Inclusive Urban Strategy and Action Plan, Bab Al-Tabbaneh and Jebel Mohsen

Volume 1. Diagnosis and Urban Scenarios report
After the implementation of the April 2014 security plan by the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces, the Office of Transition Initiatives of USAID identified the relatively calm period in Tripoli as a window of opportunity to restore the rule of law and regain trust between citizens and state institutions. USAID solicited the support of Beyond Reform & Development (BRD), a local consulting firm, to provide technical support to the Municipality of Tripoli by developing a strategic plan that can help the Municipality effectively respond to meet urgent citizen needs. BRD worked over a period of seven month to develop and help implement a strategic action plan which was comprised of several phases. Those phases included the development of the strategy document and its public announcement during a press conference attended by USAID, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), local stakeholders, political parties, and other public figures. The strategic plan outlined sectors for urgent interventions in the following 5 areas: health, education, employment, civic engagement, and urban planning. To help the municipality seek support for projects that fall under these areas, OTI supported another phase to re-establish the Local Development Office within the Municipality of Tripoli and also provided in-kind grant support for each of the 5 sectors listed in the strategic plan.

Under the urban planning and rehabilitation of damaged areas sub-sector in the strategic plan, OTI supported the development of this document, the Inclusive Urban Strategy and Action Plan. The renovation, revitalization and renewal of these blighted neighborhoods was cited regularly by citizens of Tripoli, and especially the displaced citizens of the Bab el Tebbaneh, Qobbe and Jabal Mohsen neighborhoods, as a priority area for intervention.

This urban renewal strategy was developed through a rigorous effort in a remarkably short period of time in order to keep pace with the expectations created during this time of relative calm. The information and findings presented in this document represent the culmination of weeks worth of consultation with the Municipality of Tripoli and citizens of Tripoli. The information contained herein includes the final urban plan, maps, and potential interventions that support long term social cohesion and reconciliation efforts in Tripoli. This is only the first necessary but not yet sufficient step to consolidating the ground that has been gained in Tripoli since April 2014. Success will only be attained through cooperation and dedication by the Municipality of Tripoli and the Local Development Office with international organizations, and other donors and stakeholders who choose to invest in the future of Tripoli.
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Avant-Propos

Introduction
1.1 Mission
1.2 Report Structure

Context and Urban Growth
2.1 Context
2.2 Historical Evolution and Urban Growth

Diagnosis
3.1 Topography
3.2 Urban Morphology
3.3 Spatial Dynamics
3.4 Infrastructure
3.5 Planning Framework

Household Survey Analysis
4.1 Methodology
4.2 Cross-Cutting Themes
4.3 Socio-Economic Living Conditions
4.4 Gender
4.5 Solutions & Aspirations

SWOT Analysis
55

Case Studies
6.1 Methodology
6.2 Literature Review
6.3 Post-Conflict Case Studies
6.4 Urban Rehabilitation Strategies and Practices
6.5 Synthesis

Planning Directives
85

Urban Scenarios
87
6.1 Scenario 1
6.2 Scenario 2
6.3 Scenario 3
6.4 Synthesis

Way Forward
Avant Propos

The neighborhoods of Bab Al-Tabbaneh, Jabal Mohsen, and Qobbeh are part of Tripoli, Lebanon’s second largest city and capital of its Northern Province.

One can see very little that is different among the shops and people that sit along the narrow, bumpy roads in the three parts of the city. That is except for the faces of the politicians and the colors of the party flags that adorn the electrical poles and building walls. In their political alignment, Tabbaneh being dominantly Sunni Muslim and Jebel Mohsen dominantly Alawite Muslim, are at opposite ends of a regional war. And their interface, commonly delineated by Syria Street, is where those ends meet, sometimes for days on end in an exchange of fire, grenades, and casualties.

But intra-city routes were not always marked with bullets. For decades, residents reported, relationships of trade, culture, and kinship flourished with little care for nationality or religion. Families and residents were interwoven among the neighborhoods until the Lebanese civil war of the 80s, which filtered Tripoli’s diverse neighborhoods into sectarian demarcations. Syria-aligned Lebanese Alawites aggregated in Jebel Mohsen and fought against the Sunni Tawhid Movement which was mainly based in Bab el Tabbaneh. Tensions remained through phases of quiet after the end of the civil war although people kept to their segregated areas of old and then-new residence.

The Arab Democratic Party of Jebel Mohsen rearmed in 2007 after the threat of Fath Al Islam and fighting erupted again the following year during the violent battle for government control between March 14 and March 8 coalitions in Lebanon. Since then and throughout the ongoing war to defend or dethrone the Assad regime in Syria, Bab el Tabbaneh and Jebel Mohsen have spiraled into a cycle of violence, leaving the most deprived and densely populated areas of an already neglected city further impoverished.

