

## Report

### Event on “High-Level Policy Dialogue” for Municipalities – Nexus - Thinking and Decentralization of Subnational Governments”

Park Innovation, 2 August, 2022



## Summary

The Royal Scientific Society – NERC organized an event at Park Innovation, Lebanon on 2<sup>nd</sup> of August, 2022 titled a “High-Level Policy Dialogue” at municipal level. The event focused on empowering and catalyzing the municipalities’ role to run environmental projects within the nexus framework through a decentralized scheme; allowing municipalities to generate funds in compliance with the local legislations so that to enhance livelihood in the community.

The event enabled the participants representing various entities, local government, NGOs, and UN from Lebanon to acquire information and knowledge on access to finance and the nexus approach from a variety of local/regional experts and to engage in enriching discussions that facilitate the sharing of experiences and initiatives both from a national and a regional perspective. These covered the challenges currently being faced by municipalities, the lessons learned from previous experiences and projects, and recommended solutions and suggestions.

The event concluded that municipalities in Lebanon currently do not play a core role in the management and governance of water, food / agriculture and energy. This role is restricted to providing services to their communities such as transportation, waste collection, licensing buildings, managing public parks, street lighting.

Given that, it has been recommended to look at these services through a NEXUS lens, ensuring that the interlinkages horizontally and vertically are created to better manage and govern Energy, Water, Food / Agriculture resources; coordinate municipal policies; give attention to the cohesive relationship among water security, energy security and food security, enhance the administrative practices and efficiency; look into developing water resources and capital investments, improve access to finance, mainstream the nexus approach through innovative financing mechanisms and facilities, and utilize the community cohesion as an entry point.

## Contents

<b>I. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>III. MAIN TOPICS OF DISCUSSIONS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
SESSION I .....	6
PANEL DISCUSSION: .....	6
SESSION II: .....	7
INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION: .....	7
SESSION III: .....	8
INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION: Circular Economy Best Practices .....	8
SESSION IV .....	9
INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION: .....	10
CLOSING SESSION .....	10
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS .....	11
AGENDA .....	13
CONCEPT NOTE .....	16

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The RoyalScientific Society (RSS) – National Energy Research Center (NERC) in Jordan organized a meeting at Park Innovation in Lebanon, on 2 August 2022 titled “High-Level Policy Dialogue” at municipal level, targeting the project municipalities in Lebanon: As Semqaneyyeh Municipality and Jdaidet El Chouf Municipality.
2. The main objective of the workshop was to stimulate debate on the role of municipalities in climate action as an opportunity for municipal transformative economic growth but also as a means to increase overall climate resilience at different governance levels, and to catalyze the municipalities’ role to run investment projects within the nexus framework through a decentralized scheme; allowing municipalities to generate funds in compliance with the local legislations so that to enhance livelihoodin the community.
3. The meeting was attended by 24 participants representing various local, regional, energy, and nexus experts, municipalities, NGOs, government ministriesand entities, UN organizations, private sector, financial institutions, and research institutions from Lebanon.
4. The meeting spanned over one day and consisted of four sessions. Section II of this report summarizes the meeting’s recommendations while Section III provides a summary of the presentations and the main topics of discussions held during each session. Section IV reviews the organization of work, including information regarding the workshop agenda, and participants The full documentation of the workshop is available at the following address: [www.minaretproject.com](http://www.minaretproject.com)

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS

5. The meeting concluded with the following findings and recommendations:
  - a) Alleviate policy coherence in view of the increasing competition for resources driven by climate change and growing population.
  - b) Enhance cooperation and coordination among municipalities with other relevant sub-national authorities/directorates for better management, distribution and usage of water and energy demand.
  - c) Municipalities can play a crucial role in raising awareness, attracting investment, engaging communities and producing knowledge among their communities
  - d) Empower the municipalities and equip them to properly take on new responsibilities and leading roles in implementing decentralized tasks at the local level under the localrules, regulations, and constitutions.
  - e) Identify opportunities where municipalities can intervene and play a role, whether in the provision of their core services which are part of the Energy, Water, Food / Agriculture process, or in utilizing their leverage and ability to play a developmental and investment role in NEXUS related projects, municipalities can effectively participate in preserving scarce resources and achieving more benefits by using less resource. And in that way, municipalities can take the front seat in utilizing a NEXUS approach to drive sustainable development, improve livelihoods, and better manage (preserve and improve productivity of) water, energy and food / agriculture.
  - f) Take all the necessary measures for the conservation of the environment, landscapes, maintenance of trees and wooded areas, and pollution prevention.

