

ISSUE 02 | OCTOBER 2021

URBAN

DIGEST

LEBANON COUNTRY OFFICE

RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR LEBANON'S URBAN RECOVERY AMIDST CRISES



CONTENTS

1

Introduction

2

UN-Habitat Executive Director's visit to Lebanon: advocating for the nation's holistic urban recovery

3

Local resilience building in a time of crisis

4

Restoring hope in Lebanon through a community-led approach

5

Climate action amidst calamities

6

Upcoming events and programme focus through 2021

1. Introduction

Lebanon's continued and drastic socioeconomic and financial descent, further exacerbated by a severe energy crisis and subsequent water shortages, continue to make daily life in Lebanon increasingly difficult. Following a political deadlock for over one year, a new government was formed in September 2021, bringing hope for much needed reform and recovery of Beirut following the Port explosion and Lebanon as a whole.

In June 2021, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and UN-Habitat Executive Director, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif completed her first official visit to Lebanon. During her visit, she toured and inaugurated several of UN-Habitat Lebanon's projects in response to the Beirut Port explosion and those focused on improving the living conditions and well-being of residents across Lebanon. Ms. Sharif launched the Beirut City Profile, inaugurated the National HIV and TB Centre in Karantina, Beirut and handed over a UN-Habitat-led multisectoral urban upgrading project in Mina, Tripoli to local authorities.

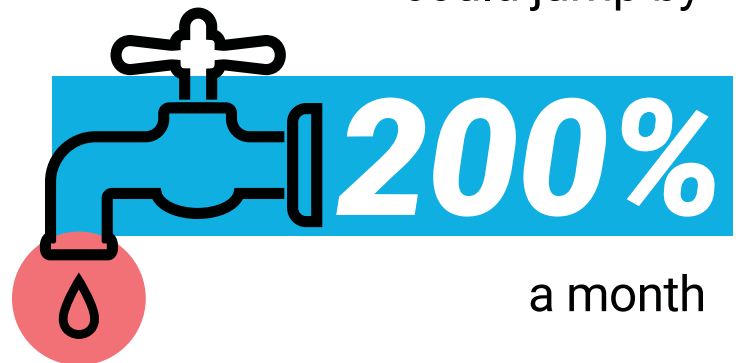
Throughout her visit, she interacted with partners and donors supporting these efforts. Her visit aimed to promote and advocate for the necessity of factoring urban dynamics into crisis response and recovery efforts – both short- and long-term – particularly in support of the people of Lebanon, during these unprecedented times.

In this edition, you can read about the key highlights of the Executive Director's visit, upcoming events and projects implemented and organized by UN-Habitat with a special focus on climate action and local authority resilience building.

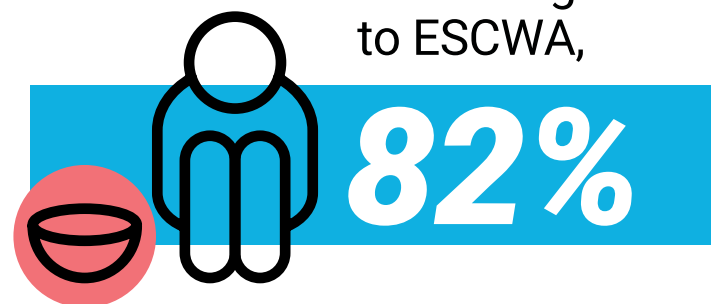
Thank you for reading!

UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme

UNICEF recently warned that should the public water supply system collapse, water costs could jump by



According to ESCWA,



of the Lebanese population is living in multidimensional poverty meaning that they are lacking access to services such as education, housing, health, housing, public utilities and more.

2.UN-Habitat Executive Director official visit: advocating for Lebanon's holistic urban recovery

During her first official visit to Lebanon, UN-Habitat's Executive Director, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif called for urban complexities to be factored into crisis response and recovery efforts not only in Beirut, but across Lebanon. Urban considerations were highlighted as equally important in humanitarian response, as well as a key tool towards achieving sustainable development. She underlined the importance of plan-led urbanization and multi-sectoral recovery as a pivotal factor in supporting the country recover from its ongoing crises.

