

# Socio-Economic Rehabilitation Programme for South Lebanon phase II



## From recovery to development

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### Eleven years of support to southern communities

The “Socio Economic Rehabilitation Programme in South Lebanon” was initiated by UNDP and the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), representing the Lebanese government, after the liberation of the occupied areas in South Lebanon in May 2000. The programme was designed to include several interventions to be implemented in cooperation with local actors and agents. The post conflict development program focused on reconciliation and on building local capacity to create an enabling and stable environment and support the return of the internally displaced persons. Unfortunately, the July 2006 war and its severe consequences resulted in a profound deterioration in the living conditions in South Lebanon compounded by increased poverty.



Immediately after the war and until 2009, UNDP focused on emergency and quick impact interventions and led the UN efforts to support the recovery of the South. Several international and local organizations worked jointly with local authorities to implement emergency and recovery assistance programs. Over the course of 4 years (2006-2010), United Nations' agencies implemented post-war recovery programming in over 200 villages in the South; these programs range from small-scale repairs to community infrastructure to large economic and social empowerment. The massive destruction and the adverse war impact on socio-economic life are still far from being recovered. The local economy that was hardly recovering from the long years of occupation received a massive drawback.



Another Socio-Economic Rehabilitation Programme was launched in May 2009; it covers the entire South Lebanon region with a wider engagement to an array of specialized activities, ranging from the support to local governance, inclusive reconciliation and youth mobilization, and capacity development to socio-economic rehabilitation. This program aims to ensure a smooth transition from rehabilitation activities to local and regional development. UNDP launched with its partners, ADR and KDC, a study to assess the needs and capacity of the community institutions and livelihood in 36 targeted communities in south Lebanon; those 36 villages are representatives of cluster of villages in the South from a socio economic point of view. The overall objective of the assessment study was to improve the quality of service delivery by community institutions and enhance livelihood conditions of the population in South Lebanon through socio- economic development. The project intended to assess the capacity and needs of the various community institutions, propose capacity-

## Mine Victims: Promises finally taking shape

Based on the needs assessment recommendations, UNDP South Programme finalized the vocational training with 60 mine and cluster bombs victims from Nabatiye, Marjayoun, Hasbaya, Bent Jbeil and Tyre kadaas which were identified with the support of the Lebanese Mine Action Center (LMAC) and trained by YMCA and IMTI on:

1. Computer IT (Hardware & Software)
2. Secretariat
3. Cellular Phone repairing
4. Electrical & Plumbing works

Some of the beneficiaries were interviewed during the last days of the training to evaluate



building responses, assess the needs of targeted communities and propose socio-economic interventions to improve livelihoods conditions.

Therefore, based on the study's recommendations numerous integrated interventions were undertaken in the South with various strata of the society: municipalities, cooperatives, mine victims, small and medium enterprises, women and youth. Some of the 2011 success stories will be highlighted in this newsletter, symbolizing the closure of the UNDP Socio Economic Rehabilitation Programme in the South.

After 11 years of support to Southern communities, the Socio Economic Programme will be sustained by the UNDP Art Gold Programme in the South focusing on three main themes: local economic development, decentralized cooperation aiming to enhance the exchange of expertise, and the participatory work to attain national ownership.

the impact of the training and derive lessons learnt. Overall, the entire trainees consulted were satisfied with the training they received and are confident that it has significantly increased their knowledge in the topics studied. Most of the interviewees had no previous experience in the topics chosen and believe that the training will help them find a job.

However, those who attended the secretariat sessions complained that the time allocated to the sessions was not sufficient, "we captured the basics of computer skills, enough to drive our interest to dig further into the topic" explained Abbas "but we need to have an advanced level". The most striking aspect of the focus group was the interest and ambition of the beneficiaries in learning: "if you can help us, we would love to have more sessions, become professionals, learn new languages... nowadays, if you don't know how to use the computer it is as if you were illiterate...i do not want to stay illiterate!" insisted Khodor. Maryam acknowledged what her colleagues said "it is the first time we actually get real support; many organizations came to us with promises, **we filled many applications since our various accidents, but promises never concretized**". Hassan feels he was lucky to

be selected "when I was filling the questionnaire I felt that it was one additional paper that will be covered with dust; when they called me I was still suspicious...now I am waiting for my certificate in order to start applying for jobs at phone repairs shops". Alaa is now 19 years old, he is unemployed and left school at the age of 13 "I joined the electrical and plumbing works sessions because it does not involve systematic studies like school". Moustapha and his class colleagues confirmed that "we can find jobs or even start our own businesses; I am already applying what I learnt at home and repaired the water system in our kitchen". Imad, father of five children is working in a butchery, he testified that he saved at least 300\$ by fixing the water pipes himself in his house "my wife was really proud".

Above the training itself and its direct benefits, a spirit of companionship and complicity was prevailing in the room "I did not know any of my colleagues in class before, now we are visiting each other and some of us became good friends. In addition to that, it was good to know that other people share the same problems **and we could talk about our wounds to someone who will understand**" concluded Imad.