- g) Leverage the private sector's interest in investing in the energy sector to help finance nexus RE projects with low-interest loans, especially in the agricultural sector.
- h) Set up an appropriate environment for investment by removing any obstacles to investment and encouraging competition through the exercise of economic activities by facilitating procedures to achieve optimal resources utilization.
- i) Propose plans and programs for sustainable development, in cooperation with local government.

### III. MAIN TOPICS OF DISCUSSIONS

#### INTRODUCTION BY:

Economic Affairs Officer, Agriculture and Livelihoods Development, UN-ESCWA

The addressing note underlined that the current pace of climate change presents human societies with scenarios never seen before. These scenarios will have an impact on the resources, particularly water and food, on which peoples and states - as well as the global system based on these states - depend for their survival, security and prosperity. It is saddened to see MENA region witnessing fragility and security problems in several areas.

Over time, and in addition to existing demographic, economic and political pressures, the impact of climate change on natural resources may impair the ability of countries to self-governance, including their ability to respond to the basic resource needs of their citizens—such as food, water, energy and employment, UN representative added.

Moreover, UN representative stated that in MENA countries, natural resources are more limited and fragile than in other regions. However, climate change and population growth, along with other factors, put more pressure on vital resources such as fresh water, weakening the food, nutritional and aquatic community food security of the people.

The introductory note concluded that climate change is altering the geographical and political levels, and what is more important is the complex influence between the water, energy and food sector, which is known as WEF Nexus, since these resources may witness a severe decrease due to the excessive demand and scarcities. It is also expected that the competitive demand for fresh water resources for agriculture, energy and human consumption will increase. Agriculture is already responsible for absorbing 70 percent of the world's total fresh water, making it the sector that uses this resource the most.

Presentations and discussions are summarized in the following sections which are organized according to the substantive sessions of the workshop.

## **SESSION I:** Opportunities and challenges of municipalities in natural resources management.

The first session was opened with a presentation on Climate & Water Changes in Lebanon given by the Former Director General at Ministry of Energy & Water / USAID Expert, which highlighted the pressures on the environment and resources and the impact of climate change on Lebanese hydrology. This is due to the: chronic political instability and ongoing civil war / unrest, the increase in population, decrease in water availability and neglect of agriculture sector by the government, which are negatively affecting food production and food security and have forced many farmers to abandon their lands and move to work in cities.

The expert further shaded the light on the measures taken by municipalities to tackle climate changes namely: the weak institutional and legal frameworks; centralization of decision-making; and resource use management in Lebanon that hinder swift and timely response, innovation and localization of solutions.

Through the presentation it has shown that water, energy and even agriculture/food are considered national security issues in Lebanon. They are centrally managed/governed by relevant national institutions for all regions in the country. Municipalities currently do not play a core role in the management and governance of water, food / agriculture and energy. Their role is restricted to providing services to their communities such as transportation, waste collection, licensing buildings, managing public parks, street lighting.

These services in certain ways intersect with energy, water and food / agriculture. It is essential to look at these services through a NEXUS lens, ensuring that the interlinkages horizontally and vertically are created to better manage and govern Energy, Water, Food / Agriculture resources. Additionally, in some cases, municipalities have a developmental and investment attraction / job creation role to play where NEXUS can be effectively utilized.

Despite a favorable regulatory framework, the municipalities do not yet have the management of development in their territories and they are not yet in a position to play the role of the engine of the expected development, the expert clarified.

## **PANEL DISCUSSION:** Promoting Integrated Approaches to Water, Energy and Food Nexus at Municipal Level.

Ensuing discussions confirmed that Lebanon has a diverse natural environment including coastal, agricultural, forest and mountainous areas many of which have unique biodiversity and ecosystems that are sensitive to climate change. Lebanon's water resources are increasingly stressed by climate change along with high population growth, increased demand from agriculture and industry, inadequate water storage capacity, increased water pollution and inefficient utilization. Agriculture in Lebanon is highly vulnerable to climate change due to the country's limited water and land resources which are under increasing pressure from population growth and urbanization. Lebanon's agricultural productivity is already strained from higher temperatures, reduced precipitation and high evapotranspiration.

