



# UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States 2020 Overview



**UN-HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE







Regional Office for Arab States Overview 2020

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

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# Contents

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**1**

Foreword

---

**4**

**2**

Key Urban Figures in  
The Arab Region

---

**5**

**3**

Regional Summary

---

**6**

**4**

Mainstreaming Human  
Rights and Social  
Inclusion

---

**8**

**5**

2020 in Brief

---

COVID Response

**9**

Highlighted Results under  
UN-Habitat Strategic Plan  
2020-2023

**14**

**6**

Networking,  
Partnerships and  
Advocacy

---

**40**

# 1. Foreword

“ Well-planned, managed, and financed cities can be leveraged in the fight against poverty, inequality, climate change and other pressing global challenges, creating a better quality of life for all. ”

Cities and urban areas in the Arab region are faced with unprecedented rates of population growth, concentration of socio-economic activities and growing rates of environmental hazards and social vulnerabilities. Moreover, the multi-faceted humanitarian crisis, civil unrest, conflict and political turmoil in several countries in the Region have led to massive destruction of housing and infrastructure, violations of housing, land and property rights as well as large-scale influx and massive displacement of people within and across borders. **Around 26 million have been forcibly displaced (refugees and IDPs),** mainly in Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria and Yemen due to conflicts and environmental threats. The spread of informal settlements in the Arab region has become a clear manifestation of inequalities in cities. In many cases, informal settlements are characterized by substandard physical structures that are often in hazardous or unsafe locations in central areas, or on the outskirts of urban areas lacking access to basic urban services. The urban poor and most vulnerable groups often suffer from compounded deprivations as they often settle on land unsuitable for development leading to the lack of tenure security and enhanced vulnerability to evictions.

Further, COVID-19 pandemic has exposed deep inequalities and demonstrated that tackling the virus is more challenging in urban areas, where access to quality healthcare is uneven, housing is inadequate, water and sanitation are lacking, and jobs are precarious. Cities have, so far, borne the brunt of the pandemic and the consequences are likely to be long-lasting. According to the SG's Policy Brief on The Impact of COVID-19 on the Arab

Region, the region's economy is expected to contract by 5.7 percent, with the economies of some conflict countries projected to shrink by as much as 13 percent, amounting to an overall loss of US\$ 152 billion.

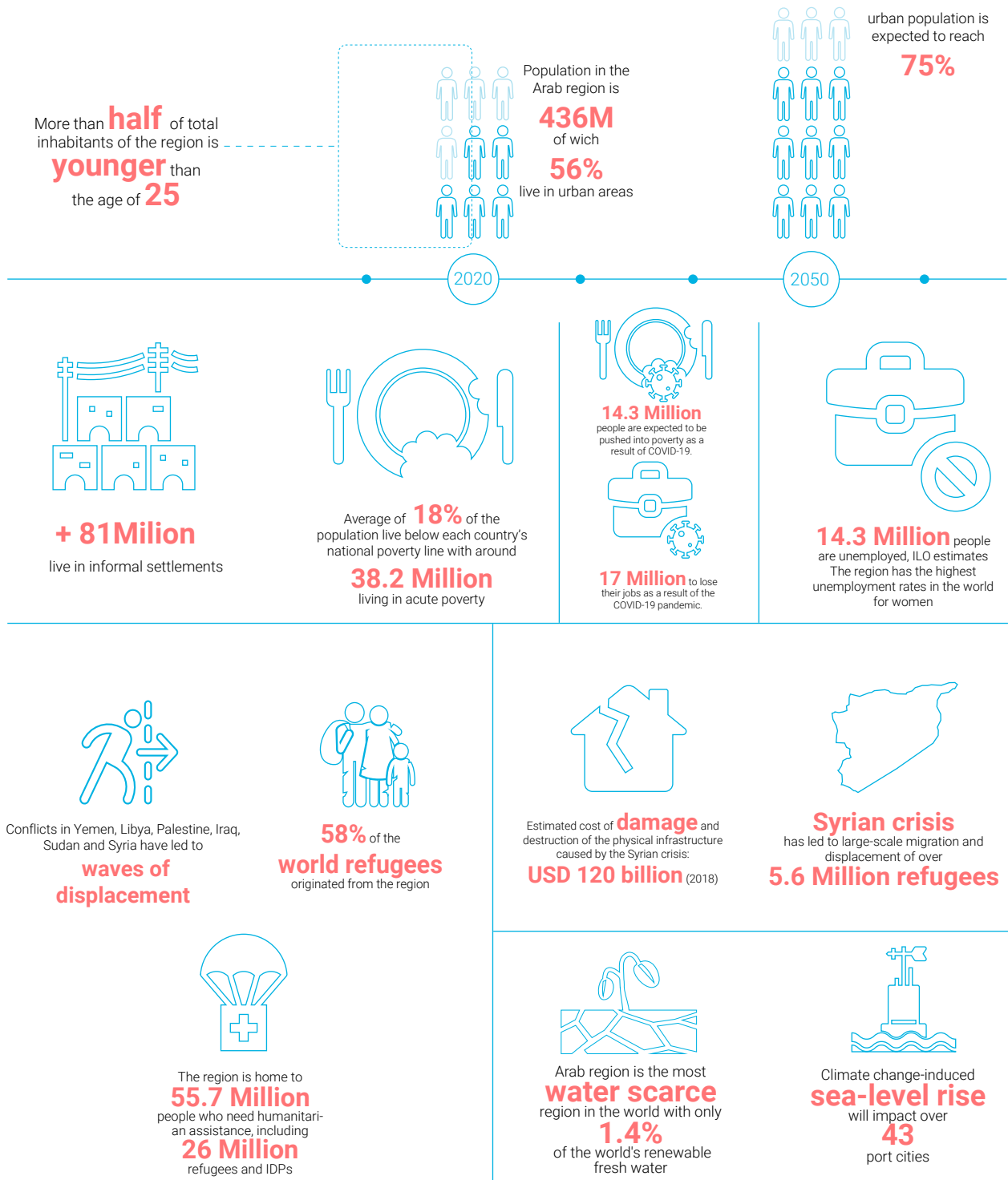
Amidst all these challenges, cities offer an opportunity to emerge stronger and build back better. With appropriate policies and supportive frameworks and governance, cities can bounce back from the devastating impacts of disasters into sustainable, inclusive and green recovery. Well-planned, managed, and financed cities can be leveraged in the fight against poverty, inequality, climate change and other pressing global challenges, creating a better quality of life for all. It is only through sustainable urbanization can we advance the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 in the decade of action.

In 2020, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States adopted its regional strategic plan (2020-2023) as a roadmap for achieving inclusive and sustainable urban development in the Arab region. The strategy puts forward an integrated vision for addressing the region's most critical urban issues in line with strategic priorities and goals at the global, regional and country level and in close collaboration with the Governments and key regional organizations. This strategy will also be implemented in coordination with the United Nations Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams.

**Erfan Ali**  
Regional Representative for Arab States  
UN-Habitat



## 2. Key Urban Figures in The Arab Region



### 3. Regional Summary



UN-Habitat strives to advance sustainable urbanization as a driver of development, poverty reduction and peace in a way that brings benefits across the Sustainable Development Goals and accelerates their implementation in the Arab region. In line with the overarching goal of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan: "Advancing sustainable urbanization as a driver of development and peace, to improve living conditions for all in line with the SDGs", the **Regional Strategic Plan for Arab States (2020 –2023)** was developed to present the strategic priorities and focus areas of work and lay out the roadmap for achieving the four mutually reinforcing and integrated goals or "**domains of change**" in the Arab region,



The Regional Strategic Plan for Arab States provides a key tool for addressing the regions' most pressing urban challenges and ensuring the successful implementation of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023 by maximizing interaction between operational and normative work at both regional and country level and leveraging change across the four interconnected domains of change, aiming for long-term impact on sustainable urbanization.

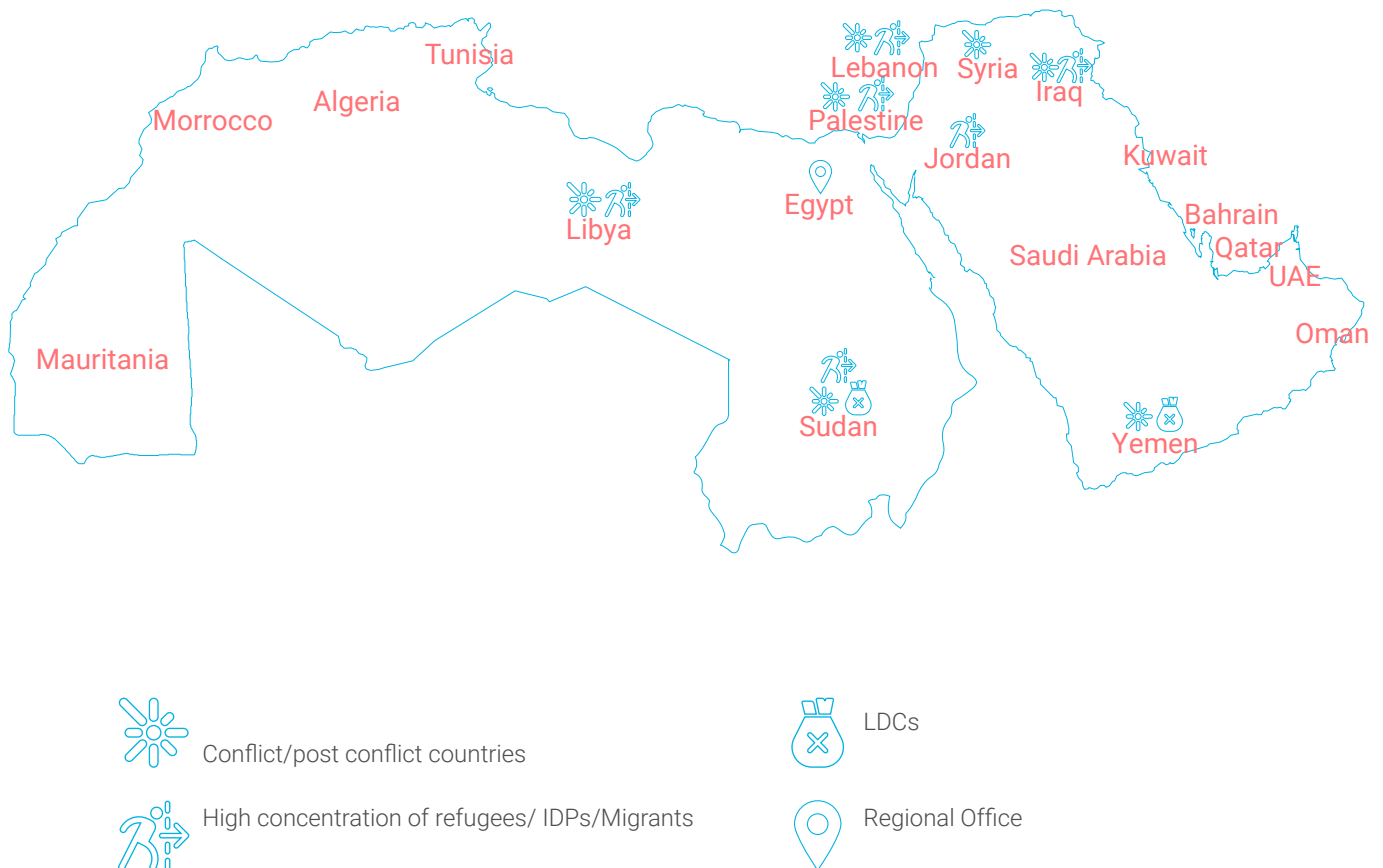
#### New Projects Acquisitions



New acquisitions in 2020 with a total value of **61.2 Million**

## Country Presence

UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS) has a mandate to provide policy advice, technical cooperation and capacity building for eighteen countries across the Arab region: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. ROAS currently has operational projects in **16 countries** and **13 operating** country offices

