

NATIONAL
URBAN FORUM



المنتدى الوطني الحضري
BEIRUT, LEBANON | 23-24 MARCH 2022

Under the Patronage of the President of the Council of Ministers
of the Lebanese Republic **H.E. Mr. Najib Mikati**

FIRST
**NATIONAL
URBAN
FORUM** OF LEBANON

*Towards a more sustainable and inclusive
future for Lebanese cities*

23-24 MARCH 2022
BROCHURE

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UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life





I. About the National Urban Forum

Context

Lebanon is one of the most urbanized countries in both the Arab region and the world, with around 89 per cent of its population living in urban areas. For decades, the country has witnessed rapid and uncontrolled urban growth and sprawl. With limited planning regulations in place or enforced, built-up areas are expanding to cover increasingly large spaces, while at the same time, urban disparities have and continue to grow. The lack of local planning and cross-sectoral master plans hinders any absorption capacity of the increasing urban population and its social, economic, environmental and demographic needs.

The multiple crises the country has been facing in the past years – including the protracted Syrian refugee crisis, the worsening and dire socioeconomic situation, the ongoing and crippling energy crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, the political instability, and financial collapse – have placed huge additional pressure on already poorly served urban areas, resulting in increased poverty, widening inequalities, and heightened social tensions. With the ongoing crises, persons with vulnerabilities are increasingly marginalized and at risk in the urban context. The public social infrastructure is weak, social protection is fragmented, and social services have declined with the ongoing crises, raising concerns, particularly in urban areas. The compounded crises have also vastly affected the already weak provision of adequate and affordable housing as well as basic urban services and infrastructure, including electricity and transport, among others. These in turn contribute to increased instances of discrimination, exclusion and violence, as well as feelings of insecurity and unsafety, especially among the most vulnerable segments of the population.

To effectively address many of these challenges in a sustainable manner, there is a need to have a better understanding of their complexities and their interlinkages in urban settings, placing sustainable urban development as a key element in the forthcoming United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Lebanon, and of national policy and planning discourse at large – including at the level of the national government in terms of planning for a future more prosperous and sustainable Lebanon. To reinstate this discourse and evidence base, UN-Habitat has partnered with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) to produce a *State of the Lebanese Cities Report*, with planned publication in early 2022.

Furthermore, and as part of a National Urban Policy (NUP) Programme launched by UN-Habitat in the Arab region in 2017, the NUP diagnosis phase was completed for Lebanon in 2018, with the publication of a diagnosis report. As part of this phase, two sectors – housing and transport – were highlighted as priority areas in need of policy reforms. Leading into the NUP formulation phase, UN-Habitat Lebanon has completed three reports on these sectors, which will be launched during NUF1. In order to ensure inclusivity of relevant urban actors in the next phases of the NUP process, and in the absence of a high-level governmental body that deals with urban issues in an integrated manner, there is a need to create opportunities for genuine dialogue and consultations with all relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

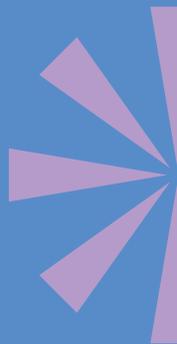
The overall objective of this first NUF (NUF1) in Lebanon is to concretely discuss the increasing urban challenges, considering the multiple ongoing crises in Lebanon – including how unplanned and poor urbanization has contributed to the daily struggles of communities across the country – and articulate why an urban lens is indispensable to contributing to finding evidence-based solutions out of the current complexities, and to fostering a sustainable and prosperous Lebanon, ensuring inclusiveness of vulnerable groups who often risk falling behind.

This is not only because cities are simply where a rising majority of people live but also because well-managed urbanization has the potential to lift people out of poverty and address their basic needs – including housing, energy, transport, water and more.

