

R.E. AWWAD, K. ELKHOURY. *Assessment of sustainable construction in Lebanon*. *Gerontechnology* 2012;11(2):152; doi:10.4017/gt.2012.11.02.465.00 **Purpose** One of the most critical contemporary issues is achieving and maintaining sustainable development, adapting the use of natural resources to provide for the needs of our rising populations without threatening the survival and quality of life for future generations. Sustainable construction, in particular, is a concept that is gaining importance all over the world and is gradually improving life for populations that recognize its importance. The current environmental degradation in Lebanon due to limited natural resources, population increases, and inefficient urban management, threatens the economic growth and the wellbeing of the people and thus dictates the urgent need for planning and taking action on a comprehensive environmental sustainability strategy. The main purpose of this research is to explore the Lebanese construction industry in order to evaluate sustainability achievements on both design and construction levels. This research also studies sustainability standards and practices implemented in some developed countries and in the surrounding region in order to better assess the current status of sustainability development and corresponding public awareness in the Lebanese construction market with respect to foreign industries. Based on the aforementioned, this research addresses challenges to sustainable construction in Lebanon and provides recommendations to enhance the use of energy-saving materials and the application of environmentally-friendly construction methods. **Method** This assessment is done through two complementary approaches: (i) a comprehensive literature review of all pertaining governmental regulations, public policy, and guidelines that have been enacted to promote building sustainability in Lebanon, as well as a survey about existing green buildings and ongoing green projects along with the implementation challenges; and (ii) conducting interviews with Lebanese parties that are key players in achieving sustainable development such as local experts, public agencies, municipalities, architectural and contracting firms, private agencies dealing with environment protection, and real-estate companies. **Results & Discussion** The concept of sustainable production and construction is still very primitive in Lebanon and the role of the government in promoting sustainability is not yet well established. Some public entities including, but not limited to, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Energy and Water, the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) have put some effort through internationally funded projects and campaigns by UNDP and the European Commission aimed at promoting sustainable production and consumption in Lebanon. However, these efforts were not enough to have a significant impact on these industries and resulted merely in voluntary guidelines rather than serious measures to reduce energy usage and pollution. Another finding of this research is that major efforts need to be made towards enhancing public awareness of sustainability issues. Hence, this research analyses the observed deficiencies in the Lebanese construction market and provides some recommendations that, if turned into action plans, constitute a promising transition from a short-sighted construction focusing on short-term goals of profit making and fast growth and lacking concern for the environment to a global long-term sustainable development that ensures the welfare of the current and future generations.

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