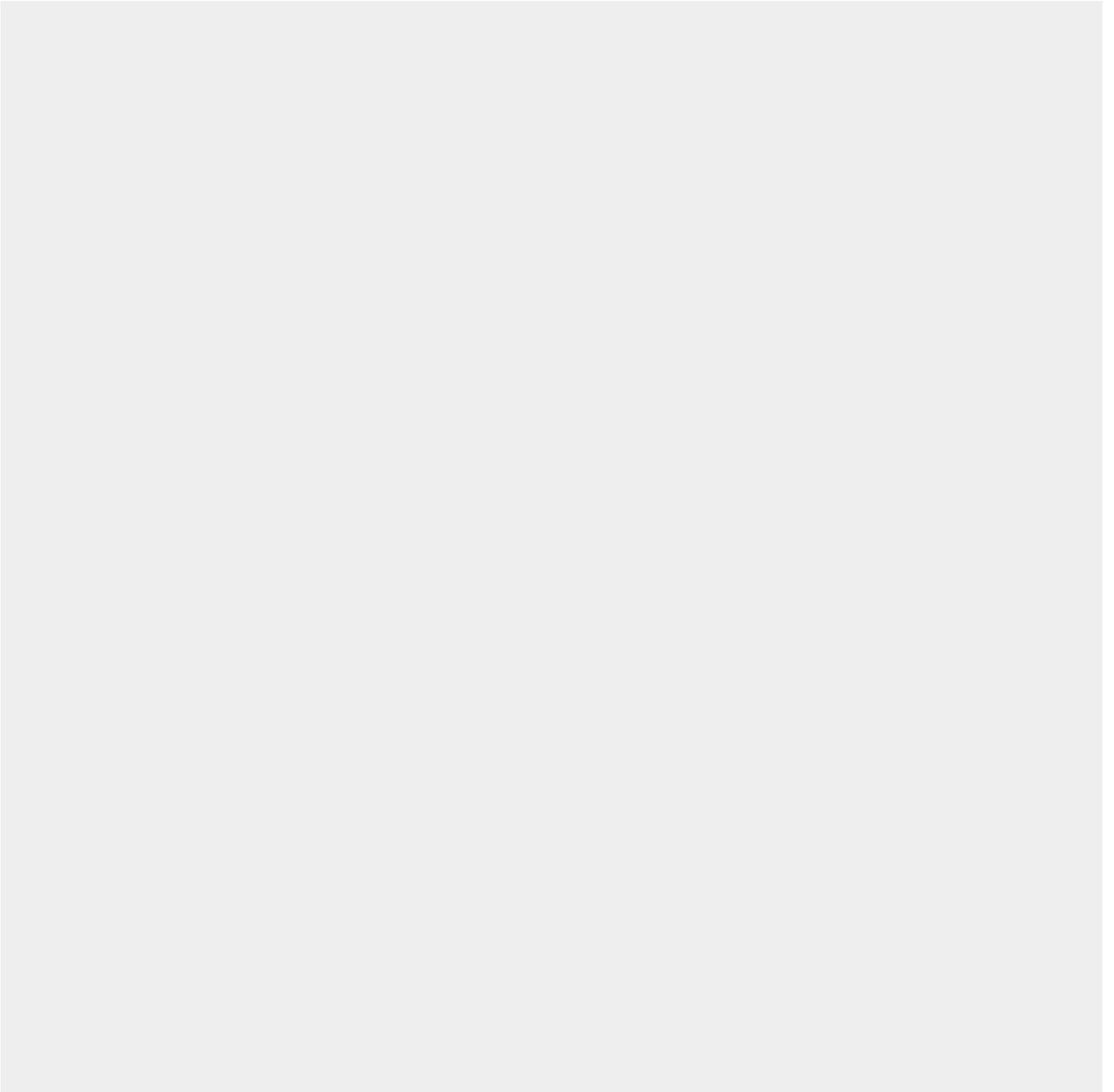## [Fostering solidarity by empowering local businesses](#) [1]

Fostering solidarity by empowering local businesses

Introduction

Image

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> This programme is very important to develop our community and create solidarity between its members. Our region needs these kinds of programmes to increase productivity and to create some stability for people.

Mahmoud's shop is part of the World Food Programme's network of businesses where vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees can use their cash assistance card to purchase food products. "I

started with the programme in 2017. I decided to be part of it after some research on how to expand my business. I found that it was a good opportunity," he explains. In order to get into the programme, a shop owner has to fill out a form. World Food Programme's officials visit the applicant's place of business and make sure that all is in order. Since being part of the programme, Mahmoud's sales increased about 50-60%.

Mahmoud highlights how programmes like this are important not only to support vulnerable families in addressing their basic food needs, but also to create "stronger solidarity between people." This programme "also creates job opportunities and contributes to the sustainability of the region. This programme is needed on the long term," he says.

Vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees come to the shop once a month, when their card is recharged. The amount received every month depends on how many members a family or household is composed of. Beneficiaries of WPF's cash assistance can purchase food products with the card, but they have to buy other items with their own resources.

Mohammad is a regular client in Mahmoud's shop. "He comes in every 15 or 16 of the month when his card is recharged to buy some food. He is from one of the poorest families in the area. He buys products that can help sustain him and we offer the best service we can, from delivery to giving discounts so he can get by," says Mahmoud.

With the support of the EU Trust Fund, WFP is trying to tackle the dire living conditions of thousands of poor and vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees, while providing technical assistance to build and strengthen national systems in implementing safety nets.

[creating_solidarity_amongst_people_mohammad_wfp_lebanon](#) [2]

Video of creating_solidarity_amongst_people_mohammad_wfp_lebanon

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Written by Claudia Nocente On the Wed, 18/09/2019 - 15:36

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