

**Government of the Syrian Arab Republic
Ministry of Local Administration & Environment
& the United Nations Development Programme**

Project Title

“Technical Assistance in the Area of Sustainable Urban Development”

SYR/08/002

Brief Description

This project ultimately aims to support the Syrian Government in the process of policy and decision making; and enhance the planning and decentralization structures through the provision of quality information and analysis in the area of sustainable urban development. Towards this objective, the project has two main outputs, namely: i) establishing national and local (pilot in Sweida) urban observatories according to UN-HABITAT global standards and linking them to the global urban observatory; and ii) developing institutional and technical capacities at the newly established Training Center for Sustainable Urban Development. The project will be implemented by the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment over a fifteen-month period

COVER PAGE

Country: Syrian Arab Republic

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s)¹: Outcome 2.1: Policy and decision-making supported by quality information and analyses, especially taking into account population dynamics, reproductive health and gender and children's issues. Mechanism in place for evidence-based policy making and resource allocation.

Expected Outcome(s)/Indicator (s): B 5. Planning and Decentralization policies and structures enhanced
(GP/ RP/ CP outcomes linked to the MYFF goal and service line)

Expected Output(s)/Annual Targets: B.5.3. National and local capacities in the field of sustainable urban development strengthened to support informed decision making.
(GP/ RP/ CP outputs linked to the above CP outcome)

Implementing Partner: Ministry of Local Administration & Environment

Responsible Partners: Ministry of Local Administration & Environment

Programme Period: 2007-2011
Programme Component: Fostering Democratic Governance
Project Title: Technical Assistance in the Area of Sustainable Urban Development
Project ID: **SYR/08/002**
Project Duration: February 2008 – April 2009
Management Arrangement: National Execution (NEX)

Programme Budget US\$	191,000
GMS Fee: US\$	4,550
Total budget: US\$	195,550
Allocated resources:	
• Government/MoLAE* \$	95,550**
• UNDP TRAC \$	100,000

Agreed by: Dr. Tayssir Al-Raddawi
Head of the State Planning Commission
On behalf of the Syrian Government

Date: _____

Agreed by: Mr. Hilal Al Atrash
Minister of Local Administration and Environment
On behalf of the Implementing Partner

Date: _____

Mr. Ahmed Rhazaoui
Officer-in-Charge UNDP

Date: _____

* Money will be paid in Syrian Pounds.

** The prevailing UN exchange rate at the time of signature of the project is US\$ 1= SP 47.9

I. Situation Analysis

The MDGs top the strategic priorities of Syria's Tenth Five-Year Plan (2006-2010), which seeks to eradicate poverty, raise the educational level of underprivileged segments, improve the level of social and health services, develop the infrastructures in the neediest areas, secure financial resources to the poor and enhance the role of society in the development process. Since the ratification of the Millennium Declaration in the year 2000, Syria has achieved notable accomplishments in realizing a major portion of the MDGs, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction, health, education, and gender equality. Nonetheless, the progress at the national level was offset by various disparities, including, inter alia, interregional, intra-regional, and urban-rural disparities. These kinds of disparities which are manifested in the MDGs and other social and economic indicators are a clear reflection of imbalanced developmental efforts at the spatial level.

Within the framework of the Ninth Five-Year Plan, significant achievements were made in terms of the horizontal expansion of the health and educational services and the adoption of reform policies and measures to raise the social welfare level at the national level. In addition, a number of developmental and infrastructure programmes and projects were implemented to address specific priority problems in certain governorates. For example, industrial zones were established in Damascus, Rural Damascus and several other governorates. Further, private universities started to spread in view of the social and economic returns they yield.

Despite the efforts extended in the Ninth Five-Year Plan, there are a few weaknesses that characterize this plan that have resulted in significant discrepancies in social, economic, and environmental indicators among regions and governorates. First, it lacked an overall vision necessary to ensure coordination among all these efforts and put them into a national and spatial perspective. Second, it adopted a sector-based rather than a spatial approach to investments distribution which did not take into account the already existing economic and social activities. Third, it did not articulate strategic and developmental goals for each region separately. Fourth, it neither highlighted the reciprocal relationship among governorates nor among the different regions.

