



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

rehabilitation • integration • prevention
إعادة تأهيل • اندماج • وقاية



A Word from our Honorary President and Co-Founder

The world has just witnessed one of its hardest years ever. A simple virus, an infinitesimally small being, has brought nations to their knees, has driven economies to a standstill for almost two years now, has forced crowds to don masks, has driven people away from one another, and has pushed so many of them into sequestration in their own rooms. Through contact, it has caused millions to die alone. It is a painful reminder to human beings that we are not the Almighty.

The pandemic is not the only calamity dawning on us Lebanese. Rampant unemployment, an economic crisis dismantling our every institution, despicable corruption suffocating the poorest of us, political stagnation fed by the merciless pride of some, and so on, and so forth.

These words are not meant to sound like a death knell, but rather to pay homage to those who spend themselves once and again in the service of life, to those knowledgeable people from all over whose research keep reviving the hope in human hearts, to those healthcare workers who bravely expose themselves to contagion in their loyalty to their patients, to these mothers and fathers who constantly risk their lives under the threat of violent riots and wars. We were the very scene of one of the most violent blasts, and there is no sign of improvement on our horizon.

It is good to speak of one's admiration to all these people devoting their work within humanitarian associations, be they international such as the Red Cross, national like the Civil Defense, or private. Their perseverance and their spirit of sacrifice prevented society from crumbling and humanity from drowning in chaos.

This is the testimony woven into this report from Oum El-Nour, which has been fighting to survive for over thirty years, helping people struggling with addiction. It might be difficult to understand the true meaning of accompanying these people whose souls are deeply wounded, who are trapped in complete despair of themselves even as they painfully trudge onwards and upwards, weighed down by the shackles of burning desire for drugs. It requires a hefty dose of wisdom and love, equal to the one borne by parents towards their children, the one shared between siblings in a tight-knit family. We cannot forget the greatness of an addict who accepts help and manages to tear off the yoke of drugs. It is a testimony to the sweeping power of human bonds.

The horrors raining upon the world must not erase from our memory those magnificent gestures of humanity. Thank you to Oum El-Nour and its entire team, including its patients, who remind us of that every day. Their activity reports for the past year is worthy of respect and sparks joy in our hearts as we discover in it the portraits of proud and generous people who do not let difficulties wear them down. Through Oum El-Nour, let us proclaim our gratitude once again to all those humanitarian associations who bravely faced enormous challenges, especially over the course of this past year

Bishop Guy Paul Noujaim
February, 2021

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ABOUT US

Oum el Nour was founded in 1989 in the waning days of the Lebanese Civil War as a group of socially-conscious young men watched one friend succumb to an overdose and struggled to support other friends in overcoming substance use disorder.

Oum el Nour was registered as a Lebanese non-profit, non-governmental social organization (under decree 120/ad) in 1990 and became a pioneer in offering rehabilitation and prevention services in Lebanon.

Beginning with inpatient rehabilitation services based on the Therapeutic Community model, Oum el Nour has since expanded to offer a comprehensive range of therapeutic services in multiple centers for Men and Women.

MILESTONES

1989: Opening of Seheilé Inpatient Rehabilitation Center for men

1992: Opening of Fatka Inpatient Rehabilitation Center for women

1994: Development of a Follow-Up Program to support former substance users' reintegration

2000: Creation of a Prevention Center to raise awareness and empower children, youth, parents, and professionals in preventing substance use

2012: Creation of Outpatient Treatment Center to support substance users in regaining a healthier balance to their lives before becoming dependent

2019: Oum el Nour Headquarters move to Aintoura

2020: Overcoming the pandemic and the economical crisis while ensuring our continuity.

Our Philosophy

MISSION

Oum el Nour is committed to serving individuals through helping them overcome their dependency in order to promote a healthier society characterized by sustainable growth. In addition to rehabilitation, Oum el Nour is highly active in the prevention and social reintegration fields.

VISION

Oum el Nour aims at gradually decreasing the numbers of individual who suffers from Substance Use disorder in Lebanon and increasing awareness regarding the various factors leading to such dependencies and behavior. Thus, we continuously endeavour to implement tested programs and develop new approaches to welcome, guide, rehabilitate, and accompany substance users.

VALUES

INDEPENDENCE:

Oum el Nour is independent, non-sectarian and non-political.

NO DISCRIMINATION:

All human beings are equal. Our services are open to everyone with no discrimination relating to gender, religion, nationality or personal viewpoints.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Oum el Nour ensures complete confidentiality of its beneficiaries' information.

