



May 2024

Background

In response to global challenges and the objectives outlined in key international agendas like the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, there is a pressing need to bolster the capacity of local leadership in the Arab region. Now, more than ever, local leaders must be equipped with refined conceptual and practical tools to deal with complex urbanisation processes and engage with international frameworks related to sustainable urban development. City leaders have the potential to translate global sustainability commitments into actionable regional progress, ensuring that cities across the Arab region are not only participants but also drivers in the global pursuit of sustainable urban development.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and United Cities and Local Governments - Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA), are pleased to announce the launch of the first edition of the Arab Mayors Academy, the first capacity development program in the Arab region focused on local authorities and designed with the local authorities. This initiative aims to create a network of champions for urban development, equipping city leaders with advanced knowledge and tools to effectively address the region's unique challenges and opportunities in urban development and sustainable development.

The Arab Mayors Academy is founded on the premise that local leadership is pivotal in the transformative journey towards sustainable urban development. Through a curriculum grounded in the latest urban governance principles and sustainable practices, it aims to equip city leaders with strategic insights and practical tools. The Academy's multifaceted approach includes engaging learning modules, interactive workshops, and collaborative networks, facilitating a dynamic exchange of ideas and strategies.

Vision of the Arab Mayors Academy

The Arab Mayors Academy envisions a future where local authorities across the Arab region are empowered with cutting-edge knowledge and tools to effectively address the unique challenges and opportunities of urban and sustainable development. Its mission is to support a new generation of visionary leaders who are well-equipped to guide their communities towards a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future. By providing an innovative and comprehensive learning platform, it aims to cultivate strategic thinking, enhance governance capabilities, and promote a proactive approach to urban challenges. Through this vision, the Academy aspires to be a catalyst for transformative change, contributing to the prosperity and well-being of cities and communities across the Arab region.

Objectives of the Arab Mayors Academy

The Arab Mayors Academy provides city leaders with a unique platform to elevate their roles in urban governance. Participants will gain access to invaluable partnership and networking avenues and exchange knowledge with regional and global counterparts.

The Academy aims to:

- Empower commitment to the global agendas, articulating local dynamics and sustainable development targets and goals;

- Provide executive training in key topics at the intersection of cities, international relations, and sustainable development;
- Strengthen and promote tools, resources, and platforms in the region that can be leveraged by local authorities' engagement;
- Create a network of local leaders concerned with the role of cities in the international arena and sustainable urban development; and
- Enable knowledge-sharing and peer-to-peer learning opportunities;

Modality of the Arab Mayors Academy

The Arab Mayors Academy primarily conducts its curriculum in Arabic, while offering selected materials in English. Central to its mission, the Academy focuses on empowering local leaders with the strategic insights and practical tools necessary for adapting global concepts to local realities effectively. This approach not only enhances the capacity of participants to address the unique challenges faced by their cities but also ensures that the solutions they develop are both innovative and sustainable.

This unique program in the Arab region starts with a launch event at the UN House in Beirut, Lebanon during 23-24 July 2024 and wraps up with an event and graduation ceremony during the World Urban Forum (Cairo—Egypt) during the first week of November 2024. During the final event, the participants in the first cohort will earn recognition through a professional certification issued by UNESCWA, UN-Habitat, and UCLG-MEWA.

The first cohort of the Arab Mayors Academy will consist of a selected group of around 15 leaders (Governors, Mayors, Deputy Governors, Deputy Mayors, and Senior Executives) from different countries in the Arab region.

City leaders will benefit from a high-level faculty composed of experts and practitioners in the fields related to the training modules. These experts and practitioners have leading roles in institutions in the academic sector, regional technical initiatives, local government networks, and the UN system.

City leaders will also have access to an online platform that serves as a one-stop shop for the learning journey. This platform allows users to access different courses, connect to webinars, participate in forums and networking activities, and complete assignments.

Program Structure of the Arab Mayors Academy

The Academy is structured to provide executive training in critical areas for the Arab region, fostering hard and soft skills necessary for leading resilient and effective urban governance. The curriculum is crafted to intertwine substantive content and personal skills.