The group was looking forward to the closing ceremony and the certificate distribution even if many were still suspicious "are we really going to be offered tool kits or is this failed promise?". UNDP fulfilled its promise on the 28th of May in Tyre Rest House, where trainees were congratulated and the tool kits were distributed to insure continuity to the trainees work.

During the ceremony, both the director of YMCA and the manager of UNDP south office highlighted the importance of continuous support to these strata of society that have been neglected so far.

### Mine Victims Challenges:

- Health conditions
- Financial resources
- Integrating the society
- Level of education
- Lack of job opportunities
- The political and security situation
- Lack of skills
- Unfair laws with regard to target groups with special needs
- Lack of support from NGOs and other organizations

Tool kits consisted of the following:

1. Hardware and software pieces for the Computer IT sessions
2. Printers and laptops for the secretariat sessions
3. Hardware and software pieces & laptops for the Cellular Phone repairing sessions
4. Electrical and mechanical machinery for the Electrical & Plumbing works sessions

Therefore new projects were identified and are being implemented:

- Vocational training program for 20 CBU/UXO victims on mechanical works of cooling and heating systems
- Capacity building program at farm location for 13 CBU/UXO victims farmers & 9 cow breeders

An integrated support to mine victims was recommended, in the needs assessment analysis, rather than treating them as a separate target group. This could be accomplished by offering mine victims assistance within the largest support provided to the communities and integrating those who need vocational training within existing centers.



The mine victims interviewed can be broadly classified as follows:

- Children (12-14 years old), most of them are still in school. All aim to continue schooling or vocational school until the age of 18
- Youth (15-25 years old): most of them are unemployed and are unaware of their potentials; they are willing to learn a skill
- Farmers who lost their assets during the 2006 war (particularly the shepherds)
- Self-employed: farmers and those with certain technical skills
- Skilled people ready to start a business and willing to get a loan combined with a grant
- Unemployed of various ages, where we can find a number of illiterates, and some of them are willing to learn technical skills

### Mine Victims Recommendations:

- Integrate those who need vocational training within existing centres
- Secure job opportunities
- Support those who have serious injuries and are unable to work, through the provision of assets to enable them to survive
- Support those who are already self-employed in order for them to expand their business through training in business management
- Support those looking for self employment through training in business creation and entrepreneurship

### Cooperatives: a complete cycle

Since 2000, the UNDP Socio economic rehabilitation Programme for south Lebanon is undertaking intensive work with the cooperatives of the South. However, the phase two of the Programme initiated in 2009 is specifically interesting to consider due to its complete cycle of activities ensuring its sustainability. In fact, the Programme supported the cooperatives, starting with an assessment of needs, followed by trainings, and finishing with projects including exhibitions, equipment granting, and creating linkages through a marketing and packaging center.



### Assessments

Prior to implementing projects two types of assessment were conducted to identify the needs of the cooperatives: one at a macro level and the other at a micro level. At a macro level, ADR/ KDC were contracted to assess cooperatives in 36 villages representatives of cluster of villages. The results of the assessment led to the identification of: the situation of cooperatives of the south, the challenges facing those cooperatives, their capacity gaps and weaknesses as well as intervention recommendations. While at a micro level, an in depth assessment of 50 cooperatives was conducted by Atayib El Rif to determine the technical and human resource capacity of cooperatives and to come up with an action plan for each cooperative assessed.

Despite the huge efforts extended by the UN, NGOs and the donor community, the socio economic needs of the South are still far from being met. The reconstruction programs and recovery interventions have mostly mitigated the physical and infrastructure impact of the war. However, given the magnitude of destruction, and the economic and political crisis following the war, the socio economic needs still necessitate improvement interventions.

For instance, the principal agricultural sector is still largely hindered by the presence of unexploded cluster sub-munitions. While Agricultural cooperatives and Small Medium Enterprises (SME) in the region undertake extensive work to retain a livelihood that is significantly deteriorating, they are confronted by several constraints.

### Trainings

Based on the assessments' recommendations, general trainings were conducted as well as tailor made on field trainings. The topics of the general trainings were grouped as follows:

- Good manufacturing & hygiene practices and work safety trainings
- Managerial skills trainings on cooperative structure, business operations, and financial management
- Computer skills trainings on computer basics for business, email, Microsoft Word and Excel

Whereas the customized trainings were conducted within the cooperatives premises, and were specifically adapted to their needs. Topics included: marketing, soap, jams and syrups, aromatic herbs, food in oil, olive oil and sweets production.

