

For Immediate Release



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AUB: Launch of the Northeast Baalbek Agricultural Demonstration Plot under CLIMAT Project to Empower the Lebanese Rural Communities

The Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) at the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) at the American University of Beirut (AUB), in collaboration with Cooperation without Borders (CWB), launched the Northeast Baalbek demonstration plot, under the Climate-Smart Livelihoods Initiatives and Market Access Tailoring (CLIMAT) project.

The launch event was held in Ras Baalbek on June 29, in the presence of representatives of the minister of Agriculture, Dr. Hassan Al Lakis; representatives of the World Food Programme (WFP); Head of Ras Baalbek Municipality Sheikh Menhem Mohanna; Governor of Baalbek-Hermel Bachir Khodor; Dr. Issam Bashour representing Dean of FAFS Rabih Mohtar; local communities; and friends of ESDU-AUB and CWB.

Throughout the event the attendees got introduced to CLIMAT project achievements, focusing on the demonstration plot objectives and its role in benefitting the local communities in its surrounding area. Work on the agricultural plots has started since the initiation of the CLIMAT project in Northeast Baalbek and West Bekaa, offering farmers, women, and youth hands-on group learning opportunities through the Farmers Field School approach.

The agricultural demonstration unit in Northeast Baalbek covers an area of 2.4 ha. It includes a training venue, a nursery, a berries plot, a hydroponic production unit, a cut rose greenhouse, and plots for aromatic and medicinal plants. The demonstration plot is serving as a knowledge hub, regularly hosting farmers who are interested in learning about the best practices adopted and asking for advice concerning their fields. In addition, the plot provides services (seedlings and germination services) at affordable prices, supporting 150 farmers within a short period until today. The demonstration plot attracts the private and public sectors; private agricultural companies use the plot for their trials, and decision-makers in the area are visiting it, acknowledging climate-smart production.

About CLIMAT Project

CLIMAT is a one-year project implemented by ESDU in partnership with Cooperation without Borders and funded by the German Cooperation under the World Food Programme “Enhancing the livelihoods of Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese host communities through Food for Training.” CLIMAT aims at building the capacities of women, youth, and farmers (individuals and agriculture cooperatives) on sustainable agricultural practices and climate-smart food processing. Beneficiaries are also offered material support and market linkages are created. CLIMAT tackles three value chains: small ruminant production (wool and carpet production, dairy processing, and herd/pasture management); alternative and climate-smart agricultural crop production; and agro-food processing.

ENDS

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,100 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

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