TRANSPARENCY:

We ensure transparency of our activities and budget through activity and financial reports and yearly audits.

RESPECT:

All beneficiaries and employees are treated with dignity and respect.

PROFESSIONALISM:

We all deserve the best. That is why Oum el Nour is committed to offering the best services. Through follow-up, evaluation and training we constantly renew our services' quality.

TEAMWORK:

Trust, loyalty, equality and solidarity unite Oum el Nour's team toward a common goal: work to serve vulnerable people.

WELCOME:

Our team is devoted and always available. Oum el Nour is a large family where everyone is welcomed with kindness.

Leadership

Board of Directors

BISHOP GUY PAUL NOUJAIM Honorary President & Co-Founder

Bishop in the Maronite Order and the founder of several NGOs, including Oum el Nour. He has dedicated his life to serving the most vulnerable.

GABRIEL DEBBANÉ Co-founder and President

General Manager of the Debbané Group and graduate from HEC Montréal with an MBA. Committed to serving many NGOs, he is a co-founder of Oum el Nour has been an active Board Member since its founding.

HANI ZGHEIB Vice President

Architect and graduate of USEK and Kyushu (Japan), he has executive experience on an International level, managing a multi-national staff. He became a Board Member for the first time in 2010.

FRANCOIS ABI NAKHOUL Board member

Holder of a master's degree in management, license and advanced studies in banking studies from USJ.

Employed at fransabank since 1980, currently regional director at mount Lebanon. Former president of the alumni committee of Notre-Dame de Louaize college. President of the NGO Lasta Wahdak which deals with spiritual formation in prisons.

JOE MISKAOUI Board member

A finance and Supply Chain professional with Senior Level experience in multinationals and Lebanese corporations. Graduated in Economy from USJ - Beirut and holder of an MBA in Finance from ESCP - Paris

TALAL AHMAR Board Member

Founder and General Manager at Squaremeters and graduate from Montreal University with a BA in Computer Science. He has been a Board Member of Oum el Nour since 2015.

ANTHONY BOU KATHER Board Member

CEO of A.N.Boukather - Automotive and a graduate from AUB with a BA in Computer Science and an Executive MBA from INSEAD. He has been a Board Member since 2015.

CHARLES NOUJAIM Board Member

Attorney at Law, BBA, he graduated in Law from La Sagesse University and previously assisted Oum el Nour as a Legal Advisor, He has been a Board Member since 2017.

Management

FATHER TONI ABI AZAR, General Manager

Father Toni graduated from Université la Sagesse with a degree in Religious Studies, which was followed by several degrees in Social Work and a Master's from the Catholic University in Paris in Economic and Social Sciences. Father Toni joined Oum el Nour in October, 2019.

Our Work and Statistics

Oum El Nour offers a comprehensive range of services to rehabilitate and reintegrate substance users as well as an extensive substance use prevention program to raise awareness about substance use issues with youth, parents, and the community.

All services are provided free of charge to beneficiaries with no discrimination regarding gender, nationality, religion, etc.

Oum el Nour's main objectives are:

1. Raise awareness on the psychological, health, and economic risks of substance use and empower youth, families, and the community with the necessary skills to make healthier decisions.
2. Diagnose, rehabilitate, and reintegrate substance users and persons with substance use disorder to overcome their dependencies and live substance free lives; support parents and families throughout the treatment period.
3. Build national capacity to combat substance use in Lebanon and coordinate with relevant organizations on national, regional, and international levels.

Prevention Department

The Prevention Department aims to empower individuals with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make healthy choices and live life fully without drugs as well as build the capacity of youth, families, professionals, and community members to act as partners in drug prevention.

A year of great efforts ...

The difficulty of the year 2020 lies in the many changes that accompanied the beginning of it, in terms of managing the department and in terms of the economic crisis that began in October 2019 and completed its course to 2020, in addition to its major repercussions on the group in terms of economic and emotional. As a prevention department, we completed our direct work on the ground for about two and a half months, until the Corona epidemic ravaged Lebanon and led to measures being taken to disrupt and block many activities for long periods of time in the country, such as banning gatherings, canceling schools and church scouting groups meetings. This prompted us to move to the remote interview strategy, which took a long time to implement. Videos and remote interviews were prepared. As for the third stage, the port explosion took place on August 4, canceling the previous strategies and showing us the need to be on the ground in Beirut to provide psychosocial support.