The Tenth Five Year Plan identified some of the root causes for these imperfections in the Ninth and previous Five Year Plans that hindered balanced regional development in Syria; and described them as challenges for the coming five years. These include: i) the insufficiency of disaggregated data at the regional and local levels; ii) the absence of tools that enable decision-makers to monitor data among the regions and governorates and take informed decisions about redistribution of investments to minimize discrepancies; and iii) the lack of capacities at the national and local levels in the areas of regional/local and sustainable urban planning.

This Project will address this set of challenges and bring the best practices in terms of providing the latest available tools at the national and local levels which would enable policy makers to develop policies and take decisions that are supported by quality information and analysis.

II. Strategy

A. Government Strategy

Emanating from the MDGs and adopting a social market economy, the Tenth Five- Year Plan emphasizes through its different chapters the importance of regularly producing accurate and reliable data at the national and local levels in order to monitor progress vis-à-vis its targets and indicators.

The strategies that the Government has adopted in its Tenth Five-Year Plan to achieve balanced regional planning include:

- Preparing a regional developmental map that clarifies the distribution of current economic, social and service activities in Syria.
- Establishing urban regional observatories.
- Coordinating with information centers at local planning levels through the regional centre.
- Building a regional database in order to support the capacities of the concerned institutions (e.g. MoLAE, SPC,GIC...etc) in drawing and directing its developmental policies based on a regional perspective and the needs of every region.
- Preparing national plans of regional planning according to the bases and methodology of sustainable development.

B. UNDP Strategy

This project will be in support of the overall directions of the UN in general and UNDP in particular to assist countries in better monitoring and reporting on the MDGs at both the national and local levels. Specifically, the project is in support of the United National Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) *Outcome 2.1 to support policy and decision making with quality information and analyses, especially taking into account population dynamics, reproductive health, gender and children issues with mechanisms in place for evidence-based policy making and resource allocation.* It also fits perfectly with UNDP's Country Programme pertinent outcomes under the area of fostering democratic governance, namely *B1 Policy and decision-making supported by quality information and analysis and B6 Planning and decentralization policies and structures enhanced MYFF Core Result Capacities and Partnerships developed of local governance actors in urban/rural areas for policy formulation, service delivery and resource management.*

C. Project Components

This project aims at supporting the Syrian Government in the implementation of these strategies through: i) providing technical support and capacity building to establish a national and a pilot local urban observatory; ii) technically supporting the newly established Training Center for Sustainable Urban Development.

Together, these two objectives would result in better monitoring of social, economic, environmental trends and conditions at the national and local levels, which in turn would contribute to informed policy and decision making.

The two project components include:

- 1) Technical support and capacity building to establish a National Urban Observatory with a pilot local urban observatory. A detailed action plan will be developed through a participatory process with the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment and relevant Ministries and Governorates to ensure that the Observatories will serve their needs in terms of urban indicator established, data collected, reports produced and knowledge managed. The National Observatory will be linked to the already established local observatory in Aleppo and will support the creation of a new one in Sweida as a pilot with possible replication in other governorate. The Observatory will aim at providing support to decision making processes based on indicators in line with the UN-HABITAT urban indicators tailored to the Syrian context. The UN-HABITAT Global Urban Observatory will provide technical inputs in the development of the action plan and will continue to provide support during and after the establishment of the Observatories. This component of the Project will also include training workshops on data gathering and analysis.

- 2) Technical support to Training Centre for Sustainable Urban Development. Technical support will include a training needs assessment to develop a plan for capacity building of the main institutions dealing with sustainable urban development in general and with the newly established Training Centre for Urban Development in particular. The plan will include institutional review, capacity building and training of human resources in selected institutions through the development of effective and efficient processes, training courses and on-the-job training as appropriate. Some initial TOTs and training workshops will be included as part of this project. In addition, the project will support the center through the establishment of a permanent exhibition room that displays UN-HABITAT practices (i.e. videos, brochures, pamphlets, etc)

Definitions of Urban Observatories

What is a Global Urban Observatory?

