

# A Road Map Towards a Socioeconomic Development Plan for the Union of Municipalities of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, Mount Lebanon Governorate

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الجمهورية اللبنانية  
وزارة الشؤون الاجتماعية

In partnership with the  
Ministry of Social Affairs



UN-HABITAT



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# A Road Map Towards a Socioeconomic Development Plan for the Union of Municipalities of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, Mount Lebanon Governorate

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## Credits and acknowledgements

This booklet, which outlines strategic directions for the local socioeconomic development of the Union of Municipalities (UoM) of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, was made possible with the generous funding support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), within the scope of the project "Improving Planning Capacities for Social and Economic Local Development" implemented between 2018 and 2023 by the UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs.

UN-Habitat extends its gratitude to all individuals who participated in and contributed to the preparation and development of this booklet.

UN-Habitat gratefully acknowledges the collaboration of the Minister of Social Affairs and his team, thanking them for their support and close coordination in the field with social development centres (SDCs).

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## Foreword by the Ministry of Social Affairs

The continuous fluctuations in the economic landscape in Lebanon have necessitated governmental institutions to rethink the forgoing socioeconomic model, which is based on the philosophy of rapid and temporary crisis response. With the increased pressing needs for social protection, aid and development, this obligates us to work towards meeting the expectations and the needs of the community relying on clear and prudent strategic planning that is realistically aligned with the available resources.

The Ministry of Social Affairs holds the responsibility and commitment of conducting developmental activities at all levels through its social developmental centres (SDCs). The ministry works in close coordination with international organizations, the local community, and local authorities.

Consequently, we seek the engagement and the involvement of relevant parties in our plans and our implementation procedures with the aim to jointly measure, evaluate and report on the performance of the ministry. This confirms our commitment to social responsibility, which contributes to achieving social stability and development.

Hence, we hereby share this booklet with you to present the analysis of data collected – and subsequently validated – with the participation of local stakeholders through different tools, including a survey with municipalities and a series of interviews and focus group discussions. The expected outcome of this exercise is to improve the socioeconomic conditions of communities and those concerned within the specified economic sectors in targeted municipalities and unions of municipalities. This will contribute to securing employment, job opportunities, skills development, and an enabling environment for entrepreneurial activities. This shall be undertaken through proper municipal planning developed in partnership with the SDCs and through the pursuit of possible funding for the implementation of such projects, yet ensuring the collaboration between the Ministry of Social Affairs, civil society organizations, and municipal councils.

**Dr. Hector Al-Hajjar**  
Minister of Social Affairs

## Foreword by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation

Knowing and analysing the resources and the challenges of the territory, planning in a participatory manner among public and private sectors and civil society organizations, designing sectorial strategies at local level where local and national level stakeholders are involved and prioritizing the interventions are a milestone before any intervention.

While this booklet is produced, Lebanon is facing one of the most severe economic and social crises: responding to individual needs is crucial, yet introducing reforms based on shared and agreed strategies is fundamental to ensure sustainability avoiding continuous adaption to emergencies.

In this context, the socio-economic focus given in developing the road map of the 10 Unions of Municipalities is really relevant. The adopted approach has enhanced the dialogue among the Unions of Municipalities, the Municipalities, the Social Development Centres of the Ministry Social of Affairs, the Lebanese Non-Governmental Organisations and stakeholders of the private sector.

The road map is the first step of a process towards interventions to be realised in the short-term and others bridging with long-terms strategies, whilst strengthening, orienting, and reforming the existing national systems.

The Italian Cooperation appreciates the role of the Ministry of Social Affairs in facilitating the process in collaboration with UN-Habitat. Italy has a longstanding cooperation with the Ministry in supporting the local development and welfare system for the provision of social services.

Italy looks forward to witnessing the continuity of the undertaken initiative through the concrete actions towards a local economic development.

**Ms. Alessandra Piermattei**  
Head of Office AICS Beirut

## Foreword by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in Lebanon

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is pleased to collaborate with the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation to present a series of booklets that endeavours to capture the strategic directions of 10 unions of municipalities (UoMs) across Lebanon towards future socioeconomic development action planning. The directions, identified by the UoMs and local stakeholders themselves, through a bottom-up participatory approach, aim to point towards future potential socioeconomic action planning that can both mitigate and set a long-term vision for the response and recovery efforts to address the nationwide socioeconomic crisis at local levels.

At the time of writing, Lebanon continues to face numerous and deep protracted socioeconomic challenges; UoMs and municipalities are at the receiving end of their impact and equally at the forefront of a local response. These booklets compile an evidence base, as identified, and prioritized by UoMs, pointing towards the longer-term need to develop full-fledged socioeconomic action plans that target the needs of their communities across the sectors of health, education, agriculture, infrastructure, among others.

Each booklet provides findings and analyses undertaken by the local teams working at the level of each UoM related to the socioeconomic conditions of each UoM. The data and findings of the booklets were collected through a participatory approach, involving a variety of stakeholders, including the UoMs, municipalities, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, and the Ministry of Social Affairs' social development centres (SDCs).

The booklets identify the socioeconomic strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of each UoM, and provide a baseline that can be used to guide further resource investment by UoMs, municipalities and external stakeholders. Culminating with a series of recommendations for each UoM, the booklets provide insight into which specific sectors UoMs should focus on advancing, based on pre-existing efforts made, availability of natural resources, and feasibility. If adopted, these recommendations could help lead to enhanced basic and social service provision, increased livelihood opportunities, and ultimately promote local socioeconomic development and community well-being.

UN-Habitat hopes that these booklets will be a valuable resource for UoMs as they develop and implement future socioeconomic action plans to improve the lives of their communities.

**Taina Christiansen**  
Head of UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

<b>AICS</b>	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
<b>CNRS-L</b>	National Council for Scientific Research in Lebanon
<b>DEM</b>	Digital elevation model
<b>EDL</b>	Électricité du Liban
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic information system
<b>MoSA</b>	Ministry of Social Affairs
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>SDC</b>	Social development centre
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
<b>ToT</b>	Training of trainers
<b>UN-Habitat</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UoM</b>	Union of municipalities

## Executive summary

The preparation of this booklet, which outlines strategic directions of the Union of Municipalities (UoM) of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali in Mount Lebanon Governorate towards future socioeconomic development action planning, was undertaken as part of a series of booklets prepared within the scope of the project **“Improving Planning Capacities for Social and Economic Local Development.”** The project was implemented between 2018 and 2023 by the UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS).

The analysis and recommendations included in this booklet are a result of several meetings, interviews, focus group discussions and brainstorming sessions conducted by the project team, which was composed of representatives of social development centres (SDCs) and UoMs, in addition to a UN-Habitat team.

With the support of a local field team – also composed of representatives of SDCs, UoMs and UN-Habitat – that was involved in data collection, the project team collected and analysed data through fieldwork, which included consultative meetings and technical sessions with all relevant groups: stakeholders, experts, local activists, and individuals from various segments of the local community. The stages of data collection and validation at the local level involved collection of information about the municipalities; conducting consultative meetings, interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders and representatives of local communities, analysing the collected data through a participatory rapid appraisal approach that defined the status of different sectors, and finally, the representatives of SDCs and UoMs proposing recommendations for specific sectors to help improve the socioeconomic situation in each UoM.

In the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, the consultations showed that the basic and social services are becoming weak due to the ongoing socioeconomic and financial crisis, and most of the sectors have been impacted in a way that the local authorities are not able to operate or to maintain effectively. To be able to improve the socioeconomic situation in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, local stakeholders recommended to focus on the agriculture and industry sectors. This was translated into strategic directions and a proposed road map for each of these sectors aimed at providing a vision for future action planning and interventions.

## Project overview

### Project objectives

The AICS-funded project as part of which this booklet was developed aimed to enhance the socioeconomic development conditions of local communities through strengthening the planning capacities at the level of unions of municipalities (UoMs) and municipalities, and by promoting collaboration between social development centres (SDCs) (affiliated to the Ministry of Social Affairs [MoSA]), local authorities and civil society organizations.

The scope of the project was adapted to meet the emerging needs of the country, to respond to the evolving socioeconomic, financial, and political crises crippling the country since 2019. To this end, the project’s focus shifted from the initial objective of developing full-fledged strategic plans covering all sectors for the targeted UoMs to highlighting mainly strategic directions in some key sectors that can contribute to future local socioeconomic development.

### Geographical coverage

- Out of a total of 60 UoMs across all governorates of Lebanon that were invited to partake in the project, 38 responded and expressed initial interest in engaging in subsequent stages of the project to identify strategic directions for their future local socioeconomic development.
- Out of the 38 UoMs, 10 were eventually selected to identify strategic socioeconomic development directions, based on a number of criteria (See “Methodology” section below).

