



PRESS RELEASE

Women and youth complete urban farming and food production training in Abou Samra, Tripoli

UN-Habitat, FAO, the Embassy of Japan in Lebanon and the Municipality of Tripoli join community members to mark this achievement.

Beirut, 12 December 2023: The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the presence of the Japanese Ambassador to Lebanon, H.E. Magoshi Masayuki and the Mayor of Tripoli, Ahmad Kamareddine joined women and youth beneficiaries as they marked the completion of their urban farming and food production course.

This course was provided to a total of 100 women and 50 youth over the past nine months together with implementing partner Dar Al Zahraa Organization, as part of UN-Habitat's Marjeh project. Funded by the Embassy of Japan in Lebanon, the Marjeh project has implemented urban farming and adequate water and renewable energy solutions within the community of Shalfeh located in Abou Samra, Tripoli since January this year.

"Japan is placing an emphasis on advancing the agricultural sector through projects that enhance food security and support livelihoods. This recent assistance that promotes urban farming in Tripoli pushes towards these objectives and helped create job opportunities in food and agriculture production, by providing the necessary infrastructure and knowledge. We hope that this grant will establish a sustainable model that is environmentally friendly and economically viable," said H.E. Magoshi Masayuki, Ambassador of Japan to Lebanon.

Abou Samra's Shalfeh area is one of the most vulnerable neighbourhoods in Tripoli. Communities face precarious living conditions and socioeconomic insecurity due to Lebanon's protracted crises. In order to provide longer-term livelihood opportunities to the community, the Marjeh project is expanding the scope of its urban farming component by establishing an urban farm in Zeitoun, Tripoli on an agricultural plot owned by the Islamic Awkaf Department of Tripoli. With the technical support of FAO on good agricultural practices from farm to consumer, fifty women who participated in the urban farming and food production training will apply the skills they learned through cash-for-work to grow, and harvest produce on this farm to create food products for the local market.

"Agriculture is the foundation of the development of nations and the basis for increasing production, and countries that depend on the cultivation of their lands guarantee the strength of their economy and development, and their fate is not in the hands of others. Agriculture is not a profession but a way of life that connects people with their land," said Ahmad Kamareddine, Mayor of Tripoli.

In addition to the urban farming and upscaling component, UN-Habitat is working to provide clean water, promote good hygiene and support the shift to renewable energy in two mixed public schools: Samih Malawi; and, Hay El Nozha, as well as a Hay El Nozha health dispensary.

“Urban farming promotes local and sustainable food systems. Agriculture in cities is good for the environment, the ecosystem and the climate, while providing more green spaces to help keep cities cool and counter the urban heat island effect. It also has multiple social benefits, through the promotion of social cohesion and communal livelihood opportunities. UN-Habitat hopes that the Marjeh project will serve an example of how such an approach can empower communities in cities, enabling them to secure livelihoods closer to home, revitalize vacant spaces, and foster skills development,” said Taina Christiansen, Head of UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme.

The Marjeh project is encouraging the application of acquired skills and knowledge to enhance food security at both the community and household levels and promoting hygiene and sanitation practices among vulnerable population groups in the Shalfeh neighbourhood. This multifaceted approach intends not only to address immediate needs but to enhance the community’s long-term resilience and well-being.

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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.

About the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Our goal is to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. With 195 members - 194 countries and the European Union, FAO works in over 130 countries worldwide.

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