



# Lebanon Country Profile

## Urban Context

For more than three years, Lebanon has been beset by the most devastating multipronged crisis in its modern history. The multiple unfolding and deeply paralyzing crises – economic, financial, social, urban, demographic, and political – has the economic crisis ranked as the worst globally since the mid-nineteenth century, according to the World Bank. The October 2019 civil uprising, the COVID-19 pandemic, the devastating Beirut Port explosion, in addition to the pre-existing impacts of the Syrian refugee crisis, has left the country beyond despair and with people unable to cope any longer.

Examples of urban challenges in Lebanon include:

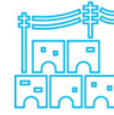
- Service systems and infrastructure have not been maintained since the Lebanese Civil War and have only become increasingly deficient in the nation's current context, making access to crucial urban basic services (housing, transport, energy, water) very challenging, or almost non-existent.
- Haphazard or no planning regulations in place/enforced and lack of local planning and cross-sectoral master plans hinder any absorption capacity of the increasing urban population and its social, economic, environmental and demographic needs.
- Additional pressure has been placed on resources and service provision as Lebanon hosts the highest number of refugees per capita and per square kilometer in the world, welcoming around 1.5 million Syrian refugees since 2011.
- Remaining damages caused by the Beirut Port explosion to infrastructure and residential and commercial areas remains significant. As well as, significant economic and social impacts, including widespread disruption to business and trade, and an increase in the cost of living.
- Increasing inflation and devaluation of the Lebanese lira, plunging more than 80% of the population into multidimensional poverty, with almost 90% of Syrian refugees living in extreme poverty.
- Lack of institutional national-scale mechanisms in place to effectively prevent, mitigate or respond to natural and human-made disasters.



Total population is 5.8 million



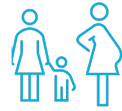
88.9 % of the population is urban



61% of urban population live in slum areas



1.5 million Syrian and 210,000 Palestinian refugees reside in the country, in 12 official camps



3.2 million people need assistance



Almost 4 million people are at risk of being denied access to safe water

## STORY FROM THE FIELD



Since 2011, 1.5 million refugees have arrived in Lebanon, inevitably adding pressure on already overstretched public services and resources, particularly affecting urban areas where the majority have settled. The COVID-19 outbreak in Lebanon, a severe and deepening economic depression and currency devaluation since 2019, and the effects of the Beirut Port explosions in mid-2020 have together driven an overwhelming 74 per cent of the population into income poverty in 2021, up from 25 per cent in 2019.

More than ever, there is an urgent need to address disparities in Lebanon – where nearly 90 per cent of its population lives in urban areas – and to uphold people’s human rights to housing, water, sanitation and other essential services and resources.

UN-Habitat's work focuses on:

- Supporting effective disaster risk mitigation and urban crisis prevention and response through urban upgrading, resilient rehabilitation efforts, supporting risk sensitive land use planning strategies.
- Collecting, monitoring and analysing multisectoral data at city and neighbourhood levels with the involvement of communities to inform needs-based projects and interventions in their respective areas.
- Advocating for the effective adaptation of climate change into development plans by encouraging use of renewable energy, protection of natural resources, habitats and biodiversity and proper solid waste management.
- Improving access to social and basic services (education, health, infrastructure projects in deprived urban areas), as well as public and green spaces to enhance social cohesion.
- Increasing secure access to land, and adequate and affordable housing by supporting the development of national housing strategies, policies and plans that protect housing, land and property rights for all, as well as cultural heritage.
- Supporting the enhancement and uptake of policies and reforms for safe, resilient and sustainable urbanization through technical and administrative capacity-building efforts at the local and subnational levels.

Examples of key achievements (2022-2019):

- 164 building facades and their connections to water and electricity upgraded and neighbouring streets rehabilitated
- 5 public, community, health care centres rehabilitated
- 6 public facilities provided with full renewable energy systems to supply their electricity
- 9 streets fully upgraded
- 125 individual housing units repaired
- 44 full residential buildings rehabilitated
- 19 public spaces rehabilitated and reactivated
- 816 households supported with cash-for-rent assistance

