

Syria Essential Services II



QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

YEAR 2, QUARTER 3

January 1 – March 31, 2018

*To protect the privacy of SES II beneficiaries, staff, and partner information, sensitive content has been redacted from this document.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Project Title	Syria Essential Services II (SES II)
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Geographic Coverage (National Province/Region, Country)	Southern Syria: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Northern Syria: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

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Acronyms

ACU	Assistance Coordination Unit	LCC	Livelihoods Coordination Committee
AOG	Armed Opposition Group	LCN	Local Country National
BAP	Basic Assistance Package	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
CA	Community Assessment	████	████████████████████
CCAR	Comprehensive Community Assessment Report	████	████████████████████
CEP	Community Engagement Plan	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CMORE	Common Monitoring & Reporting Platform	O&M	Operation and Maintenance
CSO	Civil Society Organization	PEA	Political Economy Analysis
████	████████████████████	PKK	Kurdistan Workers' party
████	████████████████████ Civil Council	POB	Producer-Owned Business
DEA	De-Escalation Area	████	████████████████████ Provincial Council
████	████████████████████	████	████████████████████
████	████████████████████ Provincial Council	████	████████████████████ Civil Council
DTA	Detailed Technical Assessment	████	████████████████████ Interim Water Authority
ERT	Emergency Response Team	SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
FACE	Finance & Administration Capacity Enhancement	SES II	Syria Essential Services II
FACT	Finance & Administration Capacity Tool	SIG	Syrian Interim Government
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	████	████████████████████
FLS	Free Lawyer's Syndicate	START	Syria Transition Assistance Response Team
FSA	Free Syrian Army	THM	Town Hall Meeting
FSLU	Free Syrian Lawyers Union	████	████████████████████
GoS	Government of Syria	████	████████████████████
ICT	Information & Communications Technology	US	United States
████	████████████████████	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Person	WAO	Women's Affairs Office
IED	Improvised Explosive Device	WASH	Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria	WEWG	Women's Empowerment Working Group
JKW	Jaish Khalid bin al-Walid	Y2Q3	Year 2, Quarter 3
KII	Key Informant Interview	YPG	People's Protection Units

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Syria Essential Services II (SES II) is a three-year, \$ [REDACTED] program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Blumont Engineering Solutions in partnership with local Syrian communities. It is designed to stabilize conflict-affected communities through two overlapping and complementary objectives:

1. Restore essential services and expand livelihoods opportunities; and
2. Strengthen governance institutions in moderate-opposition influenced areas.

SES II accomplishes these objectives primarily through technical and material assistance that increases the ability of local councils or other emerging governance institutions to restore, rehabilitate, and expand the delivery of essential services and support basic economic livelihoods.

The program operates in three southern Syrian governorates— [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED]—as well as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Governorates in northern Syria.

I.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Seven years of civil war has left Syrians devastated and without access to essential services. The restoration of these services has become increasingly important in recent months as internally displaced persons (IDPs) returned to their homes in increasing numbers in both northeastern and southern Syria. SES II responded to changing dynamics throughout the quarter by adapting programming to events on the ground as necessary. This quarter was generally successful for SES II, especially in terms of essential service rehabilitations in northeastern Syria and engagement with the [REDACTED] Provincial Council ([REDACTED] in southern Syria).

Throughout Year 2, Quarter 3 (Y2Q3), SES II slowed community engagement and focused on the implementation of activities. The decline in community engagement was due to several factors, including security and accessibility concerns in northwestern [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as well as lack of local concurrence approvals for accessible communities. Additionally, SES II has already engaged and assessed most of the accessible communities in its areas of operation. Another reason SES II did not engage many communities this quarter is because the program revised the Comprehensive Community Assessment Report (CCAR) template to gather information related to political and tribal dynamics, as well as political analyses, of target communities per a request from USAID. SES II expects this trend to continue into the next quarter as the program seeks to close out projects and focuses on the implementation of ongoing activities.

The deterioration in security in southern Syria was a particularly limiting factor in Y2Q3. The security situation in [REDACTED]—specifically [REDACTED]—forced SES II to terminate several grants and evacuate staff to Idleb. Despite this challenge, SES II continued to operate

smoothly in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Governorates for most of the quarter and deterioration of security did not limit the program as much in the North. After implementing activities in northeastern Syria for half a year—specifically in [REDACTED]—SES II gained a clearer understanding of dynamics on the ground and has enjoyed a good reputation among local authorities and other actors. The program received praise for the speed with which it has carried out high-quality rehabilitations.

This quarter, SES II completed 24 activities in 17 unique communities with another 137 activities still ongoing at the time of writing. SES II mainly focused on rehabilitating key water and education infrastructure throughout Y2Q3—in both northeastern and southern Syria. Of the 24 activities completed by SES II this quarter, 19 were rehabilitated essential services, totaling a cumulative 65 completed essential service activities. Through all 24 completed activities this quarter, SES II directly benefited 131,901 and indirectly benefited 67,257 individuals. Significantly, 15 of the 24 completed activities in Y2Q3 contained a solar energy component, through which SES II helped provide 487 kW per day, considering eight hours of operation per day.

SES II completed nine Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) activities this quarter, four of which were rehabilitations of water pumping stations in [REDACTED] Governorate. Through the other five, SES II provided solar energy systems and rehabilitated four wells in southern Syria. By completing all nine WASH activities, SES II helped restore water services for 131,900 direct beneficiaries in northeastern and southern Syria.

Throughout the reporting period, SES II completed three Education activities, which included the support of local councils to rehabilitate seven schools—including 76 classrooms—in southern Syria. As a result, 2,257 students and 133 teachers and staff have more suitable learning, teaching, and working environments. Additionally, 10,957 individuals benefited indirectly from these activities. To note, SES II completed the rehabilitation work of two schools in northeastern Syria, but the final payment has not been issued so the activity is not considered complete. However, the program received praise from the directors of both schools on the quality of the rehabilitations.

SES II continued ongoing livelihoods activities in the dairy, olive oil, and animal feed value chains in various areas of [REDACTED] as well as the wheat, vegetable, and building block value chains in [REDACTED]. The program is also rehabilitating irrigation canals that will provide water to farms that fall under various value chains—including the wheat and vegetable value chains—in [REDACTED]. In addition to the implementation of these ongoing activities, SES II's Livelihoods team was busy conducting assessments and developing projects for submission to USAID this quarter.

Implementation of governance and capacity development activities in Y2Q3 revolved around SES II's continued engagement with the DPC and its related entities and continued efforts to establish the [REDACTED] Interim Water Authority ([REDACTED]). The former is part of SES II's Provincial Approach in which it increases the legitimacy of the [REDACTED] through increased capacity and coordination with local councils, while the latter is part of SES II's attempt to enhance the management and sustainability of water resources in [REDACTED], especially in light of an influx of IDPs returning to their homes.

The rate of implementation was slowed toward the end of the quarter to ensure adequate funding for the remaining contract period. Table I – Progress Summary reflects the initial results of work over the quarter. Future work plans will be structured to align with funding plans.

Summary of Results to Date

The table below summarizes Y2Q3 results related to SES II indicators, projects, and spending.

TABLE I – Progress Summary

	Y2Q3 Results	Cumulative
1.1.1 (F Standard 4.4-8) # of beneficiaries receiving improved infrastructure services due to USG assistance*	Direct: 131,901	327,955
	Indirect: 67,257	253,301
1.1.2 # of essential service activities completed	19	65
2.1.2 # of events or activities designed to engage community members in the prioritization of needs and activity identification	20	319
Town Hall Meetings (THMs)	3	75
Female Participants**	46	-
Male Participants**	80	-
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	3	39
Female Participants**	23	-
Male Participants**	0	-
Community Assessments (CAs)	3	60
Female Participants**	10	-
Male Participants**	6	-
Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	8	87
Female Participants**	2	-
Male Participants**	6	-
Community Engagement Plans (CEPs)	3	61
Female Participants**	0	-
Male Participants**	37	-
Detailed Technical Assessments (DTAs)	29	285
Total Completed Activities	24	76
Total Ongoing Activities	137	-
Total Award Spent Down	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]

* Beneficiary numbers adjusted for geographic and project level double counting.

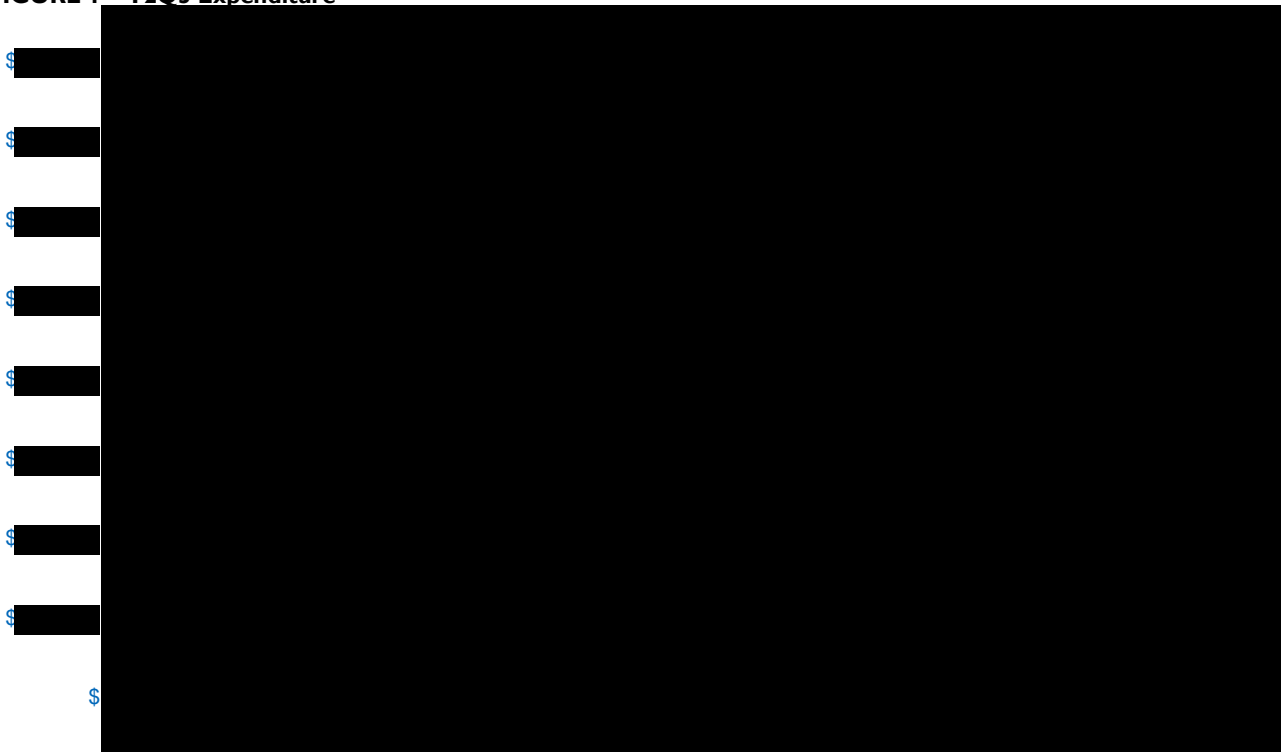
** SES II is revisiting gender disaggregated data for Year 1, upon completion of which cumulative totals for community engagement events will be available.

2. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

2.1 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

As illustrated by Figure 1 below, SES II exceeded projected expenditures this quarter. Most of this can be attributed to high-value projects in northeastern Syria that were identified on an ad hoc, as-needed basis rather than through SES II’s standard community engagement and needs identification approach, which is more applicable in southern Syria. Additionally, as work on the ground matures in the project cycle, more milestone payments are issued to grantees and subcontractors. Now well into its second year, SES II has completed projects with Syrian partners at a faster rate than earlier in the life of the program. The slight increase in projected spending for Y2Q4 is based on the same logic—SES II will focus on completing ongoing projects and expects to make final payments to grantees and subcontractors in the coming quarter.

FIGURE 1 – Y2Q3 Expenditure



Projection for Y2Q4: \$ [REDACTED]

Total Expenditure to Date: \$ [REDACTED]

2.2 RECRUITMENT

Throughout Y2Q3, SES II recruited few additional staff (see Table 2 below) as most positions—including those needed to support expansion into northeastern Syria—had been filled in the previous two quarters. Additionally, multiple salary approvals were pending USAID action for the duration of the quarter. Moving forward, SES II does not expect to hire additional staff—with the exception of a Director of Engineering.

2.2.1 [REDACTED] Jordan & Southern Syria

As of the end of Y2Q3, SES II employed seven expatriate staff and 52 local country nationals (LCNs) in [REDACTED] with three pending approval. The program has 15 coordinators operating in southern Syria with an additional one pending approval. See the table below for staff hired during Y2Q3.

TABLE 2 – Amman Hiring

Position	Number Hired	Labor Category
Capacity Development Officer	1	LCN
Finance Clerk	1	LCN
Capacity Development Manager	1	LCN

2.2.2 [REDACTED] Iraq & Northeastern Syria

As of the end of Y2Q3, SES II employed one expatriate staff and five LCNs in [REDACTED] with an additional LCN pending approval. The program has 28 coordinators operating in northern Syria with an additional three pending approval. During Y2Q3, SES II hired an Area Manager (an LCN).

3. CONTEXT ON THE GROUND

3.1 SECURITY

3.1.1 North

██████████

Despite ongoing demining operations, IDPs returned in increasing numbers to ██████████ City, especially to peri-urban areas and less central neighborhoods. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), over 86,000 people returned to their homes between October 2017 and March 2018, bringing the total number of ██████████ City residents to an estimated 100,000. However, explosions of residual incidences of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) planted by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) continued—causing injury or death to 50 to 70 civilians on a weekly basis—and posed a high safety risk for SES II field staff and sub-contractors. The slow pace of demining operations prevented SES II from rehabilitating key infrastructure in ██████████ City, including one that was classified as demined but later identified as re-contaminated, ██████████ Hospital.

In early January, tensions escalated between the United States (US) and the Government of Turkey with the Coalition’s announcement of a ‘Border Security Force’ to be deployed along the de-confliction line in the Euphrates River Valley and to the Turkish and Iraqi borders. The announcement provoked strong Turkish backlash, with Turkish President Erdogan threatening to “strangle” the new border force and launch an offensive on ██████████.¹ Approximately one week later, Turkey launched an offensive on ██████████ called ‘██████████’ to wrest the area from the control of the Self-Administration and its defense force, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). By the end of March, Turkey had gained control of the entirety of the region of ██████████—with the exception of ██████████ and ██████████. Turkish President Erdogan became increasingly emboldened by military gains in ██████████ that went unchallenged, beyond the rhetoric of the international community, and threatened to extend Operation Olive Branch to the Iraqi border and onward. In response to increasing Turkish threats, US forces deployed to ██████████ in early February. Two senior American generals accompanied by Special Forces made a publicized appearance at the Turkish border to deter a Turkish attack. Additional US forces redeployed to ██████████ in late March after the US publicly refuted Turkish statements that an agreement between Ankara and Washington had been reached to facilitate the withdrawal of the People’s Protection Units (YPG) from ██████████ and establish a jointly administered ‘safe zone.’

Despite these actions, Turkey continued to threaten to expand its offensive and in early March intensified shelling on northern ██████████. In late March, Turkey shelled the town of ██████████ a few kilometers from ██████████ border crossing—the crossing used by SES II for

¹ The Coalition stated that the border force would be comprised of 15,000 recruits and 15,000 SDF fighters. The YPG constitutes a large component of the Syrian Democratic Forces and is considered by Turkey to be an extension of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), a designated terrorist group.

cross-border shipments. Concurrent with cross-border shelling, Turkey began removing parts of the border wall near ██████ in northern ██████, eliciting local fears of an imminent Turkish offensive. Throughout the quarter, multiple assassination attempts targeted key members of the Self-Administration, many of which were claimed by affiliates of the Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army (FSA) based in northern Syria, indicating Turkish involvement. In January, ██████ ██████, the chair of the ██████ Civil Council's (█████) Reconstruction Committee (RC) and SES II grantee, was hospitalized for bullet wounds suffered in a failed assassination attempt at his home in ██████. In March, ██████ ██████, the chair of the ██████'s Public Relations Committee, was assassinated in his home in ██████. Several individuals associated with military and intelligence entities of the Self-Administration were also targeted over the quarter. These assassinations and assassination attempts, most of which took place in ██████ and other parts of ██████ Governorate, contributed to a growing sense of insecurity throughout the Self-Administration that was further compounded by reports of ISIS sleeper cells. As security forces deployed to ██████ ISIS sleeper cells mobilized in ██████ Governorate. Several reports emerged over the quarter of raids and pursuits by the security forces on ISIS militants. In March, security forces raided a safe house in ██████ where five ISIS members were plotting suicide bombings. Amidst an increasingly dangerous operating environment, SES II informed staff to minimize meetings with the ██████ and avoid high-profile events and meetings with officials of the Self-Administration.

██████████

The ██████ Civil Council (█████) continued to facilitate the return of IDPs despite the widespread presence of ISIS-planted IEDs, absence of demining operations, and severe lack of basic services. According to UNOCHA, 150,000 IDPs had returned to Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-controlled areas of northern ██████ by February 2018. A similar number of IDPs from southern ██████ remained displaced in northern ██████, ██████, and ██████ due to ongoing fighting between ISIS on the one hand, and the SDF and Government of Syria (GoS) on the other hand, with concurrent Coalition and Russian airstrikes. In late February, REACH reported that humanitarian assistance in SDF areas was “sporadic” and that severe humanitarian needs persisted—especially shelter, electricity, WASH, and health services. Over the quarter, SES II identified ██████ Hospital in northern ██████ as a critical infrastructure project to restore desperately needed medical services. However, the absence of demining operations prevented SES II from starting programming in ██████. SES II is carefully monitoring the situation and will coordinate with the mine removal actor who starts work in the area to prioritize the hospital clearance.

Meanwhile, the offensive on the remaining pockets of ISIS lost significant momentum as YPG-affiliated members of the SDF redeployed to ██████ to counter the Turkish-led ██████ ██████. Control lines east and west of ██████ remained virtually unchanged in southern ██████, between the GoS and ISIS on the one hand and the SDF and ISIS on the other hand. There were several violations across the de-confliction line over the quarter, most notably in late February, when GoS-aligned forces attacked the SDF in the vicinity of ██████ near the ██████ ██████ where Coalition advisers were located, with the ostensible aim of gaining control of ██████ gas and oil fields. The Coalition responded with heavy airstrikes, killing between 100 and 200 fighters, including dozens of Russian mercenaries. The participation of Russian mercenaries

indicated that the violation of the jointly established US-Russia de-confliction line likely occurred with the complicity of Russia, setting the stage for heightened tensions between the two countries.

Cross-Border Access

The Iraqi government continued to threaten to wrest control of all international border crossings in the aftermath of the fallout between Baghdad and Erbil over the Kurdish independence referendum. Nevertheless, informal and formal border crossings in northern Iraq remained under the control of the Peshmerga or under the joint control of the Peshmerga and Iraqi Security Forces without renewed hostilities between two actors, facilitating continued cross-border assistance to Syria. In early March, the first [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) convoy entered Syria through the official border crossing of [REDACTED]. In accordance with previous assurances by the Iraqi government, cross-border assistance via unofficial border crossings—including the border crossing of [REDACTED] used by SES II—continued except for very minor disruptions due to Turkish shelling on the Syrian side of the border..

3.1.2 South

[REDACTED]

SES II access to [REDACTED] continuously diminished in February as the GoS-imposed siege tightened and bombing intensified, despite the designation of [REDACTED] as a de-escalation zone in July 2017 and the enactment of a whole of Syria ceasefire in February 2018. By the end of March, SES II access had been completely blocked as opposition areas came under the control of the GoS and its allies.

In mid-February, curtailed commercial access caused by the GoS closure of [REDACTED] checkpoint—the sole entry point into [REDACTED]—led to high inflation and hindered the ability of SES II to procure necessary items for programming. By early March, the GoS made advances on the [REDACTED] region, gaining control of previously opposition-controlled communities—including [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]—that enabled the GoS to break through control lines that had been immutable for years. By mid-March, the GoS had gained control of nearly 50% of opposition-controlled [REDACTED] and divided remaining opposition territory into three parts: Ahrar al-Sham controlled areas of [REDACTED] Jaish al-Islam controlled areas in the vicinity of [REDACTED] and Faylaq ar-Rahman controlled areas in the vicinity of [REDACTED]

Amidst extreme siege conditions, heavy bombardment, and ongoing GoS advances, Ahrar al-Sham and Faylaq ar-Rahman conducted Russian-mediated reconciliation agreements with the GoS toward the end of March. Ahrar al-Sham was relocated to [REDACTED] while Faylaq ar-Rahman was relocated to [REDACTED]. By the end of March, all opposition areas of [REDACTED] had come under GoS control—except for [REDACTED]. Over 80,000 people were displaced from [REDACTED] over the span of just two weeks, with the majority of IDPs (approximately 50,000) placed in overcrowded collective shelters in [REDACTED] administered by the GoS.² The remaining 30,000 IDPs were placed on buses and relocated to northern Syria, including three out

² UNOCHA Situation Report covering IDP movements from 9-26 March.

of four SES II staff members, while one SES II staff member remained trapped in the besieged city of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Over the quarter, the southern Syria ceasefire became increasingly tenuous with GoS troop mobilizations, increased cross-line shelling, Iranian-Israeli escalation, and threatening Russian and GoS statements.³ In mid-March, the southern ceasefire agreement effectively collapsed with the resumption of Syrian and Russian airstrikes in eastern [REDACTED]—the first airstrikes to occur in [REDACTED] since the agreement took effect in July 2017. As a result, [REDACTED] Local Council requested SES II projects be placed on hold until airstrikes ceased and the security situation improved. [REDACTED] Local Council made a similar request, citing security concerns over an impending GoS offensive. While airstrikes ceased approximately two weeks later with US mediation, shelling by GoS and aligned forces continued, eliciting retaliatory shelling by armed opposition groups (AOGs). As a result, SES II designed small-scale, trial projects in [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] due to concerns over present and future security conditions amidst increased shelling, the possibility of renewed airstrikes, and potential curtailments in access over the long-term caused by a GoS and/or Jaish Khalid bin al-Walid (JKW) offensive.⁴ While SES II began implementation in [REDACTED] in January, projects in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] did not commence over the quarter due to pending USAID approval.

