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ACTIVITY
REPORT
2024

2024



Agroecology Demonstration Plot - under Shabake 2 supported by AFD and the Centre de Crise et De Soutien and implemented by Expertise France

MADA'S STORY

Born in the highlands of Akkar and Hermel in 1999, Mada is a local non-governmental organization that works through a Territorial Approach, constantly adapting to meet local needs.

Mada was amongst the first organizations to work in Akkar. To inform programming and raise national awareness regarding Akkar's vulnerability, natural assets and cultural heritage, the team conducted various studies and socio-economic assessments. With the goal of reinforcing the relationship between communities and the environment, the early years were focused on working towards the establishment of a Natural Park in the Akkar-Hermel-Donnieh area. Common development and nature conservation goals were set with local authorities and communities, based on which Mada implemented various projects (education, agriculture, rural development, women empowerment). In 2011, the refugee crisis shifted priorities and Mada adjusted to the new context, while retaining its identity as a development agency. Although the Natural Park became a longer-term ambition, Mada continued to work on elaborating the legal framework for Parks.

Today, Mada continues to act as a local development agency, exploring new approaches and sectors of development in the deteriorating socio-economic context.



Agroecological Plot - Akkar Al-Attika

OUR MISSION

Working with diverse groups on development and environmental projects to facilitate dynamics of change, through endogenous and inclusive efforts as well as policies and regulations adequate for local realities.

Mada achieves this mission by:

- **Supporting marginalized groups and providing a space for initiatives by actors who have the potential for change**
- **Contributing to the establishment of relationships or effective partnerships between local actors and other stakeholders.**

Through its activities, Mada tries to ensure long-term mobilization and inspire new practices of leadership while contributing to the emergence of a culture of collective action and responsibility.

OUR VISION

Mada strives for the emergence of balanced communities, appreciative of diversity, open to the world, and respectful of human rights and social justice; communities that base their development on a long-term vision of public interest and on models that emphasize a harmonious relationship between human beings and the environment. Members of these communities would be committed, accountable, and creative individuals, able to take initiatives and unite their energies within effective partnerships.



Hot Meals Distributions through Nation Station, in partnership with arche noVa and funding from BMZ

OUR VALUES

Mada is a secular, non-partisan organization with the following guiding principles:

- Non-discrimination and equity;
- Democracy and participation;
- Commitment to public interest;
- Respect and protection of the natural environment;
- Transparency and accountability;
- Creativity and flexibility;
- Autonomy and responsibility;
- Independence from political parties and private interests.

HIGHLIGHTS 2024

- Following the escalation of the aggression in September 2024, Mada mobilized to respond to the wave of massive displacement. The response included support to community kitchens in Beirut and distribution of basic items in Akkar. With partner Jibal, Mada supported community kitchens to source from agroecological farmers, and supported a shelter kitchen to promote self-reliance.
- Mada conducted the research 'An analysis of the fresh vegetables and fruits food systems in Lebanon: on the right path towards Food Sovereignty?', funded by the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), that looked into the 'sustainable, alternative' food movement in Lebanon, to determine alignment with the principles of Food Sovereignty.
- Mada's Agroecology Team and supported agroecological farmers took part in an experience-sharing visit to Sri Lanka, organized by CAFOD. The visit included interactions with agroecological farmers, cooperatives, market actors, and schools, to facilitate learning and exchange among participants from Lebanon, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.



Focus Group Discussion for Local Development Plan for Fneideq - in partnership with We World Onlus and LWRO, under RDPP II

- **Biodiversity in a Box: Bringing Nature Back to the City**, funded by the French Embassy in Lebanon and in coordination with Lebanon Eco Movement. This project worked closely with the community in last-affected areas to install planters with native species in front of residential buildings, offices, NGOs, schools, and hospitals, to beautify the space, be taken care of collectively by the community, and serve as biodiversity islands in the city.
- Under the **Youth Climate Action Fund**, established and supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, Mada supported the Municipality of Menjez to provide grants to 10 local youth-led climate projects.

