Second Regional Urban Profiling Workshop
6-7 November 2019
UN-ESCWA, Beirut

Urban profiling is key tool for urban analysis, to guide humanitarian response, and assist in the reconstruction and recovery phase for conflict-affected cities.

A Regional Urban Profiling project started in October 2018, with the aim of developing five city profiles in Iraq, Libya, Yemen and Syria covering different forms of post/in crisis urban challenges. The project aims at developing an action framework for the selected cities through retrieving crucial data and information that support developing reconstruction, recovery and urban development plans. The project implemented its kick-off workshop in January 2019 in cooperation with UN-ESCWA in Beirut, Lebanon to identify common regional post-crisis urban challenges, urban profiling methodologies and discuss lessons learned from previous profiling exercises.

The second regional workshop aims to streamline future profiling in the region by discussing the urban frameworks and working themes, tools and strategies used to support the analysis of urban pillars and consolidate them into a shared urban framework with an analysis toolbox.

These topics would rely on the experience of Libya, Yemen, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Headquarters. Each country would be presenting a tool that has been rendered very useful in their case and the challenges they have faced upon implementing other tools; resulting in a tool inventory for the toolkit.

Furthermore, the workshop will explore the possibilities of a regional urban data platform for tracking urban recovery. The second day of the workshop will focus on data portals. Experts from the countries with experience on data portals will present their portal structure, data on the portal/acquired, data visualization, data harmonization, service providers and propose methods to update the data platform using other stakeholders like UN agencies, community focal points and others.

The following three products are expected to come out of the regional workshop:

A. Common urban analysis framework for conflict affected cities
A common urban analysis framework that forms the basis of a table of contents for future profiles. The framework intends to define:

- The main pillars of analysis;
- Common research questions;
- Common recommended core indicators per pillar.

B. Urban analysis toolkit[1]
This will be a collection of the different tools that have been successfully applied in the past by the different countries in developing their own urban profiles and consolidate them for future urban profiles. The tool descriptions should have:

- 2-page brief (description of the tool, objectives for the tool, strong/weak points, lessons learnt, analysis component from the urban framework where the tool can be used for, step-by-step instructions for using the tool, indicators the tool addresses).

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[1] Please refer to annex 1 for the template.

- 1-page sample of results.
- Generalized sheets for the actual tool. (e.g. survey questions, data collection sheet, damage assessment classification/guidance).

C. Regional urban data platform

The regional urban platform aims at providing data and information on the main urban challenges facing countries in the Arab Region. This common platform would enable different stakeholders in developing evidence-based programmes. With regular updates, it can be used as a monitoring tool for cities. On a regional and country level, the platform would provide data on the urban themes of UN-Habitat and on achieving the SDGs relevant to the Strategic plan and the NUA along with urban indicators and tools in conflict and post conflict.

On a national level, the platform will present the urban and socio-economic challenges on a city level and/or country and map the ongoing projects of UN-Habitat and other UN Agencies that fall under the category of reconstruction and development projects,

Countries will present their current data platform, the format of the data and its type (GIS maps, sheets, satellite images, etc), the process of uploading the data on the platform, the current indicators on the portal and the visualization of their indicators and data, and pathways to integrating their platform into a regional platform.

Goals of the first day:
The first day of the workshop is split into three parts:
a. Discussion and agreement on the Urban Analysis Framework,
b. Discussion on the urban tools and their relevance for the urban profiling toolbox,
c. Presentation of the most recent urban profiling experiences and how the tools have been used in this context,
d. Discussion on the relevant indicators for the agreed upon pillars.

Goals of the second day:
The second day of the workshop will focus on developing a regional data platform[2]. In order to achieve this, the day will be divided into five sessions:
a. Identifying the advantages and disadvantages of the current data portals,
b. Discussion and agreement on the purpose and objectives of a regional data portal and its content,
c. Agreement on the best technical model for the regional platform in terms of server provision and in terms of data standardization between the different portals.
d. Unifying indicators, data presentation, data visualization, format for the common platform and agree on number of tools for data collection based on previous experiences.
e. Managing data portal updates in terms of tools that are scalable with little marginal cost, while maintaining data quality.

Key dates:
23 October – Deadline submission of tools and comments on urban analysis framework.
6 November – Urban Profiling Toolkit workshop.
7 November – Regional data profiling workshop.
21 November – Compilation of toolkit and shared to participants for comments (1 week)
7 December – Finalization of Urban Profiling Toolkit

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[2] Please refer to annex 2 for the guideline.