Meanwhile, JKW launched weekly attacks on FSA positions in southwestern [REDACTED] through January and February, leading to a reversal in which the FSA was on the defensive rather than the offensive. Over the quarter, JKW briefly gained control of [REDACTED] checkpoint on several occasions, jeopardizing SES II programming access to northwestern [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].⁵ While the FSA repelled all JKW attacks, with the support of targeted airstrikes from unknown actors, it was unable or unwilling to make territorial gains against JKW. As a result, SES II programming in JKW-controlled [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] remained on hold over the quarter. In March, JKW attacks decreased in frequency, possibly in an attempt to conserve military manpower and ammunitions in the event of a GoS offensive, whereby JKW could open a second front and effectively seize FSA territory in western [REDACTED] as in February 2016.

3 In mid-January, the GoS announced at a meeting attended by Russian officers and local notables from GoS areas that the southern Syria ceasefire would end on February 7 if opposition areas did not submit to reconciliation. In late February, Russia threatened that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would be next after [REDACTED], urging AOGs to preemptively surrender, hand over their weapons, and return to the “embrace of the motherland”.

4 If a GoS offensive occurs, SES II anticipates disruptions to access to communities in the vicinity of the [REDACTED] highway, northern [REDACTED] and western [REDACTED] which have experienced increased shelling in recent months due to their proximity to control lines with the GoS and Jaish JKW—affiliated with ISIS. JKW would likely exploit a GoS offensive to expand eastward from [REDACTED] toward the [REDACTED] highway at the expense of the FSA, as it did in February 2017. A JKW expansion would effectively cut off northwestern [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from cross-border assistance.

5 [REDACTED] checkpoint is located near [REDACTED] at the intersection of the road leading south to [REDACTED] and north to [REDACTED], the sole road that connects opposition areas in northwest and southwest [REDACTED]. JKW control over the intersection would inhibit cross-border shipments to northwest [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] necessary for many infrastructure rehabilitation projects.

Despite the ceasefire, GoS shelling and intermittent clashes along control lines in northern [REDACTED] primarily in [REDACTED] sub-district, continued throughout the quarter. As a result, SES II pursued programming in central and southern [REDACTED] and avoided new programming in northern [REDACTED]. In January, SES II programming in northern [REDACTED] in the town of [REDACTED], was placed on hold due to the severity of the security situation. SES II field staff were unable to safely access the town to proceed with programming, while the [REDACTED] Local Council remained in central [REDACTED] due to cross-line shelling and IED attacks.

Meanwhile, SES II continued to face governance-related obstacles to programming in [REDACTED]. In January, the [REDACTED]-based [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) announced the formation of a new provincial council—in parallel with the existing Syrian Interim Government (SIG)-affiliated [REDACTED] Provincial Council ([REDACTED]). The [REDACTED] cited the [REDACTED]'s manipulation of electoral lists, in collusion with the SIG, and the illegitimacy of the presiding governor, [REDACTED], who has overstayed his term and been in power since 2016. The [REDACTED]-affiliated council aims to establish new local councils, in parallel to those established by the [REDACTED]. Since January, multiple local councils have been established throughout [REDACTED]. While programming in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] continued, unaffected by these political dynamics, programming in [REDACTED] remained on hold due to local council changes. In March, the [REDACTED] Local Council was poised to undergo membership changes in an ostensible attempt to co-opt critics of the SIG-affiliated [REDACTED] and undermine [REDACTED] attempts to establish a parallel local council.

Cross-Border Access

UN Resolution 2165 was renewed in January 2018, ensuring continued access through formal and informal border crossings. Cross-border assistance continued through an informal border crossing near [REDACTED] following the closure of the informal border crossing near [REDACTED] in late December due to concerns of the Jordanian authorities over a heightened risk of JKW attacks in the area.

3.2 POLITICAL CONTEXT

3.2.1 North

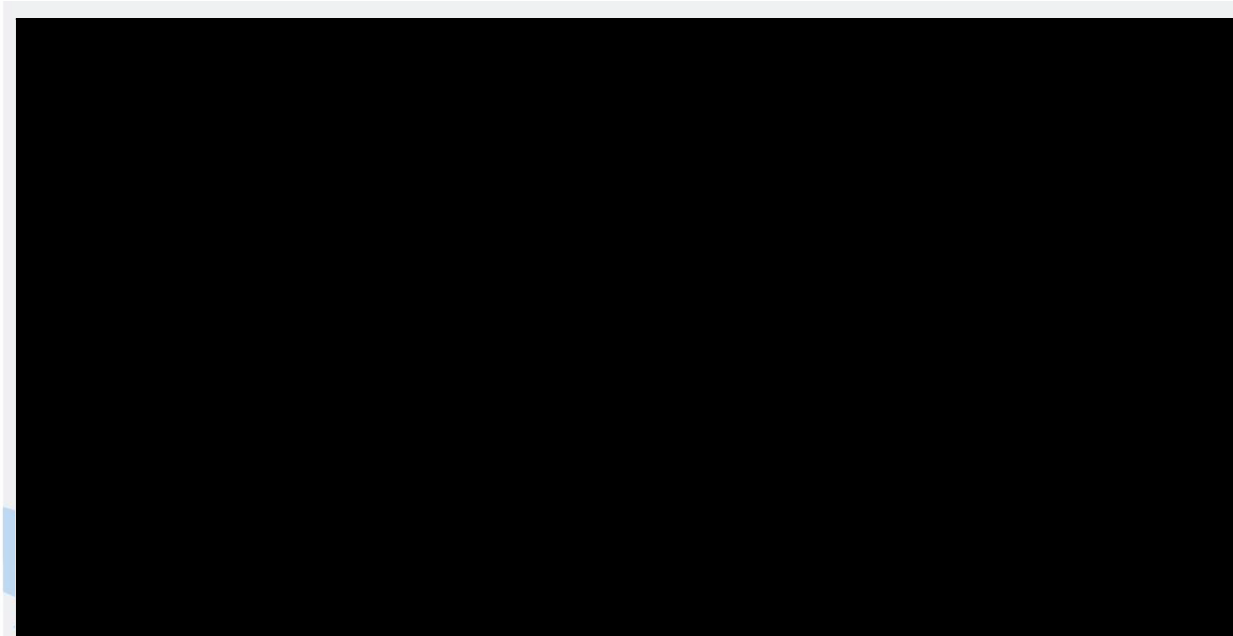
[REDACTED] City

In the second week of January, field sources indicated that the US had met with authorities of the Self-Administration and proposed an [REDACTED] for [REDACTED]' solution in which the SDF would give up [REDACTED] to consolidate governance in the unified block of territory from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. However, this proposal was unanimously rejected by the Self-Administration. The authorities also denied rumors that [REDACTED] would be handed over to the GoS.

On January 7, the Committee for the Formation of Councils and Communes under the [REDACTED] set up the first four communes in [REDACTED] district of [REDACTED] City. The following day, the committee held a series of meetings to establish another five communes in [REDACTED] district. By the end of the month, 15 communes had been established in [REDACTED] 13 in [REDACTED] 16 in [REDACTED] and another

16 between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The committee also opened People's Councils in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. See Figure 2, the map of [REDACTED] City (from the REACH Resource Centre), below.

FIGURE 2 – [REDACTED] City Neighborhood Reference Map



Following the reorganization of the [REDACTED] during its second Legislative Conference on January 10, a follow-up meeting was held to elect the co-presidents of the committees under the Executive Council for [REDACTED] following a consensus vote by the assembled attendees. The Legislative Council then authorized the appointments and formally instructed the committees to establish subsidiary offices.

Following the reorganization of the [REDACTED] in January 2018, the various committees worked to establish sub-offices responsible for specialized tasks in February. The Committee of Social Affairs and Labor established an Office of Employment to receive resumes and contact information of people looking for work in [REDACTED]. Additionally, the Committee of Social Affairs and Labor requested that international actors in [REDACTED] provide details of their employees to track employment status. Meanwhile, the Electricity Department of the [REDACTED] alongside the Committee for Energy and Communications of the [REDACTED] conducted interviews for some 160 employees to join the Electric Company. The Legislative Council also held elections to select its membership, the results of which drew criticism of the lack of specialists with legal experience.

As part of the gradual [REDACTED] move to [REDACTED] City, the Economics and Agriculture Committee moved to new headquarters in the city to be in closer contact with the citizens who have returned to [REDACTED] and better understand their needs and concerns. The Education Committee of the [REDACTED] also rented four houses in [REDACTED] to use for teaching since school buildings in the area have all been destroyed.

In February, the People's Municipality for [REDACTED] began to activate its role in service provision in the city by planting trees and fixing walkways. The municipality has worked on improving the

urban space for citizens with a limited budget and capacity. As the municipality lacks human resources, the announcement of the municipality's official activation did not take place until the after the addition of administrative staff. Later in March, the municipality was reported to have hired 320 administrative and service staff for its various committees.

As governance in ██████ City and its environs evolved, so too did the regional dynamics as the self-administration moved to align itself further away from the Democratic Union Party with the formation of the Syria Future Party. On March 27, the ██████ held its first official meeting in ██████ City to ratify its internal regulations and elect a president for the party, ██████, an Arab engineer from ██████. His election reflected wider dynamics within the Self-Administration to give increased prominence to ██████ despite increasing tensions with Turkey. Widely held perceptions of the party are that it is supported by the PKK and the US. Also in March, Kurdish and Arab tribes attended a meeting to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation and build a basis for more effective coexistence in the context of the continuing trend of Self-Administration governance bodies attempting to broaden outreach initiatives to Arab tribes.

██████

In January, SES II received information that the Syrian Democratic Council was planning to initiate the process to form a Legislative Council for ██████ in the beginning of February. The ██████ complained about a lack of engagement from international entities compared to other areas. In the middle of January, authorities arranged a training session for 50 co-presidents of recently founded communes in the area that focused on the role of women, democracy in society, and the principles of autonomous administration.

During its second general conference on February 1, the ██████ announced the start of the process to establish the Democratic Civil Administration of ██████. The ██████ selected leadership figures to establish Legislative and Executive Councils. Several key administration figures from ██████ region were present at the meeting, indicating that the new process is largely influenced by the Self-Administration of ██████ Region. Military figures also attended to officiate the reorganization process.

██████

In February, the joint presidency of the People's Council in ██████ resolved to form a committee of five individuals responsible for determining and fixing rental prices of property owned by the municipality. It also established a separate committee of eight individuals mandated to fix monthly rental prices (per meter) for shops in the industrial zone. SES II was informed that such policies are simply a confirmation/standardization of what was already in place. The People's Municipality has also begun to repair its headquarters after it was destroyed during the liberation from ISIS. On March 18, after Turkish and allied FSA troops took full control of ██████ City, a new ██████ Civil Council—which includes anti-Democratic Union Party Kurds from Syria and is backed by the Turkish state—was formed to govern the region.

3.2.2 South

██████

██████'s lack of funding and support resulted in 19 prisoners escaping from the ██████ prison on January 19. The lack of security guards can be attributed to the fact that members of the executive force, guards, and other members of prison staff have not received their salaries in over a year. Then, on March 16, 23 prisoners escaped from the same prison, marking the third breakout in six months following incidents on October 29, 2017 and January 19, 2018. SES II field reporters attributed the breakout to the lack of resources that prevents ██████ from having robust security at the prison.

In February, tensions increased as some opposition figures participated in international and local reconciliation negotiations with the GoS and Russia. AOGs arrested two opposition leaders in ██████ who participated in January's ██████ conference that was also attended by GoS representatives. The ██████ Revolutionary Council called on ██████ to try all those who participate in the negotiations for treason. Officially, ██████ and AOGs are opposed to any local reconciliation negotiations. ██████ published an order calling on all armed factions and local governance bodies to share the names of individuals who participate in reconciliation processes with GoS authorities so they can be arrested and tried. On February 22, the president of ██████ Municipal Council, which is linked to the GoS, was assassinated for reportedly participating in a meeting with a Russian Armed Forces commander and representatives of the GoS.

Also in February, the Local Council in ██████ temporarily disbanded itself due to disagreements surrounding results of three tenders for the rehabilitation of nine schools in the community. According to SES II sources, members of the local ██████ tribe who competed for the contracts disputed the fact that they were awarded to contractors from ██████. The ██████ tribe members ordered the local council to cancel the results of the tender. On February 14, the local council declared it would stop working due to the dispute, however, a consensus with all parties was eventually reached and the local council resumed its work.

Security and governance actors took steps to address increasing insecurity across opposition-held ██████ in February. In ██████ and ██████ AOGs started night patrols to counter theft and kidnappings; the Military Council in ██████ imposed a curfew in response to increasing incidents of theft; and local civilian police and the Military Council in ██████ issued an order barring individuals from outside the community suspected of entering the town to steal or buy scrap metal and parts—an SES II field researcher reported that local authorities suspect that these individuals are informants for the GoS's intelligence services.

In March, the ██████ called on local negotiation committees across the governorate to stop reconciliation efforts with the Syrian and Russian authorities. On March 18, a pro-GoS news outlet reported that 18 towns in ██████ had reached an agreement with the Russian authorities, including ██████, ██████, ██████, ██████, and ██████. Reportedly, under the agreement communities will return to the authority of the GoS in exchange for the Government securing the availability of health, water, and electricity services, as well as fuel.

In March, a number of armed factions in [REDACTED] interfered in elections for the executive board of the [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]). A member of the [REDACTED] told SES II that some armed factions have significant influence of the union's management, which led to the expulsion of some members, and the factions wanted to replace the person who established the [REDACTED]. When the union gathered to elect new members, the armed factions prevented all [REDACTED] members from participating in an attempt to control governance bodies and local affairs in [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

Intense disagreements between the re-elected Head of the [REDACTED], and the [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] were fueled by assertions by the [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] has only appointed his allies in QPC positions and that they were initially excluded from the designated electorate. The dispute led to the emergence of a parallel provincial council in [REDACTED] appointed by local councils that view [REDACTED] as illegitimate. The parallel council is made up of 30 members and union representatives and the executive office has 12 members. Amid the tension, [REDACTED] was assaulted in an apparent kidnapping attack.

In February, the two provincial councils continued to operate amid high levels of tension. While the SIG-backed [REDACTED] continued work as usual, the newer, rival provincial council worked to win broader support among the local population, civil society organizations (CSOs), and local governance bodies. The head of the new provincial council attended meetings to promote the new entity. The [REDACTED] Local Council and [REDACTED] organization reportedly coordinated with the new provincial council to deliver humanitarian aid in [REDACTED]. Although the [REDACTED] Local Council is linked to the SIG and the SIG-backed [REDACTED] the community felt it had been neglected, leading to the local council's support for the newer provincial council.

Tensions between the two councils continued in March. [REDACTED], who attempted to establish the rival council, was reportedly trying to oust [REDACTED] in the latter's position as Head of the [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] accused [REDACTED] of being corrupt and failing to address the needs of local communities. The [REDACTED] suspended the governorate's Directorates of Education and Services after finding out that they agreed to implement two [REDACTED] ([REDACTED])-funded projects without informing the [REDACTED]. The two projects were halted as a result.

[REDACTED]

The intensity and scope of shelling in January adversely affected the operations of many local councils. Those of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] suspended work due to heavy shelling. The main role of local councils seemed to be locating housing for IDPs coming from other areas of [REDACTED]. Institutions meant to safeguard law and order were also negatively affected—judicial workers and police in [REDACTED] saw reduced working hours due to the shelling.

The activities of governance bodies in [REDACTED] were severely affected in February due to pro-Government forces' intense bombing campaign. In response to the threat of airstrikes, the [REDACTED] police stopped working early in February. In [REDACTED] an office for investigative judges was targeted by airstrikes. While the [REDACTED] ([REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]) courts remained open for a few hours every day before February 21, they ceased functioning once airstrikes and shelling intensified. Many LCs, including in [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] also stopped working in mid-February. In some areas, such as [REDACTED] LCs tried to

coordinate with civilians to remove debris left by airstrikes and shelling. However, these councils' efforts were reportedly limited due to a lack of capacity as well as sustained bombing.

3.3 LIVELIHOODS & MARKETS

3.3.1 North

The prices of both diesel and petrol sold on the black market decreased significantly in SDF-controlled areas in January due to the Self-Administration's decision to allow individuals to reopen local primitive refineries that had initially been closed when the SDF took control. Authorities also started permitting traders to buy refined oil products directly from primitive refineries as well as refineries operated by the Self-Administration to help meet demand. These decisions increased the availability of oil products and competition between traders, resulting in a 49% decrease in prices on what was previously a prohibited market.

The decrease in the prices of black market oil products led to a decrease in the prices of other livelihoods inputs, such as bread and water, which are tied to the price of oil as diesel is used to power generators that provide electricity to bakeries and water pumps. In ██████ the price of a household subscription to electricity generators dropped by 32% in January. However, electricity fees remained the same in ██████ City, where a lack of electricity from the network keeps demand for generators high and gives operators greater control over price-setting.

In January, the Economic Committee of the Democratic Civil Administration of ██████ (██████) put together a proposal to open a dairy factory to counteract high prices for dairy items, create livelihoods opportunities, and increase self-sufficiency in ██████. The small quantity of dairy items produced locally is insufficient to meet market demand. Additionally, establishing a dairy factory would increase the market size for local shepherds' products.

Delayed seasonal rains affected farmers across the region, resulting in an increase in the prices of fruits and vegetables. Starting in mid-February, there was sporadic rainfall in ██████ and ██████ although it was still insufficient in some areas. Representatives of Agriculture Committees across the region made calls regarding the urgency of rehabilitating irrigation channels to lessen dependence on rainfall.

The Fisheries Office in ██████ dealt with an ongoing problem in March of people fishing using electric shock and dynamite, which adversely affects the fishing climate during the breeding period, from mid-March to early June. The office imposed harsher penalties, including fines and confiscation, to deal with those who used these methods despite previous warnings.

3.3.2 South

██████

Two checkpoints between ██████ and ██████ Governorates were closed in January due to frequent kidnappings by pro-Government gangs in ██████. Traders bringing in goods from ██████ had to cross through the ██████ checkpoint, which is managed by the Syrian Arab

Army. SES II researchers feared a price increase as the Syrian Arab Army charges far higher fees. However, simultaneously exchange rates returned to normal levels in January, leading to general price decreases in [REDACTED]. Following the sudden fall of the dollar against the Syrian Pound in December 2017, SES II researchers reported that the value of the dollar increased throughout January.

As a staple food in southern Syria, bread was difficult for some local councils in [REDACTED] to obtain in January. To compensate for the lack of wheat supply, some local councils fundraised with locals living abroad and resorted to black market traders to meet demand. The return of IDPs and refugees from abroad also placed greater pressure on local councils to provide bread, some of whom began regulating rations more strictly. However, support for agricultural livelihoods is on the rise in [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED], under the SIG and supported by SRTF, announced plans to sell 600 tons of locally produced bran and wheat to traders and cattle owners. Meanwhile, [REDACTED] distributed cereals to 95 cattle owners in [REDACTED] and seeds to a number of farmers in [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. Additionally, the [REDACTED] Local Council announced the distribution of 200 agricultural baskets, and the [REDACTED]—a group of locals supported by expatriates from [REDACTED]—launched an agricultural campaign and planted more than 300 acres of wheat.

The price of gas cylinders decreased significantly in February, dropping by almost 10% across the governorate. This was caused due to the increasing availability of gas on local markets in both Government and opposition-held areas. Availability increased after the Syrian Gas Company regained control of gas supply streams in [REDACTED] from ISIS. This trend is expected to continue as the GoS continues to re-establish production. In mid-December 2017, the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said it plans to increase production to three million cubic meters per day by the end of 2018, up from 300,000 in July 2017.

Bread shortages remained a critical issue in February due to a lack of flour in communities in eastern [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) decreased flour allocations to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] to fill shortages in quantities going to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The situation was better in western [REDACTED]. In [REDACTED] stable quantities of wheat allowed the local council to decrease the price of bread by 20%. The [REDACTED] also provided flour to the [REDACTED] IDP Local Council in [REDACTED]. SES II sources attributed the significant difference in flour availability between eastern and western [REDACTED] to a significant difference in the amount of support that is received. One source alleged that while communities in eastern [REDACTED] provide the [REDACTED] with official population statistics from 2013 to determine aid distribution, communities in western [REDACTED] manipulate statistics to inflate the support they receive.

Pro-GoS forces re-started targeting bakeries in opposition areas in March. An SES II field researcher reported that the only operating bakery in [REDACTED] was targeted on March 15 by an airstrike. The bakery was not damaged but its generator was destroyed, forcing the local council to rely on bakeries in Eastern and Western [REDACTED]. This was compounded by the announcement of the [REDACTED] that it would cease its flour provision program in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in September 2018. This will make it difficult for local councils to provide bread to their communities as the flour provided by the [REDACTED] reportedly covered half of the total needs of the population in each community.

Instability caused gas prices to fluctuate throughout March. Traders' fears that smuggling routes from ██████ would be cut off due to an anticipated GoS offensive led them to withhold some of their available supplies from the market. This decrease in availability caused initial price increases, however, as the offensive failed to materialize, traders were forced to release their products into the market after a few days, causing gas prices to return to previous levels.

As in ██████ non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international NGOs continued to prioritize agriculture in the governorate. US-based ██████ is supporting small local farming projects (up to 30 acres) that provide farmers with winter crop seeds, such as wheat, barley, or other crops. Toward the end of the month, the NGO, ██████ held lectures for farmers and distributed bags of fertilizers. As in ██████ farmers were concerned about the late arrival of winter rains.

In February, SES II received several reports on Israeli support for organizations delivering aid in ██████. On February 5, pro-opposition media outlet Orient News published an interview with the heads of ██████ and ██████. Both organizations said they deliver relief aid from Israel to southern Syria. While acknowledging sensitivities around providing aid from Israel, the head of ██████ said that it allowed the organization to respond more quickly and avoid the obstacles posed by delivering aid from other countries neighboring Syria. The head of ██████ said that Israel's role is limited to the delivery of aid through the Israeli ██████ program.

Other SES II sources reported that Israeli involvement in ██████ goes beyond facilitating aid delivery. On February 21, the ██████ opened a bakery in ██████. According to field sources, the organization and the bakery, which plans to produce 6,000 to 7,000 pieces of bread per day, receives Israeli support. Media outlets have also alleged that ██████ NGO, which was founded by the Israeli-American, ██████, also delivers significant aid in ██████ with Israeli support.