I – Women and Youth

- **SAFE: Sustainable Agri-Food Economy for refugee and local communities in vulnerable governorates of Lebanon**, in partnership with We World Onlus and the Lebanese Observatory for Workers' and Employees' Rights (LWRO), under the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP II) for Jordan and Lebanon, which is supported by Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union, Ireland, the Netherlands and Switzerland. This project supports private sector and civil society actors in the Agri-Food Sector to generate jobs and provide income for the most vulnerable, with focus on decent employment and inclusion.
- **Support socio-economically vulnerable households meet their basic needs and withstand future shocks in Akkar Governorate** in partnership with We World Onlus and funding from the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations Department (DG ECHO). Mada's component entails piloting exit strategies from cash assistance through Income-Generation Activities.

II – Environmental Protection

- **SWaM Akkar - Supporting Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Jurd al-Kaytaa, Akkar**, in partnership with COOPI - Cooperazione Internazionale, COSPE - Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo nei Paesi Emergenti, StudioAzue, and the Union of Municipalities of Jurd al-Kaytaa, and funded by the EU; and **Supporting Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Jurd al-Kaytaa** in partnership with the Municipality of Fano, COSPE, COOPI, ASET, and the Union of Municipalities of Jurd al-Kaytaa, and funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS). Under these projects, Mada is responsible for awareness raising and community mobilization.



Biodiversity Box - funded by the French Embassy in Lebanon



Agroecology Demonstration Plot in Meshmesh - in partnership with arche noVa and funding from GFFO



SAMAD شبكة المزارعين
البيئيين في عكار

Logo SAMAD – The Akkar
Agroecological Farmer's Network

III – Food and Agriculture

- **Wielding Agroecology to Transition Agriculture for Development (WATAD)**, under the Shabake 2 project supported by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) & the Centre de Crise et De Soutien, implemented by the French Public Agency for International Technical Cooperation - Expertise France. The project increased the individual and collective capacities of smallholder farmers to transition to agroecology, and fostered the enabling environment for agroecology to prosper. Notably, Mada facilitated the establishment of SAMAD – The Akkar Agroecological Farmer's Network, to increase cooperation among farmers, boost negotiation power, encourage resource sharing, and promote greater solidarity.
- **Strengthen resilience of refugees from Syria and their host communities to current and future challenges and risks related to socio-economic crises in Lebanon**, in partnership with arche noVa and funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). This project bolsters the resilience of the Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities across The North through rehabilitation of agricultural and water infrastructure and micro-infrastructure at the farm level, and by building the capacities of smallholder farmers and livestock breeders on Good Agricultural Practices and business management.
- **Agricultural Productivity and Poverty Reduction in Lebanon – Phase II**, in partnership with LebRelief and funded by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Mada is supporting farmers in Minnieh and Donnieh to improve water management, and piloting collective solar systems for clusters of farmers to optimize resource use and encourage collaboration.
- **Strengthening local climate-sensitive and universal WASH capacities using and disseminating the Green Humanitarian Aid approach**, in partnership with arche noVa and funded by the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO). Under this project spanning 14 countries, Mada is enhancing the capacities of authorities in Akkar to respond to water-related emergencies, supporting farmers in water-management, and promoting agroecology using the green humanitarian aid approach.
- **Localized and accountable Food Security and WASH response for 6,370 people in Wadi Khaled, Machta Hammoud, and Mazarea Jabal Akroum in Akkar governorate**, funded by the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF) and implemented by We World Onlus, in collaboration with Mada as sub-implementing partner. Mada's component entails distributing fresh food baskets to vulnerable households through agricultural cooperatives, providing technical and material support to farmers, and piloting exit strategies from food assistance through Supplementary Subsistence Gardens.

THE PLATFORM



Palestinian Lunch - Joint Activity with Great Oven and Matbakh Settat - with the support of CCFD-Terre Solidaire

The Platform is a space that provides diverse supports to civil society and grassroots initiatives. In 2024, various groups were supported with the financial support of CAFOD and CCFD-Terre Solidaire.

- **Nation Station** - founded in response to the Beirut Blast, operates a Community Kitchen that distributes hot meals to vulnerable households in Geitawi, hosts the farmers' market Souk el Mawsam, and implements various communal, cultural, and educational activities. Mada continued supporting them strategically, operationally, and materially in 2024.
- **Matbakh Settat** - a Palestinian women-led initiative based in Shatila Camp that employs women in its kitchen and distributes hot meals. Mada supported them through linkages with other initiatives and joint activities with other groups, as well as raw material for distributions during the war.
- **Dikken el Mazraa** - an experimental solidarity grocery shop that combats inflation through a membership system that prices goods progressively based on the client's socioeconomic situation, while sourcing from local, sustainable producers. Mada continued to support Dikken operationally and materially in 2024.