This introduction, in addition to the status of the work team and the atmosphere at that time, made this year exceptional in its progress.



Youth direct beneficiaries: 8,250



Parent direct beneficiaries: 439



Professional/Community direct beneficiaries: 420



Indirect Beneficiaries (Awareness campaigns, educational videos): 23,000

In 2020, the Prevention Department reached:

4,450 direct beneficiaries

23,000 indirect beneficiaries



Psychosocial support for kids in Borj Hammoud

Prevention center initiative after Beirut explosion



Training to Oum el Nour volunteers with Dr. Marie-Ange Noh

Reception Center

The Reception Center is the entry point to Oum el Nour treatment services. The Reception Center staff help substance users access treatment services in Lebanon and provide hotline services to offer information and counseling. The Center also welcomes beneficiaries in person to help them better understand their needs and to advance towards the best treatment option.

The Center accompanies each individual in transferring to Oum el Nour treatment services or treatment with other structures, according to their specific needs.

Hotline: +961 (0)9 223 700

In 2020, the Reception Center provided counseling for 3670 beneficiaries



Women:45

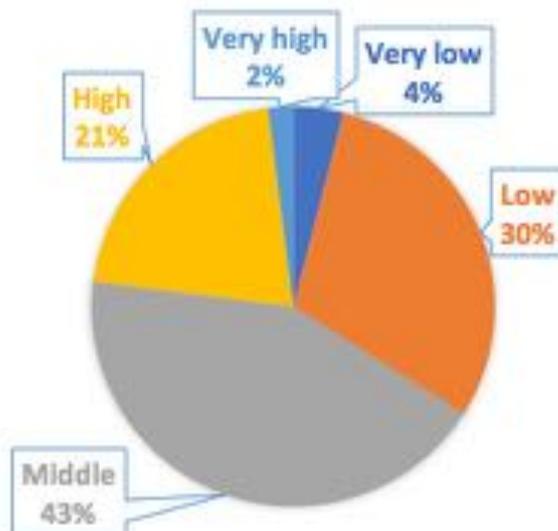


Men:255

Most common issues:

- Cannabis- 86%
- Cocaine- 66%
- Alcohol- 62%
- Tramadol (opiod)- 49%
- Amphetamines- 48%
- Salvia- 47%
- Freebase- 45%
- Ecstasy- 28%
- Gambling- 18%

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS RECEPTION CENTER 2020



Inpatient Treatment Centers

Oum el Nour has two Inpatient Rehabilitation Centers, one for men in Seheilé (72-bed capacity) and one for women in Fatka (35-bed capacity). Both centers share the same aim to accompany substance users in overcoming their dependency and reintegrating into society.

Inpatient treatment at Oum el Nour, which last 15 months, is based on the Therapeutic Community model, which focuses on holistic support (psychological, social, medical, educational, legal, etc.) through group and individual therapy and activities, as well as psychological and social support for the family to increase awareness about issues relating to substance use and reinforce healthy parenting skills.

The program is divided into 5 stages: Resident, Companion, Head of Unit, Supervision and Reintegration; each stage lasts 3 months and concentrates on specific objectives and on acquiring specific skills. During the last phase, a stronger focus is placed on reintegration.

