

*Please read carefully the "Guidelines for the Submission of Proposals" which outline the modalities for application and the criteria for the selection of proposals spelled out in the Cities Alliance Charter. Please ensure that all necessary supporting documentation is attached to this form. Additional information may also be enclosed, **but total submission should not exceed 12 pages.***

DATE: January 25, 2010 Updated March 18, 2010

1. TITLE of PROPOSAL: Urban Upgrading Strategy for Rief Damascus

2. PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY¹:

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¹ Country-specific proposals typically originate from local authorities, but must be sponsored by at least one member of the Cities Alliance (see [Cities Alliance Charter](#), Section D.14).

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4. RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION: – *Organization that will receive and execute the grant:*

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6. INFORMATION ON PROPOSED PROJECT:

Type of project (*check one*):

Preliminary City Development Strategy ___ Slum Upgrading_X-- Both _

7. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF PROJECT (*specify*):

Cities: Rapidly Growing Municipalities in Governorate of Rief Damascus
Country: Syrian Arab Republic

8. EXPECTED DURATION: 18 Months

BUDGET SUMMARY:

9. AMOUNT OF TOTAL BUDGET REQUESTED FROM CITIES ALLIANCE FUNDING:

US Dollars \$ 310,000

10. CO-FINANCING AMOUNT OF TOTAL BUDGET, INCLUDING LOCAL PARTNERS:

US Dollars \$140,000

Ministry of Local Administration and Governorate of Rief Damascus: \$85,000

World Bank: \$40,000

AUDI: \$7,000

AFD: \$8,000

11. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET COST: US Dollars \$450,000

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT:

12. Background – issues to be addressed and scope of project

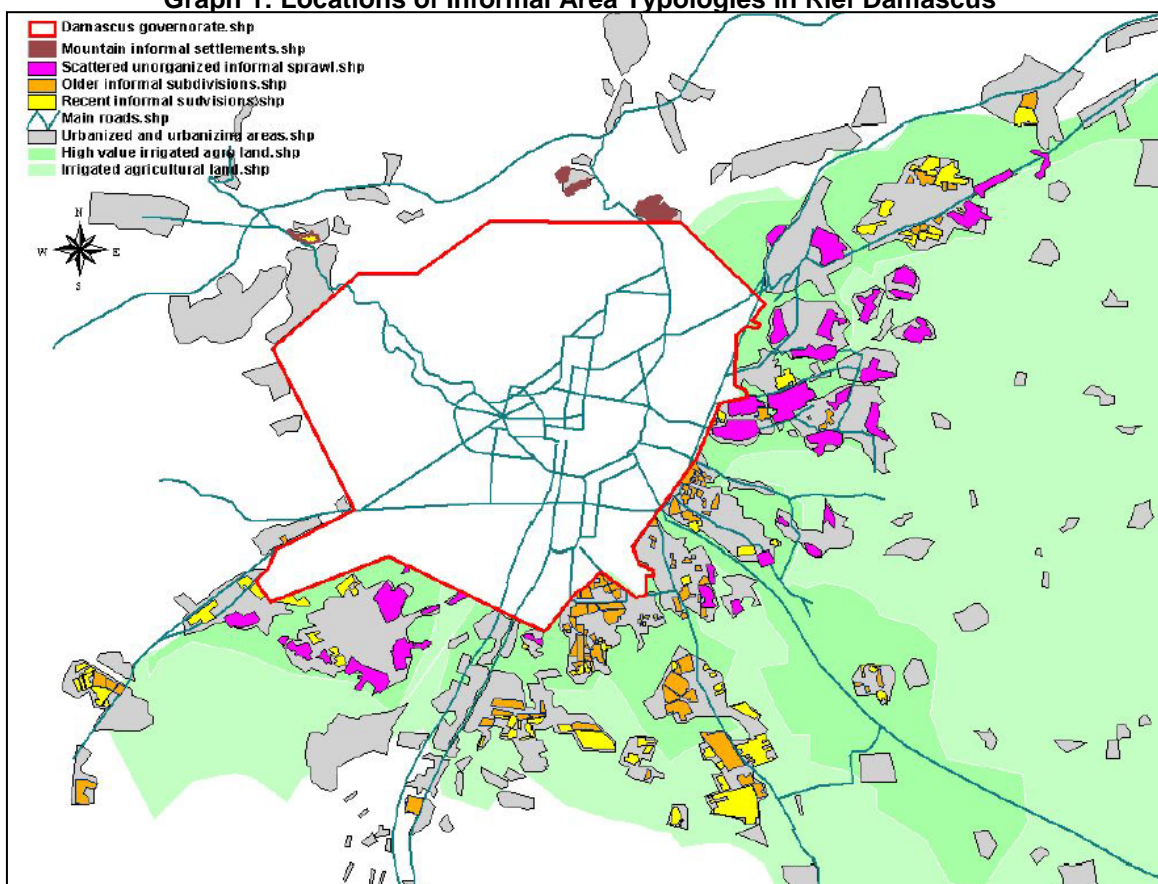
It is estimated that the Damascus Metropolitan Area had a population of 4.14 million in 2005. This population has been increasing at over 4 percent per annum; a huge rate for such a large urban agglomeration.² As Syria's capital and main locus for economic concentration, employment and investment opportunities, the Damascus area has been attracting poor rural migrants as well as urban groups from all over the country, while a considerable number of manufacturing and service industries choose to locate. A large number of refugees from regional conflicts have also recently moved to live in