Farmers in ██████ began receiving support in February through a project implemented by the ██████. The project aims to enhance farmer's ability to grow wheat and barley by providing them with fertilizers and improving their use of fertilizer to increase crop yields.

In January, traders reportedly began undersupplying the markets to drive prices up since ██████'s contract with the GoS expired. However, the expiration of the contract has not appeared to impact the trader's ability to import goods into ██████ as food and non-food items entered the area as usual. Specifically, the entry of barley via ██████ slightly improved bread security and lowered pressure on local councils. This may turn as agricultural production in the ██████ area, where a large proportion of ██████'s agriculture sector is located (specifically wheat and barley), will likely experience a significant decline as military confrontation increased throughout January. SES II researchers reported that agricultural work had completely ceased in ██████, ██████, ██████, ██████, and ██████. Additionally, the

bombardment on the area forced many farmers to leave their lands and prevented them from tending to their crops.

Due to increasing fees at checkpoints, the general price level of various goods remained high in [REDACTED]. Fees paid to the GoS increased to 2,000 Syrian Pounds per kilogram on all goods, and traders passed this cost along to consumers.

As the GoS continued its war of attrition campaign on [REDACTED] in February, access to markets, food, and water plummeted. Airstrikes and shelling targeted markets and bakeries in civilian areas, limiting access to food products and causing prices to increase dramatically. SES II sources reported that the bakery and warehouses owned by [REDACTED] were hit by airstrikes and shelling from pro-Government forces and rendered inoperable. The bombing campaign was also accompanied by a total blockade of goods. The [REDACTED] checkpoint was completely closed from mid-February onward. Although [REDACTED] used to bring in thousands kilograms of goods every day through the checkpoint, he was unable to do so for the last couple weeks of February. As intense shelling continued in the [REDACTED] area in February, agricultural lands were destroyed and farmers ceased activities in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Living conditions continued to worsen in [REDACTED] in March as most shops ran out of food due to a lack of supply and prohibitively high costs. Increasing waves of IDPs also exacerbated the situation. It was reported that all bakeries except for one were destroyed by pro-GoS airstrikes and shelling in [REDACTED]. Food stocks in the area were critically low by the end of the month. Additionally, international aid distributions were delayed and repelled by Russian and GoS airstrikes, further worsening conditions.

3.4 STATE OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES

3.4.1 North

Ongoing efforts to restore the electricity network improved the generation and delivery of electricity in some areas. In [REDACTED] City, an estimated 80% of areas had some access to the electricity network (availability also improved in [REDACTED] countryside). [REDACTED] City remained without any access to public electricity services in January. The authorities lacked access to cables, transformers, and cranes that would quicken the pace of the work. By the end of the month, only a few neighborhoods in the city had access to electricity provided through diesel generators.

In January, the [REDACTED] announced that the five stations of the [REDACTED] Irrigation Project were demined. The rehabilitation of the stations will be an essential step in the restoration of the area's extensive irrigation network. Meanwhile, sewage systems in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were out of service throughout the month, contaminating water and contributing to the spread of diseases. Later in March, after repair work was carried out by the [REDACTED]'s Electricity Committee—funded by SES II—a temporary rehabilitation of one transformer at the [REDACTED] Power Station was completed and connected to the power station in [REDACTED] as well as the [REDACTED] Irrigation Project. This rehabilitation will have positive effects on the capacity of the pumping station at [REDACTED] to supply drinking and irrigation water to the northern countryside of [REDACTED].

██████████. Throughout March, several security incidents took place close to the ██████████ station in apparent attempts to undermine stabilization efforts in ██████████ by targeting essential services infrastructure.

As demining operation continued in ██████████ City's key infrastructure sites (the biggest challenge to programming in northern Syria), SES II received reports that suggested people may have been planting explosive devices at night in key sites that were declared cleared of IEDs. For example, on a site visit to ██████████ Hospital, SES II staff discovered that IEDs had been replanted in the hospital after it was initially cleared.

During February, the ██████████ focused its attention on repairs to the central water network in ██████████ City. Following tests to the network, the Services Committee identified 17 serious fractures in large pipes and announced intentions to repair and/or replace these sections of the network. However, the committee lacks funds to carry out the work properly. The ██████████ stated in a meeting that it is unable to procure the parts needed to rehabilitate the electrical connection at the main water pumping station locally and, therefore, requested stabilization actors to support the rehabilitation of the electricity mechanism at the station.

In ██████████ field sources reported the launch of a project to rehabilitate ██████████ Dam based on coordination between the ██████████ and the ██████████. About 10 km east of ██████████ the ██████████ announced that the drinking water station had been rehabilitated, returning running water to about 14,000 people in the vicinity. Meanwhile, at ██████████ the rehabilitation of the water station had not produced the anticipated results, with only part of the target area receiving drinking and irrigation water due to undetected damage to the water network and ongoing issues with rehabilitated water pumps that require replacement.

In ██████████ sources expressed concerns about health provision following ██████████'s (██████████) announcement that it will suspend operations there at the end of April 2018. Some connected to the organization suggested that reasons for the suspension may be related to problems in coordination between ██████████ and the Health Committee, while some perceived it as the Self-Administration directing ██████████ to relocate services to ██████████. The move is potentially disastrous given that ██████████ is one of the only significant healthcare actors operating in ██████████ and provides free healthcare and vaccinations for ██████████'s population of half a million individuals.

According to multiple field sources, a delegation from the ██████████ held a series of meetings with different bodies of the local administration in ██████████ during the last ten days of the quarter. The ██████████ reportedly committed to the rehabilitation of the ██████████ Hospital in ██████████ in addition to the rehabilitation of several schools.

3.4.2 South

Access to education in JKW-controlled areas was under renewed threat and subject to further restrictions in January. JKW announced that they would bar women under the age of 40—except for those needing medical treatment—from leaving JKW-occupied areas on the suspicion that women were fleeing to enroll in schools and universities. In late January, the director of Hospital was briefly detained because he had allegedly produced false medical reports for women under the age of 40 so they could exit . He was threatened with further arrest if he continues to produce false medical reports. All schools were under the control of the extremist group in February. Some families reportedly home-school their children in secret so that they are not taught the JKW curriculum.

Electricity coverage remained consistent across most areas of in January. In eastern an SES II researcher reported that the only difference was the time at which they received electricity, but the total number of hours remained consistent. However, in areas around in western there was no electricity available from the grid as has been the case for the past several months. Local councils were actively maintaining and repairing damages to electricity networks as a result of a massive storm in mid-January. The storm also further damaged roads, already in poor condition due to the lack of maintenance in recent years.

Six villages located in suffered from a very severe water shortage in February. According to , inhabitants of , , , , , and may be forced to leave the area due to a lack of access to water. The shortage was linked to the fact that the ten water wells for the area were out of service and needed to be rehabilitated. While provided water for the villages for four months, its ceased activities in January. Inhabitants reported that the only source of water for the villages was a single private well. The water extracted from this well is sold for an unaffordable price.

According to SES II sources, , an AOG, increased its support for medical services in areas of eastern where they are present. In February, the group was reported to have provided an ambulance to the brigade. They also provided an emergency vehicle to the Family Medical Center located in .

The -funded water project to supply City from in GoS-held areas was completed by March 7. The project has not yet affected electricity or water supply in opposition areas of southwestern but will end the Government's reliance on opposition areas for water. The Government's ability to cut off electricity to opposition areas in southwestern without significant repercussions on its own service delivery is a cause for concern. It is expected that the GoS will use leverage this to pressure opposition areas into reconciliation deals.

The use of solar energy continued to expand in . is supporting wells to irrigate small farms by installing solar powered pumps. According to an SES II researcher, most of the villages in southern had been linked to the network of water pumps, for drinking water, through solar energy toward the end of January as a result of , SES II, and other international NGOs' programming.

Access to informal education programs seems to be worsening. Early in January, ██████' self-learning sessions stopped with the organization not providing reasons for discontinuing the support to these centers.

In February, SES II received multiple reports highlighting the critical state of schools of ██████, including in ██████ and ██████. These schools, which are said to require urgent rehabilitation after being shelled, have not received any support from organizations or local governance bodies. The local councils do not have the financial means to support the schools and teachers work without salaries. There was also no drinking water available at the schools or diesel to heat classrooms in winter.

██████ experienced a strain on its services as IDPs from eastern ██████ relocated as far west as camps in ██████ due to their lack of resources to rent houses. SES II field sources noted examples of IDPs who first resettled in ██████ before moving to camps in ██████ because they could not afford rent.

████████████████████

The state of medical services remains dire. On January 17, the ██████ returned five of the 29 of patients it had evacuated from ██████ in a deal between Government forces and ██████ in late December. According to an opposition-affiliated news outlet, the treatment for these patients has not finished. Reportedly, there is no information about future plans for treatment.

The state of education has continued to suffer in the besieged pocket as a result of the increased shelling. The Education Directorate announced that it has suspended first term examinations for the 2017-2018 school year in ██████'s schools. This decision comes as the result of Government forces' increased shelling in the area. According to an opposition-affiliated news outlet, they will reschedule the exams in cooperation with relevant administration bodies.

Health services in ██████ continued to be severely affected In February. ██████ declared that six of the field hospitals it supported went out of service and 13 were targeted by airstrikes and shelling. A source in the ██████ told SES II that most of those injured cannot access suitable treatment in ██████. Rubble and constant airstrikes also made transporting the injured to medical points and field hospitals very difficult. Even prior to the February 19 offensive, the state of health facilities and services in the area was critical. In shelters where civilians were hiding, there was no access to services such as electricity and water. All education services were suspended because of the intensity of the bombardment.

Several medical evacuations took place in March amid the intensifying GoS assault on ██████. The ██████ evacuated three groups totaling 80 patients in mid-March. The evacuations took place after a deal was reached between ██████ and the ██████. Additionally, ██████ reached a deal with Russia to evacuate medical patients on March 21. According to media outlets, 150 patients were evacuated from ██████

4. APPLICATION OF FINDINGS FROM RESEARCH & ANALYSIS



4.1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & ASSESSMENTS

4.1.1 North

During Y2Q3, SES II did not engage with any communities in northern Syria due to CCAR modifications requested by USAID, including additional information on political and tribal dynamics, as well as political analyses of the target communities. This data request affected submission of CCARs and required SES II to revise and resubmit previously compiled CCARs.

During the quarter, SES II focused on appropriate revisions to community engagement activities and CCAR development processes. The modified community engagement process for northern Syria will emphasize three main components during community engagement activities and preparation of CCARs: 1) political economy and stakeholder analysis; 2) rapid assessments of key essential services; and 3) community participation activities to ensure inclusion and accurate representation.

In order to collect applicable data and include additional political analyses in CCARs, SES II developed a Preliminary Community Assessment tool. This tool will facilitate the collection of initial information about security conditions, community social context, local authority structure, and key community stakeholders prior to official SES II engagement with a community. SES II acknowledges the importance of having a Stakeholder Analysis that will identify key individuals in a community, along with their level of influence and participation in community dynamics and decision-making processes. However, this activity is resource-intensive in relation to field data collection. Furthermore, there are inherent risks associated with field data collection when asking specific questions about individuals, political and tribal dynamics, and security. During the quarter, SES II began evaluating options to properly manage and resource this task and may consider additional SES II partners for support. This will reduce risks associated with known SES II coordinators asking sensitive political questions and will allow SES II coordinators to focus on project development and implementation support activities.

SES II also formalized the process in which the Jordan-based staff review pre-identified projects from the [REDACTED], USAID, and the [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]). SES II can then use these pre-identified projects or sectors to focus the community engagement activities and gather feedback on a specific essential services activity from a wider, representative population sample. Subsequently, SES II adjusted the CA tool to include FGDs and KIIs that will focus primarily on garnering more participation from representative and vulnerable populations on topics related to essential services provision.

During Y2Q3, SES II resubmitted a CCAR for [REDACTED] on February 8, 2018—the original submission date was December 31, 2017.

4.1.2 South

During Y2Q3, SES II engaged with and assessed three communities—[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), and [REDACTED] ([REDACTED])—all located in eastern [REDACTED]. Engagement included the surrounding villages of [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), and [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]). SES II did not engage with any communities located in western [REDACTED] due to security and accessibility concerns in northwestern [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as well as lack of local concurrence approvals for accessible communities in southwestern [REDACTED].

During Y2Q3, SES II submitted CCARs for two communities and resubmitted CCARs for four communities in southern Syria (see Table 3). SES II also worked on revisions for other CCARs, but the documents are pending resubmission to USAID.

TABLE 3 – Southern Syria Community Assessments

#	Community	Original Submission Date	Resubmission Date
1	[REDACTED]	November 11, 2017	January 2, 2018
2	[REDACTED]	November 11, 2017	January 3, 2018
3	[REDACTED]	December 5, 2017	January 2, 2018
4	[REDACTED]	December 21, 2017	February 27, 2018
5	[REDACTED]	February 26, 2018	N/A
6	[REDACTED]	February 27, 2018	N/A

As part of SES II’s Women’s Empowerment Working Group (WEWG) initiative and to increase the level of women participation in community engagement activities, SES II modified the CEP, THM, FGD, and KII templates. The modifications provided additional opportunities for women to participate in CA data collection for essential services assessments and required a minimum of three women for KIIs. SES II allows the women to focus on a sector, but based on previous experience, anticipates increased women participation related specifically to Education, Health, and Business & Labor sectors. Modifications for the THMs included the following:

- A separate women’s project list for women to vote on essential services priorities.
- Women participants’ signatures on THM documents with the local council members’ signatures; the number of signatures are three to five women attending from the [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) and five to eight for women attending from the community, if the community does not have [REDACTED] under the local council.
- A separate attendance sheet for women invited to any community meetings.

SES II piloted the modified tools in [REDACTED] with drastically increased numbers. Throughout all community engagement events, 38 unique women and 42 unique men participated, i.e. 47.5% of participants were women. This is considerable compared to women’s participation in [REDACTED], for

example, which totaled 12%. To scale these gains, SES II will replicate these formats in future community engagement.

4.2 AD HOC REPORTS

At the request of USAID, SES II produces Ad Hoc Reports related to the program or the environment within Syria where activities are implemented. Ad Hoc Reports may also advise on technical issues surrounding other US Government assistance or policy that overlaps with SES II's scope and expertise. During Y2Q3, SES II produced seven Ad Hoc Reports, summaries of which can be found below.

█ Governance Reorganization

As part of the second Legislative Conference of the █, which took place on January 10, 2018 in █ City, the Council initiated a restructuring process with the aim of establishing Executive and Legislative Councils for █. This follows a process similar to that of █ where, since November 2017, the █ Civil Council was gradually replaced by Executive and Legislative Councils operating under the new structure of the █. The purpose of the restructuring was to provide an opportunity for greater representation, including enhancing Arab and tribal representation, to adjust to the evolving needs of the people in █'s post-liberation context. Key elected officials are identified in the report.

█ Provincial Council Elections

The electoral process described in the report is consistent with that of the last elections in 2017. Election announcements were made through the Ministry of Local Administration and local councils. The first step in the process is to elect a General Assembly made up of approximately 120 members who, upon confirmation by the Ministry of Local Administration, would elect an Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission, made up of members of the General Assembly and candidates from registered unions, is then responsible for nominating and electing members of the provincial council, including the Head and Deputy-Head. Interviewees reported that some candidates for the Head of the █ had been named at the time of writing, while others indicated that campaigning had not yet begun. The SIG plays an oversight role, primarily acting through the Ministry of Local Administration.

Cost Recovery Mechanisms in █

As essential services continue to be rehabilitated across █, local authorities are gradually developing cost recovery policies and structures for services. To expand SES II's understanding of these dynamics, the research team examined fee policies and their implementation in water, electricity, and solid waste collection services in selected areas of █ and █. Findings in this report draw on past SES II research as well interviews with 24 community members and key informants, including local authorities in relevant areas.

In █, where public water, electricity, and waste collection services are functioning to some degree, authorities have recently introduced cost recovery systems. On paper, all residents benefiting from services are charged fixed rates that are consistent across districts. Although

respondents noted fees for services were reasonable, many reported not paying them. As authorities continue to standardize policy implementation, penalties have not yet been enforced to compel households to pay.

Similar cost recovery systems for ██████ City and countryside have not been developed. Such systems are likely to be introduced in ██████ City as institutions return and a greater number of services begin to function again. The authorities for ██████, including the Services Committee, appear to consider that the further rehabilitation of essential services networks is a prerequisite for developing cost recovery policies for the city. For the time being, public water and electricity services are provided free of charge where they are available. There are no waste collection services in either the city or countryside. In many locations, citizens are forced to pay for services provided by private suppliers since publicly provided services are either insufficient or unavailable. Authorities for ██████ appear to play a minimal role in regulating privately provided services.

██████ Vegetable Trade

Local wholesale and retail vegetable markets are located in ██████ and ██████ City, respectively. Wholesalers and retailers are responsible for the management of their own shops and determine the prices of their goods. Wholesalers buy vegetables directly from farmers and sell to retailers, who then sell to local consumers. Farmers purchase inputs at their own expense with either cash or credit, depending on personal finances and their relationship with shop owners. Vegetable traders are typically centralized in one location in each community. Local authorities do not have control over markets because they are made up of private businesses and vegetable production is not subsidized. There are three possibilities in terms of land ownership: 1) farmers own land and work it with their family; 2) farmers rent land and work it for a specified period; or 3) farmers work in a crop sharing system and receive a percentage of revenue.

██████ Absentee Law

To manage housing, land, and property issues stemming from years of conflict, the ██████'s Executive Council has recently drafted a law entitled the "Protection of Absentee's Property Law." The draft law, which is currently under review by the Legislative Council, intends to create legal provisions for authorities to manage vacant property identified by the Absentee's Properties Protection Committee, which has been active in ██████ since November 2017. The draft law, which does not contain language to suggest that certain groups will be exempt from its provisions, has legal precedents in other Self-Administration areas, including the ██████ Region. SES II did not find evidence to substantiate allegations that property issues were being handled differently depending on religious or ethnic affiliation.

██████ Dam Eighth Turbine Cable Maintenance

During the Syrian conflict, ██████ Dam sustained damage while under ISIS control for a long period of time. After ISIS forces had been cleared from ██████ Governorate, maintenance crews started working on the restoration of the dam's facilities to enable the generation of power that would supply several areas with electricity. Out of the eight turbines in ██████ Dam, four underwent maintenance and were partially operational, supplying power to the transformer station in ██████. The other four had different issues that rendered them inoperable—one of which had

an issue that was easy to fix but did not fall within the scope of the maintenance crews. SES II explored the specifications of the necessary repairs and a potential training course for maintenance staff.

Reorganization

On September 24, 2017, the [REDACTED] was established at a conference in [REDACTED] with the support of the [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] is headquartered in [REDACTED] in northwestern [REDACTED] Governorate. In early February 2018, a second conference was held in [REDACTED] to begin the process of restructuring the [REDACTED], similar to that of the [REDACTED]—formed out of the [REDACTED] Civil Council. At this conference, the co-chairs and deputies of the Legislative Council were elected. The Executive Council was subsequently formed. On March 1, 2018, another conference took place to continue the [REDACTED]'s reorganization with the purpose of making governance more inclusive and allowing representatives from areas recently liberated from the ISIS to join the council. At this conference, the Democratic Civil Administration of [REDACTED] was declared, which contains Executive and Legislative Councils, as well as 12 committees.

4.3 ATMOSPHERIC REPORTS

SES II developed monthly Atmospheric Reports for January, February, and March 2018. Broken down into Security, Political Context, Livelihoods and Markets, and State of Essential Services, a summary of trends and incidents throughout the quarter is provided in section 3, 'Context on the Ground'. The reports, compiled by SES II partner, [REDACTED] inform programmatic approach and implementation strategy by detailing key developments on the ground that affect implementation. For example, Atmospheric Reports capture notable security incidents and inform SES II of areas to avoid or new communities with which to engage; anticipate and later summarize results from local council elections; are used to explore prices of commodities utilized in SES II programming; and provide additional insight to the most needed essential services. In general, atmospheric reporting has improved programming by providing more in-depth knowledge of the context inside Syria.

4.4 QUARTERLY SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

The Space for Civilian Governance in Southern Syria

As SES II increases its engagement with the [REDACTED], the SES II research team was tasked with examining the way in which armed groups and tribal structures are involved in specific civilian governance processes in southern Syria. To assess this topic and its implications for civilian governance, the study builds on the findings of SES II's 2016 Political Economy Analysis (PEA) and looks at armed group control over the formation of civilian authorities; the influence of non-civilian actors over civilian authorities' decision-making; and changes in civilian authorities' remit in security and justice.

Several key trends and contextual changes have affected the balance of power between southern Syria's main actors and powerbrokers since the 2016 PEA. At the local level, these trends include the decreasing overt role of armed groups in some local affairs, the emergence of new policing

structures, and the continued influence of tribal structures on governance. At the regional level, the influence of [REDACTED], a Muslim Brotherhood-linked group that once financed the South's court network and had strong links to the [REDACTED], has waned. Instead, structures that previously played minor roles, such as the [REDACTED], are now emerging as actors with growing influence as international support to these bodies increases.

Within this context, local councils continue to be the main civilian bodies responsible for service delivery and governance. On the one hand, the De-Escalation Area (DEA) and support for communities from international actors has helped community buy-in for local councils increase. At the same time, the level of influence exerted by non-civilian forces and elites over governance processes remains significant. With respect to the implications this has for civilian governance, this study finds:

- Overt involvement by armed groups on local council formation, and instances of armed group members sitting on local councils has decreased. The [REDACTED] also has an expanding role in local council formation.
- Armed group influence over civilian authorities' decision-making and capacity for implementation remains significant.
- Findings show that local and provincial councils have not expanded their remit in security and justice and play no effective role in the sector.

The findings of this PEA should be understood as a snapshot in time. As such, external factors will continue to shift and subsequently shape the prospects for civilian governance. In particular, the looming possibility of a GoS offensive threatens to drastically change the landscape and balance of power in the South. If the DEA holds, three other factors will also affect prospects for civilian governance: 1) a reduction of funding to moderate AOGs; 2) the level of international aid reaching communities; and 3) negotiation and reconciliation with the GoS.

In light of this report's findings, the SES II research team proposed the following recommendations to continue to support and strengthen civilian governance:

- Continue to use incentives created by stabilization programming to build the legitimacy and remit of civilian actors;
- Continue to engage and support the capacity development of the [REDACTED] and technical directorates; and
- Direct police programming toward transparency and efficiency rather than supporting civilian governance.