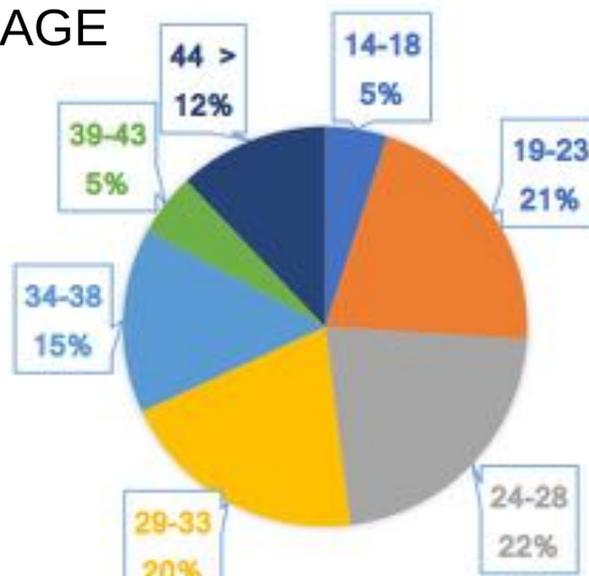


The Inpatient Center for Men at Seheilé welcomed 63 residents in 2020



The Inpatient Center for Women at Fatka welcomed 10 residents in 2020

AGE



Follow-Up Center

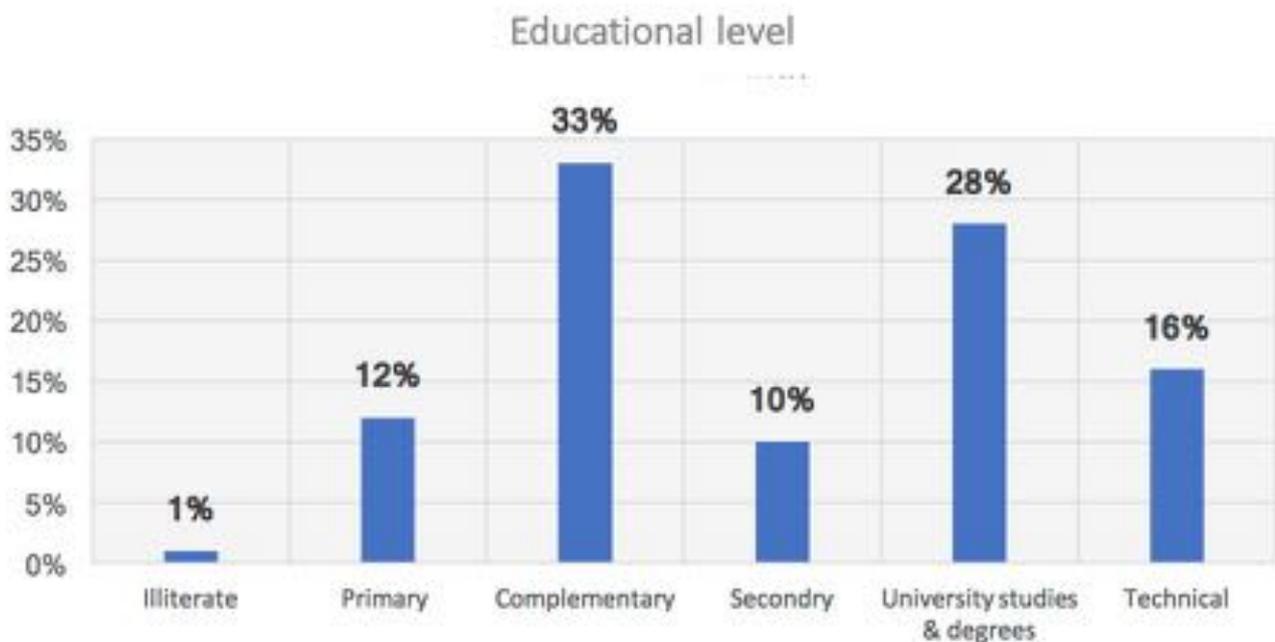
The Follow-Up Center helps recovered individuals who have completed the rehabilitation program in Oum el Nour Inpatient Centers to maintain their sobriety and reintegrate into society. The Center accompanies beneficiaries in avoiding relapse and in developing their autonomy and personal potential. The Follow-Up programme lasts 18 months and consists of a 24/7 hotline, psychiatric and psychological follow-up, group therapy, individual therapy and follow up with the family.

In 2020, the Follow Up Center welcomed 19 new beneficiaries, who joined the 49 beneficiaries already in the Follow Up program.



The Follow Up Center worked with a total of 34 men in 2020.

The Follow Up Center worked with a total of 4 women in 2020.



Outpatient Treatment Center

The Outpatient Rehabilitation Center provides support to substance users who have not yet reached a stage of dependency or who are unable to enter an inpatient treatment facility. The Center's objective is to help its beneficiaries achieve autonomous, substance free lives. They accompany substance users toward abstinence from all substances and avoiding relapse, improving their psychological well-being and their family dynamics, and helping them to be better integrated in their social environment.

The Center offers 4 to 9 months therapy, based mainly on group therapy, family therapy and individual psycho-social support.

In 2020, The Outpatient Center welcomed 15 beneficiaries.



