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## Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

### Workshop on “Transitions to Renewable Energy and Sustainable Prosperity in Lebanon: The Role of Municipalities, Education and Future Scenarios for 2030”

ESCWA, Beirut – Lebanon, 23 September 2019

## INFORMATION NOTE

Within the framework of the “Regional Initiative for Promoting Small-Scale Renewable Energy Applications in rural areas of the Arab Region (REGEND)” Project, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is partnering with the Institute for Global Prosperity (IGP), University College London, RELIEF Centre and Chatham House to organise the workshop “Transitions to Renewable Energy and Sustainable Prosperity in Lebanon: The role of municipalities, education and future scenarios for 2030”. This is the second in a series of workshops exploring the transition to renewable energy in Lebanon. The workshop will be held in Beirut, Lebanon on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2019 at the UN-House.

### 1. Background Information

With a rapidly changing commercial outlook for both fossil fuels and other alternative sources of energy, it is timely to consider how Lebanon, as a potential oil and gas producer, can limit its exposure to carbon risk and follow a cleaner pathway to sustainable energy through optimised models for energy and economic diversification. The first workshop exploring the transition to renewable energy in Lebanon, held by the IGP, RELIEF Centre and Chatham House in January 2019, explored these issues asking what choices Lebanon might have beyond the traditional top-down structural reforms in view of the evolving crisis response and resilience approach. Discussions showed that there is great potential to support people’s needs through place-based and people-centred approaches, learning from what had worked in parts of Lebanon and elsewhere in the region. There was a strong emphasis on considering the economic and political economy realities that projects would need to engage with in order to be implementable and sustainable.

Several interests and paths forward were defined at the end of the workshop, including the desire to understand more from the point of view of local government; how people could be better educated in energy use and the available options to them; and how scenarios could help national and local policymakers to make robust decisions regarding energy.

Building on from this, the second workshop will focus more deeply on the role of municipalities, the role of education and the future scenarios we can imagine for Lebanon’s energy supply in the context of the climate emergency.

The organisers, the Institute for Global Prosperity UCL, the RELIEF Centre, Chatham House and ESCWA would like this series to facilitate, amplify and complement the work of the community of practice involved in the energy transition in Lebanon across all stakeholders.

#### The Institute for Global Prosperity

The mission of the IGP is to rethink what prosperity means for people around the globe. The IGP’s vision

is to help build a prosperous, sustainable, global future, underpinned by the principles of fairness and justice, and allied to a realistic, long-term vision of humanity's place in the world. The IGP undertakes pioneering research that seeks to dramatically improve the quality of life for this and future generations. Its strength lies in the way it allies intellectual creativity to effective collaboration and policy development. Of particular importance to the IGP's approach is the way in which it integrates non-academic expertise into its knowledge generation by engaging with decision-makers, business, civil society, and local communities.

### **Chatham House**

Chatham House offers policy solutions grounded in certain core principles: the rule of law; representative and accountable government with effective separation of powers; open and well-regulated markets; a vibrant media and civil society that enables informed public debate; and a cooperative approach to international affairs based on the concept of an international society. Chatham House engages governments, the private sector, civil society and their members in open debate and private discussions about the most significant developments in international affairs. Chatham House also carries out independent and rigorous analysis of critical global, regional and country-specific challenges and opportunities.

### **The RELIEF Centre**

The RELIEF Centre is a centre for research and learning focused on inclusive growth and prosperity. It is about the prosperity of Lebanon in particular but is also part of a larger agenda for developing sustainable ways to improve the quality of life of people throughout the world. The RELIEF Centre brings Lebanese and UK institutions and expertise together to address this challenge using cutting-edge research and innovation. The RELIEF Centre aims to speed up transitions to sustainable, prosperous societies in the context of mass displacement, to improve the quality of people's lives.

## **2. Objectives of the Workshop**

This series of workshops brings together strategic planners, scholars, and energy practitioners to discuss how alternatives and equitable energy supply systems can be built by answering the following questions:

- What are the implications for energy arising from the different lives that people want to lead within the specific contexts and settings of Lebanon?
- There is a chronic lack of data about energy use and demand in Lebanon, particularly for those in rural areas but also for the urban poor living in rapidly urbanising areas, and in informal settlements. To understand what this demand looks like, we first need to understand what people's needs are. What new research/data agendas could help?
- What is the potential for government policies to enable equitable energy supply and the needs of different communities such as the displaced or the urban poor who reside in informal settlements in rural and urban contexts? What other scale of intervention e.g. at the local community level, or the neighbourhood level are effective when political decentralisation/fragmentation exist?
- How can stakeholders such as development banks, government donors and humanitarian actors work together to reform development assistance to Lebanon in a way that enables them to effectively manage carbon risk and make a net positive contribution to Lebanon's long-term development goals?
- What conversations do we need to have, or data do we need to collect, to encourage the development of new sustainable approaches to displacement crises and energy that reflect the actual needs of people living in the country?

This workshop will help answer the following questions, considering a community co-creation/co-thinking approach in particular:

- What are different municipalities across Lebanon doing to explore and plan for alternative renewable

energy systems?

- How can innovative education initiatives use these developments to improve energy literacy across government, municipalities and society to accelerate the energy transition and shift demand preferences?
- What future scenarios for 2030 do we envisage for Lebanon's energy supply in the context of the climate emergency?

### 3. Participants

The workshop will bring together various local and international organisations, NGOs, government ministries and entities, municipalities, UN organisations, and research institutions and academia.

### 4. Date and Venue

The workshop on "Transitions to Renewable Energy and Sustainable Prosperity in Lebanon: The role of municipalities, education and future scenarios for 2030" will be held in Beirut on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2019 at the UN House.

Registration is scheduled for 8:30 A.M. on Monday, 23 September 2019. The workshop will conclude by 05:30 P.M. on the same day. The draft agenda will be circulated to registered participants.

### 5. Language of the Meeting

The meeting will be conducted in the Arabic and English languages. Simultaneous interpretation from and into the Arabic and English languages will be provided.

### 6. Correspondence

All correspondence related to the seminar is to be sent to either one of the three addresses:

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