

Under the high patronage of His Excellency,
the President of the Republic of Lebanon,
General Joseph Aoun

AFSD 2026
Arab Forum for
Sustainable Development



AFSD 2026 is organized in two modalities:

- Online preparatory sessions in May 2026.
- In-person meeting: date and location to be determined.

Online AFSD 2026 sessions

Detailed agenda

Beirut time	DAY ONE: TUESDAY 12 MAY 2026
10.30 a.m.– 12 p.m.	Special session 1 Accelerating SDG 6: Capacity-building to address water scarcity and transform agrifood systems in the Arab region To register for this session, please use the following link . The program of this online session is available at this link .
12–1 p.m.	Break
1–3 p.m. 	Review of SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation) Accelerating the inclusive implementation of SDG 6 to strengthen water security This high-level panel discussion will present a baseline assessment of SDG 6 in the Arab region prior to the onset of the recent regional conflict, highlighting policy gaps. It will examine the impact of conflict on water resources and water diplomacy, and outline solutions to address water-related vulnerabilities. The session will also explore water cooperation, as a catalyst for peace, and mid- to long-term planning for water resilience in conflict settings. It will further

showcase innovative projects to address water scarcity in the context of climate change, including the use of non-conventional water resources, partnerships with the private sector, investments, and the role of financing institutions. Finally, the session will review regional preparations in the lead-up to the 2026 United Nations Water Conference.

Moderator: Shahira Wahbi, Expert in Water and Food Security and Sustainability, Former Director of Housing, Water Resources and Disaster Risk Reduction, Arab Ministerial Water Council, League of Arab States

Panelists:

- **Ali Karnib**, Water and Sustainable Development Expert, Lebanese American University of Beirut
- **Abdulla Balalaa**, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy and Sustainability, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, United Arab Emirates
- **Ziad Mimi**, Head of Palestinian Water Authority, State of Palestine
- **Marwa Khattab**, General Director of Multilateral Cooperation, Department of External Cooperation –Nile Water Sector, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt
- **Natasha Carmi**, Water Peace Programme Manager for WANA region, Geneva Water Hub, Cross-sectoral coordination and non-conventional water for water security

Discussants:

- **Anna Rosendahl**, Head of Regional Development Cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa, Embassy of Sweden in Amman, Jordan
- **Amgad El Mahdi**, Regional Manager for Middle East and North Africa, Green Climate Fund
- **Rami Abi Ammar**, Program and Research Officer at the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)

To register for this session, please use the following [link](#).

3–3.30 p.m.	Break
3.30–5 p.m.	Special session 2 Non-conventional solutions for water-resilient cities To register for this session, please use the following link. The program of this online session is available at this link.



Beirut time	DAY TWO: THURSDAY 14 MAY 2026
10.30 a.m.– 12 p.m.	Special session 3 Unleashing the potential of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) through improved business environments To register for this session, please use the following link . The program of this online session is available at this link .
12–1 p.m.	Break
1–3 p.m.	 Review of SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) Safe and affordable housing as a human right: delivering SDG 11 in times of crisis in the Arab region This high-level panel discussion will examine progress and challenges in delivering SDG 11 in the Arab region, with a focus on safe and affordable housing as a human right and a cornerstone of inclusive, resilient cities, particularly in contexts affected by protracted crises and conflict. It will build on recent global and regional momentum, including the Sixth Arab Ministerial Forum for Housing and Urban Development (Doha, Qatar, 14–16 December 2025), highlighting housing as essential to social protection and sustainable urban development. The session will spotlight practical, integrated policy and financing solutions that link housing to poverty reduction, decent work and social inclusion. It will also consider post-conflict recovery and reconstruction approaches aimed at building back better and greener. Moderator: Nihal El-Megharbel, Former Vice-Minister of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform, Egypt, Regional Expert on Urban Policies Panelists: • Amr Khattab, Assistant Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities for technical affairs and projects, Egypt • Maher Johan, Deputy Minister of Planning, Iraq • Mohammad Ahmad Ali Thabet, Deputy Minister of Public Works and Highways, Yemen • Salim Abuthaheer, Assistant Deputy Minister for Housing Affairs, Ministry of Public Works and Housing, State of Palestine • Fahd bin Mohammed Al Khayarin, Assistant Undersecretary for Social Development Affairs, Ministry of Social Development and Family, Qatar