**US\$ 55,885,296**

**37**

Value of Active Projects 2019-2022

Number of Active Projects 2019-2022

- 113 schools assessed for damage
- 1,704- individuals underwent capacity-building activities 1,062 persons involved in cash-for-work activities
- UN-Habitat-ESCWA State of the Lebanese Cities Report 2021
- UN-Habitat Beirut City Profile 2021
- Guide for Mainstreaming Housing in Lebanon's National Urban Policy 2021
- Guide For Mainstreaming Transport & Mobility in Lebanon's National Urban Policy 2021
- Lebanon's National Urban Policy Synthesis Report Intersection of Housing & Transport 2021

## STORY FROM THE FIELD



The “[Beirut housing rehabilitation and cultural and creative industries recovery](#)” – a US\$ 12.75 million grant funded project by the Lebanon Financing Facility, administered by the World Bank – launched in 2022 will allow UN-Habitat to reconstruct valuable housing stock of heritage value and revive critical creative, and cultural sectors through grants, both severely affected by the explosion. At least thirty-one multi-level residential buildings of heritage value will be completely rehabilitated through a build back better approach. In partnership with UNESCO, 150 grants will be provided to support practitioners and entities of cultural and creative industries get back on their feet.

# DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF URBAN RECOVERY PLANS IN KEY LEBANESE CITIES



36 months



US\$ 15,000,000



Agglomeration areas of the cities of Beirut, Tripoli, Zahle, Baalbeck, Saida and Tyre



Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Energy and Water, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Municipalities of targeted cities



Marginalized population within most disadvantaged neighbourhoods of targeted cities

## Purpose

Vulnerable Lebanese and non-Lebanese living in urban areas are bearing the brunt of the multiple and multilevel crises Lebanon is facing. This includes the further deterioration of their socio-economic conditions exacerbated by the financial crisis and collapse of the state. Poverty levels are rising across the country's cities especially in informal areas with more than 80% of the population living in multidimensional poverty.

The purpose of this project is to work with local authorities on the development and implementation of catalytic urban recovery plans within key cities: Beirut, Tripoli, Zahle, Baalbeck, Saida and Tyre. These plans will bring local authorities from different municipalities together to look beyond their administrative boundaries and develop plans that acknowledge the crosscutting nature of these crises and propose an integrated multi-sectoral response with short- and medium-term goals.

Within these plans local actors including authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) will be brought around the table to determine how they can join efforts and resources to respond to increasing needs and challenges. As local governments are the face of the state with their communities, UN-Habitat will work with them on developing these plans to follow a participatory local management and advisory structure that could guide the urban recovery processes while mainstreaming their working modalities and approaches – especially focusing on building their skills and capacities to respond to and manage occurring crises.

## Project Description

Under this project, UN-Habitat will work with UoMs and municipalities on developing multi-sectoral urban recovery plans with short- and medium-term goals that focus on enhancing local planning and various capacities: technical, local economic development, governance, administrative and financial.

In the initial phase of the development of urban recovery plans, city boundaries outside of those administratively imposed will be identified and urban recovery stakeholders, as well as, existing human, institutional and financial resources will be mapped. Following this, prioritized needs and interventions will be identified through consultations within the project's targeted cities and their communities to understand key issues and challenges to be addressed in various sectors: WaSH, infrastructure, housing, local economic development, safety, health and more. UN-Habitat will then work with local authorities on mobilizing resources and creating local management and advisory structures that implement key multi-sectoral interventions through multiple partners.

### **Project Strategy**

The urban recovery planning process for each city will follow an area-based evidence-based approach that is people-centered ensuring that no one is left behind. This will be done by fostering the active direct engagement of local actors and stakeholders including targeted communities through several approaches including participatory scenario planning. Transparency and accountability at the local level will be a key principle of the urban recovery plans from development to implementation. All while working with local authorities and communities to ensure the proper operation, maintenance and sustainability of interventions implemented. and install core unit in-situ. These low-cost modular core housing units can be incrementally expanded if required, providing affordable and durable shelter solutions to returnees, and thereby facilitating their reintegration to and rebuilding of lives in the areas they return to.

### **Main Expected Accomplishments**

- Urban recovery plans are developed and endorsed by local actors and stakeholders including most disadvantaged communities.
- Vulnerable populations residing in most disadvantaged urban areas within main Lebanese cities enjoy improved living conditions through enhanced access to better social and basic services and local economic development opportunities.
- Local actors including public institutions, CSOs, and private sector have gained skills and capacity to plan and work jointly in a participatory and transparent manner for the sake of their communities.
- Achieved outputs are sustained through enhanced skills at the level of municipalities and other concerned actors to operate and maintain implemented projects.

