



Empowering Civil Society

**How to Unleash Innovation and
SDG Finance through the Power
of Community**

22 September 2023
10 a.m. - 11 p.m. EST

UN Headquarters
(Conference Room 12) + online

Registration:

In person (with UN Badges): <https://shorturl.at/xyKP2>

Online: <https://shorturl.at/eoAZ0>



The Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), and the Islamic Development Bank (ISDB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation joined forces for a special event spotlighting the NGO Empowerment for Poverty Reduction Programme (Tadamon) during the upcoming 78th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). This event will showcase the achievements and lessons learned during the first phase of the Tadamon programme and how innovation, alternative finance and sustainable development can empower civil society organizations (CSOs).

Background:

Access to finance is critical for CSOs, and traditional ways of financing are often not sufficient or adequate for expanding their innovative projects. To fill the gap, there has been an increase in the use of alternative finance business models and novel initiatives striving to harness innovative financing, driven by factors such as increased internet penetration, rising smartphone usage, and a growing entrepreneurial spirit. Among them are crowdfunding platforms, used for a variety of purposes, including supporting small businesses and startups, funding social and community projects, and assisting individuals with medical expenses or personal needs. Blockchain or crypto-based solutions have also been used to improve financial inclusion, facilitate remittance or cross-border transfers, or hedge against the inflation.

At the heart of the Tadamon initiative lies a deep commitment to eradicating poverty and uplifting communities. Through its programmes, Tadamon supports local CSOs in their mission to improve the socio-economic wellbeing of marginalized communities. Sponsored by ISFD, managed by ISDB, and implemented by UNDP, the programme operates across 33 Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Member Countries by leveraging innovative approaches and alternative mechanisms, and fostering collaboration. With over 3,500 CSOs having joined Tadamon to drive transformational change, the programme runs a series of initiatives, including a Crowdfunding Academy, which has equipped 450 CSOs with skills in management, innovative financing, and crowdfunding, and the Tadamon Accelerator, which has supported 50 CSOs from 30 countries with training and \$460,000 in grants. In six months, \$2.2 million has been raised to support 80 campaigns and CSOs.

Goal:

The objective of the event is to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders and partners to highlight and explore different ways of harnessing innovation and alternative financing mechanisms to empower CSOs to further their mission in addressing a range of critical development issues, and identify the gaps and needs to further strengthen CSO capacity, foster innovation in tackling poverty reduction-related challenges and ensure sustainable financing for those on the frontlines.

Objectives:

- **Spotlight exceptional CSOs and their work**, how they are tapping into community engagement and innovative approaches to tackle issues from poverty to health, as well as probe existing systemic challenges to their work on the ground and potential solutions;
- **Explore avenues to leverage innovative financing** mechanisms and alternative finance platforms for financing the SDGs, involving various stakeholders – from high-tech companies and crowdfunding platforms to development organizations and governments;
- **Showcase the achievements, impact and lessons learned thus far from Tadamon 2019-2024** and explore next steps, challenges and priorities for the programme's second phase in strengthening local ecosystems and support for CSOs;
- **Explore existing and new partnerships** to strengthen collaboration, and foster synergies and collective efforts in supporting and empowering CSOs.

Agenda

15 min **Opening session**

Inspiring opening remarks:

- **Haoliang Xu**, UN Under Secretary-General and UNDP Associate Administrator (TBC)
- **Dr. Mansur Muhtar**, IsDB Vice President of Operations
- **Ambassador Hameed Opeloyeru**, OIC Permanent Observer to UN

Master of the Ceremony: **Lejla Sadiku**, Programme Specialist, UNDP

Igniting Transformation:

- **Tadamon** NGO Empowerment Program Journey (3-minute video)

Statement from Dr. Hiba Ahmed, ISFD Director General

35 min **Civil Society Organizations, Innovation and Finance for SDGs**

Introduction to the NGO Empowerment Programme (Tadamon) (2019-2024)

UNDP and IsDB present milestones and outcomes, highlighting projects and initiatives that include CSO mapping, capacity building and the Tadamon platform

- **Dr. Robert Pasicko**, Program Coordinator, UNDP

Panel Discussion:

- Voice from the ground: **Edward Bitar**, Founder and President, Live Love Lebanon and **Nasser Diallo**, Founder and CEO, Clinic+O
- Crowdfunding in the Muslim world: **Chris Blauvelt**, Cofounder and CEO, Launchgood
- Crypto/blockchain for good: **Doro Unger-Lee**, Head of Education and Inclusion, Algorand Foundation
- SDG Finance / Innovation: **Gina Lucarelli**, Team Leader, Accelerator Labs Network, UNDP

Moderator:

- **Syed Husain Quadri**, Director, Resilience & Climate Action Department, IsDB

10 min **Closing and forward-looking session**

Impactful Projects: Video on success stories by local CSOs (3 min)

Crowdsourcing the redesign of the NGO Empowerment Programme – engage participants in designing the future phase of the NGO Empowerment Programme, driving innovation and sustainable impact.

Syed Husain Quadri, Director, Resilience & Climate Action Department, IsDB

Wrap up and group photo