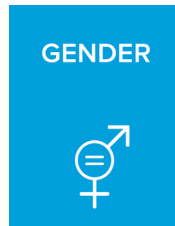


Mauritania, Somalia, Djibouti and Comoros are under UN-Habitat Regional Office for Africa



## 4. Mainstreaming Human Rights and Social Inclusion

All the work carried out by UN-Habitat is underpinned by human-rights-based approach, which ensures that those furthest behind are targeted first



### Supporting Gender Equity in the Arab Region

Through mainstreaming Gender as a crosscutting issue in its Strategic Plan 2020-2023, UN-Habitat ROAS works to make urban settings safe and empowering for all women and girls. We support safety in urban development plans, gender-responsive local programmes, inclusive mobility and transport networks, and safe and economically viable public spaces through partnerships with local and national governments, women's groups and other community actors.

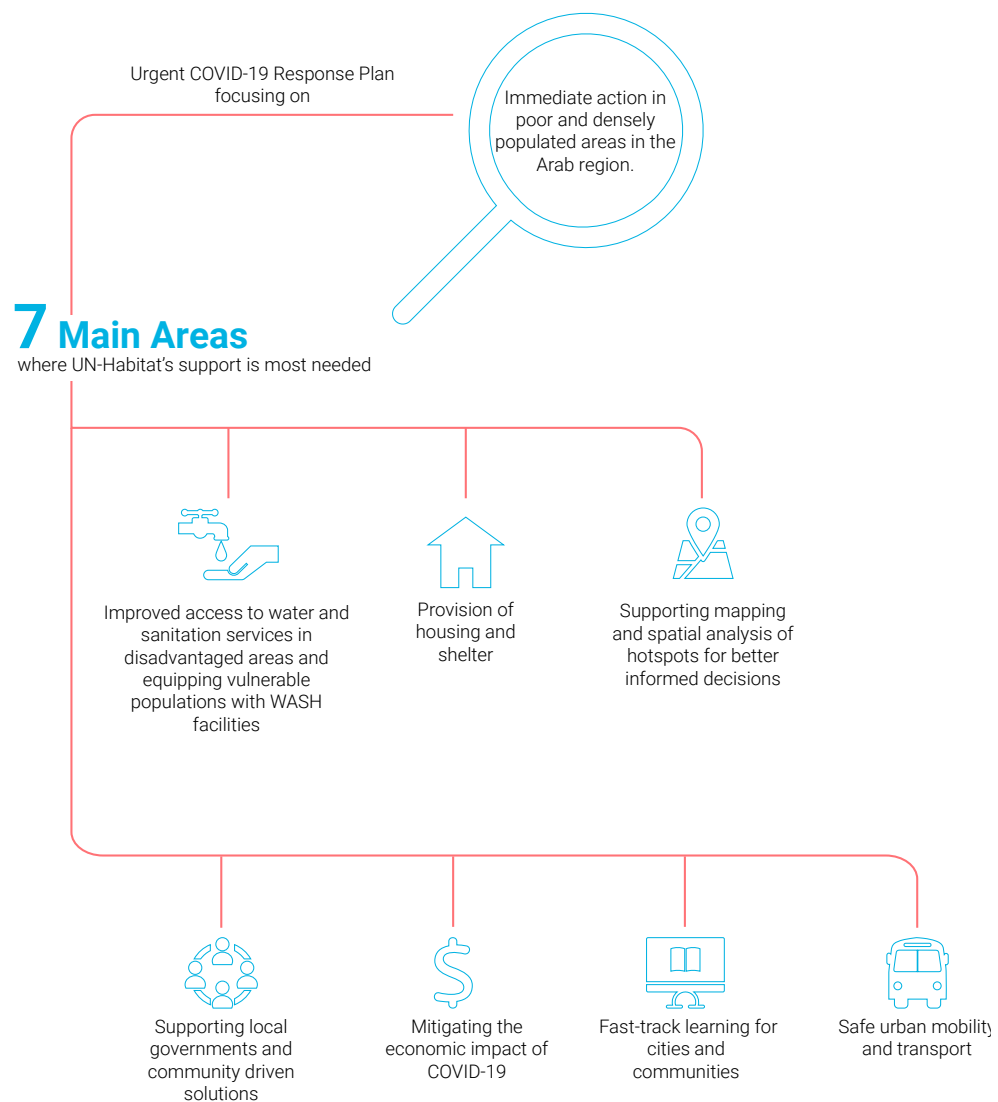
UN-Habitat collects gender-specific data and conducts gender-sensitive analysis that addresses men's and women's respective roles, needs, and aspirations. Building on its urban profiling experience, and through community consultations, the data feeds into evidence based and community led interventions which yields in needs-based interventions.

In conflict and post conflict contexts, UN-Habitat ensures "Building Back Better" through identifying gender specific sensitivities and implementing gender responsive infrastructure. Further, UN-Habitat's work addresses Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights infringements and builds awareness of equal HLP rights among vulnerable IDP and refugee communities. Through its normative and operational work, UN-Habitat seeks to improve women's access to land as a key contributor to stabilizing societies in crisis and/or post-conflict.

Housing, Land and  
Property Rights Awareness  
sessions for women, Iraq  
2020 @UN-Habitat



## 5. 2020 in Brief



## Regional Response

Under the regional programme, “Supporting COVID-19 Response in Disadvantaged Urban Areas in The Arab Region”, funded by Alwaleed Philanthropies, UN-Habitat is supporting Arab countries response to the COVID-19 pandemic through targeted short to medium term interventions in the shelter and water sectors focusing on the most vulnerable areas and disadvantaged communities. Below are examples of the implemented work under the programme in the targeted countries:

### Sudan

UN-Habitat is providing **shelters to 2400 vulnerable households** in Khartoum to

UN-Habitat is providing shelters to 2400 vulnerable households in Khartoum to reduce overcrowding and mitigate the community spread of the virus



reduce overcrowding and mitigate the community spread of the virus, in addition, essential supplies are provided to **25,000 people** in targeted informal settlements. Local volunteer groups and NGOs are also engaged and empowered to take over and scale-up the initiative in partnership with private sector sponsors, leading to enhancement of local capacities to respond to health crisis.

### Palestine

The programme is supporting Solid Waste Management and collection, as well as disinfection of main public spaces and installing physical sanitation and hygiene units to reduce virus transmission in Bethlehem area, **targeting 60,000 people**, including **20,000 in 3 refugee camps**.

### Syria

Hands-free washing stations are being installed in crowded community markets and IDPs collective shelters, in addition, repairing house connections to reconnect residential buildings to water networks, and enhancing the mitigation measures in densely populated areas through the provision of sterilization equipment, solutions and solid waste containers.

### Iraq

The programme is contributing to increased access to potable water supply through the installation/upgrading of secondary water networks in underserved and conflict-affected urban settlements. In addition, communal WASH facilities in public health units and schools are being upgraded in underserved and war-affected urban settlements. In response to housing needs for those with war-damaged houses, the programme is rehabilitating **60 houses** with a focus on water and sanitation needs. In summer 2020, UN-Habitat installed **seven mobile handwashing trailers** in busy marketplaces in five cities affected by the pandemic through its COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Rapid Response.

### Tunisia

The programme is supporting the Orientation and Social Support Centres (in the cities of Tunis, Sousse and Sfax) in charge of hosting homeless people and their SAMU Social (Emergency Social Support Service) to provide shelter, access to basic hygiene facilities and socio-psychological support to around **800 homeless persons**. Light renovation works have been undertaken to allow the centers to host more homeless people while practicing social distancing and allowing for quarantine and self-isolation. UN-Habitat has also supplied Tunis Social Support Centre with a vehicle dedicated to the mobile relief teams, in addition to supplying the centers with COVID-19 Protective equipment. The programme also advocates and provides policy support to secure the right to housing for all amid the Covid-19 outbreak in response to forced evictions reported by the SAMU Social (Ministry of Social Affairs) and the NGO Médecins du Monde Belgique. The interventions have contributed to enforcing moratoriums on evictions and allowing deferrals of mortgage payments by devising strategies that also factor contingency plans to avoid economic challenges for landlords and banks.

UN-Habitat activities also included widespread awareness raising campaigns on



safety and protection measures conducted in public spaces and IDP and refugee camps in **Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Palestine and in out-of-camp settings in Iraq**, in addition a number of webinars and online dialogues were organized to facilitate knowledge exchange on the impact of COVID-19 on cities and urban areas and explore the implications of the pandemic on future planning. This included a series of webinars with multiple regional partners that aimed at enabling a platform for exchange of knowledge, local experiences and peer learning and shedding light on the immediate and medium-term response of cities in the Arab region.

the project implementation, UN-Habitat in collaboration with the Taybah Foundation for Development, trained a group of volunteers on COVID-19 awareness raising among IDPs. Consequently, each group introduced the information about COVID-19, its symptoms, and means of transmission to IDPs in Al Alili camp, Al Hudaydah Governorate. **6,600 beneficiaries** have been addressed through the campaign and the hygiene kits (COVID-19 kits) were distributed to **3,000 project beneficiaries** and some close neighbors of them in Qataba and Al Hyma. The volunteers emphasized on the importance and best practices of hand washing with soap to prevent the transmission.

## Country Response Activities

### Iraq

UN-Habitat developed guidelines in English and Arabic on managing COVID-19 risks in construction and field sites and during community mobilization activities, to guide local contractors, Implementing Partners and UN-Habitat staff members on how best to mitigate safety risks during the pandemic.

### Yemen

In order to prevent spread of Cholera and other water-borne diseases as well as to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 throughout

### Kuwait

UN-Habitat is disseminating PPE to both frontline workers and people with special needs, in collaboration with Kuwait Red Crescent. In addition, awareness materials and social media campaigns are utilized to raise public awareness on means to combat the pandemic.