Within this overall objective, NUF1 in Lebanon is specifically aimed to:

- Increase **understanding of the state of urbanization** in Lebanon at national and subnational levels and how this has contributed to the current demise of cities – and how solutions can be borne – towards transforming Lebanese cities for a better urban future. *The State of the Lebanese Cities Report* will provide a basis for discussion.
- Increase **understanding of the needs of those most vulnerable in urban settings**, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.
- Improve **advocacy for urbanization that is well-managed**, including through evidence-based national urban policies, as a route to sustainable development – with a specific focus on housing and transport as critical entry points to a socioeconomically viable and inclusive Lebanon.
- **Take stock of the pre-existing and unfolding energy crisis** in Lebanon, with a focus on identifying sustainable solutions for large-scale renewable energy use in urban environments and transportation.

II. NUF1 Programme



The NUF1 is a two-day event that will take place in Beirut on 23–24 March 2022.

Day 1

Wednesday, 23 March 2022

Location: UN House ESCWA (Conference Hall), Beirut

About

The first forum day is focused on positioning the event's themes within the current political, policy and institutional landscape of the country. Following the opening of the forum, a plenary session will be held, where the current state of urbanization will be presented, launching the *State of the Lebanese Cities Report* prepared by UN-Habitat Lebanon in partnership with ESCWA. It is envisaged that the report will not only contribute specialist input into the United Nations Common Country Analysis (CCA) and subsequently the UNSDCF, but more widely will inform and help guide the efforts of national entities currently or potentially engaged in sustainable urban development, particularly city municipalities, unions of municipalities, and national government elements.

Underpinning and immediately following the launch of the *State of the Lebanese Cities Report*, a dedicated technical session will be held focused on unpacking the significance of urban data generation and evidence-led decision-making for urban crisis response and longer-term development of Lebanese cities, the lack of urban data, and the key role of such data towards building resiliency.

Time	Speakers	Agenda Item
09:00–09:30 a.m.	-	Arrival and registration
09:30–10:00 a.m.	<p>Ms. Taina Christiansen (moderator) Head of UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme</p> <p>Dr. Erfan Ali UN-Habitat Regional Representative, Office for Arab States</p> <p>Dr. Najat Rochdi United Nations Deputy Special Coordinator for Lebanon, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Lebanon</p> <p>Dr. Rola Dashti UN Under-Secretary-General, ESCWA Executive Secretary</p> <p>Representative, Government of Lebanon</p>	Session I: Opening remarks and launch of the <i>State of Lebanese Cities Report</i>
10:00–10:45 a.m.	<p>Session II: The state of urbanization in Lebanon This session provides an overview of urbanization in Lebanon through the launch of the <i>State of the Lebanese Cities Report</i>. The report is a multisectoral stock-taking of urbanity in Lebanon, helping to identify entry points for more sustainable urban development. It aims to support local and central government entities, as well as humanitarian and development partners, with an existing or potential role in advancing sustainable urban development.</p> <p>Dr. Sukaina Al Nasrawi Social Affairs Officer, Sustainable Urban Development Lead, Gender Justice, Population, and Inclusive Development Cluster, ESCWA</p> <p>Ms. Suzanne Maguire UN-Habitat Urban Analysis and Housing Specialist</p> <p>Dr. Sukaina Al Nasrawi Ms. Suzanne Maguire</p>	<p>Introduction to the launch of the UN-Habitat–ESCWA <i>State of Lebanese Cities Report</i></p> <p>Presentation of current state of urbanization in Lebanon across 10 cities</p> <p>Q&A with the audience</p>
10:45–10:50 a.m.	Ms. Taina Christiansen (moderator) Head of UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme	Urban Fair opening
10:50–11:20 a.m.	Coffee break	

Time	Speakers	Agenda Item
11:20–12:35 a.m.	Session III: The significance of urban data: Data generation and evidence-led decision-making for urban crisis response and longer-term development	
11:20–11:45 a.m.	Dr. Sukaina Al Nasrawi (co-moderator) Social Affairs Officer, Sustainable Urban Development Lead, Gender Justice, Population, and Inclusive Development Cluster, ESCWA	- Introduction of the session and speakers - Framing the session by presenting a stock-taking of ESCWA's and UN-Habitat's work on urban data and analysis
	Dr. Nanor Karageozian (co-moderator) Social Analyst—Head of UN-Habitat Urban Analysis and Policy Unit	
11:45–11:55 a.m.	Mr. Jad Ghosn Information Management Officer for the Inter-Agency Coordination Unit – UNHCR	Data for urban crisis response
11:55–12:05 a.m.	Dr. Ziad Abdallah Statistician- Head of IT Department, Central Administration of Statistics	National statistical system: Capacities, challenges and vision
12:05–12:15 p.m.	Mrs. Yusra Sidani Beirut Municipality, Municipal Council Member	The role of data for municipal decision-making
12:15–12:35 p.m.		Summary and Q&A with the audience