## PROMOTING AN INTEGRATED AND INCLUSIVE AREA-BASED APPROACH IN DISADVANTAGED LEBANESE URBAN NEIGHBOURHOODS



36 months



US\$12,000,000



El-Qobbeh neighbourhood, Sabra neighbourhood, Karm El-Zeytoun neighbourhood



Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Ministry of Social Affairs, Municipalities of targeted cities, UN sister agencies, mainly UNICEF, National/Local NGOs



Vulnerable host and refugee populations within targeted disadvantaged neighbourhoods

### Purpose

The proposed project's overall objective is to enhance the living conditions and build the resilience of vulnerable host and refugee populations, mainly women and youth, residing in most disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods through multisectoral, multilevel integrated interventions. The project is designed in a way to provide multiple enhanced protection, peacebuilding, social, basic and livelihood services, achieved through the implementation of integrated interventions and activities.

### Project Description

The project will revolve around four interlinked outcomes that collectively address the challenges of local development, access to urban services, social cohesion, and gender inequalities in the neighbourhoods.

- Enhance social protection and community safety in the three neighbourhoods through secured access to multiple social integrated services. This will be achieved by establishing a multiservice community centre to provide different social and protection services – mainly targeting women, youth, children, vulnerable Lebanese and refugees. In each neighbourhood, a relevant local NGO will be capacitated to run the centre in coordination with other community-based organizations and structures.
- Ensure that the three neighbourhoods enjoy increased and sustainable access to improved basic urban services. Based on updated neighbourhood profiles (NPs) and on integrated neighbourhood upgrading approaches, specific buildings will be identified for rehabilitation and multisectoral upgrading of infrastructure networks (domestic water, stormwater, wastewater, electricity, roads, sidewalks, etc.). To ensure the better maintenance and longer-term sustainability of these works, several interrelated activities will be implemented to enhance the capacity of local authorities and community systems. From a longer-term

perspective, neighbourhood upgrading strategies will be developed to support local authorities to better plan future urban interventions in their areas.

- Secure a steady increase of the means of income in the targeted neighbourhoods, through enhanced livelihood opportunities and improved local skills. To this end, informal vocational training programmes will be conducted – with a focus on women and youth. At a physical level, selected local markets will be upgraded, enhancing their hygiene, safety and mobility. Building rehabilitation and upgrading works will be undertaken as much as possible through the use of locally produced/available products/ materials and cash-for-work modalities involving community members – with a focus on women and youth. From a longer-term perspective, spatial plans will be developed to enhance the local markets’ functionality, inclusiveness and performance. This will be coupled with capacity-building programmes, on the one hand, for local authorities to manage and maximize markets’ functionality and inclusivity, and on the other, for local producers and small businesses – especially those run by women and youth – to provide better-quality services and products.
- Enhancing the social stability in the neighbourhoods through empowered communities and improved inclusive public and recreational spaces. This will entail rehabilitation and upgrading of public gardens and other spaces, including football fields and sports facilities, so they can be turned into women-, youth- and child-friendly safe spaces for community interaction, social cohesion and inclusion. To sustain achieved outputs, awareness-raising programmes will be conducted, and the capacity of local authorities and actors will be built on inclusive public space design, management and governance.

### **Project Strategy**

The project will adopt a multisectoral and multilevel area-based approach (ABA), or neighbourhood approach, in all its phases. It will address the needs of all residents of defined geographical areas affected by the crises and in need of a multisectoral response, addressing multidimensional vulnerabilities. The project will adopt a humanitarian–development–peacebuilding nexus approach. Short-term activities addressing immediate needs will be complemented with medium- to longer-term interventions, which aim to build the capacity and resilience, and target the systems strengthening, of local authorities and communities and ensure the sustainability and potential scale-up of the project components in a prevention-oriented approach.

### **Main Expected Accomplishments**

- Vulnerable population groups in the targeted neighbourhoods have better access to social and protection services through the creation of multiservice community centres.
- Vulnerable population groups in the targeted neighbourhoods have better access to basic urban services.
- Vulnerable population groups, mainly youth and women, are more widely engaged in economic activities through enhanced vocational and personal skills.
- Access to safe, accessible and women-friendly public markets is improved through physical upgrading and enhanced local products and trades.
- Vulnerable and at-risk population groups have better access to safe, inclusive public spaces, sports and recreational facilities.
- Local authorities have improved capacity to better monitor, coordinate and maintain implemented services, as well as prevent, reduce and respond to shocks.



