

A large, ancient cedar tree with a thick, gnarled trunk and dense, dark green foliage dominates the left side of the image. The tree is set against a backdrop of rugged, brownish mountains under a clear blue sky. The foreground shows rocky terrain with some sparse, dry vegetation.

UNDP LEBANON  
**ACHIEVEMENTS**  
2006 - 2009

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Public Market - Ghazeh, Bekaa Region



Deir Kanun El Nahr women cooperative - South Lebanon

## INTRODUCTION

UNDP is the UN's global development network. It advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge and resources to help ordinary people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national challenges.

We focus on four key areas, and treat them with equal priority. Firstly, we help to create conditions that allow for efficient and effective governance. Secondly, with the Millennium Development Goals as our framework, we are also at the forefront of the fight against poverty. Thirdly, we have a strong emphasis on the importance of preventing conflict and maintaining the civil peace. Finally, we also believe that the world can no longer afford to ignore the challenges faced by the environment and climate change. In each of these four areas, we ensure that the solutions are sustainable over the long-term. UNDP recognizes the complex ethnic, political and religious make-up of Lebanon. We work with every section of Lebanese society to meet all national and local challenges head-on. We work hard to strengthen Lebanon's democracy and seek to ensure that government and Parliament represent the needs of all the people. We help ordinary Lebanese lift themselves out of poverty by encouraging cooperative work and income-generating schemes. We have a vital, ongoing role in the rebuilding of Lebanon in the wake of the devastating July

2006 war and the Nahr el-Bared conflict of 2007. We also pursue alternative and renewable sources of energy for Lebanon and have paved the way for cleaner and more affordable energy.

This report elaborates on those achievements.



Infrastructure works in the Nahr el-Bared surrounding municipalities



## A STRONG CITIZENRY, AN EFFECTIVE STATE

UNDP has been at the forefront of the growing international consensus that good governance and sustainable human development are indivisible. And we believe that developing good governance can be - and should be - the primary way to eliminate poverty. Without democracy, attempts to alleviate poverty become less effective. The rule of law and respect for human rights are both undermined. That's why helping to build a true democracy for Lebanon lies at the heart of UNDP's mission. We recognize this country's unique cultural and religious heritage and work closely with each section of Lebanese society. We believe that by bringing people together, Lebanon will avoid repeating the pitfalls that have darkened its past.

UNDP helps the Lebanese government to deliver its mandate, with support services strengthening the judiciary, Parliament, and the Prime Minister's office. We assist in the development of policy and focus closely on ways to improve public and civic administration. Working with the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, UNDP is a lead partner in the development of the Human Rights National Action Plan. This will enshrine rights for minorities - especially women, children, people with disabilities and refugees - as well as the right to access public services and institutions for all. All of these changes

will ensure that the voice of the ordinary citizen is better heard.

Partly as a result of UNDP's efforts, the 2009 general election was the safest and most fair in the country's recent history. Together with the governments of Spain, Belgium and Denmark and the Canadian International Development Agency, we supported the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities by distributing 700,000 voter-ID cards, procuring 35 digital fingerprinting machines and training 11,000 electoral staff. We ran campaigns that encouraged voters to trust the electoral process. We also worked hard to provide vital but easily accessible information for members of the public. We helped the Ministry of Interior to update its website, which meant that voters were able to check if their names were correctly registered on the voting lists and read all elections-related information.

A special effort was made to reach out to Lebanon's marginalized: women, the elderly and people with disabilities. To ensure transparent coverage and impartial reporting, we worked with leading international trainers to develop the expertise of journalists from each section of Lebanese society.



Call center - 2009 Parliamentarian elections

Currently, no Lebanese woman is allowed to pass on her nationality to her husband or children, whereas men have had this right ever since the foundation of the Lebanese republic. This disparity is a fundamental violation of a woman's rights: of her right to choose, her right to dignity, and above all, of her right to equality with men. It not only breaches international conventions, as enshrined in the Charter of Human Rights, but also the Lebanese Constitution, which acknowledges the principle of equality in rights. That's why the government and UNDP are advocating to change this law. We've been tasked to mobilize women's networks across Lebanon and have brought together people of many different backgrounds - both men and women - who share this goal. We've

commissioned detailed research to fully ascertain the extent of the population that this unfair discrimination affects. This includes moving testimonies from women married to foreigners whose children have been adversely affected.