5. RESTORING ESSENTIAL SERVICES



5.1 QUARTERLY TRENDS

SES II implemented essential services activities smoothly in Y2Q3, in both northeastern and southern Syria. After six months of operating in ██████████ by the beginning of the quarter, SES II had a better understanding of contextual dynamics that affected implementation, as well as a reputation for implementing high-quality work. Throughout the quarter, SES II received positive feedback from authorities in ██████████ on the speed and quality of implementation. This is a testament to the competence and ability to learn quickly on the part of SES II employees, coordinators, and implementing partners. In southern Syria, work continued as normal for the most part, with the exception of programming in ██████████, where a tightening GoS siege and eventual offensive forced SES II to suspend—and later terminate—several activities. Despite this, the minimal number of terminated activities is illustrative of SES II’s foresight in selecting communities and identifying projects as part of the community engagement process.

Across ██████████, ██████████ and ██████████ SES II completed 19 essential services activities, nearly half of which fell under the WASH sector, which reflects the fact that water has been an increasing need in southern Syria since the July 2017 ceasefire agreement and subsequent influx of IDP returnees. Northeastern Syria also saw increasing numbers of IDPs returning to their communities as ISIS was cleared out and local authorities began clearing debris and restoring essential services. In addition to the program’s WASH activities in ██████████, SES II focused on enhancing the provision of electricity to major pumping stations.

Notable Ongoing Activities in Northeastern Syria

Notable ongoing activities in northeastern Syria fall under the health, electrical, and education sectors. Throughout the quarter, SES II implemented the rehabilitation of ██████████ Hospital—the primary health facility in ██████████, worth over \$█████████. Toward the end of the quarter, much of the interior work had been completed, and the activity was approximately 82% complete. The activity will improve health services for an estimated 500,000 direct and 150,000 indirect beneficiaries. Toward the end of Y2Q3, SES II awarded a grant to the ██████████ to rehabilitate power transmission lines connecting the ██████████ Dam to the ██████████ Irrigation Project. The ██████████ connected the power line to ██████████ Irrigation Station late in the quarter and proposed additional work outside the scope of the grant as they will complete the work under budget and would like to invest the extra money in the irrigation station. Once complete, the activity is expected to have a significant impact, with approximately 300,000 direct beneficiaries, including residents and IDPs in northwestern ██████████ Governorate. SES II’s first education activity in ██████████ is the rehabilitation of two schools in which 342 students are enrolled. Work was completed but the activity has not been closed out as final payments have not been issued. At ██████████ School, Director ██████████ praised the work, which was completed about two weeks ahead of schedule. At ██████████ School, Director ██████████ was effusive in his

praise for the recently completed rehabilitation work. These activities will be reported on in more detail upon completion.

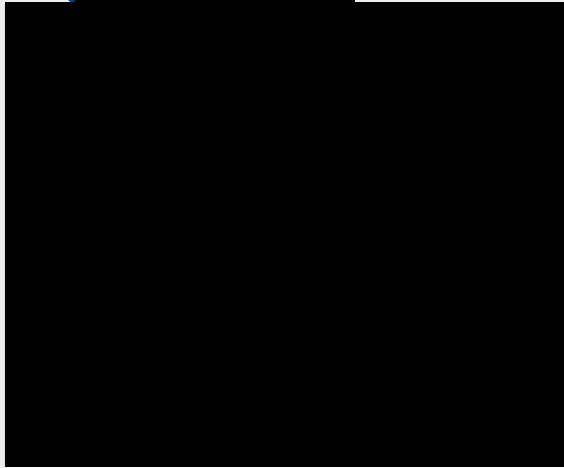
5.2 ESSENTIAL SERVICES PROGRESS

SES II completed 19 essential service activities in Y2Q3 and had 60 ongoing essential service activities continue into the next quarter (see Annex I for a list of ongoing activities). Y2Q3 accomplishments are summarized in Figure 3 on the next page and in more detail by sector below. It must be noted that SES II adjusts beneficiary totals based on its geographic double counting elimination method. This is necessary as the large scale of SES II activities and geographic overlap resulted in inflated beneficiary figures. Figures aggregated at the sectoral, quarterly, and life of program level do not necessarily add up. At each level of aggregation, more double counting is introduced as activities overlap within communities, increasing the amount by which the total must be adjusted. Therefore, the beneficiary numbers in the table overviews for each sector below do not add up to the adjusted total in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3 – Y2Q3 Essential Services Progress

Y2Q3 ESSENTIAL SERVICES PROGRESS

19 activities completed in
17 communities across
3 governorates



131,901 direct beneficiaries
67,257 indirect beneficiaries

ELECTRICITY – 3 activities

19 transformers rehabilitated or replaced entirely
 with a combined capacity of **6,430** kVA

EDUCATION – 3 activities

7 rehabilitated schools in [redacted] and [redacted] with

76 classrooms

Teachers & Staff		Students	
38 male	95 female	1,009 male	1,248 female

WASH – 9 activities

4 rehabilitated wells supply communities in southern Syria with

93,840 m³ of water per month

Reduced water loss by **3,822** m³ per month

Solar energy systems provide **423** kW of energy per day

Saving local councils **\$26,203** per month

Which means it would take only **13.5** months to recover the cost of the activities

4 rehabilitated pump stations in [redacted] supply communities with

302,400 m³ of water per month

SOLAR ENERGY – 10 activities

Solar energy systems generating **487** kW of energy per day

HEALTH – 1 activity

58 kW of power provided per day through solar panels

saving the hospital **\$2,106** per month in diesel costs



WASH projects include the rehabilitation of wells, distribution systems, and wastewater management systems based on needs identified by communities. SES II

works with local authorities to address WASH needs in their communities with a focus on increasing efficiency and operational sustainability. The program designs projects that replace or rehabilitate inoperable or outdated pumps and other equipment vital to daily operations while also considering the source of energy to select the proper equipment and optimize efficiency. Whenever feasible, SES II incorporates solar energy solutions to operate water infrastructure, which increases sustainability by ensuring a constant source of energy and decreases financial burdens on facility operators by replacing expensive diesel fuel with free sunlight. As part of its comprehensive approach to enhancing stability in Syrian communities, SES II further supports local authorities by including follow-on cost-recovery and solar energy system operation and maintenance (O&M) trainings for well operators and managers as capacity development activities.

During Y2Q3, SES II completed nine WASH activities—four in [REDACTED], four in [REDACTED] and one in [REDACTED]. Through these activities, SES II helped rehabilitate four wells and provide 130,900 people with access to clean water at a rate of 50 liters/person/day. The total combined amount of water pumped assuming eight hours of operation per day in the four activities in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] equates to 93,840 m³/month—that’s over 37.5 Olympic swimming pools per month. By rehabilitating these water networks, SES II also improved the efficiency of water distribution and helped reduce water loss by about 3,822 m³/month. Installing solar energy systems to operate some of these water networks—providing 423 kW/day—has helped local councils in southern Syria save up to \$26,203 per month in diesel costs (the price of diesel at the time of writing was \$0.90/liter). As a sum of \$ [REDACTED] was spent on the four activities in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], it would only take [REDACTED] months to recover the cost of the grants. These savings are significant given local councils’ limited financial resources, allowing them to invest the money elsewhere to better provide for their communities. Through the four WASH activities in [REDACTED], SES II helped local authorities increase the stations’ pumping capacity to 302,400 m³/month—nearly 121 Olympic swimming pools per month. Additionally, SES II had 21 ongoing WASH activities at the end of the quarter—also spread across [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]—that will improve the provision of water for an estimated 262,330 direct beneficiaries.

WASH Overview	Value
Completed Activities	9
Direct Beneficiaries	130,900
Indirect Beneficiaries	41,000
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]
Ongoing Activities	21
Estimated Direct Beneficiaries	262,330
Estimated Indirect Beneficiaries	35,900
Total Value	\$3 [REDACTED]

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHT

REHABILITATION OF DRINKING WATER PUMPING STATION

Partner		Total Value	\$
Direct Beneficiaries	21,333	Cash Value	\$
Indirect Beneficiaries	N/A	In-Kind Value	N/A
Completion Date	March 18, 2018	Award Date	December 19, 2017

Drinking Water Pumping Station is situated on the main irrigation canal that is fed by and serves , as well as five nearby communities. Before SES II intervention, the station was inoperable due to a lack of grid electricity and no permanent generators located at the facility. SES II provided and installed equipment—including a 400 kVA diesel generator and accessories, a horizontal pump with a flowrate of 80 m³/hour, two liquid chlorine injection devices, and a 2,000 kg capacity chain hoist—to restore the facility to operation. The building itself was in decent condition and required only basic civil rehabilitation. The rehabilitation of Drinking Water Pumping Station has enabled the authorities to pump 38,400 m³ of water per month. As follow-on activities, SES II plans to assess and repair the distribution network and storage tanks to reduce water loss and increase storage and network capacity to match the pump station flowrate.



A canal connected to the station (left), the generator provided by SES II (middle), and testing water quality with the chlorination tank (right).

REHABILITATION OF DRINKING WATER PUMPING STATION

Partner		Total Value	\$
Direct Beneficiaries	53,333	Cash Value	\$
Indirect Beneficiaries	N/A	In-Kind Value	N/A
Completion Date	March 26, 2018	Award Date	December 5, 2017

Drinking Water Pumping Station is located on and feeds the community of , which is approximately 10 km east of City. Before the SES II intervention, the station was out of service due to the lack of grid electricity and no permanent generators located at the facility. The existing pumps were in operational condition and did not require replacement or significant maintenance. To address the electrical issue and rehabilitate the station, SES II awarded the a Fixed Amount Award grant, which is significant as it was the first SES II grant awarded to a local Syrian partner in northeastern Syria. With SES II assistance, the procured and installed a new 250 KVA diesel generator to operate the existing pumps and rehabilitated the electrical network and accessories, including cables, connectors, automatic transfer switch, and electrical panel. The also implemented civil rehabilitation work, including plastering, painting, maintenance of windows, and finishing work to improve the pump station building. The's rehabilitation of Drinking Water Pumping Station restored the authorities' capacity to pump 96,000 m³ of water per month, thereby improving drinking water services in the community.



The generator procured and installed by the (left) and rehabilitated and operational electrical panel (right).



Public Use

projects include rehabilitation of infrastructure critical to providing community services, such as bakeries, roads, civil records departments, and solid waste management. During Y2Q3, SES II completed three public use activities, rehabilitating one bakery, two landfills, and two garbage collection trucks in three different communities in [REDACTED]. SES II's bakery rehabilitations are extremely impactful as bread is a staple food in Syria and the GoS has used 'war of attrition' tactics to target bakeries and limit communities' access to food throughout the conflict. By rehabilitating landfills and garbage collection trucks, SES II helps local authorities provide a cleaner, more sanitary living environment for their community members. These types of interventions help stop the spread of diseases and sicknesses and rid communities of foul odors produced by accumulated waste. At the end of Y2Q3, SES II was also supporting the rehabilitation of another three bakeries, two solar road lighting activities, and providing operational costs to the [REDACTED] Civil Records Department—all in [REDACTED] Governorate. These ongoing activities will, upon completion, positively impact an estimated 222,000 direct and 83,111 indirect beneficiaries.

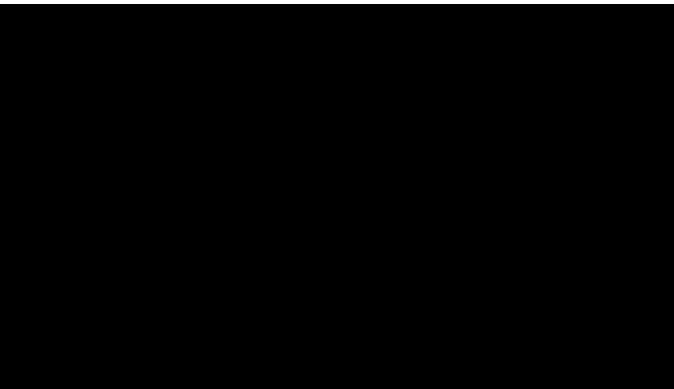
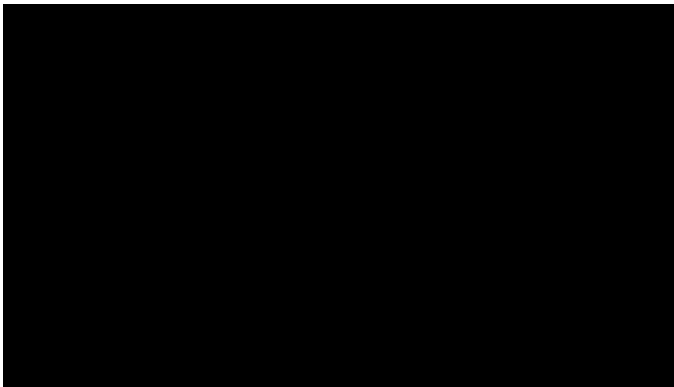
Public Use Overview	Value
Completed Activities	3
Direct Beneficiaries	18,350
Indirect Beneficiaries	300
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]
Ongoing Activities	6
Estimated Direct Beneficiaries	222,000
Estimated Indirect Beneficiaries	83,111
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHT

██████████ – REHABILITATION OF ██████████ BAKERY

Partner	██████████	Total Value	\$ ██████████
Direct Beneficiaries	18,350	Cash Value	\$ ██████████
Indirect Beneficiaries	300	In-Kind Value	\$ ██████████
Completion Date	January 22, 2018	Award Date	August 1, 2017

The bakery in ██████████ is the main source of bread for ██████████'s residents and nearby communities. Since the bakery was damaged by bombing, the ██████████ Local Council rehabilitated the bakery due to the demand for bread, however, they did not maintain it well due to a lack of financial resources. This forced the local council to find alternatives for rehabilitation. For example, the local council installed normal bricks to repair the furnaces instead of thermal bricks, which caused a decrease in efficiency and prolonged operating hours—up to 16 hours per day. The prolonged hours in turn had a significant cost implication, especially with rising fuel prices. The fuel consumption for the bakery generator was 40 liters per hour, which is equivalent to 640 liters per day considering 16 hours of operation. In addition, the burners consumed approximately 90 liters per hour. Moreover, the damaged and low-efficiency equipment leaked fuel and sometimes produced inedible bread. The waste was often due to equipment failures that resulted in burned bread or contaminated dough. Through this activity, SES II supported the local council to install a new production line, rehabilitate two existing production lines, and install two generators. Now that the rehabilitation is complete, the local council has improved the provision of bread for 18,350 residents in ██████████ and improved livelihoods for bakery supervisors, workers, and bread distributors. The local council also uses some of the revenue from selling bread to employ workers in the water and waste collection departments.



Installation of thermal bricks on the furnace.



Education

projects rehabilitate schools and associated facilities through general maintenance of buildings and related furniture. During Y2Q3, SES II completed three education activities in which it supported local councils in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to rehabilitate seven schools in three communities with a total of 76 classrooms—67 in [REDACTED] and nine in [REDACTED]—allowing 2,257 students and 133 teachers and staff to return to their studies and their jobs. These activities also positively affected their families, indirectly benefiting 10,957 community members. Solid educational institutions will be foundational for the long-term reconstruction of Syria that is becoming more and more tangible in the context of the DEA and waning power of the opposition. Syrians will look to younger generations to rebuild their nation.

SES II also had 14 education activities ongoing at the end of the quarter that will, upon completion, have an impact on an estimated 14,955 direct beneficiaries and 89,900 indirect beneficiaries. Through 12 of these 14 ongoing activities SES II is supporting the rehabilitation of 58 schools across [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. The other two activities provide support for local councils to create multi-purpose rooms in four schools rehabilitated by SES II in previous activities. The multi-purpose rooms will complement standard educational activities by providing a space for students to engage in extracurricular activities.

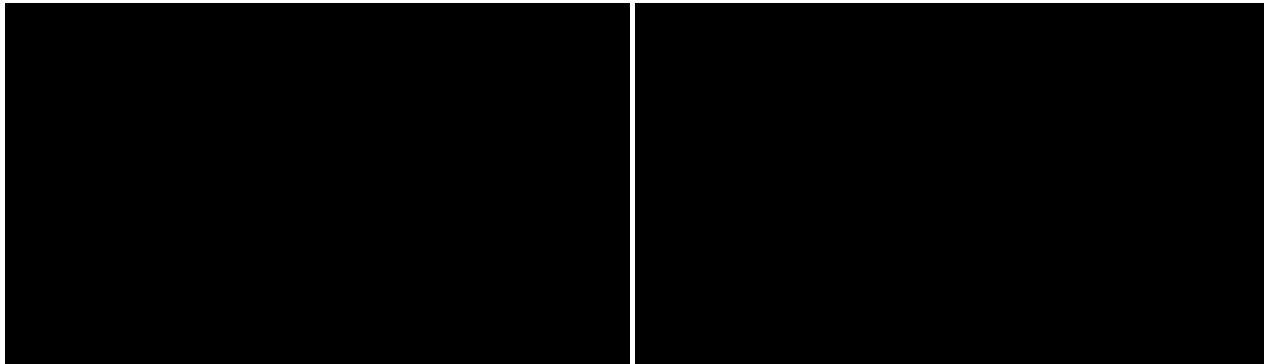
Education Overview	Value
Completed Activities	3
Direct Beneficiaries	2,390
Indirect Beneficiaries	10,957
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]
Ongoing Activities	14
Estimated Direct Beneficiaries	14,955
Estimated Indirect Beneficiaries	89,900
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHT

REHABILITATION OF SCHOOL IN

Partner	Local Council	Total Value	\$
Direct Beneficiaries	390	Cash Value	\$
Indirect Beneficiaries	1,950	In-Kind Value	N/A
Completion Date	February 20, 2018	Award Date	October 15, 2017

The community relied on the only functioning school out of seven in and neighboring villages, School, to provide educational services to all students in grades one through six in the area. Through this activity, SES II supported the Local Council to conduct non-structural rehabilitation work on the school building, including cosmetic, electrical, and sanitation improvements. Additionally, the local council installed a solar energy system to ensure the school receives a constant supply of electricity from a reliable source. Having completed this project, the local council has provided a more suitable learning and working environment for 390 students, teachers and staff.



School hallway after rehabilitation (left) and refurbished desks in a rehabilitated classroom (right).



Health projects rehabilitate hospitals and clinics through general maintenance, provision of materials, and installation of sustainable energy solutions. During Y2Q3, SES II completed one health activity in which it worked with the [REDACTED] Local Council to operate the community’s hospital via solar energy (see the Implementation Highlight below for more details) and provide improved health services for 6,086 direct beneficiaries and 15,000 indirect beneficiaries. In addition to the completion of the [REDACTED] Hospital activity, SES II had 10 ongoing health activities in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at the end of Y2Q3. Notably, all 10 ongoing activities include a solar energy component and combined will improve health services for an estimated 431,360 direct and 551,200 indirect beneficiaries in northeastern and southern Syria.

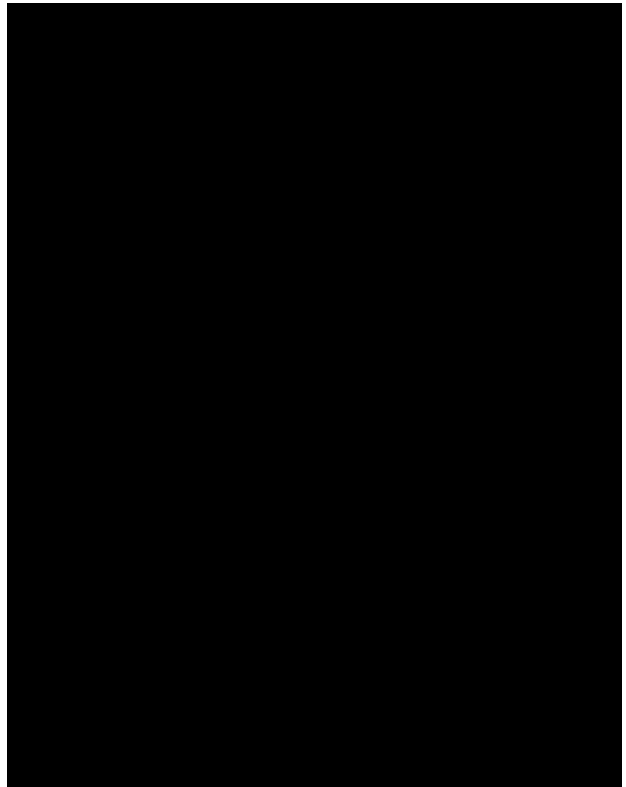
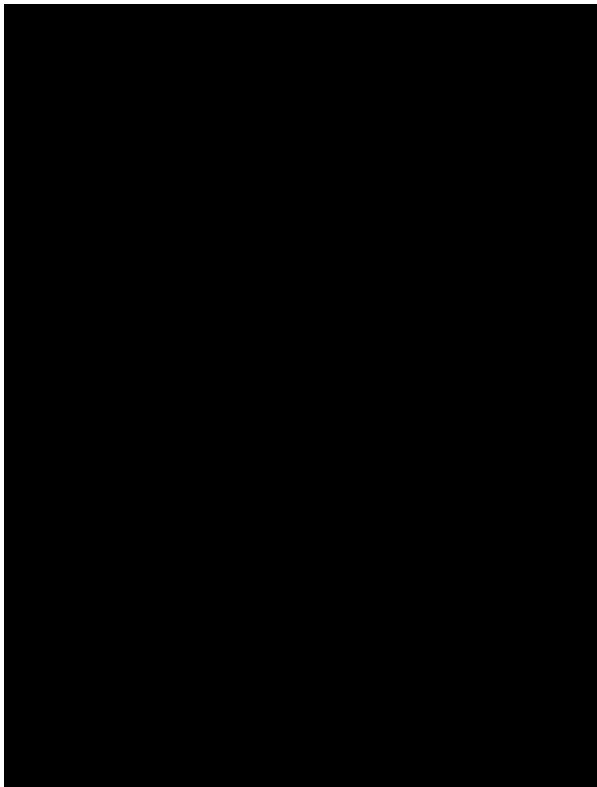
Health Overview	Value
Completed Activities	1
Direct Beneficiaries	6,086
Indirect Beneficiaries	15,000
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]
Ongoing Activities	10
Estimated Direct Beneficiaries	431,360
Estimated Indirect Beneficiaries	551,200
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHT

██████████ – OPERATING ██████████ HOSPITAL VIA SOLAR

Partner	██████████ Local Council	Total Value	\$ ██████████
Direct Beneficiaries	6,086	Cash Value	\$ ██████████
Indirect Beneficiaries	15,000	In-Kind Value	\$ ██████████
Completion Date	February 1, 2018	Award Date	September 1, 2017

██████████ Hospital—the only medical facility in the community—serves residents of ██████████ and the eastern part of the ██████████ region through various specialized departments. SES II supported the local council by providing and installing a hybrid solar energy system to operate the hospital; two solar domestic water heating systems; and by providing administrative equipment (laptops, printers, a projector, and scale) to enhance the capacity of the hospital management. The 58 staff members are now better equipped to provide patients with improved medical services. The installation of the solar energy system—which provides 58 kW/day—has enabled the hospital’s management to operate the facility for 24 hours per day and save up to \$2,106 per month in diesel costs. Hospital management can now invest this money as they see fit to continue improving medical services for the community.