The discussion gave insight in the climate change effects and impacts in Lebanon, with particular attention for food security and water. It also shaded light on the policies, priorities and commitments of the government in responding to climate change and important climate-relevant activities that are being implemented, including activities being internationally financed.



## SESSION II: Nexus Governance Setting – Mainstreaming Nexus approach at municipal level

Session started with a presentation on decentralization given by an Economist/Researches Manager at The Policy Initiative, who underlined how the concept of local governance for development is often narrow and constrained to infrastructure management, and how the large remit for municipalities by law, contrasted by a limited scope of services in reality due to the weak administrative and institutional capacities such as:

- Municipalities in Lebanon are empowered through strong decentralization and decision-making abilities.
- Municipal unions are normally formed and are strong lobbyists for municipal rights and supporters of municipal service provision.
- Municipal councils have strong decision-making abilities and mayors, who are voted into office by the municipal council, are tasked with executing the council's decisions and plans.
- Under the Lebanese Municipal Law, municipalities are not allowed to have commercial bank accounts or invest in conventional financial products.
- Unconventional investments including partnerships with the private sector are not covered in the Lebanese Municipal Law.
- Neither law allows municipalities to enter or establish investment funds. This lack of clarity may hinder efforts to take such actions.

The expert elaborated how the Lebanese laws showed strong decentralization and decision-making abilities at municipal levels and at the level of municipal unions, which are prevalent in Lebanon. Further, the expert explained how investment of public assets is allowed for revenue generation; however, municipalities cannot use commercial bank products and financing instruments as they are prohibited by law from opening commercial bank accounts.

In particular, the law does not have any provision for unsolicited private sector proposals. The laws do not allow municipalities to participate in or establish investment funds. The path forward in Lebanon will include a design for the investment fund, identification of investment-worthy projects, development of project plans, and pitches to potential investors including support and capacity building for investment team.

### INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION: Municipal Governance Through Nexus Lens

The interactive discussion run about the weak governance structure of municipalities in Lebanon and how the high levels of inefficiency and bureaucracy between the levels of government is leading to corruption and favoritism behavior across the different levels of the administration, lack of a regional and territorial approach in administrative decentralization, and complete nonchalance in addressing the economic and currency crisis deeply threatening the continuity of local governments.

In the same vein, the attendees stressed that Municipal unions strengthen decentralization by representing several municipalities and joining efforts for the benefit of the collection of represented municipalities.

The attendees also stressed that municipalities remain a key actor though, as they provide an essential platform for interventions that alleviate the effects of the national level shocks on local communities, including provision of essential services and infrastructure as well as environmental and cultural preservation. The current situation necessitates a scale up of financial and technical capacity of municipalities through international donors that circumvent reform processes at the national level.

### SESSION III: Creating economic value through a circular economy approach

Presentation was facilitated by the Circular Economy Expert at Lebanese House Establishment for Environment about Waste Management Mechanisms. The expert presented the concept of a Circular Economy as a sustainable development pathway in Lebanon, and identified opportunities for investment and employment in a new industry of waste-reduction. It characterized the processing of waste products as a ‘value-chain,’ a series of opportunities to extract economic benefit from discarded materials. The materials concerned are bio-waste (including agricultural waste), plastics, paper, fabrics (clothing and textiles) and glass.

The expert’s analysis focused on Circular Economy recycles, re-uses and repairs used products, to extract more value from their materials and reduce waste. How circular economy creates a ‘closed loop’ system of value, involving technical and logistical processes that can sustain a large workforce, while providing services and new products to support the wider economy.

The expert presented the traditional Linear Economy model in Lebanon, that focuses on extractive industries and manufacturing processes that generate waste. A Circular Economy, by contrast, is based on three principles:

- 1: Designing out waste and pollution
- 2: Keeping products and materials in use
- 3: Regenerating natural systems

However, the state of environmental management in Lebanon represents a complex crisis, which requires holistic solutions that move beyond infrastructure investments in waste collection and sorting. The focus on waste collection and sorting, as opposed to reduction and reuse in industrial systems, has created a waste management system that is unsustainable.

The expert concluded with recommendations for greater efficiency in the energy sector and for support to retailers in on-selling recycled products.

### INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION: Circular Economy Best Practices

Ensuring discussions confirmed that Lebanon has struggled to deal with the enormous demographic burden and social and economic consequences of the Syrian crisis since it began in 2011.

The financial crisis which arose in the second half of 2019 has put the country under further strain.

