

PRESS RELEASE

HYBRID PANEL DISCUSSION

“Launch event of UN-DESA /UN-CDF Handbook on assets management for Sustainable Development

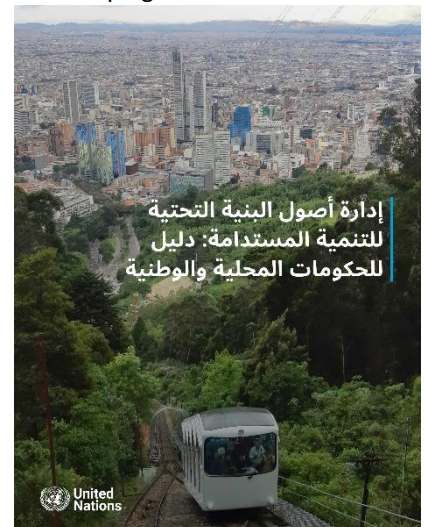
“It is estimated that the realization of over 90 percent of the Sustainable Development Goals is directly or indirectly linked to infrastructure” Mr. Daniel Platz, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Financing for Sustainable Development Office, UN DESA.

This was one of the points that was raised during the first launch event of the Arabic version of UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), with support from the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), new guide “Managing Infrastructure Assets for Sustainable Development: A Handbook for Local and National Governments”. The event was organized in support of UN Resident Coordinator’s Office for the UAE, which played a role in facilitating the launch of the handbook by hosting the event at the UN Hub that is managed under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator Dr. Dena Assaf and the UN in UAE during Expo2020 Dubai. The event took place on 29th March 2022, and was coinciding with MENA climate week, a part of a series of events that the UN is organizing on the road to COP28. The event had wide range of panelists and attendees from different background and organizations.



During his opening remarks, Mr. Daniel Platz, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Financing for Sustainable Development Office, UN-DESA stated that the Handbook outlines the application of field-tested tools – such as the Asset Management Diagnostic Tool and Action Plans – to be a concrete guidance to effective asset management. He said that undermaintained infrastructure can lead to an annual 2 percent loss in GDP in some developing countries. Mr. Abdulaziz Alsaffar, Programme Analyst, Municipal Investment Finance, UNCDF, presentation focused on the key takeaways of the Handbook, stating “up to 80% of the costs for public and private fixed assets are incurred after financing and after construction”. He also concentrated on climate-resilient asset management expressing that “it is crucial when it comes to the Middle East”.

Eng. Naseebah Abdulla Almarzouqi, Director of Studies, Research and Development, Ministry of Energy & Infrastructure, UAE, represented the government at the event focusing on the environmental aspects of asset management, she also presented new initiatives especially regarding to net-zero emissions by 2050. While Ms. Mhairi Main Garcia, Vice-chair of the board of directors of the Clean Energy Business Council (CEBC) and regional head of energy, transport and infrastructure and a partner Dentons, expressed her opinion stressing on the importance of climate change chapter to the world in generally and to the MENA region specifically. As well as agreeing with Mr. Abdelaziz and pointing out that climate resilience should be a crucial part in the planning phase to achieve the best outcomes. Furthermore, Ms. Farah Yassine, Senior Sustainability, Resilience and ESG Advisor with GHD, Chairperson of the Emirates Green Building Council’s Women’s Network, comment reflected on SDG 11 which is the core of our Handbook, concentrating on the sustainability pillars, environmental, economic, and social considerations, alongside the human being should be at the heart of planning to achieve “loveable” assets, not only loveable ones.



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