### Beneficiaries

- Local communities, including men, women, elderly, youth, children, and people with disabilities
- UoMs
- SDCs
- Civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

## Methodology

The aim of the series of booklets produced for the 10 targeted UoMs, which this booklet is a part of, is to analyse the local conditions of these unions and study the sectors and services that are essential components within them. These booklets provide a practical framework for taking future steps towards achieving sustainable and balanced development. Thus, the booklet series is the compilation of data and analysis about needs, gaps and challenges identified by the UoMs and other relevant local stakeholders, as well as recommendations that they have outlined to inform strategic socioeconomic development directions for their respective unions. Therefore, the booklets can serve as tools for decision-makers at both the local and national levels, as well as for development agencies to build upon when preparing their national and local programmes and policies. They were hence developed as part of the system-strengthening process of the project for UoMs to start the journey of enhancing their local socioeconomic development planning. The booklets do not intend to present full-fledged

### Expected outcomes

- Identification of strategic socioeconomic needs and directions for local communities, led by their respective selected UoMs, SDCs and stakeholders active at the local level, to provide a bottom-up evidence base about their socioeconomic status and development opportunities.<sup>1</sup>
- Dissemination of the produced evidence base to inform potential projects and secure further investment for their implementation by various internal and external stakeholders.

### Timeframe

The project was implemented from 2018 to 2023, during which it was put on hold multiple times during the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent socioeconomic crisis.

<sup>1</sup> As explained in the “Methodology” section below, the project did not aim to produce fully fledged socioeconomic action plans. The booklets developed to summarize the produced evidence base aim to lay the foundation for the future development of such detailed action plans by respective authorities or interested stakeholders.

strategic socioeconomic action plans; rather they outline the foundational elements and entry points upon which it is hoped that relevant stakeholders can continue building upon to support in future local socioeconomic development action planning efforts.

In consultation with AICS and MoSA coordinators, it was agreed to have the assessment of the UoMs focusing especially on the main productive sectors in each UoM. Hence, each of the booklets includes a general description of the state of basic and social services – the latter focusing on health, education and culture/public spaces – within the respective UoM, in addition to some recommendations for improvement of these services. For the productive sectors, each booklet includes a more detailed analysis of the state of the two sectors that were identified as key for the future local socioeconomic development of the respective UoM, in addition to more detailed recommendations and a proposed road map, based on the data collected and analysed during the field activities and in consultation with local stakeholders.

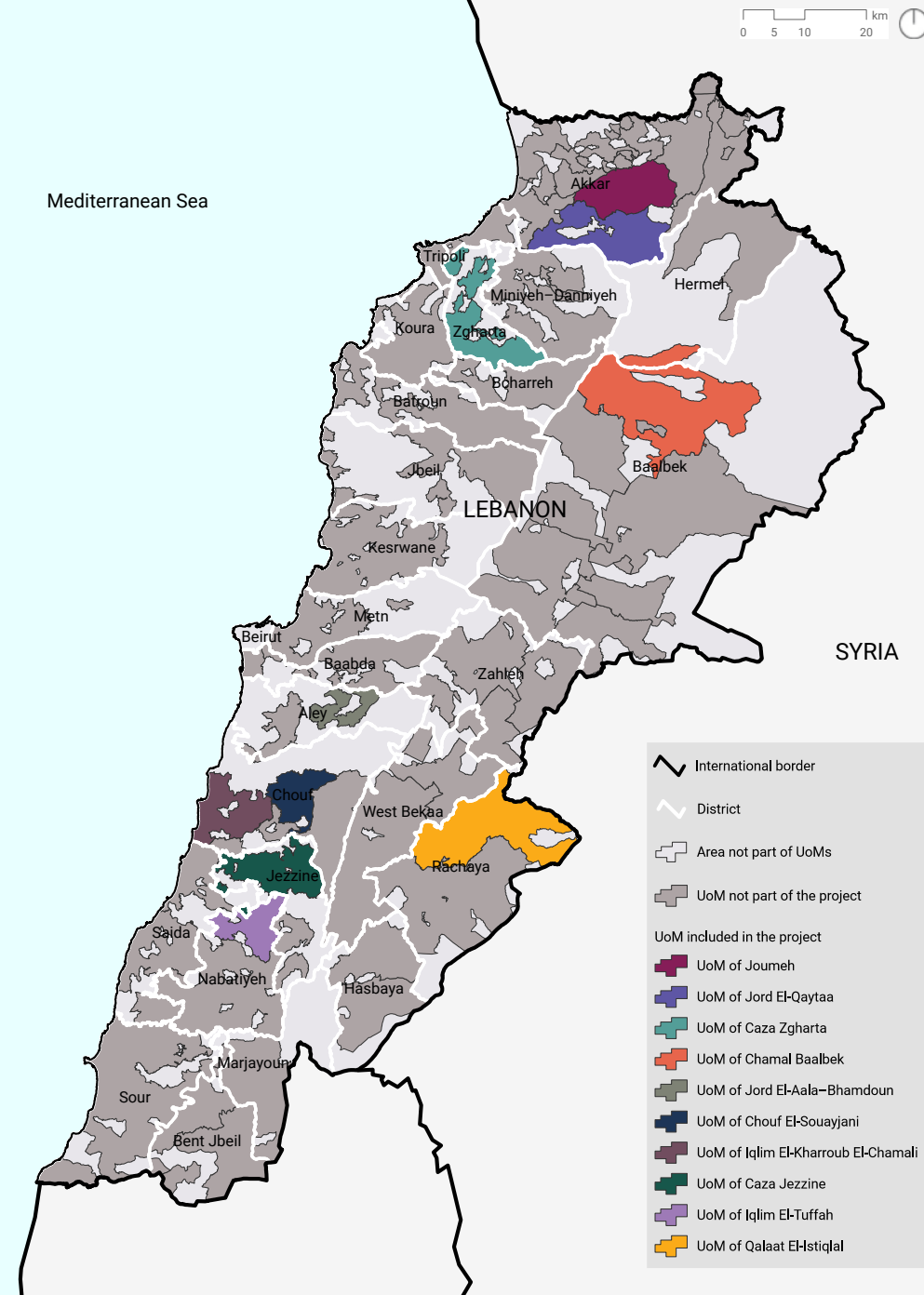
The assessment and analysis on socioeconomic development issues conducted to develop this booklet series adopted a participatory approach that focused on actively involving local stakeholders in the respective UoMs. Thus, most of the figures presented in the booklets were derived or estimated through data collected and analysed participatively with and by local stakeholders in the UoMs. This bottom-up evidence production process endeavoured to impart local knowledge for the purpose of obtaining an initial baseline regarding certain socioeconomic development matters for the respective UoM. More in-depth assessments will need to be undertaken in the future to further detail and elaborate on the data collected and analysed for the purposes of this booklet series. In line with this participatory approach, the methodology that was used to develop these booklets included the following components and steps:

**Selection of UoMs**

1. Representatives of all 60 UoMs in Lebanon were invited to an initial project introductory meeting. Out of the 60, representatives from 54 UoMs attended this meeting, which was held remotely through Microsoft Teams, as initial project mobilization took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Out of these 54 UoMs, 38 submitted “Expressions of Interest” to participate in the subsequent steps of the project. These expressions included the submission of general information about the UoMs and a mapping of existing strategic and/or action plans.
3. Out of the 38 UoMs, 21 were excluded because they had existing relevant plans and programmes supported by various international entities and donors. Out of the remaining 17 UoMs, 10 were eventually selected to develop booklets outlining strategic directions for their future local socioeconomic development, based on a number of criteria, including population density, high number of Syrian refugees, high levels of poverty, low value of annual municipal budgets, and limited or no previous financial support from donors. Having UoMs represented from across all Lebanese governorates was also a criterion of selection. The 10 targeted UoMs include:

Akkar Governorate	North Governorate	Mount Lebanon Governorate	Bekaa Governorate	Baalbek-Hermel Governorate	South Governorate	Nabatiyeh Governorate
Joumeh	Caza Zgharta	Jord El-Aala –Bhamdoun	Qalaat El-Istiqlal	Chamal Baalbek	Caza Jezzine	Iqlim El-Tuffah
Jord El-Qaytaa		Chouf El-Souayjani				
		Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali				

**Table 1.** 10 UoMs selected under this project.



**Figure 1.** Location of 10 UoMs selected under this project. Source: UN-Habitat (2023).

2 This information was collected mainly through the information sheets that UoMs had previously submitted as part of the “Expression of Interest” phase explained above. Some information – mainly related to other financial support from donors – was also based on the knowledge of UN-Habitat area coordinators, as part of their regular work with UoMs.



## Preparation and training

1. A project coordination team – consisting of 7 SDC coordinators designated by MoSA,<sup>3</sup> 11 representatives<sup>4</sup> from 10 UoMs, and 8 UN-Habitat staff members – was established to lead, implement, and monitor project activities and progress (Figure 2).
2. Besides the project coordination team, 10 field teams were established for each of the 10 UoMs, consisting of 10–12 individuals representing municipalities, associations, organizations, cooperatives, clubs, and educational establishments active in their respective UoM (Figure 2). Their role was to assist in collecting information related to each municipality within their respective UoM, participate in extensive consultations, and in general guide and support field-based activities.
3. A detailed training curriculum on life and technical skills was developed by UN-Habitat to conduct workshops for the project coordination team at UoM level (representatives of participating UoMs/municipalities, SDCs and UN-Habitat). In addition, survey questionnaires and templates were developed in Arabic for data collection.
4. Based on the developed training curriculum, the following workshops were conducted between 2019 and 2023:
  - One workshop was conducted to develop the soft skills of the members of the project coordination team, including on communication techniques, community mobilization approaches, meeting moderation techniques, and public speaking techniques. This included the use of a broad range of communication tools, tips and guidelines.
  - One workshop was conducted to develop the planning capacity of the members of the project coordination team, in terms of developing and rolling out the participatory field assessments, including on constituting a representative field team, undertaking stakeholder mapping exercises, etc. Participants were trained on the use of tools and templates, including different diagrams, to outline the criteria for the creation of field teams, and their respective roles.
  - Four workshops were conducted to develop the capacity of the members of the project coordination team through regular coaching and training of trainers (ToT). Topics included the following: initiating and maintaining contacts with local community stakeholders, undertaking primary and secondary data collection, documenting key gathered information and data, and carrying out data analysis. During these workshops, multiple tools were developed together with the field teams, including, among others: a municipal survey questionnaire; field assessment checklists; forms to record field observations and remarks; protocols and guidance for conducting focus group discussions and key informant interviews; problem tree analysis tool; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, etc.
  - Ten workshops were conducted to develop the capacity of field teams to use templates and tools to help facilitate the local stakeholders in their respective UoM to set the UoM's vision, identify its strategic directions, and prepare road maps for prioritized strategic directions and sectors for the UoM to focus on.



