

UNHCR-funded Solar Panels Ensure Uninterrupted Access to Clean Water for 25,000 Residents in Akkar

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AKKAR - UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency and its partner, the Rene Mouawad Foundation, today inaugurated a UNHCR-funded solar-powered system at the Qobayat water station in Akkar, northern Lebanon. The water station, managed by the North Lebanon Water Establishment, is the primary water source for over 20 villages in the Akkar region.

UNHCR equipped the water station with a solar-pumping system that generates power through 195 solar panels to support water-pumping from nearby water sources to the tank. Thanks to this intervention, over 20 towns¹ in the Akkar governorate, hosting over 25,000 residents, now have continuous access to clean water.

“This project is an example of the positive impact that UNHCR interventions have in ensuring that people in Lebanon have improved access to essential services, such as water,” said Ivo Freijssen, UNHCR Representative in Lebanon. “I’ve met with municipalities that benefited from this project and heard from them how this intervention has a direct impact on the daily lives of all residents.”

As part of its support to Lebanese communities, throughout 2022, UNHCR and partners have innovated solutions to Lebanon’s energy crisis through 74 community support projects. These projects have increased Lebanese and refugees’ access to sustainable solar-powered energy by providing electricity to primary healthcare centres, governmental hospitals, and Water Establishment stations, benefiting over 1.5 million persons in more than 84 villages across the country.

“The installation of the solar-powered system in the Qobayat Water Establishment shows how the United Nations and its partners are supporting people in Lebanon with tangible solutions to some of the most pressing everyday problems,” said Imran Riza, United Nations Deputy Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. “Much has been done by the United Nations over the past years, and we remain committed to increasing the impact of our support to Lebanon through programs that speak to the critical needs of all people,” he added.

In 2022, over 575,000 individuals benefited from UNHCR projects in the Beirut and Mount Lebanon region. For example, UNHCR-installed solar streetlights in Naameh and Sad El Baushrieh have increased the protection of residents from road accidents, thefts, and other risks.

In the Bekaa, UNHCR has supported 11 health facilities with solar-powered solutions that secure potable water and ensure that they continue providing lifesaving treatment to patients. Over 200,000 individuals in the Bekaa and Baalbek-Hermel regions have benefited from such projects.

¹ The residents of the villages of Sindyenet, El Bireh, Danke, El Qsair, Fraidis, El Mejdal, El Dawse, Deir Janine, Mazraat Baldeh, El Hed, Kfar Harra, Daghle, Aain el Zeit, Aain tanta, Aaydamoun, Dahr Ousman, Ebour el Bid, El Nahriyyeh, El Meghraka and Al Aawaynat now have sustained access to water.



In the South, two water stations supported by UNHCR are providing clean water to over 57,000 residents.

In January, UNHCR finalized the installation of solar-powered systems in the Tripoli and Halba governmental hospitals in north Lebanon. Thanks to this intervention, the hospitals are now respectively saving \$41,000 and US\$ 29,000 per month in fuel expenses.

UNHCR has been supporting Lebanese institutions and communities since 2011, including 655 community support projects to upgrade public infrastructure in towns and villages across Lebanon.

Freijsen added: “UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, supports entire communities - both refugees and Lebanese – during this most difficult time. With compounded crises deeply affecting Lebanon in recent years, we have doubled our efforts to support Lebanese communities and institutions. Our commitment remains strong, and we will continue to stand by the most vulnerable.”

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