# FOSTERING CIRCULAR SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN A PILOT RIVER BASIN AREA



36 months



US\$ 5,000,000



One Union of Municipality located on a degraded river basin, to be selected within the project scope based on specific criteria.



Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Economy and Trade, Interior and Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Targeted Union of Municipality (UoM) and registered municipalities within the union, CSOs



Selected UoM, in addition to businesses, industries, agricultural activities and general community within the jurisdiction area covered by the UoM

## Purpose

The project's purpose is to select a UoM located in close proximity to a river basin and undertake a detailed baseline urban profiling exercise to collect data and develop maps with respect to industrial activity, solid waste management, and other relevant indicators with the objectives of 1- informing the development of an integrated solid waste management plan for the union, 2- supporting in the strengthening of local infrastructure for solid waste management, and 3- promoting circular economy opportunities within selected priority solid waste value chains and implementing related pilot projects.

## Project Description

The project will include the following components:

**Component 1:** Selection of a target river basin area, and development of the urban profiling methodology and data collection and analysis tools. The urban profiling will cover households, industrial companies/zones, agricultural farms, and commercial businesses when applicable. This will involve adapting the UN-Habitat urban profiling, city profiling and neighborhood profiling (NP) methodologies while also relying on UNIDO's expertise in industrial mapping.

Based on the urban profiling methodology (e.g., satellite imagery analysis, field assessments, household survey, industrial surveys, key informant interviews, etc.), primary quantitative, qualitative, and mapped data will be collected, processed and analyzed. Data analysis will be structured around several profile content sections divided thematically. Mapped data will be uploaded into a geodatabase that will be used to store georeferenced information, which will then be used to create maps and analyze spatial information for the selected area.

**Component 2:** ISWM plans will be developed for the selected UoM using a participatory approach. This process will be facilitated through the assessment of solid waste generation and management baselines, infrastructure, and common practices of the selected union, a thorough

stakeholder mapping, and the identification of existing collection and treatment processes. The latter will be validated through a series of public workshops with relevant stakeholder. Once finalized, a full feasibility study will be conducted to evaluate the cost efficiency of the proposed technology(ies), land, infrastructure; it will also define the institutional arrangements as well as the roles and responsibilities of the relevant actors.

**Component 3:** Concrete pilot interventions to address priority infrastructural needs and enhance circular economy opportunities within priority solid waste value chains, including:

- Identification and procurement of priority infrastructural needs for the management of municipal waste at each targeted municipality.
- Selection of priority industrial, commercial, and agricultural value chains based on the results of the profiling exercise; and mapping of selected industrial, commercial, and agricultural solid waste value chains.
- Identification of circularity opportunities of solid wastes along and across value chains.
- Conducting workshops to facilitate business linkages, enabling technology cooperation and transfer of innovative solutions.
- Identification of pilot circular solid waste management opportunities
- Feasibility analysis of the identified circular solid waste management opportunities.
- Technology transfer to implement circular solid waste management opportunities.

**Component 4:** Creation of a database capturing the materials inflows and outflows of the prioritized value chains. Digital solutions for the identification of circular business models across value chains can be considered and linking the database to the relevant line ministries and the Central Administration of Statistics. This will be followed by developing a platform capturing all actors in the prioritized value chains.

**Component 5:** Awareness raising activities will be aimed at sensitizing trainees on the benefits of waste diversion. Information regarding the proposed solutions/ pilot projects will also be disclosed to maximize awareness and enhance replication. Capacity-building activities will target the staff at the targeted UoM and its affiliated municipalities who will be trained on the proposed ISWM plan including the identified regulatory and economic instruments that are needed to be able to sustainably implement the plan.

### **Project Strategy**

- Active direct engagement of local actors and stakeholders throughout all project phases
- Participatory planning of interventions
- Implementation of awareness raising and capacity building
- Ensuring proper operation, maintenance, and sustainability of achieved works and outputs
- Robust project performance monitoring and evaluation processes

### **Main Expected Accomplishments**

The project will enhance solid waste management within the jurisdiction area of a UoM located on a degraded river basin of Lebanon. This will contribute to:

- The reduction of random solid waste disposal in rivers, sea, and lands,
- The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from haphazard burning of solid wastes, and
- The improvement in livelihood conditions through the creation of economic opportunities from the circular solid waste management solutions which will be provided in the pilot river basin area.