

# Lebanon updates

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**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

# UN-HABITAT Wraps Up Post-Conflict Recovery Interventions in NBC Adjacent Area

**U**N-HABITAT organized on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in the town of Muhammara (adjacent to Nahr El Bared Camp) a public ceremony, which gathered more than 80 people representing various agencies, mainly ECHO, UN partner agencies, municipalities, CBOs and NGOs present in neighboring villages and NBC.

The event was organized in order to achieve the dual objective of (1) announcing the completion of the one-year post-conflict recovery interventions in NBC adjacent area and (2) opening the *Khairatna Bazaar* with the participation of over twenty local producers (farmers, craftsmen and artisans) and vendors who displayed their products.

Speeches given by representatives of Muhammara Municipality, local communities in NBC Adjacent Area and ECHO emphasized the importance of inclusive recovery to address the common recovery needs of Lebanese and Palestinian affected families, which in turn would contribute to enhancing peace building and promoting local reconciliation amongst concerned communities.

As part of this joint UN action, UN-HABITAT component focused on providing the necessary support to Muhammara Municipality in order to improve municipal service delivery mechanisms and benefit both communities: Lebanese and Palestinian. In this context, UN-HABITAT adopted an inclusive approach and formed Joint Working Groups that facilitated a local dialogue process between community members who took part in the identification of five Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) covering the sectors of infrastructure repair, health, livelihood recovery, education and youth (in cooperation with UNDP), detailed as follows:

**Infrastructure Repair: Water Channel Rehabilitation**

The construction of a concrete water channel in NBC - sector (B) reduced significantly levels of pollution caused by the inadequate mixing of the existing



*Before the construction of the concrete water channel in NBC sector (B)*

water network with sewage and wastes produced by neighboring slaughterhouses.

**Health: Muhammara Healthcare Center (MHCC)**

The MHCC was established in a building donated by the Municipality of Muhammara and is located on the main highway at the southern entrance of Muhammara village and at proximity of the NBC entrance. UN-HABITAT provided basic medical equipments, which would be complemented through additional funding secured by the World Bank.

**Livelihood Recovery: Khairatna Bazaar**

It is a weekly opened marketplace established on a land donated by Muhammara Municipality. The marketplace targets local producers, craftsmen and farmers in NBC and the surrounding areas. It was designed as a meeting place to serve various trading, economic, social and cultural functions.

**Education: School Rehabilitation**

This action entailed carrying physical rehabilitation works and distributing basic educational equipments to 14



*... and after*

schools and Kindergartens in Muhammara and NBC.

**Youth: Sports Facilities**

Lead by UNDP, the QIP entailed the provision of sports equipments to five sports clubs in Muhammara and NBC adjacent area and to a number of UN-RWA schools. A mini football playground was also set up in NBC adjacent area.

The entire action is part of a comprehensive project entitled “*Integrated Support to the Rehabilitation of NBC Adjacent Area*” that is funded by the European Commission – Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) and implemented by UNDP, ILO, UNICEF, UNRWA and UN-HABITAT. The project aimed to enhance the living conditions of the population in the camp through three major components:

- I. Coordination of recovery efforts,
- II. Rehabilitation of basic infrastructure,
- III. Capacity building of the Municipality of Muhammara in terms of service provision and joint Lebanese-Palestinian committees.♦

## Italian Contribution to Improve Municipal Governance in Lebanon

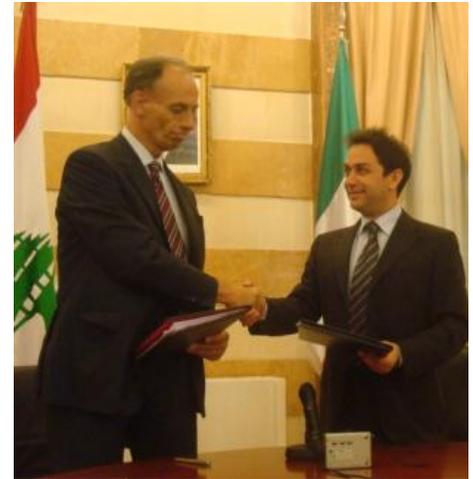
The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and the Lebanese Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) signed on Saturday 20 June, 2009 a Memorandum of Understanding, which entails providing the necessary institutional and technical support to improve municipal governance in Lebanon.

The cooperation falls under a two-year project (September 2009 – August 2011) funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a grant amounting to €500,000.

The Project aims to promote institutional reforms at the national and local levels in order to empower local authorities and enable them play a leading role in improving the living conditions in Lebanon and decreasing regional development disparities.

Through this project, UN-HABITAT in cooperation with the MoIM will activate and empower the existing “Training Unit” within the General Directorate of Administrations and Local Councils (GDALC). This would be achieved through the formation of a multi-disciplinary team that would be trained and coached throughout the project process to be able to deliver on continuous basis the needed capacity building activities to municipalities in Lebanon.

Whereas the first year of the project will focus on assessing the training needs, the preparation of the locally adapted training materials that would be tested among a number of municipalities as well as the set up of municipal best practices database, the second year would concentrate on implementing a comprehensive training and capacity building program that would target not less than 120 municipalities.