² JICA, The Study on Urban Planning for Sustainable Development of Damascus Metropolitan Area, Draft Final Report, Volume 2 Master Plan Report, November 2007.

informal and quasi formal areas within the Damascus Metropolitan Area. It is estimated that between 500,000 to one million Iraqi refugees have settled in the Damascus metropolitan area.

The Governorate of Damascus contains the historical and core city as well as old formal and informal suburban extensions. It had a population of 1.93 million in 2005. It is presently almost completely built-up and most growth of the metropolitan area in the contiguous areas of the Governorate of Rief Damascus which surrounds it. In 2005 the population of Rief Damascus (estimated at 2.21 million inhabitants) had already exceeded that of Damascus proper. The areas of Rief Damascus which are most under urbanization pressures are located in the Ghouta, an historical irrigated oasis fed from streams coming off the Anti-Lebanon mountain chain (Graph 1). Especially over the last twenty years the small municipalities, towns and villages as well as the precious agricultural land have been subject to a huge urban overspill phenomenon, one totally unexpected and for which there were no effective plans. The small existing urban centers exploded outward, there was an incipient and scattered conversion of private agricultural land to urban use, and there has also been squatting on State controlled-mountainous land north of the city proper.

Graph 1: Locations of Informal Area Typologies in Rief Damascus



Most of urban growth in Rief Damascus has been due to informal urban processes (non-conforming or "mukhalaf" as it is termed by Syrian authorities). At least half the current population of both Damascus proper and its extensions lives in informally developed areas, and the figure could be considerably higher. Most of this informal urbanization exhibits similar dynamics as that found in other Arab countries. That is, it is mainly driven by the individual owner-builder and the informal land sub-divider, aided by a well articulated informal land market, and also by a vibrant and speculative real estate market which overlaps this. Government urban plans and legislation proscribe such development, yet it has been a prominent feature of urbanization in the Damascus region since the late 1960s. Some would even say that it is the dominant form of urbanization, at least on what was privately held agricultural land.

Informal residential construction in Rief Damascus is generally solid and of quite good quality, with families investing considerably and building progressively, and their neighborhoods slowly consolidating

and densifying. However, in the absence of any effective control roads tend to be very narrow and there are few land reserves for social services or recreation.

Also, infrastructure services (water, power, roads, and sanitary drainage) are only extended by government agencies after-the-fact and tend to be piecemeal and substandard. The small municipalities in Rief Damascus struggle on tiny budgets to service growing and unplanned sprawling areas with paved roads, wastewater networks, solid waste collection systems, and other basic municipal services. In these efforts, it is the existing formal core areas which receive most attention, leaving few resources for extension planned (*tanzim*) areas, which due to real estate investment pressures, are frequently redrawn. Similarly, the water/wastewater and power authorities struggle to provide the necessary trunk lines and the necessary substations, raw water sources, and sewerage treatment plants.³ In fact, it could be said that its is trunk infrastructure which is most in need of complete overhaul in some areas of Rief Damascus. In summary, it seems that local authorities and infrastructure agencies can never manage to get ahead of the rapid urbanization processes and are always playing a game of catch-up.









