



**AMERICAN
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Certificate Award Ceremony: Strengthening Industrial Resource Efficiency for a Sustainable and Competitive Future

The European Union, in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), announced the successful completion of its training program under the EU-funded 2Circular Project, a €3.7 million initiative supporting Lebanon's transition to a green and circular economy. The project, implemented in partnership with Lebanon's Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Economy and Trade, and Ministry of Finance, also collaborates with the Association of Lebanese Industrialists and the Federation of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture in Lebanon. It aims to enhance resource efficiency and promote circular business models in Lebanon's private sector, particularly in the food and beverage industry.

To mark this achievement, the European Union, together with UNIDO, hosted a Certificate Award Ceremony on February 20, 2025, at the American University of Beirut (AUB), Charles Hostler Auditorium, from 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM. The event celebrated 27 service providers who have successfully completed an intensive training program on the Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies (TEST) methodology. This comprehensive approach helps businesses identify and implement cost-saving, resource-efficient measures that enhance operational efficiency and sustainability.

About the 2Circular Project

The 2Circular Project is a key pillar of the Lebanon Reform, Recovery, and Reconstruction Framework (3RF), building on the success of the EU-funded SwitchMed program and UNIDO's TEST methodology.

The project focuses on:

- Upscaling resource efficiency in 30-40 food and beverage companies through TEST-based solutions.
- Developing circular business models to drive innovation and sustainability.
- Facilitating access to finance for SMEs to adopt sustainable practices.
- Supporting Lebanon's industrial green transition in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry.

Training a cohort of TEST service providers

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The TEST methodology helps businesses integrate environmentally sound technologies to prevent pollution, optimize resource use, and reduce operational costs. Through the six-month EU-funded training program led by international and national UNIDO TEST trainers, in partnership with AUB as the technical execution partner and in collaboration with the Lebanese University, 27 service providers gained hands-on experience in 14 beneficiary companies. Their work resulted in the identification of 89 resource efficiency measures with substantial savings potential:

- 84,729 m³ of water saved annually
- 9,111 MWh of primary energy conserved per year
- 1,502 tonnes of materials optimized annually
- 3,687 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent emissions reduced per year
- €1.655 million in annual production cost savings
- €2.73 million in leveraged investments with an average payback period of just 1.7 years

Voices of Collaboration

Dr. Antoine Ghauch, Project Coordinator, AUB:

“AUB played a pivotal role as the technical execution partner of UNIDO in the EU funded 2Circular project, orchestrating a vital capacity building program for 27 engineers in resource efficiency and cleaner production. We strongly believe that this initiative should be upscaled by the development of an online module for the industrial community, offering continuous education aimed at improving resource efficiency and cleaner production in their processes, enabling industrial companies to enhance both their operational performance and environmental stewardship.”

Dr. Ali Ismail, Lebanese University:

As a key partner in the EU-funded 2Circular project implemented by UNIDO, the Lebanese University contributed resource efficiency and cleaner production advisors, graduates participating as trainees, and hosted practical training on food systems and resource efficiency and cleaner production in the food industry for 27 engineers. Its involvement reflects its dedication to promoting and integrating resource efficiency and cleaner production education within the Lebanese University for a more sustainable industrial sector.”

Dr. Nada Sabra, Liaison and Resource Efficiency Expert of the 2Circular project:

“By delivering a comprehensive theoretical and on-the-job training to engineers on industrial resource efficiency in partnership with academia, UNIDO, through the EU funded 2Circular project, is playing a pivotal role in sustainably fostering the national service provision market in the field of industrial resource efficiency and cleaner production, for a more resilient, competitive and environmentally responsible industry.”

Eng. Chantal Akl, Acting Director-General, Ministry of Industry:

“Building the capacities of service providers in industrial resource efficiency is at the heart of the priorities of the Ministry of Industry, and a pivotal achievement of the 2Circular project that needs to be sustained as it fosters the development of the national market of service providers in industrial resource efficiency for a sustainable industrial development and an enhanced competitiveness and resilience of the Lebanese industrial sector.”

Mr. Talal Hijazi, Representative, Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI):

"We appreciate the EU and UNIDO's continued support in advancing industrial resource efficiency and cleaner production practices. These efforts are essential for Lebanon's industrial growth and green transition."

Mr. Elie Massoud, Federation of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture:

"This achievement is not just a certification—it is a commitment to sustainability, efficiency, and innovation in our industries. The dedication of the trained service providers is a testament to the fact that sustainability is not just an option—it is the way forward."

Ms. Zeina Harakeh, Ministry of Economy & Trade:

"The Ministry of Economy and Trade recognizes industrial resource efficiency as both an economic necessity and an environmental priority. Through the 2Circular project, we are equipping Lebanese industries with the tools to enhance productivity while minimizing environmental impact. The newly certified service providers will play a crucial role in advancing sustainable production practices, strengthening Lebanon's competitiveness in global markets, and driving the transition towards a circular economy."

EU Delegation to Lebanon

Ms. Lea Polony, Program Manager, Economic Affairs and Private Sector, European Commission:

"Through the 2Circular project, the EU is helping businesses in Lebanon's food and beverage sector cut waste, save resources, and work more sustainably. We've trained 27 experts to support companies in reducing their environmental footprint and adopting greener practices. This is part of the EU's broader commitment to building green skills and supporting Lebanon's shift to a more sustainable, circular economy."

Building a Sustainable Future

Beyond resource efficiency in the food and beverage sector, the 2Circular Project is expanding Lebanon's expertise in sustainable production services. The 27 newly certified SPs, including seven women, are now well-equipped to support Lebanese industries in adopting resource-efficient and cleaner production methods, fostering a thriving national market for sustainability-focused services.

Looking Ahead

The success of the 2Circular Project highlights the transformative impact of resource efficiency on economic and environmental resilience. As Lebanon continues its recovery, adopting circular business models and sustainability-driven industrial practices will be essential for long-term growth. UNIDO, in collaboration with key stakeholders, remains committed to advancing Lebanon's green transition and fostering a competitive, resource-efficient industrial sector.

The Certificate Award Ceremony marks a milestone in this journey, celebrating the achievements of service providers and reaffirming Lebanon's commitment to sustainable industrial development.

UNIDO encourages Lebanese industries, policymakers, and development partners to build on this milestone by engaging with the newly trained service providers and sustaining their

continued development. In the coming months, UNIDO will work with 16 additional food and beverage companies seeking to enhance resource efficiency. These companies will have the opportunity to collaborate with selected service providers under UNIDO's guidance, ensuring quality implementation and continuous learning.

About UNIDO:

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is a specialized UN agency dedicated to industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization, and environmental sustainability. UNIDO promotes and accelerates sustainable industrial growth in developing economies.

About the European Union:

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states, committed to sustainable development and environmental protection through global funding initiatives.

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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 750 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 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 365-bed hospital.

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