

## Global Communities and PCI Resilience, Rebuilding and Humanitarian Assistance



### Global Communities' Lebanon Engagement

Global Communities and PCI, a Global Communities Partner, have implemented community-driven humanitarian assistance programs for decades, responding to the needs of millions of families in countries around the globe. From natural disasters, to armed conflict, to social and economic upheaval, we are there to meet the humanitarian needs of vulnerable people affected by crisis. We work in partnership with a range of community stakeholders, both public and private, to enable communities to recover from crisis, rebuild safely, and restart livelihoods sooner, laying the foundation for long-term recovery.

Global Communities, known locally as CHF International, has deep roots in Lebanon, where we have worked to support communities in shelter solutions, economic development, and community infrastructure. Over nearly three decades, our work has reached tens of thousands of Lebanese families. Letting communities be the central guide of their own development, Global Communities has worked with donors including USAID, UNHCR, and the Caterpillar Foundation to construct and repair schools, improve roads, and rehabilitate drainage and irrigation canals to support the wellbeing and livelihoods of people and communities.

**Vitas Group** was founded by Global Communities, and shares its mission of improving the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people. Vitas operates in Jordan, Lebanon, Romania, Palestine, and Iraq, with its first franchisee company in Egypt that launched in early 2019. As of June 2020, Vitas served 85,330 clients and had an outstanding portfolio of \$238 million.

Since 2004, Vitas companies have disbursed more than **\$3 billion** to over **1 million** customers with an annual default rate **below two percent**.

### Vitas Lebanon

Vitas Lebanon has been operating in Lebanon since 1999, first, as an NGO through a cooperative agreement with USAID, then as a service company working with three Lebanese banks in 2004, and finally as a non-bank financial institution specialized in microfinance services for the vulnerable population. Over the years, Vitas Lebanon has provided financial services to the most vulnerable segments of the Lebanese population, particularly women, youth, and the under-privileged in rural areas. Vitas Lebanon's role within the Lebanese community has been instrumental as a catalyst of positive long-lasting change.

Vitas Lebanon signed a Loan Guarantee Facility with the Development Finance Corporation (DFC), formerly known as Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) in 2007 for up to \$20 million to support enterprise and housing loans. In 2012, facility was renewed and increased to \$50 million. In 2015, Vitas Lebanon received OPIC's Impact Award in the Access to Finance category. The current facility is about to be increased to \$150,000,000. Since 2007, DFC has guaranteed \$204.5 million in loans to Lebanese entrepreneurs and homeowners.

### Li Beirut

"Li Beirut" is a charitable initiative started by Vitas Lebanon in partnership with Global Communities and other local partners to assist local communities in alleviating the impact of the disaster caused by the Beirut Explosion through fundraising for housing repair and rehabilitation. Vitas Lebanon has longstanding social and development mission and commitments, in normal circumstances, exercised by the provision of microfinance services to the under-privileged and vulnerable segments of the Lebanese population.

Vitas Lebanon renewed its unwavering commitment to the local community, and created Li Beirut for fundraising to support, assist, and help the victims of the Beirut explosion.

## Global Humanitarian Approach: Response, Resilience, Recovery

At Global Communities and PCI, we are committed to developing innovative programs that lay the foundation for long-term recovery. Our assistance is concentrated on meeting immediate needs, including food and shelter, while restarting livelihoods, rebuilding homes and neighborhoods, and helping families manage and recover from the trauma of disaster and conflict. We engage with a broad range of stakeholders as part of our community-based approach, with a particular focus on building the resilience of the communities we serve, so that they may become more resistant to the future shocks and stresses brought on by the crisis at hand.

**In Syria, we have repaired or rehabilitated 2,190 household shelters benefiting 13,879 people, and 38 collective shelters, benefiting 3,142 people.**

We have implemented these programs around the world in a variety of contexts. In Syria, where the protracted crisis has led to numerous waves of shelter and food security emergencies, Global Communities has been responding since 2014 with multi-sectoral programming, including shelter rehabilitation, and distribution of shelter kits, ready to eat rations, and agricultural kits. Through a dual-track approach we address immediate, life-saving needs, while working with communities for sustainable solutions. Similarly, in Haiti, Global Communities and PCI responded to the 2010 earthquake, working to repair destroyed neighborhoods, constructing transitional shelters, improving WASH infrastructure, and integrating critical community planning and risk mitigation activities. PCI returned to Haiti in 2019 to study the long-term impact of the 2010 interventions, and found that they had delivered long-term, sustainable neighborhood improvements and living conditions, in large part by providing durable shelter solutions. These solutions included construction of emergency and transitional shelter, and provision of retaining walls and other basic risk mitigation infrastructure.



*Two-story transitional shelters delivered through the USAID Katye program, implemented in Haiti by Global Communities and PCI following the 2010 earthquake.*

## Core Sector Expertise

### Shelter

Global Communities is highly experienced in responding to shelter-related crises, with recent responses in both Syria and Lebanon. In Syria, to support those who need to rebuild their residences, often after they have been displaced from their homes, we have repaired or rehabilitated 2,190 household shelters benefiting 13,879 people, and 38 collective shelters, benefitting 3,142 people. These repairs include rebuilding walls, patching rooves, and fixing doors and windows. In Lebanon, we worked to repair 15 collective centers, and worked to identify unfinished substandard shelter structures, and negotiated with landlords to repair or improve their shelters in exchange for free rent. In total, we were able to repair a total of 318 homes and secure free rent for 2,890, supporting Syrian refugees living in Mt. Lebanon.

### Food Security

To help communities recover from natural or manmade disasters, our emergency and transitional programs reduce food aid dependency, improve household nutrition, provide additional income, and promote self-reliance. We utilize approaches such as cash transfers, food assistance, or innovative electronic vouchers for food or agricultural inputs. We take care to deliver services in such a way that supports struggling and/or fragmented local markets.

### Livelihoods

Rebuilding livelihoods and restarting economic activity is a critical component for disaster-affected families as they restart their lives. Without support for livelihoods or widespread economic recovery, the economy of a community remains reliant on handouts and can stagnate for years following a disaster. Helping families rebuild their livelihoods through short-term employment, provision of inputs or assistance to enable individuals to start or resume their own businesses, or longer-term vocational training, enables them to become proactive agents in control of their own recovery process. Our programs are designed to help reduce food aid dependency, improve household nutrition and food availability, and provide income.

### Protection

The goal of our protection services is to improve the well-being of those we serve and empower them to employ positive coping mechanisms in the face of significant hardship. Important to the Global Communities approach is the mainstreaming of protection activities throughout our humanitarian programs. By viewing other sectors, such as WASH, Shelter, and Food Security and Livelihoods through a Protection lens, we are able to provide comprehensive programming that is enhanced to provide protection to the vulnerable and avoid inadvertently causing harm.