A liquidity crisis and poor fiscal management has exacerbated pre-existing structural inefficiencies in the Lebanese economy, leading to a devaluation of the Lebanese currency, capital flight and banking restrictions in an import-dependent economy.

Moreover, the cost of goods has risen by 45% as the cost of imports has inflated with the local currency devaluation.

Resulted recommendations stressed on the dire need of having effective and efficient advocacy, programming and decision-making, involving the following key stakeholders:

- 1) Government stakeholders responsible for regulatory reforms; contractors managing waste management systems;



- 2) Private sector industries that design and manufacture products (both from recycled and virgin materials), especially packaging manufacturers;
- 3) Collection, sorting and recycling agencies, including private companies and Municipalities;
- 4) Repair and redistribution actors who keep products in the economy and support re-use (mainly for electronics, furniture and fabrics);
- 5) Agricultural sector actors such as farmers, food processing industries and cooperatives;

#### **SESSION IV: Local Efforts Through Climate Policy and Sustainable Development**

Visual presentation facilitated by an Expert in the fields of Energy, Electricity, Environment and Economics focused on the Sustainable Development Opportunities in The Energy Sector in Lebanon. The expert presented the renewable energy outlook in Lebanon and focused on how energy is critical to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The expert further added that Energy and electricity demand have weighed heavily on the Lebanese economy in recent years; due to the influx of refugees that has swelled the population and added to power demand. Imported fuel oil alone accounts for nearly a quarter of the national budget deficit. Population growth has pushed energy use up steadily, with the demand for power increasingly exceeding existing generation capacity. While private producers have helped to close the gap, such arrangements are costly for both consumers and the national utility, Electricité du Liban (EDL). Renewable energy technologies, in contrast, promise stable, clean, fully domestic power and heat systems.

The expert stated that Lebanon's commitment to scaling-up the use of renewable energy technologies is fortified by ongoing updates to its renewable energy targets. A new target aiming to meet 30% of total primary energy consumption (electricity and heating demand) from renewables by 2030 was introduced in 2018 and formed the basis of a first update to the electricity reform paper in March 2019.

Like other developing countries, Lebanon faces difficulties in compiling energy data and therefore is yet to generate a complete energy balance. As a result of that, the presentation showed that Lebanon relies on imports to satisfy its energy demand. In terms of primary energy, consumption is met using the following six major components: • liquid petroleum gas (LPG); • gasoline; • gas oil; • kerosene; • fuel oil; and • bitumen. The only sources of energy produced domestically include solar water heaters (SWHs), hydro power plants and a minor solar PV contribution. The Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW) is the main stakeholder in the energy sector in Lebanon. It is essentially responsible for the country's electricity, water and oil portfolios, particularly at the strategic and planning levels in these areas, the expert added.

From another side, a visual presentation was presented by the Former Director General, Ministry of Water on the water challenges within As-Semqanieh geographical scope. The presenter expounded about the huge water deficit while the water demand is continuously increasing. The reasons for this is: poor infrastructure of water supply and distribution network with precipitation insufficiently being recovered, increased pollution levels due to limited capacity of wastewater treatment plants. A complicating factor is that the water sector is governed by many institutions, including ministries, government agencies and municipalities, whereas coordination is not always clear. Specifically, in the case of Jdeidet Al-Chouf, while water from the river can be made available, the lack of energy prevents access to this water.

## INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION:






This session embraced interesting discussions among the attendees about the current electricity/energy issues and recommendations in Lebanon. The following recommendations resulted out of the interactive discussion to align the national strategies with the global sustainable development goals and to allow renewables to cut costs, reduce emissions and bring socio-economic benefits:

1. Implement more stable and integrated regulations for renewable energy deployment.
2. Adopt new measures for small-scale applications.
3. Integrate innovative market schemes.
4. Reform the current market framework to increase investments and project bankability.
5. Financing and the role of the private sector.
6. Establish an independent electricity regulatory authority.
7. Consider a new electricity law clarifying the role of renewable energy.
8. Bundle renewable energy projects at the local, municipal levels.

## CLOSING SESSION

The closing statements highlighted that in order to reduce emissions and avoid the most dangerous impacts of climate change, Lebanon has set out its climate goals in a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), climate/WEF Nexus actions can be mainstreamed into decision making using existing policies. Without careful consideration and planning, there is a risk that Lebanon's national development agenda could compromise its climate commitments, the need is dire to prioritize adaptation interventions in the water and irrigation sectors, introduce climate change vulnerability and adaptation considerations to criteria used for selecting WEF projects for implementation and financing, create an enabling environment leading to greater resilience in the environmental, social and economic activities and sectors.