In her meetings with the international community, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, local authority officials and the government – the absence of adequate planning and good urbanization was repeatedly highlighted as an impediment towards achieving sustainable development in the country, and as one of the root causes and potential solution to the multiple and ongoing socio-economic and public basic services challenges faced across the country.

Ms. Sharif visited projects implemented by UN-Habitat including those contributing to the ongoing recovery of Beirut, as well as those mitigating the protracted urban crises, such as displacement and migration, experienced across the country. She interacted with partners and donors and met with beneficiaries. While meeting with senior government officials and local authorities throughout her visit there was clear consensus on the need for strong coordination and collaboration between multiple stakeholders on all levels. The interconnectivity of all sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, housing, and others was highlighted – meaning that the efforts to revive them are indivisible.

“The international community must remain mobilised to maintain its engagement with and support to Lebanon. Not only to ensure that the heart of Lebanon – Beirut – is restored, but to assist all persons – Lebanese, refugees, and migrant communities – across the country, to cope with and overcome the harsh multiple and ongoing crises.”

– Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif
*United Nations Under-Secretary-General
and UN-Habitat Executive Director.*



Through timely funding secured through generous contributions from the Government of Japan, International Islamic Charity Organization (Kuwait), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, UN CERF, UNESCO and UNICEF the following initiatives were launched, and projects handed over during the visit.

Inauguration of the newly rehabilitated National HIV and TB Centre

Donor

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

Beneficiaries

900 patients per month

One of the many health facilities that was impacted by the explosion, included the only **National HIV and TB Centre** in Karantina, Beirut, serving patients from across the country, including some of the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society.

Through the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, UN-Habitat completely rehabilitated the centre inside and out. **Solar panels** have been installed to provide reliable and renewable energy to the centre making it fully self-reliant on its own electricity which is vital in Lebanon's current situation. The centre has regained structural stability and now features a **shaded pathway** into the centre making it safer, more accessible, and pedestrian friendly.

Public space rehabilitation around the centre is also underway to enhance connectivity to surrounding areas. 600 households living in Karantina received **hygiene kits** as part of this project and **public hand-washing stations** are now installed on the grounds of the centre – both contributing to community protection against COVID-19 transmission.

In the presence of the former Minister of Public Health, H.E. Dr. Hamad Hassan, the Governor of Beirut, Judge Marwan Abboud and the Ambassador of Sweden to Lebanon, H.E. Ms. Ann Dismorr, UN-Habitat's Executive Director, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif handed over the fully rehabilitated centre to the Ministry of Public Health.

Watch this [video](#) to learn more.



Launch of the Beirut City Profile: a basis for reform

Under the patronage of H. E. Mr. Hassan Diab, the former President of the Council of Ministers, the Beirut City Profile was launched in the presence of the Executive Director and Ms. Najat Rochdi, Deputy Special Coordinator for Lebanon, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. The report offers an important multisectoral and spatial analysis about the city of Beirut, including a diagnosis of the wide spectrum of challenges that the city has encountered over the past decades, including the most recent and devastating shock, the Beirut Port explosion.

The profile's analysis highlights several topics including existing city systems. For example, unlike other cities in Lebanon, there is no single authority in charge of what makes up the Greater Beirut City. The Greater Beirut City, encompassing 31 municipalities, is consequently left without formal mechanisms to respond to the larger system which they are a part of. Recognition of this fact is paramount in diagnosing the state of Beirut.

Another is insufficient service provision. This affects all living in the city and vulnerable segments of Beirut's population in particular, who experience systemic inequities in access to services and have fewer financial resources and social safety nets to make up for these gaps. This includes many women, youth, disabled persons, refugees, working migrants and low- or unskilled Lebanese men.

Overall, the profile aims to help offer a common understanding of how multiple shocks and vulnerabilities manifest across the city. The multi-scale approach used is key for an urban recovery response, to link local needs with city systems, and enabling national policies and regulations. The analysis highlights existing systems and governance structures' respective capacities to absorb shocks and suggests how these can be further strengthened to help the city bounce back and transform from a current fragile state towards a resilient and inclusive city.

UN-Habitat hopes that the Beirut City Profile will serve as a much-needed evidence-base for all stakeholders involved in the reconstruction of Beirut and Lebanon as a whole.

Read the full profile [here](#).