A national media campaign has been launched to raise awareness amongst the public and to encourage the Lebanese Parliament to change this law as soon as it can.

Lebanon's fourth National Human Development Report - Towards a Citizen's State - was published in 2009. The work behind this was coordinated by UNDP, and the report shaped the debate on the central issues of citizenship.

“The UNDP project at the Ministry of Finance has been and continues to serve the important objective of public finance reform by successfully providing policy advice and technical support. The highly competent national project team working collaboratively with the administration has been instrumental in upgrading fiscal management and driving reform with excellent results and impact.”

Raya Haffar  
Minister of Finance



Media training on covering the parliamentarian elections 2009





University students visiting the Lebanese parliament

It looks at the diversity of confessions in Lebanon and the impact this has on the functioning of the state. It addresses the relationship between the state - its constitution, laws and institutions - and its citizens, the people whom the state is designed to protect. It looks at social policies and national and communal identity in light of shared cultural values. The Constitution and the personal status laws are also reviewed. A report on Education and Citizenship has also been published, along with a third book, 101 stories<sup>1</sup>, which outlines initiatives undertaken by civil society organizations towards defining and enacting citizenship in Lebanon. UNDP believes that open debate on these issues - much of which this report generated - can only be good for the people of Lebanon.

Furthermore, UNDP is supporting a National Action Plan to combat corruption and to strengthen transparency in public institutions. Following the establishment of a national advocacy body, various means have been devised to raise awareness about the pernicious effects of corruption. One of the most effective was to publish and distribute a story for children, which demonstrated how damaging corruption and nepotism can be. We also focused on the importance of responsible journalism, and highlighted the vital role journalists play in presenting unbiased and objective reporting. Such approaches are especially important in a confessional state like Lebanon, where perceptions and public opinion play important roles in social cohesion and political cooperation.

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*“The [UNDP] team was...dynamic, responsive, and effective in implementing its activities and ensuring that the ministry held one of the best general elections on record.”*

Ziyad Baroud

Minister of Interior and Municipalities



University students visiting the Lebanese parliament

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1. All documents available online at [www.undp.org.lb/communication/publications/index.cfm](http://www.undp.org.lb/communication/publications/index.cfm)

# TACKLING POVERTY AND ENCOURAGING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

At the dawn of the new millennium, the 191 United Nations Member states, including Lebanon, pledged to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The first goal was to halve the incidence of extreme poverty and hunger. Member states vowed that “they will spare no effort to free men, women and children from the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty and to make the right to development a reality for everyone”.

With this mandate, UNDP Lebanon works to fight poverty in the poorest regions, especially North and South Lebanon, Bekaa and Beirut Southern Suburbs. We also analyze root causes of poverty and work with the Lebanese government, civil society organizations, local authorities, vulnerable groups and community organizations to promote the MDGs in Lebanon.

## The anti-poverty struggle

In order to alleviate poverty, UNDP supports the Lebanese government’s pursuit of economic recovery and growth at both the national and local levels, as outlined in the Prime Minister’s Parliamentary statement of November 2009.

UNDP is supporting the inter-ministerial committee to develop the first National Social Strategy in Lebanon. This will avoid overlapping and duplication of efforts in the

provision of social services. The strategy aims to protect the most vulnerable and poorest population groups and will lead to better social services for all and the expansion of socio-economic opportunities.

In 2009, we helped produce the ‘Poverty, Growth and Income Distribution’ report. This will ensure a more effective targeting of resources to combat poverty by informing policy-makers of the nature and characteristics of poverty in Lebanon.

## Support for poor and vulnerable groups on the ground

Locally, UNDP helps poor and vulnerable groups in three ways. Firstly, we support income generation activities with the implementation of well targeted socio-economic interventions aimed at reducing regional disparities and imbalanced development.