<sup>3</sup> Representing each of the seven governorates covered by the project.

<sup>4</sup> All UoMs nominated one representative for the project, except for Jord El-Qaytaa UoM, which nominated two representatives as focal points at the request of the union's president.

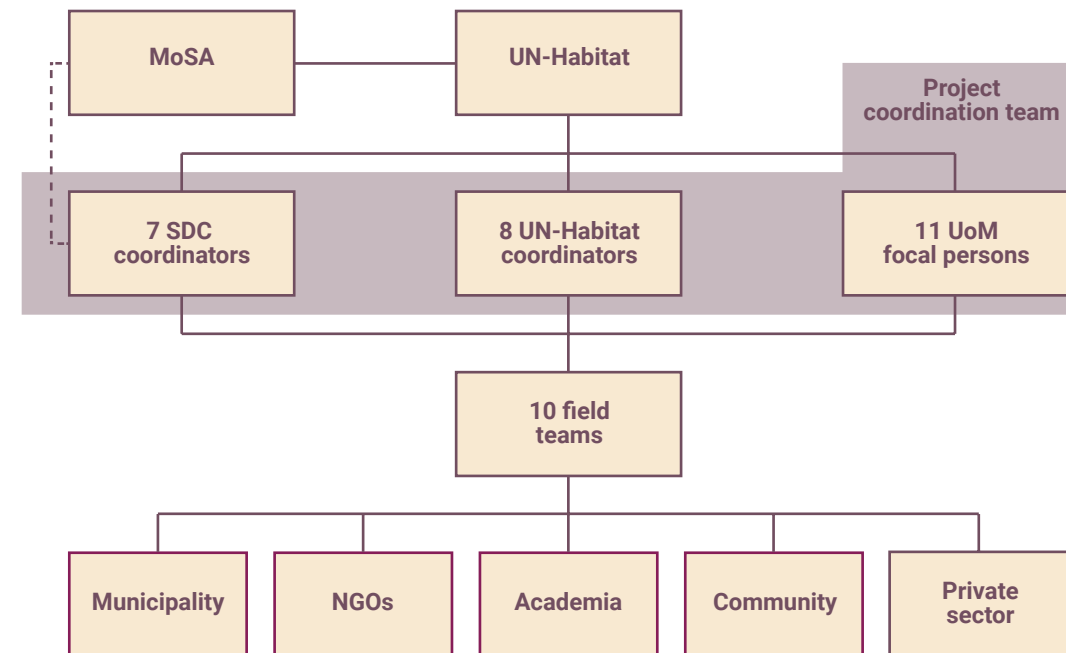


Figure 2. Stakeholders involved in the development of booklets as part of the project.

## Data collection, analysis and validation

1. Following the workshops, survey questionnaires were filled with each of the 142 municipalities that are part of the 10 targeted UoMs. The surveys aimed to gather general information about municipalities under the 10 UoMs (e.g. population, resources, projects).
2. After filling the surveys, the project team conducted 52 focus group discussions, 61 consultative sessions, and 20 individual meetings with UoM presidents. The purpose of these activities was to collect additional data from different relevant stakeholders and to discuss the situation and challenges of different sectors in the UoMs.
3. Following data collection, the project coordination team met several times to analyse the general local context as well as the services and sectors of each UoM, using the participatory rapid appraisal methodology.<sup>5</sup> Strategic directions were thus formulated to support and enhance the socioeconomic status of the union. Additionally, strengths, weaknesses and available opportunities within all sectors were assessed. Depending on the existing resources and opportunities within each UoM, specific sectors were identified in each UoM, for which clear future directions were defined.
4. With regard to maps included in the booklets, the UN-Habitat Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team supported in the production of a set of general maps for each of the booklets to depict the context, topography and land cover/land use of each UoM. The GIS team also updated the boundaries of the UoMs based on their municipal composition. This was done based on available data from the survey with municipalities, open sources, and other relevant secondary data sources.

Based on the data collected and analysed, a booklet was produced for each of the 10 UoMs, including identified and proposed strategic directions and priority interventions. Thus, 10 UoMs successfully participated in the entire process, resulting in supporting and enhancing their capacities in setting strategic directions focused on socioeconomic needs, with a view to identify evidence-based entry points to enhance the socioeconomic conditions of mainly vulnerable areas affected by the multiple crises.

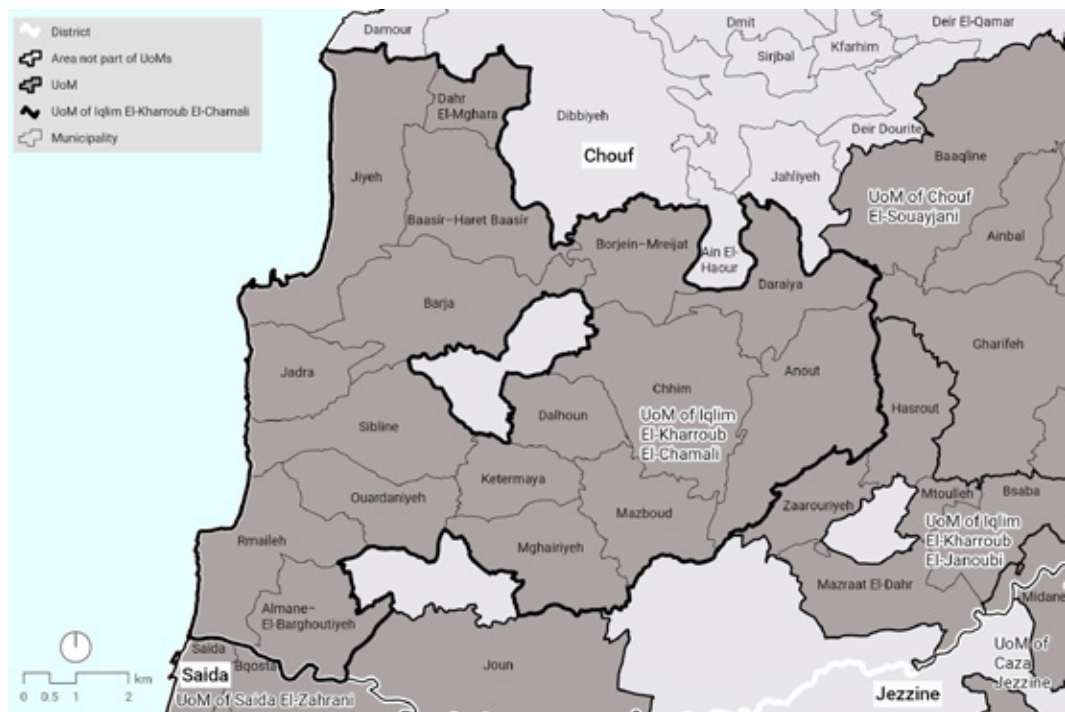
<sup>5</sup> Participatory rapid appraisal is a learning process that empowers people to conduct their own analysis to create the information base they need for participatory planning and action.

# Overview of the Union of Municipalities (UoM) of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali

## Geographical location and land cover/land use

Located in Chouf District of Mount Lebanon Governorate, the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali consists of 17 municipalities (Figure 3). The size of the municipal councils of the 17 municipalities varies; some have 9 members (Sibline, Dahr El-Mghara, Almane-

El-Barghoutiyeh and Jadra), others have 12 members (Mazboud, Anout, Rmaileh, Ouardaniyeh, Dalhoun, Baasir-Haret Baasir, Borjein-Mreijat and Mghairiyeh), and others have 15 members (Jiyeh, Ketermaya and Daraiya), while Chhim and Barja have 18 members.

