



## Towards Safe, Inclusive and Accessible Public Spaces in Lebanon

*Speaker: Maryam Nazzal, UNHabitat Lebanon*

Public spaces have historically often been overlooked and undervalued by national authorities but are increasingly being considered the backbone of cities can enhance community cohesion and promote health, happiness, and well-being for all citizens. In 2011 UN-Habitat launched the Global Public Space Programme which aims to improve the quality of public spaces worldwide. Public space is regarded as an integral component of sound urban planning practices and part of the global effort to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. In 2012, UN-Habitat Lebanon implemented “Safe and Friendly Cities for All”, a pilot Project in two of the most vulnerable and poor communities of Beirut city. The findings of the survey have largely highlighted the need for the creation and rehabilitation of public spaces, as expressed by the interviewed women, youth, and children. Also in 2016, in response to the influx of Syrians refugees resulting from the conflict in Syria and causing enormous strain on host communities, UN-Habitat launched the “Inclusive Safe and Accessible Public Space” Project to implement public spaces in many cities of Lebanon (Beirut and Tripoli), by using the Minecraft Game to involve the community, with special emphasis on youth, children, women and refugees in the design of public spaces. These projects lie in the heart of this presentation.

(Image by UNHabitat Lebanon)

### Short Bio:

*Ms. Maryam Nazzal is currently the Junior Project Support Officer at UN-Habitat-Lebanon. With more than six years of experience as a social worker working with different international and local NGO's, Maryam gained expertise in the fields of community development and capacity building. Maryam holds a bachelor degree from the Lebanese University as a social worker and a Master's degree in “Socio-Cultural Engineering of Youth and Citizenship” at the Saint Joseph University in Beirut. She has extensive knowledge in social development, social mobilization, public spaces, hygiene promotion, communication for development and solid waste management.*

**Date:** 16 February 2017

**Time:** 18:00 p.m. – 19:30 p.m.

**Room:** Ground Floor Exhibition Area, Department of Architecture, Ledras 68, 1010, Nicosia