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Ministry of Social Affairs

UN HABITAT
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PRESS RELEASE

10 unions of municipalities set to enhance planning capacities for local socioeconomic development

Ministry of Social Affairs, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and UN-Habitat resumes joint project on planning processes at local level

Beirut, Lebanon 17 August 2022. UN-Habitat, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) and the Ministry of Social Affairs held a kick-off workshop on improving planning capacities for social and economic local development, with ten unions of municipalities from across Lebanon to relaunch the activities of the UN-Habitat-led project, funded by AICS, entitled, “Support to local communities in Lebanon: Improving local socioeconomic development planning through strengthened local planning capacities at the unions/clusters of municipalities level.”

The workshop brought together representatives from unions of municipalities, social development centres of the Ministry of Social Affairs, and UN-Habitat to design and to agree on the road map in order to develop a local socioeconomic plan using participatory and evidence-based approaches in each of the 10 unions.

The unions of municipalities involved in this project are: Mintaqat El Joumeh Akkar; Jord El Qaytaa; Caza Zgharta; Jurd Al Aala Bhamdoun; Iqlim El Kharroub El Chamali; El Souayjani; Caza Jezzine; Iqlim El Touffah; Qala'a El Estiqlal; and Chamal Baalbeck.

“Local socioeconomic development can be fostered when local communities, civil society and the private and public sector work together. This synergy and collaboration would lead to innovative solutions that can alleviate challenges faced by communities. Through this project, I urge local authorities and all stakeholders to design project proposals that have the capability of improving people’s lives,” said Judge Abdullah Ahmad, Director General, Ministry of Social Affairs.

“As Italy, we consider that strategic planning would support development even in a difficult context. The involvement of the local communities in a participatory process will engage them in thinking their own vision of the future and how and what to do to achieve it, taking into consideration the cultural, environmental, social and economic aspects. We hope that this exercise will lead to innovative and strategic social and economic plans,” said Alessandra Piermattei, Director of AICS Lebanon.

“Local authorities, social development centres and civil society in Lebanon play a critical role in planning, strategizing priorities and implementing urgent actions. They are on the frontline of the communities which they serve – and it is those same communities who are struggling to cope with the multiple crises facing Lebanon,” said Taina Christiansen, Head of UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme.

The local socio-economic plans of each Union of Municipalities focusing on income generation projects, job creation opportunities and welfare services provision will be presented to the Lebanese institutions and to the International Community as an opportunity to face the economic crisis.

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About the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

UN-Habitat works in over 90 countries supporting people in cities and human settlements for a better urban future. Working with governments and local partners, its high impact projects combine world-class expertise and local knowledge to deliver timely and targeted solutions. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes a dedicated Goal on cities, SDG 11 – to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

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