

UN-HABITAT & UNDP launch a capacity building program targeting the six municipalities in NBC

Adjacent Area

The UNDP and UN-HABITAT organized on October 8, 2008 a meeting to launch the capacity building program targeting local elected leaders and civil society organizations in the six municipalities located in the adjacent area of Nahr El Bared Refugee Camp (NBC). The meeting gathered 20 representatives from the six municipalities of Bebnine, Beddawy, Bhannine, Deir Amar, Minieh and Muhammara.

The capacity building program aims to enhance the capacity of urban governance actors to play a significant role in promoting sustainable recovery and development through poverty reduction, participatory decision making, conflict resolution, institutional strengthening and impact monitoring.

The program, which is implemented in cooperation with the International Management and Training Institute (IMTI) for a period of six months, would begin by carrying out a rapid training needs assessment to validate with local stakeholders the four pre-determined topics:

1. Competencies for Local Elected Leaders (LEL),
2. Introduction to Local Government Finances,
3. Creating a Financial Framework for Local Governments, and
4. Building Bridges, including strategic planning & conflict management.



In This Issue

- UN-HABITAT & UNDP launch a capacity building program targeting the six municipalities in NBC Adjacent Area 1
- UN-HABITAT joins effort with ILO, UNDP, UNICEF and UNRWA to promote an integrated approach for the rehabilitation of NBC adjacent area 2
- 21 municipalities close successfully 21 Community Projects in Southern Lebanon 2
- Improved Municipal Planning: A Holistic Program to link recovery interventions with long lasting solutions 3
- World Habitat Day (October 1, 2008) 4



UN-HABITAT joins efforts with ILO, UNDP, UNICEF and UNRWA to promote an integrated approach for the rehabilitation of NBC adjacent area

This joint UN project, which is funded by the European Commission – Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) seeks to assist Palestinian refugees and the most vulnerable Lebanese affected by the conflict in the Nahr el Bared refugee camp (NBC) through an improved coordination of the integrated relief and recovery efforts, including the provision of livelihoods, basic social services and rehabilitation of infrastructure. The UN-HABITAT interventions within this project



focus on promoting inclusive planning approaches in order to improve stakeholders' recovery response. In partnership with the Muhammara Municipality, two main activities would be carried out:

1. **Set up of six joint working groups** (procurements, works, social, education, recovery and youth) comprising representatives from the municipal council, civil society organizations and community groups from the Lebanese and Palestinian sides. Members of the working groups would engage in a consultative process to assess, identify, develop and implement Quick Impact projects (QIPs) that respond to urgent recovery needs. Funding for the identified QIPs would be ensured through the project.
2. **Improving municipal service delivery.** The aim is to make sure that municipal services adhere to standards and best practices to guarantee sustainability of all interventions. In this context, UN-HABITAT would provide the needed technical support, machineries and equipments to allow the municipality of Muhammara to deliver recovery services to Lebanese and Palestinian communities.

21 municipalities in Southern Lebanon close successfully 21 Quick Community Recovery Projects



With US\$ 210,000 funding size granted to the Unions of Municipalities of Tyre, Bint Jbeil and Jabal Amel, 21 quick community recovery projects were successfully implemented by 21 municipalities, members in the three unions of municipalities. Projects included among others, rehabilitating infrastructure, upgrading municipal services, supporting income generating activities, and improving the use of public spaces through establishing public gardens, sports playgrounds and town squares. “We carried out several field visits to the villages to mobilize municipalities, local stakeholders and community, Rony Jalkh, UN-HABITAT Capacity Building Coordinator stated.

The aim was to identify the most pressing needs of the villages. This exercise allowed the municipality to lead a participatory process involving communities in the assessment and identification of quick impact interventions.”

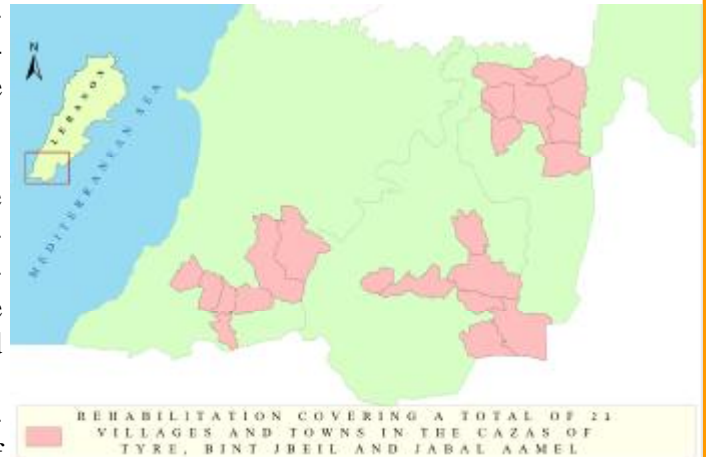
During the entire process of project identification, technical assistance was provided to concerned mayors and municipal staff. A consensus-building exercise between all concerned local stakeholders was carried out and resulted in the final selection of 21 projects.

The objective of these interventions, which fall within Cyprusaid funded project entitled “Good Governance for Enhanced Post-War Reconstruction”, is to enable municipalities and the communities improve their living conditions.