In March 2009 preparatory assistance from the Cities Alliance was granted to the Ministry of Local Administration (then Local Administration and Environment) and to the Governorate of Rief Damascus to undertake preliminary investigations of informal urban development in the Damascus fringes and to prepare the present application. Managed by the World Bank, over a four month period a small team of local and international consultants reviewed relevant studies and other sources of information, consulted with numerous government officials, key Syrian professionals, members of civil society, and community leaders, carried out extensive field investigations, and made first attempts to classify and map the informal phenomenon. The results of these efforts have been assembled into a report entitled A Preliminary Urban Profile of Rief Damascus, which is attached as Annex 1 to this application.

Preliminary analysis carried out during the Cities Alliance preparatory grant assistance has identified four typologies of informal settlement in the areas of Metropolitan Damascus, which are under strong urbanization pressures (see Graph 2). The first, and most extensive, typology is that of informal land subdivision on private agricultural land. Medium and large land blocks are gridded and parceled into small affordable plots (ranging from 80 to 160 m²) and sold to families who build out progressively or to informal developers who build once-off small apartment blocks. Access is limited to narrow lanes (3 to 6 meters wide) and no land is reserved for open space or services. This type of informal development, which produces a very efficient type of layout, has been a prominent feature of Damascus's expansion since the 1960s and is continuing in various fringe locations in Rief Damascus such as in Sayeda Zeinab, Sbeina, and Artouz. This typology can be split into older mature and dense subdivisions and newer, still consolidating subdivisions. A second typology can be called scattered random conversion of prime agricultural land and is a found mostly around existing towns such as Arbiin, Daraya, and Jaramana. Small agricultural strips and parcels are sold off as building plots (both for modest apartment blocks and for villas), and the result is a confusing patchwork of residential and commercial buildings mixed with orchards and fallow agricultural strips. These areas densify only very slowly, and the search for cheap land parcels rapidly pushes the pattern into more remote agricultural land. Although most of these areas have been post-planned and now fall under the *tanzim* regime, they are an extremely inefficient form of development and are the main consumers of prime agricultural land. A third typology, are informal settlements or pockets found on non-agriculture lands and mountainous State lands. These settlements are mainly dense agglomerations of modest houses on mostly steep slopes with only narrow access lanes, and the settlements of Ash Al Warwar and Jebal al Ward are main examples. A final typology can be called village settlements relatively far from Damascus which are slowly densifying and expanding. These are mostly found in the eastern and southern arcs, and are mainly of interest as the kernels of future informal expansions. Examples include Kharabet al Ward, Deir al Asafir, and Beit Sawy.

It should be pointed out that these types of informal urban development are not restricted to the Damascus area alone. It is found in the fringes of cities throughout Syria, and it is estimated that presently one third of the country's population lives in these informal/extra-legal areas. And it is these urban fringe areas which are now absorbing most of the nation's population increase.

³ The Greater Damascus area is facing a serious water problem, with existing sources under threat due to drought and increasing consumption.

Graph 2: Examples of the Main Typologies of Informal Areas in Rief Damascus

<p><u>Typology One</u></p> <p>Informal Subdivisions (more recent sub-typology)</p>		
<p><u>Typology Two</u></p> <p>Scattered Un-Organized Informal Conversion of Agricultural Land</p>		
<p><u>Typology Three</u></p> <p>Mountain Informal Settlements</p>		
<p><u>Typology Four</u></p> <p>Expanding Agricultural Villages</p>		

The causes of the informal settlement phenomenon on the fringes of Damascus are similar to those found elsewhere in Syria and in other MENA countries. The urban planning and legislative framework is formalistic, top-down, and increasingly irrelevant to facts on the ground. The Syrian Government relied on rigid master plans which did not anticipate the huge development pressures, took lengthy

periods to prepare, and were practically unenforceable. Also, the subdivision and building standards associated with plans are uniformly high and impose residential developments which are unaffordable to large segments of the newly arriving populations (new family formation, rural migrants from other areas of Syria, and Damascene families moving out from the center). Other causes of informal development include a lack of affordable housing as an alternative to informal development, limited coordination among different national and local authorities, a virulent speculative property market, and weak municipal technical capacities. And it must be added that laws governing urban development in Syria are obtuse and frequently contradictory.