	• Mahmoud R. Fath-Allah, Chief Economist, Director of the department of Environmental, Meteorological Affairs, Economic Sector, League of Arab States Discussants: • Sylvana Lakkis, Co-Founder and Chairperson, Arab Forum for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities • Joseph Schechla, International Human Rights Expert, Habitat International Coalition – Housing and Land Rights Network • Soha Mneimneh, Lecturer and Researcher in Urban Planning and Policy at Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (ALBA), University of Balamand, Lebanon • Rania Hedeya, Director, Regional Office for Arab States, UN-Habitat • Samer Al-Kharashi, Director, Regional Office for the Middle East, UN Tourism To register for this session, please use the following link.
3–3.30 p.m.	Break
3.30–5 p.m.	Special session 4 New Urban Agenda midterm review: from national reporting to regional action To register for this session, please use the following link. The program of this online session is available at this link.
Beirut time	DAY THREE: TUESDAY 19 MAY 2026
10.30 a.m.– 12 p.m.	Special session 5 Insights from the Arab Gender Gap Report 2025 To register for this session, please use the following link. The program of this online session is available at this link.
12–1 p.m.	Break
1–3 p.m.	Review of SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy) From access to resilience: accelerating SDG 7 in the Arab region This high-level panel discussion will take stock of progress on SDG 7 in the Arab region, assessing advances in access to energy, renewable energy, energy efficiency, affordability and grid readiness. It will examine how the region's challenges, including conflict, economic



and debt distress, climate risks, energy market structures and price volatility, are reshaping pathways towards achieving SDG 7. The session will highlight infrastructure and digitalization as key enablers of reliable and resilient systems and of greater integration of renewable energy sources. The discussion will draw on country experiences and promote inclusive action to reach last-mile populations, in line with the principle of leaving no one behind. It will also identify priority policy directions and financing solutions, while reinforcing linkages with SDG 9, including on critical minerals, and SDG 11, regarding access to basic services.

Moderator: Aisha Al-Sarihi, Economic Expert, Ministry of Economy, Oman

Panelists:

- Ministry of Energy in charge of Natural Resources, Djibouti (TBC)
- **Ayman Ismail**, Chairman, Palestinian Energy and Natural Resources Authority
- **Amani Al-Azzam**, Secretary General, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Jordan
- **Ouael Chouchene**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy, Tunisia
- **Sorina Mortada**, Board Member, Electricity Regulatory Authority, Lebanon
- **Fotouh Al-Ragom**, Acting Executive Director, Energy and Buildings Research Center, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research

To register for this session, please use the following [link](#).

3–3.30 p.m.	Break
3.30–5.30 p.m.	Special session 6 Water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus: local solutions for global impact To register for this session, please use the following link. The program of this online session is available at this link.



Beirut time	DAY FOUR: THURSDAY 21 MAY 2026
10.30 a.m.– 12 p.m.	Special session 7 Sustainable transport for all: applying a gender- and disability-inclusive approach To register for this session, please use the following link. The program of this online session is available at this link.
12–1 p.m.	Break
1–3 p.m. 	Review of SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) Infrastructural impact of conflict and pathways for resilience This high-level panel discussion will focus on the infrastructure dimension of SDG 9, beginning with a baseline assessment of infrastructure-related trends in the Arab region prior to the recent escalation of conflict. The discussion will examine the impact of conflict, including damage to energy, water, agriculture, and transport, as well as spillover effects on trade, supply chains and industrial production. The session will also explore policy options to strengthen infrastructure resilience during crises and outline post-conflict recovery, reconstruction and financing priorities. Moderator: Nadim Farajalla, Associate Professor at the School of Engineering and Chief Sustainability Officer, Lebanese American University, Lebanon Panelists: • Salim Rouhana, Lead Urban, Resilience and Land Specialist for the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan (MENAP) Region, World Bank • Yarob Badr, Minister of Transport, Syrian Arab Republic • Salem Al-Socatri, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Fish Wealth, Yemen • Ahmad Tamer, Director General of Land and Maritime Transport, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Lebanon • Abdalla Ahmed Mohamed, Managing Director, Sudan Electricity Holding Company, Sudan • Diana Bou-Ghanem, Board Member, Head of Market and Competition Unit, Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, Lebanon • Jean-Bertrand Mothes, Country Director for Lebanon, French Agency for Development



	To register for this session, please use the following link .
3–3.30 p.m.	Break
3.30–5 p.m.	Special session 8 Shaping the future of work in the Arab region: artificial intelligence and employment pathways To register for this session, please use the following link . The program of this online session is available at this link .