### Egypt

**15,552 m3/day of drinking water are being produced** in Luxor using implemented River Bank Filtration technology and serving more than **110,000 vulnerable inhabitants** ensuring provision of clean water. It is also expected

COVID-19 Hygiene Promotion Campaign (Street Billboards), October 2020 @UN-Habitat



that an estimated additional **180,000 inhabitants** will be served in early 2021 in Assiut and Sohag governorates, in addition to **5000 inhabitants** with access to improved sanitation in Damietta governorate.

## Lebanon

UN-Habitat designed, produced and installed the first public handwashing stations in Lebanon. The stations, placed in some of the most densely populated and vulnerable urban communities in Beirut and Mount Lebanon Governorates, form a major line of defense against the spread of COVID-19 in the neighbourhoods. In addition, the project promoted the significance of water use and proper sanitation in reducing COVID-19

risk and exposure by holding awareness sessions targeting vulnerable Lebanese, refugees and migrants, residing in specific urban areas in Lebanon. In parallel, about **4,500 residents** of Beirut, who are Syrian and Palestinian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese, received hygiene protection kits inclusive of instructions on how to properly use the kits' supplies to maximize protection against COVID-19.

 In many countries including: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, KSA, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Kuwait and Tunisia, UN-Habitat supported the Development of a System Response Plan for the United Nations Country Team to support the Government's efforts in addressing socio-economic recovery in the short- to medium-term.

In addition, UN-Habitat formulated and published the Unions of Municipalities' COVID-19 Rapid Assessment Report. **34 Unions of Municipalities** and five individual municipalities were assessed, covering **52% of all municipalities in Lebanon**.

The report helped outline the challenges facing local authorities in responding to the pandemic and identify the most critical support they require and recommend mitigating measures from the most urgent and immediate to the long-term. Challenges identified from a water and sanitation perspective (WASH) include, the lack of clean water in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods and the incorrect treatment of wastewater and solid medical waste. Other challenges include ineffective translation and

dissemination of national level directives and guidance at the local level and a lack of clear procedures on preventative measures to be taken against COVID-19 at the community level.

UN-Habitat has been actively contributing to the UN wide response at country level through supporting the national government's efforts to respond to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. In many countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Palestine, UN-Habitat supported the Development of a System Response Plan for the United Nations Country Team to support the Government's efforts in addressing socio-economic recovery in the short- to medium-term.

## Palestine

A rapid assessment was conducted with the purposes of providing better support to local authorities through data collection to feed into decision making, policy and advocacy, under the project "Achieving Planning and Land Rights in Area C, West Bank, Palestine" implemented in partnership with the Land and Water Settlement Commission (LWSC) and funded by the European Union. The analysis was helpful for the preparation of the LWSC Recovery Plan to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19. The plan analyses the ramifications and risks of the pandemic and puts forward ways of recovery focused on ensuring that LWSC succeed in meeting its strategic goal of completing land survey in the West Bank territory by 2023 by incorporating socio-economic aspects related to land settlement and registration including gender responsiveness, user rights and focus on the most marginalized. The plan was published as a good practice by the Global Land Tool Network under the efforts of 'Tenure Security and COVID-19 Pandemic'. Furthermore, UN-Habitat Palestine supported Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) Business Continuity Plan through defining detailed sustainable response actions to ensure the continuity of the MoLG's work in supporting and providing guidance and financial means to local authorities and enabling them to sustain the delivery of critical services to their citizens.

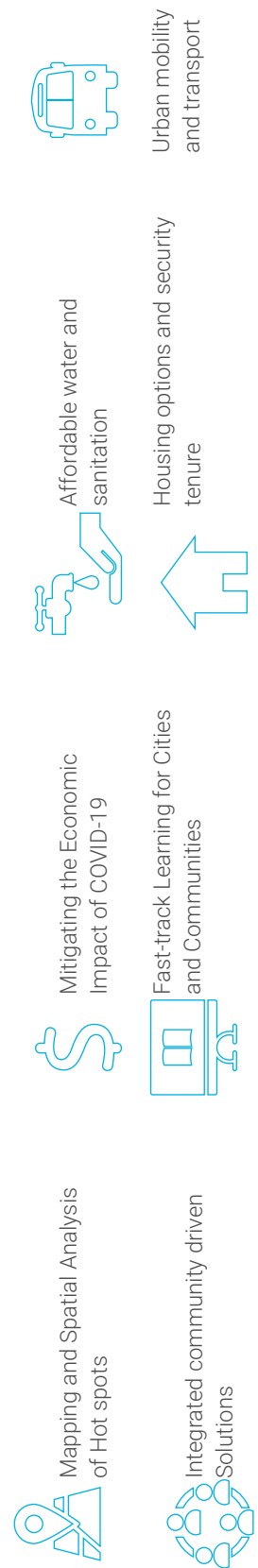
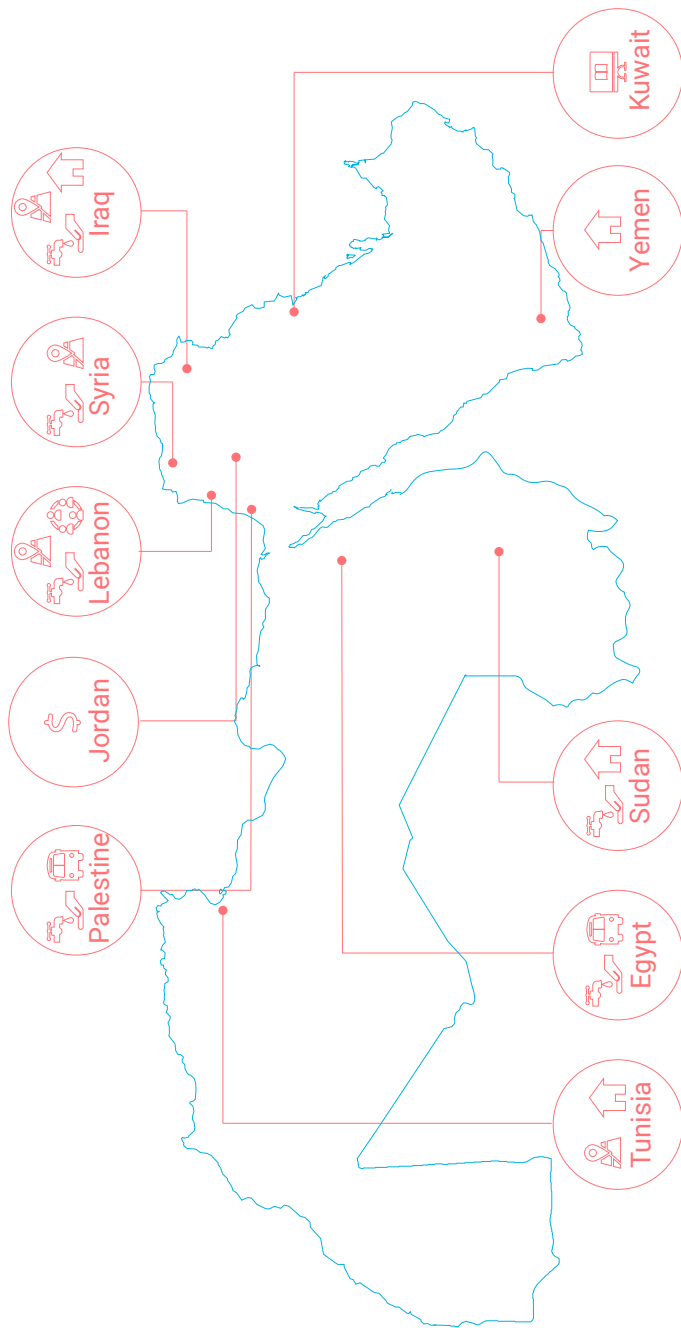


Figure1: UN-Habitat response to COVID-19 in the Arab region



## 5. 2020 in Brief

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### Highlighted Results under UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023





## Domain of Change1

### Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum

UN-Habitat consolidates its experience in the area of basic services, housing and slum upgrading, land, urban mobility and public space contribute to Reduced Spatial Inequality and Poverty in the Arab Region. At the regional level, UN-Habitat initiated a regional technical cooperation programme titled **“Towards Arab Cities without Informal Settlements”** which was launched in the Tenth Session of the World Urban Forum in Abu Dhabi, UAE, in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank. The programme is based on a regional study that analyzes the state of informal areas in different Arab countries and identifies key cross cutting elements that needs to be integrated in the new participatory city-wide approach with a focus on social, economic, and environmental aspects. UN-Habitat also co-organized a series of workshops to support efforts towards **“Safe, Inclusive and Accessible Public Spaces in the Arab States”** that was attended by a wide range of stakeholders and partners with the aim of achieving better understanding the current situation and identifying challenges from a regional and local perspective for quality public spaces and providing practical tools and good practices to improve accessibility, safety and inclusivity of public spaces at the city-wide level.



## Palestine

UN-Habitat worked on supporting efforts towards achieving long-term sustainable and inclusive urban planning and strategic visioning by developing three city-region plans at the largest governorates in the West Bank to strengthen urban-rural linkages, consolidating **25 local outline plans** and 2 cluster plans for a group of Palestinian communities in the Israeli controlled area C of the West Bank. Furthermore, efforts were focused on supporting the land settlement processes of more than **70,000 dunums in area C**, West Bank to foster tenure security especially for the most marginalized groups, including

women, Bedouins, and pastoralists. Also, to support efforts towards sustainable urban basic services, UN-Habitat continued to work on advancing gender-responsive planning and supported eliminating violence against women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by promoting community-led initiatives and awareness raising activities on the importance of safe and inclusive public spaces, including the planning, implementation, and management of four public spaces (placemaking) interventions in Area C of the West Bank.

## Egypt

UN-Habitat supported the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities to launch the first **National Housing Strategy for Egypt**. This strategy represents a unified integrated vision that effectively directs the housing sector over the next twenty years, while recognizing that the primary role of the government is regulation and empowerment. In the same context, the programme is supporting the Informal Settlements Development Fund (ISDF) to lead the regional programme **“Towards Arab cities without informal settlements”** and shift its approach from upgrading unsafe or unplanned areas to a wider participatory, city-wide upgrading approach. The new approach links both challenging and potential development areas in the city to provide socio-economic cohesion and innovative funding opportunities for the urban upgrading projects. Testing of the new approach will take place in 2021 to prepare for national scale up.

UN-Habitat also continues its engagement with the Government of Egypt to provide technical support in developing inclusive and participatory strategic urban plans. In 2020, UN-Habitat developed the strategic Master Plan of Sharm El Sheikh city and the Masterplan for Al-Ruwaisat neighborhood integrating it within the city fabric. These plans were developed adopting an environmental/ community-based development approach to advance the frontiers of urban sustainability in South Sinai. Furthermore, the programme developed the structure plan, city governance, and the institutional framework for Ras El

UN-Habitat in cooperation with GoE updated the strategic urban plan for the Badary Markaz including 18 villages and two small cities using the learning from the small cities programme



Hekma new water-front city, which is planned to host around **300,000 permanent residents** in addition to **3,000,000 tourists per year**.

