



A project funded by the European Union



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PRESS RELEASE

OMSAR and the European Union announce the launching of thirteen initiatives by the civil society within Afkar III

Today, at the premises of the Ministry of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR), Minister Nabil De Freij and the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon Ambassador Christina Lassen announced the launching of thirteen projects proposed by non-governmental organisations in the presence of the winning NGOs. The projects are supported by the EU-funded programme "Afkar III" and were selected following a call for proposals.

The announcement was accompanied by presenting the progress of the "Afkar" programme and the projects funded within its third phase. The presentation also elaborated on the conditions, which made possible obtaining European funding that amounted to 80% of each project's value.

Ambassador Lassen said: "The European Union cherishes a dynamic and competent civil society and recognises the importance of constructive relations between Governments and civil society organisations...This is why working with civil society organisations is at the core of our approach in Lebanon." She added: "Whether in development matters or policy – we always seek to have the advice of civil society actors through consultations before policy dialogue with the Government."

Minister De Freij said: "Perhaps a distinguishing factor in this call for proposals was that it stressed the need to build real and effective partnerships among various groups of civil society players as a central element of success. The upgraded level of project proposals was the result of the participation of a number of universities, which also, through their academic focus, increased the confidence in the NGO capacities to implement them. The guiding conditions offered an opportunity to universities to contribute to the implementation of the projects and ensure their continuity once the funding is over." The Minister also stressed the effective role played by the civil society during the recent municipal elections.

Minister De Freij announced that seventy-three initiatives underwent a transparent and competitive application process based on European evaluation and selection standards. A specialised team conducted the evaluation with the participation of European observers. Thirteen projects presented by NGOs were selected to be funded by the European grants within the programme. These projects focus on development and reform all over Lebanon, including remote rural regions.

Afkar III (€10 million), which is managed by OMSAR, promotes socio-economic development and reform. It focuses on building the capacities of the Lebanese civil society and encouraging partnerships between its representatives.