Installation of solar panels (left) and connection of cables to solar panels (right).



Electrical

projects enhance the provision of electricity in Syrian communities by rehabilitating electrical supply and distribution network infrastructure. Electrical projects also have implications for other SES II interventions, as they enhance the provision of electricity for schools, hospitals, bakeries, wells, and other facilities. During Y2Q3, SES II completed three activities that rehabilitated electrical networks and enhanced the provision of electricity in the communities of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. Through these activities, SES II replaced or rehabilitated 19 transformers with a combined capacity of 6,430 kVA. The program also worked with local authorities to implement another nine ongoing activities that will, upon completion, improve the provision of electricity for an estimated 431,230 direct beneficiaries across nine communities in [REDACTED] as well as provide power to the [REDACTED] Irrigation Station in [REDACTED], which will have positive downstream effects for the agriculture sector—including the vegetable value chain in [REDACTED].

Electrical Overview	Value
Completed Activities	3
Direct Beneficiaries	14,975
Indirect Beneficiaries	N/A
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]
Ongoing Activities	9
Estimated Direct Beneficiaries	431,230
Estimated Indirect Beneficiaries	N/A
Total Value	\$ [REDACTED]

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHT

██████████ – ENHANCING PROVISION OF ELECTRICITY IN ██████████

Partner	██████████ Local Council	Total Value	██████████
Direct Beneficiaries	3,600	Cash Value	██████████
Indirect Beneficiaries	N/A	In-Kind Value	\$ ██████████
Completion Date	February 19, 2018	Award Date	August 25, 2017

Shelling by the GoS rendered transformers and the power grid in ██████████ only partially functional, so electricity was distributed irregularly and unreliably. Before SES II intervention, the ██████████ Local Council attempted to rehabilitate the network but was limited by a lack of financial resources. As a result, the community only received electricity for three to four hours a day. Through this activity, SES II and the local council rehabilitated and enhanced electrical services in ██████████ by installing two new 400 kVA electrical transformers, rehabilitating and relocating existing functional transformers, and conducting general maintenance on the electrical network. Additionally, SES II provided administrative materials for the local council's Electrical Office, including a laptop and printer. Now that the network is rehabilitated, 3,600 people—including residents and IDPs—receive electricity regularly and reliably.



Recently installed transformer tower (left) and electrical panel (right).

6. INCREASE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY & LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES



One of SES II's objectives is to increase economic activity and livelihood opportunities through a comprehensive value chain rehabilitation approach that engages actors and empowers them to oversee and facilitate the rehabilitation process. During Y2Q3, SES II focused on developing projects and implementing programming to increase economic activity and livelihood opportunities in various value chains throughout southern and northeastern Syria. With varying geographies, these value chains include dairy, animal feed, olive oil, wheat, vegetables, and building blocks. These value chains are integral parts of the economies in their respective areas, and rehabilitating them will have a significant impact on markets and beneficiaries. Additionally, SES II is supporting the rehabilitation of irrigation canals in ██████, which will have positive downstream effects for agricultural value chains in the area—including the wheat and vegetable value chains that the program is also supporting. A major focus of the Livelihoods team this quarter was the development of new projects, which will position SES II to initiate implementation for the value chains mentioned above in the coming quarters. SES II's initial efforts to support women's economic empowerment will come in the form of a women-owned dairy factory in ██████, which can be replicated in other communities.

6.1 PROGRESS THIS QUARTER

6.1.1 Northwest ██████ & ██████ Dairy Value Chain ██████

Common problems in the dairy value chain in northwestern ██████ and ██████ include limited access to animal feed and veterinary services and supplies, as well as unavailable or scarce pasture for grazing and water for livestock. Downstream, dairy factories face challenges due to damaged equipment and lack of power, although a number of factories continue to operate at greatly reduced output. Market access is also reduced—prior to the war, traders purchased milk from farmers, often under contract with some portion of payment in advance. Some traders still work, but none offer contracts and advance payment, and in most cases, farmers are responsible for arranging transportation themselves. As a result of these challenges, the majority of dairy factories have closed down, and a number of large commercial livestock and large state-owned farms have entirely closed down since the beginning of the war. There are still many small dairy farmers in ██████, but herd sizes are believed to have reduced by around one-third. The approximate damage to dairy farming in ██████ and ██████ is shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4 – Impact of the War on the NW [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Dairy Value Chain

Community	Herd Size (heads)			Annual Milk Output (kg)		
	Pre-war	Current	Change	Pre-war	Current	Change
[REDACTED]	7,000	5,700	-19%	400,000	200,000	-50%
[REDACTED]	5,630	4,800	-15%	10,000,000	1,500,000	-85%
[REDACTED]	11,000	7,200	-35%	2,520,000	1,800,000	-29%
[REDACTED]	1,300	900	-31%	5,100,000	3,400,000	-33%
[REDACTED]	10,850	4,700	-57%	2,600,000	1,050,000	-60%
[REDACTED]	70,000	8,000	-89%	8,000,000	4,500,000	-44%
TOTAL	105,780	31,300	-70%	28,620,000	12,450,000	-56%

To address the problems mentioned above, SES II has supported the establishment of a Livelihoods Coordination Committee (LCC) and designed activities to rehabilitate infrastructure essential to the value chain. The Northwest [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Dairy Value Chain is one of the more mature value chains—in terms of the project cycle—supported by SES II. The value chain workshop was held on June 14, 2017, and in Y2Q3 the LCC held three meetings and conducted two site visits per its agreed upon responsibilities with SES II.

Much of the work for livelihoods activities takes place before grant implementation. Throughout Y2Q3, SES II worked on four activities—conducting Detailed Technical Assessments (DTAs) and preparing documents for submission to USAID—that are at various stages of development. These activities are summarized in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5 – NW [REDACTED] & [REDACTED] Dairy Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
[REDACTED] Dairy Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Market	[REDACTED]	Consumer-facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
NW [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Dairy LCC Phase 2	[REDACTED]	LCC Grant	Pending Approval	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL				\$ [REDACTED]

Ongoing Activities

As of the end of Y2Q3, SES II had seven ongoing activities in the Northwest [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Dairy Value Chain, summarized in Table 6. Through these activities, SES II supports the rehabilitation of six dairy factories and one market, as well as the LCC’s travel, communication, and stationary costs. The LCC is responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of SES II activities in the field, as well as advocacy for livelihoods and economic reconstruction in the target area. The LCC is also one of SES II’s primary methods of increasing coordination and building relationships between multiple communities and local councils as it brings together stakeholders from multiple communities to discuss and implement programming together.

TABLE 6 – NW [REDACTED] & [REDACTED] Dairy Ongoing Activities

Activity Number	Activity Name	Project Type	Value
[REDACTED]	NW [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Dairy LCC	LCC Grant	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Market	Consumer-Facing Infrastructure	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL			\$ [REDACTED]

SES II's six dairy factory rehabilitation activities are all implemented through local councils and, upon completion, will increase the production capacity and revenue of each factory. Work includes physical rehabilitation of factory buildings, as well as the provision and installation of solar energy systems, domestic water heating systems, and other equipment key to dairy processing, such as refrigerators, sorting machines, mixers, steam generators, and more. The rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory ([REDACTED] for example, is projected to increase revenue from dairy products by a factor of 10 (see Table 7). Combined, the six factory rehabilitations will impact an estimated 335 direct beneficiaries and 16,350 indirect beneficiaries in addition to creating nine full-time jobs. Some factories will start producing dairy products they had not produced before, thereby broadening their customer base and increasing their marketability. By supporting the rehabilitation of the [REDACTED] Market, SES II is helping to provide a designated area for dairy vendors to sell their products, limiting contamination and spoiling. The rehabilitated market will also be more accessible and sanitary, incentivizing more people to buy and sell goods there. Along with the 100,000 direct beneficiaries (the population of [REDACTED]), SES II expects this activity to create two new jobs.

At different points along the value chain, these two types of livelihoods interventions—factory and consumer-facing infrastructure rehabilitations—are complementary and mutually reinforcing. With a more suitable place in which to sell their goods, dairy producers will be more inclined to bring goods to market and trade with consumers, which in turn will help bring about the return of pre-war market conditions. This will also have effects up and down the value chain. As dairy producers trade more and different types of products, they will rely on cattle and livestock farmers to produce more raw dairy material.

TABLE 7 – SES II Impact on [REDACTED] Dairy Factory

[REDACTED] Dairy Factory	Before SES II Intervention	After SES II Intervention
Raw Milk Product Processing Capacity	500 kg/day	5,000 kg/day
Monetary Value of Raw Milk (Cost for Factory / Profit for Dairy Farmers)	\$ [REDACTED] /day	\$ [REDACTED] /day
Dairy Product Production Capacity	30 kg/day	2,793 kg/day
Monetary Value of Dairy Products (Revenue for Dairy Factory)	\$ [REDACTED] /day	\$ [REDACTED] /day

6.1.2 East [REDACTED] Dairy Value Chain [REDACTED]

The LCC for the East [REDACTED] Dairy Value Chain was formed subsequent to the value chain workshop that was held on October 2, 2017. During the workshop, participants identified challenges in the value chain, including increasing fodder prices; lack of electricity; and damaged processing facilities, among others. Currently, livestock farms are located in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Small traders are in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], while dairy product traders are in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] City. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have an average of 12 small workshops each with a capacity of 50 kg of dairy products per day; larger factories with a capacity of 500 kg per day can be found in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] City. There are six big markets in the target area, located in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. As expected, women participate mainly in small household workshops (70%), farms (40%), and in small factories. To a lesser degree, they also participate in markets and factories (20%).

To address some of the issues identified by the value chain actors, SES II developed the activities listed in Table 8 during Y2Q3.

TABLE 8 – East [REDACTED] Dairy Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
LCC Dairy - SE [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	LCC Grant	Pending Approval	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Dairy Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pending Approval	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Watering Wells	[REDACTED]	Farmer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Dairy Factory - [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Dairy Factories	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pending Approval	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL				\$ [REDACTED]

6.1.3 East [REDACTED] Animal Feed Value Chain [REDACTED]

Actors in the East [REDACTED] Animal Feed Value Chain have faced many challenges since the onset of the war. The amount of land available for fodder crop farming has significantly decreased; artesian wells are inoperable, forcing farmers to rely on rainfall to water crops; and high fuel prices increased the operation costs of plowing and harvesting, as well as for fodder factories, which in turn increased the prices of final products—in addition to others.

During Y2Q3, SES II mapped and facilitated a workshop for the East [REDACTED] Animal Feed Value Chain. Work in the field was implemented by SES II partner, [REDACTED] who brought together value chain actors for the workshop on January 7, 2018. Eighty-eight participants attended, including two women, and later formed an LCC made up of 16 members, including farmers, traders, factory owners, and local council representatives.

[REDACTED] also conducted five DTAs in this value chain during the quarter (see Table 9 below). Two of the DTAs were for Direct Assistance to Farmers—one for fodder made from corn and beans and one for wheat and barley. SES II is looking into providing corn and bean farmers with plastic bags and agricultural spraying equipments. For wheat and barley farmers, SES II will most likely provide polypropylene bags—which can be reused—for packaging harvest crop. [REDACTED]'s work as an SES II partner is part of a capacity building project (SES II-AM-003.1) for the implementation of livelihoods and economic recovery programming.

TABLE 9 – East [REDACTED] Animal Feed Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
LCC Fodder - East [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	LCC grant	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
On Farm Assistance - Fodder (Wheat + Barley)	[REDACTED]	Direct Assistance to Farmers	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
On Farm Assistance - Fodder (Corn + Beans)	[REDACTED]	Direct Assistance to Farmers	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Wells	[REDACTED]	Farmer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL				\$ [REDACTED]

6.1.4 West [REDACTED] Animal Feed Value Chain [REDACTED]

State-owned Fodder Institutions, also known as Fodder Distribution Centers, previously distributed fodder to farmers at subsidized prices. However, poultry farms were not part of the government support plan. Since the onset of war, these fodder distribution centers are no longer available. The current situation is much different. Looking at the different elements of the value chain, producers and suppliers of fodder raw materials are now located primarily in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and villages of [REDACTED]. Meanwhile, the percentage of fodder raw material for livestock is 60% imported and 40% locally sourced. By contrast, for poultry, 95% is imported while only five percent is bought from the local market. Women's participation across the value chain is about 10%.

As for fodder wholesalers, these are located in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There are currently over 60 traders for local fodder while around 10 traders import fodder. Prior to the conflict, there were approximately 50-60 traders importing fodder raw materials. There is no noticeable participation of women.

Approximately 50 small fodder factories—*jawareesh*—are located in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and there is no reported women's participation. This is a decrease from approximately 165 *jawareesh* and 30 small bulgur factories before the war. As for large fodder factories, there are 13 facilities located in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Prior to the conflict, there were 26 large factories. Again, there is no reported participation from women in these facilities.

Livestock and poultry farms, as well as household livestock breeders, are scattered across all areas in the value chain. There are around 650,000 sheep, 8,500 cows, and 1,000 poultry farms. Prior to the war, the numbers were approximately 175,000 sheep, 26,000 cows, and 3,000 poultry farms for meat, along with 1,100 egg production farms. Although the number of sheep has increased, the number of cows and poultry farms has significantly decreased since the start of the war. By contrast to other elements in the value chain, women's participation in this component ranges between 40% and 50%.

In Y2Q2, SES II facilitated a value chain workshop—attended by 24 participants—and the formation of an LCC for the West [REDACTED] Animal Feed Value Chain. The LCC's activities are supported by a cash grant [REDACTED]. To date, the LCC has held three meetings supported by SES II, two of which took place during Y2Q3.

Throughout the quarter, SES II worked on developing 11 activities that fall under the West [REDACTED] Animal Feed Value Chain (see Table 10 below). As part of project development efforts, SES II conducted four DTAs in this value chain during the quarter.

TABLE 10 – West [REDACTED] Animal Feed Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fodder Factory	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Trader Facility	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL				\$ [REDACTED]

6.1.5 Southeast [REDACTED] Olive Oil [REDACTED]

The war has had a heavy impact on the olive oil value chain in southeastern [REDACTED]. At the level of production, the high cost of diesel makes it expensive for farmers to travel to their orchards to maintain their trees. The reduction of electricity supplies by the GoS causes farmers to rely on rain-fed irrigation or expensive diesel-powered pumps, causing many trees to become dehydrated and non-productive and thus decreasing product quality. In addition, agricultural chemicals are expensive and in limited supply and olive saplings are difficult to acquire. Downstream, market access is limited due to poor road conditions and the elimination of marketing opportunities outside of [REDACTED] Governorate. Factories, including olive presses and bottling facilities, have been damaged and lack a reliable electricity supply. As a result, only seven of around 55 olive presses are still functioning. Table 11 provides pre-war and current statistics for communities located within this value chain.

TABLE 11 – Impact of the War on the SE [REDACTED] Olive Oil Value Chain

Community	Area Cultivated (Donum)			Production (MT)		
	Pre-war	Current	Change	Pre-war	Current	Change
[REDACTED]	1,800	800	-56%	800	240	-70%
[REDACTED]	2,300	1,500	-35%	359	60	-83%
[REDACTED]	8,000	4,000	-50%	12,000	6,000	-50%
[REDACTED]	20,000	16,000	-20%	6,000	2,240	-63%

To help re-establish the olive oil value chain in southeastern [REDACTED] SES II facilitated a value chain workshop on June 15, 2017 and the formation of an LCC thereafter. Since its formation, the LCC has held five meetings—three of which were in Y2Q3—and conducted two site visits. In coordination with the LCC and other value chain actors, SES II conducted seven DTAs throughout Y2Q3 and worked on developing grant documents for the activities listed in the Table 12 below.

TABLE 12 – SE [REDACTED] Olive Oil Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
[REDACTED] Olive Press	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Olive Oil Press	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Irrigation Wells	[REDACTED]	Farmer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
On Farm Assistance - Olives	[REDACTED]	Direct Assistance to Farmers	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
2nd Grant SE [REDACTED] Olive Oil Livelihood Coordination Committee	[REDACTED]	LCC Grant	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
Four Olive Nurseries	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Market	[REDACTED]	Consumer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	Budget not finalized
TOTAL				\$ [REDACTED]

Ongoing Activities

As of the end of Y2Q3, SES II was implementing five ongoing activities in the Southeast [REDACTED] Olive Oil Value Chain, summarized in Table 13. Through the LCC, which is supported by funding from the first grant in this value chain, SES II has begun the implementation of four factory rehabilitations. To note, the work on activity [REDACTED] – Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Facility is complete, but the closeout of the grant is pending a certificate of completion.

TABLE 13 – SE [REDACTED] Olive Oil Ongoing Activities

Activity Number	Activity Name	Project Type	Value
[REDACTED]	Southeast [REDACTED] Olive Oil Value Chain	LCC Grant	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Facility	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Rehabilitation	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Facility	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL			\$ [REDACTED]

Each of the olive oil press facility rehabilitations are implemented through local councils and will increase the production capacity and, therefore, revenue of olive oil producers in the target area. Primary work across all activities includes the maintenance of olive oil production lines; installation of transformers and generators to provide power; installation of processing equipment to either update older or replace damaged equipment; and the provision of administrative materials to enhance the capacity of facility management. Revenue from the [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Facility, for example, is expected to increase by \$10,000 dollars per day during the season after the rehabilitation is completed (see Table 14 below). Combined, these factory rehabilitations will have 4,150 direct beneficiaries and 202,000 indirect beneficiaries, including consumers, wholesalers, and resellers in the respective communities. In addition, SES II expects that by rehabilitating these facilities, the program will contribute to increased livelihoods opportunities for community members by creating a combined 146 new jobs—some full-time and some seasonal labor.

TABLE 14 – SES II Impact on [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press

[REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Rehabilitation	Before SES II Intervention	After SES II Intervention
Raw Material Product Processing Capacity	37,000 kg/day	50,000 kg/day
Potential Revenue for Farmers	\$ [REDACTED]/day	\$ [REDACTED]/day
Olive Oil Product Production Capacity	7,400 kg/day	10,000 kg/day
Jift Product Production Capacity	29,667 kg/day	40,000 kg/day
Potential Revenue for Factory based on fees	\$ [REDACTED]/day	\$ [REDACTED]/day
Factory Jobs (Seasonal)	8	46

6.1.6 West ██████ Vegetables ██████

As a result of war, the agricultural sector has been severely affected at all levels, including vegetable crop production and vegetable processing. At the farm level, the area cultivated by vegetable crop, and in turn vegetable production, has reduced significantly because of the war, and input prices increased, which was reflected in the price of vegetables produced. Large nurseries went out of service, causing farmers to rely on smaller, private nurseries. The operation costs of vegetable processing factories have increased because of increasing fuel prices; so have the prices for inputs needed for production in the factories. Women played—and continue to play—an important role in vegetable farming in the target area, including planting seeds and seedlings, weeding, and harvesting. In terms of downstream industry, women are involved in vegetable grading and packaging, as well as the processing of various products.

On January 9, 2018, SES II partner, ██████ facilitated a workshop for participants in the West ██████ Vegetable Value Chain, which was attended by 39 value chain actors, including three women. The members also formed an LCC to oversee activities in the value chain. During Y2Q3, SES II conducted DTAs and developed nine potential activities to address problems identified during the workshop by value chain actors (see Table 15).

TABLE 15 – West ██████ Vegetable Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
Vegetable Nurseries in ██████	█████	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ ██████
█████ Cooling Centers	█████	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ ██████
█████ Wells	█████	Farmer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$ ██████
On Farm Assistance - Vegetables in ██████	█████	Direct Assistance to Farmers	Pipeline	\$ ██████
On Farm Assistance - Vegetables in ██████	█████	Direct Assistance to Farmers	Pipeline	\$ ██████
Fodder Warehouse in ██████	█████	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	Budget not finalized
█████ Market	█████	Consumer-facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	Budget not finalized
█████ Nurseries	█████	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	Budget not finalized
█████ Nurseries	█████	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	Budget not finalized
TOTAL				\$ ██████

6.1.7 [REDACTED] Wheat/Bread [REDACTED]

As [REDACTED] is historically a major wheat-producing region in Syria, bakeries are a key component of the economy and provide livelihood opportunities. Throughout the conflict, bakeries were damaged in clashes and degraded due to a lack of regular maintenance, reducing the quality of bread and production capacity of the bakeries. As with other livelihoods activities in northeastern Syria, SES II implements a rapid response approach and coordinates with the [REDACTED] Agricultural Committee and other local stakeholders to identify bakeries that would benefit from rapid assistance and strengthen the existing wheat value chain. During Y2Q3, SES II worked on developing the activities in Table 16 below, intending to improve economic livelihood opportunities. It should be noted that SES II initially mapped and assessed facilities other than bakeries—such as wheat mills—in this value chain with the intention of rehabilitating them, however, wheat is considered a strategic crop and thus a target for interference by the [REDACTED] (i.e. compulsory purchasing, price controls, etc.).

TABLE 16 – [REDACTED] Wheat Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Bakery in [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pending Approval	\$ [REDACTED]
Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Bakery	[REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	Pipeline	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL				\$ [REDACTED]

Ongoing Activities

Currently, three bakeries assessed by SES II (see ongoing activities in Table 17 below) have the combined capacity to produce about 273,000 kg of bread per month, serving around 33,000 residents and IDPs in their respective communities and surrounding areas. SES II is equipping the bakeries with new production lines and other necessary equipment to increase production and quality; generators to produce reliable energy; and supporting the rehabilitation of the bakery buildings.