This “Inclusive Urban Strategy and Action Plan” proposal was conducted in 3 phases over a period of 3 months:

The first phase presents an urban growth analysis of the study area throughout history and a diagnosis tackling spatial, social, economic and planning issues. This analysis reflects on the urban and socio-economic implications of the conflict. This phase concludes with three potential urban scenarios aiming to address the raised issues and complexities.

Duration: 6 weeks

The second phase offers an elaborated scheme of the selected urban scenario by the municipality. It addresses multiples levels of interventions: public spaces, urban mobility, physical rehabilitation.

Duration: 3 weeks

The third phase presents a preliminary urban action plan addressing sensible and potential focus points for future interventions and proposes phasing and tools for implementation.

Duration: 3 weeks

The proposal is presented in two volumes:

Volume 1: Diagnosis and Urban Scenarios
Volume 2: Strategy and Action Plan

Volume 1 is the outcome of the first phase

The ultimate aim of the inclusive urban strategy and action plan proposal is to initiate and foster peace and reconciliation between the conflicting communities, while addressing spatial, social and economic segregations.
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mission

An Inclusive Urban Strategy and Action Plan is to be set for the area of Bab-Al Tabbaneh, Jebel Möhsen and part of Al-Qobbe, in Tripoli, Lebanon. This project is a unique opportunity for a spatial and socio-economic rehabilitation aiming to achieve the following:

- **Harmonize** different initiatives and efforts, and plan the investments of future funding in an inclusive and sustainable approach.
- **Address** the spatial segregation between neighborhoods and the break of historic socio-economic ties between these neighborhoods and the city of Tripoli, and achieve physical, economic and socio-cultural linkages.
- **Enhance** the livability of these neighborhoods while enhancing their economy, culture and mix of functions and people, and try to build on these socio-cultural assets.
- **Counteract** the rise of violence and reach sustained long-term peace amongst conflicting communities, and celebrate this area as a reconciliation zone.
- **Adopt** innovative solutions to address poverty, illiteracy and unemployment leading to social desperation.
- **Improve** access to basic infrastructure and upgrade the current infrastructure systems.
- **Strengthen** the local distinctiveness of communities and their sense of belonging while changing the generic perception of other local, national and international communities to them.
- **Plan** for sustainable growth in setting a vision for the future.

The significance of this strategic development lies first in its timing given the critical political and security situation Tripoli is going through. Second, this project explores how inclusive urban strategies can engage in reconciliation processes and benefit peace building process in divided cities and landscapes. It shows how changes in the physicality of the urban fabric -its voids and linear breaks- can draw strategic connections and allow for urban cohesion.

Third, this strategic development plan breaks through classical approaches that tend to overcome conflicts and achieve reconciliation by addressing critical social, cultural and physical issues in a dispersed manner. With its holistic approach, the strategic development plan addresses the conflict zone as an integral part of wider local and national contexts which need to be addressed.
1.2 Report structure

The report initiates with an introductory section framing the background of this study, the required mission, the consultant’s profile and the structure of the report.

The Second Chapter defines the study context and the historic evolution and urban growth of the study area. The historical narrative aims at drawing links between shifts in political powers, changes in planning and design ideologies, and alterations in the social structure on the international, national and local scales. These established links contribute to a better understanding of how the study area was shaped and developed throughout history and what are the factors that initiated and fostered this development.

The Third Chapter presents the diagnosis of the study area in terms of its topography, urban morphology, spatial dynamics, stakeholders, infrastructure and planning framework.

The Forth Chapter outlines the household survey in a thematic analysis addressing the social fabric, security and safety, employment, education, healthcare, access to infrastructure, gender and governance. It concludes with potential solutions and aspirations informing the future development plan to be proposed.

The Fifth Chapter presents the SWOT analysis, stating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints of the study area. It tackles the urban fabric and growth, the social and economic status, the environment and infrastructure conditions, mobility and security issues. This section informs the planning directives and hence the proposed urban scenarios to be responsive to the residents’ needs and aspirations.

The Sixth Chapter investigates case studies similar to the study area, good practices in terms of urban regeneration. The section concludes with lessons learnt and potential strategies.

The Seventh Chapter identifies planning directives and principles guiding the proposed scenarios.

The Eighth Chapter presents three urban scenarios, each overlaying the physical, social and economic aspects of the adopted vision.

The report concludes with a concluding note and the way forward for the next stages of this proposal.
2. CONTEXT AND URBAN GROWTH

2.1 Context

Regional. Al Fayhaa Metropolitan area is comprised of a union of three municipalities: Tripoli, El-Mina, and Beddawy, officially recognized as Al Fayhaa Union of Municipalities. Al-Fayhaa is a regional growth pole geographically positioned to serve as a major link between the Mediterranean basin and the Middle-Eastern hinterland.