Day 2

Thursday, 24 March 2022

Location: UN House ESCWA (Conference Hall), Beirut

About

Apart from the overarching theme “Towards a More Sustainable and Inclusive Future for Lebanese Cities,” NUF1 will specifically focus on three main themes, which have also been articulated as key focus areas for reform and focus in Lebanon by the recent ministerial statement issued on 16 September 2021 by the Government of Lebanon upon its formation, detailing its priorities for its term in office.

Theme 1: Towards the development of a national urban transport and mobility policy

Theme 2: Towards the development of an inclusive national housing policy

Theme 3: Towards sustainable energy solutions for an urbanizing Lebanon

Each of the themes will be discussed during dedicated, more technical sessions on the second day that will involve several presentations and discussions. During relevant sessions, UN-Habitat will launch the guides it has published on how to mainstream housing and transport/mobility into a future national urban policy.

Time	Speakers	Agenda Item
09:00–9:30 a.m.		Arrival and registration
09:30–10:00 a.m.	<p>Ms. Taina Christiansen (moderator) Head of UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme</p> <p>Dr. Erfan Ali UN-Habitat Regional Representative, Office for Arab States</p> <p>Mr. Rein Nieland Head of Section for Governance, Social Development and Civil Society, Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon</p> <p>Mrs. Faten Abou Hassan Director General, DGLAC, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities</p> <p>Representative, Government of Lebanon</p>	Session I: Opening remarks
10:00–11:30 a.m.		Session II: Towards the development of a national urban transport and mobility policy (launch of UN-Habitat’s <i>Guide on Mainstreaming Transport and Mobility in Lebanon’s National Urban Policy</i> and discussion on way forward)
11:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.		Coffee break
12:00–1:30 p.m.		Session III: Towards the development of an inclusive national housing policy (launch of UN-Habitat’s <i>Guide on Mainstreaming Housing in Lebanon’s National Urban Policy</i> and discussion on way forward)
1:30–2:30 p.m.		Lunch break
2:30–3:45 p.m.		Session IV: Towards sustainable energy solutions for an urbanizing Lebanon
3:45–4:00 p.m.		Plenary recap: Adoption of NUF1 Declared Actions Declaration will be read by Ms. Sera Saad, Architect and Urban Planner, Live Love Beirut



Session II: Towards the development of a national urban transport and mobility policy

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Objective

The objective of this session is to first provide an overview of the transport policy priorities proposed as part of UN-Habitat's National Urban Policy programme, and then to discuss the prospects of developing an urban transport and mobility policy and the policy priorities, according to different stakeholders, in light of the current crisis. The session will also shed light on possible immediate-term solutions to mitigate emerging needs until policy formulation advances.

Time	Speakers	Agenda Item
10:00–10:05 a.m.	Ms. Zeina Nazer, P.E. (moderator), Co-Founder of Cities Forum	Introduction of the session and speakers
10:05–10:25 a.m.	Dr. Marc Haddad Associate Professor, Lebanese American University (consultant to UN-Habitat)	Presentation of UN-Habitat’s <i>Guide on Mainstreaming Transport and Mobility in Lebanon’s National Urban Policy</i>
10:25–10:35 a.m.	Mr. Ziad Nasr Director General, Railway and Public Transport Authority	Prospects of urban policymaking in Lebanon, with a focus on transport policy
10:35–10:45 a.m.	Ms. Zeina Nazer, P.E. Co-Founder of Cities Forum	On-demand public transport service
10:45–11:05 a.m.	Dr. Tammam Nakkash Transportation Specialist, Teams International	Transport policy priorities in Lebanon
11:05–11:15 a.m.	Mr. Chadi Faraj Co-founder, Riders’ Rights NGO	The informal transport sector and its inclusion in future transport policies
11:15–11:30 a.m.		Summary and Q&A with the audience