"To make Lebanon safer and more sustainable, we need to take action. In this regard, the Beirut City Profile, along with other city and neighbourhood profiles that UN-Habitat has been tirelessly producing for the past months, are valuable resources to use in our joint endeavours to "Build Back Better" and wiser."

– Ms. Najat Rochdi,
UN Deputy Special Coordinator, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Lebanon.





“Normative work such as UN-Habitat’s Beirut City Profile is essential to informing tangible projects and interventions that will contribute to the far-reaching recovery of Beirut and Lebanon as a whole. Equally important is the engagement local authorities and communities in the design, implementation and sustainability of these interventions.”

*– Ms. Mari Grepstad,
Chargee d’Affairs, Embassy of Norway to Lebanon*



Restoring homes severely affected by the Beirut Port explosion

Donor

The Government of Japan

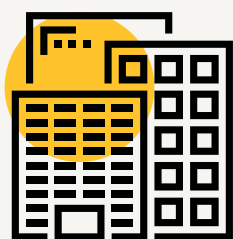
Beneficiaries

around 7,165 direct | 13,000 indirect

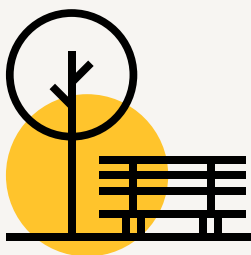
According to the Shelter Sector that is co-led by UN-Habitat and UNHCR, an estimated 291,180 individuals living in 72,265 apartments located across 9,700 buildings within three kilometres of the epicentre of the Beirut Port explosions were directly impacted. Many relocated to areas that were not directly affected by the explosion, but the majority of affected households continue to reside within their damaged homes.

Immediately after the explosion the emergency response focused on repairing homes with minor and moderate damages to seal and weatherproof homes before winter. The emergency humanitarian response phase has since transitioned to that of long-term recovery and reform, and UN-Habitat is now focusing on repairing residential buildings which have severe structural damages, which were not targeted in the initial response.

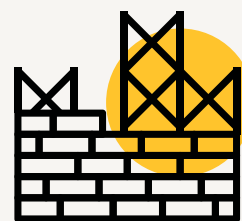
Through funding of over USD 2 million from the Government of Japan, UN-Habitat in partnership with Live Love Lebanon is rehabilitating:



11 multi-story residential buildings



Public spaces



Community infrastructure

These were severely damaged by the Beirut Port explosion. This project will help enable dignified living conditions and adequate shelter for those residing in Beirut's Gemmayzeh, Mar Mikhael, and Karantina neighbourhoods, as well as Bourj Hammoud's Maraach neighbourhood.

The initial selection of buildings were identified through the [Beirut](#) and [Bourj Hammoud](#) Building-level Damage Assessments, validated through field work with partners such as Live Love Beirut, and endorsed by relevant authorities.

To highlight the vast housing rehabilitation needs remaining following the explosion, UN-Habitat's Executive Director, H.E. Takeshi Okubo, Ambassador of Japan to Lebanon and Judge Marwan Abboud, Governor of Beirut visited the project site of the targeted buildings in Rmeil. On this visit the delegation visited the cluster of buildings to be rehabilitated and met with their owners who spoke of their experience on the day of the explosion. They also visited the area that was identified for public space rehabilitation by the project.

While the worsening socio-economic situation in Lebanon continues to deepen, this project will also help mitigate the effects of the crisis by providing community members with cash-for-work after they have acquired the necessary construction and rehabilitation skills through tailored vocational training sessions. Youth groups of vulnerable Lebanese, and Syrian refugees will be engaged and employed for the project's construction and rehabilitation activities, aimed at supporting the revitalization of the local economy and enhancing the community's sense of ownership.

"I used to sleep in Beirut every Tuesday at this house. It was a miracle that I wasn't there on 4 August 2020. The house was severely damaged. Work still needs to be done to reinforce the walls and the roof to make it safe again."