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

    					
<p>Co-funded by the European Union</p> <p>german cooperation DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT</p> <p><b>MINARET II</b></p> <p>Empowering Municipal Governance for Climate Resilience Using WEF Nexus Approach</p> <p>High-Level Policy Dialogue Meeting 2 August, 2022</p> <p>Lebanon - El Chouf District</p>					
Sr. No	Title / Name	Position	Organization	E-Mail	Yes/No (for publication and documentation purposes)
1	صالح الدين	رئيس بلدية الشوف	بلدية الشوف		✓
2	OUSSAMA KASSAMAN	Key Expal	Clima-Med	okassamani@climamed.org	✓
3	نظام بوخزام	رئيس لجنة مؤسسة البت اللبنانية	الجمعية	Nizam@LHee.org	✓
4	محمد بابا	مدير فرع لجمعية	علم مجلس دولي	Elbaba.moh@qumail.com	✓
5	نديم موسى	أمين سر لجنة مؤسسة	أمين سر جمعية LHEE	Nadim.moussa.LHEE@gmail.com	✓
6	نبيل مري الدين	رئيس جمعية غرين اوريينت	Green Orient	nabilnn@hotmail.com	✓
7	Rasha Shwey	Architect	Federation of Chouf Sweijany Municipalities	rashashwey@gmail.com	✓
8	وليد الدغيلي	خبير في الطاقة/استشاري	4E	w-deghaili@hotmail.com	✓
9	عروان حيران	رئيس مصلحة استشاري	وزارة الطاقة والمياه	erwan.hiran@hotmail.com	✓
10	ميريام جابر	مدير عام سابق لوزارة الطاقة والمياه	خبير مائي	bjaber.motge@gmail.com	✓



11	Firas Hassan	Architect	Arch-Firas Hassan@hotmail.com	✓
12	Samer Zebian	Administrative Coordinator	Samer@shoufkabar.org	✓
13	Hassan Jaafar	ENVIRONNEMENT	jaafarhassan48@hotmail.com	✓
14	Reem Mustapha	Transportation Engineer	reem-mustapha@hotmail.com	✓
15	Wael Hameidan	Independent Consultant	whameidan@gmail.com	X
16	Yehya Abu Karroum	President of Union of municipalities of Chouf Souqaniya	arch-yehya@hotmail.com	✓
17	D. HAMMOU LAAMRAVI	Economic Affairs officer. UN-ESCWA	hammou.laamravi@un.org	✓
18	Hisham Fatayri	Master Educational Management	Fatairyh2@yahoo.com	✓
19	Rania Hamadeh	Teacher-supervisor	Raniahamadeh@gmail.com	✓
20	Sami Zoughib	Research Manager TPI	samizog@gmail.com	✓
21	Taher Dallou	Energy Expert	taher.dallou@rss.org	✓
22	Ahmed Abu Ghoush	Financial Manager	Ahmed.Abughoush@rss.org	✓
23	Muhammad Zuhair	Manager of energy efficiency	muhawalhah@more.gov.jo	✓
24	ROLA AL-SHAMEESH	PM/MINARET	rola.shameesh@rss.org	✓
25	Hilmi. Harmonish	Mayor	harmonishilmi@gmail.com	✓