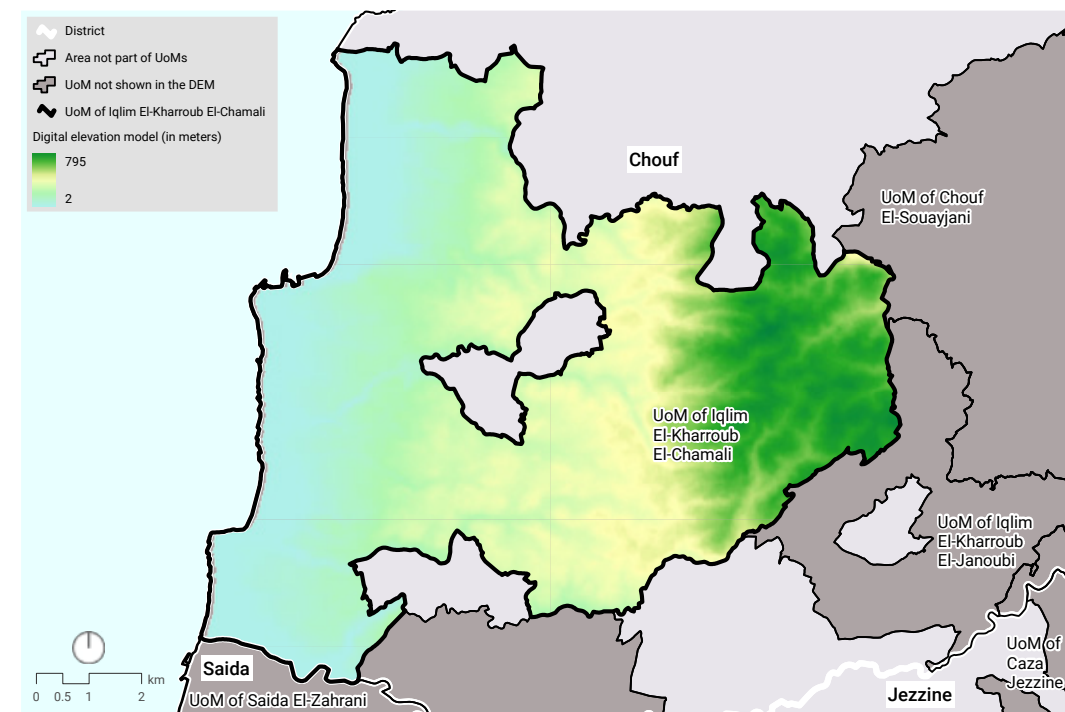


**Figure 3.** UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali with its municipalities.

Source: The boundaries of the UoMs based on their municipal composition were updated by the UN-Habitat GIS team, based on available data from the survey with the municipalities, open sources, and other relevant secondary data sources.

The total area of the UoM is approximately 85.56 square kilometres, and its elevation varies from around 2 metres above sea level in Jiyeh and Rmaileh to around 795 metres at the highest point in Daraiya and Anout (Figure 4). The UoM

is bordered to the north by Saadiyat, extending down to Damour, Khaldeh, and ultimately Beirut; to the south by Saida; to the east by Hasrou, Gharifeh, and Mount Chouf; and to the west by the Mediterranean Sea.



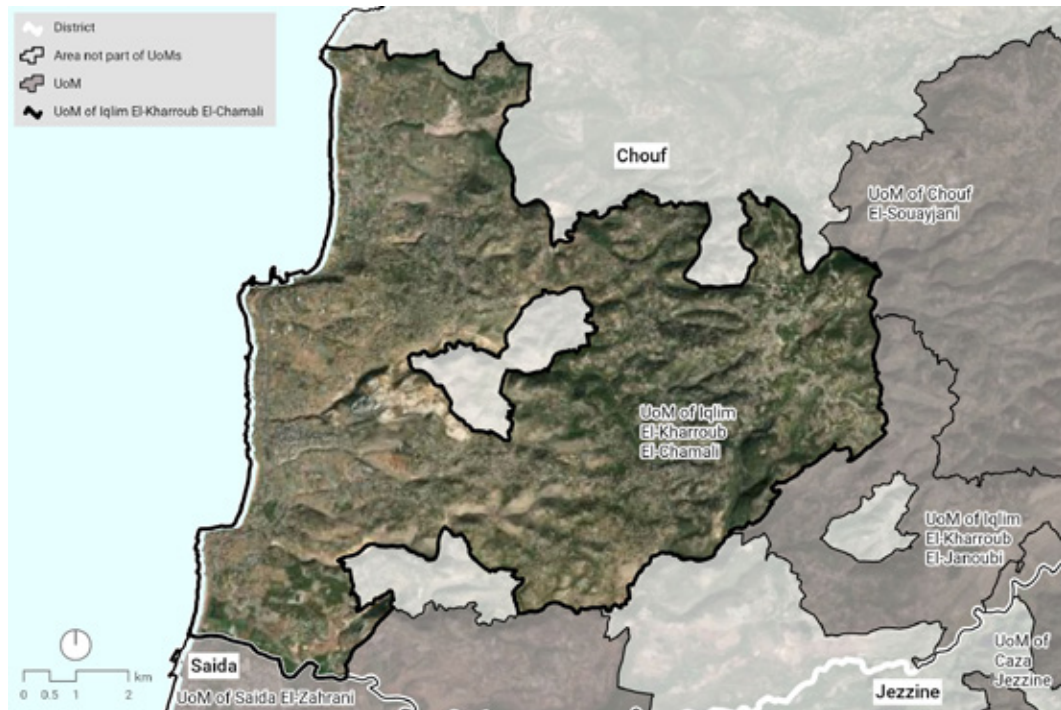
**Figure 4.** Digital elevation model (in metres) for the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali.

Source: Digital elevation model (DEM) taken from the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer (ASTER) Global Digital Elevation Model Version 3 (GDEM V3), with a spatial resolution of 30 metres, downloaded from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) website (<https://lpdaac.usgs.gov/products/astgtmv003/>).

The headquarters of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali is located in the town of Mazboud, within the Chouf District. The UoM possesses a distinctive geographic location, serving as a strategic midpoint between mountainous and coastal areas, and it can be accessed through multiple routes. Having both mountainous

and coastal traits, the UoM could benefit from climatic and economic diversity. Additionally, the UoM comprises a substantial workforce across various roles and positions within the public sector, not only at the district and governorate levels but also at the national level.

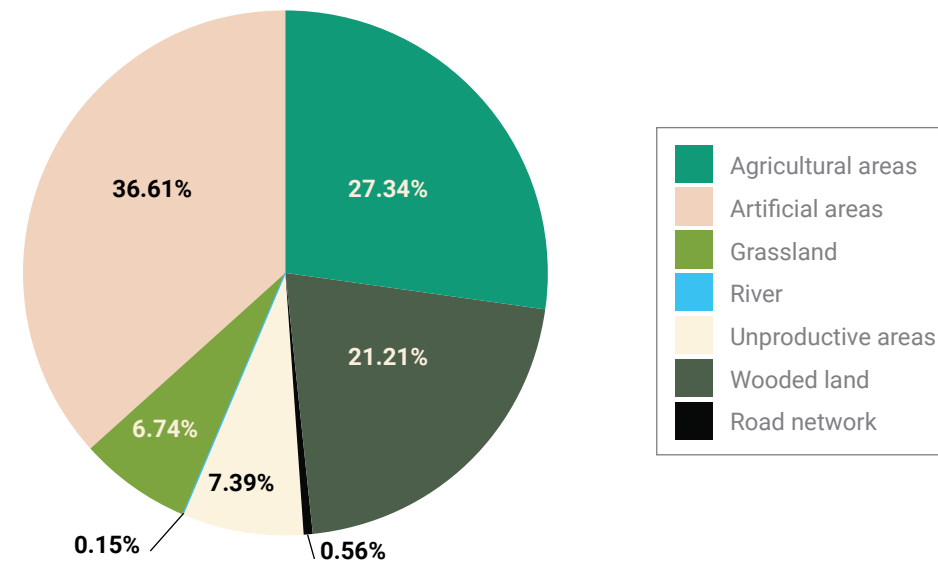




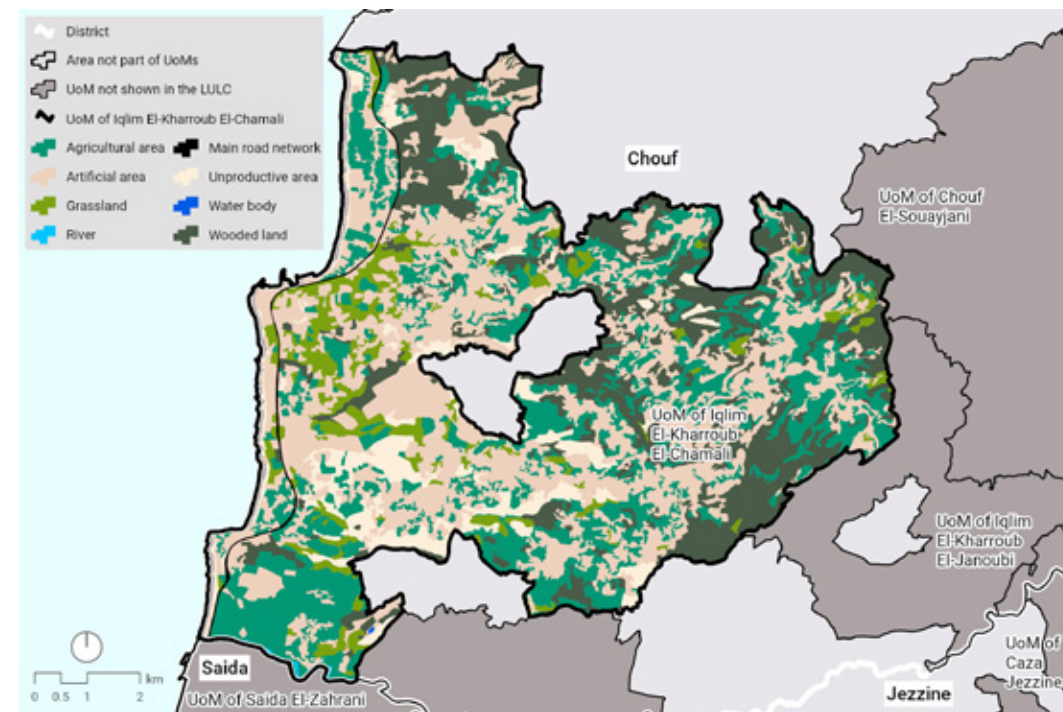
**Figure 5.** Satellite image of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali. Source: The high-resolution satellite image displayed in this map was extracted from Esri online World Imagery.