– Francois, homeowner and project beneficiary



Revitalizing Beirut's social hubs – Vendome, Laziza and St. Nicolas stairs

Donor

Block by Block

Beneficiaries

3,000 direct | 5,000 indirect

In Beirut, public stairs have long served as spaces for get-togethers, recreation, entertainment, as well as their traditional purpose of facilitating mobility. The 4 August 2020 explosion caused physical damage to these stairs, which in turn have had a direct impact on the social dynamics of these spaces. In an effort to revive these social hubs, UN-Habitat is working with Catalytic Action through funding by Block by Block to rehabilitate a minimum of 3 public stairs in the neighbourhoods of Mar Mikhael and Gemmayzeh in Beirut that were severely affected by the explosion.

In order to revitalize these stairs with the vision of the area's residents at heart, participatory Minecraft workshops were held with a sample group of people of different ages, genders and socioeconomic status. The workshops provided an opportunity to bring their own ideas and creativity to the renovation of these stairs, to ensure that they respond to their needs and are inclusive and emanate the spirit of their respective neighbourhoods. Once the stairs are rehabilitated there will be a re-activation of social events and gatherings that used to be undertaken on these stairs.



Handover of a Swiss funded multisectoral urban upgrading project in Tripoli

Donor

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Beneficiaries

95,560 direct | 253,000 indirect

UN-Habitat through funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation implemented a multisectoral urban upgrading project in Tripoli. With a total of eleven projects completed in the municipalities of Beddawi and Mina, the project's activities range from the installation of **solar lighting** on a major highway and the areas of Jabal el Baddawi and Al Masaken, to the **rehabilitation of building facades** on historic Labban street and the establishment of **inclusive public spaces** such as a park and football fields. All while introducing an **incentive-based recycling model** through reverse vending machines that can receive aluminium, glass and plastics and give store discounts and points in return. All of these activities play important roles in facilitating social cohesion in the area, for example, the public space and football fields provide an environment for dialogue and experience sharing for individuals from host and refugee communities.

This project was handed over to the local authorities of Mina and Beddawi by Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director with the attendance of the Deputy Head of International Cooperation, Embassy of Switzerland to Lebanon, Ms. Alice Thomann and Deputy Special Coordinator, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator

“Safe and inclusive public spaces are hubs of engagement for all residents no matter their background. By providing a space for informal conversations between host and refugee communities and improving living conditions, social cohesion can be fostered. Inclusivity should not only be adopted in terms of the space to be implemented but during the design process. The SDC-funded project implemented by UN-Habitat in Mina, Tripoli is a key example of this approach, where residents and local authorities provided input and participated in all stages of the project.”

– Alice Thomann,
Deputy Head of International Cooperation,
Embassy of Switzerland to Lebanon



Partnering with the Order of Engineers and Architects in Beirut to advance sustainable urban development in Lebanon

UN-Habitat and the Order of Engineers and Architects (OEA) in Beirut have recently agreed to collaborate in providing a framework of cooperation within which UN-Habitat and OEA Beirut shall join efforts to advance sustainable urban development in Lebanon. This will be done through conducting research and analysis on urban issues, sharing of existing data, promoting urban policy development at national and subnational levels, contributing to enhanced urban planning and design, and organizing and implementing advocacy and knowledge-sharing initiatives in Beirut and other areas of Lebanon.

“This collaboration is joining two important forces in Lebanon. I note UN-Habitat’s global, regional and national expertise on urban management and the OEA’s advanced expertise through its wide base of members and scientific committees. Both expertise joined together can actively serve Lebanon in these difficult times and set the foundation for long-term recovery and growth.”

*- Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif,
United Nations Under-Secretary-General and UN-Habitat Executive Director.*





Joining strengths with the private sector to transform waste to resources

UN-Habitat has established a partnership with multiple private sector companies including Nestlé, Diageo, IBI Group, PepsiCo and Development Inc. to address plastic pollution in Lebanon and several other countries across the Arab region including, Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. This new avenue of collaboration will encapsulate several “waste-wise” initiatives that take climate action by promoting sustainable resource use and management and recycling.

Ongoing activities within this scope, includes the Rubble to Mountains Initiative that aims to transform rubble and debris left by the Beirut Port explosion into city furniture and restore abandoned quarries. Another initiative is incentivizing recycling through Reverse Vending Machines, by providing redeemable points to individuals who return glass, aluminium and plastic bottles to reverse vending machines in different locations in Tripoli, North Lebanon. The points received can be used to purchase other products such as beverages and food stuffs.



DIAGEO



Development Inc.

