

# Providing opportunities for **vulnerable** **urban** children



In virtually all the countries where World Vision works across the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Southern Asia, people are migrating in staggering numbers from rural areas to urban centres. The shift from rural, often agricultural, societies to urban hubs places significant strains on national and local economies, social relations, infrastructure and services which, in turn, has a direct impact on the well-being of urban dwellers, especially the most vulnerable among them. Rapid urbanization often puts families, and children in particular, at even greater risk as many face discrimination, social exclusion, environmental hazards, informal economies, illegal housing, lack of employment opportunities, child labour and limited participation in governance processes and local level decision making.

## WHAT IS HAPPENING?



Globally, **almost half of the world's children now live in urban areas**, hundreds of millions of which are growing up amid scarcity and deprivation. (UNICEF, 2012)



In Lebanon, even before more than 1 million Syrian refugees sought shelter, mostly in urban centres, **87 per cent of the population lived in urban areas**. (UN Habitat, 2010)



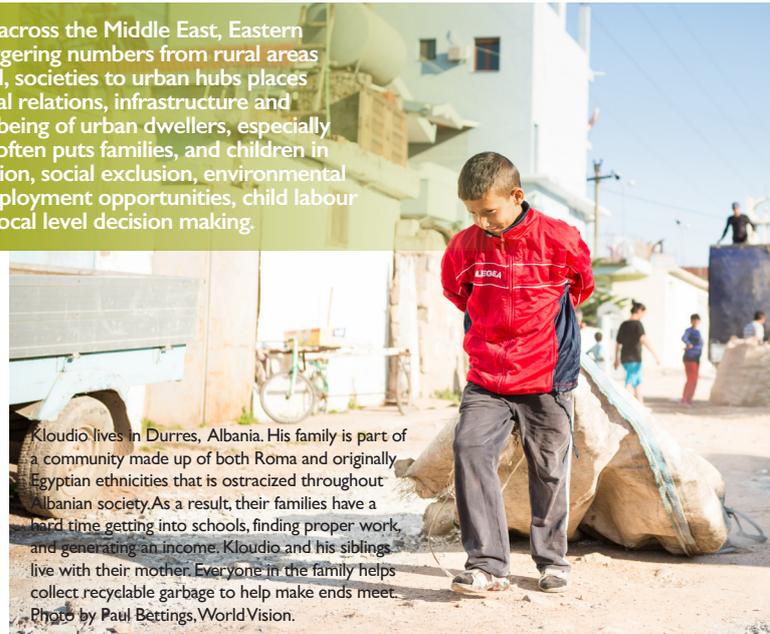
Orangi town in Karachi, Pakistan is **second largest slum in the world**. Technically only 10 years old, the township is home to 1.5 million people. (International business times, 2009)



In 2000, the **urbanization rate in Gaza was 94.6 per cent**. By 2015 it is projected to increase to 95.5 per cent. (World Bank)



In transitioning countries in Eastern Europe, **secondary cities often have poverty indicators equivalent to, or worse than, those of rural areas**, including in terms of access and quality of infrastructure. (World Bank, 2006)



Kludio lives in Durres, Albania. His family is part of a community made up of both Roma and originally Egyptian ethnicities that is ostracized throughout Albanian society. As a result, their families have a hard time getting into schools, finding proper work, and generating an income. Kludio and his siblings live with their mother. Everyone in the family helps collect recyclable garbage to help make ends meet. Photo by Paul Bettings, World Vision.

## WHAT WE DO

Provide an issue based, multi-sectoral, integrated model for contributing to Child Well-Being Outcomes in urban contexts, in collaboration with partners

Our model highlights key levels of sustainable change by focusing on four essential domains of change: impacting child well-being: Healthy Cities, Prosperous Cities, Safer Cities, and Resilient Cities.

Central to the realization of these domains is the inclusion of the most vulnerable children and communities in order to contribute to Just Cities. (See diagram below)



\*The above 'Cities for Children' Framework was designed by the Centre of Expertise for Urban Programming, World Vision International (2014).

# CHILDREN AND YOUTH HELP DEFINE WORLD VISION'S WORK IN BEIRUT

The world's population is becoming increasingly more concentrated in urban areas. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Lebanon, a country where 87 per cent of its population lived in urban centres, even before the most recent influx of refugees from Syria.

