

Water maintenance centers opened in south

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TYRE: Residents of south Lebanon will enjoy better water supply following the inauguration of two water maintenance centers in the south on Thursday.

As part of the "Water management and water infrastructures improvement in south Lebanon" project, the centers were inaugurated by the UN Development Program's (UNDP) ArtGold program, in cooperation with the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and the South Lebanon Water Authority.

The project is funded by the Spanish government.

The first center is located in the village of Ain Baal, Tyre, while the second is in the village of Taibi, Marjayoun.

Both inauguration ceremonies were attended by Rafael Reig on behalf of the Spanish ambassador to Lebanon.

The two centers costing \$40,000 have the needed equipment and machinery for detecting water leakages and repairing water networks. Engineers and technicians will also undergo training sessions on water networks maintenance.

UNDP's manager in the south, Mohammad Muqalled, said the inauguration of the two centers was part of the project to improve the south's infrastructure and water management. "This project serves over 60,000 residents of villages in Jabal Amel municipal union and 300,000 in villages in Tyre's municipal union," he said.

UNDP's manager in Lebanon, Saifeddine Abaro, said the international organization, in cooperation with the CDR, has been addressing the water needs of southerners following the Israeli pullout from the south in 2000, adding that those needs have become more pressing following Israel's 2006 summer war against Lebanon.

Meanwhile, Reig stressed the Spanish support for the Art Program in Lebanon in all its "geographic areas and lines of intervention," adding that Lebanon would benefit from 1 million euros (around \$1.3 million) of the 12 million euros allocated for the Art initiative worldwide in the 2010-2012 period.