Improved Municipal Planning: A Holistic Program to link recovery interventions with long lasting solutions

One year after its involvement in strengthening the capacities of municipalities to respond to the housing crisis in Southern Lebanon, UN-HABITAT is gradually shifting its interventions from recovery and reconstruction to long-term development in the three regions of Tyre, Bint Jbeil and Marjeoun

During the recovery and reconstruction stages, the unions of municipalities represented to UN-HABITAT the institutional platform to plan and implement relevant interventions. In this context, three Regional Technical Offices (RTOs) were established in the three unions of municipalities of Bint Jbeil, Jabal Amel and Tyre. RTOs represented the technical arm for the municipalities. During 12 months of operation, RTOs played an instrumental role in helping municipalities plan, guide, control, and monitor and evaluate the sound reconstruction of totally destroyed houses.

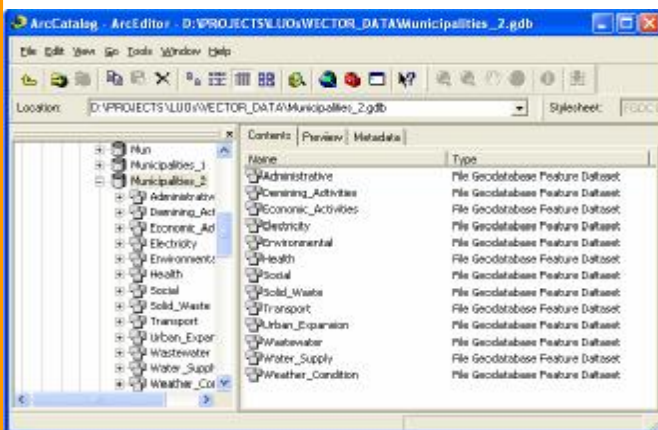


During the second year of operation, UN-HABITAT will assist the three unions of municipalities in implementing a two-folded strategy:

Providing necessary municipal planning tools.

Implementing capacity building and training activities.

With respect to the first pillar three Local Urban Observatories (LUOs) will be established within the



The urban indicators integrated in the GIS platform (using ArcGIS 9.2)

three unions of municipalities. Several key urban indicators with verified information will be integrated into a GIS platform. Those indicators would allow municipalities to assess their needs and gaps and consequently improve their planning capacities. “Several urban indices would be developed using key urban indicators (such as: connectivity to infrastructure index, urban governance indices, urban environmental justice indices etc.), Rodolphe Ghossoub UN-HABITAT Senior GIS Expert stated. Those indices would serve as a planning tool for municipalities and would help them accordingly make the appropriate decisions for improving urban planning practices and interventions”.

The second pillar aims to engage actively local elected leaders, community representatives and civil society organizations in data collection, analysis and report production.

By the end of 2009, the UN-HABITAT project in Southern Lebanon is expected to achieve the following outputs:

- The urban challenges of 21 municipalities and three unions of municipalities are profiled.
- 21 municipalities have local development plans.
- 3 unions of municipalities develop their own regional strategic plans.
- Capacities of not less than 150 local elected leaders, civil society and community representatives are strengthened.

World Habitat Day (October 1, 2008)

The United Nations has designated the first Monday in October each year as World Habitat Day. The idea is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities and the basic right to adequate shelter for all. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat. On that occasion, the UN-HABITAT Executive Director, Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka delivered the following statement:



Harmonious cities
World Habitat Day, 2008
6 October 2008, Luanda, Angola



“Today we mark World Habitat Day at a time when the majority of the world’s people are living in towns and cities. The process is accelerating and this transformation has a direct bearing on the strategies that we must adopt to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

The other historic turning point is that the number of urban slum-dwellers worldwide has broken the 1 billion mark, making it clear that the urbanization of poverty is arguably one of the biggest challenges facing development today.

This is why we chose the theme **“Harmonious cities” for World Habitat Day 2008**. We need to raise awareness of the problems of rapid urbanization, their impact on the environment and the consequences and challenges of spiralling urban poverty.

No longer can we turn a blind eye to the plight of slum-dwellers living in life-threatening conditions. Nor can we hide from the fact that urban poverty and urban inequalities are on the rise around the world, in developed and developing countries alike. We have both a moral and an ethical responsibility to make our cities more harmonious by making them more inclusive. It is a societal imperative that we fight urban poverty and squalor if we are to secure urban safety and security.

Our experience working with Governments, local authorities, communities and the private sector around the world gives us good insights into tackling these challenges. Even if we do not have all the answers it enables us to ask some of the right questions.

It is also no coincidence that climate change is now coming to the forefront of international debate at the same time, and at virtually the same pace, as the world becomes urbanized. Cities consume upwards of 75 per cent of all energy and contribute to an equally substantial amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Cities must therefore be an integral part of any mitigation efforts.

Reducing cities’ contribution to climate change and vulnerability to the effects thereof must be viewed as a historical opportunity to improve the living conditions of all men and women, including the most vulnerable sectors of our urban populations. Both adaptation and mitigation efforts require improved land-use planning, more robust infrastructure and smarter construction. I can think of no better initiative than to combine these efforts to make our cities and towns greener, safer and more equitable. My message to you today is that the challenges of climate change and urban poverty are inextricably linked and both depend on making our cities more harmonious”.

Partners



Donor Agencies



UNHABITAT Offices In Lebanon

- UNHABITAT Beirut Office: UNESCO Building, First Floor, Tel: 01-850013 (ext 111)
- UNHABITAT Tyre Office: Municipality of Tyre Building, Third Floor, Tel: 07-741217