Artificial areas within the UoM account for 36.61 per cent (30.85 km<sup>2</sup>) of the total area, while agricultural areas span 27.34 per cent (23.04 km<sup>2</sup>) and wooded lands cover 21.21 per cent (17.87 km<sup>2</sup>). Unproductive areas (unused plots) make up 7.39 per cent (6.23 km<sup>2</sup>), grassland 6.74 per cent (5.68 km<sup>2</sup>), road network 0.56 per cent (0.48 km<sup>2</sup>) and rivers 0.15 per cent (0.12 km<sup>2</sup>) of the UoM's area (Figures 6 and 7).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The figures are based on the land cover/land use classification system level 1, calculated by the National Center for Remote Sensing in the National Council for Scientific Research in Lebanon (CNRS-L) in 2017. According to that classification, the category "artificial areas" includes urban areas (urban fabric), activity areas (industrial or commercial area, port area, airport), non-built-up areas (dumpsites, landfills, urban extension and/or construction site, urban vacant land), and artificial, non-agricultural vegetated areas (green urban area, and sports and leisure facilities). "Agricultural areas" include field crops, permanent crops, intensive agriculture, and agricultural units. "Wooded land" includes dense wooded land, clear wooded land, scrubland, and burned wooded land. "Grassland" includes both dense and clear grassland. "Unproductive areas" include bare rocks, bare soils, beaches, and dunes.



**Figure 6.** Land cover/land use as a percentage of the total area of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali. Source: Calculation made by UN-Habitat (2023) based on the Land Cover/Land Use Map of Lebanon, scale 1:20000, Classification System Level 1, National Center for Remote Sensing, CNRS-L (2017).

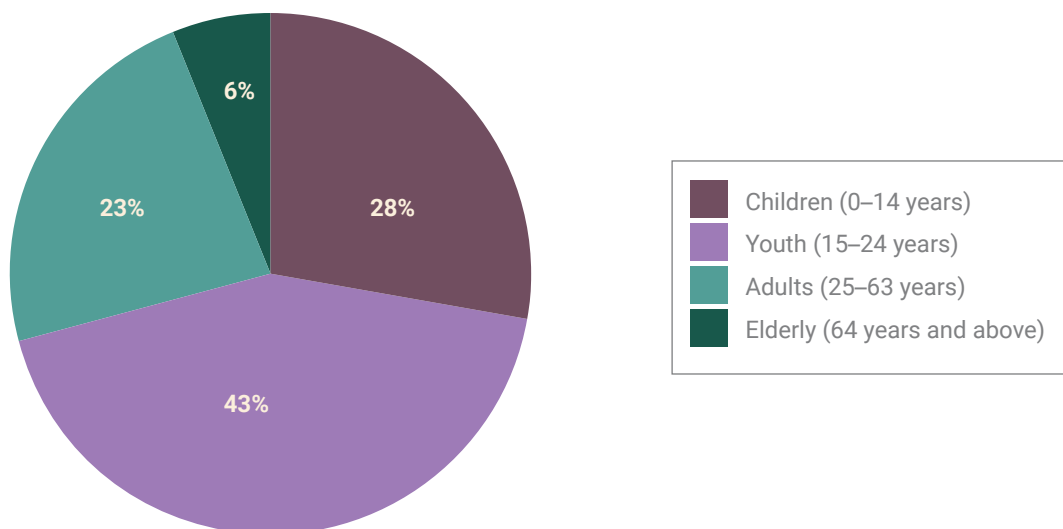


**Figure 7.** Land cover/land use within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali. Source: UN-Habitat (2023), adapted from Land Cover/Land Use Map of Lebanon, scale 1:20000, Classification System Level 1, National Center for Remote Sensing, CNRS-L (2017).

## Population overview

The total population of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali is approximately 230,000, with non-Lebanese (mostly Syrian and Palestinian refugees) constituting around 30 per cent, according to surveys conducted with the 17 municipalities of the union. With regard to refugees, there is one Palestinian refugee gathering in Sibline and two informal tented settlements for Syrian refugees in Anout and Ketermaya.

The population of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali is characterized by a relatively high percentage of children and youth, accounting for over 70 per cent of the total population, according to the survey filled by the municipalities' mayors (Figure 8).



**Figure 8.** Distribution of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali's population by age.

Source: Survey conducted with municipalities.

Approximately 4.5 per cent of the registered population in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali live outside of Lebanon – in Australia, the Gulf countries, Africa and elsewhere – according to the survey conducted with the

17 municipalities of the union. The emigration waves started at the onset of the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990), approximately 40 years ago, and have continued due to subsequent security events and crises up to the present day.

## Basic services: Current state and recommendations for improvement

The state of basic services in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali is considered acceptable, as all services are available, although to varying degrees among sectors and municipalities. Like the rest of Lebanon, the quality and quantity of basic services have deteriorated due to the ongoing socioeconomic and financial crisis, affecting service provision and maintenance, due to the lack of the ability of local authorities to cover operational and maintenance costs.

### Water

The water sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali faces significant challenges, particularly during the summer season when water shortages become pronounced. These challenges arise from a combination of factors, including restricted daily pumping hours, uneven distribution of water among various municipalities in the UoM, and unauthorized encroachments on water sources without adequate oversight. As a consequence, the UoM struggles to meet the growing water demands of its population, which, in turn, has negative repercussions on their daily lives and economic activities. The UoM primarily relies on available water sources from the Barouk Water Authority and privately owned artesian wells. The Barouk Water Authority is responsible for managing and maintaining the UoM's water networks, which suffer from a lack of maintenance.

Within this context, the local stakeholders who were engaged in the assessment and analysis process that informed the production of this booklet recommended to adopt a multifaceted approach. Firstly, they suggested that extending the daily water pumping hours is essential to meet the demands of both residents and institutions. Ensuring a consistent supply of electricity and fuel when required is paramount in securing a stable water supply. Additionally, they identified an urgent need for ongoing rehabilitation and maintenance of water networks, coupled with measures to combat encroachments and rectify the unequal distribution of water across municipalities.

### Roads and transportation

The majority of the roads, including secondary ones, in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali are in a state of disrepair, necessitating maintenance and rehabilitation efforts, according to mayors, the Aley SDC coordinator and other stakeholders who were consulted with as part of the project. Notably, most of the main and subsidiary roads in the UoM lack basic road safety infrastructure, including public lighting, traffic signs, speed limits, and reflective guardrails. The poor condition of these roads has negative ramifications across various sectors in the UoM, contributing to an increased occurrence of traffic accidents and posing risks to the safety of both drivers and pedestrians. Despite these challenges, commuting between the municipalities within the union remains generally efficient. Residents can move between different municipalities with ease, encountering minimal accessibility obstacles. Regarding public transportation, it remains largely unavailable in the UoM, leading residents to heavily rely on private vehicles for their transportation needs.

To respond to some of these challenges, local stakeholders engaged in this project suggested large-scale road rehabilitation, repaving, and the implementation of traffic safety measures. Furthermore, maintenance of existing street lighting networks and the installation of new street lighting systems powered by alternative energy sources were considered essential steps in improving road conditions and ensuring safety.

## Buildings and facilities

The state of buildings and infrastructure within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali is characterized by significant similarities among its constituent towns. Notably, residential buildings in this UoM predominantly consist of up to three floors, and the use of roof tiles in these structures is relatively uncommon. Most residential properties in the area are distinguished by their expansive green spaces, creating a pleasant and comfortable environment for residents.

Non-residential buildings and facilities primarily comprise small shops situated on the ground floors of buildings. These establishments cater to commercial, industrial and service-oriented activities, collectively serving the needs of the local population.

In terms of housing tenure types, approximately 85 per cent of residential units in the UoM are privately owned, while the remaining 15 per cent are rented, according to the consultations conducted with relevant stakeholders. This reflects the inclination of the majority of residents towards homeownership, with a smaller portion choosing to rent their dwellings. Similar to other regions in Lebanon, there are legal violations in construction and encroachments on public properties within the area.

In this context, the local stakeholders who participated in the project recommended to adopt proper urban planning practices and a unified approach regarding building specifications among the municipalities of the UoM.

## Electricity

Within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, the state of public electricity networks is considered fair, requiring maintenance and restoration, according to consultations with relevant stakeholders. Based on information collected through the survey conducted with the municipalities, the UoM is home to three power plants, which are not operating efficiently and do not supply sufficient electrical power to the area. Currently, residents heavily rely on

private generators and alternative energy sources to meet their electricity needs. The responsibility for operating and maintaining public electricity networks falls under the jurisdiction of the Electricité du Liban (EDL), while private generators are managed by their respective owners. The UoM grapples with persistent power outages, escalating costs associated with private generator subscriptions, and elevated fuel prices required for the operation of these generators.