13. Objectives

The objective of this application is to prepare a medium-to-long term urban upgrading strategy for Rief Damascus, including preparation of a first phase demonstration projects. The strategy will include four building blocks: (1) a citywide urban upgrading strategy and actionable interventions to upgrade nine existing informal residential areas which have been identified as the ones under the most urbanization pressure and need, (2) practical mechanisms to limit and deal with the chaotic conversion of agricultural land to urban use, (3) a policy for affordable land and housing systems for future population increases, and (4) institutional capacity building through on-the-job training and learning exchange. A key element will be to improve government policies towards informal urban development. Better community consultation and participation will be a prominent feature to understand and capture their needs, fears and aspirations.

The proposed set of activities will have a positive, albeit indirect, impact on the environment by: (i) indicating urban upgrading priority activities in a selected group of municipalities, which typically include improvement of sanitation systems, drainage channels, solid waste management, and water provision, all of which help reduce pollution, morbidity and environmental hazards; (ii) indicating measures to protect scarce and fertile agricultural land; and (iii) developing planning tools to monitor land use and population growth.

14. Methodology and sequencing of activities

The proposed Cities Alliance Grant for Urban Upgrading for Rief Damascus will extend over an 18 month period. The demonstration projects (Study Area) have been defined as the following areas (*nahiyas*) of Rief Damascus which are under urbanization pressures: Duma, Harista, Arbiin, Kafr Batna, Jaramana, Mlayha, Babyla, Sahnaya, and parts of the nahiyas of Tal and Al Qadsiya. These areas are located in municipalities and neighborhoods where growth pressures are the most acute and where there are high concentrations of inhabitants of limited income (Table 1):

Table 1: Study Area

Municipality/ neighborhoods ⁴	Special Focus
Sayeda Zeinab	Including Sayeda Zeinab, Al Hajira, Al Dhiabia, Al Bahdalia, Al Huseinyia, and Kharabet al Ward
Al Sbeina	Whole of municipality including especially Hay al Ghazal
Artouz	Artouz, Jedidet Artouz and Extensions
Al Hama	Jebal al Ward
Doma	All informal extension areas
Hajar Al Aswid	Whole of municipality
Hezza	Whole of village, including extensions

In order to develop the urban upgrading strategy, a series of activities and tasks is proposed. The Ministry of Local Administration sees this strategy as being more than an abstract exercise, rather one which incorporates actions and quick-wins with the widest possible demonstration impact. The main tasks are as follows:

1. GIS, Spatial and Demographic Analysis and Assistance to Municipalities Help expand the scope and activities of the existing GIS unit in the Ministry of Local Administration to carry out for the Study Area (a) analysis of service provision, populations, land use, built form, layering of detailed plans with

⁴ Note that in June 2009 some of these areas have been re-classified administratively, with new municipalities being declared.

imagery and infrastructure networks, acquisition of up-to-date imager, (b) provision of mapping and planning assistance to the target municipalities, and (c) analysis of populations and population projections by municipality and neighborhood, in partnership with the National Statistics Office. The Institut Français du Proche Orient in Damascus will also collaborate in this effort.

2. City-wide land, housing and infrastructure assessments

a) In consultation with education, health and other service directorates of Rief Damascus as well as the Technical Services Directorate, support the *planning and location of land reserves* for needed facilities to better reflect population realities as developed under (1) above.

b) Explore ways to *protect high-value agricultural land* under urbanization pressures within the Study Area with partners, such as the JICA pilot scheme in El Ghouta.

c) Develop and disseminate a *land and housing assessment* covering the following subjects in the Study Area:

- Current and future demand for housing and land, broken down geographically
- Affordability of housing and land by income and socio-economic groups
- Housing markets and housing supply mechanisms to meet demand
- Costs of providing infrastructure for different areas and ways to recover these costs

Developing this assessment will require a certain amount of analysis, both of secondary data on household incomes and poverty and also through field research. The Institut Français du Proche Orient will provide valuable inputs by undertaking a study of land and real estate markets and of housing conditions, tenure, costs, finance, and supply and demand within various localities of Greater Damascus. Property transactions and housing production, sale, and rental in both the formal and informal sectors will be covered. Particular focus will be put on land conversion and subdivision for building purposes, and on household affordability as a determinant of demand.

d) In close consultation with the Greater Damascus Water and Wastewater Authority and the Rural Damascus Electricity Authority, *assess infrastructure service levels* and needs in focus areas and identify systemic gaps and bottlenecks. Also map existing networks and planned network extensions and rehabilitations. Liaise with EIB and KfW water and wastewater projects to maximize value added. Also, take advantage of the upcoming EIB Municipal Development Fund, especially as concerns plans for improved integrated solid waste management in Rief Damascus communities.