H.E. Minister Ziyad Baroud and Ambassador Gabriele Checchia sign the bilateral agreement

The implementation of this national program comes at this particular timing to respond to the various training needs that would be required by not less than 950 new municipal councils, which will be newly elected during Spring – Summer 2010 for another 6 year mandate. ♦

## UN-HABITAT Releases a New Publication on Municipal Service Delivery in NBC Adjacent Area

As part of a the joint UN project entitled “Integrated Support to the Rehabilitation of NBC Adjacent Area” that is funded by the European Commission – Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO), UN-HABITAT released in July 2009 a publication on municipal service delivery in NBC adjacent area.

The publication is the result of rapid field assessments carried out by UN-HABITAT during the period extending from January – March 2009 in Muhammara the town and NBC adjacent area.

The assessment, which covered five sectors: sewerage, water provision, roads network, electricity and solid waste collection, aimed at:

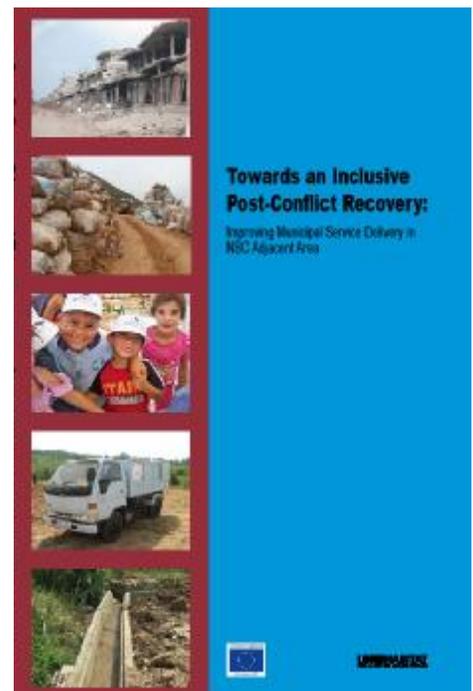
- Examining the current state of each sector, including existing “informal” alternatives;
- Analyzing the gaps in terms of financial, technical and human resources;
- Mapping completed, on-going and

future projects dealing with the five sectors; and

- Proposing an inclusive model of service delivery that emphasizes equal and enhanced service provision to all NBC adjacent area residents, including Muhammara.

The assessment allowed the formation of a number of findings:

- Service delivery in Muhammara faces many challenges that affect the state of the services. These mainly include the recent establishment of the municipality, lack of municipal financial and technical resources, lack of UNRWA funding and the possibility of halting its services in the new camp and government’s retreat in service provision.
- All these factors have reflected negatively on the state of services in Muhammara leading to an incomplete state of service networks and to weaknesses in service delivery in the sectors of sewerage, water network, electricity, road network and solid waste. ▶



UN-HABITAT new publication on Municipal Service Delivery in NBC Adjacent Area

The most significant gaps however lie in the sectors of sewerage and solid waste collection, which has direct impact on the quality of life and the standards of living conditions in Muhammara.

As a follow up to the findings of the assessment, UN-HABITAT allocated around Euros 70,000 to procure necessary municipal machineries, detailed as follows:

- 1 Truck with compressor for solid waste collection (medium size).
- 1 Pickup for solid waste collection.
- 1 Sewage tanker with pump for sewerage.
- 1 backhoe loader/JCB for general works and roads rehabilitation.

The four machineries were donated to Muhammara Municipality and necessary technical support was provided to enable the municipality manage and operate

these services in a sustainable and proper manner.

In parallel to this pilot activity, UN-HABITAT initiated a dialogue involving the two key local stakeholders, mainly the Municipality of Muhammara and the Popular Committee. This dialogue process called for the adoption of an inclusive approach towards equal and

enhanced service delivery between the municipality and the Palestinian community living within the municipal boundaries. The overriding concern is to enhance the immediate post-conflict recovery processes while laying the foundation for promoting equal rights and responsibilities in service provision among local residents in Muhammara and NBC adjacent area. ♦



*Machineries donated to Muhammara Municipality*

## Laying the Foundation for the Long-Term Sustainability of Regional Technical Offices (RTOs) in Southern Lebanon

Within the framework of the Project “Good Governance for Enhanced Post-Conflict Reconstruction in South Lebanon”, UN-HABITAT in cooperation with the American University of Beirut (AUB) organized a one-day working session on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 gathering representatives from the three partner unions of municipalities of Tyre, Bint Jbeil and Jabal Amel, Regional Technical Offices (RTOs) team as well as experts in various fields.

The workshop aimed at:

- Assessing RTOs set up, operation and achievements.
- Examining the various administrative, financial and technical requirements to

secure the sustainability and institutionalization of RTOs within the existing three unions of municipalities.

The working session came 18 months after the set up of RTOs in the three unions of municipalities. It was considered a crucial timing to gather all concerned partners and agree on a joint framework to (1) secure the appropriate handing over of RTOs to concerned union of municipalities and (2) agree on follow up steps to ensure the institutionalization of RTOs before project termination in December 2009.

Based on this pioneer experience, UN-HABITAT intends to launch a nationwide study to identify, assess and draw lessons from existing similar technical

offices in other unions of municipalities. Technical offices could have an instrumental role in promoting municipal decentralization and engaging, in a more effective manner, concerned local authorities in addressing various urban challenges in Lebanon. ♦



*Participants in the working session in AUB*



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