Therefore, to empower municipalities to contribute to local economic and social development, local stakeholders who participated in the project considered it essential to promote and implement sustainable renewable energy projects in order to provide a long-term solution for the energy shortages.

## Sanitation and solid waste management

According to a consultation session with relevant local stakeholders, some municipalities in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali have sewage networks in place, although they require full connection with the primary network located in the town of Jiyeh. Conversely, other towns lack such sewage networks altogether. The main network in Jiyeh is also in need of urgent rehabilitation due to aging infrastructure and increased capacity demands arising from population growth. Towns without sewage networks rely on septic tanks for the disposal of wastewater. This challenging situation has adverse effects on various sectors, including groundwater contamination and its resultant health and environmental consequences, soil pollution, agricultural production, etc.

With regard to solid waste management, the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali adheres to a waste management system implemented in collaboration with a private company, City Blue. The adopted mechanism involves the daily collection and processing of waste by the private firm, with the company's fees being directly deducted from municipal budgets through the Independent Municipal Fund.

Notably, there is currently a lack of waste sorting facilities in the UoM. Key issues affecting waste management in the union include the absence of sorting from source practices.

To improve the sanitation situation, the local stakeholders who participated in the project proposed the completion of sewage network installations across the territory of the UoM, rehabilitation of existing sewage networks, connection to the primary station in Jiyeh, augmentation of the sewage network's capacity, and alignment with the UoM's evolving sewage network needs. Regular monitoring of well water quality and remedial measures to combat pollution are also vital to safeguard the well-being of residents and the environment.

Regarding the solid waste management situation, the local stakeholders recommended to develop a sustainable waste management plan, involving local communities in its implementation, which is essential to address these challenges effectively.

## Telecommunications

The condition of the telecommunications infrastructure in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali falls short of desired standards, primarily due to the subpar quality of services and fuel shortages affecting operations.

Consequently, there is a pressing need for maintenance, restoration and enhancements to improve service quality in this sector. However, municipalities and UoMs have no control on this sector, which is run by the central government through the Ministry of Telecommunications.



## Social services: Current state and recommendations for improvement

### Health care

There are 16 health-care institutions that provide a range of health-care services within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, according to the survey conducted with the municipalities. These institutions consist of both governmental and private entities and offer services, such as medical examinations, health education, and medication. The cost of these health-care services varies from one institution to another. The management and maintenance of governmental health-care facilities are the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Social Affairs. In the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, there is a government hospital located in Sibline, a private hospital in Mazboud, and another government health-care facility in Chhim that functions as a small clinic. Additionally, several towns have clinics administered and maintained by various local associations. Access to these health-care institutions is relatively easy for all residents in the UoM. However, the health-care sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali faces several challenges, particularly given the current economic conditions in the country. These challenges include shortages of medications and medical equipment, along with frequent power outages that lead to increased costs for fuel to operate private generators. These issues have a detrimental impact on the functioning of these health-care centres and institutions.

To address these challenges, the local stakeholders who participated in the project proposed supporting and equipping health-care centres and hospitals in the UoM, ensuring the availability of essential medications and modern medical equipment, and securing the required fuel for uninterrupted operations.

### Education

The UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali accommodates 26 schools, comprising both public and private institutions, according to the survey conducted with the municipalities. These schools offer commendable educational and pedagogical services, as reflected in the positive results of official exams taken by their students, according to the consultation with the relevant education stakeholders. The cost of educational services varies based on the type of school, its specific services, and its educational level. The administration and management of public schools are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, while private schools are managed by private entities. Most students and teachers have relatively easy access to their respective schools in terms of transportation, with the exception of many university students who incur high transportation costs to reach their universities outside the UoM, primarily due to geographical distance.

The UoM hosts universities in the town of Ouardaniyeh (Islamic University) and Jadra (Arts, Science & Technology University in Lebanon [AUL]). There are also branches of the Arab University and the Lebanese University in the vicinity of the UoM. Technical institutes are also found in the UoM.

Despite some of the positive aspects of the education sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, various challenges exist, according to the consultations with the relevant education stakeholders. These include persistent electricity cuts, the high cost of fuel leading to high operational costs for educational institutions, and a scarcity of modern educational equipment required to meet the needs of students and teachers, particularly in the field of information technology.

### Culture

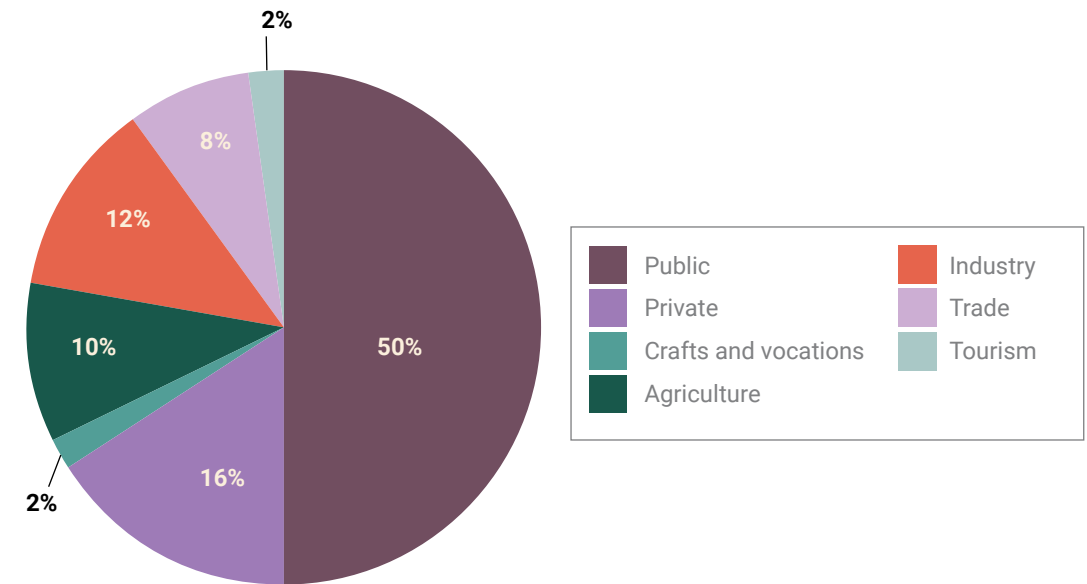
On the cultural front, the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali boasts numerous NGOs, sports clubs, and youth organizations. However, due to insufficient funding, their programmes and activities have diminished due to the ongoing economic crisis, falling short of meeting the aspirations of local youth.

The local stakeholders who participated in the project advised to establish effective coordination mechanisms among NGOs, sports clubs, and youth organizations, as well as between such organizations and municipal institutions and the UoM. Additionally, the local stakeholders recommended to empower these organizations with the competencies and skills needed to fulfil their social responsibilities, with support from the local authorities in the UoM.



## Local economy and livelihoods: Current state

This section provides an overview of the key local economy and livelihood challenges and needs in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, with a particular focus on the agriculture and industry sectors, which have been identified through fieldwork and the outcomes of meetings and discussions with relevant parties to provide real opportunities to drive the process of socioeconomic development forward in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali. Recommendations to improve these two sectors will be presented separately in the next section.



**Figure 9.** Distribution of employment by sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali.  
Source: Survey conducted with municipalities.

### Public sector

Approximately 50 per cent of the workforce in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali is employed in the public sector, according to the survey conducted with municipalities within the union (Figure 9). Thus, this sector plays a vital role in the UoM's economic landscape, serving as a significant source of income. The public sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali encompasses various fields of work, including military and security institutions, government administrations, and public schools. Within the public sector, there is an even distribution of workers with respect to age and gender. Employees in the public sector work within and outside the UoM, and those working outside the UoM incur additional transportation expenses. The sector also faces challenges due to declining employee salaries caused by the devaluation in the national currency.

### Private sector

The private sector is a vital component of the local economy in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali. It significantly contributes to job creation and stimulates economic activity in the area. Approximately 16 per cent of the UoM's workforce is employed in the private sector, according to the survey conducted with municipalities within the union (Figure 9). Employees in the private sector are distributed evenly across gender and age groups. The private sector encompasses a wide range of fields, including but not limited to banking, construction and various professions, such as engineering. The cement factory in the town of Sibling is a major economic driver in the UoM due to its size and production capacity, providing numerous employment opportunities for local residents.

## Crafts and vocations

The crafts and vocations sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali encompasses various fields of work, including construction, tiling, plumbing, mechanics work, blacksmithing, car painting, etc. Most workers in this sector primarily work in their hometowns. The sector faces a significant challenge related to competition between foreign and local labour. This competition arises due to the low wages in the sector, leading many local workers to withdraw from employment. Consequently, the sector accounts for only 2 per cent of the total workforce in the UoM, according to the survey conducted with municipalities within the union (Figure 9). Moreover, there is a gender disparity within this sector, with males comprising the majority of workers and females representing a smaller proportion. Such gender disparity is less accentuated in some fields of work, such as hairdressing, tailoring, woodworking, etc.