3. Local resilience building in a time of crisis

Total Beneficiaries

189,625

137,500 vulnerable Lebanese

24,375 Syrian Refugees

27,750 Palestine Refugees

Donor

European Union

UN-Habitat and UNDP have joined forces in implementing the [Municipal Empowerment and Resilience Project \(MERP\)](#), an initiative implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MOIM) and funded by [the European Union, through its Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, the 'Madad Fund'](#). The project aims to strengthen the long-term resilience of local authorities in Lebanon as well as host communities and displaced persons affected by the crisis.



Basic service and local economic development projects

MERP launched a call for concept notes for needs-based inclusive and sustainable projects budgeted for up to USD 330,000. 33 concept notes were submitted and 18 short-listed. To ensure that municipalities with limited capacity can benefit, shortlisted municipalities received training and coaching to develop their concept notes into full proposals. 17 proposals were submitted for potential funding by MERP.

Finalized proposals cover key municipal services such as firefighting services, sports and youth centres, health care centers, public gardens, energy efficiency projects, sewage systems, and drinking water services. Considering the current context, several municipalities also submitted proposals for projects with a strong local economic development and entrepreneurship focus.

A municipal fair was held in August where municipalities and UoMs will present their final proposals to key stakeholders, including a review committee and other national, regional, and local actors and development partners. MERP supported municipalities in marketing their ideas during the fair, thereby paving the way for potential implementation through other local or international funding opportunities.



“What makes the project even more important are the current circumstances that are prevailing in Lebanon and we hope to meet the aspirations of the local communities and overcome as much as possible the difficulties of the corona pandemic, the hard economic and living conditions and the deterioration in the rate of the Lebanese pound.”

– Eng. Hassan Dbouk,
Head of the Union of Tyre Municipalities



Bridging residents of Bourj Hammoud to their Municipality

In April 2021, a municipal hotline for Bourj Hammoud was launched through the project. The hotline provides first-hand assistance to communities by:

- 1) Providing information on COVID-19 related issues,
- 2) Allowing users to follow up on or initiate new requests to repair houses damaged by the Beirut blast,
- 3) Responding to the needs of persons with disabilities by referring support requests to the relevant aid organizations.

The hotline is based on a WhatsApp application delivered in Arabic, English and Armenian. Residents of Bourj Hammoud can access the hotline by sending a WhatsApp message to **71 800 177**.

4. Restoring hope in Lebanon through a community-led approach

Fostering hope in El Jazzar street, Sabra

Donor

Royal Norwegian Embassy in Beirut

Beneficiaries

5,000 direct | 90,000 indirect

Through UN-Habitat's multisectoral urban upgrading project that fully rehabilitated El Jazzar street in Sabra, Beirut, funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, residents now live in enhanced safety and dignity. Through multiple interventions, the upgrading included enhancing the safety of residents through redesigning and constructing a pedestrian friendly street, organizing electrical wiring and shifting it to run underground, renovating and weatherproofing 22 building facades, and rehabilitating stormwater networks. Furthermore, 220 families have received COVID-19 hygiene kits and received awareness trainings on the rational use of the kits and; 276 women and girls attended the sessions on better management of solid waste.

Fatma Youssef, has been living in El Jazzar Street, Sabra for the past 40 years. Each day she has lived in the area, she has stepped out of her home and faced a chaotic and dirty scene – that is not only a heart-breaking sight but poses a huge health risk to her and her neighbours' health. Her residential building was one of the buildings that had its facade upgraded by UN-Habitat and the solid waste that was left piled for decades, removed.

"In these difficult times that we have been going through, the rehabilitation of El Jazzar Street has given us hope that we will live a better life."

*- Fathi Sarhan,
Resident of El Jazzar Street, Sabra*





Youth paint dreams on school walls that were once damaged by the Beirut Port explosion

Implemented by UNESCO and UN-Habitat with support by Education Cannot Wait

Beneficiaries

6,228 students | 738 teachers

Following in-depth damage assessments of 113 schools completed by UN-Habitat, and through funding secured by UNESCO, UN-Habitat led the technical oversight of the rehabilitation of 23 private schools that were damaged by the Beirut Port explosion. Through engaging students, two of these schools explored the power of mural art in bringing together a community to process the devastating explosion. Students aged 10 to 15 engaged in mural art history workshops to understand the role of such art in promoting expressive thought and cultural identity. Students then sketched images around the theme of "education for health and well-being" which were incorporated into holistic designs and applied to school walls.