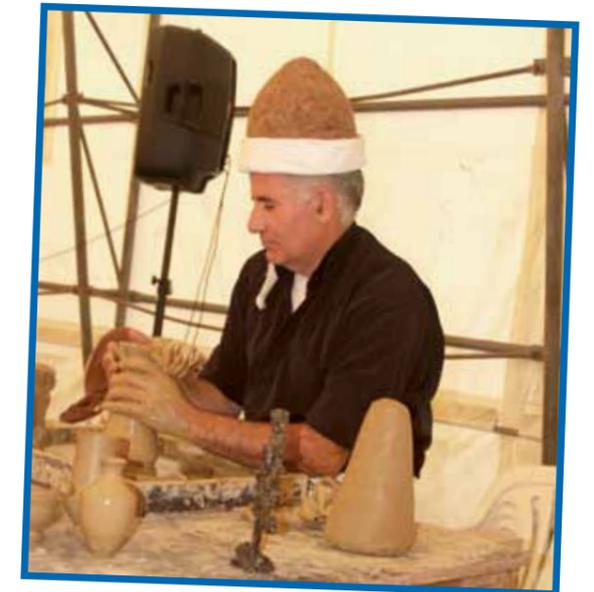
All the trainings handouts and proceedings are being grouped in a booklet that will be shared with cooperatives and will become a training reference book, where production flow charts, recipes and other guiding tools can be found.

### Projects

The assessments also helped identifying priority projects, mainly consisting of equipment grants to proceed in the production in a timely and efficient manner, thus improving the livelihood of the cooperatives members. Moreover, cooperatives are supported through exhibitions; giving them opportunities to market and sell their produces. Finally, the Programme is in the process of establishing a marketing and packaging center in the South serving the cooperatives of the region.

### Cooperatives Challenges:

- Governance (transparency, accountability, understanding of duties)
- Management & Financial Management (allocation & administration of funds, inventories, project proposal, cooperatives sustained mainly through donor support)
- Business performance (feasibility studies, production mix, profit margins, marketing, raw material)
- Understanding of value of co-operative work and implementation of its principles



The support of the cooperatives is not a smooth process; various challenges were encountered on the road. Although most cooperatives have made noticeable progress, political interference and the insufficient practice of the concept of cooperation are still slowing down the process. However, the Programme is working hard to overcome obstacles and believes that capacity building still needs to be sustained.

### Cooperatives Recommendations:

- Assist the Cooperatives in identifying and accessing markets inside and outside Lebanon
- Increase awareness of the cooperatives on the importance of securing loans
- Help the cooperatives enhance their accountability systems
- Advocate for the increase of female and youth members among the board and oversight committee
- Assist the cooperative to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all board and oversight committee members

- Develop, in collaboration with the Directorate General of Cooperatives at the MOA, policy guidelines addressing the issue of compensation of board members
- Provide the cooperative with the mechanisms that will help them update and upgrade their written human resources procedures on a regular basis
- Provide the cooperatives with trainings on strategic planning, accountability, financial management, production management, safety procedures at work, emerging hazards, potential risks, implementation of feasibility studies, provision of clear work procedures and quality standards
- Help the cooperatives establish their financial forecasts
- Enhance entrepreneurship among cooperatives versus culture of grants
- Support is to be focused on partnerships with the few active and relatively successful cooperatives
- Support to cooperatives should be conditional on good governance and management practices
- Support the establishment of networks versus cooperatives
- Support the diversification of crops at the farm level
- Support agricultural products with high potential for income generation and employment creation, as well as to the simplicity of technology required, market potential, size of investment and sustainability

## From theory to practice: Support to Small and Medium Enterprises

Under the Socio- Economic Rehabilitation Programme phase II project, within the Local community economic development strengthened component, one of the activities is the Training of SMEs & local entrepreneurs.

The first phase of the project consisted of training community members and NGOs to become business consultants to better support SMEs. The training focused on issues relevant to most businesses such as trade, quality control, packaging and certifications. The training also gave participants information on available business support services in Lebanon hence allowing these trainees to have a comprehensive approach to business support and counseling.

Ali Yassin, one of the trainees, was impressed by the diversity of the attendees; entrepreneurs, NGOs members, micro credit staffs, social workers, municipality members, business students, private sector staff...; *"this allowed an interesting exchange of information and a diverse perspective of the various topics", "the business ideas we developed in groups during the workshop were useful exercises any entrepreneur should undertake prior to venturing into business, and the manuals we received will be important references in the future"*. Ali Hijazi was initially scared not to be able to follow the course since he is



working as a civil engineer at the municipality of Abrikha *"most of the information was new, but I realized that **business was a necessity for any field of work, especially business planning**. I am looking forward for the field work and I am seriously thinking of starting the wedding agency we developed in our group!"*. Doha Sabagh, member of the UNDP youth group and currently working in a bank, was happy to *"refresh her business concepts"* and was pleased to understand *"how accounting, finance, marketing, and cash flows (fields she studied at university in separate courses) were linked in a common business plan"*. Reef Ghandour, working in a micro credit organization, was sure that this training would help her serve her clients more efficiently.