TABLE 17 – [REDACTED] Wheat Ongoing Activities

Activity Number	Activity Name	Project Type	Value
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Bakery in [REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Bakery in [REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Bakery in [REDACTED]	Factory Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL			\$ [REDACTED]

Once the rehabilitation of these bakeries is complete, SES II expects they will have significantly increased production and revenue from bread sales (see Table 18 for the impact of SES II intervention on the [REDACTED] Bakery in [REDACTED]). Combined, the bakeries will impact an estimated 170 direct beneficiaries—including the bakery owners, staff, and family members—and 33,000 indirect beneficiaries—including residents and IDPs in the target communities. Additionally, SES II expects that seven new jobs will be created as a result of these activities.

TABLE 18 – SES II Impact on [REDACTED] Bakery

[REDACTED] Bakery [REDACTED]	Before SES II Intervention	After SES II Intervention
Flour Product Processing Capacity	48,000 kg/month	62,400 kg/month
Monetary Value of Flour (Cost for bakery)	[REDACTED] \$/month	[REDACTED] \$/month
Bread Production Capacity	57,600 kg/month	74,880 kg/month
Monetary Value of Bread (Revenue for bakery)	[REDACTED] \$/month	[REDACTED] \$/month
Bread Production Breakeven Point	N/A	33,098 kg/month
Employment	5	7

6.1.8 [REDACTED] Vegetables [REDACTED]

The [REDACTED] Vegetable Value Chain Workshop was held on December 5, 2017 in Y2Q2, but the LCC met for the first time on February 25, 2018, with the attendance of USAID. They met at the SES II office in [REDACTED] to discuss challenges in the value chain and potential support from international actors. Major challenges in the value chain include: damaged irrigation canals, broken irrigation gates, and the accumulation of sediment have led to irregularity of irrigation in [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] damage in the [REDACTED] Irrigation Station has halted farming on some farms and prompted farmers to dig irrigation wells; increased prices of seeds and fertilizers—because of shortages in the market—have led to a decrease in cultivated areas; rising fuel prices increased the cost of cultivation and transportation to wholesale markets; and increased transportation costs due to damaged roads. To note, SES II is rehabilitating irrigation canals (see section 6.1.10) and the [REDACTED] Irrigation Station as separate—but related—activities. Needs that could be addressed by SES II included farming tools and equipment and processing factory rehabilitations (see Table 19 for activities developed by SES II in Y2Q3).

In early February 2018, SES II began initial talks with [REDACTED], as well as farmers and local authorities, to establish two Producer-Owned Businesses (POBs) in the vegetable value chain in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] Governorate. Vegetable farmers will be supported to develop and implement a business plan that defines products, customers and markets, supply plan, sales and marketing, the business process, staffing and organization, start-up budget, and launch planning. Additionally, SES II and [REDACTED] discussed providing standardized on-farm assistance packages to farmers that would include tools like shovels, plows, rakes, and other necessary equipment to enhance production.

TABLE 19 – [REDACTED] Vegetable Activities in Development

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
LCC Vegetables - [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	LCC grant	Approved	\$[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Veg [REDACTED] and On Farm Assistance	[REDACTED]	POB	Approved	\$[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Veg [REDACTED] Market	[REDACTED]	Consumer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Veg [REDACTED] Market	[REDACTED]	Consumer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Veg [REDACTED] Market	[REDACTED]	Consumer-Facing Infrastructure	Pipeline	\$[REDACTED]
TOTAL				\$[REDACTED]

6.1.9 [REDACTED] Building Blocks

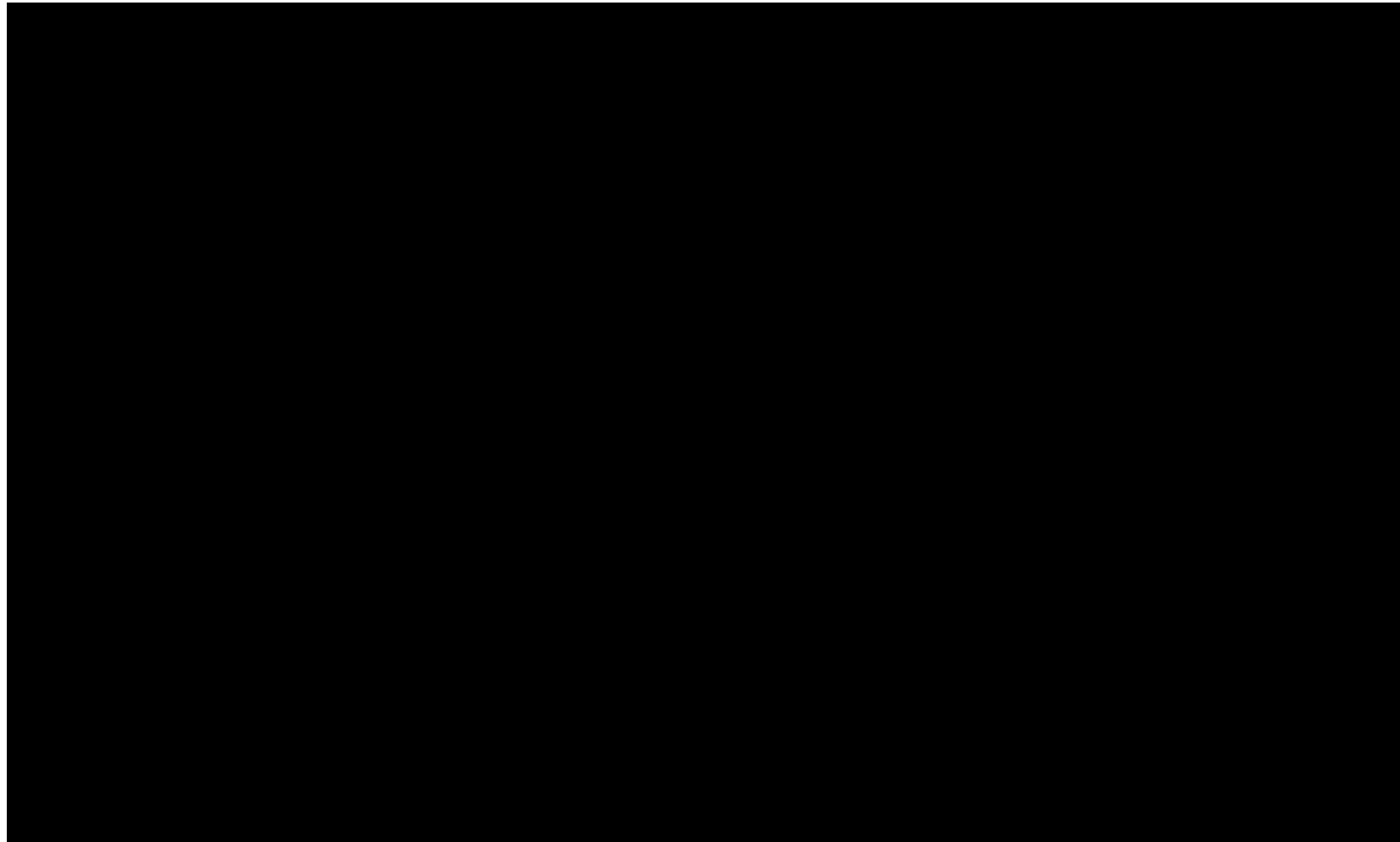
The [REDACTED] Building Block Value Chain comprises small artisanal mining operations in the [REDACTED] area, small building block manufacturers, and local construction activities. Rehabilitating this value chain will have a significant impact in light of the expected construction needs in the governorate, as well as building blocks having a high weight to value ratio. This makes it economically crucial to produce them locally as their heavy weight and low unit value dramatically increases transportation costs disproportionately.

In the beginning of Y2Q3, SES II conducted research into the building block value chain in northeastern [REDACTED] by mapping quarries and cement block presses in the first couple weeks of the quarter. After conducting research, SES II found that rehabilitating cement block presses would have the most value for impact and decided to focus efforts on these facilities. The program then facilitated a value chain workshop for actors in the value chain on January 29, 2018. Sixteen participants attended, including one woman, and formed an LCC to facilitate activities moving forward. Later, SES II coordinators worked with the LCC to identify which cement block press owners and other value chain actors requested SES II support.

Toward the end of Y2Q3, SES II was assessing different options to follow up on the work mentioned above. The program decided to do two things. First, SES II plans to provide direct assistance to building block press owners in [REDACTED] for which the program has a list of beneficiaries verified by the local authorities. In the same phase, SES II will conduct a mapping of beneficiaries in [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] while also assessing the needs of the quarries identified during the initial value chain mapping. Once this step is complete, SES II will provide and distribute the equipment and materials to beneficiaries in the abovementioned communities.

6.1.10 [REDACTED] Irrigation Canals [REDACTED]

Prior to the conflict, irrigation canals in [REDACTED] Governorate provided water to a prosperous agricultural sector. SES II, in conjunction with the [REDACTED] Agricultural Committee, has identified an area approximately 20 km north and northwest of [REDACTED] City that includes canal networks that require maintenance. The target area is shown in phases in the map below and spans over 13,000 hectares of farmland and agricultural areas that are fed by the irrigation canals.



The irrigation network is designed to transport water from [REDACTED] Dam—located just off the map in the southwest corner—into the [REDACTED] Main Irrigation Canal. From the main irrigation canal, there are many smaller irrigation canals that break away to distribute water throughout the surrounding farmlands.

Although still partially functional, lack of maintenance has decreased the capacity of the canals and they now transport water at a rate far below their optimal capacity. This decreased flow of water negatively affects the agricultural sector, namely wheat and vegetable farms. The canals require basic dredging and cleaning, along with civil rehabilitation work, to restore them to their fully functional state.

Through Phase 1 of the project—worth \$ [REDACTED]—the [REDACTED] is rehabilitating 51.5 km of canals that irrigate around 6,000 hectares of farmland. Through the end of Y2Q3, the [REDACTED] had completed the rehabilitation of the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Canals—the first two canals out of five in Phase 1—and began cleaning the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Canals. Upon completion, the first phase will directly benefit 1,000 farmers by providing them with increased water supply for crops and livestock and indirectly benefit 900,000 residents in the target area who consume the products of these farms. By rehabilitating these irrigation canals, the [REDACTED] will increase water supply to wheat and vegetable farms that fall under the [REDACTED] Wheat and Vegetable Value Chains mentioned above.

TABLE 20 – [REDACTED] Irrigation Canals – Phases 2 & 3

Activity Name	Community	Project Type	Status	Value
Phase 2 Rehabilitation of Irrigation Canals in [REDACTED]	Multiple	Farmer-Facing Infrastructure	Pending Approval	\$ [REDACTED]
Phase 3 Rehabilitation of Irrigation Canals in [REDACTED]	Multiple	Farmer-Facing Infrastructure	Pending Approval	\$ [REDACTED]
TOTAL				\$ [REDACTED]

6.2 NEW PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

At the time of writing, SES II was still developing three projects that were in the pre-pipeline phase—one in northeastern Syria and two in southern Syria. SES II plans to award a grant to [REDACTED] ([REDACTED])—a Syrian NGO—to implement programming in the olive value chain in [REDACTED]. During the quarter, SES II initiated talks with [REDACTED] and began project development. [REDACTED] works in northern Syria and has previous livelihoods implementation experience. Work would include mapping, facilitating a value chain workshop, and other coordination for the proposed value chain.

In southern Syria, SES II plans to award a grant to [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) to implement programming in the Southwest [REDACTED] Olive Oil Value Chain. [REDACTED] is a US-based NGO founded by Syrian-Americans and has previously implemented livelihoods programming inside Syria. Work would include mapping, facilitating a value chain workshop, and other coordination for the proposed value chain.

Additionally, SES II will work with another Syrian NGO, [REDACTED] to establish an information and communications technology (ICT) academy in [REDACTED]. It will be a combined vocational training and

ICT incubation center designed to provide male and female youth in [REDACTED] with sustainable livelihood opportunities both locally and globally through online freelancing. The project will provide three different livelihood pathways for three different groups of beneficiaries. In total, the ICT academy will accommodate 640 beneficiaries.

6.3 WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

During Y2Q3, SES II worked on developing an activity to establish a women-owned dairy factory in [REDACTED] that would be a POB. The first step was to identify potential beneficiaries, who mostly comprise women-headed households with small-scale dairy production operations. SES II plans to improve the quality and quantity of production by issuing grants to provide equipment, which will improve hygiene by providing more suitable storage containers, and expand capacity by providing households with livestock—these grants will be issued after the POB is established.

This quarter, SES II also focused on hiring dairy experts to guide the design of factory business models through participatory planning. Beneficiaries will receive training that focuses on the governance of dairy production, including coordination and internal processes. Through the end of the quarter, SES II had identified and interviewed two potential consultants and intended to interview one more. The consultant will work with the business owners and managers to design a business plan, and then SES II will issue a grant to establish the POB. SES II intends to replicate this model upon successful implementation of the pilot in [REDACTED].

7. GOVERNANCE & CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR SYRIAN INSTITUTIONS & CIVIL SOCIETY

7.1 MAKING THE SYSTEM WORK (PROVINCIAL ENGAGEMENT)

After developing its approach to provincial engagement in Y2Q2, SES II worked in close coordination with the [REDACTED] and provincial directorates throughout the following quarter. Engagement with [REDACTED] is especially important for SES II's provincial approach since it supervises local councils and is responsible for the coherence of the overall system of provincial governance. SES II's provincial engagement during Y2Q3 primarily included support for the revision of a directive issued by the [REDACTED] to local councils; development of projects resulting from provincial directorate workshops; and the development of a process for the identification of district-level—or multi-community—needs that will culminate in an overarching plan for the rehabilitation of essential services in [REDACTED] Governorate.

7.1.1 The Directive

In November 2017, the [REDACTED] released a directive to local councils mandating specific actions with respect to how they implement SES II-funded projects. Some actions included were technically acceptable as written, some were in need of refinement, and some were unacceptable from the perspective of SES II. Later in Y2Q2, SES II began a dialogue with the [REDACTED] on developing a new version of the directive that would be acceptable to all parties. The [REDACTED] held meetings with local councils—funded by SES II—to draft a new directive late in Y2Q2 and in the beginning of Q3.

Later in Q3, the [REDACTED] sent a finalized directive to local councils and organized five meetings (funded by SES II)

[REDACTED] meeting with local councils in [REDACTED] western [REDACTED] (January 6, 2018).

to discuss the new directive—one large meeting in █████ attended by 120 people representing 50 local councils, and four smaller district-level meetings in western █████. SES II reviewed the minutes of the meetings and, in general, there was very little resistance from participants—most of the discussion focused on clarifying components of the directive, and a number of local councils wanted the directive to go further. Overall, the consultation process was very valuable—it built consensus around the directive and created an excellent impression amongst the local councils, many of whom were extremely happy to have been given the opportunity to provide feedback. The new directive sets rules and limits for how the █████ can support and oversee local council implementation of SES II grants and clarifies the relationship between the █████ and local councils. Significant points regarding the new directive include:

- It no longer has the requirement for the █████ to approve local council procurement;
- It removes the link to the procurement tax, although the provincial administration is still pursuing this through other means;
- It now has a requirement that local councils procure only from suppliers licensed by the █████—this may have some value in combating procurement abuse;
- It not only defines local council obligations (what the local council must do for the █████ during implementation) but also defines what the █████ should do to help, and recognizes the basic right of the local council to carry out the main activities; and
- Currently, it is phrased in terms of local implementation of SES II grants, but the █████ intends to generalize it to cover other donor-funded grants.

Moving forward SES II will provide support for the implementation of the directive in a number of ways. The SES II Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be aligned with the directive, and SES II will formally communicate to local councils that it supports the directive and expects local councils to comply. SES II also plans to build the capacity of the █████ to implement the directive.

Supporting the revision of the █████’s directive to local councils has been a major piece of SES II’s provincial engagement in southern Syria. It is significant that the █████ has agreed to provide support and oversight of local council activities rather than attempt to control them directly. This has contributed to an increase in legitimacy of the █████ in the eyes of local council members and in the willingness of local councils to work with the █████. Local councils have been in favor of more engagement and oversight by the █████ as it results in consistent processes and more overall support by the provincial entities. By engaging the █████ in this process, SES II has helped facilitate increased coordination between not only the █████ and local councils, but also between local councils and their counterparts in neighboring villages and districts. The meetings to revise the directive—in addition to meetings to identify district-level needs mentioned below—are the foremost example of this increased coordination. Additionally, the █████ broadened the range of participants to be more inclusive, inviting CSOs and vulnerable groups to outreach meetings.

7.1.2 Directorate Workshops

Another cornerstone of SES II’s provincial approach is provincial directorate workshops. In these workshops, which are funded by SES II, participants first identify the directorate’s clients—the types of people and organizations the directorate helps and supports. For example, if the workshop is for the Health Directorate, they might identify the clients as clinics, hospitals, and

households. Participants then map how the directorate serves its clients—what specific activities it needs to perform in order to serve them. They also assess needed support, including staff, equipment, and systems the directorate would need to carry out each of the activities identified in the mapping stage. The previous step then feeds into a rough outline of a capacity development project—a set of inputs that would allow the directorate to serve one of its clients and could potentially be funded by SES II.

In Y2Q2, SES II organized workshops for the Health, Education, and Agriculture Directorates of ██████ Governorate and plans to provide at least one grant based on each of these workshops. One of the main priorities identified in the Health Directorate Workshop was providing power sources for clinics and hospitals. In Q3, SES II began designing a large project to provide solar systems to health facilities through the Health Directorate and in coordination with ██████ SES II expects that this will be completed and ready for submission to USAID mid-Q4. SES II also started assessing the feasibility of implementing education programming for children with special needs in Y2Q3. The program identified one privately run center that could potentially receive grant funding and coordinated with the Education Cluster to identify other actors in the area. Work on an Agriculture Directorate project was pending a second workshop for the sector with women’s participation, which the directorate held at the end of Q3. At the time of writing SES II was still analyzing outputs of the women’s Agriculture Directorate workshop and will combine them with the original workshop report before submitting to USAID.

By bringing together front-line service delivery staff, units, and directorates, these workshops are meant to clarify relationships between the various stakeholders, strengthen the legitimacy of the directorates (through SES II-funded projects), and encourage a ‘service’ mentality through which the directorate serves its clients, rather than a ‘power’ mentality through which the directorate seeks to control the sector. The workshops have been very well received. For example, the head of the Health Directorate said that “SES II provided great help and support to the health sector and the staff learned a lot from their experience, especially adopting brainstorming and problem solving tools.” He showed appreciation for SES II and highlighted the lessons learned through working with the program.

7.1.3 District Needs Identification

During Y2Q3, SES II developed a process for the identification of district needs in which the ██████ and directorates originate large projects that cover multiple communities, the directorates develop these projects, and then the ██████ combines them into a single plan and budget for priority projects in ██████ Through this process, large projects will be developed; the relationships of the various stakeholders will be clarified; governing entities will increase their legitimacy; and the ██████ will gain credibility as a speaker on behalf of the entire governorate. The process, which will culminate in the ‘Essential Service Priorities for De-Escalation’ plan, is outlined below:

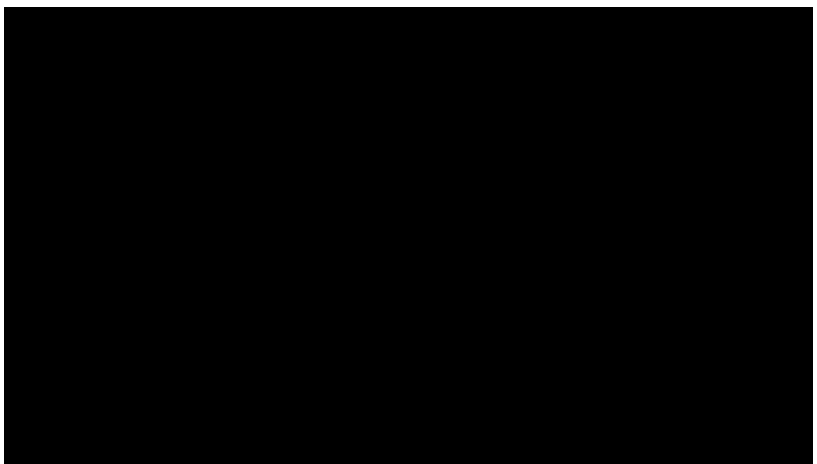
- District-level outreach is conducted;
- During outreach, basic project ideas are identified and captured by the ██████ and the ██████ sends them to the relevant directorate;
- The directorate reviews them and decides whether to develop them as is, adjust them in some way, or reject them; it develops a slightly more detailed project description than that

developed during outreach for the projects not rejected (e.g. including activities, outputs, and an approximate budget);

- The relevant offices in the [REDACTED] and the Finance Directorate review the project and the budget and request additional information from the [REDACTED] until they are satisfied;
- The final projects are combined into single document by the [REDACTED] with one chapter per sector or directorate; the budgets for all of the projects are combined into a single provincial budget by the Finance Directorate and appended to the document;
- The final document is approved by the [REDACTED] and by a meeting of the provincial administration; and
- The document is presented to donors and the public in a large public meeting.

SES II will coordinate this process and provide technical support as needed. SES II expects to fund some of the project ideas after completion of the process.

In Y2Q3, SES II provided a grant to fund outreach by the [REDACTED] which was used to fund a series of district-level meetings, as well as some larger meetings. Some of these meetings have already been delivered (e.g., the meeting of the entire provincial administration and local councils mentioned above to get feedback on the directive). The [REDACTED] held a total of 14 meetings throughout Y2Q3 to visit local councils and begin the development of the Essential Service Priorities for De-Escalation.



Participants at a district-level meeting.

7.1.4 [REDACTED] Workshop for the [REDACTED] Provincial Administration

During Y2Q3, members of the [REDACTED] Finance Directorate, and Agriculture Directorate visited Jordan to participate in a one-week workshop organized by SES II. The workshop included:

- Introductory presentations on SES II;
- A presentation and discussion delivered by [REDACTED]—a program funded by the [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]);
- A discussion and joint planning session on the directive;
- A discussion and joint planning session on District Needs Identification;
- A discussion on the role of the [REDACTED] and Finance Directorate in the Finance and Administration Capacity Enhancement (FACE) process;
- A discussion between [REDACTED] (the head of the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], USAID [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

- Discussions between members of the provincial administration and members of the Southern Syria Support Group.

Overall the workshop was very successful. The detailed discussions showed that members of the [REDACTED] and other provincial entities were highly engaged in and committed to the provincial activities being supported by SES II. Discussions identified a number of promising areas where SES II could further work to build the capacity of the [REDACTED] provincial administration.