Additionally, UN-Habitat in cooperation with GoE updated the strategic urban plan for the Badary Markaz including **18 villages** and two small cities using the learning from the small cities programme. Introducing the planning at Markaz level aims at reducing spatial inequality, poverty and enhancing urban/rural linkages and development cycles.

In 2020, UN-Habitat has also produced the assessment study for the Cairo Public spaces. This assessment is the first step towards supporting Cairo Governorate with a comprehensive strategy for Public spaces management. The plan will enhance the urban performance and quality of life for Cairo inhabitants, through the promotion for green, safe and accessible public spaces open for all.

UN-Habitat is also working on land readjustment pilot projects in Qaha Qalyubia, Qena and Damietta governorates. These projects support the Government's efforts to sustainably manage urban growth, preserve agricultural land and control informal expansion. UN-Habitat has provided technical support and policy recommendations regarding various issues covered by the currently amended building law, including land management of expansion areas and the legal framework of land readjustment. Through Hayenna project, UN-Habitat applies its three-legged approach, bringing together urban planning and design, public finance and economic development, and policy making and legislative reform. UN-Habitat is working with Qalyubia to form the first unit for land readjustment on the sub-national level, a breakthrough towards the institutionalization of the methodology in the Egyptian context. The integrated approach is piloted in Qena and Damietta governorates, and policy recommendations for legal and institutional reforms are formulated based on the project's lessons learned.

Efforts to enhance accessibility in Greater Cairo through improved planning of sustainable transportation continue through two key projects, the Western BRT corridor and Downtown Cairo Bike Share System.

UN-Habitat is providing technical support to Ministry of Housing to reach tender documents for the Western Corridor by Q1 2021, while simultaneously building the capacity of the project management unit within the Ministry.

In promoting last mile connectivity, the Downtown bike share project has competed a tendering process to secure an international and local operator. At the same time, a redevelopment project for downtown is currently underway through the Ministry of Housing, and as a result of UN Habitat's lobbying, the vision is a cycling friendly one with bike share stations and bike lanes.

In addition, to the above mentioned projects, Egypt is continuing to promote safe and complete streets outside of the capital. It's latest intervention is in Ras el Bar, Damietta, where UN Habitat is redesigning of one of its main streets as a pedestrian and cycling oriented avenue. Implementation is set to take place in 2021 through financing from the governorate's budget. The mobility portfolio is also supporting the government in planning sustainable transportation in cities such as developing a transit oriented strategic plan for Sharm el Sheikh city in Egypt, adopting progressive sustainable transport policies before that were not previously included in strategic planning.

## Iraq

UN-Habitat supported recovery and stability efforts of basic services and infrastructure through the rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure in the cities of Erbil, Dohuk, Sumel, Mosul, Sinjar, Heet and Yathrib. As a result of these projects, **1,763 vulnerable households** have been supplied with regular and clean water. UN-Habitat also led the redesign and the on-going rehabilitation of Al Yarmouk Park (67,000 sqm) in West Mosul to



promote sports, social interaction, enhance civic identity, and cultural expression in a city severely impacted and damaged by conflict. This was followed by a horticultural training course for thirty unemployed and highly vulnerable female residents to conduct the planting and maintenance work required for the greening of the Park and ensuring its long-term sustainability. Another two multi-purpose public spaces are being created in Heet and Yathrib.

## Syria

UN-Habitat supported restoration of basic services and facilities (rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure, WASH/sewage networks, solid waste management, cadastral services) focusing on densely populated areas to meet the community needs prioritized in the Municipal Action Plans which were developed in a participatory manner with community representatives.

In Deir Ezzor City, UN-Habitat worked on the rehabilitation of Hasan Al-Taha road with an approximate length of 1500 m and restored a microbus station and installed solar-powered lighting.

In Aleppo, UN-Habitat rehabilitated secondary and tertiary roads and a damaged microbus station that enhanced rural-urban connectivity

and contributed to restoring mobility dynamics; in addition to rehabilitating 3 gardens, 1 public space and 2 markets. UN-Habitat's support has positively boosted resilience of the population and improved connectivity, as stated by beneficiaries of the project.

In Daraa, UN-Habitat initiated work on the rehabilitation of sewage lines passing through multiple neighborhoods in addition to upgrading and rehabilitation of four public spaces. Additionally, UN-Habitat is supporting solid waste management and rehabilitation of damaged wastewater connections, public spaces and local markets in several municipalities.

UN-Habitat also worked on improving the safety of residential buildings for returnees and residents with a focus on female headed households in Homs Governorate/Talbiseh, Ar-Rastan as well as in Harasta City in Rural Damascus.

Additional activities were implemented to restore/improve equal access to basic services in Daraa and Deir Ezzor through the UN Joint Programme to Build Urban and Rural Resilience and the Conditions for Recovery in Syria, which is jointly implemented by 6 UN Agencies and UN-Habitat as a technical lead, building on its experience in area-based approach, enhancing Municipal capacities

**Restoration of  
damaged Micro  
bus station, Aleppo,  
Syria@ UN-Habitat**





on local area-based planning and supporting local neighborhoods and city level action plans.

Furthermore, UN-Habitat continues its support and advocacy for improved urban mobility.

## Lebanon

UN-Habitat has been promoting soft mobility within the Municipality of Tyre in partnership with the Municipality of Zurich. Tyre was selected as a pilot location due to its optimal geographical nature as it is flat making it more bike-friendly. The initiative is providing residents with access to bicycles to help reduce traffic congestion while increasing pedestrian-friendly areas through bus shuttles. The interventions on urban mobility will inform the normative work being done on urban transport under the National Urban Policy project.

In addition, extensive work has been undertaken to improve pedestrian mobility on El Jazzar street in Sabra (Beirut) and in Maraach, Bourj Hammoud (Beirut) and Labban Street, Mina (Tripoli).

## Jordan

UN-Habitat worked on promoting safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces for Social Cohesion in Amman and Zarqa, and building the capacity of Amman Municipality officials, selected groups of society and refugees on inclusive public space designs.

## Yemen

UN-Habitat supported the most vulnerable communities and conflict affected IDP families to have access to safe sanitation in three IDP camps in Al-Hudaydah Governorate. Sixty-three units of hygienic public pit latrine and two communal latrines were constructed in Al Alily formal and informal camps and Al Hyma informal IDP sites in Al Khawkha and Al Tuhayta districts, these units serve **1,399 individuals**. In addition; through the **rehabilitation of 148 damaged houses** in Al Khawkha and Al Tuhayta districts, UN-Habitat has secured access to adequate housing to around **900 persons including 619 female headed households**, widows, and girls.

## Saudi Arabia

UN-Habitat supported the Ministry of Housing implement an innovative programme on

WASH facility project.  
Egypt @ UN-Habitat



social housing. A thorough assessment of the role of the government and Housing NGO's in KSA has been conducted, in addition to reviewing major laws and regulations for the development housing program. The program resulted in a set of recommendations which the government currently applies in their internal assessment as they review relevant laws accordingly. The program is also developing a beneficiary selection criterion, focusing on marginalized groups, and building on UN-Habitat principles (Housing at the Center). Finally, the project is building the capacities of the employees of the Ministry of Housing through a continuous training program implemented along the duration of the project.

## Sudan

UN-Habitat improved access to essential basic services including water, sanitation, health and education in North and South Darfur region to achieve sustainable peace and community stability for IDPs and hosting communities. **38,000 persons** are benefiting from secured access to basic services. Moreover, some pastoralists and sedentary farmers livestock are also benefiting from enhanced water provision, which has reduced tension and conflict over water resources. UN-Habitat in collaboration of UNAMID has increased secure conflict-free land for returns and resettlement through joint dialogues among IDPs, host communities, and secured adequate land rights for IDP returns, as well as identified land for public facilities, basic services and livelihoods applying Sketch mapping, GIS and Social Tenure Domain Models for 6 settlements.

In collaboration of GLTN "Darfur Land Administration Assessment" report was published with objectives to assess the capacity and the processes of the statutory and customary land administration systems in the five Darfur states of Sudan and provide guidance on how to protect the housing, land and property (HLP) rights and provide land tenure security to people voluntarily returning to Darfur, and other vulnerable groups, such as IDPs, refugees, women and youth. The Report was widely disseminated to several

stakeholders and concerned bodies.

**240 rural court judges** benefitted from capacity building activities to address inter-communal conflicts related to land rights in more **30 localities in Darfur**. Further, UN-Habitat conducted capacity development and backstopping of the **five 'Core Teams' of 75 participants at State, Locality and community levels**, to support land registration and creating detailed digital maps of villages. The training programme included **1)** Participatory mapping approaches, and Sketch mapping exercises, **2)** Data collection tools, with focus on mobile data collection tools software's such as kobo toolbox **3)** using STDM (Social Tenure Domain Model) to digitize and capture land plots, demarcation of boundaries, land uses and buffer zones, and creation of database **4)** the five core team supported with survey equipment's, and geographic data collection information systems such as RTK, and GPS.



## Knowledge Products

-  Egypt's first National Housing Strategy
-  National feasibility study and guideline for Riverbank Filtration units in Egypt
-  Hebron, Ramallah and Al-Bireh, and Jerusalem City-region Plans.
-  Placemaking Toolkit: Designing People Places, Palestine.
-  Policy framework to foster tenure security and resilience for Bedouin communities in Area C, Palestine.
-  The Human Rights Impact Assessment Mechanism and Local Outline Plans in the So-called "Area C", Palestine.
-  Darfur Land Administration report





Public playground, 2020, Tuwani, Palestine. @UN-Habitat



## Featured Story

# Spatial Planning Interventions In Support Of Human Rights

## The case of At Tuwani, Hebron, Palestine

Located approximately one kilometer from the Byzantine archeological site called “Khirbet At Tuwani”, the small Palestinian village At Tuwani is situated in the hilly south of the Hebron Governorate, with about 200 residents, originally immigrated from the two nearby mother towns Yatta and Dura. After the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967, At Tuwani village became under the full Israeli control. In 1982, the Israeli settlement of Ma’on was established about 900 meters to the east of At Tuwani, at the main road connecting with the nearest village Tuba.

The Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) that maintains the full administrative and security responsibilities over Area C, according to Oslo II Accords, has issued 34 demolition and confiscation orders against Palestinian structures in At Tuwani between 1988 and 2017. As of December 2020, six demolition incidents have been recorded at At Tuwani, with 11 demolished structures and 12 displaced residents.

Without a statutory local outline plan, most of the village’s structures are under threat of demolition and there is no legal way to enhance and further the village into a livable habitat with access to basic services.