These include purchasing machinery for livestock farmers, building a wheat mill, helping food-processing plants to expand, constructing pools for trout farming; encouraging the production of olive oil; and building a cold storage facility for cherries. And to underpin this economic recovery, we’ve also built roads, pavements, bridges and canals.

Secondly, we are strengthening job creation and employment opportunities with the development of “market oriented” vocational skills training for youth, women and the unemployed. Aimed primarily at young people, and with a special emphasis on those affected by the 2006 war, we encourage training in areas as diverse as mechanics, electronics, beauty products, air conditioning and agriculture. The training is customized to meet the challenges of an ever-changing marketplace. For instance, as car engines become increasingly sophisticated, mechanics are re-trained to meet the new requirements.

Encouraging women’s cooperative work has been a priority and we are encouraging them to grow and prosper. Technical and managerial skills are being developed, including financial project support and



Nejmit Al Sabah Women Association - Mhaydseh, Rashaya





Public Market - Ghazeh, Bekaa Region

## Poverty, Growth and Income Distribution in Lebanon

- 28.5% of the Lebanese population are considered poor
- 8% can be considered extremely poor and live in conditions of extreme poverty, equivalent to \$US 2.4 per capita per day. Thus, almost 300,000 individuals in Lebanon are unable to meet their basic food and non-food needs
- 20.5% of Lebanese lie between the lower and upper poverty lines
- The north has the highest concentration of poor, 53% of its population, followed by the south, with 42% considered poor
- In contrast, Beirut has approximately 6% overall poverty (excluding Beirut Southern Suburbs)
- There is a 20% unemployment rate amongst youth aged between 15 and 24
- 45% of the overall poor have heads of household with less than elementary education

training sessions on administration, selling techniques, and marketing strategies. As at October 2009, around 600 women members of 30 cooperatives in the south, 10 cooperatives in Akkar, and 8 cooperatives in the Bekaa are income providers in their households. With the help of UNDP, and capitalizing on Lebanon's rich and proud heritage, these women prepare traditional culinary products, artisans' goods and handicrafts. We are also creating marketing opportunities and events to support women's involvement in local exhibitions, such as Souk El Tayyeb.

Thirdly, we are promoting business development for the poor. To this end, UNDP is supporting the establishment of Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs) in four regions to improve production standards of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and to develop market access opportunities.

To further encourage development at the local level, we have established the Art Gold programme. One of its pillars is to link Lebanese municipalities with a number of their European counterparts - including local and regional authorities in Italy, Spain, Belgium and the Principality of Monaco - and enables them to tackle common municipal-level challenges. To date, 45 partnerships have been established. Focus areas for Art Gold have included the building of a tourist centre, a library, public spaces, a blood laboratory and a Primary Health Care centre.

On top of this, we also have a specific focus in Akkar and South Lebanon and Beirut Southern Suburbs on the youth sector. UNDP created local youth groups to strengthen the role of the youngsters in their villages, foster leadership skills and connect them to development work. Topics include communication and social issues, as well as environmental and cultural activities like summer schools, youth forums, and cinema clubs.



Bekassine Forest - Jezzine

## TOWARDS A GREENER FUTURE

The protection of the environment is central to the world's future. The environmental challenges facing us all may often seem complex and intractable, but by working together, they can be overcome.

Working closely with our donor partners, UNDP assists the Lebanese Government in its protection of the environment, especially after the challenges of the July 2006 war. We pursue alternative and renewable energy sources. UNDP works towards improving land management, promoting agricultural activities and energy efficiency, raising national awareness and engaging the private sector.

### Legislating for the Environment

UNDP reviews existing cases of environmental jurisprudence in Lebanon, and compares them to international case studies. We assisted legislators in drafting two laws on energy efficiency and conservation, and helped create the Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation. The Center promotes energy efficiency measures, and sets out national energy conservation plans. Our experts also worked alongside Lebanese officials to establish a specialized jurisdiction to address and penalize environmental crimes.