Here is a [glimpse](#) of the outcomes.



5. Climate action opportunity amidst calamities

Sustainable water management – more than just climate change mitigation

Donor

The Adaptation Fund

Beneficiaries

around 120,000 direct

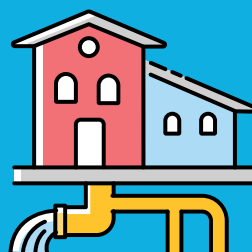
Starting end 2021, UN-Habitat in Lebanon and Jordan will implement a sustainable water management project that will respond to urgent climate change impacts and vulnerabilities in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis.

Funded by the Adaptation Fund for Climate Change, the project will reduce the demand of unsustainable water sources such as over-extracted (and often polluted) groundwater, while increasing water supply options from innovative and more sustainable sources, including rainwater harvesting and the reuse of treated wastewater. This will be done by demonstrating what concrete adaptation measures respond to the needs of both displaced persons and host communities, especially women and youth, while avoiding any tension over resources and employment opportunities.

Objectives of the project:

1. Increase resilience of municipal governments in managing urban risks and vulnerabilities within climate change context.
2. Improve awareness, ownership and capacities of displaced persons and host communities in responding to climate change.
3. Expand unconventional water harvesting, supply and irrigation options, using innovative and replicable techniques.
4. Improve knowledge, policies and regulations to increase urban resilience in the region within climate change context.

**DID
YOU
KNOW**



that Lebanon was already using two thirds, roughly

60%

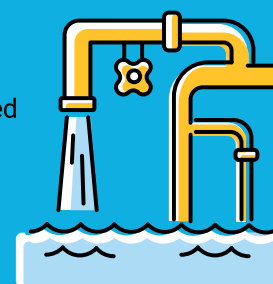
of its available water resources in 2012? While at the global level, the rate of water withdrawal averages from 10 to 30 per cent.

2/3

of the population is connected to sewer networks, but only

8%

of wastewater reaches the operational wastewater treatment plants and is treated.



An **inception** workshop was held on 20 October 2021 to kick-off the project and agree on the implementation and execution arrangements, including the first year's workplan and roles and responsibilities of all actors involved.

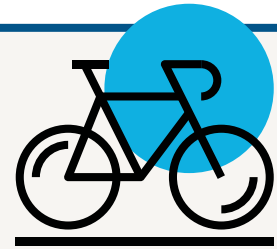
Bike-sharing initiative widens transport options in Tyre

Donor

Municipality of Zurich

Beneficiaries

450 direct



Earlier this year, the Municipality of Tyre launched two bikeshare stations through a City-to-City Partnership with the City of Zurich, facilitated by UN-Habitat. To date, bikes have been rented by more than 450 people for recreational purposes including tourism, shopping, sport and more. Bikes provide users an alternative mode of transportation, that is not only green but can decrease exposure to COVID-19, while reducing traffic congestion, accidents and pollution in the city.

In addition to the bike-sharing stations, the partnership between the cities of Tyre and Zurich is expected to continue into a second phase. This phase envisions the establishment of a central parking facility with a bus shuttle system – “Park and Ride” – with specific routes and schedules through the city for daily commuting and tourism.

The main goal of the “Park and Ride” system is to further introduce alternate mobility methods in the city of Tyre, to reduce traffic in the city, limit the high number of single car usage trips and replace it with a unified public transportation system, and improve the accessibility of the city for non-motorized travellers for a reduced fee.

The City-to-City Partnership between Zurich and Tyre municipalities began in 2017, aiming to support the Municipality of Tyre in coping with the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis in the city – through multiple components. This project partnership is expected to improve the performance of the Municipality of Tyre and achieve a long-term positive impact in the field of soft mobility through sharing the knowledge and expertise related to best practices for mobility and social cohesion between host and refugee communities.

“I use the bike in Tyre area because it’s a small city, so I find it easier to use the bike than the car. This is an interesting project because it promotes the use of bikes in our daily life. I really wish that there would be more stations across the country to encourage people to adapt to bike-sharing culture. I hope that this is the start of the establishment of more public spaces that are friendly to all: youth, children and families.”