- **The Great Oven** - a cross-community, cross-cultural, cooking-based group operating in Beirut and Bekaa, that seeks to break down barriers and address misconceptions pertaining to ethnicity, faith, culture and traditions. In 2024, Mada supported them with internal templates, coaching sessions on internal functions, fundraising, partnerships, and joint activities with other groups.
- **Field to Fork** - an organic, regenerative farm and distribution social enterprise located in the Bekaa, which distributes in Greater Beirut. Mada supported their operations with focus on value for money through compost, a solar system, and a drip irrigation system.
- **Tres Marias** - a migrant women-led group based in Bourj Hammoud that provides upskilling workshops to migrant women, life/social skills workshops, and advocates for social justice. Mada supported them with equipment for their kitchen, optimization of internal functions, and linkages with other groups, as well as raw material for distributions during the war.
- **Initiative Ras el Nabaa (IREN)** - founded by a group of friends to support the Ras el Nabej community with essential items (food, medication, clothing). Mada supported them with linkages and joint activities with other groups, as well as raw material for distributions during the war.



Souk el Mawsam at Nation Station - supported by CCFD-Terre Solidaire, CAFOD, and BMZ



Agroecological Farmers Market in Akkar - funded by AFD

Cross-Regional Projects

Mada expanded its cross-regional projects in 2024, including:

- **Phases III of Producers, Consumers and Civil Society for Greater Food Sovereignty in Lebanon** – funded by CAFOD, and **A Locally-Led Model for Greater Food Sovereignty in Lebanon** – funded by CCFD-Terre Solidaire. In 2024, Mada continued supporting **Nation Station** and **Dikken el Mazraa**, while expanding support to new groups: **Tres Marias**, **The Great Oven**, and **Field to Fork**. Mada also focused on collective support as opposed to individual, with focus on joint activities by the groups.
- **From Farm to Kitchen - Building a Resilient Food System in Lebanon**, in partnership with **Nation Station** and CCFD-Terre Solidaire, with funding from AFD. The project is generating evidence to maximize agroecological production and profitability, through research and experimentation; establishing a pool of agroecological advocates and professionals through training and awareness; supporting **Nation Station's Community Kitchen** in Beirut; and expanding marketing channels by establishing a Community Kitchen in Tripoli that replicates the Beirut model.
- **Food System Change – An Alternative, Solidarity-Based Model Towards Food Security in Lebanon**, in partnership with Helvetas Germany and funding from BMZ. This project supports **Nation Station's Community Kitchen** and its weekly sustainable farmer's market – Souk el Mawsam, through business development, material and technical support, marketing, visibility, and strategy. The project builds on the learnings from Akkar on the transition of smallholder farmers to agroecology to support farmers from other regions (mainly Chouf).

