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Resilient nations.



Press Release

(December 14, 2017) The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) flagship project in Lebanon –Together towards Sustainable Development (T2SD) – jointly with the Tripoli Special Economic Zone (TSEZ) has launched the Skills Gap Analysis in Tripoli and the North on 14 December 2017. The Skills Gap Analysis was launched during a seminar held at the Order of Engineers and Architects in Tripoli, one of the most remote and impoverished areas across Lebanon.

The event was attended by key stakeholders of Tripoli, representatives of the private sector, public entities, board members of the TSEZ, and members of the international community and UN agencies. The present Skills Gap Analysis focuses on potential employment opportunities in the Northern region, by assessing existing programs, delivering new types of necessary trainings that target and benefit workforce demand, and by suggesting means to implementing them. The Skills Gap Analysis is carried out through educational programs and trainings that involve Vocational Training Education (VTE) – ranging from accounting, food safety, graphic arts, to medical imaging and mechanics.

The initiative is a result of the engagement of the members of T2SD and leaders from the private sector, to address Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – specifically *Goal 4: Ensuring Quality Education*. Building up on the latter, it is inevitable to recognize quality education as: a necessity, a fundamental human right, and a pathway to a thriving promising tomorrow. It is crucial to recognize that different factors interfere in the realization of *Quality Education* across the nation. There are apparent disparities in *Quality Education* when comparing public and private schools. The latter overlap with the geographical distribution of schools throughout the country as most public schools are in the remote areas, especially in the North (mainly in Akkar, and in Miniyeh) and some areas in the South. The quality of education is also affected by a variety of other factors such as: socioeconomic class, parents' educational level, and lack of academic support at home/community.

Assuring *Quality Education* is closely aligned with UNDP's global vision in confirming free primary and secondary schooling by 2030, putting societies on a sustainable development

pathway, managing risk and enhancing resilience, and advancing prosperity and wellbeing. Implementation of the set goals in Tripoli will stem from the collaboration between local businesses, formal and informal academic establishments, and support from national and international entities to achieve the set objectives.

T2SD is an innovative strategic policy initiative of UNDP Lebanon, which responds to the achievement of the SDGs. It brings together businesses committed to align their efforts with the Goals, which present an opportunity for business-led solutions and technologies to be developed and implemented to address the country's major sustainable development challenges.

T2SD will work together with the government and address gaps to respond to the needs of society, and establish partnerships with the private sector. T2SD will promote economic and social development, inclusiveness, environmental sustainability, education, entrepreneurship, and transparency, among other objectives. Businesses will help ensuring that markets, commerce, technology, and finance advance in ways that lead to a healthy environment. This initiative will be implemented through the companies' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) frameworks. The improved business environment will ensure growth by establishing greater market confidence for investors.

T2SD is governed by 10 members who represent different industries: Abou Jaoude and Associates Law Firm, Fransabank, BB energy, IPT Energy Center, Malia Group, Mersaco, Open Minds NGO, Touch, UNDP, and World Environment Group.

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