– *Aya Saleh, 30 years old, Resident of Tyre*



Diverting rubble left by the Beirut blast away from Lebanese landfills

Jointly funded by UNICEF and UN-Habitat

Beneficiaries

200,000 direct | Lebanese population indirect

To address and prevent some of the foreseeable environmental hazards that would be caused by disposing of rubble into landfills, UN-Habitat in coordination with several partners established the Rubble to Mountains initiative. Through its three-pronged approach, the initiative is transforming rubble and glass into a biodegradable, sand-like material that will be used to fill holes left by mining in Lebanon's mountains, build furniture for Beirut's public spaces and establish a permanent site for processing waste left by construction and demolition. Visit this [link](#) to learn more about the project.



Clinic on wheels – the Municipality of Beirut's new Mobile Health Clinic

Donor

Mayors Migration Council

Beneficiaries

10,000 direct | 238,491 indirect
(Population of Beirut Municipality)

On 29 July 2021, the Municipality of Beirut officially launched their Mobile Health Clinic in partnership with UN-Habitat, that serves residents of several disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Beirut including Karm El-Zeytoun and Tariq El Jdide, among others.

Through funding from the Mayors Migration Council's Global Cities Fund for Inclusive Pandemic Response, the Mobile Clinic is providing free and non-discriminatory COVID-19 testing and other basic medical services to individuals who are unable to access these services due to lack of transportation, lack of finances, or other barriers to care. Going where it is needed most, the Mobile Clinic is focusing on neighbourhoods with high populations of refugees, migrants, and vulnerable Lebanese that were severely impacted by the Beirut Port explosion.

Read more about the project [here](#).

**COVID-19
BOX**



“Thanks to the Global Cities Fund, the Beirut Mobile Health Clinic will reach the neighbourhoods where it is needed the most, providing healthcare to those who would otherwise be left behind.”

– *Jamal Itani, Mayor of Beirut, Lebanon*

6. Forthcoming

Putting housing at the centre of response and recovery

UN-Habitat immediately engaged in the emergency response after the Beirut Port explosion by rehabilitating 97 homes and providing cash-for-shelter assistance for 816 households. With the current response having shifted to recovery and reconstruction, UN-Habitat is channelling its technical expertise and know-how under an urban recovery umbrella, by rehabilitating severely damaged residential buildings through an area-based approach. This entails not only physical rehabilitation, but addressing housing, land and property rights in targeted buildings, and the public spaces and connectivity in surrounding areas. Further efforts are expected to be focused on implementing a larger and comprehensive housing recovery initiative in Beirut, rehabilitating larger public spaces and facilities, while connecting the recovery of the built environment, to the cultural and creative industries.



State of Lebanese Cities Report

UN-Habitat is currently developing a State of the Lebanese Cities Report – a multisectoral stock-taking of urbanity in Lebanon, that could help identify entry points for more sustainable urban development. Set to be published later this year, the report complements national-level data with city-level data that highlights policy-relevant variations in urban status and prospects at the subnational scale.

At the end of August, consultative sessions were held with municipalities, academia and urban development stakeholders across the country to ensure that the data collected and analyzed are depictive of the on-ground, real-life situation of these areas, their needs and their challenges.



National Urban Forum

UN-Habitat aims to hold the first Lebanese National Urban Forum (NUF) towards the end of 2021. The objective of the NUF is to concretely discuss increasing urban challenges in the context of the multiple ongoing crises in Lebanon. NUFs create an opportunity for a diverse range of stakeholders and policymakers to exchange views, share experiences, and mobilize support on sustainable urbanization initiatives. Furthermore, NUFs provide a platform for stakeholders to reflect on their country's urbanization state and trends, as well as discuss achievements, challenges and potential solutions for transformative change.

This NUF wishes to raise awareness and catalyze important discussions around cities in Lebanon – with a particular focus on energy, housing and transport – and the importance of why an urban lens is indispensable to contributing to finding solutions out of the current complexities, and in fostering a sustainable and prosperous Lebanon.

