



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

Municipal Unions

Region	Middle East and North Africa
Award Scheme	Others
Themes	Local Economic Development Waste Management Environmental Resilience
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere Goal 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Municipal Unions are collective unions created by neighboring municipalities to collectively work on waste management activities, including collection and processing facilities, as well as communal interventions in shared waterways.

Municipal Unions enable small and medium sized municipalities to pool resources and meet economies of scale, thus driving down waste management cost per capita.

Background and Objective

Many regions challenged by plastic pollution have a lack of adequate waste management infrastructure. In densely populated urban areas, this problem is visibly apparent by the accumulation of plastic waste on land and in the water that becomes part of the local landscape. And while waste management is a basic service that should be provided by local government units to the public to protect public health and the environment, there is a significant lack of institutional and technical capabilities, as well as public funding in many developing economies sufficient to address this need. In rural and remote areas, waste management operations tend not to benefit from economies of scale through improved quantities and efficiencies, an issue that is only compounded by small waste management budgets in rural communities. In Indonesia, for example, less than 2% of the provincial or district budget is allocated for municipal solid waste management. Their budget ranges between US \$2-5 per capita per year as compared to US \$10-12 per capita per year in large cities like Jakarta.

Actions and Implementation

Municipal Unions are collective unions created by neighboring municipalities that enable local governments to pool resources to collectively work on waste management activities, including collection and processing facilities, as well as communal interventions in shared waterways. Such inter-Municipal Unions allow small and medium sized municipalities to meet economies of scale, driving down waste management cost per capita. Inter-municipality agreements become particularly relevant for riverside communities, where cleaning waste often leads to leakages into rivers from upstream communities that then have to be managed by downstream municipalities through catchment systems. Sharing successes alongside preliminary support from NGOs can trigger interest, mobilize action and provide necessary technical assistance. Innovative approaches to recognize success, for example publicly rewarding local municipalities for best practices, can resonate with key local leaders, especially given the politicized nature of local-level interventions. Additionally, coordination among riverside municipalities requires clearly defined roles, responsibilities and cost-sharing for managing setup and operations of catchment systems based on their locations.

Outcomes and Impacts

Lebanon has 1,038 municipalities, around 75% of which co-operate within unions (also called “federations”) of municipalities that pool and co-ordinate resources to deliver public services, such as infrastructure, strategic planning, economic development, health, environmental protection, solid waste management, public safety, etc.



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Conclusion

Public-Private Partnerships and other collaborations with NGOs can serve as a similar model, whereby stakeholders pool resources and/or share responsibilities to service community needs.