The training and the support booklets paved the way to the second phase of the project

where trainees had to apply the skills acquired in the field. A consultant was recruited to support trainees and guide them. Divided in groups, trainees approached SMEs in each kadaa; they conducted diagnostic reports of the SMEs during field visits, and reported back to the consultant during various debriefing sessions. Main problems identified in most of the SMEs were related to marketing, brand image, accounting, hygiene & health hazards and customer service. The final consultancy reports were finally handed over to 16 SMEs with a situation analysis and a list of recommendations. Some of the SMEs immediately started applying recommendations mentioned by the trainees: **"it is important to have an external view of our business; sometimes we are so involved in our work that we cannot see anymore very basic mistakes,** and small changes can make a huge difference" mentioned Anwar the owner of a bakery supported.

The consultant along with the trainees and the Programme selected at least one SME from each Kadaa that is qualified to go through the third and last phase of the project, which consists of implementing the recommendations of the diagnostic reports. The SMEs selected to go through the third phase had to be geographically distributed, to make sure that trainees from each kadaa can directly follow up the process and that they went through the whole consultancy experience cycle (theory, field practice & diagnostic reports, field implementation of recommendations). Supported by the Programme, the trainees were in charge of assisting SMEs in applying recommendations, getting quotations, recruiting accountants and designers, checking necessary machineries to be granted...

The needs assessment conducted in the

### SMEs Challenges

- Availability of adequate physical infrastructure (water, electricity)
- Access to technology and modern techniques of production
- Delay of payment by customers
- Access to loans



South recommended promoting entrepreneurial work among youngsters to encourage them to stay in their Southern villages; especially youth members of the UNDP established groups. Mohamad Fawaz, Charbel Louka, and Hassan Khazaal, all members of the youth groups, benefited from the project in different ways: Mohamad, owner of a computer maintenance and retail center, was assisted by Hassan as a trainee of the SME workshop, and was granted a printing machine bought from Charbel, owner of an equipment company and also a trainee in the workshop.

The 3 phases of the projects ensured a comprehension of a complete cycle of business support. Trainees finally received an attestation of participation that can be added to their CVs; thus improving their access to job opportunities.

### SMEs Recommendations:

- Establish business development units in partnership with municipalities with the participation of university graduates from the youth gatherings
- Enhance institution and capacity building of BDS organizations
- Introduce technical and management training of business owners and technical skills of workers in various fields
- Create the demand for services: Promote start-up businesses and entrepreneurship
- Promote women entrepreneurship
- Enhance business performance of SMEs through support in technology and modern techniques of production as well as in technical, safety and health standards
- Enhance the use of the English language

## Municipalities: The impact of trainings & projects

The UNDP organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and of Municipalities a training of municipalities at a national level to improve their capacities to overcome their legal, management, financial and development challenges. In the South, all municipalities and unions were invited to attend the training that attracted numerous participants being mayors, board members or employees. Among others, topics included good governance, the legal framework of municipalities as well as decentralization. Participants got the opportunity to express their needs, priorities and challenges, and were exposed to ways to write projects and involve civil society in local governance.

Khalil Zrek from the municipality of Kfar Roman explained that the workshop increased his knowledge in the role of the municipalities and the committees as well as from the financial point of view. He highlighted that most of the attendees lacked accurate understanding of many of the presented topics, especially concerning the legal framework. He insisted that **"many of the newly elected members presented themselves during the last elections without taking into consideration the criteria and knowledge necessary to be part of the municipality to efficiently serve citizens"**. From a personal point of view, Mr. Zrek testifies that he is now better in organizing conferences and can now differentiate the role of each person within a municipality. Directly after the training the municipality conducted a board meeting and discussed how to improve and apply some of the ideas gathered through the workshop.



Hussein Baddredine the treasurer of Harouf municipality preferred to have the presence of mayors as mandatory *"because the mayor is the right person in charge of transferring the knowledge acquired to the rest of the members and can allocate tasks among members"*. He appreciated interaction between attendees and the sharing of experiences.

Hussein Allawi the mayor of Touline, explained that the municipality of Touline is new and was elected for the first time during 2009, *"this is why I felt that I should personally attend the training"*, *"I confess that I was afraid to get bored, but after the first hour I understood how important the topics were, and the trainers were really good in transmitting the messages in an interactive manner"*.

Abbas Tormos the vice president of Talloussa municipality was impressed by the commitment and active participation of attendees who were very interested by the topics. *"We are still in contact with the trainers; we still need their support and hope that more trainings from this sort will be conducted"*.

Also, in line with the criteria of selection set by the programme staff and following several meetings with the relative Unions/ Municipalities and through community networking, projects were identified and implemented in villages and union of villages.