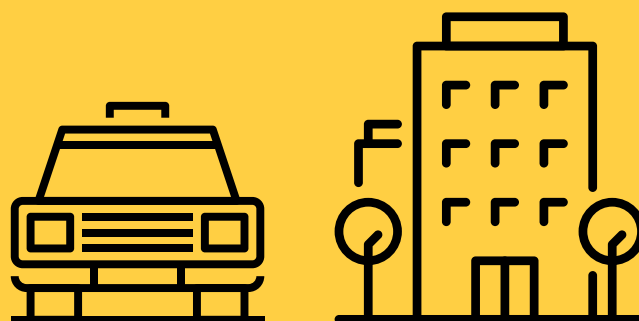
More details to follow!

Mainstreaming housing and transport in Lebanon's National Urban Policy (NUP)

Housing and transport have been identified as the two priority sectors in Lebanon in need of policy reforms during the **diagnosis phase of the NUP Programme**. As part of the second phase of the NUP Programme in Lebanon, UN-Habitat has developed two guides that are soon to be published. The guides aim to propose and support the formulation of housing- and transport-specific policy priorities necessary to steer the sectors to be people-centred and mainstreamed into Lebanon's NUP as it is developed.

The guides are an elaborate and context-tailored tool for policymakers in Lebanon to advance their policy actions, while taking into consideration the structural causes of the lack of affordable housing and poor transport systems in the country. The guides are also an important tool for private sector entities and grass-roots organizations invested in impactful projects and advocacy in the two sectors.

In addition to the two guides, UN-Habitat will also launch a synthesis report highlighting the interlinkages of the housing and transport sectors.



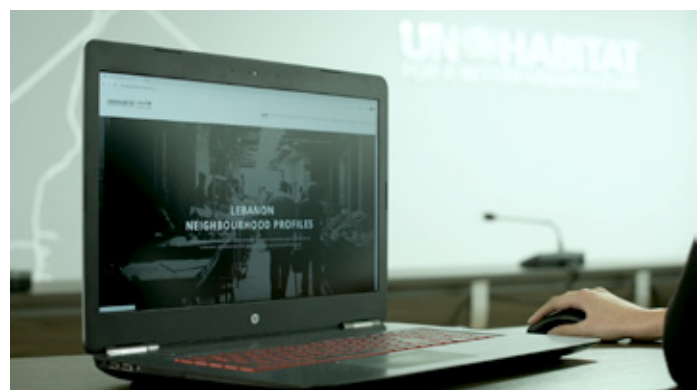
Neighbourhood Profiling Project

UN-Habitat and UNICEF jointly developed [profiles on 28 disadvantaged neighbourhoods](#) in Lebanon.

Neighbourhood profiles are reports containing original spatialized data and analysis, generated within an area-based framework, and synthesized to respond to the evidence needs of sector specialists, multisector practitioners, and local authorities. The profiles are hosted on a [user-friendly online portal](#) that enables users to compare data from different neighbourhoods and sectors within neighbourhoods themselves.

The profiles' data was gathered participatively through field and household surveys, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. Neighbourhood profiles offer an integrated place-based analysis covering multiple sectors and issues, including governance; population; safety and security; health; education; child protection; youth; local economy and livelihoods; buildings and housing; basic urban services; and access to open spaces.

Watch these [videos](#) to learn more.

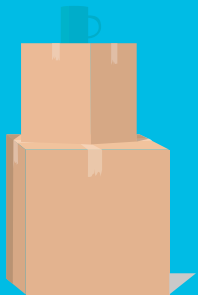


WE'VE MOVED!

UN-Habitat Lebanon's offices have moved
and are now based in:

**UN House/ESCWA, 5th floor
Riad El Solh, Beirut, Lebanon**

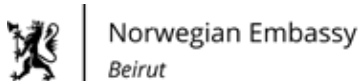
Please direct any correspondence
to UN-Habitat Lebanon
to the above address.



Through generous support from funding partners, and collaboration across a wide range of local and national authorities, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector and United Nations sister entities, UN-Habitat is able to implement its normative and operational mandate in Lebanon.



From
the People of Japan



Logos featured above represent donors of the projects highlighted in this edition of the Urban Digest.

Email us at unhabitat-lebanon@un.org or call us on +961 1 978398

Follow us on social media @UNHabitatLB