13 men



2

women



85% University students



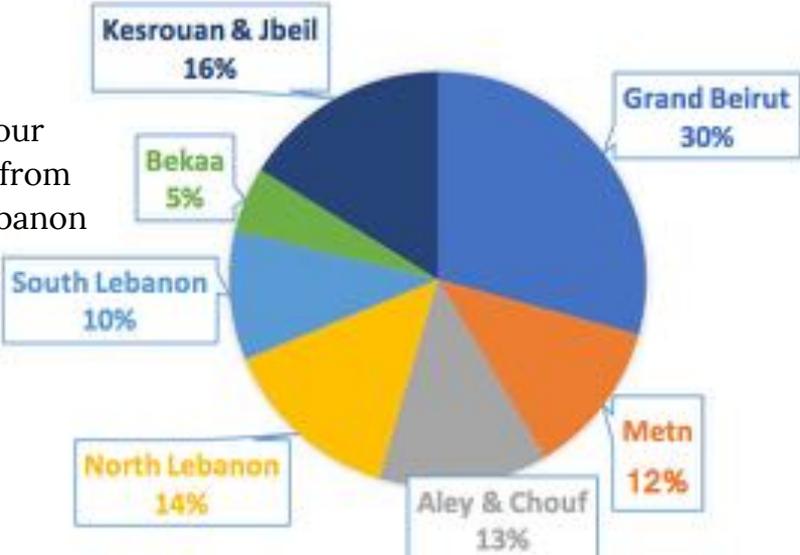
15% High-school students



The Inpatient Treatment Centers for Women at Fatka (left) and Men at Seheilé (right)

Residents participate in the daily operations at the Centers, including meal preparation (above)

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE RECEPTION CENTER 2020



Our beneficiaries in our treatment centers are from different locations in Lebanon



Outpatient and follow up centers offered support online during the pandemic.

The Reception Center (below) offers individualized counseling and diagnosis for anyone in need.



Oum el Nour during the pandemic

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has upended family life around the world. School closures, working remote and physical distancing – it's a lot to navigate for anyone, but especially for organizations like Oum el Nour, who leads programs that rely on community interaction. We teamed up together for Lifelong Health initiative to bring our beneficiaries and team together and limit their movements in and outside the center. As well, we set handy tips to help manage this new (temporary) normal.

The administration, the Outpatient Center, the follow up, the reception centre and the prevention centre were working remotely and switched their individual and group sessions online. They also worked to help the beneficiaries process their feelings and provide extra support as they continue their treatment to avoid substance use and maintain their sobriety.

The Inpatient Treatment Centers learned to adapt on a day-to-day basis. Lockdowns complicated the usual routines of residents welcoming their families for a visit, residents in the final stages of treatment spending scheduled time outside the center, and the supply deliveries to maintain daily operations.

Despite the various disruptions triggered by the pandemic, Oum el Nour has not suspended any of its services and is dedicated to continuing to offer counseling and treatment to all those in need.



OUR SUPPORTERS, PARTNERS, AND STAFF

Project Partners

Lebanese Ministry of Public Health (MoPH):

The MoPH has been providing funding to support the costs of treatment for Lebanese residents in the Inpatient Rehabilitation Centers since 1995.

Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA):

The MoSA has been a key supporting partner for Oum el Nour's activities since 1994. The Ministry covers a portion of the costs for:

- primary Prevention activities
- Outpatient treatment
- activities at the Reception and Follow-Up Centers
- the Prison program, providing counseling and awareness-raising for detainees and prison employees
- Parents' Program to support parents of residents in inpatient treatment



Oum el Nour maintains formal partnerships with several municipal authorities to support substance use prevention and rehabilitation services:

- Municipality of Beirut
- Municipality of Hadat (where Oum el Nour maintains a small branch office)
- Municipality of Zouk Mikael



Project Partners

Cooperazione con i Territori del Mondo (CTM):

"Strengthening of Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Social and Economic Reintegration Services for Addicts and Former Addicts in Lebanon"

This 3-year project, funded by the Italian Cooperation and implemented by CTM in partnership with Oum el Nour, Conferenza Episcopale Italiana (CEI), and Associazione Solidarietà E Sviluppo (SEdE-CIA), is scheduled to be completed in June, 2020. The objectives consist of 1) renovation projects in the Inpatient Centers at Seheilé and Fatka, 2) reinforcing Prevention Center programming and 3) strengthening Oum el Nour staff continuing education. In 2019, the fourth major goal of the project, the development of Social Farming, was further developed.

Social Farming has both therapeutic and practical objectives and Oum el Nour is the first NGO in Lebanon to practice Social Farming. Residents at Oum el Nour dedicate a portion of their therapy time to growing vegetables and tending to chickens, geese and goats. This contact with nature and connection to animals assist residents in developing emotional management skills and building a new relationship with environment. After several months of implementation, social farming activities have succeeded in drastically reducing costs for residents' meals and offer the opportunity for generating an income to subsidize treatment cost.



