INCEPTION MEETING

**Fostering COVID-19 recovery and SDG Implementation through Local Action
in Asia-Pacific, Arab and African countries**

Wednesday 15th March 2023, 10:00-12:30pm

Background

The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and an inclusive, resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic largely depend on local action. The project *"Fostering COVID-19 recovery and SDG Implementation through local action in Asia-Pacific, Arab and African countries"* recognizes the important role of city authorities and was designed to partner with 9 cities in three regions globally to support their localization efforts. Through a territorial approach to sustainable development anchored in multilevel governance, participation, and inclusion, the project aims to reinforce the capacities of local and regional governments and multi-level governance systems to advance the localization of the SDGs.

The meeting will kick-off the implementation of the project in the Arab region. Implementing partners will present the project's objective, approaches, and roadmap. In addition, all cities and partners involved will also have the possibility to present their local context and efforts in implementing the SDGs and advancing local/urban development processes in their cities.

Local governments will be accompanied to adopt the global Urban Monitoring Framework as the indicators' framework of reference for the development of Voluntary Local Reviews and to develop City Development Strategies as well as related transformative projects. With the involvement of key partners, partner cities will also be connected to regional and global processes to discuss their experiences and learn from peers.

The meeting will be an occasion for implementing partners and pilot cities to share views and objectives for the upcoming joint work. The cities joining the project in the Arab region are Ennour, Tunisia; Irbid, Jordan; and Ramallah, Palestine.

Project implementation in the region is led by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

Objectives of the Meeting
• Kicking-off the implementation of the project
• Presenting the project's objective, approach, and roadmap
• Sharing the pilot cities' experiences on the SDGs and expectations from the project
• Connecting all partners involved in the process

Agenda

Moderator: Martino Miraglia, Human Settlements Officer, UN-Habitat	
10:00 – 10:20	**Introductory Remarks:** Rania Hedeya, Regional Representative (a.i), UN-Habitat ROAS Sukaina Al Nasrawi, Urban Development Lead, ESCWA
10:20 – 10:30	**Tour de Table** Introduction of participants
10:30 - 10: 50	**Overview of the Project** Martino Miraglia, Human Settlements Officer, UN-Habitat
10:50 – 11:00	**City experience** Eng. Akram Khraisat, Director of Amman Urban Observatory, Greater Amman Municipality, Jordan
11:00 – 11:45	**Pilot Cities** Presentations by pilot cities, introducing their territorial context and their work on SDGs and local/urban development. **Ennour (Tunisia)** Ms. Fatma Mahmoud, Mayor of Hay Ennour **Irbid (Jordan)** Eng. Leila Youssef, Assistant Director of the International Projects and Programs Unit, Greater Irbid Municipality **Ramallah (Palestine)** Mr. Ahmed Abu Laban, City Director, Ramallah Municipality
11:45 – 12:15	**Project Tracks:** Presentation by implementing partners (UN-Habitat & ESCWA) 1. **Technical Track:** Voluntary Local Reviews & SDG Localization 2. **Regional Activities:** Mayors Academy, SDG Localization Platform, VLR/VNR Studios, Advocacy 3. **Learning & Capacity Building Track:** SDG Localization/COVID-19 Recovery Tool & Training of public officials
12:15 – 12:30	**Q&A**
12:30 – 1:30	**Lunch**

Resources

Online platforms on VLRs and SDG localization

UN-Habitat VLR platform: https://unhabitat.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews

UNDESA VLR website: https://sdgs.un.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews

UCLG GOLD: https://www.gold.uclg.org/report/localizing-sdgs-boost-monitoring-reporting

VLR Guidelines

UN-Habitat-UCLG Global Guidelines

Vol.1: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/07/uclg_vlrlab_guidelines_july_2020_final.pdf

Vol.2: https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2021/07/vlrguidelines_vol2.pdf

UNDESA VLR Guiding Elements:

https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/GlobalGuidingElementsforVLRs_FINAL.pdf

Learning and Capacity Building

Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) Learning Modules:

https://learningwith.uclg.org/p/voluntary-local-reviews

UCLG SDG Localization Learning Modules:

https://learning.uclg.org/localizing-the-sdgs