## Intervention

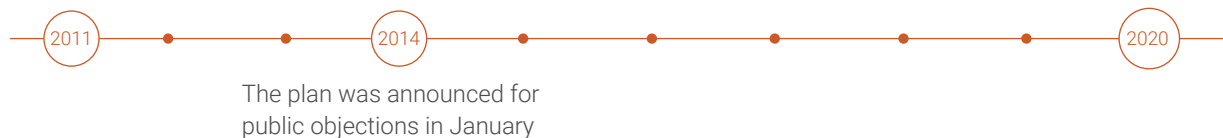
The local outline plan is set to freeze 17 demolition orders issued by the ICA at At Tuwani. Based on this plan, the EU has supported in construction of additional floor for At Tuwani school, and rehabilitation of internal roads with a total budget of 283,695 euro. In addition, UN-Habitat supported the design and implementation of a public space (placemaking) intervention at At Tuwani, with the concept and the design of a public playground, were totally developed by the local community with active participation from women and youth groups.

At Tuwani village, among other 11 communities in Area C will be targeted in terms of mapping of land rights and capacity development through the project "Achieving Planning and Land Rights in Area C, West Bank – Palestine (2019-2023) that is implemented by UN-Habitat in partnership with the Land and Water Settlement Commission (LWSC) at the bequest of the EU.

## Timeline

the local community of At Tuwani took the initiative to prepare their village plan

finally endorsed by the ICA on 7 December



## Roles



**Palestinian Ministry of Local Government**  
Led the Initiative



**Local Community**  
Adopted the proposed plan that was submitted to the ICA.  
Developed the concept and the design of a public playground, with active participation from women and youth groups.



Provided technical support, within the ambit of the EU-funded project "Fostering Tenure Security and Resilience of Palestinian Communities through Spatial-Economic Planning Interventions in Area C" (2017-2020)



**United Kingdom**  
Provided financial support



**International Peace and Cooperation Center**  
Provided Technical Support



**European Union**  
supported in construction of additional floor for At Tuwani school, and rehabilitation of internal roads with a total budget of 283,695 euro



## Domain of Change 2 Enhanced shared prosperity of cities and regions

### Sustainable, Inclusive and Evidence-based National Urban Policies

UN-Habitat supports efforts by government authorities at different levels to develop policies, frameworks and actions to boost the productivity of cities and regions through an integrated territorial development approach. Through the Programme in Selected Arab countries, UN-Habitat continued to provide technical support to the governments of (Sudan, Tunisia, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan) that are at different stages of developing and implementing their national urban policies.

In **Jordan**, The draft NUP is almost finalized and 3 thematic guides for mainstreaming Local economic development, transportation and housing into National Urban Policy are under preparation.

In **Tunisia**, reports for Phase I and Phase II have been prepared and a draft NUP has been finalized with 3 thematic reports on; mainstreaming Local economic development, climate change and environment and social inclusion into National Urban Policy under preparation. Participatory workshops are being organized to approve the deliverables in consultation with stakeholders, in addition to advocacy activities to promote results.

In **Sudan**, a diagnostic study was developed with a vision for a new system of governance and a proposal of merging the 18 states into six regions. A meeting at ministerial level was conducted and discussions are ongoing to agree on the way forward and incorporate new developments in the country into the study.

In **Egypt**, UN-Habitat has provided technical assistance, recommendations and conducted discussions on various issues such as the building law, the unified planning law and the local development law, with special focus on land readjustment and municipal urban governance.

2020 witnessed the production of the semi-final version of Egypt's National Urban Policy. The document was shared with the main partners including the Ministry of Housing (GOPP), Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Local Development, Ministry of Planning and experts in different fields. An inclusive public consultations programme has been designed and is planned to take place in 2021. The programme ensures public engagement of a broad range of stakeholders. To ensure the implementation of the Policy, piloting the application of NUP is taking place in two selected governorates, Luxor and Gharbia. The development of the NUP has been recognized during the feasibility phase as vital for providing the needed direction and course of action to localize the new urban agenda and support urban development in Egyptian cities. Egypt's NUP is based on 5 pillars: managing urban growth, connectivity within and between cities, balanced urban and territorial development, urban governance and land management, and local economic development.

In **Lebanon**, Based on the recommendations of the National Urban Policy Diagnosis Report published in 2018, two thematic mainstreaming guides on housing and transport are in development. The guides will inform the formulation process of Lebanon's national urban policy and the development of national housing and transport strategies. In addition, two orientation workshops were conducted to promote and familiarize relative stakeholders with the NUP process. The first workshop targeted urban planning experts, practitioners, academia and civil society and the second targeted representatives from different local authorities. The outcomes of both workshops confirmed the need for more





public awareness on the necessity of an NUP in Lebanon.

In December, a regional closing event was held to showcase the experiences of developing national urban policies and best practices in the target countries, as well as other countries from the Arab region with advanced experience and implementing NUPs. The event showcased the project results, lessons learned and facilitated establishing a network for future collaborations to ensure the continuity of the National Urban Policy Programme beyond its timeframe.

UN-Habitat will develop a State of Lebanese Cities Report in 2021 which aims to provide a critical evidence base that gives insight into the urban state of affairs in Lebanon. The report strives to assist both UN and non-UN actors in further navigating and informing humanitarian and development work in Lebanon – a highly urbanized country that is currently facing multiple and ongoing socio-

economic, political and health crises.

In **Iraq**, UN-Habitat's urban policy-making contribution and advocacy efforts were integrated in the country's National Development Plan 2018-2022.

To ensure the implementation of the Policy, piloting the application of NUP is taking place in two selected governorates, Luxor and Gharbia. The development of the NUP has been recognized during the feasibility phase as vital for providing the needed direction and course of action to localize the new urban agenda and support urban development in Egyptian cities



Beneficiaries holding the land title, 2020, Sudan.  
@UN-Habitat





## Syria

Under the Municipal Technical Support Offices Programme (MTOS III)/Training for Project-Phase III", UN-Habitat trained local authorities (159 Municipal staff from 30 municipalities) on the area-based-planning, damage assessment and prioritization of needs; supported formulation of /30/ neighborhood action plans, provided necessary equipment and furniture to /30/ Municipalities to restore their capacities to provide accessible and sustainable basic services to enhance resilience of the Syrians and other vulnerable groups living in Syria (refugees); and assessing the capacities of municipalities to tackle and limit the spread of COVID 19 pandemic.

The project currently enhances more in depth planning, prioritization and formulation of response area-based action plans by local authorities and neighborhood committees.

UN-Habitat technically supported the General Directorate of Cadastral Affairs (GDCA) and facilitated their meeting with GLTN

mission conducted to Syria early 2020; provided advanced software to Aleppo Directorate of Cadastral Affairs (DCA) to restore damaged and/or lost cadastral records and to archive cadastral records to enhance land tenure and facilitate community access to civil documentation requisite for property protection. This software which was developed by UN-Habitat was piloted in Aleppo DCA and positively impacted security of tenure in Aleppo, therefore, GDCA requested replication of this pilot in other areas.

## Saudi Arabia

Following the success of the Future Saudi Cities Programme, UN-Habitat began its new engagement with the Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs to support the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2030. The new project is designed to offer policy advice on the implementation of the NSS at the national, as well as at the regional and local levels. The first key assignment was the policy advice on the Optimizing the Spatial and Economic

Municipality staff, community representatives, and UNH team discussing priorities during a workshop in Lattakia City 2020@UN-Habitat



agglomeration and Investment in Saudi Cities to support key investment distribution decisions undertaken by Saudi Council of Economic and Development Affairs (CEDA).

During WUF10, held in February 2020, the Future Saudi Cities Program Launched the State of Saudi Cities Report 2019 (SSCR2019) which represents the overall strategy guiding Saudi Cities and its race to achieve the Saudi Vision 2030 and the National Transformation Program (NTP2020) as well as the New Urban Agenda and SDGs, especially Goal 11. The report is informed by the bottom-up evidence-based reports (Profiles and CPI reports for 17 Saudi Cities) that were accomplished during the 6-year cooperation programme between the Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs and UN-Habitat.

## Yemen

UN-Habitat published the State of Cities report, that has an in-depth analysis of the urban challenges in the conflict context of the country and shed some light on the priorities in the 10 selected major cities in Yemen.



### Knowledge Products



State of Yemen Cities Report.



Lebanon NUP guides on housing and transport.



State of Saudi Cities Report





Ras El Hekma....., Egypt. @UN-Habitat



## Featured Story

# A New Plan For A Socially, Environmentally And Economically Sustainable water-front city

Ras Al Hekma, Egypt

UN-Habitat, in collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, successfully conceptualized the Ras El-Hekma Waterfront New City to achieve a qualitative transformation in the spatial planning of new resilient cities in Egypt.

The plan goes beyond attracting investors, residents and visitors, and seeks to achieve a new level of sustainable environmental-based development principles, which will be a catalyst for the development in the North Coast region throughout the year.

## Intervention

The brand-new adopted methodology builds on the planning/development's lessons learned of new cities in Egypt over the past three generations and explains the principles being adopted for the fourth-generation cities to achieve national strategic objectives. The project shows critical determination for development benchmarks via localization of the SDGs key performance indicators as well as the implementation of the New Urban Agenda's principle to "leave no one behind".

The project emphasizes the characteristics of the unique geographical location, exceptional environmental features and the priorities of the expected and targeted communities. The adapted methodology enables comprehensive analytical methods and tools to precisely explore the ideal recipe of sustainable urban development compatible with the requirements of the land, water and human resources of the site.

The utilized brand-new strategy defines the big moves which would transform the city to a sought-after destination locally as well as globally. The vision includes the Social sustainability, Environmental sustainability, Sustainable urban planning and Economic sustainability where the new waterfront city attracts people, investors, and tourists owing to its natural environment, heritage, technology and agriculture activities.

**The vision** of the development of the Ras El-Hekma Waterfront New City project is elaborated under six steps, which would make the city a flagship project for Egypt new cities development programme

**1** giving a strong identity to the place,

**2** transforming city productive economy

**3** resilient city that deploys new sustainability standards for climate change adaptation

**4** people centered urban development,

**5** introducing futuristic mobility options

**6** placing Ras El-Hekma at the global map

Furthermore, the project identifies the characteristics and the building regulation of the city different districts to ensure that the implementation and execution of the project align with the UN-Habitat Sustainable Neighbourhood Planning Principles and the holistic concept of the city development to achieve its designated objectives. Moreover, the Ras El-Hekma Waterfront New City identifies the best institutional framework and the smart management tools and mechanisms of the city to be applied, to ensure the sustainability of the city and introduce new mechanisms and approaches for the Egyptian Government to apply in any other new city.