This integrated approach ensures that city leaders are well-versed in theory and skilled at applying these insights for tangible, people-centred urban development. Participants will engage in peer-to-peer learning, access a wealth of resources, and become part of a vibrant network of local leaders dedicated to sustainable urban development.

The curriculum of the Academy is the result of a tailored process that started with key urban development priorities and challenges in the region. Consecutively, a consultation tool was used through a survey that resulted in the input of more than 130 city leaders in the Arab region. The resulting data analysis was able to further refine our understanding of the main needs, challenges, and opportunities city leaders face.


The program is divided into Self-Paced, Online, and Face-to-face components, covering key modules in a cohesive way. The topics explored in each module are designed to make the most of that specific modality. For example, more conceptual material can be explored asynchronously, fitting the learners' interest in different topics. At the same time, more participative and interactive activities are developed in online or face-to-face sessions.

Preliminary Program

Face-to-Face Events	Self-Paced Courses		Webinars
	Mandatory	Optional	
From Global Goals to Local Solutions: Navigating Crisis with Multi-Level Governance for Sustainable Development (SDGs localization, multi-level governance, Crisis/disaster management)	New Urban Agenda 1	Sustainable Transportation Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Sustainable Cities: Inclusive Digital Transformation • Navigating the Future of Transport in Cities\ • Building Healthy, Green and Safe Cities: Local Action and Strategic Planning for Change • Quality of Life in Cities: Valuing What Matters to People • Building Resilient Local Economies and Sustainable Land Management for Productive Urban Futures • Investing in Our Future: Sustainable Financing for Local Development • Climate Change and Urban Dynamics • Public-Private Partnerships for Local Development: Unlocking Urban Potential through Good Practices • City Diplomacy: Navigating Global Challenges through Local Cooperation
	New Urban Agenda 2	Sustainable Public Procurement	
	Cities and the Challenge of Sustainable Development	Building Urban Economic Resilience	
Empowering Communities: Partnerships, Civic Engagement, and Results-Based Management for Local Impact (Results Based Management, city diplomacy and Civic engagement)	Public Private Partnerships	Results based Management	

Month	Curriculum
JULY 2024	23-24 July Launch of the Mayors Academy, Beirut: From Global Goals to Local Solutions: Navigating Crisis with Multi-Level Governance for Sustainable Development (SDGs localization, multi-level governance, Crisis/disaster management), In-Person New Urban Agenda 1 and 2, Online Course Emergency Preparedness, Online Course
AUGUST 2024	Cities and the Challenges of Sustainable Development, Online Course 14 August Smart Sustainable Cities: Inclusive Digital Transformation, Webinar 21 August Navigating the Future of Transport in Cities, Webinar 28 August Building Healthy, Green and Safe Cities: Local Action and Strategic Planning for Change, Webinar
September 2024	11 September Quality of Life in Cities: Valuing What Matters to People, Webinar 18 September Building Resilient Local Economies and Sustainable Land Management for Productive Urban Futures, Webinar 25 September Investing in Our Future: Sustainable Financing for Local Development, Webinar
October 2024	Public Private Partnerships, Online Course 2 October Climate Change and Urban Dynamics, Webinar 9 October Public-Private Partnerships for Local Development: Unlocking Urban Potential through Good Practices, Webinar 23 October City Diplomacy: Navigating Global Challenges through Local Cooperation, Webinar
November 2024	1st Week of November World Urban Forum, Cairo: Graduation Ceremony Empowering Communities: Partnerships, Civic Engagement, and Results-Based Management for Local Impact (Results Based Management, city diplomacy and Civic engagement)

Online Courses: Optional	
August 2024	Sustainable Transportation Networks
September 2024	Sustainable Public Procurement Building Urban Economic Resilience Diagnostics and Action Planning in the Context of COVID-19
October 2024	Results Based Management

Zoom link: https://zoom.us/j/93307673644 ID: 933 0767 3644 Passcode: UNmeet@ @22 Times: 13:00 - 14:30 Beirut Time	
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