The Global Urban Observatory (GUO) is a worldwide information and capacity-building network that addresses the urgent need to improve the world-wide base of urban knowledge by helping Governments, local authorities and organizations of the civil society develop and apply policy-oriented urban indicators, statistics and other urban information. The GUO was established by the United Nations Human Settlement Programme UN-HABITAT in response to a decision of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, which called for a mechanism to monitor global progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and to monitor and evaluate global urban conditions and trends. The GUO works closely with Best Practices and Local Leadership programme (BLP) which was established to make use of information and networking in support of the Habitat Agenda Implementation.

What are Local and National Urban Observatories?

Local and National Urban Observatories are governmental agencies, research centres or educational institutions that are designated as the "workshops" where monitoring tools are developed and used for policy-making through consultative processes. A Local Urban Observatory for a city or town is the focal point for urban policy development and planning where collaboration among policy makers, technical experts and representatives of partners groups is fostered. Networks of Local Urban Observatories are facilitated by National Urban Observatories where necessary. National Urban Observatories co-ordinate capacity building assistance and compile and analyze urban data for national policy development. Setting-up an Urban Observatory. Guide to joining the Global Urban Observatory Network.

Source: UN-HABITAT website at: <http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/guo/>

D. Duration of the project

This project is expected to be implemented over the period 5 February 2008 till 30 April 2009

III. Results & Resources Framework

Intended Outcome as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:

B 6 Planning and Decentralization policies and structures enhanced

Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets. Outcome indicator:
Number of regional and municipal management plans drawn up and implemented ;

Applicable MYFF Service Line: 2.6 Decentralization, local governance and urban/rural development

Project title and ID (ATLAS Award ID): SYR/08/002- Technical Assistance in the Area of Sustainable Urban Development

Partnership Strategy Considering the usefulness of the urban indicators that will be developed and the data will be collected within the framework of the project (as part of establishing the observatory) for the monitoring of the Tenth Five Year Plan, close coordination will be ensured with the State Planning Commission. Further, it will develop partnership with other agencies working on sustainable urban development. In terms of the Training Center for Sustainable Urban Development, the project will also closely coordinate with the EU's Project "Municipal Administration Modernization" that is being implemented by the MoLAE and within the framework of which the renovation of the Center was initiated.

Outputs	Output Targets	Indicative activities	Responsible Parties	Inputs (US\$)
Output 1 A national and local (Sweida) urban observatories established according to UN-HABITAT global standards, functioning, and linked to the global urban observatory	1.1 Implementation structures in place	1.1.1 – form project implementation team -1.1.2 Form project board with representation of key stakeholders	Ministry of Local Administration & Environment (MoLAE) <i>(Handwritten: 2 desks, 1 vehicle, 2 chairs)</i>	NPD: 2,000*15=30,000* Admin/Finance Assistant: 600*15= 7,500* Part-time focal point in Sweida: 300*15=4,500* Office equipment: 5,000* Vehicle: 20,000 Internal travel cost: 1,000* Total Output Target 1.1 : 68,000 UNDP TRAC: 20,000

(Handwritten: local observatory, 2 desks, 1 vehicle, 2 chairs)

