

3RF Urban Policy Working Group

Minutes of Meeting

Meeting organizers	UN-Habitat, World Bank, 3RF Secretariat
Meeting attendees	In person: Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM), Beirut Governorate, Central Management Unit (PMO), UN-Habitat, World Bank (WB), UNOPS, Live Love Lebanon, AUB–Beirut Urban Lab, 3RF Secretariat (UNRCO), Online: KfW, EU, AICS, Beit el Baraka, Lebanese Red Cross, UNICEF, Beirut Heritage Initiative (BHI)
Unable to attend	Directorate General of Local Administrations and Councils, Beirut Municipality, Public Cooperation for Housing (PCH), Lebanon Reforestation Initiative, UNDP, UNESCO, Order of Engineers and Architects
Location	Beirut Municipality and MS Teams
Date	17 May 2023
Duration	11:30 a.m.–13:00 p.m.
Meeting nr.	2.
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed review process for UN-Habitat’s housing policy recommendations – 3RF Secretariat and UN-Habitat, followed by group discussion 2. Update on the draft updated Heritage Law – UNESCO /3RF Secretariat 3. Update on the Beirut Urban Recovery and Development Strategy – World Bank 4. Next steps and AOB

Minutes of meeting	
1. Proposed review process for the UN-Habitat’s housing policy recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a presentation of the proposed review process of the housing policy recommendations, as outlined in the 3RF Urban Policy WG concept note shared with the invitation to this meeting, the group discussion focused on relevant topics to consider in the review of housing policy recommendations included in UN-Habitat’s Guide for Mainstreaming Housing in Lebanon’s National Urban Policy (NUP) published in 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build on a diagnostic of past context (subsidized loans from the PCH and Banque de l’Habitat, social housing projects launched by religious communities, etc.), inter-linkages with environment, role of diaspora, investments in social bonds, problem of vacant/unused houses and office buildings, reviewing the rental legal framework, need to bring in municipalities and the army since they own land, affordability of housing, addressing issue of over-populated areas and the economic impact of weak infrastructure, etc. ○ Such a diagnosis is already found in the UN-Habitat NUP housing guide (pp. 16–42), but it might need to be reviewed/updated. • Agreed way forward → An online form will be shared with the WG members and 2-3 offline consultation meetings with other stakeholders will be organized to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review mapping of stakeholders that need to be consulted;



- b. Review UN-Habitat’s housing policy recommendations for updates, missing priorities, obsolete topics, etc.; and
- c. Propose prioritized actions to advance a holistic housing policy.

- The outcome of the review will feed into drafting a joint position paper on the way forward, which can be used to inform the World Bank’s Beirut Urban Recovery and Development Strategy as well as identify synergies and funding gaps.

2. Update on the draft updated Heritage Law

- The updated draft Heritage Law was transmitted to the Directorate General of Antiquities after several rounds of discussions and meetings with all stakeholders.
- However, as the Parliament is now in the presidential election phase, no further action is possible at the moment.
- To be explored at a later stage: how the updated draft law might interact with the housing policy recommendations.

3. Update on the World Bank-led Beirut Urban Recovery and Development Strategy

- **Background context:** At the third 3RF Consultative Group meeting, which provides strategic guidance and mobilizes political support at the high level, [agreed on the strategic direction and priorities of 3RF key sectors](#), where the Lebanese Government, international organizations, donors, and civil society endorsed the formulation of a Beirut urban recovery and development strategy and action plans, linking housing to wider urban recovery with sensitivity to the culture, municipal services, environment, and other relevant key urban sectors.
- **Objective:** the aim of the activity is to support the formulation of the cross-sectoral Urban Recovery and Development Strategy for the Greater Beirut, including facilitating multi-stakeholder co-creation platform, consultations, identification of actions and pilots, etc.
- In order to complement funding from the Lebanon Financing Facility (LFF), the WB team has successfully raised additional funds from the WB multi-donor Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery and is waiting for final endorsement from the City Climate Finance Gap Fund.
- The implementation period is set to be 18 months. The competitive bidding process is set to be launched in June through a call for expression of interest.
- Eligible ‘firms’ will be able to apply → ‘firms’ in the broader sense, as defined by the WB corporate procurement guidelines.
- Feedback from the group highlighted the need to ensure representatives from a comprehensive range of government agencies, universities, and NGOs to be involved in the consultation platform that will be set up.
- To be noted: no feedback was provided by the WG members on the list of references prepared by the WB on relevant existing studies and data, which was shared together with the invitation to this meeting.

4. Next steps

- a. WG members will receive an online form to review UN-Habitat’s housing policy recommendations in June.
- b. UN-Habitat and the 3RF Secretariat will also organize 2-3 offline consultations in parallel with other key stakeholders to collect their feedback on housing policy needs, priorities and challenges



- c. The 3RF Secretariat will share the WB's Call for Expression of Interest with the Urban Policy WG as soon as it is launched.
- d. The next Urban Policy WG meeting is planned for July, to focus on the outcome of the review process and the way forward for the housing policy.

5. AOB

- **Live Love Lebanon:** Raised the issue of slow progress on the LFF BERYT project. Requested updates be shared and progress be speeded up in the interest of the inhabitants of the blast-affected areas.
 - **3RF Secretariat:** Noted that the 3RF Urban Policy WG is not the forum to discuss project-specific issues, as there is an LFF Technical Advisory Committee set up for the project, where all relevant issues can be raised.

Documents shared

[Guide for Mainstreaming Housing in Lebanon's National Urban Policy](#) – UN-Habitat
[Beirut City Profile](#) – UN-Habitat