### Municipalities Recommendations:

- Support a comprehensive reform of the decentralization system in Lebanon
- Support municipalities through investing expertise and resources in developing the human and financial capabilities
- Launch specific interventions targeted to develop technical skills, management systems and coordination, and reporting mechanisms
- Tailor cut training programs, with separate targeting of staff and municipal council members, and further investment in content suitable for each group to improve the effectiveness of capacity building programs
- Consider pooling together resources for larger regional level projects

Selection Criteria included:

- Villages targeted in other recent project activities were avoided in order to address other villages and increase programme coverage
- Unions of Municipalities were targeted proportionally as per the number of municipalities they cover
- All proposed projects had to maintain a reasonable ratio of cost per beneficiary
- Projects had to target at least one of the eight Millennium Development Goals
- Each proposed project had to be part of a global vision or strategic plan of the municipality / union and was studied to be sustainable and in complementarity with other activities
- Projects with positive environmental impact were prioritized

### Municipalities Challenges:

- Financial resources and management
- Human resources & management
- Readiness to engage stakeholders in municipalities work and receptivity to innovative ideas and new paradigms whether of accountability or rights-based approaches
- Interventions at the level of the community with small scale projects do not allow for the targeting of most relevant needs.

## Social cohesion and reconciliation of youth groups

Since 2000, the youth project was planned and set up, out of the recognition of the important role of the sector in the welfare of the ex-occupied area in particular and in the South in General. The project aims to enhance the overall reintegration and social reconciliation seen as a vital aspect of the stabilization of the area.



During eleven consecutive years, the Programme facilitated the interaction of youth from different villages, confessions, and cultural affiliations in order to foster a feeling of common belonging and to develop a strategy for youth contribution towards the development of their region. The general orientation of the project included community development projects, capacity building workshops and summer camps, reintegration and reconciliation as well as recreational and cultural



activities. To date, 60 youth groups were established, around 48 workshops and 16 summer camps were held, more than 120 community activities took place, and four youth groups became NGOs. Now is the time for those youth groups to continue their path without the support of the Programme that is confident that many of them have developed the skills to become charismatic and pragmatic leaders.

## 2011 youth summer camp:

The Programme planned and organized its last summer camp in Kfarhouna for 70 persons from youth groups established in Nabatieh, Jizzine, Marjayoun, Hasbaya, Bint Jbeil and Tyre Kadas. The camp was held from the 26th till the 30th of July 2011. Young leaders from each kadaa who undertook intensive TOT trainings where in charge of the youngsters divided in four working groups; the summer camp was a practice for their training skills acquired. The daily schedule included group discussions on different topics, in addition to sports and leisure activities. Youth were exposed to numerous interactive exercises that focused on the concepts of advocacy, conflict resolution, discrimination, as well as the impact of education and society on citizens.

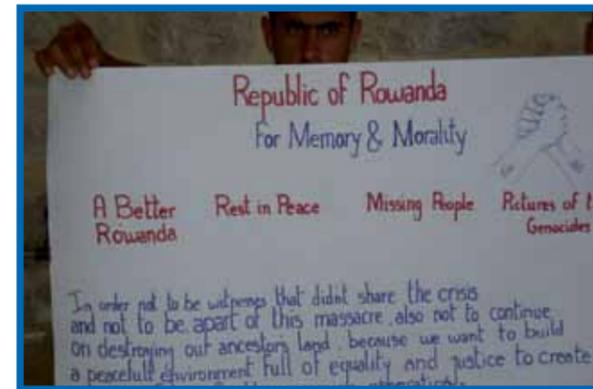
Trainers from Nahwa al Mouwatania conducted different training sessions on the topic of advocacy. Presentations followed by group work were conducted; each group selected a subject/ issue and prepared an advocacy campaign accordingly.



The movie "Hotel Rwanda" was discussed throughout group exercises. Each group had to prepare a media campaign (using different social media tools) to answer the following questions:

1. What chocked you in the movie? Using a video tape
2. What are the similarities between Rwanda and Lebanon, and what are the lessons to be learned for Lebanese? Using a voice recorder
3. What are your expectations about Rwanda 21 years after the genocide? Using printed material, drawings or photos
4. You are the government of Rwanda post genocide; think of a work plan to resolve the problems faced using a website

Interestingly, **the influence of the Lebanese civil war and its continuous impact on Lebanon after all the years was influencing the replies of the youngsters** when talking about Rwanda. The youngsters were certain that Hutus and Tutsis are still fighting against each other regardless of a fragile peace between tribes. Youngsters did not agree on whether to put pictures of the genocide on the website to make sure history won't be repeated, or whether this will increase conflicts. They finally understood that **a peace building recovery phase is a long process involving all parties including the government, citizens, the media and the schools, where enforcement of laws, admitting being guilty, forgiving, and willing to rebuild, should be concepts that prevail.**



The youngsters took part of a rally paper focusing on the Lebanese diversity and the educational system. The inhabitants of the village were involved in the game by helping the youngsters in answering the questions. The game results were discussed after the movie show "History book" focusing on the Lebanese educational system segregating Lebanese according to: the type of schools; its geographical, economical, religious and political affiliation; and on the absence of a unified history book.

