



UN HABITAT
نحو مستقبل حضري أفضل



بتمويل من الاتحاد الأوروبي

PRESS RELEASE

Municipal Empowerment and Resilience Project activities launch in Lebanon

Beirut, 29 June 2020 - *The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), with the support of the European Union, are organizing a series of workshops in the North, South and Northern Metn regions of Lebanon, to launch the activities of the Municipal Empowerment and Resilience Project (MERP).*

At a time of unprecedented challenges, for local government in Lebanon, confronted by both the Syrian displacement crisis and Lebanon's economic crisis, this new project will enhance the capacity of municipalities and Union of Municipalities in these regions to better respond to local needs during times of crisis.

With a budget of more than US\$17 million, funded by the European Union through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the EU Madad Fund, the Project will provide financial support and technical assistance to municipalities and Unions of Municipalities (UoMs). The objective of such a support is to enable them to improve basic services and invest in local economic development activities that will benefit Lebanese communities and refugees alike.

In particular, the Project will support municipalities and local businesses to join forces to create much-needed jobs, allowing men, women and youth to support themselves and their families.

Training opportunities for municipal staff and guidance on improving financial practices and municipal procedures provided by the Project, will create more accountable and efficient local government systems. Community outreach supported by the Project will encourage citizens to be engaged in local development.

At the same time, the Project will work together with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) to strengthen national and subnational governance systems to ensure that local authorities have stable, long-term support.

Working together with municipalities, UoMs and MoIM, the Project aims at developing stronger and more responsive local governments and a better quality of life for the communities they serve for years to come.

Eng. Hassan Dbouk, Head of Union of Tyre Region Municipalities, said: *“What makes the Project even more important are the current circumstances that are prevailing in Lebanon currently and we hope that by meeting the aspirations of the local communities and overcoming as much as possible the difficulties of the corona pandemic, the hard economic and living conditions and the deterioration of the rate of the Lebanese pounds.”*

Hussein Ghamraoui, Head of Urban Community Al-Fayhaa, said: *“Al-Fayhaa cities are the Lebanese regions that have suffered for a long time from escalating tensions, crises and recurrent conflicts and are the most affected by the Syrian crisis. Hence, the importance of the Municipal Empowerment and Resilience Project as a tool to support the Urban Community Al-Fayhaa and the affiliated municipalities through the development projects that will be implemented.”*

The European Union stands by Municipalities and Unions of Municipalities in Lebanon to support them in delivering the adequate services to Lebanese citizens and refugees alike, while creating accountable and efficient local government systems.

END

For more information please contact:

Aline Kiwan, Media and Communication Officer, at aline.kiwan@un.org, mobile 03-294070

Note to editors

About the Municipal Empowerment and Resilience Project (MERP)

MERP is a joint project by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). The Project is being implemented between 2019 and 2022 in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) and funded by the European Union (EU), through its Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the EU “Madad Fund.” The project aims to strengthen the long-term resilience of subnational authorities in Lebanon as well as host communities and displaced persons affected by the Syrian crisis.

Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3hBveux>

About the European Union (EU)

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of

enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

Learn more on the work of the EU in Lebanon at

https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/lebanon_en or follow on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at @EUinLebanon

Learn more on the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the EU Madad Fund, at <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/> or follow on Twitter at @EU_NEAR, on Facebook at EU Neighbourhood & Enlargement and on Instagram at EU_NEAR

About the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and the planet.

Learn more at www.lb.undp.org or follow on Twitter at @UNDP_Lebanon, on Facebook at UNDP Lebanon and on Instagram at UNDP_Lebanon

About the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

UN-Habitat works in over 90 countries supporting people in cities and human settlements for a better urban future. Working with governments and local partners, its high impact projects combine world-class expertise and local knowledge to deliver timely and targeted solutions. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes a dedicated Goal on cities, SDG 11 – to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Learn more at www.unhabitat.org/lebanon or follow on Twitter at @UNHabitatLB, on Facebook at UN-Habitat Lebanon and on Instagram at UNHabitatLB