Project Partners

Fondation d'Entreprise Air France and Société Générale de Banque au Liban:

"Drug Free North: Substance Use Prevention for Youth and Families"

This project, cofinanced by Fondation d'Entreprise Air France and Société Générale de Banque au Liban, is currently ongoing. The focus of this project is to help at-risk youth and their families build skills to make healthier decisions and avoid risky behaviors, in the North of Lebanon, a region marked by higher levels of economic stress.



Rotary Club Beirut Cedars:

"Aman- Create Golden Parents"

This innovative project, developed in partnership with **LARAA** (Lebanese Association for Awareness & Rehabilitation from Technology Addiction), reached 20,000 parents in Beirut, Metn, Jbeil, and Mount Lebanon, with the goal of reinforcing healthy parenting skills and providing tools for preventing substance use and cyberaddiction.



Project Partners

Oum el Nour is very grateful for its network of loyal donors who support us in continuing our mission to help those seeking to overcome their substance dependencies.

This network includes individuals and businesses who provide both cash and in-kind donations in the form of food products, sanitary products, and small equipment that help Oum el Nour maintain its services.

We are especially grateful to the donors participating in the Sponsorship Program, who have volunteered to underwrite the annual treatment cost for one resident.

Anyone interested in becoming a partner and supporting Oum el Nour's mission can contact the Fundraising department: fundraising@oumelnour.org



National Partnerships and Advocacy

Oum el Nour is part of the following national networks and committees:

- Lebanese Network of Therapeutic Communities, which also includes: Cénacle de la Lumière, Nusroto al-Anashid, and Jeunesse Contre la Drogue.
- Drug Addiction Committee: We are the civil society representative in the Drug Addiction Committee along with representatives from the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Interior, to promote treatment alternatives for persons arrested on drug charges.
- The technical committee to develop and guide the implementation of the Inter-Ministerial Substance Use Response Strategy for Lebanon, 2016-2021 a process co-ordinated by the Council of Europe's Pompidou Group.
- Lebanon Humanitarian and Development NGOs Forum (LHDF): We are a member of this network that aims to facilitate the improvement, rationalization, and optimization of the response to humanitarian and development needs in Lebanon.

Talitha Koum: We are collaborating with this small NGO in Deir el Ahmar (Bekaa Valley), to expand prevention and referral services in this underserved region.



International Partnerships

Over the years, Oum el Nour has developed an international network of partners:

- **Oum el Nour France**- established in 1993; participates in awareness-raising and fundraising activities
contact: oumelnour.france@gmail.com
- **Drug Free Lebanon**- established in 2007; participates in awareness-raising, fundraising, and scientific collaboration activities
contact: infodrugfreelebanon@gmail.com; www.drugfreelebanon.org
- **Oum el Nour Liberia**- established in 2015, this sister organization offers substance use prevention programs, and inpatient and outpatient substance use rehabilitation treatment
contact: infolib@oumelnour.org; www.oumelnour.org/liberia

Oum el Nour also serves as one of the NGOs to assist the United Nations Department of Global Communications in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals and disseminating information on the UN's role in defending human rights and promoting peace and security.



A final word from Our general Director Father Toni Abi Azar and Acknowledgements

The 2020 has been an extremely distressing year at so many levels in Lebanon, whether due the political situation that brought the country to a standstill, followed by an economic collapse, or to the pandemic and the lockdown, and finally to the devastating Beirut port explosion. However, we are grateful that we were able to overcome all these challenges and we were able to maintain our commitments and attain our objectives.

We strongly believe more than ever that our will and resilience is helping us, to continue our mission of helping people who are suffering from substance abuse and those who need sheltering, fostering, understanding. Oum el Nour under all the circumstances of the year 2020 was and is still able to offer a place away from noise, pressure, judgment. A place to recover, look back and learn, and to reconnect with oneself before reconnecting with others.

Oum el Nour team would like to thank all of those who have contributed to helping our mission this year. Thank you to the many public institutions and private donors, whose gifts of cash and in-kind donations make it possible to continue. Thanks to all our employees, whose dedication and hard work made it possible to our beneficiaries to find the help they need, in order to live a full, substance free, life.

Thank you!



**LIFE DOESN'T GET EASIER OR MORE FORGIVING,
WE GET STRONGER AND MORE RESILIENT**

