



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.

Networks acting for environmental and socio-economic change

Region	Middle East and North Africa
Award Scheme	Dubai International Award
Start Year	2017
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Transformation is not unilateral work, rather it is the association of efforts within a framework that leverages the collective action. ACT, Active Advocacy for the Communities of Tomorrow, is a Lebanese organization working towards the coupling of the economy with social and environmental concerns by building a network of urban actors, from the public, civil and private sectors. And by doing so, the NGO is re-shaping the consumption pattern alongside social and environmental behavior.

Background and Objective

In Lebanon, organic waste exceeds 52.5% of what is dumped in landfills and residential e-waste amount up to 39.000 tons per year. One in four Lebanese live in poverty. The young, the elderly and the host communities are the most affected by poverty and food insecurity.

Actions and Implementation

Problem solving process -Lack of public awareness: ACT raised awareness through art and contests and through creating a large network of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. -Lack of legislative national framework for recycling processes: It engaged with the municipalities on a one-to-one collaboration investing in the awareness and good will of the board and members of local authorities. -Lack of private engagement: ACT tapped into the power of corporate social responsibility to engage private partners in the cause. Participating partners -Local authorities: they provide the logistics and the human resources for the implementation of ACT's projects, they open their doors to local citizens for environmental awareness sessions given by ACT. -National authorities: the ministry of Economy and ACT are in the process of agreement over a concept note to raise awareness on a national level and expand the change in the production, consumption and market patterns within a social entrepreneurship framework. -Private sector: Spinneys, Sofi de France, Tawleh and Souk el Tayeb are participating in ensuring food products for ensuring food security for slum dwellers. Solicar joined the network for the protection of the environment and they collaborate with municipalities to take recyclables. -NGOs: Arc-en-ciel and l'Ecoule are partners for recycling e-waste, paper, cardboard, tins, metals and plastics. -Charities: many charities have joined the network for food security and protection of the network. They contribute to the project by collecting and sorting the food gathered from partners from the private sector and using the products to serve the economically disadvantaged on a daily/weekly basis. Decision making process National authorities and ACT are aligning their priorities and work in favor of the environment, the needy and the economy to expand the platform for a virtuous and sustainable cycle of change. Private partners and local authorities took the initiative to contribute to bettering the environment and supporting the economically disadvantaged. Tools, methods and benchmarks Data collection and archiving for internal reporting, gathered by ACT on a weekly basis, and by the partnering institutions (municipalities - every 6 months, recycling partners - on a yearly basis). The main benchmarks used are: number of beneficiaries, food quantity saved or re-used, tons of recycled products.

Outcomes and Impacts

Institutional: ACT built a low-cost yet highly effective system of exchange and transfer between pre-established and sustainable stakeholders involving public institutions, private companies and community-based organizations, collaborating within a consensus over social and environmental policies. It assigned to each player a key-role within a virtuous cycle of behavioral and practical change. Financial: Through institutional sustainability, ACT built a practice that leverages the resources and reshapes the existent urban space to make the highest possible socioeconomic return on investment. Social & Economic: ACT has been serving 17 charities, providing them with around 10 tons of vegetables and 560 kilograms of bakeries every month, to support 500 to 700 economically disadvantaged slum dwellers on a weekly basis. Cultural: By setting forth a platform for collective action to support the economically disadvantaged and the host communities, ACT fights the stigma and the exclusion of the latter from one of their most basic rights: access to food, and pushes towards prioritizing environmental issues. It encourages both public and private sector to contribute towards the community and the environment, shifting the behavior patterns of the empowered. And by supporting the slum dwellers, it gives back hope and confidence to the



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unempowered. Environmental: ACT is saving tons of organic waste per week and reusing them and has built a strong collaboration with the Municipality of Cornet Chehwane. It also raised awareness on the risks and the best practices through quarterly workshops targeting local citizens, including women and youth, as well as through artistic initiatives like the graffiti wall along a highway in Cornet Chehwane.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

Part 1 - Where the inspiration came from When Paula, president of ACT, encountered the work of Tristan Stewart in favor of the re-use of food wastage, she found out the importance of the topic at the international level and the impact it could have in Lebanon in case the different sectors cooperate together under the same slogan and in the same direction. Part 2 - How the practice can transfer inspiration ACT understands the inter-connectivity between stakeholders at the local, regional, national and international levels. The participation of actors from across public and urban fabric allows the replication of a system for collective action to protect the urban environment and support the slum dwellers. Municipalities, civil society coordinators or social entrepreneurship initiatives can reproduce the collaborative framework at the grassroots level and align their work with the national policies. Since food security and responsible consumption and production are on the 2030 Agenda for SDGs, they must be implemented and enforced at the local and national levels. ACT recently joined the GCNL Global Compact Network Lebanon which, in addition to the president's involvement in the Chartered Institute of Waste Management network, constitute a strong local and international platform for transfer.

Innovative Initiative

Lesson 1 - Excess food wastage is higher in markets and at the source than in the F&B sector That's why ACT decided to engage first and foremost with the supermarkets and is expanding to reach farmers and products from the source in order to gather as much food as possible and serve as many slum dwellers as possible. Lesson 2 - There is a need for awareness and partnerships The initiative is acting in favor of more awareness and partnerships and is involving as many partnering organizations across sectors to create a virtuous cycle of change. ACT is also working on creating a socio-ecological culture within the next generation through awareness sessions. Lesson 3 - There is a gap between consumption patterns and socioeconomic needs There is an overwhelming amount of organic waste and an alarming number of people living under the poverty line and suffering from undernourishment. It is more important than ever to re-couple the social needs with the economic challenges, which is why ACT is tapping into the hidden and often lost potential of the economy to support those who need it the most.

Resources devoted to delivery

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Conclusion

Lebanon has a limited legal framework in favor of consistent work towards ecological concerns and protection of slum dwellers.