	<p>1.2 Policy oriented urban indicators and indices that are comparable to global indicators and based on the Syrian context (national and local) developed</p>	<p>1.2.1 Collect and analyze universal key urban indicators used for international comparisons 1.2.2 Identify national urban and Sweida local observatory partners 1.2.3 Mobilize key stakeholders through organizing public awareness raising/sensitization workshops/activities about urban indicators, global, national, and local urban observatories 1.2.4 Conduct consultative meetings to identify critical issues and select indicators to measure conditions and trends of national and local importance (indicators specific to the Syrian context and the situation in Sweida where the local observatory will be established as a pilot) 1.2.5 Conduct primary data collection activities at the national level and in Sweida 1.2.6 Identify data gaps and proxy data that can be used at both levels</p>	<p>MoLAE</p>	<p>MoLAE: 48,000* F&A: 2,400 Total Output Target 1.1 with F&A: 70,400 National consultant: 3,000* International consultant: 12,000* Mission cost: 3,000 UN-HABITAT mission costs: 4,000 Workshops: 5,000* Internal travel: 2,000* Publications: 3,000* Total Output Target 1.2.: 32,000 UNDP TRAC: 13,000 MoLAE: 19,000* F&A: 950 Total Output target 1.2 with F&A: 32,950</p>
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<p>1.3 Tools for data generation and analysis, control and improvements of data quality, management and analysis of data and dissemination of information developed.</p>	<p>1.3.1 -Develop a web-based data management system 1.3.2 -Test the package for its usefulness in data collection, management, analysis, and monitoring at the city level</p>	<p>MoLAE</p>	<p>Software: 10,000 UN-HABITAT Mission cost: 3,000 Internal travel: 1,000* Total Output Target 1.3: 14,000 UNDP TRAC: 13,000 MoLAE: 1,000* F&A: 50 Total Output Target 1.3 with F&A: 14,050</p>
<p>1.4 Institutional and technical capacity (at both the national level and in Sweida as a pilot) developed for data collection, assembling, analysis, continuous monitoring over time</p>	<p>1.4.1 -Develop, test, and disseminate training packages with the system 1.4.2 -Conduct intensive training on selecting indicators, collecting, verifying and managing data 1.4.3 -Prepare, publish and disseminate training materials 1.4.4 - Establish processes for revising indicators and data sets over time</p>	<p>MoLAE</p>	<p>Training package: 5,000 UN_HABITAT Mission cost: 4,000 Internal travel: 2,000* Total Output Target 1.4: 11,000 (UNDP TRAC: 9,000) MoLAE: 2,000* F&A: 100 Total Output Target 1.4 with F&A: 11,100</p>
<p>1.5 National urban observatory and local urban observatory in Sweida linked to the</p>	<p>1.5.1 Facilitate networking services at the local level and a common interface with the regional affiliate</p>	<p>MoLAE</p>	<p>Internet home page cost: 5,000 Publications: 5,000 National Consultant: 3,000* International travel & DSA:</p>

	global network of regional, national and local urban observatory partners	<p>1.5.2 Design and maintain a national internet homepage and newsletter for reporting on all activities of the national urban Sweida local observatories</p> <p>1.5.3 Organize study tours/ensure participation of technical staff in global/regional workshop regarding global urban observatories</p>		<p>15,000</p> <p>Total Output Target 1.5: 28,000</p> <p>UNDP TRAC: 25,000 MoLAE: 3,000* F&A: 150</p> <p>Total Output Target 1.5 with F&A: 28,150</p>
Sub-total output I				
Sub-total output I with F&A				
Output 2 Institutional and technical capacities at the newly established Training Center for Sustainable Urban Development built	2.1 Institutional review of the TCFSUD completed	<p>2.1.1.-Review the suggested mission statement and objectives of the center and make suggestions for improvement</p> <p>2.1.2 Review the proposed organigramme and make suggestions for improvement</p> <p>2.1.3 -Develop TORs for the key positions at the Centre</p>	MoLAE	<p>UN-HABITAT publications, CD-ROMS, tool kits etc. 15,000</p> <p>Total output target 2.1: 15,000 UNDP TRAC: 15,000</p> <p>Total output target 2.1: 15,000 (F&A: not applicable)</p>
2.2 Capacity building action plan developed and initial training conducted	<p>2.2.1 Assess training needs in line with the priorities and mission statement of the Center</p> <p>2.2.2 Develop capacity building action plan</p> <p>2.2.3 Implement TOTs and key lectures/workshops in the Center</p>	MoLAE		<p>UN-HABITAT mission cost: 5,000</p> <p>Training expenses : 5,000*</p> <p>Stationery/training materials : 3,000*</p> <p>Workshop costs: 5,000*</p> <p>Reports/publications: 5,000*</p> <p>Total output target 2.2: 23,000</p>

				UNDP TRAC: 5,000 MoLAE: 18,000* F&A: 900
				Total Output target 2.2 with F&A: 23,900
			Subtotal Output 2	38,000
			Subtotal Output with F&A	38,900
				191,000
				4,550
				195,550
Budget Total				
Total F&A				
Budget Total with F&A				

Note: Budget inputs with an asterisk sign next to them are those that will be funded by the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment.