## Partners

وزارة الإسكان والمرافق والمجتمعات العمرانية  
Ministry of Housing, Utilities & Urban Communities







### Domain of Change 3 Strengthened climate action and improved urban environment

In line with the New Urban Agenda's commitment to facilitate the sustainable management of natural resources in cities and urban areas in a manner that protects and improves the urban ecosystem and environmental services, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, and promotes disaster risk reduction and management, the third domain of change focuses on the intersection of cities and other human settlements with climate and the environment. In the Arab region, UN-Habitat is keen to address the resilience, adaptation and mitigation actions for the development of sustainable cities through curbing the impact of climate change, creating new economic opportunities and improving livability in cities.



Rubble sorting within  
the Rubble to mountain  
initiative 2021, Beirut,  
Lebanon @UN-Habitat

In 2020, the Adaptation Fund endorsed UN-Habitat's regional project titled "Increasing the Resilience of Displaced Persons (DPs) to Climate Change-related Water Challenges in Urban Host Settlements" in **Jordan and Lebanon**. The project aims at increasing the resilience and adaptive capacities of displaced persons to climate change-related water challenges in urban host settlements, for increased resilience.

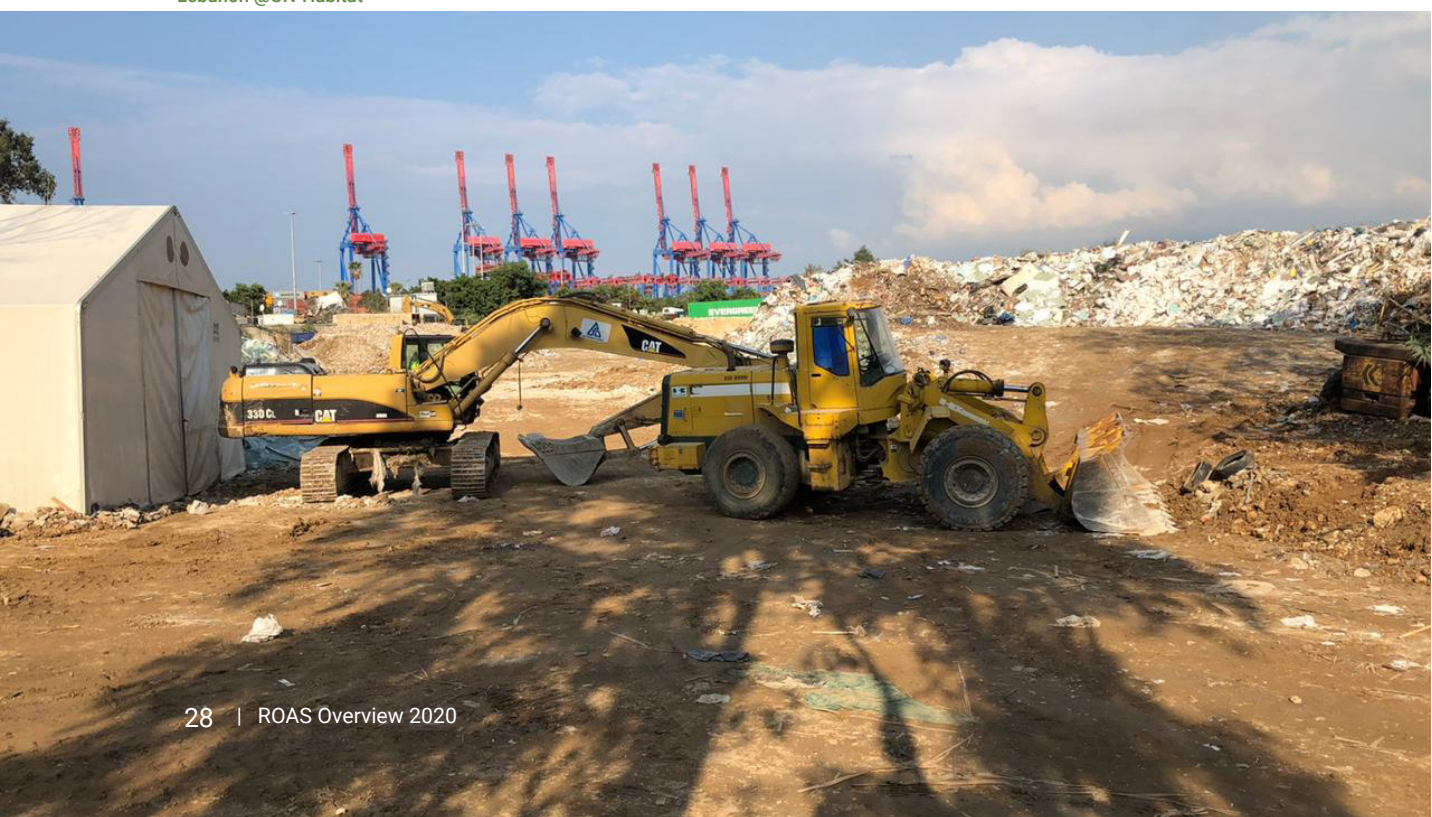
Also In 2020, UN-Habitat ROAS worked in collaboration with the World Green Building Council worked on developing Guidelines for Mainstreaming Climate Resilience in Recovery, Reconstruction and Regeneration Processes in the Arab Region, under the framework of the "SDG-Climate Nexus Facility Project". The guidelines will be disseminated and published in 2021.

## Sudan

UN-Habitat continues to advocate for the adoption of renewable energy generation in urban areas in the Arab region by using solar rooftops on public and residential buildings. In Sudan, water wells were constructed using solar panels in Dagareis Village with the financial support of the Government of Japan. Also, in order to support green recovery and reconstruction efforts.

## Iraq

Green reconstruction methods and passive building strategies were introduced to reduce energy consumption and limit the need for energy cooling systems in Al Nejoom School in Heet, and in rehabilitation and retro-fitting of a damaged building that will be reused as a community center in Yarmouk Park. In the same park, the programme has adopted energy efficient solutions, recycled materials and installed solar panels to improve public safety for children, youth and adults in Mosul with the financial support of the European Union. UN-Habitat Iraq has also supported the



municipality of Sumel in the prevention of grey water from getting collected in the streets through the construction of **culvert boxes serving 500 houses**.

## Lebanon

UN-Habitat co-launched the “Rubble to Mountains” initiative following the Beirut port blast. Co-led by a consortium of UN, private sector and NGO partners, the initiative aims to prevent an environmental waste crisis similar to that which followed the Lebanese Civil War. The initiative is collecting, sorting, and reusing the debris left by the explosions and transforming it into a material that will fill and reinforce mountains severely eroded by quarrying and build furniture for Beirut’s public spaces. The site used for the entire collection, sorting, and transformation process will be established as a long-term hub for the environmentally sound management of construction and demolition waste. Improving the urban environment remains at the heart of UN-Habitat’s projects in Lebanon, to name a few, the upgrading of several neighbourhoods including Maraach, Bourj Hammoud; El Jazzar Street, Sabra and Labban Street, Mina feature the adoption and use of renewable energy sources, recycled water, green construction materials and more.

## Jordan

As flash floods have been identified as the second prioritized risk in Jordan’s National DRR Strategy, UN-Habitat initiated work on strengthening the Government and community resilience and capacities to better manage flash floods through the implementation of flood resilient infrastructure in 2020 through the project titled “Strengthening the social stability and resilience of vulnerable Jordanian communities and Syrian refugees in Amman against flash floods” funded by Japan.

## Egypt

In terms of improving air quality, UN-Habitat is working on reducing **40,000 tons of CO2 emissions** per year through the promotion of the use of Bus Rapid

Transit. Also, the environmental and traffic impact assessments were conducted for Al Warrak Island development project, aiming to minimize the expected negative impact and secure development and risk mitigation measures. Moreover, the strategic urban plan for Sharm El Sheikh city has considered Green Development as one of the leading development pillars. Subsequently, proposed projects in different sectors (mobility, energy, ...etc.) were assessed as per predetermined environmental-based indicators.

## Syria

UN-Habitat, in coordination with UNDP and FAO secured approval of the Adaptation Fund on a Concept Note on “Climate change resilient communities through integrated natural resource management in Eastern Ghouta in Rural Damascus.

UN-Habitat also supported monitoring of polluted gases and improving air quality in the city of Aleppo and treatment of medical waste as well as supporting environment community-led projects and rehabilitating the training hall of Al-Qadmous Environmental Community Support Center.

## Kuwait


UN-Habitat launched a campaign called “Greening Kuwait” for greening open spaces with the participation of many government agencies, the private sector and volunteer teams. The campaign aims to plant 100,000 trees in open spaces to create a green belt protecting cities from dust storms, desertification, and sand encroachment in the north and south of Kuwait.


## Bahrain

UN-Habitat initiated discussions with the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning to develop a vision and roadmap for greening Bahrain in cooperation with FAO and UNDP with the aim of improving the quality of the built environment and contributing to enhancing the health and wellbeing of urban residents in the Kingdom of Bahrain by increasing the green spaces.



### Knowledge Products

 Local climate action in the Arab region” English version

 Local climate action in the Arab region” Arabic version





The Rubble to Mountains initiative has created livelihood opportunities for over 100 daily labourers many of whom are women, 2021, Beirut, Lebanon. @UN-Habitat



## Featured Story

### “Rubble to Mountains” Initiative

Preventing an environmental crisis following the Beirut blast

Beirut, Lebanon

On 4 August 2020, Lebanon suffered a devastating blast at its capital's port. A large amount of ammonium nitrate stored at the port exploded, causing at least 204 deaths, 7,500 injuries, and US\$15 billion in property damage, and directly affecting 300,000 people.

The Beirut Port explosions that damaged thousands of buildings, housing and public infrastructure, left behind an enormous amount of rubble and debris. For weeks following the blast, people came out in droves to sweep the city's rubble-littered streets, leaving piles of waste that were likely destined for Beirut's nearly saturated landfills.

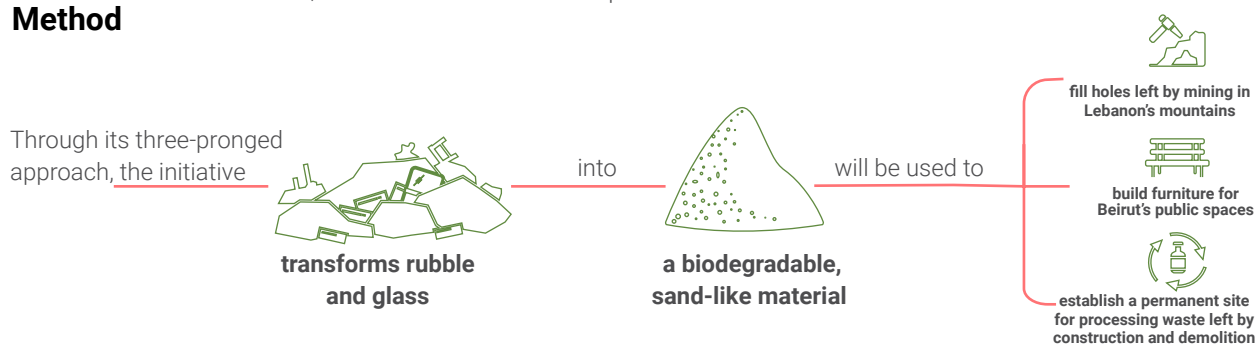
“Lebanon can always do the wrong thing with its waste, like dumping it illegally by the side of a road or river, but why not use our energy and resources to address this disaster with a sustainable and environmentally-friendly plan?” says Mona El Hallak, Director of the Neighborhood Initiative at the American University of Beirut.