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### Lebanon is a signatory to four international Environmental conventions:

- Montreal Protocol <sup>2</sup>
- The Convention on Biodiversity <sup>3</sup>
- The UN Framework on Climate Change Convention <sup>4</sup>
- The UN Convention to Combat Desertification <sup>5</sup>

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- 2) The Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer is an international agreement that controls the production and consumption of substances that can cause ozone depletion. The Montreal Protocol was signed in September 1987 and became effective in 1989.
  - 3) The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) entered into force on 29 December 1993. It has 3 main objectives: to conserve biological diversity, to use biological diversity in a sustainable fashion, and to share the benefits of biological diversity fairly and equitably.
  - 4) The United Nations Conference on Desertification (UNCOD) adopted a Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (PACD) in 1977. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) concluded in 1991 that the problem of land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas had intensified, although there were "local examples of success".
  - 5) Over a decade ago, most countries joined the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to begin to consider what can be done to reduce global warming and to cope with whatever temperature increases are inevitable.



solar water heaters - South Lebanon

### Efficient, Renewable Energy

In a country with fast growing energy needs, UNDP has paved the way for cleaner and more affordable energy in Lebanon. We introduced energy efficiency standards and labels for several electric appliances in Lebanon. We are creating an energy efficiency fund to finance future projects and offer training workshops to the public and private sectors. Major governmental and commercial organizations joined the UNDP-assisted Energy Audit Program which generated an average annual savings of \$US 45,000 per building for a total of 110 buildings. Installation costs were recovered after just over two and a half years. UNDP introduced a pilot study for the installation of 500 solar heaters for households in the poorest villages of South Lebanon. Preliminary results revealed a 30% reduction in household energy costs. We're now working to expand the installation of

these solar water heaters across the country. This will significantly improve access to energy services, lower the cost of energy, and improve overall living standards. Moreover, energy efficiency and renewable energy techniques can lead to a wide range of savings, as the cost of electricity is heavily subsidized.

We have also installed energy efficient and renewable energy equipment in selected public buildings and facilities in 50-60 sites in the South, Bekaa and Akkar. These include 17 municipality buildings, 5 public sector hospitals, 3 public sector schools, and 3 social centers.



“After seeing the benefits of the project, more and more people are interested in the cultivation of Oregano, especially as collection from the wild is exposing us to the danger of cluster bombs”

Amira Mkanna from Halloussiyeh  
South Lebanon





Industrial hemp - Bekaa valley

## Energy efficiency is not an option: get an energy audit and save money

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### Examples of sites in Lebanon that have joined the Energy Audit program:

- ALFA Libatel Building  
Annual savings are around \$US 14,000, with installation costs recovered after no more than three years.
  - Hotel Al Bustan, Beit Mery  
Annual savings are \$US 59,000 with installation costs recovered after just over two and a half years.
  - LibanPost Headquarters  
Annual savings around \$US 13, 000, with installation costs recovered after three years.
  - Marriott Hotel, Beirut  
Annual savings around \$US 30,000, with installation costs recovered after just over two and a half years.
  - Spinneys Supermarket, Jnah  
Annual savings around \$96,000 USD, with installation costs recovered after just over two years.
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### Hemp

Along with the Ministry of Agriculture, UNDP also supported farmers in their production of varieties of industrial hemp and associated products. This simultaneously improved the living conditions of rural communities and reduced land degradation in the Bekaa region. We also work to strengthen trade opportunities for rural produce through branding and promoting local dry-land products.

Baalbeck-Hermel has been identified as being at a high risk of desertification. This is largely because there are steep mountains with shallow soil and poor vegetable cover. There are also no proper land and water management practices. UNDP joined efforts with the Ministry of Agriculture and the German Technical Cooperation to pinpoint the most affected areas. As a result, we've prepared a flood management plan, built stone walls, installed modern irrigation networks, and planted trees.

### Medicinal and aromatic plants

The July 2006 war badly damaged the economy of Southern Lebanon. The prevalence of cluster bombs meant that local people were unable to collect medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs), a vital source of income. UNDP therefore leased lands free of cluster bombs and encouraged villagers to use them to cultivate high value plants such as oregano. We also constructed irrigation systems and provided MAP seedlings.

We encourage community-based production and small enterprises through micro-financing. These will be linked with trading companies, which will further process, manufacture and market the MAP-based products. We also help collector groups and assist in developing standards and a certification system for MAP resources.

