

Closing of the project “Capacity Building and Mentorship for Youth in Akkar, North Lebanon, and Beirut-Mount Lebanon”: enhancing the capacity of the youth for a better community

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Beirut, Thursday February 6, 2020 – EMPOWER held the closing event of the project “Capacity Building and Mentorship for Youth in Akkar, North Lebanon, and Beirut-Mount Lebanon” at Sin El Fil Municipality in the presence of representatives from UNICEF, EMPOWER, Mada Association, and beneficiaries of the project who came from Akkar, Tripoli, Chouf and Beirut. This project was implemented in partnership with UNICEF, and the generous funding of both the governments of the Netherlands and Germany through the German Development Bank KfW.

Karine Jabaji, president of EMPOWER, welcomed the attendees and thanked UNICEF for its partnership to launch this project, and the Governments of Germany and the Netherlands for their funding. She then stressed on the importance of these trainings to youth who needed to develop their skills in communicating their ideas and projects that has a major benefit for their communities.

In her turn, UNICEF youth and adolescent development Specialist Amal Obeid said that the launch of this pilot project focuses on training young people on technical skills based on the job needs of the regions they live in. She explained that UNICEF invested in studies on a national scale to assess the situation of young people. And these studies, from one side, have highlighted the challenges faced by young people in Lebanon and, from another side, identified gaps in strategies at the level of public and private systems that must provide young people with the appropriate knowledge, skills and lifelong learning opportunities, and hence the need for such projects.

Delphine Compain, coordinator of Mada Association, also thanked UNICEF and the donors and addressed the participants by saying: “When the youth of today were born, social media and mobile phones already existed, and it is essential and empowering to know how to use them professionally. We are pleased to see the projects that you have developed, that have positively contributed to Lebanon, and that show how invested you are in your communities. We wish you full success in the continuation of your projects.”

The project was launched in October 2018 and it included among its activities the organization of training sessions on digital skills with a focus on social media campaigning and marketing, where more than 217 participants in total benefited from the training sessions. 113 participants were directly trained on how to use professionally social media channels namely Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Their training included how to draft a social media plan, choose the channels that best targeted their audience and fit their projects, develop posts and market ideas. They also attended coaching sessions on Leadership and Communication skills as they in turn were required to train peers, where a total of 104 peers benefited from the trainings.

Main project themes revolved around recycling, nature protection, awareness on health-related issues and drugs, revival of manual skills such as embroidery, and storytelling to revive heritage.

Mounir Halbas, a participant from Akkar said: “I was looking for a project to develop my own capacities as well as those of the youth so I joined this training and I was sure that it will help me promote and develop my project. This is how “Recycling of Sawdust” project was born.”

“This project has allowed me to delve into the social media world. Today I am in charge of multiple pages thanks to this training and the knowledge I acquired”, added Rim Abou Chech from Tripoli, the woman behind the “Stories from Tripoli” page.

As Malaz Asaad from Syria put it: ““A Small Dream, A Big Future” project is a dedicated to Syrian children deprived of education because of war, poverty and displacement. This training has taught us how to reach a wider audience through our pages on social media and get new followers.”

The project also aimed to support youth in Akkar, North Lebanon, by training 368 youth on technical and life skills to improve their employability and empower them to access better employment opportunities. The technical skills focused on vocational training related to forest nursery, green house management, phone maintenance, accounting, photography and montage. 6 career days which more than 3,500 youth attended them were carried out to assist youth in identifying job opportunities and to link them to the job market.

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