## Intervention

To address the emerging challenge and prevent some of the foreseeable environmental hazards that would be caused by disposing of rubble into landfills, similar to that which followed the Lebanese Civil War, UN-Habitat co-launched the “Rubble to Mountains” initiative. Co-led by a consortium of UN, private sector and NGO partners, the initiative aims to prevent an environmental waste crisis, by collecting, sorting, and reusing the debris left by the explosions and transforming it into a material that will fill and reinforce mountains severely eroded by quarrying and build furniture for Beirut’s public spaces.

“We decided to transform this crisis into an opportunity. There are 80 types of plastics in the world, and only seven types can be recycled; therefore, there are 72 types that cannot be reprocessed. So, we worked on our own “patent” that can handle all types,” says Mohamed Daoud, Founder and CEO of Development Inc.

## Method



“A first of its kind in Lebanon, the Rubble to Mountains initiative processes the construction and demolition waste left by the Beirut blast in an eco-friendly manner which not only reduces pressure on Lebanon’s overwhelmed landfills but provides sustainable solutions. It is my hope that the current site used for the entire collection, sorting, and transformation process will be established as Beirut’s hub for the environmentally sound management of construction and demolition waste,” said Zaher Mansour, Rubble Management Expert at UN-Habitat Lebanon.

Of the approximately 160,000 tonnes of rubble stored at the Bakalian lot in Karantina, Beirut, as of January 2021 about 6,000 tonnes has been sorted according to material type. In a context of financial hardship nationally, the Rubble to Mountains initiative has created livelihood opportunities for over 100 daily labourers many of whom are women - making the initiative not only beneficial for the environment, but also for financial stability of breadwinners and heads of households.

Improving the urban environment remains at the heart of UN-Habitat’s projects in Lebanon, to name a few, the upgrading of several neighbourhoods including Maraach, Bourj Hammoud; El Jazzar Street, Sabra and Labban Street, Mina feature the adoption and use of renewable energy sources, recycled water, green construction materials and more.

## Partners







## Domain of Change 4

### Effective urban crisis prevention and response

UN-Habitat supports the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in countries affected by conflict and natural and human-caused disasters, ensuring that its work contributes, in a coordinated manner, to sustaining peace and a comprehensive whole-of-system response to complex emergencies. Considering the increased complexity and urban nature of crises in the region, UN-Habitat adopts a focus on resilience, of both systems and people, as well as a rights-based approach that gives particular attention to women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities in both host and displaced communities.

## City and Neighborhood Profiling

City and Neighborhood Profiling is considered one of the main tools that UN-Habitat widely utilizes to support urban crisis recovery, urban response and building back better. City and neighborhood profiling work was undertaken in **Iraq, Libya, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen**, and is used to produce damage assessments, coordinate recovery efforts among humanitarian actors and identify evidence-based priority actions. Using the “Socio-Economic Vulnerability Assessment Tool-SEVAT” in Iraq to ensure a uniform and systematic approach in identifying highly vulnerable households for rehabilitation has been a successful testimony in this regard.

In collaboration with relevant country offices, in 2020 UN-Habitat ROAS proceeded with the finalization of urban profiles in Yemen (Mareb), Libya (Derna) and Syria (Aleppo, Dar’a and Der Azzour) to develop a picture of the status of cities under stress. The analysis found in the profiles has been organized along the lines of the “Urban Recovery Framework” (URF). This URF is currently being

implemented in Syria as a new process to develop advice for policy and programming to promote better urban recovery.

In **Lebanon**, an interactive and user-friendly portal featuring data and maps on 28 disadvantaged neighbourhoods has been launched in partnership with UNICEF. The portal provides interested actors and stakeholders with reliable multi sectoral data and integrated analysis on the neighbourhoods. UN-Habitat is currently in discussions with the Lebanese Ministry of Interior and Municipalities about the institutionalization of the portal.

## Addressing Housing, Land and Property Rights

Lack of security of tenure complicates humanitarian responses and exposes vulnerable populations to a wide range of protection issues, including further displacement. Addressing housing, land and property (HLP) rights early on in a crisis situation is critical to allow for voluntary return or local integration.

In **Lebanon**, Two pilot locations that are home to Syrian refugees are part of a regional HLP project funded by GIZ in Lebanon and Iraq. One of the components of the project is research focused and capitalizes on the findings of an earlier HLP project funded by Ford Foundation and implemented in 2018. The second project involves the customization and use of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) tool and related satellite imagery to enable refugee families to lead a participatory process that will map their HLP claims to their properties back home in Syria. Building on the lessons learnt in Iraq and elsewhere, members of the communities and local organisations will be trained to implement the pilot projects on the ground and operate the version of STDM, and other complementary tools that will be adapted and customized to the local context



BEFORE



AFTER





In **Iraq**, UN-Habitat has completed the collection and registration of HLP claims in Doghry, Sinjar District, issuing Occupancy Certificates for **1,076 households** in this township. Overall, **6,433 households** had registered their HLP claims with UN-Habitat and 5,439 Occupancy Certificates have been issued benefitting a total of **35,323 individuals**. In Mosul and Hamdanyia cities in Iraq, legal assistance to submit compensation claims on lost, damaged or destroyed property has been provided. A total of **331 cases** have been filed with the Sub-compensation Committee through the counseling and representation by UN-Habitat, free of charge. The Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Sub-cluster chaired by UN-Habitat, issued the HLP COVID-19 Response Guidance Note highlighting the HLP issues during pandemic and providing guidance to HLP actors in Iraq on safe delivery of limited/ critical services for HLP activities in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak in Iraq.

In **Syria**, UN-Habitat is working to promote improved understanding of the Syrian policy and legal frameworks related to HLP issues within the project "Strengthening Capacity to Address Immediate and Post-Agreement

(HLP) Issues". Key stakeholders have received capacity building to address operational HLP Issues and improved urban and rural land management. The office has also supported the seven pillars of the Urban Recovery Framework, including housing, to enhance (rural-urban) resilience, social cohesion and to support return.

## Iraq

In many countries, UN-Habitat expertise in urban resilience and recovery efforts help to align humanitarian and development responses. In Iraq, under the project "Support to Reconstruction and Peacebuilding of Liberated Cities in Iraq" **324 low-cost housing** units were constructed in Mosul, Ninewa Governorate.

Further, **1,014** of the most vulnerable IDP and recently returned IDP families in Fallujah District, Anbar governorate were helped with items to repair and upgrade their shelters, including items to mitigate the extreme climate conditions. A further 1,000 displaced and recently returned displaced households were provided with non-food items to improve their living conditions. In terms of house

Rehabilitated female-headed households, 2020, Yemen.  
@UN-Habitat



rehabilitation, UN-Habitat Iraq has completed the rehabilitation of **380 houses** resided by IDPs, refugees and host community members in the cities of Erbil, Duhok, Sumel, Mosul and Sinjar and as a result, **3,040** men, women, boys and girls are now benefiting from an improved and more secured living conditions. In target neighbourhoods of the cities of Mosul, Heet and Yathrib, UN-Habitat is implementing an area-based and integrated urban recovery programme funded by EU that consists of the rehabilitation of war-damaged housing (90 houses have been handed back to their owners so far), the creation of new public spaces (one per city), the extension and upgrading of water networks, and rehabilitation and retro-fitting of key public facilities, such as water treatment plants, schools and clinics.

## Yemen

**148** war-damaged -houses were rehabilitated, benefitting **1000 people**, with focus on female-headed households and construction of **63** WASH facilities/toilets and 2 communal latrines in IDP sites was completed, benefitting **1700 people** in Al-Hudaydah.

## Lebanon

36 historic buildings (110 residential units) ranging from 300 to 450 years old that are home to vulnerable Lebanese and refugee families were renovated to improve their living conditions. In addition to the physical upgrading of the buildings, the enhancement of livelihoods and communal well-being, the project included capacity building and awareness raising activities on the importance of preserving cultural heritage.

## Syria

My School My Community (Education for All III) project conducted consultations with the children, families, teaching cadre and local community to define needs in the catchment areas of targeted schools in Homs and Rural Damascus and rehabilitation these areas to

ensure safer access to the students and the residents.

## Palestine

UN-Habitat Palestine supported urban farming interventions to alleviate quarantine effects amongst the elderly groups that aims at enhancing the mental and physical health and wellbeing of elderly people whilst simultaneously enabling self-sufficiency of their households through the promotion of home-based farming. These interventions seek to enhance the livelihoods and food security of targeted households, by providing them with opportunities to be more food-secure and self-sufficient in terms of access to basic vegetables and greens during the pandemic in light of the continued restrictions on mobility of goods, food and people.

## Egypt

UN-Habitat Egypt has released the development plan for the Al Ruwaisat the neighbourhood, which will play a significant role in the development of the Sharm El Sheikh city in cooperation with different stakeholders and local communities. Series of roundtable discussions and fieldwork surveys were conducted to assure resilience, effective urban crisis prevention and effective mitigation measures and actions.

## Sudan

UN-Habitat participated in a post-disaster assessment together with the Government of Sudan , World Bank, UNDP and other UN agencies. Findings revealed that in 2020 over 860,000 people were affected by the floods, more than 100,000 homes were damaged or destroyed after weeks of flooding, and over 10 million people are at risk of contracting water-borne diseases. In this context, UN-Habitat is currently implementing a project to improve the living environment and enhance resilience of communities at high-risk of floods in Khartoum informal settlements.



### Knowledge Products

[Neighborhood profile portal in Lebanon](#)

[Yemen Urban Data Portal](#)

[Yemen Urban Profiles](#)

[Aden Profile](#)

[Sanaa Profile](#)

[Al Hodeidah Profile](#)

[Zinjibar Profile](#)

[Ta'iz Profile](#)

[Al Hawtah Profile](#)

[Sa'dah Profile](#)





UN-Habitat staff distributing Non Food Items Fallujah, Iraq. @UN-Habitat



## Featured Story

# Providing Non-Food Items to the most vulnerable populations

Fallujah, Iraq

Quilts. Mattresses. Solar lamps. Water jerry cans. Cooking stoves. Imagine being displaced from your home and not having these basic items to stay warm, safe, hydrated, clean and fed.