7.2 CAPACITY FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

SES II focused on developing the capacity for service delivery in two primary areas during Y2Q3: water governance in [REDACTED] and solar energy systems in [REDACTED]. Both capacity development activities were delivered through subcontractors—[REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) and [REDACTED], respectively. These types of activities support other SES II interventions, specifically the rehabilitation of wells and pump stations, which have become increasingly critical—both in northeastern and southern Syria—throughout the last several months. Through capacity development activities, SES II helps pave the way for local Syrian authorities to manage, maintain, and deliver essential services in a longer-term, more sustainable way.

7.2.1 [REDACTED]

The main technical assistance activity during Y2Q3 was the launch of assistance to governing bodies in [REDACTED] to create a temporary authority capable of basic management of water assets and service delivery, referred to as [REDACTED]. This body will carry out basic, essential functions such as preparing O&M plans, managing and monitoring operations, and organizing fee collection/cost recovery. The body will also provide basic management and planning functions needed to manage water distribution assets in [REDACTED] on a network-wide basis. [REDACTED] will do this both directly and by supporting the water offices of lower-level governance structures.

In Y2Q3, SES II subcontracted a technical provider, [REDACTED], (activity [REDACTED] – Remote Technical Support for the Establishment and Short-term Operation of [REDACTED]) to work with [REDACTED] staff on capacity development. Through the three-month subcontract, [REDACTED] provides initial support for the establishment of [REDACTED] the development of short-term and medium-term work plans, the development of a staffing plan, and designing and drafting key technical inputs. During Y2Q3, [REDACTED] was introduced to the [REDACTED] staff and began the process of capacity development. Specifically, [REDACTED] assessed [REDACTED] staff and organized them into three groups— Engineering, Finance, and Human Resources. [REDACTED] also discussed the SES II grant and milestone process with the teams and began to explore the technical teams’ skills. After this analysis, [REDACTED]’s technical teams—guided by [REDACTED]—will move into implementation of the technical work, which will include activities like developing a water safety program and a multi-year operations and maintenance plan. [REDACTED] will work with the teams to develop work plans for delivering these products and coach and train the staff. Each component of the work will include a mixture of medium-term technical products and short-term practical actions to improve water service delivery. These will include visible public processes and events to raise the profile of [REDACTED] and start to build its legitimacy. In parallel, [REDACTED] will work with [REDACTED] to develop a larger

organizational chart and proposal for a new office—this information will be used to develop a second grant for ██████ SES II will provide close monitoring and support for these efforts.

In addition to the capacity development of ██████ SES II provided a grant (██████████) to the ██████ to establish a small office for ██████ and cover travel and workshop expenses, as well as professional fees for the core ██████ team. This grant includes the rehabilitation of a small ██████ office and the purchase of office furniture and equipment. SES II will also enhance ██████'s administration and management capacity by providing cash assistance for 12 laptops, two printers, one projector, and one data show screen for documentation and communication purposes. Additionally, SES II will support with professional fees for the core RIWA team of 12 staff, including a Senior Manager, five Section Heads, four Technical and Administration Officers, and two Technical Support Officers (the staff working with ██████).

7.2.2 Solar Energy System Training

During Y2Q3, SES II partner, ██████, conducted trainings related to solar photovoltaic power systems, covering topics like health and safety issues, as well as O&M. ██████ trained the staff of five wells and pump stations in the communities of ██████ (January 2-4, 2018), ██████ (January 2-4, 2018), ██████ (January 2-4, 2018), ██████ (January 16-18, 2018), and ██████ (January 9-11, 2018). The trainings for ██████, and ██████ were combined into one session attended by 21 participants, while the trainings in ██████ and ██████ were attended by five and eight participants, respectively. These trainings were follow-up activities to build the capacity of staff and management of pump stations and well facilities rehabilitated by SES II in previous interventions and are representative of SES II's comprehensive approach to rehabilitating essential services and strengthening governance institutions.

7.3 CAPACITY FOR FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

SES II builds the capacity for finance and administration of program beneficiaries—including local and provincial authorities, as well as CSOs—in order to allow them to manage their own process of improvement according to agreed upon quality criteria. The program first assesses the beneficiaries' initial capacity using the Finance & Administration Capacity Tool (FACT), which takes into account six aspects of finance and administration, including procurement, treasury, accounting, financial reporting, payroll, and recruitment. Based on the results of the assessment, SES II develops FACE projects.

FACE projects are five to six-month capacity development projects that include finance training and provide incentives for beneficiaries to implement improvements to the six aspects of finance and administration named above. Each beneficiary receives funding for training, to hire local consultants/financial experts, and other small items. Beneficiaries receive payments when they meet a major capacity development milestone. As part of the FACE process, SES II also provides training to governance institutions on procurement, treasury, and accounting, delivered over a three-week period by the international accounting firm, ██████.

During this quarter, the first three local councils submitted their new revised financial regulations, based on [REDACTED] training, the FACT assessment, and the advice of a local consultant hired using project funds. These new regulations were reviewed by the SES II Capacity Development team and technical feedback was provided. This represents a major milestone for the FACE process as these are the first instances of local councils revising financial regulations after SES II training.

7.3.1 FACT

SES II conducted 14 FACT assessments, including six for CSOs, seven for local councils, and one for the [REDACTED] in Y2Q3—all in southern Syria:

7.3.2 FACE

As of the end of Y2Q3, SES II had 18 FACE grants under implementation and submitted another five to USAID—all in southern Syria—(see Table 21 below).

TABLE 21 – Y2Q3 FACE Grants Status

No.	Community	Entity	Status
1	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
2	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
3	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
4	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
5	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
6	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
7	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
8	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
9	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
10	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
11	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
12	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
13	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
14	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
15	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
16	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
17	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
18	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Ongoing
19	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Approved
20	[REDACTED]	Local Council	Pending Approval
21	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Agricultural Directorate	Pending Approval
22	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Educational Directorate	Approved, Pending Grant PVS
23	Tal [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Health Directorate	Pending Approval

7.4 GOOD GOVERNANCE

SES II primarily implements Good Governance programming by requiring local Syrian authorities to sign an MoU in which they commit to implementing SES II projects in a transparent, accountable, and participatory manner before they are awarded any SES II funding. The MoU helps ensure local authorities abide by these tenets by focusing on important, but easily implemented activities, such as branding activities and events, establishing a public complaints system, preparing reports, and conducting public meetings. The MoU also ensures that local authorities abide by SES II Minimum Procurement Standards in order to receive funding.

7.4.1 Grant-Related Good Governance

SES II requires Syrian partners—local authorities—to sign an MoU before they can receive grants to implement activities. The purpose of the MoU is to enhance local authorities' transparency, accountability, and participation by incentivizing their operations and interaction with their communities. The major requirements laid out in the MoU are also grant milestones—they ensure that grantees do not receive funding until SES II has verified that a certain milestone has been met. In addition to the signing of the MoU itself, grant milestones related to Good Governance include branding and visibility and fair procurement practices. For example, one milestone requires a signed copy of the MoU available at the office of the council, and the verification is photographic evidence of a signed copy of the MoU.

With respect to branding and visibility for grants to local councils in the South, the first milestone requires that the local council makes a public announcement of the project compliant with MoU requirements for local council communication and visibility. SES II verifies this through photographic evidence of the project announcement—captured by SES II coordinators—in a public place and using the local council logo. The final milestone for the grant stipulates that the project completion ceremony is compliant with similar MoU branding requirements, verified by SES II through photographic evidence of the completion ceremony and prominent display of the local council's logo.

Through the MoU and grant milestones, SES II ensures that local authorities—in both the North and the South—demonstrate fair procurement practices. To encourage transparency, SES II requires local authorities to disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the public. Additionally, local authorities must consider multiple bids or quotes and select the one with the lowest cost that meets the specifications laid out in the request for quotation or tender announcement. In the case that multiple bids cannot be obtained, local authorities must fully disclose this to the public.

As of the end of Y2Q3, 64 local councils—including four during the quarter—had an MoU signed with SES II, committing to the requirements above and, more importantly, committing to serving their communities while practicing the tenets of good governance.

7.4.2 Ongoing Good Governance Activities

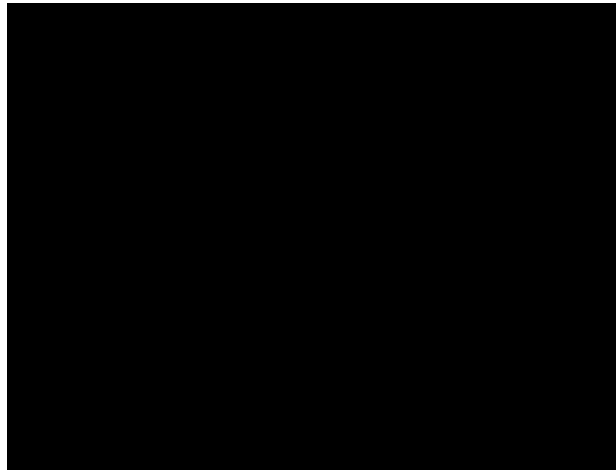
SES II provides support for Good Governance activities at the local level that focuses on encouraging local councils to discharge commitments made in the MoU with respect to Good Governance, in particular to:

- Brand SES II activities as their own activities;
- Implement a public complaints system;
- Prepare and release periodic reports of all activities conducted (regardless of funding source); and
- Conduct public meetings to present and discuss the periodic report.

SES II provides support in three ways. First, SES II field staff engage with local councils to provide support and monitoring for these activities. Second, a member of the SES II Governance team engages with designated focal points in each local council to coordinate, follow up on, and provide technical support (at the time of writing there was a network of 55 local council focal points). Third, SES II provides funding for activities, such as printing a banner and organizing public meetings through Basic Assistance Packages.

By the end of Y2Q3, almost all of the local councils engaged by SES II had conducted at least one Good Governance activity. Overall, the progress to date is as follows:

- 52 local councils have installed a complaints box;
- 53 local councils have prepared and released at least one periodic performance report for a total of 110 reports;
- 17 local councils have held only one public meeting to get public feedback and review complaints; and
- 33 local councils have held two or more public meetings to get public feedback and review complaints.



Checking the complaints box in

During this quarter, SES II also organized two 'lessons learned' workshops for the Good Governance focal points—one workshop in eastern [redacted] and one western [redacted]. All but one focal point travelled to attend the meetings, for a total of 54 participants. The workshops were used to share experiences from Good Governance activities and involved a series of participatory exercises aimed at developing consensus on quality, for example, what a good public report would look like or what a good public meeting would be like. Upon completion, the groups had identified a platform of action for improving the quality of Good Governance activities by the local councils.

7.4.3 Minimum Procurement Standards

SES II's Minimum Procurement Standards require local councils to issue a public notice with the outcome of procurement for SES II-funded goods and services for any procurement of goods or services greater than \$ [REDACTED]. The notice summarizes the procurement process and discloses any potential conflict of interest or non-competitive practice (such as sole-sourcing). Evidence of issuing the notice is included in grant milestones, which means that in order for a grantee to receive a milestone payment, evidence of the notice must be uploaded to CMORE by Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinators and verified by the Governance team. The system is not intended to be a watertight system of control over procurement, rather it is intended to create transparency and generate additional social accountability around following basic procurement practices. As with the Good Governance activities, local councils commit to this system in the MoU.

The Minimum Procurement Standards system was put into effect during Y2Q2 (early November) and grants including evidence of Minimum Procurement Standards started to be prepared in the same month. During Q3, SES II started to receive evidence of compliance (in the form of public announcements related to SES II procurement) as part of the evidence for milestone payments.

The Minimum Procurement Standards were also discussed in the Focal Points Workshop (7.4.2) and the workshop for the [REDACTED] held in [REDACTED]. This led to a number of suggestions for improvement, which will be taken forward in the next quarter.

7.4.4 Training on Local Governance

SES II contracted [REDACTED] to develop a comprehensive training curriculum and set of training materials, including guides, videos, and an online platform. The training is meant to ensure an adequate and common understanding of SES II goals, governance concepts, and community engagement practices. The training includes:

- An SES II orientation to introduce trainees to the program, its objectives, and roles and responsibilities;
- A module on government and governance that focuses on the theoretical concepts of government and governance and defines the difference between the two;
- A module that gives a general overview of the main community-level actors in Syria (local councils, provincial councils, and CSOs), including their concepts, histories, and structures;
- A community engagement module that informs trainees of key factors for successful THMs and how community engagement supports project design; and
- A soft skills module that equips participants with managerial soft skills, such as work planning, holding meetings, documenting work processes, managing conflicts, and leadership and negotiation skills.

In Y2Q3, [REDACTED] trained five local councils, three CSOs, and the [REDACTED]—all in southern Syria.

7.4.5 Material Assistance for Local Councils

To support Good Governance and supplement more conventional capacity development of local councils in southwestern Syria, SES II provides Basic Assistance Packages (BAPs) that consist of equipment and furniture that enhance local councils' daily operations. BAPs specifically improve local councils' abilities to report on activities, brand events, and facilitate meetings. During Y2Q3, SES II provided three BAPs—on to each of the local councils in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. These BAPs each included two laptops, a printer, hard disk, projector, data show screen, camera, inverter, solar charger converter, six photovoltaic panels, and 10 gel batteries. Later in the quarter, SES II modified BAPs to increase the printing budget so local councils would have more funding to brand activities and include complaints boxes so community members could communicate feedback to their local council.

Additionally, SES II rehabilitates local council offices when identified as a priority need. These activities include non-structural rehabilitation, such as patching walls, painting, plumbing, replacing windows and doors, and conducting electrical work. In Y2Q3, SES II rehabilitated two local council office buildings—one in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and another in [REDACTED] [REDACTED]—worth a total of \$ [REDACTED].

7.5 SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

7.5.1 Support for [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

SES II provides several forms of support and capacity development for [REDACTED] via grants and task orders. During this quarter, all of these activities continued smoothly:

- **[REDACTED] finance and administration capacity development.** During this quarter, Phase II of the [REDACTED] capacity development project continued, under the implementation of [REDACTED]. The project focused on implementation of improvements recommended by [REDACTED] and included coaching and individual skills training.
- **[REDACTED] finance and administration implementation support.** During this quarter, the grant to implement key recommendations of Phase I passed the first two milestones. Eleven of the 13 positions planned were recruited (the two exceptions being a Compliance Officer and in-country auditor). The Performance Solutions Package developed by Making [REDACTED] was updated and all recruited staff developed work plans in line with the package.
- **[REDACTED] training centers.** In Y2Q3 the grant for the [REDACTED] Training Center was ongoing. The three Master Trainers for this center were recruited and assumed responsibility for facilitation of [REDACTED] training. The grant for the [REDACTED] Training Center was submitted to USAID and awaiting approval, while the plan to establish a training center in [REDACTED] was cancelled due to the security situation. In parallel, SES II finalized a scope of work for [REDACTED] to provide Training of Trainers to the Master Trainers funded through this grant.

7.5.2 Support for [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

SES II provides capacity development support to [REDACTED] through two activities, the first of which was ongoing in Y2Q3:

- **Capacity building for livelihoods and economic recovery implementation.** This grant enhances the capacity of [REDACTED] staff to implement technical field activities related to livelihoods and economic recovery interventions through a learning-by-doing process. Through this grant, [REDACTED] is responsible for initial value chain mapping, facilitating value chain actor workshops, conducting DTAs, engaging POBs, launching revolving funds for women's economic empowerment, and supporting project implementation and verification. To support and facilitate these activities, SES II will also provide IT equipment for [REDACTED]'s Syrian staff.
- **Enhancing [REDACTED] organizational capacity.** Through this activity, SES II will conduct a technical, administrative, and financial needs assessment of [REDACTED]. The evaluation will be based on USAID's Human and Institutional Capacity Development criteria. This activity will include on-the-job mentoring and training based on the identified needs.

7.5.3 Support for [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

SES II is currently supporting the Syrian CSO, [REDACTED] to conduct Phase I of a survey of Syrian people. The survey attempts to capture Syrians' perceptions on topics such as local governance,

the de-escalation agreement, and peace negotiations. Phase I will collect data from 400 respondents in 20 communities in opposition-controlled [REDACTED] Syria.

In Y2Q3, [REDACTED] completed its pre-consultation, statistical plan, stakeholder analysis, and questionnaire. Because of the sensitivity around this process, the SES II Governance team carefully reviewed all technical work done by [REDACTED] providing extensive comments and feedback on the questionnaire. Unfortunately, implementation was delayed by difficulties making payments to [REDACTED]'s bank. This issue was resolved late in the quarter, allowing implementation to start at the beginning of the next quarter.

SES II also began a discussion with [REDACTED] on the possibility of a second grant during Y2Q3. [REDACTED] developed a concept note for a second grant that was shared with the program and based on this concept is currently developing a more comprehensive proposal. This will be developed into a request for grant funding, assuming availability of funds in the next quarter.

7.5.4 Support for Women's CSOs [REDACTED]

During this quarter, SES II launched its effort to build the capacity of Women's CSOs. The effort builds on the successful pilot in [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. SES II's approach is to provide Women's CSOs—and also local councils' WAOs—with training on management and business planning, and then to assist them in designing a follow-on grant for an income generating activity that can be delivered by the CSO. In Y2Q3, SES II completed the procurement of an external provider, [REDACTED], to deliver the training. [REDACTED] was contracted to deliver the training to 19 communities (taking the total to 20 including the pilot). A list of 11 communities in which there is both a women's CSO and a WAO was developed and shared with [REDACTED]. SES II is now working on a plan to roll this out in the North. An implementation plan was developed and approved and at the time of writing the training material was being finalized. Implementation will be under way at the beginning of the next quarter.

8. COORDINATION WITH PARTNERS & OTHER ACTORS

8.1 SES II PARTNERS

8.1.1 North

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is based in [REDACTED] and has offices in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They currently provide logistics support to Blumont humanitarian assistance programs operating out of Iraq and provide construction, logistics, and camp services to other groups in Syria. They have strong local knowledge, recent projects, and an impressive footprint in Syria. In Y2Q3, [REDACTED] implemented the rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Hospital, [REDACTED] Pump Station, and two schools in [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is based out of [REDACTED] Iraq, and specializes in engineering, security, and support services. During the quarter, [REDACTED] implemented the rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Drinking Water Pumping Station and [REDACTED] Pump Station in [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was founded in 2003 to support the post-war Iraq re-construction effort led by the [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is now a group of companies providing services that include construction, oil and gas services, electrical components, design, pre-fabricated buildings, and life/camp support. In Y2Q3, [REDACTED] implemented the rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Pump Station.

8.1.2 South

[REDACTED]

SES II collaborates closely with [REDACTED] as a key partner in the field. [REDACTED] uses its established network to provide transportation and logistics support to move materials, and equipment from Jordan to Syria, with the ability to transport from Syria to Jordan pending Government of Jordan approval. [REDACTED] also provides technical support for programmatic implementation within Syria, including but not limited to community assessments; oversight and administration of grantee assistance; rehabilitation of essential services; and project progress monitoring and verification.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is a Syrian NGO that implements SES II livelihoods programming inside Syria, conducting DTAs and facilitating workshops.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] provides on-the-ground research and analysis for SES II in the form of Quarterly Special Assessments, Ad Hoc Reports as requested by USAID, and monthly Atmospheric Reports that analyze security trends, governance, livelihoods and markets, and the status of essential services within SES II's areas of operation. [REDACTED] also provides SES II with remote monitoring and evaluation technical assistance, as well as independent annual assessments of program impacts that inform SES II approaches and future interventions.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] provides specialized engineering services to SES II and conducts solar O&M trainings for beneficiaries. In Y2Q3, [REDACTED] conducted solar O&M trainings for well operators in five communities.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] works to accelerate and sustain the economic recovery of individuals and communities affected by conflict and focuses on providing in-depth capacity development activities to the SES II implementing partner [REDACTED]. This quarter, [REDACTED] subcontracted [REDACTED] to implement Phase II of the [REDACTED] capacity development activity.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is a research and consultancy group that provided cost recovery trainings for well operators in Y2Q3. [REDACTED] is also building the capacity of [REDACTED] in northern Syria.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is a global audit firm that provided finance and administration trainings for local councils assessed by the SES II FACT this quarter.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has an established record as a third-party monitoring and research partner and has supported numerous programs providing humanitarian, development, and political assistance to organizations inside Syria. This quarter, [REDACTED] provided Good Governance training to local councils in southern Syria.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is a leading development consultancy that provides governments, the private sector, and international organizations with economic, strategic, and operational consulting services. This quarter, [REDACTED] received a subcontract to strengthen the capacity of women's CSOs after conducting a pilot for the [REDACTED] Women's Community Center last quarter.

8.2 COORDINATION WITH OTHER ACTORS

Given the number of implementers inside Syria, and especially in SES II's areas of operation, the program coordinates extensively with numerous actors, donors, and other stakeholders and encourages transparent communications by local authorities about other donor-funded initiatives to prevent duplication of efforts on the ground and ensure symbiotic programming whenever possible. SES II coordinates with these other parties at every stage of the project process—before, during, and after implementation. Increased coordination among actors has led to more efficient, effective, and impactful solutions to issues faced by Syrian beneficiary communities. Key points of coordination this quarter are summarized in this section.

8.2.1 North

- The [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]) and [REDACTED] regarding the operation of water stations in [REDACTED];
- [REDACTED] for general northern Syria programming;
- [REDACTED] to discuss plans for electrical rehabilitations in [REDACTED];
- The Northeast Syria [REDACTED] Working Group in relation to supporting their review of water station rehabilitations;
- The [REDACTED] to discuss the progress of ongoing projects;
- The [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] regarding their move to [REDACTED] City;
- [REDACTED] to discuss livelihoods programmatic synergies and ground-truth [REDACTED] projects;
- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to conduct a walk-through of [REDACTED] Hospital;
- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] regarding the uninterrupted power supply in [REDACTED] Hospital as well as their plans for [REDACTED] Hospital;
- [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at a livelihoods workshop in [REDACTED] in which the program presented the SES II Livelihoods Framework;
- [REDACTED] regarding school rehabilitations in [REDACTED] City; and
- [REDACTED] to discuss ongoing research in northeastern Syria related to the Y2Q4 Quarterly Special Assessment.