# MAINTAINING CIVIL PEACE

Repeated armed conflicts have left the land and people of Lebanon with a devastating legacy. With invaluable support from donor nations, UNDP is working hard both nationally and locally to restore livelihoods, to prevent further violence and to rebuild what has been damaged.

## The 2006 war

The war of July 2006 exacted a terrible toll on Lebanon. Nearly 1,200 civilians were killed, and over 4,000 were wounded. 125,000 housing units were destroyed, along with 850 commercial enterprises, 600 public schools, 97 bridges and 16 hospitals. By the end of 2009, 357 people had been killed or injured by unexploded mines.

From our office in Tyre, UNDP began to rebuild the damage immediately after the cessation of hostilities. We were on the ground with the local population, supporting each recovery effort and developing sources of employment and income.

Following operations initiated by UNDP, rubble was removed from 160 villages in South Lebanon, 40 in Bekaa and 4 in Beirut Southern Suburbs. Technical assistance was provided to the government's National Demining Office (NDO) to work on clearing unexploded cluster bombs (UXOs). With our support, 200 municipalities were given machinery to clean the water conduits and to repair roads, street lighting, sewerage networks and public buildings.



Restoring fishermen livelihoods - Abdeh, North Lebanon

UNDP's support for the reconstruction of marketplaces allowed local businesses to begin trading again. Cooperatives were reinvigorated, primarily in Nabatiyeh, Bint Jbeil, Marjayoun and Tyre Qadas. The destroyed fish market of Ouzai in Beirut Southern Suburbs was also rebuilt, after 3,500 fishermen had lost their source of income. Nets, engines and fishing equipment were provided for different fishermen's cooperatives throughout Lebanon.

The war caused severe environmental damage. UNDP supported the Ministry of Environment with its clearance of 15,000 tons of oil that had spilt into the sea along the coastline, with a view to processing and disposing the oil along international standards.

## The Nahr el-Bared crisis

In 2007, the Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp was destroyed after a three-month conflict between the militant group Fatah al-Islam and the Lebanese army. 31,000 refugees were displaced and hundreds of people were killed. The infrastructure of the neighboring municipalities was also severely damaged.

UNDP's early focus was on removing rubble, amounting to 500,000 m<sup>3</sup>. With the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) in charge of rebuilding the camp itself, we concentrated on rebuilding the infrastructure and the electricity networks in the neighboring areas. UNDP also supported the surrounding municipalities: Mhammara, Bebnine, Bhanine, Minieh, Beddawi and Deir Amar. Furthermore, we assisted the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in its dredging of Al Abdeh Harbor and the restoration of fishermen's livelihoods.

UNDP is now prioritizing peace building and activities to promote civil peace, with a specific emphasis on North Lebanon. Our aim is to reduce inter and intra communal tensions. We are strengthening local authorities, supporting the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee and organizing youth summer schools to bring together Lebanese and Palestinian communities.



Lebanese Palestinian youth summer school - Ramliyah, Chouf

## Maintaining civil peace across Lebanon

We train and mobilize a cross-section of Lebanese society who can make a long-term impact on the wider reconciliation process. Over 500 professionals have already benefited from our work: journalists, high school teachers, young people, municipal officials, and NGO staff. An “early warning mechanism” is being established to detect impending signs of local conflict that may, if not controlled, grow to national proportions.

UNDP has also helped the creation of Peace Clubs for university students. Not only are they trained in conflict resolution skills, but events were organized - mainly community basketball tournaments - by some 30 young people and coaches from the Bekaa and South Lebanon.

Another initiative has included 12 teachers and young people, trained by the UNDP, in the creation of an online forum, Circles of Understanding. Teachers and youth leaders networked to plan and implement activities in their respective communities over an 11 week period.

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“I joined the [youth] group in my village 4 years ago and I participated in many workshops and summer camps. We decided to launch a local periodic magazine, where we could approach important issues and make everybody in the village involved in the development process. Personally, this experience makes me more confident. I helped in the graphic designing and the production of the magazine. This helped me discover my strengths, and made me feel effective within my group.”

Khodor Khodor - 24 years old from Ayn Yacoub Akkar





UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

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