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Press Release

Second national Steering Committee convened on the “Resilient Water Solutions Against Climate Change” project in Lebanon.

UN-Habitat, ESCWA, and UNICEF gather Lebanese Ministries of Environment and Agriculture with local authorities and project partners to discuss water-related climate adaptation measures in Lebanon.

Beirut, 1 June 2023 – In the context of the “Resilient Water Solutions Against Climate Change in Jordan and Lebanon” project, led by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the second national Steering Committee meeting in Lebanon has concluded, gathering Lebanese Minister of Environment Nasser Yassine and Lebanese Minister of Agriculture Abbas Al Hajj Hassan along with local authorities, implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders. Participants discussed the project’s milestones, challenges and the way forward.

In his statement, Yassin stressed the importance of finding alternative sources of water while preserving biodiversity. “We need to manage water resources wisely and evaluate all potential solutions. In this context, this project is very important because it promotes the use of non-conventional water sources such as treated wastewater and grey water,” he said.

For his part, Hassan said that investing in development and equality in Lebanon has become a priority given the current crises in the country. “Climate change has brought its share of challenges all over the world, including in the Arab region. This project is important because it promotes the use of non-conventional water sources. Lebanon is rich in water so we must learn to manage our resources sustainably, and this can only be achieved through such partnerships,” he added.

The project aims to provide innovative measures to promote climate change resilience with a focus on ensuring climate change and gender mainstreamed urban planning. Financed by the Adaptation Fund, the project also encourages the sustainable management and use of water resources through promoting water-efficient irrigation methods and permaculture, in addition to using non-conventional water sources, such as treated wastewater and harvested rainwater. In Lebanon, the city of Zahle and the wider Zahle District are the project’s targeted areas due to recurrent droughts, extreme heat and a shift in rainfall patterns which have recently become major concerns for these areas.

“The project clearly aligns with Water Action Decade priorities internationally and regionally. It also places emphasis on working at the community level to strengthen awareness and capacity building around water scarcity issues,” said ESCWA Deputy Executive Secretary Mounir Tabet.

“Urban areas and cities are major contributors to global warming and climate change. In Lebanon, urban areas are rapidly expanding without the necessary planning needed to ensure that green agricultural lands and water resources are well-protected. We hope that this project can prove to be a reference for other regions across the country to improve sustainable water resource management that builds community resilience to climate change while providing new economic opportunities amidst the crises that Lebanon is facing,” said Head of UN-Habitat Lebanon Country Programme Taina Christiansen.

The project will later this year convene a regional Steering Committee meeting. Major project stakeholders from Lebanon and Jordan will gather to discuss regional contextualities of the project. They will also formulate a strategy that optimizes the regional exchange of information and experiences between the two countries and across the Arab region; and promote the upscaling, replication and sustainability of the project.

About the “Resilient Water Solutions Against Climate Change in Jordan and Lebanon” project

The "Resilient water solutions against climate change in Jordan and Lebanon" project is funded by the Adaptation Fund and implemented by UN-Habitat in partnership with ESCWA and UNICEF in Lebanon and national executing partners in the targeted countries. The project aims to increase the resilience of communities to climate change-related water challenges in Lebanon and Jordan.

About 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.

About ESCWA

One of five United Nations regional commissions, ESCWA supports inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Arab States, and works on enhancing regional integration.

About UNICEF

Working in Lebanon for over 70 years, UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories,



we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. For more information about UNICEF Lebanon and our work for children, visit www.unicef.org/lebanon/ or follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

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