IV. Management Arrangements

1. The project will be nationally implemented by the Ministry of Local Administration & Environment MoLAE in accordance with the established UNDP rules and procedures. The MoLAE, referred to as the implementing partner will be responsible for the overall implementation of the project and for ensuring that the day-to-day activities are implemented in accordance with the work plan. It will also be responsible, together with UNDP Country Office, for supervising project staff and consultants.
2. The MoLAE it will ensure cooperation with the Central Bureau of Statistics, State Planning Commission and relevant ministries throughout the implementation of the project, particularly in the process of developing urban indicators, collecting data, and establishing the national and local urban observatories. In order to pave the ground for possible replication of local observatories in the future, MoLAE will ensure the participation of all thirteen governorates in the workshop where the Local Urban Observatory in Sweida will be presented. MoLAE will seek technical assistance and guidance from UN-HABITAT throughout the implementation of the project.
3. A Project Board (PB) will be established to monitor the project's progress towards results. The PB will consist of representatives from the MoLAE, SPC, Governorate of Sweida, UNDP, and UN-HABITAT. The PB should meet three times over the course of implementation of the project or as need be. (Terms of Reference are attached in Annex 1 of this document).
4. The project management team will include the National Project Director and an Admin/Finance Assistant. The National Project Director will be accountable for the implementation of all the activities of the project, coordination among the different stakeholders, ensuring adherence to and application of acceptable financial management systems and monitoring and evaluating the project's overall progress. S/He will be accountable to the PB, and any changes in the milestones and outputs of the project will be discussed with and agreed upon by the PB.
5. A part-time focal point will be recruited and based in Sweida Governorate. S/He will be responsible for: i) producing a detailed action plan derived from the overall workplan of the project ii) monitoring the implementation of this plan. iii) and reporting to the NPD and a senior official in Sweida Governorate.

V. Monitoring & Evaluation

The NPD and the Government counterpart MoLAE will be responsible for delivering the outputs of the project, the implementation, input management, and sound administrative management. The National Project Director will develop and submit a detailed project work plan, a procurement plan at the outset of the project, quarterly financial reports, and quarterly progress reports to the UNDP country office. The report should include two sections, namely project implementation and project performance. It should receive inputs from Deliverable Descriptions, Outputs Definitions, Quality Log, Issues Log, and Risks Log. Additionally, an annual progress report (APR) due one year after the initiation of project activities and a final project review report at the end of the project will be submitted to UNDP. These documents

will provide critical information and lessons learned regarding the effectiveness of the implementation strategy and the delivery of outputs.*

The PB will meet three times over the course of implementation of the project or as need be in order to take stock of the progress of the project. All stakeholders will also participate in a Final Review Meeting at the end of the project duration, where a Final Project Review Report highlighting the main achievements, results, and lessons learned will be reviewed and discussed. An independent evaluation could also be commissioned at the cost of the project if warranted. At least two field visits should take place by UNDP CO to Sweida Governorate during the life of the project, to ensure proper implementation of the project. The project is subject to auditing at least once in its lifetime, in accordance with NEX regulations.

VI. Legal Context

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of the S.A.R. and the United Nations Development Programme, signed by the parties on 12 March 1981. The host-country implementing unit shall, for the purpose of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement, refer to the government cooperating agency described in that document.

The following types of revisions may be made to this project document with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative only, provided he is assured that the other signatories of the project document have no objections to the proposed changes:

- Revisions in, or additions of, any of the annexes of the project document.
- Revisions which do not involve significant changes in immediate objectives, outputs or activities of the project, but are necessitated by rearrangement of inputs already agreed to, or by cost increases due to inflation; and mandatory annual revisions, which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs or expert or other costs due to inflation or take into account expenditure flexibility.

Schedule of Payment:

The MoLAE will transfer its contribution to the project in Syrian pounds in one installment on 14 February 2008. This transfer will be made to UNDP's following account:

BYBLOS BANK SYRIA (Shaanan)

UNDP REPRESENTATIVE (POUNDS ACCT)

200 0200 573 004

* These reports will be prepared in line with the UNDP updated rules and regulations and the templates included in the user guide 2006 (<http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/project/>)