## AGENDA

Tuesday, 2 August 2022	
10:30 – 11:00	Registration
OPENING SESSION	
11:30 – 11:00	<p><b>Opening Speeches</b></p> <p>Eng. Muhieddin Tawalbeh, <i>Manager of Renewable Energy and Solar Thermal Division, Royal Scientific Society, Jordan</i></p> <p>Ms. Rula Al-Shaweesh, <i>MINARET Project Manager, Royal Scientific Society, Jordan</i></p> <p>Mr. Hilmi Harmoush, <i>Mayor of As-Semqanieh Municipality, Lebanon</i></p> <p>Ms. Irene Sander, <i>Regional Coordinator for the Nexus Regional Dialogues Programme, GIZ, Germany</i></p>
12:00 – 11:30	<p>Visual Presentation - <b>MINARET in a Nutshell: (Aims/Challenges) + (BEI Inputs)</b></p> <p>Eng. Mohammed Khalafat, <i>Energy Specialist, Royal Scientific Society, Jordan</i></p> <p>Eng. Taher Dallou, <i>Energy Specialist, Royal Scientific Society, Jordan</i></p>
12:15 – 12:00	<p>Visual Presentation - <b>MINARET I Achievements at Jdaidet El Chouf Municipality</b></p> <p>Eng. Hisham Fatayri, <i>Mayor of Jdaidet El Chouf Municipality, Lebanon</i></p>
12:30 – 12:15	COFFEE BREAK
12:40 – 12:30	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b> on the importance of the of Nexus approach in managing natural resources to confront climate change and fragility.</p> <p>Dr. Hammou Laamrani, <i>Economic Affairs Officer, Agriculture and Livelihoods Development, UN-ESCWA-Lebanon</i></p>
Session I	<b>Opportunities and challenges of municipalities in natural resources management</b>
13:15 – 12:40	<p><b>Visual Presentation on Climate and Water Challenges in Lebanon</b></p> <p>By Eng. Bassam Jaber, <i>Former Director General at Ministry of Energy &amp; Water / USAID Expert, Lebanon</i></p>



	<p><b>Interactive Discussion</b> <b>Key areas of discussion:</b></p> <p>What are the most key challenges/barriers related to energy, water and food sectors faced at the level of Jdaidet El Chouf and As-Semqanieh municipalities that were touched through BEI data collection process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the projects that the municipality aim to have in order to reduce CO2 emissions and solve wastewater problems?</li> <li>- What are the most important problems facing municipalities in the field of climate change and natural resources management (water, energy, food), whether at the environmental projects at municipal level or at the level of laws adopted by the Lebanese government?</li> <li>- How could the SECAP as climate change tool help the municipalities to develop WEF nexus solutions to combat the challenges that most affect these sectors, especially the energy sector?</li> </ul> <p><b>Voices from the public -Q and A</b></p>
<p><b>Session II</b></p>	<p><b>Nexus Governance Setting - Mainstreaming Nexus approach at municipal level</b></p>
<p><b>14:15 – 13:15</b></p>	<p><b>Visual Presentation</b> on Decentralization By <b>Mr. Sami Zghaib</b>, Economist, Researches Manager - The Policy Initiative, Lebanon</p> <p><b>Interactive Discussion</b> <b>Key areas of discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To what extent the municipal laws in Lebanon allow for municipalities' involvement and level of authority in the development process in terms of financial control, the management and governance over resources and the level of empowerment and facilitations measures they provide to the community?</li> <li>- In your opinion, what is the sector that has the most potential to reduce CO2 emissions at As-Semqanieh municipal level? (Transportation, electricity, gas, solid waste, and wastewater)?</li> <li>- How do the governing scene do in dealing with the complexity among the water, energy and food sectors at the municipal level? and what can be done to enhance the role of municipalities to become the agent in the sustainable development?</li> <li>- How can we model the “NEXUS” at municipal level?</li> </ul> <p><b>Voices from the public -Q and A</b></p>
<p><b>14:30 – 14:15</b></p>	<p><b>BREAK</b></p>

Session III	Creating economic value through a circular economy approach
15:00 – 14:30	<p><b>Visual Presentation</b> on Waste Management Mechanisms By Mr. Nazim Abi Khzam, <i>Circular Economy Expert - Lebanese House Establishment for Environment</i></p> <p><b>Key areas of discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is the municipality doing to promote the conversion of waste into resources?</li> <li>- What are the enablers for knowledge-exchange among urban practitioners from city administrations, civil society, academia and the private sector?</li> <li>- How will the transition to a circular economy reduce costs and create jobs?</li> <li>- Will moving toward a circular economy require changes in community behavior?</li> </ul> <p><b>Voices from the public -Q and A</b></p>
Session V	Local Efforts Through Climate Policy and Sustainable Development
15:00 - 16:00	<p><b>Visual Presentation</b> on The Sustainable Development Opportunities in The Energy Sector in Lebanon By Dr. Walid Dughmi, <i>Expert in the fields of Energy, Electricity, Environment and Economic, Lebanon</i></p> <p><b>Visual Presentation</b> on Water Challenges Within As-Semqanieh Geographical Scope By Eng. Hasan Jaa'far, <i>Former Director General, Ministry of Water, Lebanon</i></p> <p><b>Interactive Discussion</b></p>
16:00	<b>GROUP PHOTO / LUNCH</b>

## CONCEPT NOTE

### *“Policy Dialogue at Municipal Level”*

2 August 2022, 10:30 - 16:00

El Chouf District, Lebanon

#### Background:

MINARET “The MENA Region Initiative as a Model of NEXUS Approach and Renewable Energy Technologies” supports municipalities to improve their service delivery in relation to natural resources management management (related to water, energy and food security).