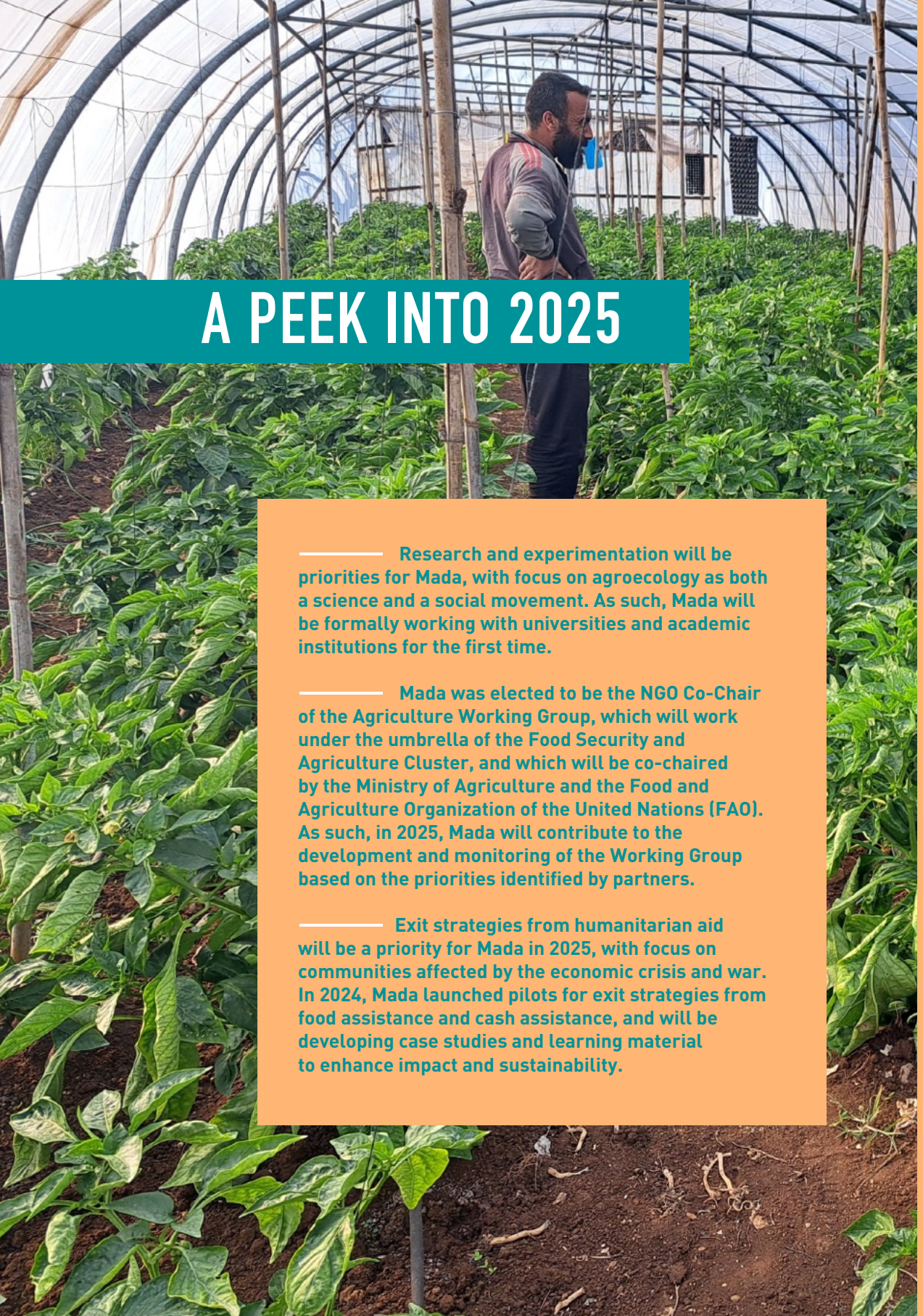
Kick-starting & upcoming projects

————— **The Power of Youth: Unlocking Potential for Inter and Intra-Communal Conflict Prevention in Lebanon** in partnership with Jafra Foundation and We World Onlus, and funding from the EU. Under this kickstarting project, Lebanese, Syrian, Palestinian, and Migrant Youth-Led Civil Society Organizations will be supported to implement peacebuilding initiatives, and local actors will be supported to counter disinformation and promote peaceful changes and coexistence.

————— Under a second round of the **Youth Climate Action Fund**, established and supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, Mada will support the Municipality of Menjez to provide additional grants to local youth-led climate projects.

————— **Strengthening the resilience of vulnerable women, young adults, and men in Lebanon through livelihood improvement and increased food security** implemented by a consortium led by arche noVa and composed of Johanniter Unfallhilfe e.V. (JUH), Mada, Nabaa, and MAPS, with funding from BMZ. Mada's component entails supporting women agroecological farmers to expand production and new women to shift to agroecology – through technical, material, business, and marketing support; supporting local livestock breeders to produce their own fodder; and promoting renewable energy in the Agriculture Sector.





A PEEK INTO 2025

Research and experimentation will be priorities for Mada, with focus on agroecology as both a science and a social movement. As such, Mada will be formally working with universities and academic institutions for the first time.

Mada was elected to be the NGO Co-Chair of the Agriculture Working Group, which will work under the umbrella of the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster, and which will be co-chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). As such, in 2025, Mada will contribute to the development and monitoring of the Working Group based on the priorities identified by partners.

Exit strategies from humanitarian aid will be a priority for Mada in 2025, with focus on communities affected by the economic crisis and war. In 2024, Mada launched pilots for exit strategies from food assistance and cash assistance, and will be developing case studies and learning material to enhance impact and sustainability.

2025

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