This mega trend is forcing aid organisations, including World Vision, to re-think and re-structure how we help those in need.

After five years of piloting a peace building project in two urban communities in Beirut, it was time to scale up to a citywide level, adopting a consolidated cluster approach; where instead of having multiple Area Development Programmes (ADPs) in different parts of the city, there would be one program focusing on two issues and operating through multi-sectoral interventions.

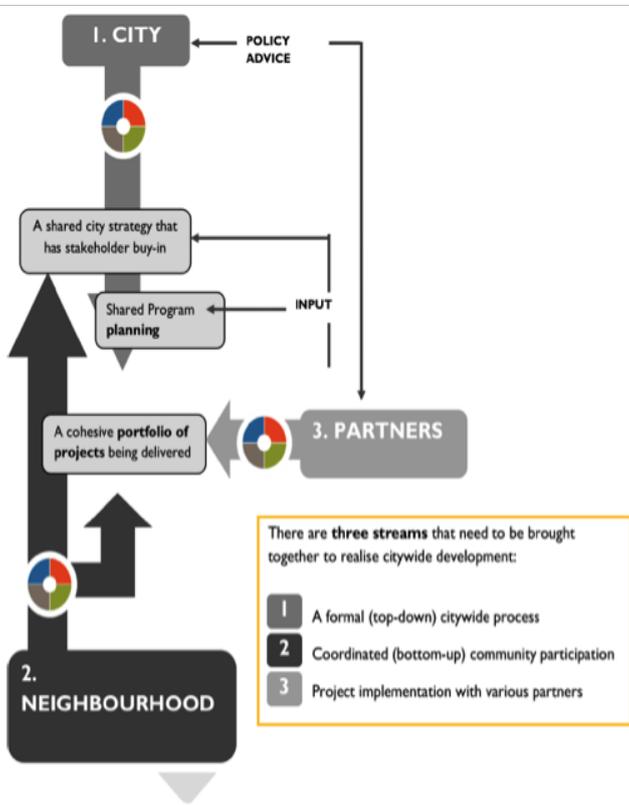
And, for the first time in the history of World Vision Lebanon, the programme agenda was not set by World Vision staff and decision makers, but rather by a group of 80 children and youth between the ages of 6 and 25. Experts in World Vision Lebanon met with those 80 children and youth for one year, listened to their dreams, fears, and problems, and helped them in coming up with possible solutions. The result was having children and youth designing the programme.

*"I have many dreams for Lebanon and Beirut," says Maria, 14, passionately. Maria was of the youth who helped design the programme. "But, what I really want to see is the joining of citizens, all together... for the sake of Lebanon," she adds.*

*"I believe that change will come, not now, as it needs time. But it is coming, because youth are having more power now," added Sandy Daoud, a 22-year-old youth participant in the Beirut City Programme.*



Children gathered before going on stage to complete their puzzle, one that reflects their vision of Beirut visually. Photo by Mona Daoud, World Vision.



\*The above 'Citywide Approach' for programming was designed by the Centre of Expertise for Urban Programming, World Vision International (2014).

## OUR APPROACH

- **Enable city-wide impact** by making connections between community, civil society, the private sector, municipal government and policy makers.
- **Providing space for dialogue** between community, civil society and government.
- **Supporting research** in order to design other evidence-based programmes/projects and models.
- **Using clusters** or geographic groupings that differ depending on population size. Clusters allow World Vision's urban programmes to share: infrastructure, centralized support service and leverage the same partnerships and networks. Programme clustering is a means to engage effectively and efficiently creating change and impact with larger urban populations.

### Benefits of clustering:

1. Improve economies of scale
2. Facilitate innovation and knowledge transfer
3. Leverage relationships
4. Increase visibility
5. Consolidation

**World Vision Middle East, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Office**

e-mail: [contact\\_MEERO@wvi.org](mailto:contact_MEERO@wvi.org)  
62 Perikleous Street, 2021, Strovolos, Nicosia Cyprus  
Office: +357-22-870277 Fax: +357-22-870204

World Vision MEERO [WVMEERO](https://www.facebook.com/WVMEERO) [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/wvmeero) [youtube.com/wvmeero](http://youtube.com/wvmeero)  
[wvi.org/meero](http://wvi.org/meero)