## Agriculture

According to the survey conducted with municipalities within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali (Figure 9), approximately 10 per cent of the workforce is engaged in the agriculture sector. Many families rely on agriculture as their primary means of livelihood, making support for agriculture and the provision of sustainable job opportunities in this sector vital for achieving economic and social stability in the union. Workers in this sector are predominantly male adults, with females being less involved. The union's fertile soil is suitable for the production of various crops and food products, some of which are even exported to major Lebanese cities and, occasionally, abroad, such as olive oil, vegetable oil, and carob syrup. Important agricultural activities in the union include olive farming; cherry, legume and avocado cultivation; and yogurt production. Additionally, beekeeping and honey production, as well as livestock and poultry farming, are practised quite widely in the UoM. The UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali has seven agricultural cooperatives, but they lack coordination and collaboration among them.

The agriculture sector in the UoM faces several other challenges, including the impact of climate change, rising costs of pesticides and agricultural materials (particularly in beekeeping), unfair competition from imported agricultural products, water scarcity, and high

irrigation costs. Moreover, the agriculture sector is in need of modernization, in addition to the critical requirement of securing energy supply needed for irrigation and agricultural processing.

## Industry

In the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, the industry sector plays a pivotal role in bolstering the local economy and creating employment opportunities for its residents. Approximately 12 per cent of the total workforce in the UoM is employed in this sector, according to the survey conducted with municipalities within the union (Figure 9). A breakdown by age groups reveals that youth and adults combined make up the majority of the workforce in this sector. In terms of gender breakdown, there is an even representation of males and females in the sector. The UoM boasts a diverse range of primary industries, including for the production of olive oil, vegetable oil, soap, carob syrup, tahini, as well as a thriving chocolate industry, which includes well-known brands, such as Al Qaisi in Jadra, Patchi in Sibling, and Al Wafa in Sibling. Other industries encompass the production of paper products (tissues, toilet paper, etc.), ceramics, painting and tiling materials, and cement, among others. Industrial facilities are dispersed across various areas within the UoM, including Chhim, Sibling, Daraiya, Baasir and Mazboud. Products produced by industries in the union are primarily distributed within local markets in Lebanon, with some limited overseas export. The industry sector in the UoM faces several challenges, including the high cost of raw materials, rising fuel expenses, and competition from imported goods. For instance, in industries like confectionery and tahini, there is competition from foreign products that do not meet the required specifications.

## Trade

In the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, the trade sector plays a pivotal role in local economic development and employment opportunities. According to the survey conducted with municipalities within the union (Figure 9), approximately 8 per cent of the UoM's workforce is engaged in the trade sector, with workers distributed across different age groups. A wide variety of commercial enterprises operate within the UoM, trading food products, confectionery,

meat, poultry, pastries, clothing, footwear, health-care products, cars and car parts, gifts, cosmetics, toys, mobile phones, ceramic tiles, sewing supplies, fruits and vegetables, building materials, furniture, household appliances, electrical supplies, animal feed, agricultural materials, cement, etc. Notably, trade activities extend beyond the union's geographical boundaries, encompassing products like olive oil, vegetable oil, tahini, carob syrup, chocolate, etc. The trade sector in the union faces various challenges, including external competition and marketing difficulties due to the lack of relevant skills and resources.

## Tourism

The percentage of workers in the tourism sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali is estimated to be only 2 per cent of the total workforce, according to the survey conducted with municipalities within the union (Figure 9). This low percentage is to a large extent a result of insufficient investment and attention to this sector. Most workers in this sector are young and male. The UoM boasts natural resources of great interest, including a wealth of forests, as well as significant archaeological sites. These include ruins in Barja, the Roman Palace in Chhim, a mosque of heritage value in Dalhoun, Mazboud Waterfall, and several religious sites, such as shrines in Anout, Mazboud, Chhim, Ketermaya, and other areas. The UoM also features various tourist establishments, including pools, restaurants and hotels, which are essential for the vitality of the tourism industry. The tourism sector in the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali faces several challenges that hinder its development and growth. These challenges include the high cost of tourism services, which affects tourist attraction and sustainability. Additionally, there is limited attention to tourist resources, lack of advertising and media promotion, and the lack of a strategic tourism development plan.

## Remittances from abroad

According to the survey with the municipalities, around 4.5 per cent of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali's registered population has emigrated over the years. The emigration process started at the onset of the civil war, approximately 40 years ago, and has persisted due to ongoing

security events and crises up to the present day, as mentioned in the "Population Overview" section above. Most of the emigrants migrated to Australia, the Gulf countries, and Africa.

Some expatriates extend financial support to their families and relatives through monthly remittances, amounting to approximately USD 2 million per month, according to the consultations conducted with relevant stakeholders in the union. This assistance plays a crucial role in helping these families navigate the challenges and difficulties stemming from the country's economic and financial crisis. Several municipalities and government institutions benefit from the funds provided by expatriates, some of which are channelled into public projects within the UoM. For instance, expatriates offered assistance to the Sibling Governmental Hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic.





## Recommendations for sectors identified as key for future local socioeconomic development

Based on the consultative meetings and workshops held with representatives from municipalities within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, there was consensus on adopting the following vision for local socioeconomic development:

**“Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali: a national treasure blessed with majestic mountains and a picturesque coastline, enriched by the determination of its people, diverse in its agricultural practices and industries, flourishing with the generosity of its pioneers, and fortified by the quality of its economy.”**

To achieve this vision, it was recommended that municipalities, civil society, and the private sector must come together, along with local communities, working collaboratively to foster local socioeconomic development based on the UoM's assets and available opportunities. According to the results of the process followed during the project within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, it was suggested that there should be a focus on developing the agriculture and industry sectors due to the available human, natural and material resources that can be harnessed and improved for the better.

Working towards achieving agricultural and industrial development necessitates creating a road map for each sector (see the subsections “Proposed Agriculture Sector Road Map” and “Proposed Industry Sector Road Map” below) that includes multiple stages to be implemented within a logical timeframe and according to the availability of funding. The road map for both the agriculture and industry sectors was envisioned to encompass strategic interventions linked to four key factors or aspects:

1. Infrastructure
2. Existing institutional framework
3. Natural resources
4. Local human resources

The below section includes an overview of the identified strategic directions for the available productive sectors within the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali, with a focus on the agriculture and industry sectors, both of which present opportunities for sound local socioeconomic development. These directions have been identified and proposed based on the analysis of the existing situation of these sectors presented in the previous section, which relied

on information provided from different local stakeholders through a participatory approach.

As for other sectors (such as trade, crafts and vocations, and tourism), they will certainly continue to play a role in the socioeconomic development of cities and towns of the UoM of Iqlim El-Kharroub El-Chamali. However, local stakeholders engaged in the project considered that these other sectors can also be developed in a manner that aligns with the vision and directions of the union with regard to agriculture and industry. The trade sector, for example, despite its limited presence within the union, has considerable potential due to its connections with the agriculture and industry sectors. These sectors can provide a variety of local products for trade. Therefore, supporting and promoting the trade sector will contribute to stimulating economic development in the union and will provide employment opportunities, particularly for the youth, in light of the challenging economic crisis faced by the country. Thus, the local stakeholders recommended for the trade sector to focus on capacity-building, including incentives and training in online marketing to stimulate commercial activity. Furthermore, organizing exhibitions for product promotion could be explored. Additionally, the recommendations prioritized ensuring a stable supply of sustainable energy, especially considering rising fuel prices and increased power cuts. This is particularly crucial, as the UoM lacks public refrigeration facilities for agricultural products. Moreover, recommendations focused on enhancing the competitiveness of local businesses through product quality improvement and providing external marketing opportunities, in addition to efforts to protect trade from illegitimate activities, monopolies, and tax evasion.

In the tourism sector, the local stakeholders proposed to develop a strategy to capitalize on its potential, given the union's unique combination of mountainous and coastal regions. This strategy would include revitalizing and promoting existing archaeological sites and investing in the coastal areas. Other recommendations involved activating ecotourism; hosting tourism festivals; and encouraging the establishment of stalls for selling fast food, souvenirs, and handicrafts near archaeological and touristic sites, often directly linked to agricultural products. It was also suggested that efforts are made to protect the UoM's rich forest resources, by establishing firefighting teams and providing them with the necessary equipment – especially given the occurrence of significant wildfires in the past. Another recommendation focused on

establishing a tourism chamber in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism. This chamber would oversee tourism activities in the union, supervise archaeological and tourist sites, and develop plans for attracting tourists.

Although it was proposed to focus mainly on the development of the agriculture and industry sectors in the union, local stakeholders participating in the project emphasized the importance of improvements in the social and basic services within the union to create a more enabling environment for local development. Thus, even though the key challenges in these sectors as well as some recommendations for their improvement were already elaborated in previous sections above, the below list includes some of the most highlighted suggestions by local stakeholders:

Providing necessary support, such as the supply of needed equipment and supplies, to public and private health-care facilities within the union's jurisdiction.

Assisting health-care and education facilities with challenges linked to rising fuel prices and increased power cuts, such as securing alternative energy sources.

Promoting the establishment of centres for individuals with special needs to integrate them into economic and social activities.

Fostering activities for children and the elderly, and continuing to organize festivals or sports tournaments.

Directing efforts towards improving infrastructure-related services, such as sanitation, water supply, roads, electricity, telecommunications, and waste management to enhance the general quality of life in the union.



