

The United Nations and the Government of Japan inaugurate recently rehabilitated Markazouna Community Centre in Tripoli

Beirut, 13 September 2023. Today, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations International Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), the Government of Japan, and the Municipality of Tripoli inaugurated the recently rehabilitated and reactivated “Markazouna”, a Multipurpose Community Centre in Shalfeh, Tripoli.

Fully rehabilitated, the Markazouna Community Centre can now continue to deliver essential services for women and children, including extracurricular activities for children and youth, in a safe and inclusive space. Specific activities include awareness-raising on protection against sexual and gender-based violence, provision of self-defense and positive parenting classes, carpentry workshops and more.

This initiative has been led under the joint project entitled “Multi-sectoral response to the humanitarian crisis in the North of Lebanon through the human security approach” aimed at increasing the security of host and refugee populations living in vulnerable areas of Tripoli. The project generously supported by the Government of Japan through the UNTFHS is implemented by UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UN Women along with implementing partners Al-Fayhaa Association who manage the community centre, the Lebanese Democratic Women’s Gathering and the René Moawad Foundation.

“Japan has placed a strong focus on to the protection and empowerment of vulnerable people and the overall improvement of their livelihoods. Given the challenging circumstances that Lebanon is going through, the need for facilities that foster a supportive and safe environment for the communities in need is heavily increasing, hence the importance of this initiative that Japan chose to support through the UNTFHS,” said H.E. Magoshi Masayuki, Ambassador of Japan to Lebanon.

The prioritization of the rehabilitation and reactivation of the Markazouna Community Centre was reconfirmed through the findings of the neighbourhood profile carried out in Shalfeh neighbourhood, as part of this project. Rehabilitation works included the restoration and upgrading of the whole centre, the playground, providing the centre with renewable energy through solar panels, ensuring full accessibility, providing furniture and electrical equipment.

“Markazouna is an oasis of ambition and confidence, weaving the fabric of development around people, not people around development, providing psychological, educational, and social support,” said Ahmad Kamareddine, Mayor of Tripoli.

Implemented between April and mid-September 2023, the project has reached more than 5,000 Lebanese and non-Lebanese beneficiaries through the community centre.

“Communities are built on shared values, traditions, culture, and aspirations; and in times of challenge and adversity, it is the solidarity and unity within communities that provide the resilience needed to overcome obstacles,” said the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon, Mr. Imran Riza in his opening remarks. “The ‘Markazouna Community Centre’ stands as a testament to our commitment to fostering this solidarity, offering a space where community members can come together to not only access essential services but also to foster a renewed sense of belonging and interconnectedness.”

“Our partnership began in 2018 through the Abjad Centre, where we have been able to see how the human security approach promotes the necessary conditions in which humanity can flourish. I am happy to see the Markazouna Community Centre follow the blueprint of the Abjad Centre and serve as a space that supports integrated solutions on key priority areas such as housing, education, health, and social inclusion for communities and those most vulnerable,” said Mehrnaz Mostafavi, Chief of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security.

The project directly contributes to improving the lives of the people in Shalfeh, with the Markazouna Community Centre as a vital and vibrant space for the community and is expected to continue to benefit the residents for many years to come.

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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 United Nations International Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

Working in Lebanon for over 70 years, UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

For more information about UNICEF Lebanon and our work for children, visit www.unicef.org/lebanon/ or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#)



About the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. Placing women's rights at the centre of all its efforts, UN Women leads and coordinates United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world. It provides strong and coherent leadership in support of Member States' priorities and efforts, building effective partnerships with civil society and other relevant actors.

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