3. Preparation of neighborhood plans and actionable interventions

a) Develop appropriate *neighborhood plans* to replace currently rigid and impractical detailed plans in existing/expanding popular and mostly lower-income informal settlements (such as Al Husseinya, Hay al Ghazal, etc.). This would include support for possible land gains for services through landowner partnerships with municipalities. Support would be given for their rapid adoption by all concerned authorities.

b) Develop appropriate *model neighborhood plans* and associated standards and regulations for special sites and services, or "popular self-help housing zones", in new and fringe areas which allow affordable and very popular housing production modes. The aim is to improve and formalize what is the predominant informal settlement process in Rief Damascus. Included in this task would be (1) producing guidelines for adopting such model plans by municipalities and (2) producing action plans tailored to specific appropriate locations where they could be applied as demonstration pilot projects.

c) Develop *model integrated upgrading plans* for targeted individual municipalities, engaging with them closely in the process. Plans will include medium term capital investment plans.

Targeted individual municipalities will play an important role in the development of this activity by participating in discussions with consultants and with counterparts from the Ministry of Local Administration and the Governorate of Rief Damascus. The terms of reference of consultants working in the preparation of neighborhood plans will include: (i) informing municipalities about the work to be

undertaken and obtaining their approval; (ii) creating a small committee in each municipality to ensure the participation of the Ministry, the Governorate and the municipality at equal footing; (iii) validating all the stages of the process with the committee; and (iv) ensuring that municipalities participate in presentations and dissemination activities.

4. Assessment of Municipal Management Needs and Provision of on-the-job Capacity Building and Study Tour. Carry out assessments of management strengths and weaknesses in target municipalities and provide tailored capacity building programs. Possible management improvements would be in the areas of spatial planning and mapping, budget planning, revenue enhancement, and better participation by citizens. Study tours for government and municipal officials to other countries in the region which have upgrading programs could also be arranged.

5. Compilation of specialized assessments and practical tools to prepare a medium to long-term urban upgrading strategy. This final piece will include: (i) growth prospects for Rief Damascus and their implication in terms of land, housing, and infrastructure needs; (ii) priority large scale investments needed at the Governorate level; (iii) priority low-scale investments needed at municipal level (using the selected municipalities); (iv) accompanying urban regulations for ii and iii including proposals for simplification; (v) proposals to increase and expand the participation of citizens in city planning processes; (vi) a set of indicators to monitor and follow-up the implementation of the strategy; (vii) a capital investment plan with proposed sources of funding, which might include the World Bank, other donors, and private sector entities, sequencing and main actors and stakeholders.

15. Deliverables

The following are a list of expected deliverables and their approximate delivery dates:

1. Spatial and demographic analysis report of Study Area (month 6) and continuous production of thematic maps etc. to assist targeted municipalities.
2. Land and housing assessment, first part in month 6 and second part in month 12.
3. Appropriate pilot tanzim plans for three or four existing informal neighborhoods (month 8)
4. A model tanzim plan for new "popular" areas, including model regulations (month 8) and application guidelines and action plan (month 12)
5. Integrated upgrading plans for three target municipalities, including infrastructure, service, and poverty reduction elements (months 12 to 14)
6. Recommendations to preserve high value agricultural land (month 15)
7. Consolidated upgrading strategy of Rief Damascus (month 17 and 18)
8. Monitoring outcomes report (month 18)

16. Expected outcomes and related monitoring indicators and plans

The overall expected outcome is the adoption by local and national authorities of the upgrading strategy for Rief Damascus and starting the implementation of high priority investment projects in some (or all) areas. Monitoring of the following indicators will be carried out by the Ministry of Local Administration over the 18 months and will be part of the final reporting to the Cities Alliance:

- Adoption of recommendations for rationalization and amalgamation of local unit boundaries and service areas in Rief Damascus
- Official adoption of revised tanzim plans for existing informal neighborhoods
- Official adoption of model "popular" neighborhood tanzim plans in (a) Rief Damascus and (b) nationally

- Adoption by elected municipal councils of integrated upgrading plans
- Adoption by municipalities of recommended management and budgeting improvements
- Endorsement by the Ministry of Local Administration and the elected local councils of Governorate of Rief Damascus of the overall urban upgrading strategy and its promotion as an effective approach for urban upgrading nationally.
- Efforts to leverage follow-up financing and start of implementation.