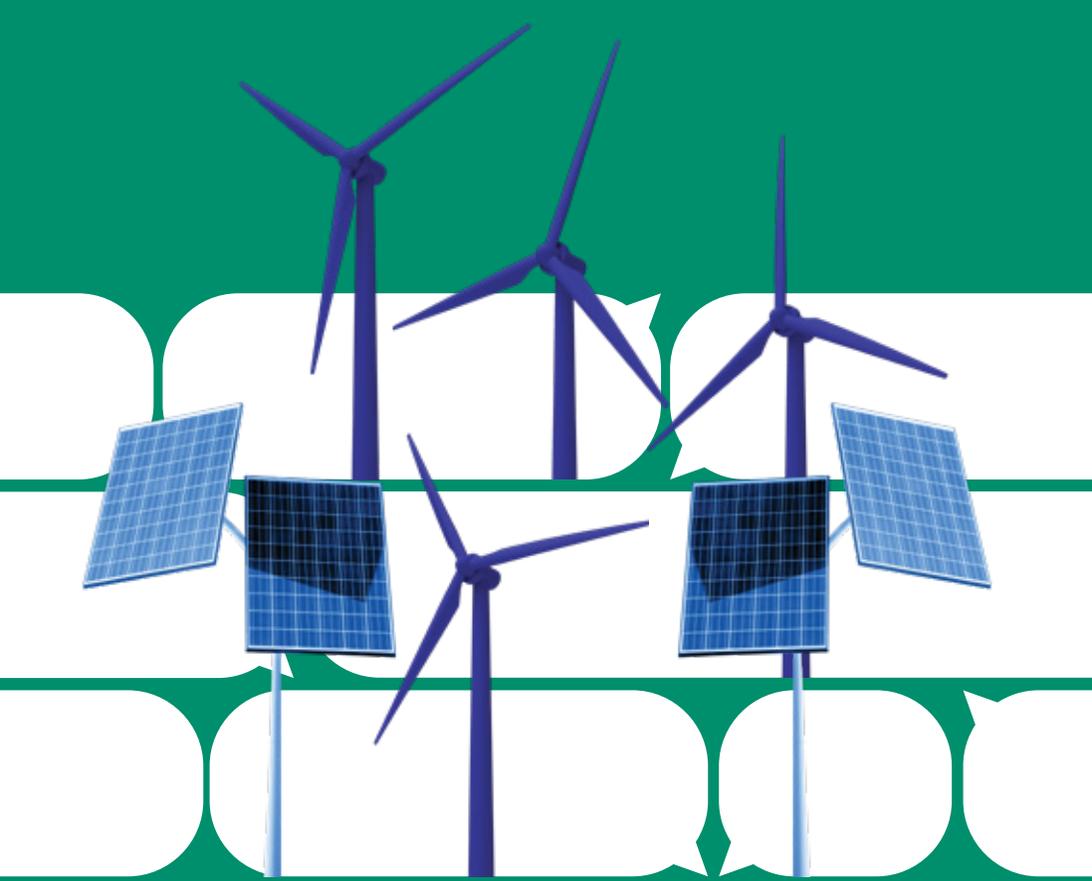
Session III: Towards the development of an inclusive national housing policy

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Objective

The objective of this session is to first provide an overview of the housing policy priorities proposed as part of UN-Habitat's National Urban Policy programme, and then to discuss the prospects of developing a national housing policy, and the policy priorities, according to different stakeholders, given the current state of the housing market and economic challenges. The session will also shed light on positioning housing at the centre of the recovery strategy following the Beirut Port explosion, and on highlighting lessons learned that could feed into the policy agenda.