A documentary movie "Twelve angry Lebanese" performed by the inmates of Roumieh Prison was also projected. The documentary was followed by discussions with Zeina Dacash the founder of the Drama therapy inside Roumieh prison. The discussions focused on the changes in the inmates' behavior after the therapy and after the performance of the theatre play.

Like every year the youngsters were sad to leave the camp, their long farewells left a

good impression that the objective of re-integration and social reconciliation was reached. Few hours after they came back from the camp, the pictures were already on facebook and youngsters kept communicating through the web, while some others went to Tyre to play soap soccer together!



## A youth group standing on its feet

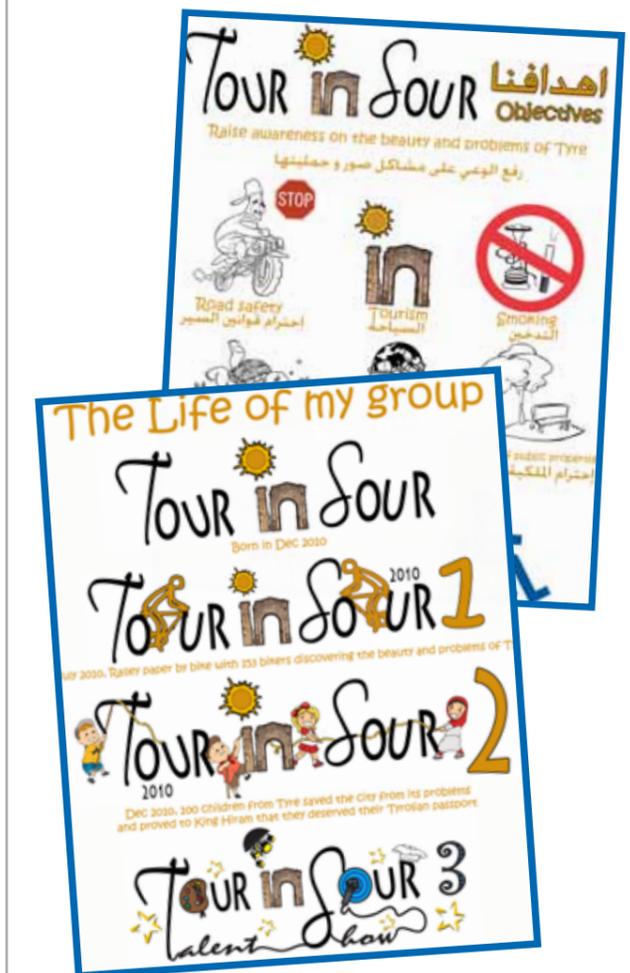
Less than two years from the date of its establishment, the Tour in Sour youth group is already standing on its feet alone. Some of the main criticisms of the youth groups spotted by the assessment were that in order to be able to operate and to avoid interventions from the political parties, YGs members are inclined to use UNDP as an appropriate umbrella for their activities and as a resort for support and affiliation. The assessment also highlighted that the over-association with UNDP prevents YGs from developing their own identity and autonomy; when asked about whom they are, some YGs answer **"we are a UNDP youth group"**. The case of Tour in Sour, among other YGs, was different.

Since its establishment the YG has conducted a strategic planning session where they identified the problems and the resources available in their city and decided to work on Awareness and Education to highlight the problems and beauty of Tyre through a creative Tour of the city (thus their name Tour in Sour). Their objectives and name were set, and they have been consistently working on the same issues since; the city and various stakeholders now know who the Tour in Sour is and what they do, and they are constantly asking

## Youth Challenges:

- Governance & Organization
- Human Capital & retention and independence
- Financial Management & sustainability
- Collaboration with other regions

for the next Tour in Sour event "when is your Tour in Sour 5? What will it be? Please don't forget to invite me?". The youth group members were trained on how to fundraise and get sponsors and most of their events were auto funded.



The success of the Tour in Sour events was spread very fast, mainly through word of mouth, social media and through the press; almost in every meeting new members are joining. Politics, confessions, physical handicap, or nationalities were never an obstacle as the group enjoys a melting pot from various backgrounds. Interestingly, municipalities, event organizers, and NGOs are now directly asking for the support of the group for their activities.

The municipality of Tyre has requested the support of the group in various festivals, fundraising events, and to raise awareness on road safety issues. While the Phoenician sports center and the Anera association requested the youngsters to have a stand in the Tyre international marathon village and in the Borj El Chemaly Palestinian camp to raise awareness on the dangers of smoking. Finally, Green Line association asked the Tour in Sour group to be their partner in the South to promote biking as a mode of transportation, an objective that the youth group has always pushed for. During the world environment day, a national campaign was organized whereby bikers had to move in masses, blocking cars with a slogan on their T-shirts. The problem of Tyre is that there are no bikers nor bikes to rent, and it would have cost a lot to get bikes from Beirut. The youth group got the ingenious idea to walk inside the neighborhoods of Tyre and repair old bikes for people, thus making sure that people will continue using the bikes they threw aside a long time ago. Finally, 39 bikes were gathered and the youth group convinced

few motor bikers to drop their engines for 2 hours and move with the group of bikers which also gathered many girls. But what was interesting about this event is that all over Lebanon the logo of the Tour in Sour group was present on bikers' T-shirts without the support of the logo of UNDP, a sign that the youth group is gradually moving to a sustainable and autonomous situation aimed by UNDP.