17. Sources of investment to implement the slum upgrading program

The possible sources of investments for the urban upgrading strategy in target areas of Rief Damascus would include:

1. Municipal own-source revenues, particularly through more extensive use of the betterment tax especially for road and public space improvements
2. Central budgetary support to municipalities for capital investment projects.
3. Loans and grants for major infrastructure investments in Rief Damascus through financial cooperation from such donor agencies as KfW and EIB.
4. Possible loan from the World Bank if an operational re-engagement with Syria takes place.
5. Possible private sector investments in land development schemes negotiated with municipalities.

18. Partnerships

The main partnerships which will be operational during the 18 month period are at three levels. At the local level are the municipalities (some 30 in the Study Area of which 5 to 8 will be the subject of focus during the 18 months), which struggle with planning control and delivering basic services, and which through their local councils and neighborhood leaders (mukhtars) provide mechanisms for community participation. The Governorate of Rief Damascus will be the partner at the mezzo level, as the main service provider through its various governorate-level directorates. Finally, the Ministry of Local Administration provides the national level overview and represents the main platform for much needed policy reform, which is one of the main objectives of the proposed project.⁵

These three main partner groups will be supplemented with technical partnerships with the National Statistics Office, the Damascus Water and Wastewater Authority, and with the Damascus offices of the Institut Français du Proche Orient (IFPO) and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). It is also envisioned that there will be close technical liaison with KfW as concerns water and wastewater and GIS work in Rief Damascus, with EIB also in the water and wastewater sector, and with GTZ's Urban Development Programme in Syria, particularly for exchange of ideas on informal urban development.

The World Bank and AUDI will be providing technical assistance in the supervision of all activities listed in this application.

19. Government commitment and approval

⁵ The Ministry of Local Administration is a key partner for a very practical reason. Within the focus areas of Rief Damascus certain towns are administratively under the Governorate of Quneitra and not Rief Damascus. Also, some areas of Rief Damascus are under the control of Damascus Governorate. Only the Ministry of Local Administration has the mandate to deal with all three governorates.

Recently the Syrian Government has shown a commitment to begin to adopt new approaches to tackle the issue of informal settlements and reform its urban planning approaches and tools. In 2001 modern, time-limited rental contracts were allowed, which greatly freed up residential rental markets, and a law in 2003 allowed the legalization of large, established informal settlements. And perhaps the recent flood of Iraqi refugees to the Damascus area, most of whom end up being accommodated in informal housing, has jarred traditional political thought.

Hence, presently there is a great opportunity for effective reform of the ways which Syria approaches its urban sector, including recognition of the importance of informal urbanization as a key factor in development. And nowhere are such new approaches needed as in the areas of Rief Damascus under severe urbanization pressures. An urban upgrading initiative in Rief Damascus will directly support the Governorate and its municipalities in understanding the scope and dynamics of the issues involved, and will help bring together the main government, private, and civil society stakeholders to develop agreed policies and actions which can demonstrate effective upgrading approaches and new mechanisms to guide and organize future development. An urban upgrading initiative in Rief Damascus can be seen as a local, problem-based approach which will complement regional and national level reform in the urban sector.

IMPLEMENTATION AND FINANCING PLANS:

20. Implementation arrangements

The proposed Cities Alliance grant will be implemented by the Ministry of Local Administration, Directorate for Studies and Plans, in coordination with the Governorate of Rief Damascus and partners agencies. The Directorate will designate a full time coordinator and employ an accountant for the Grant. It will handle all procurement according to WB guidelines. The Directorate will make staff and an equipped office space available for the Grant operations and will ensure that information required to produce the deliverables is available in a timely manner.

A Grant Manager Agreement will be signed with the World Bank in the amount of \$40,000 to co-finance task team supervision.

21. Project schedule and delivery targets

The sequencing of these activities and tasks over the proposed 18 month period can be organized as shown in the following table (indicative).