Time	Speakers	Agenda Item
12:00–12:10 p.m.	Dr. Mona Fawaz (moderator), Professor of Urban Studies and Planning, American University of Beirut	Introduction of the session and speakers
12:10–12:30 p.m.	Dr. Bruno Marot , Urban Planner and Housing Specialist (consultant to UN-Habitat)	Presentation of UN-Habitat’s <i>Guide on Mainstreaming Housing in Lebanon’s National Urban Policy</i>
12:30–12:40 p.m.	Mr. Rony Lahoud Chairman and General Director, Public Corporation for Housing	Prospects of urban policymaking in Lebanon, with a focus on inclusive housing policy
12:40–12:50 p.m.	Dr. Karima Ben Bih Urban and Disaster Risk Management Specialist, World Bank	Post-explosion Beirut housing recovery as entry point for policy reform
12:50–1:00 p.m.	Ms. Maya Geara Lawyer, National Committee for Tenants	Tenants’ right in a future housing policy
1:00–1:10 p.m.	Mr. Walid Moussa President, Real Estate Syndicate of Lebanon	Needed policy reforms for a well-balanced and functional real estate market
1:10–1:30 p.m.		Summary and Q&A with the audience



Session IV: Towards sustainable energy solutions for an urbanizing Lebanon

2:30–3:45 p.m.

Objective

This session aims to unfold two objectives: The first is to present and discuss the Lebanese energy sector's current standing, challenges and recommendations, in addition to the renewable energy (RE) scenarios developed in national strategies and plans in connection with the need to respond to housing, transport and energy production; and the second is to learn from international RE plans, legislations, policies, business models and procedures, and some of the most successful RE projects in the housing and transport sectors (the Danish example will be highlighted).

Time	Speakers	Agenda Item
2:30–2:35 p.m.	Ms. Nisrin Obeid (moderator), Chief of Trade and Senior Advisor, Danish Embassy in Lebanon	Introduction of the session and panellists
2:35–2:50 p.m.		Interactive Poll Questions
2:50–2:58 p.m.	Mr. Rani El-Achkar Executive Director, the Lebanese Centre for Energy Conservation	Lebanon’s energy commitments, institutional framework, and strategies
2:58–3:06 p.m.	Mr. Trevor McIntyre Placemaking Global Director, IBI Group	International experience on designing an energy-efficient built environment through placemaking
3:06–3:14 p.m.	Mr. Niels Hansen Technical Director, Future Energy	The Danish energy experience: Legal aspects, infrastructure and innovation
3:14–3:22 p.m.	Mr. Marc Ayoub Energy Policy Researcher and Program Coordinator at the Issam Fares Institute for Policy and Research	Energy-efficient cities and communities based on lessons learned from other countries
3:22–3:30 p.m.	Mr. Philippe El Khoury Managing Director, ME Green	The private sector’s engagement in Lebanon’s energy field: Challenges and how energy solutions can be localized
3:30–3:45 p.m.		Q&A



NUF Urban Fair

Location: UN House ESCWA (Conference Hall), Beirut

9:00 a.m—3:00 p.m.

Objective

The fair is organized to provide an opportunity for selected partners to display the best examples of as well as future interventions in urban practices, mainly related to housing, transport, and renewable energy. The fair aims to promote these practices and solutions to exchange experiences, share knowledge, and demonstrate opportunities. Exhibitors will present publications and display visuals about their work.

Exhibitors

Beirut Heritage Initiative

-   @Beirutheritageinitiative
-  @Beirut_HI
-  beirutheritageinitiative.com

Beirut Urban Lab (American University of Beirut)

-  @BeirutUrbanLab
-  beiruturbanlab.com

Lebanese Centre for Energy Conservation

-  @LCEC.Lebanon
-  @LCEC.insta
-  @LCECtweets
-  The Lebanese Center for Energy
Conservation (LCEC)
-  lcec.org.lb

Lebanon Green Building Council

-   @LebanonGBC
-  @lebanon.green.building.council
-  lebanon-gbc.org

Public Works Studio

-   @publicworksstudio
-  @publicworks_lb
-  publicworksstudio.com
housingmonitor.org

Riders' Rights

-  @RidersRightsLebanon
-   @ridersrightslb
-  ridersrights.me

Train/Train

-  @traintrainlebanon
-  traintrainlebanon.org

United Cities

-  sdgimpactfund.org/ucf