### Tebnine educational center:

On the 15th of July, citizens from Tebnine and Debel gathered to inaugurate the opening of the children center in Tebnine funded by Art Gold through the Spanish Embassy. During the ceremony representatives from the Spanish Embassy, as well as from Art Gold and UNDP Socio-Economic Programme were present along with mayors and other NGOs to congratulate the youth groups on their work.



The continuous work of UNDP- South Programme with the youth groups in the South as of year 2000, in addition to the field assessments and consultations conducted by ART GOLD Staff was the base for the projects' identification. The three targeted villages/ youth groups Ein Jarfa, Debel and Tebnine were selected following criteria: (1) the youth groups' community active participation, (2) the confessional diversity and (3) the geographic distribution of the villages. The proposed activities to be implemented were identified and discussed with the local stakeholders, mainly the youth groups and the municipalities.

The objectives of the project is to strengthen and support the existing Youth Groups in Tebnine, Debel and Ein Jarfa established by UNDP Socio economic Rehabilitation Programme for South Lebanon since 2000; to promote the concept of citizenship within the youth groups and their corresponding local communities; as well as piloting and motivating the local authorities to develop youth activities, ideally leading to defined and permanent youth policies.

In Tebnine, it was decided to establish a children educational and recreational center

that is inexistent in the region. The center will be a safe place where parents can leave their children to learn while playing and drawing. Birthday parties could be celebrated at the center where there are various sections such as: painting; physical activities; educational toys; lego robotic system ( Mindstorm games). Storytelling and puppet shows will be also taking place at the center.

The impact of such projects are many. This center will not only provide new job opportunities but will also permit parents to work, especially women. The project will ensure that children are not on the streets getting exposed to dangerous activities or doing nothing important at home. Francesco Bicciato, the Chief Technical Advisor of Art Gold Lebanon, mentioned during the ceremony that this project falls within the territorial development policies of Art Gold; especially that youth are seen as the future of the country. He added that those youth were strengthened thank to the use of IT facilities as well as by facilitating the registration of the youth group as an NGO able to get funds alone.



On the 25th of September 147 persons (including 97 participants) gathered from Marjeoun, Nabatyeh, Bint Jbeil, Beirut, Tyre, Matn, UNIFIL , Germany, Britain, US, Switzerland and Italy for a common cause: Raise awareness on the problems of OUR sea.



The Tour in Sour youth group, established by UNDP Socio Economic Rehabilitation Programme for South Lebanon, organized a rally paper in the sea to raise awareness on specific Tyrolean sea concerns and beauty.

The plot of the game: Nemo is not happy about how his home the SEA is changing; stubborn as always, he challenges his father and decides to run away convinced he can save the sea from its dangers. The teams will help Merlan, Nemo's father, in FINDING NEMO. Throughout the day, the teams had to follow the traces of Nemo and help him in his mission.

The rally paper consisted of 5 stages; to go from a stage to another the teams had to identify the locations based on riddles provided and moved around Tyre by bike.

Wearing sea related costumes, the teams had to answer questions, and challenge another team in fun games. The five stages contributed to the following:

1. Introducing participants to the problems of fishermen and fish, by spending time with fishermen in their boats and going to the nearby island to learn how to do fishing nets



2. Exposing participants to the problems of internal tourism in Tyre, highlighting touristic spots, and finding out innovative ways to promote maritime tourism through rappelling on the historical "Sarray" building



3. Discovering the underwater archeological sites by snorkeling and understanding why pottery shouldn't be stolen from the sea



4. Discovering the challenges faced by the Tyre Coast Natural Reserve in protecting sea turtles, and the problems of sea turtles due to pollution through kayaking and Rafting



5. Discovering the beauty of Tyre shores, and witnessing the problems of pollution and its negative effect on corals and the ecosystem, by creating endangered fish with the sand and trash



On the 25th of September all Tyre was playing and following the bikers! Local people were a key to making teams win, since many of the questions could not be answered without the help of the fishermen and the Tyrolians. Crowds gathered around the challenges to cheer and help participants.

To avoid having additional plastic bottles thrown in the sea, the Programme decided to gift each participant a souvenir water container that teams were refilling on each stage.

In addition, rather than ordering the food from a restaurant, the Programme opted to help a fisherman family that is in a terrible socio-economic condition.