In March 2020, as the world rushed to the shops to stock up on supplies to get through national lockdowns and quarantines, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), who often live day-to-day, did not have the same option. They are highly sensitive to changes in access to food, water, or services, particularly those not living in camps. Furthermore, displaced Iraqi families and other vulnerable people living in critical housing conditions suffer from a lack of dignity, safety, security, privacy and protection from harsh weather conditions. Whilst in February there was snow blanketing the streets of Baghdad, in July, Iraqis faced an unprecedented heat wave when temperatures soared between 50 – 54 degrees Celsius.

## Intervention



in Fallujah district of  
Anbar governorate



improve living conditions of  
IDPs by providing the means to  
upgrade and repair their basic  
shelters and by providing much-  
needed non-food items.

**65%**

of beneficiaries utilized the  
funds to "protect from harsh  
weather conditions

**2,014**

Iraqi displaced families living  
outside IDP camps benefited  
from the intervention

The Iraqis with the highest needs, and who did not have the resources to improve their situation, were identified through a socio-economic vulnerability assessment. The items provided helped these families to repair their homes and regain a sense of dignity and also to help keep families cool during the summer months, which can be lifesaving when temperatures rose above 50 degrees, and families had to stay at home to respect COVID-19 movement restrictions.

Carrying out distributions of items in the early days of COVID-19 response required limiting contact between people and using protective items such as gloves and masks. Items were slowly and carefully loaded onto trucks and driven to identified households. Street by street, shelter by shelter, family by family, people came out to collect their assistance packages. This was also an opportunity to provide people with accurate information about COVID-19 from the World Health Organisation and phone numbers they can call to ask questions, such as the Iraq Information Centre hotline.

Accurate information about the spread of COVID-19 is critical, particularly in urban areas and informal settlements where people live very close to one another, and social distancing is simply not possible. UN-Habitat is distributing accurate information to Iraqis wherever possible during these difficult times.

## Partners







The blast left behind an enormous amount of rubble and debris, Beirut, Lebanon. @UN-Habitat



## Featured Story

# Response to Beirut Blast

Beirut, Lebanon

In August of last year, UN-Habitat's urban crisis expertise, proved further critical, in immediately responding to the devastating explosions that rocked Beirut's Port. As local authorities were thrust to the frontline to help facilitate the emergency response with already limited financial, human and technical resources, UN-Habitat deployed to support them in conducting rapid building-level damage assessments of more than 14,000 buildings to establish an overview and baseline of the level of infrastructural repair and safety precautions needed in Beirut and Bourj Hammoud municipalities. The assessments continue to inform the prioritization of partners' interventions by highlighting the most affected areas.



## Interventions



From a **shelter** perspective, UN-Habitat undertook a further detailed assessment of buildings in need of structural repairs, as a basis of an emergency cash-for-rent project that UN-Habitat is currently rolling out, funded by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund. This intervention will provide **800 eligible households** with safe shelter options for a minimum of 3-4 months, helping families get back on their feet. In neighbourhoods heavily affected by the blast, UN-Habitat is undertaking minor repairs to more than **100 damaged homes** through funding by the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) and the Real Estate Syndicate of Lebanon (REAL). By repairing windows and doors that were left in tatters by the blast, families living in these homes will be protected from harsh weather throughout the winter season. UN-Habitat is also ensuring its expertise is contributing to the overall coordination of the Shelter Sector response, by co-leading this sector with UNHCR and NRC.



Through collaboration with UNESCO and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, UN-Habitat also undertook a detailed **assessment of 150 private schools** affected by the explosion – and is currently overseeing the holistic rehabilitation of around **33** of these **schools in need of significant repair**.



Beyond the immediate response to the most pressing needs, lies the **protracted housing situation in Beirut** and across Lebanon. To ensure that housing, land and property rights of Beirut's residents are protected, UN-Habitat Lebanon is ensuring housing, land and property issues are adequately addressed and enhanced through integrated programming and synergies related to the provision of shelter assistance to vulnerable groups across the city while ensuring that heritage buildings are restored in compliance with Lebanon's Directorate of General Antiquities standards.



Aside from damaged homes, **medical centres across the city were severely affected** and some left incapable to function. One of these facilities is the only national HIV and TB Centre based in Karantina, Beirut. UN-Habitat, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is rehabilitating the centre through a build back better approach – making it green, accessible to all and more connected to the community through small public spaces.

## Partners



## 6. Networking, Partnerships and Advocacy

Strategic partnerships are crucial for maximizing the reach and impact of the programmes and projects in the region and strengthening capacities to achieve sustainable urban development. During 2020, ROAS was able to capitalize on its experience and position in the region to work with multiple partners to support sustainable urbanization including central, regional and local governments, UN entities (through joint programmes and projects to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) and its long strategic partnership with the League of Arab States. Additionally, given the importance of International Financial Institutions (IFI) in development funding, partnership was strengthened with the Islamic Development Bank to support research and development of knowledge products on the topics of informal settlements and climate change. UN-Habitat also partners with Civil Society Organizations, academic institutions and research centers in the Arab region to support policy dialogues and implementation of projects and initiatives.

Appointment of HRH Princess Lamia Al Saud as UN-Habitat Goodwill Ambassador for Arab States 2020, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates @ UN-Habitat

### Arab States in the World Urban Forum

The Tenth Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF 10), held from 8-13 February 2020 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, marked the first time that an Arab country hosts the world's most important conference on cities and human settlements.

WUF10 was convened by UN-Habitat, in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities, under the theme: Cities of Opportunities: Connecting Culture and Innovation.

Attracting over **13,000 attendees** taking part in more than **540 official** events, WUF10 yielded the Abu Dhabi Declared Actions, which outlined commitments from international organizations, national, local and regional governments, the private sector, civil society, academia and others for the next two years and beyond to support the achievement of the SDGs.



WUF10 witnessed the appointment of the first UN-Habitat Goodwill Ambassador for Arab States, HRH Princess Lamia Bint Majed Al Saud, leading philanthropist and the Secretary General of Alwaleed Philanthropies. Highly regarded for her humanitarian and philanthropic work to advance sustainable and inclusive development for the most vulnerable, HRH has supported UN-Habitat efforts to address urban challenges in Arab states and advance sustainable urbanization as a driver of development and peace.

On the sidelines of WUF10, UN-Habitat Regional Office of Arab States, Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (DERASAT) and UN Development Programme launched the Executive Summary of the 'State of Arab Cities Report 2020: Financing Sustainable Urban Development in the Arab Region'. The report, funded by DERASAT Bahrain, demonstrates through concrete evidence and in-depth analysis, the primacy of innovative sub-national financial instruments and significant urban infrastructure investments to help forge inclusive, prosperous and resilient urban settlements.

## Urban October

Urban October is an opportunity for everyone to be part of the conversation about the challenges and opportunities created by the fast rate of change in our cities. Each October, everyone interested in sustainable urbanization from national and local governments to universities, NGOs and communities is encouraged to hold or participate in activities, events, and discussions. The month begins with World Habitat Day on the first Monday of the month, 5 October in 2020, and ends with World Cities Day on 31 October.

## World Habitat Day

In 2020, The Arab region witnessed a number of WHD celebrations across several countries, under the theme "Housing For All: A Better Urban Future". In Egypt, the "National housing strategy" was launched in a joint virtual event with the Egyptian Ministry of Housing, Utilities

and Urban Communities. The Strategy marks Egypt's commitment to achieving affordable and decent housing for all and sets clear policies to deal with the housing challenges in Egypt.

In Yemen, under the patronage of the prime minister, a workshop was held to discuss "Urban Challenges in Yemen" and the impact of the ongoing conflict on the housing sector. In a video message, the prime minister highlighted that "Housing is a fundamental human right and a catalyst for other basic rights. Inclusive, decent and affordable housing is the key to sustainable transformation and building peace for our cities and societies".

In Palestine, the Ministry of Local Government and UN-Habitat renewed their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for 3 years. The MoU outlines the scope of interventions agreed under the 2030 Agenda with a focus on spatial planning, local governance, urban basic services, and urban management, with a special attention to defend the building, planning, and land rights of Palestinian communities, across the Gaza Strip, and West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem.

While in Morocco, World Habitat day was celebrated with a webinar on "Housing for All" organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Policy, attended by the Minister, representatives from UCLG, League of Arab States and UN-Habitat.

## World Cities Day

In commemoration of WCD, UN-Habitat ROAS and UCLG MEWA organized a Webinar on "Empowering Local Communities for Inclusive COVID-19 Recovery, In line with 2020 theme "Valuing our Communities and Cities". The webinar emphasized the role of local communities in building cities' resilience and planning for post-COVID-19 response, with presented experiences from Egypt, Morocco,

**In Palestine, the Ministry of Local Government and UN-Habitat renewed their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for 3 years. The MoU outlines the scope of interventions agreed under the 2030 Agenda**





Kuwait, Yemen and Lebanon.

In Palestine, UN-Habitat and partners launched the project “Supporting Solid Waste Management Preparedness and Response to the COVID-19 and Provision of Sanitation and Hygiene in Public Spaces in Bethlehem Area” funded by Alwaleed Philanthropies. The event was attended by the Governor of Bethlehem, Mayor of Bethlehem and Mayors of Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, and Al Doha cities. A voluntary street cleaning campaign was held across the governorate, in which male and female students volunteered and also distributed infographic flyers on COVID-19 to workers in the area.

The Ministry of Planning, Housing and City Policy in Morocco organized a webinar bringing together a large and diverse panel of national and international experts and stakeholders. The event “Thinking and Designing the City of Tomorrow” aimed to draw the broadlines of innovative territorial planning approach allowing us to think and conceive the cities of tomorrow in a greener, more inclusive and sustainable manner. The event was attended by the Prime Minister of Morocco, Morocco Minister of National Planning, Urban Planning, Housing and City Policy, UCLG President, UN Resident Coordinator in the Kingdom of Morocco and UN-Habitat Executive Director.

## Issue Based Coalition on Urbanization (IBC-U)

Established in 2020, the IBC-U in the Arab region, co led by UN-Habitat and UN Environment, serves as a regional platform to localize, integrate and mainstream sustainable urbanization as one of the SDGs accelerators in regional and country-level processes. Through coordinating activities among regional actors, fostering partnerships, and providing normative and technical guidance, the IBC supports member states in their implementation of the New Urban Agenda, and the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and urban targets in their policies.

In 2020, the IBC-U succeeded in; Supporting Local governments in their COVID-19 response and recovery through facilitating knowledge and data sharing and city to city exchange; Fostering regional collaboration for innovative urban resilience through joint programing and launch of joint Resilience initiatives; and Strengthening urban knowledge and information through a series of webinars as well as a establishing a shared repository of tools and urban knowledge products.

Street Cleaning Campaign,  
World Habitat Day, Palestine,  
2020 @ UN-Habitat



# Donors

Our work in 2020 would not have been possible without the generous support of our donors:



**A better quality of life for all  
in an urbanizing world**



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