8.2.2 South

Throughout Y2Q2, SES II coordinated with many implementers active in southern Syria. The program coordinated with:

- The Health Cluster in relation to capacity building for the [REDACTED] Health Directorate and rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Hospital in [REDACTED]—for which the program also coordinated with [REDACTED];
- The [REDACTED]-funded [REDACTED] program regarding provincial engagement in [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] regarding the organizational capacity development of [REDACTED]
- The [REDACTED] to discuss [REDACTED] outreach and the Y2Q3 Quarterly Special Assessment;
- [REDACTED] to finalize inputs for the Y2Q3 Quarterly Special Assessment;
- [REDACTED] government representatives to conduct a virtual site visit to [REDACTED] Hospital and assess remaining needs;
- [REDACTED] regarding school rehabilitation projects in [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] to discuss health facility rehabilitation and [REDACTED] to coordinate work in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Hospitals;
- A stabilization adviser for the [REDACTED] government regarding general programming in southern Syria;
- The [REDACTED] program—implemented by [REDACTED]—to de-conflict education programming and support for the [REDACTED] Education Directorate;
- [REDACTED] and the Health Cluster to improve the governance of solar energy systems in southern Syria; and
- The Health Cluster regarding social protection and gender-based violence.

8.3 INTERNAL COORDINATION

8.3.1 WEWG

Late in Y2Q2 SES II established an internal WEWG to coordinate gender activities across northern and southern Syria. The WEWG is made up of members of different teams across the program and is responsible for brainstorming new activities or initiatives; identifying, modifying, and formalizing processes; and tracking and reporting activities. Thus far, increased internal coordination through the WEWG has resulted in the modification of SES II community engagement and assessment tools to be more gender sensitive. Additionally, one SES II staff member shared a gender matrix analysis tool that is now being used by the Livelihoods team to create a new project development template.

The WEWG met six times throughout Y2Q3.

9. PROGRAM LEARNING

9.1 CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

Approval Process with the [REDACTED]

Challenge: During Y2Q3, USAID approval processing periods increased significantly, e.g., for procurements, salary approvals for new hires, and internal promotions. This had a significant impact on implementation and operations, including staffing and external negotiations.

Solution: During the quarter, we began work with the [REDACTED] to identify constraints and streamline processes. Completion of these efforts are planned for Y2Q4, and are essential for relationship management with Syrian partners and cost-efficient operations.

Work Plan Project Approvals

Challenge: Nearly all of the \$ [REDACTED] of program funds budgeted for grants have been awarded as sub-projects (overall contract funding is 95% obligated). This has necessitated a change to Work Plan priorities and schedules. USAID approval processing time increases, and a complete hold on new sub-projects planned in the Work Plan, has impacted operational timelines and relationships with Syrian partners.

Solution: SES II has developed timeline impact analysis and determined which new work can be effectively delayed and which must be cancelled. Research began this quarter on transferring cancelled work to other Donors.

Staff Safety

Challenge: The GoS offensive focus in the south progressed more quickly than forecast, specifically in [REDACTED].

SES II Syrian Coordinators had to take shelter in the assault and missed windows of opportunity to evacuate ahead of the assault. The Coordinators later – at great risk – evacuated to other locations via GoS-provided transportation. Through this process it was determined that SES II could not expense USAID funds for the relocation expenses and other financial impacts of the GoS offensive for Syrian Coordinators. Following close coordination with the [REDACTED]-funded project ([REDACTED] support for evacuation tracking and temporary relocation in Idleb was provided.

Solution: Expand the buffer zone for new indicators of GoS potential speed of advance with future offensive operations.

Capture lessons learned from other donors for potential future emergency responses.

Inform all Syrian Coordinators that SES II cannot utilize USAID funds to support them in such situations.

Ineligible Beneficiaries

Challenge: When implementing sub-projects that include a distribution of equipment or tools to individual beneficiaries, we sometimes receive an inflated beneficiary list. This is a common risk for this type of project.

Solution: Continue conducting due diligence on beneficiary list submissions.

Data Quality to Support Indicators

Challenge: While SES II has made significant progress in rectifying its indicators since Year 1, data quality remains an ongoing challenge to obtain in Syria's difficult operating context. Government, public, and private records are typically nonexistent, destroyed, inaccurate or inaccessible. This has created verification and data quality challenges, mostly by prolonging the process of data collection, this quarter in particular, as the program implements a new methodology for addressing the issue.

Solution: The program seeks to improve data quality whenever possible, and during this quarter developed new templates with guidance for grantees and partners that report data used for indicator analysis or reporting. Through this process, data quality gaps identified in ongoing and completed activities will be filled, providing increased confidence in the data supporting program indicators and other key reporting figures. A designated monitor is responsible for coordinating with the field to rectify any remaining questions about reported data to the greatest extent possible. This will improve the ease and quality of reporting on indicators.

9.2 SES II LEARNING PORTAL

During Y2Q3, SES II designed the beta version of a learning portal to increase accessibility of implementation data and facilitate coordinated learning across the program. The major components of the portal include an interactive dashboard featuring performance data, a live Syria news feed, overviews of the program approaches, downloadable reports and atmospherics, and a media page. The portal is accessible to all internal staff, including USAID and select Blumont headquarters staff.

Learning & the Design Process

The Research, Analysis, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning team collaborated with technical teams to consolidate both monitoring and reporting data and program data on the dashboard. The process of exploring program data beyond indicators, implementing systems for reporting and updates, and visualizing data was beneficial to all involved. As a result, program data and information are not only more accessible, but are also more reliably updated and understood across the program. This will allow SES II to assess indicator progress, grants/subcontract information, pipelines, and community engagement information alongside other program data to realize a more holistic picture of implementation.

Monitoring & Reporting Improvements

By making indicator data available on the portal, SES II seeks to reduce the reporting burden and monitor indicators throughout performance periods rather than reporting only at the close of a period. Having integrated indicators with the CMORE system in previous quarters, this quarter SES II designed a visual cockpit for monitoring those indicators that is linked directly to CMORE. With updated indicators for completed activities, SES II is now finalizing data quality inquiries before operationalizing this component of the dashboard and will begin to focus next quarter on the ongoing activities to expand its capability to forecast achievements against select indicators.

10. ANNEXES

Annex I: Ongoing Activities

Annex II: Performance Management Plan

Annex III: Success Stories (Attached)

ANNEX I: ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Sector	Activity #	Activity Name	Value	Direct Beneficiaries	Indirect Beneficiaries
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhance [REDACTED] Lifeline Organizational Capacity-Sub-contract	\$ [REDACTED]	0*	0*
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Establishment and Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Training Center	\$ [REDACTED]	10	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing [REDACTED] Finance and Administration Capacity	\$ [REDACTED]	0*	0*
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Capacity Building for Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Implementation	\$ [REDACTED]	0*	0*
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Capacity Building for Syrian Monitoring Polling Implementation Phase 1	\$ [REDACTED]	0*	0*
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Training services	\$ [REDACTED]	0*	0*
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] Subcontract	\$ [REDACTED]	0*	0*
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	12	15,000
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	12	102,600
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	15	8,000
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	9	7,100
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	9	7,100
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	10	5,250
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	9	1,500
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	23	19,400
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	13	45,000
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] LC Building	\$ [REDACTED]	13	4,500
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	16	5,150
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	9	5,150
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	17	37,000
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] LC Building	\$ [REDACTED]	10	5,250
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] LC Building	\$ [REDACTED]	44	13

Sector	Activity #	Activity Name	Value	Direct Beneficiaries	Indirect Beneficiaries
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistant Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	11	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistant Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	13	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	22	32,000
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistant Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	11	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistant Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	10	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity for [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	20	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity for [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	20	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity for [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	20	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity for [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	20	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity for [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	20	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] LC Building	\$ [REDACTED]	15	25,100
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] LC Building	\$ [REDACTED]	15	26,800
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] LC Building	\$ [REDACTED]	27	7,000
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Basic Assistance Package for [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	14	33,584
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Local Council Building	\$ [REDACTED]	21	17,000
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Local Council Building	\$ [REDACTED]	15	10,800
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	21	114,600
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	15	0
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	16	4,650
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	10	5,500
Capacity Building	[REDACTED]	Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of [REDACTED] Local Council	\$ [REDACTED]	13	6,700

Sector	Activity #	Activity Name	Value	Direct Beneficiaries	Indirect Beneficiaries
Capacity Building		Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of Local Council	\$	0*	0*
Capacity Building		Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of Local Council	\$	0*	0*
Capacity Building		Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of Local Council	\$	0*	0*
Capacity Building		Finance and Admin for Essential Services	\$	15	25,100
Capacity Building		Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of Local Council	\$	15	10,800
Capacity Building		Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity of Local Council	\$	21	17,000
Capacity Building		Basic Assistance Package for Local Council	\$	12	47,000
Capacity Building		Rehabilitation of Education Directorate and Operation via Solar Energy	\$	26	14,672
Capacity Building		Rehabilitation and Operation of the Provincial Council's Main Building via Solar Energy	\$	31	800,000
Capacity Building		Enhancing Financial and Administrative Capacity for Provincial Council	\$	31	800,000
Capacity Building		Building the Outreach Capacity of Provincial Council	\$	31	800,000
Capacity Building		Strengthening Women Civil Society in Governorate	\$	0*	0*
Capacity Building		Basic Assistance Package for Local Council	\$	15	0
Capacity Building		Rehabilitation of LC Building and Basic Assistance Package.	\$	17	29,000
Capacity Building		Basic Assistance Package for Local Council	\$	14	0
Capacity Building		Remote technical support for the establishment and short-term operation of	\$	0	0
Capacity Building		Establishment of Interim Water Authority	\$	12	0
Capacity Building			\$	820	3,095,319
Education		Creation of Multipurpose Room for Three Schools in	\$	570	3,420
Education		Creation of Multipurpose Room for School in	\$	0	0

Sector	Activity #	Activity Name	Value	Direct Beneficiaries	Indirect Beneficiaries
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Six Schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	540	2,000
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Four Schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	581	2,905
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Five Schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	2200	11,000
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Five Schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	1292	6,460
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Four schools around ██████████	\$ ██████████	623	3,115
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Three schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	980	4,895
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Two Schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	296	1,480
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Six schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	2468	12,100
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Three Schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	380	1,900
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Nine Schools in ██████████	\$ ██████████	2500	28,000
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of Nine Schools Around ██████████	\$ ██████████	2525	12,625
Education	██████████	Rehabilitation of ██████████ School and ██████████ School	\$ ██████████	0	0
Education			\$ ██████████	14,955	89,900
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	9000	6,000
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	17600	3,000
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	2100	0
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	17000	0
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	6300	0
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	37730	0
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	33000	0
Electrical	██████████	Enhancing Provision of Electricity in ██████████	\$ ██████████	8500	42,000
Electrical	██████████	Rehabilitation of Power Transmission Lines from ██████████ Dam to ██████████ Irrigation Project	\$ ██████████	300000	0
Electrical			\$ ██████████	431,230	51,000
Health	██████████	Expansion and Operation of ██████████ Hospital via Solar Energy	\$ ██████████	10470	100,000
Health	██████████	Provision and Installation of Heating and Domestic Water Heating Systems in ██████████ Hospital	\$ ██████████	10000	200,000

Sector	Activity #	Activity Name	Value	Direct Beneficiaries	Indirect Beneficiaries
Health	[REDACTED]	Operation of [REDACTED] Hospital via Solar	\$ [REDACTED]	20900	20,900
Health	[REDACTED]	Operating [REDACTED] Hospital via Solar	\$ [REDACTED]	300000	0
Health	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation and Operation of [REDACTED] Hospital via Solar Energy	\$ [REDACTED]	39000	0
Health	[REDACTED]	Operating [REDACTED] Hospital via Solar Energy and Hospital Administrative Materials	\$ [REDACTED]	45000	192,000
Health	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation and Operation of [REDACTED] Clinic via Solar Energy	\$ [REDACTED]	1450	14,000
Health	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation and Operation of [REDACTED] Hospital Via Solar Energy	\$ [REDACTED]	3640	13,500
Health	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation and Operation of [REDACTED] Medical Center via Solar Energy	\$ [REDACTED]	900	10,800
Health	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Hospital	\$ [REDACTED]	0	0
Health			\$ [REDACTED]	431,360	551,200
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Dairy Livelihood Coordination Committee (LCC)	\$ [REDACTED]	14	33,500
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	\$ [REDACTED]	7	33,500
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	\$ [REDACTED]	8	17,140
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	\$ [REDACTED]	14	17,140
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	\$ [REDACTED]	5	33,500
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Dairy Factory	\$ [REDACTED]	10	3,550
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Market	\$ [REDACTED]	0	0
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	SE [REDACTED] Olive Oil Livelihoods Coordinating Committee	\$ [REDACTED]	7	0
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Facility	\$ [REDACTED]	23	20,000
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press Rehabilitation	\$ [REDACTED]	8	45,000
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press	\$ [REDACTED]	8	65,000
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Olive Oil Press	\$ [REDACTED]	1093	5,465
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Supporting Animal Feed Livelihoods Coordinating Committee in Northwest [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	12	0
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of Irrigation Canals in Ar-[REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	1000	900,000
Livelihoods	[REDACTED]	Rehabilitation of [REDACTED] Bakery in [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	50	7,000

Sector	Activity #	Activity Name	Value	Direct Beneficiaries	Indirect Beneficiaries
Livelihoods		Rehabilitation of Bakery in	\$	0	0
Livelihoods		Rehabilitation of Bakery in	\$	60	12,000
Livelihoods			\$	2,319	1,192,795
Public Use		A Hybrid Grant to the to provide office equipment and cover operational costs for a period of six months	\$	30000	44,500
Public Use		Provision and Installation of Solar Lighting Units for Roads	\$	84000	30,600
Public Use		Provision and Installation of Solar Lighting Units	\$	45000	8,000
Public Use		Rehabilitation of Bakery	\$	28000	11
Public Use		Rehabilitation of Bakery	\$	25000	0
Public Use		Rehabilitation of Bakery	\$	10000	0
Public Use			\$	222,000	83,111
WASH		Operation of Well #1 and Pumping Station via Solar Energy	\$	25000	0
WASH		Enhancing Hydraulic Essential Services in	\$	9000	6,000
WASH		Operating Pumping station via Solar	\$	9000	6,000
WASH		Operation of Well via Solar Energy	\$	4500	2,000
WASH		Installation of Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Pilot	\$	15000	2,000
WASH		Rehabilitation of Hydraulic Sources in	\$	6300	1,000
WASH		Enhancing Hydraulic Services in	\$	20600	0
WASH		Operating Hydraulic Sources Via Solar Energy	\$	14000	4,000
WASH		Enhancing Hydraulic Services in	\$	5500	9,00
WASH		Enhancing Drinking Water Services in	\$	2100	0
WASH		Enhancing Drinking Water Services in	\$	11250	0
WASH		Enhancing Drinking Water Services in	\$	6300	0
WASH		Enhancing Drinking Water Services in	\$	13500	3,500
WASH		Enhancing Drinking Water Services in	\$	37730	0
WASH		Enhancing Drinking Water Services in	\$	4550	0

Sector	Activity #	Activity Name	Value	Direct Beneficiaries	Indirect Beneficiaries
WASH	██████████	Enhancing Drinking Water Services in ██████████	\$ ██████████	16000	5,000
WASH	██████████	Operation of ██████████ Well via Solar Energy	\$ ██████████	0	0
WASH	██████████	Enhancing Drinking Water Services in ██████████	\$ ██████████	28000	2,500
WASH	██████████	Enhancing Drinking Water Services in ██████████	\$ ██████████	10000	3,000
WASH	██████████	Enhancing Drinking Water Services in ██████████	\$ ██████████	24000	0
WASH	██████████	Rehabilitation of ██████████ Drinking Water Pumping Station	\$ ██████████	0	0
WASH			\$ ██████████	262,330	35,900

TOTAL			\$ ██████████	1,365,014**	5,099,225**
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* Beneficiary numbers for capacity building trainings are based on participant lists that will be finalized upon receipt of activity reports from subcontractors.

** Numbers not yet adjusted for double counting.

ANNEX II: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Indicator	Baseline	Y1 Actual	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Q2 Target	Q2 Actual	Q3 Target	Q3 Actual	Cumulative Total	LOP Target	% Achieved
G1: % of Syrian target communities reporting a perceived increase in the stability of their community	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	67%	-	75%	Partially Achieved
SO1: % of Syrian target communities reporting quality of SES II infrastructure services have improved	0	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	85%	-
1.1.1 # of beneficiaries receiving improved infrastructure services due to USG assistance (F standard 4.4-8) ⁶	Direct: 0	12,911	100,000	166,068	190,000	31,467	190,000	131,901	327,955	660,000	49.69%
	Indirect: 0	56,488	110,500	72,385	227,000	128,507	188,500	67,267	253,301	780,000	32.47%
1.1.2 # of essential service activities completed	0	4	21	18	45	24	60	19	65	135	48.15%
<i>Disaggregation: % of assessed activities with maintained operations post-completion</i>	0	N/A	≥75%	N/A	≥75%	N/A	≥75%	100% (4/4)	N/A	≥75%	Achieved
<i>Disaggregation: % of activities that incorporate significant cost share from a local Syrian Partner</i>	0	N/A	≥30%	0%	≥30%	N/A	≥30%	N/A	N/A	≥30%	N/A
1.1.3 % of Syrian target communities that perceive an increase in economic livelihood opportunities	N/A	N/A*	-	-	-	-	-	63%	-	65%	Partially Achieved
1.1.4 # of jobs created as a result of program interventions	0 FT	74F/12M	48	0F/51M	120	22F/9M	120	1F/29M	604	450	134.22%
	0 PT	3F/31M		18F/329M		6F/3M		0F/16M			
1.1.5 # of value chain projects completed	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	8	0%
1.1.6 % of value chain actors that have increased their business output as a result of livelihoods interventions	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	60%	N/A	N/A	65%	N/A
SO2: % of communities in which members report increased accountability and legitimacy in local governance entities	N/A	100%	-	-	-	-	-	88%	100%	≥80%	Achieved

⁶ SES II adjusts totals for this indicator based on its geographic double counting elimination method. This became necessary with the large scale of SES II activities and geographic overlap, which resulted in inflated beneficiary figures. Due to this method, figures aggregated at the sectoral, quarterly, and life of program level do not necessarily add up consecutively. At each level of aggregation, more double counting is introduced as activities overlap within communities, increasing the amount by which the total must be adjusted.

Indicator	Baseline	Y1 Actual	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Q2 Target	Q2 Actual	Q3 Target	Q3 Actual	Cumulative Total	LOP Target	% Achieved
2.1.1 % of Syrian partners that demonstrated an increase in their Financial and Administrative Capacity Assessment Tool (FACT) score	0	0	20%	N/A	30%	N/A	60%	N/A	N/A	70%	N/A
2.1.2 # of events or activities designed to engage community members in the prioritization of needs and activity identification	0	150	50	60	75	89	25	20	319	300	108.67%
GI 1 % of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income, or employment) (F standard GNDR-2)	0	N/A	20%	N/A	30%	N/A	30%	N/A	N/A	30%	N/A
GI 2 # of local women participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported by USG assistance (F standard GNDR-10)	NA	4	5	0	7	3	9	0	8	10	80.00%

Indicator Progress Analysis

1.1.2 # of essential service activities completed – disaggregation: % of activities that incorporate significant cost share from a local Syrian partner. Many SES II activities that were originally set to be completed in two years will be continue into Year 3 due to USAID exercising the option year. However, the program is seeking to increase the pace of implementation beyond the approximate 20 essential services activities it is now achieving per quarter as the focus will be on completing ongoing activities. Targets will be adjusted outward for Year 3 to account for this program variance.

1.1.4 # of jobs created as a result of program interventions. SES II implemented a new data collection method this quarter, which led to a re-count on this indicator and modifications to the PMP over the life of the program. The program used a new verification tool to collect data from local councils to increase the quality of figures being reported. As a result of going back to every completed activity, some additional jobs were found to be created that hadn't previously been reported and are now disaggregated by part-time/full-time and gender, per the PIRS. Figures increased primarily due to a few instances in which a facility was not functional before SES II intervention and then became functional after, resulting in a significant number of new jobs.

Gender Indicators 1 & 2. Due to the departure of the Gender Coordinator, the program has revisited certain aspects of its approach to gender inclusion and is working to determine how achievements against these indicators will be realized and reported. Women are still being included in many ways across the program, however, the focus on women's leadership/economic empowerment in these two indicators means activities must be designed specifically to support the requirements outlined in Performance Indicator Reference Sheets.

1.1.5 # of value chain projects completed. No value chain projects have been completed to date, although progress through activities is being made. Please refer to the discussion at the end of Section 9.1 regarding value chain projects.

1.1.6 % of value chain actors that have increased their business output as a result of livelihoods interventions. No value chain activities have been assessed yet to date; assessments are planned for the coming quarter.

Target Setting

First year targets for SES II were set based on available historical program data and the projected pace of activity completion over the course of the year. Two primary factors account for differences between achievements and targets during the past several quarters: 1) lack of reliable or complete historical data in Year 1 that was used to establish targets; and 2) unforeseen program variances outside of the program's control. SES II revised its Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Plan and established Year 2 targets around the same time that it began revisiting data quality and recollection efforts for Year 1. Targets based on the available data from that period were resultantly less useful in predictive analysis since new data quality standards were imposed and caused many figures used in the analysis to be adjusted after the fact.

Additionally, the program implemented activities at a different pace than anticipated; with the option year approved, activity completion has spread out somewhat as the program has gained

time to complete awarded grants and subcontracts. With the departure of the Gender Coordinator this quarter, the approach to gender has also changed and new methods of reaching indicator targets against gender will be established in the coming quarter. Collectively, these factors have impacted the accuracy of target setting in Year 2 but have also provided a solid basis for setting them in Year 3. Historical performance data has been rectified and is more available, the program has started to show a steadier pace of implementation (20-25 activities completed per quarter), and the program has increased its capacity to monitor indicators by integrating them with CMORE/SES II portal while expanding its capability for predictive analysis overall. As such, targets for Year 3 will be set sometime in the next quarter with these factors taken into consideration and more reliable information on which to base the analysis.

Ad Hoc Stability Assessment

During the quarter, [REDACTED] conducted an ad hoc stability assessment to gather benchmark data against the perception level indicators G1, SO1, 1.1.3, and SO2. Progress against these indicators show the program is on-track to meet its annual targets for community perceptions. Data was not available for SO1, but [REDACTED] did provide informative data in response to this indicator and showed generally positive results that essential service activities were priorities in the community and that implemented activities were still operational. The complete report can be found on SES II's reporting portal or be obtained by request.