Apart from the fact that participants really had fun, the social effect of the event directly showed up. Matt from the US was concerned about "what could be done to make the sea cleaner" while Samah was surprised to discover that "Tyre was such a beautiful city". Some participants also wanted to know "when was the best time to see sea turtles". On the other hand, people from Tyre wanted to know how they could join the youth group, while others wanted to be advised about all Tour in Sour future events. However, the most common question raised was "when is the Tour in Sour 5 event?"

The Tour in Sour team intends to continue its mission with the sea, especially after their inspiring visit to Venice where youngsters mixed with other European youth had a workshop on the theme of water and learned how to sail.

### Youth Recommendations:

- Establishing partnerships between the YGs and municipalities, cooperatives, NGOs, and international organizations
- Providing a legal umbrella for the YGs
- Attracting and retaining more members, as well as developing the skills and capabilities of the groups
- YGs need to develop strategies to secure funding
- Improving YGs' Programs: developing annual plan of activities & trainings on program management
- Activating exchange of experiences with other regions in Lebanon and with other countries



## Venice and Lebanon: Together Through the Mirror September 12<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> 2011: a Week in Venice

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of September in the morning, Dina, Nada, Hiba, Raed, Ahmad, Samar, Dina, Mohamad and Bana arrive at the Marco Polo Airport. A trip by boat, thanks to the support of Alilaguna and the Cooperativa Sociale il Cerchio, in the middle of the waves under the light of an upcoming thunderstorm, and we land at Certosa island.

The "abode" of the yachtsmen become their home and the cooks become familiar very soon. The sailing teachers – of the same age – mingle with them, as for the girls of the Youth Policies Department, who become the point of reference for the island and the for the events of the week.

We are all looking for Irene, Mattia, Cecilia, Nicole, Adam, Gorkem, Ana, Felicitas, the youngsters who live in the international Venice and who are coming in the afternoon with tents and backpacks. They choose a place in the island to assemble the tent. Then, at the first night dinner, they get to know one another, also with the mosquitoes of the lagoon.

From now on every morning the youngsters mix together to follow the Sailing courses and kayak trips together with the friends of VdV - Vento di Venezia. Every evening there are spray art workshops. The first night is dedicated to night fishing held by the Momos Association, which had already work with the youngsters the last year in Lebanon. The second night is dedicated to Break Dance exhibitions, held by the kids of the Incubox Project, repeated in the next days by popular demand.

One afternoon is dedicated to the themes of Water and Borders, discussed with the professor Emilio Cocco of Teramo University and Marta Moretti of the International Center Città d'Acqua. Some of the youngsters speak in English, others in French, Spanish, German, Arabic, Italian...but what matters is the will to understand each other.

The last two afternoons are dedicated to the making of a graffiti piece of art called "For Us No Border" in the Bissuola park, with the association Urban Code, who was also in Lebanon last year. The illustration of a fish getting out of a bowl symbolizes the repudiation of borders. This is the result of an exchange of ideas and spray, which will remain in the City as signature of the passage of a generation most of the times unheard and underrated. But this time the youngsters demonstrate that they clearly know what is right, and that they have the tools to claim to it.

And then Venice, with its sparkling beauties and the mystery of the lagoon islands, between exhibitions and "campi", with the friends of the Parco della Laguna Institution.

Today they are leaving. As a long time ago were leaving their Palestinian, Bosnian, Algerian friends... Nobody wants to leave and everybody would like to continue. For this reason the winter will be useful to build up a new meeting next summer in Lebanon.

Venice, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Alberta Basaglia  
Responsible for the Project



## Fun Street Art

On the 16th of October, the youth group of Nabatyeh organized an artistic and social event on the streets of Nabatyeh to shed the light on the problems of drugs, cultural heritage, environment and respect of laws witnessed in their city.

The activity aims at mobilizing citizens through a fun game whereby teams have to compete through arts to raise awareness on social topics. The event's objective is to move citizen out of their neutrality, push them to express their concerns and take initiatives in finding solutions through innovation and creativity.

Teams had to use maps to reach the different stages in the city where advocacy campaigns related to the social causes had to be implemented by using various social media: short movie, uniform design, street art painting, printed advertising and photography. For instance, one of the stages of the game consisted of a street art competition where participants had to embellish the streets and paint on unattractive parts of the city things related to social issues.

Eighty contestants participated to the event coming from Tyre, Sidon and Nabatiyeh. They wandered in the historical roads of Nabatyeh wearing their costumes and waving their advocacy signs raising the curiosity of the walkers. They also had to collect the largest amount of sorted waste and collect hidden words from sponsors, thus also promoting the economic sector. The final ceremony took place at the Cultural Council of South Lebanon where all the outcomes of the groups were displayed and projected to the public and where the winning teams were announced.



**UN House**  
Abbassyeh Cross Road,  
Ivoire Center, Block D,  
3rd Floor.  
Tel: +961 7 349 020/1/2  
[www.undp.org.lb](http://www.undp.org.lb)  
[www.cdr.gov.lb](http://www.cdr.gov.lb)