Minaret II aims to improve people’s lives by helping municipal governments to secure the funds and develop the skills they need to deliver high-quality public services, in particular with regard to policies that affect the usage of water, energy and food resources. The focus hereby likes on sustainable energy policies, addressing climate mitigation by means of reduction in fossil fuel consumption. However, since energy policies impact on water and food security issues, both in a positive but also negative ways, an integrated look at natural resources management is warranted. Minaret II therefore addresses issues related to increased renewable energy usage, energy efficiency practices but in equal measures water management techniques, and food security strategies. While municipalities in the three target countries do not directly manage these three resources, municipalities must coordinate and cooperate with other relevant sub-national authorities/directorates for better management, distribution and usage of water and energy demand within the framework of their specific mandate. Finally, municipalities can play a crucial role in raising awareness, attracting investment, engaging communities and producing knowledge among their communities. In order to benefit of proven international practices in strengthening urban resilience, Minaret II follows the Covenant of Mayors (CoM) approach, enabling beneficiary municipalities from becoming members by developing Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP), for which a set of guidelines exist. Membership at the CoM allows municipalities to join a network of local authorities for knowledge exchange as well as gaining credibility for financial resource mobilization.

Minaret II comprises three phases; phase I consisting of a thorough baseline data collection; phase II including the cross-sectoral development of the SECAP and phase III being dedicated to the topic of access to finance. Due to time constraints, some phases will start in parallel or prior to the full accomplishment of the previous phase.

Minaret II is in the progress of accomplishing the first phase of the project consisting of a thorough baseline assessment. The baseline assessment includes a vulnerability assessment of the effects of climate change, in order to highlight strengths and weaknesses of a territory- This is to determine the nature and extent of risk by analysing potential hazards and assessing vulnerability that could pose a potential threat the provision of energy, water and food security (as well as prevent harm to people, property, livelihoods and the environment more generally). This forms the foundation for selected adaptation actions, which will translate into the SECAP and contribute to improve the resilience of the territory.

Minaret II is implemented by the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan in the framework of the Nexus Regional Dialogues Programme - MENA, which in turn is implemented by GIZ and funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Minaret II operates in Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan from January 2022-March 2023.

### Objectives of the event:

- MINARET II aims to stimulate debate on the role of municipalities in climate action as an opportunity for municipal transformative economic growth but also as a means to increase overall climate resilience at different governance levels
- Introduce Minaret II initiative implemented by the Royal Scientific Society and engage stakeholders in the overall process through knowledge exchange

### Modality of event:

The event will be organized in the form of a U-shape consisting of high-level representatives from local municipalities (Mayors), national governments, international organizations and bilateral donors, and a linear table of panelists that includes speakers from targeted municipalities and others specialized in the area of high-policy dialogue within the water, energy and agriculture/food sector at the municipal level. Each side will share knowledge and experience and how such an approach can be responsive to both the SDGs and the municipalities' mandate.

### Time and Place:

Date : 2 August 2022

Time : 10:30AM – 16:00PM

Venue : Park Innovation, El Chouf, Lebanon.

### Participation:

The event is open to all stakeholders relevant to MINARET II agenda. Participants to the event will include representatives from regional, national and local governments, the private sector, international organizations and donors, representatives of non-governmental and community-based organizations.

### Audience

OPERATIONAL	MINARET PROJECT TEAM, IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS (INCLUDING MUNICIPALITIES AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS)
PROGRAMMATIC	MINARET Project Team, GIZ/IRD Team, MINARET Finance Expert
STRATEGIC	Donor Agency [GIZ],

### Contacts:

#### MINARET Focal Point:

MS. RULA AL-SHAWEEH

Email [rola.shaweesh@rss.jo](mailto:rola.shaweesh@rss.jo)

Website [www.minaretproject.com](http://www.minaretproject.com)

### Sessions:

The meeting will offer a set of activities allowing open dialogue, constructive critique and self-reflection. It will include the following key elements:

**Welcome Remarks/ Visual Presentation/ Plenary Sessions/ Key Lessons and Way Forward.**