UN-Habitat Networking Event:
Urban Planning in Post-Conflict/Post-Crisis Contexts

**Date and time:** Tuesday, 11 February, 16:30-18:30 (4:30-6:30 PM)
**Location:** Hall 2: Room 3, Abu Dhabi Exposition Center (WUF10 Venue)

**Session Objectives**

Building on events at WUF 9 that explored the importance of planning to foster resilience and recovery in protracted and post crisis urban settings, this multi-stakeholder, multi-regional event aims to further explore the roles of culture and innovation shaping planning responses in diverse and complex urban crisis settings. Through highlighting cases from Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Kenya, and engaging with the diverse views and experiences of refugees, host populations, returnees, local government leaders, and UN experts, and moderated by an academic expert, the event will assess the relevance of culture and innovation in planning responses to urban crises.

The session will also identify lessons that can be drawn from shared experiences, which could be mainstreamed in future urban crisis responses to facilitate social inclusion and cultural integration and to contribute to addressing the root causes of crises while accelerating post-crisis recovery. The session will thus provide valuable feedback to UN-Habitat on its strategic direction and the development of a community of practice for this subject.

**Summary**

As the global nature of crisis is becoming increasingly urban and increasingly protracted, and as the majority of those displaced by crises seek refuge in cities, inclusive urban planning processes have becoming increasingly recognized as a means of building resilience in protracted crises, fostering sustainable recovery in post-crisis settings and addressing the root causes of crises. WUF 9 increased global awareness of the role of urban planning in crisis recovery, and this session advances the discussion by highlighting the role of culture and innovation in planning responses to urban crises.

Lessons have been learned for instance in the Syria crisis, on the importance of understanding cultural norms and behaviors in the layout of refugee camps. The meaningful, inclusive engagement of affected populations in urban crisis recovery, such as in the State of Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan has been important – not only to ensuring “building back better” approaches that foster economic recovery and social inclusion – but also in the recovery of culture and shared identity. Gaming technology has harnessed the potential of global youth culture to enable refugee and host community youth to find common ground, interact, and then co-create shared urban spaces as an entry point to fostering social inclusion in protracted crisis settings. In some circumstances, the restoration of culturally significant built fabric in post-crisis settings have had psychological and social importance in reinforcing shared identity, and ultimately helping affected communities sustainably reintegrate in their places of origin.

Through a back-to-back series of conversations with: representatives from Lebanon, discussing Syrian refugee and host community integration in Lebanon and the region; representatives from Afghanistan discussing community-led recovery planning; and representatives from Kenya discussing refugee and host community integration in Kalobeyi new settlement in Turkana County, along with experts from UNHCR, UN-Habitat, and UCLG, will reflect on experiences and lessons from each of these countries as well as the wider discipline. The moderator, Dr. Shipra Narang Suri, will facilitate the exploration of the role of culture, innovation, and planning in urban crisis recovery.
Session outline and panel details

Overview

The session will consist of three interactive panels covering three different contexts in Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Kenya. The moderator will frame, bridge, and moderate the discussion as well as provide remarks to distil the common themes and takeaways from the panelists and the discussion sessions. The panelists are encouraged to interact in a guided dynamic conversation which will include inputs from the audience, rather than to prepare presentations.

Detailed schedule and panel information

16:30-16:35: Introduction: The moderator will highlight linkages with the global goals, complexities, and contexts; and provide an overview of the case studies and themes.

- Moderator: Dr. Shipra Narang Suri, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat

16:35-16:55: Lebanon Panel: The speakers will discuss cities hosting refugees in Lebanon and in the MEWA region, highlighting the key role of urban planning to minimize informal urban expansion as a result of crises. The panel consists of the following speakers:

- Hon. Mayor Mohamed Saadie, Co-President of UCLGA-MEWA; President of the Union of Dannieh Municipalities; and Mayor of Deirnbour
- Ms. Hayat Fakher Diné, Community Activist
- Mr. Fady Khoury, Head of Child and Youth Financial Education Program, YMCA

16:55-17:10: Discussion/ inputs from the floor

17:10-17:30: Afghanistan Panel: The speakers will discuss the challenges, lessons, and integrated approaches taken in recovery planning. The panel consists of the following speakers:

- H.E. Deputy Minister Abdul Baqi Popal, Deputy Minister of Municipalities, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- Mr. Fernando da Cruz, Country Programme Manager (a.i.), UN-Habitat
- Ms. Frozan Abdullah, Community Representative

17:30-17:45: Discussion/ inputs from the floor

17:45-18:05: Kenya Panel: The speakers will discuss the integration of refugee and host communities in the unique new settlement of Kalobeyei, Kenya. The panel consists of the following speakers:

- H.E. Hon. Josphat Koli Nanok, Governor of Turkana County, Republic of Kenya
- Ms. Ivana Unluova, Assistant Representative (Programme), UNHCR in Kenya
- Mr. Isaac Ouma, Acting Field Manager, FilmAid International - Kenya

18:05-18:20: Discussion/ inputs from the floor

18:20-18:30: Closing: The moderator will highlight take-aways from this discussion that could be mainstreamed into future urban crisis response, followed by a wrap-up of the key points.
Guiding questions for panelists

Lebanon
- What were the feelings and perceptions of host and refugee communities towards each other when the refugee crisis began?
- What has been the impact of being able to jointly plan and build shared spaces in your community?
- How did technology assist in this process?

Afghanistan
- How did the community-led recovery planning process enable returnees to reinvigorate their local culture and reintegrate?
- What were the impacts of the innovation of community contracting? (positive or negative)

Kenya
- What were the challenges faced in a multi-dimensional, multi-cultural refugee/ host community context?
- How did the County Government’s work persuade the host communities that it would be beneficial all around to allow refugees to settle and integrate?
- What was the role of an external architect? What were the impacts?

Overarching questions - for UCLG, UN-Habitat, and UNHCR representatives
- What is new and innovative in urban crisis response?
- What have we learned about the importance of mainstreaming culture in urban planning responses to crisis?
- How have the conversations with the panelists resonated with your experience?