Proposed Sequencing and Scheduling of Activities

Activity/Task	Months 1-3	Months 4-6	Months 7-9	Months 10-12	Months 13-15	Months 16-18
(1) GIS and Population Analysis & Assistance	—————			—————		
(2) Land needs		—————				
(3) Preserving Agro Land Strategies		—————		—————		
(4) Develop land and housing assessment		—————		—————		
(5) Infrastructure Assessments	—————		—————			
(6) Appropriate Plans for Existing Neighborhoods			—————			
(7) Model Plans for New Neighborhoods			—————	—————		
(8) Integrated Municipal Upgrading Plans				—————	—————	
(9) Management Needs Assessments and		—————		—————		

Capacity Building						
(10) Consolidated Upgrading Strategy						

22. Financing plan (indicative only)

A. CITIES ALIANCE GRANT REQUEST

Components / Main Activities	Total (US\$)	Type of Expenditure			
		Consulting Services (US\$)	Training/ Capacity Building (US\$)	Dissemin- ation Costs (US\$)	Other (US\$) (Travel)
PROJECT ACTIVITIES:					
1. GIS, Spatial and Demographic Analysis and Assistance to Municipalities	50,000	40,000	10,000		
2. City-wide land, housing and infrastructure assessments	40,000	37,000		3,000	
3. Preparation of neighborhood plans and actionable interventions	47,000	47,000			
4. Assessment of Municipal Management Needs and Provision of on-the-job Capacity Building and Study Tour.	60,000	12,000	10,000		38,000
5. Compilation of specialized assessments and practical tools to prepare a medium to long-term urban upgrading strategy	15,000	14,000		1,000	
6. Project coordination	50,000	50,000			
TOTAL Project Activities	262,000	200,000	20,000	4,000	38,000
PROJECT ADMINISTRATION & SUPERVISION:					
Independent Audit (1):	8,000	8,000			
Supervision Costs (2): a) fees/labour/wages b) travel costs c) office running cost	16,000 24,000				16,000 24,000
Sub-Total – Project Administration & Supervision	48,000	8,000	00	00	40,000
TOTAL A (Cities Alliance Grant Request)	310,000	208,000	20,000	4,000	78,000

Ministry of Local Administration	\$85,000		20,000	40,000	25,000
World Bank	\$40,000	10,000	00	5,000	25,000
AUDI	\$7,000	3,000	00	4,000	
AFD	\$8,000		4,000	4,000	
TOTAL B (Co-Financing)	\$140,000	13,000	24,000	53,000	50,000

B. CO-FINANCING

C. TOTAL

TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET COST (A + B)	\$450,000	221,000	44,000	57,000	128,000
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See Guidelines for more information.

(1) An external audit is required upon completion or termination of project activities. Categorise this type of expenditure as "other."

(2) Incremental costs associated with the management of the project, up to a maximum of 15 percent of the Cities Alliance grant request. Categorize this type of expenditure as "other."

23. Costing assumptions

For consulting services the assumptions include: number of days estimated for the job, daily rates, and travel if necessary. For training the assumptions include: type of training, number of days needed, number of participants, costs of courses, and travel if needed. For dissemination activities an approximate 12% of total costs was determined and then distributed by activity and co-financier.

24.Expected currency of expenditures

Into what currency (or currencies) do you expect the grant funding (provided in U.S. dollars) to be converted?

For international expenditures, USD. For local expenditures, Syrian Pounds

What exchange rate assumptions have you used?

NA

25.Co-financing arrangements

Co-financing was discussed in detail with each co-financier. The Ministry of Local Administration has engaged to financing training, dissemination and in-kind contributions such as offices, personnel and telecommunications. A detailed table is available upon request.

The CMU will include the supervision budget in FY11.

AUDI has agreed to finance the following: assistance in the conduction of surveys, review and synthesizing of all relevant studies and statistical information, participation in World Bank missions, organization of workshops, translation of documents between Arabic and English languages, dissemination, setting up of web sites, and print materials.

AFD has agreed to help with training and dissemination activities.

Is all co-financing confirmed/committed? Yes

26.Financial management information

A financial management specialist and a procurement specialist based in the World Bank Beirut office will be on mission in Syria, after grant approval to: (i) assess the capacity of the MLA to manage the funds and procure services; (ii) determine personnel, equipment and training needs to improve such capacities; and (iii) develop action plans to establish the FM framework as well the procurement plan.