## Agriculture

One of the recommendations of the local stakeholders for the agriculture sector included striving to provide alternative energy sources for agriculture. This involves identifying priorities for alternative energy projects that can benefit a significant number of farmers and cover a large percentage of agricultural lands. The union, in collaboration with relevant municipalities, could seek support from local and national donor agencies and international organizations based on these priorities.

In addition, since the UoM is home to a large population of residents, especially youth, who are facing unemployment, local stakeholders suggested that it is possible to try to engage many of these residents in the agriculture sector, taking into consideration the available opportunities in it. This will require capacity-building for such residents. Thus, local stakeholders who participated in the project recommended to organize training programmes and courses for residents interested in agriculture, including new and old farmers. To better design such capacity-building programmes, local stakeholders advised to conduct an assessment of the needs and skills of potential trainees with the help of volunteers from universities and civil society organizations within the UoM. Local stakeholders also recommended developing electronic platforms for applying to and enrolling in knowledge development activities.

Other recommendations covered the strengthening of agricultural cooperatives. The presence of specialized agricultural cooperatives was regarded as essential for formulating clear strategies for agricultural development. Creating a transparent mechanism for coordination and cooperation among them was also emphasized to divide responsibilities based on expertise, types of crops, geographical area, etc.

Furthermore, the local stakeholders recommended to work on securing raw materials,

fertilizers, and agricultural equipment as well as organizing exhibitions for marketing and sales of agricultural production. To accomplish this, it was argued that the union must strengthen its relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture to identify the ministry's potential support for farmers, particularly in terms of supplying agricultural fertilizers and supplements. Additionally, the union, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and agricultural cooperatives, can work on organizing seasonal agricultural exhibitions throughout the year to assist in marketing the UoM's products, increase income, and create job opportunities.

Other suggested areas of intervention by the union involved allocating water sources more effectively and addressing water scarcity. This necessitates adopting modern irrigation methods, such as drip irrigation, to maximize water utilization in agriculture.

It was also recommended for the UoM to work on enhancing high-quality agricultural production by applying stringent quality standards and increasing the market value of agricultural products. Another recommendation included introducing new and diverse crops that align with local soil and environmental conditions, taking into account climate change considerations and challenges related to soil quality. This was considered important to promote sustainability in the agriculture sector and ensure product diversification.

Local stakeholders also emphasized the creation of new markets for agricultural products by establishing reliable product distribution networks, expanding their scope, and finding opportunities for exporting and domestic marketing.

Lastly, local stakeholders stressed on the importance of encouraging the involvement of youth and women in this sector, providing equal job opportunities for diverse age and gender groups.



# Proposed agriculture sector road map

Level of difficulty to implement	Budget to implement
High	High
Moderate	Moderate
Low	Low

Short time to achieve

Activating coordination and collaboration between relevant ministries and municipalities

Medium time to achieve

Relying on solar energy as a source for operating wells for irrigation

Enhancing the work of agricultural cooperatives and activating their role

Collaborating with ministries and municipalities to establish a sustainable plan for infrastructure maintenance

Collaborating with civil defence and other relevant authorities to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for fire prevention and control

Providing clean water for irrigation

Implementing municipal and official measures to address encroachments on public properties, forests and woodlands

Constructing and maintaining agricultural roads

Establishing connections with the faculty of agriculture within the Arab University to assist in conducting agriculture research

Treating sewage water and using it for irrigation of specific crops

Conserving natural resources in the UoM and exploiting unused agricultural lands

Training youth and women on agricultural topics and modern techniques

Guiding youth to reduce migration

Activating the relationship with expatriates and involving them in financing and marketing projects

Training locals in food processing, particularly olive and carob production

Activating agricultural guidance and training

Preparing and implementing recurring awareness campaigns to encourage residents to engage in agricultural activities

Developing and implementing advertising and media campaigns to highlight the importance of agricultural products in the UoM

Long time to achieve

Integrating the use of modern technology in agriculture

Working on establishing specialized agricultural and livestock cooperatives

Striving to establish centres for agricultural training and guidance

Establishing relationships with donor organizations to enable project implementation

Protecting groundwater resources and springs

Encouraging youth to participate in agricultural cooperatives and enter the job market

Limiting urban expansion at the expense of agricultural lands

Preserving soil by establishing proper waste disposal sites

Developing and implementing municipal regulations to conserve resources and natural areas

Improving agricultural marketing by providing targeted training on packaging and labelling techniques, as well as exploring opportunities to access new markets outside the union

Infrastructure

Institutional framework

Natural resources

Human resources

## Industry

To help improve this sector, local stakeholders recommended to provide alternative sustainable energy sources to industries to help reduce their operational costs and, consequently, lower prices and compete with imported goods, while also increasing their production and, consequently, employing more local workers. In this regard, it was recommended that the union must develop a plan to secure alternative energy based on priorities, ensuring fair energy distribution to private institutions.

Other recommendations involved creating links between industrial institutions and vocational institutes and relevant university branches to secure employment opportunities for residents by better matching labour supply and demand, as well as to organize capacity-building courses for industry owners to train and guide them regarding marketing and competition.

Other areas of proposed interventions were related to enhancing and upgrading the skills of the workforce in the industry sector through specialized training programmes to help improve their performance.

In addition, in their recommendations, the local stakeholders focused on promoting inclusivity and diversity within the workforce in the industry sector, including related to the employment of women and individuals with disabilities.

Furthermore, some recommendations focused on organizing exhibitions for the promotion of local industrial products and on taking steps to expand their distribution towards overseas markets.

Lastly, the local stakeholders stressed on the necessity of the municipalities to play a pivotal role in supporting the industry sector. It was suggested that they can achieve this by offering incentives to encourage investment in industrial areas, which, in turn, will contribute to the generation of new job prospects and sustainable economic growth.



# Proposed industry sector road map

Level of difficulty to implement	Budget to implement
High	High
Moderate	Moderate
Low	Low

Short time to achieve

- Building a strong relationship with the Ministry of Industry and enhancing collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- Establishing a local committee within the UoM to communicate with the private industry sector

Medium time to achieve

- Maintaining the roads leading to factories and industrial zones and ensuring electrical supply
- Relying on solar energy as a source to provide energy for industrial areas to reduce pollution
- Working with factory owners and industrial institutions to establish a mechanism for treating industrial waste

- Enhancing cooperation between municipalities and the private/industry sector
- Striving to develop an industrial development plan for the UoM
- Involving civil institutions in the process of attracting young people to engage in the industry sector
- Establishing relationships with universities and technical institutes to support academic guidance for students
- Building relationships with donor organizations to enable the implementation of projects that support local industries

- Preserving the natural resources in the UoM and protecting them from pollution caused by industries
- Protecting existing rivers and springs from the disposal of industrial waste
- Limiting urban sprawl at the expense of forest areas

- Training and empowering young people to enter fields of work in local industries
- Organizing regular exhibitions for local industrial production
- Preparing and executing promotional and informational campaigns about local industries in the UoM

Long time to achieve

- Collaborating with ministries and municipalities to develop a sustainable plan for maintaining the necessary infrastructure for the industry sector
- Implementing the established mechanisms for treating and managing industrial waste

- Working to increase and encourage investments in industrial projects

- Preserving and protecting the archaeological and heritage landmarks in the UoM
- Establishing natural reserves for the conservation of resources and attracting visitors and tourists
- Working on issuing and implementing municipal regulations to preserve natural resources and areas

- Activating the relationship with expatriates and motivating them to invest in local industrial projects

Infrastructure

Institutional framework

Natural resources

Human resources



## Conclusion

The developed roadmaps in the 10 booklets clearly show that advancing local socio-economic development in the 10 unions be it in the agriculture, industry, or tourism sectors is indeed a complex and lengthy process, yet not impossible. This path requires collective and proper local strategic visioning coupled with clear commitment by all stakeholders and serious efforts at different levels, in addition to significant financial resources and solid coordination local structures and mechanisms.

It is also evident from the roadmaps that UoMs, with the contribution from municipalities enrolled, could initiate primary steps that do not require significant funding but still support and contribute to the implementation of the overall vision on the long run.

It should also be clear to the unions and to the other local actors that the implementation of the roadmaps requires collective efforts from all. This includes local communities, municipalities, UoMs, SDCs, civil society organizations, and the private sector. To facilitate this collaboration, it's proposed to create a local advisory body (committee) for each identified sector. It is advised that the committee to be established by the UoM and include representatives of local public and private entities and institutions. The main role of these committees will be to lead and develop practical action plans to commence the implementation of the road map for each respective sector. Members of these committees must commit to providing the time and efforts necessary to achieve progress at the level of each sector.

The next step would entail that each committee individually contacts concerned ministries under each sector to learn more about the ministries' strategies and plans and their financial and human capacity to support and guide the union in the process of tourism, industry, and/or agricultural development, especially with regard to developing local strategies for the three sectors.

Based on outcomes of the meetings with relevant ministries, the designated committees would make the necessary contacts with relevant universities and donors to seek the potential financial and technical support aiming to developing a strategy and an executive plan for each sector.

Realistically speaking and with the commitment of local actors, the above-mentioned tasks from the creation of local committees to establishing partnerships to identifying entities supporting the development of the sector strategy, should not exceed a period of six months. The strategy to be prepared for each sector is expected to propose a detailed doable business plan with a reasonable timeline and a clear budget.