Al Fayhaa Metropolitan area¹
- Total Area: 30 sqkm
- Population: 320,184 (1/3 of Northern Lebanon population)
  - Tripoli: 229,369
  - El Mina: 54,052
  - Beddawy: 36,763 (including Palestinian refugee camp population)
- Density: 12,000/sqkm
- Average Household size: 5.2

Municipal. The city of Tripoli is located 85 km north of Beirut and is the second largest city in the country after the capital. Tripoli’s status as the administrative center of the Mouhafaza (Governorate) of North sustains its role as an administrative and economic hub of Northern Lebanon.

The city is crossed by “Abou Ali” River of 44.5 km length emerging from the Quadisha Valley in Northern Lebanon.

On the western side of the river, the area is densely populated and makes up the districts of Abou Samra, the Citadelle, the old town and Zahrieh.

The eastern flank of the river is defined by the following neighborhoods: Dahr Al-Moghr, Al-Souaika, Al-Hara Al-Berraniya and Bab Al-Tabbaneh. Further inwards, the neighborhoods of Qobbe and Jebel Mohsen overlook the river and the old city.

On an institutional level, the municipality of Tripoli has the authority to implement decisions without being slowed down by the central government’s implementation process by which Beirut is suffering.

Study Area. Shaped on its western edge by the river, the study area is about 2 km² and is comprised of 11 neighborhoods, defined as illustrated in the following figure.
Context Map showing the study area in highlight within Tripoli municipality and in relation to El-Mina.
2.2 Historical Evolution & Urban Growth

a. From the Pre-Hellenic period to the late 19th century: A melting pot of cultures

The people of Arwad, Saida and Sour first founded Tripoli in the first millennium BC in the area of al-Mina. Tripoli was the center of this Phoenician confederation, hence the name Tripoli meaning “triple city” in Greek. It was controlled successively by the Assyrian Empire, Persian Empire, Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, the Caliphate, the Seljuk Empire, Crusader States. The Crusader presence (1109-1289 AD) is marked today by the historic core of Al-Mina, the cathedral (known today as al-Mansuri Mosque) and the Citadel of Saint Gilles in Tripoli.

In 1289 the Mamluks conquered the Crusader city situated on the peninsula, razed it to the ground and rebuilt a new city two kilometers to the east at the foot of the citadel longing the Abu Ali River, in order to protect the city from naval invasions, and redefine its vocation as a city interdependent from its agricultural fields. The Mamluk city was shaped within walls prescribing its limits, and 5 gates ensured access to its neighborhoods. Each gate gave its name to the neighborhood it opened to, amongst others Bab Al-Tabbane opening to Tebbane neighborhood and leading to Akkar area and then Syria.

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The old city was shaped by 5 neighborhoods on the river’s left bank: Al-Haddadine, Al-Muhatra, Al-Nouri, Al-Rennmané, Al Hadid; and 2 others on the river’s right bank: Tabbaneh and Souaika. The city developed around its central Mosque into a maze of streets as a defensive mechanism against military invasions, and completely disconnected from Al-Mina. The maze of narrow streets defined different souks responding to all the basic needs of the inhabitants. Tripoli witnessed a substantial growth in its economic and political power during the Mamluk era.

Under the Ottomans (1516-1918), the area of Bilad Al-Sham was defined to include in present-day Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and southern Turkey, and was divided into three Wilayas (Governorates): Aleppo to the North, Damascus to the South and Tripoli. Wilayat Tripoli included the maritime façade of Syria from Latakia in the north to Maameltein, near Jouineh, in the south as well as the internal cities of Homs and Hama.

Tripoli continued hence to grow albeit at a slower pace. Several khans, mosques and baths date back to this period.

During the 17th century, the rise of the ports of Saida, followed by Akka, Haifa and finally Beirut on the southern coast of the Mediterranean, set competing poles to the city of Tripoli and signaled the beginning of a long decline process.

In 1867, the ottoman set the institution of the Tanzimat, meaning administrative changes, leading to the dismantling of Wilayat Tripoli and Saida, and the establishment of Wilayat Beirut in 1888. The latter comprised the whole maritime façade of Bilad Al-Sham including Tripoli as a secondary hub. Despite this shift in the political power towards Beirut, Tripoli maintained its status as the main maritime exit for Central Syria. In 1877, the municipality of Tripoli was founded, followed by Al-Mina Municipality in 1883.

The discrepancy between living standards in Beirut the capital city, while marginalizing the peripheral zones which economies were dependent on the productive sectors -agriculture and industry. The discrepancy between living standards in Beirut/Mount Lebanon and the periphery (the North, the South, and the Bekaa) became more acute. This socio-economic marginalization contributed to a less stable situation in Tripoli and hence to a lack of private investments in its economy.

The city progressively witnessed the realization of new infrastructure which fostered new mixed residential and commercial redevelopment extending the city outside its walls, along four major infrastructure lines:

- **West**, along Azmi Road, which was instructed by the Ottoman governor Azmi Bchara, and connecting Tripoli to Al-Mina.
- **North**, along the axis leading to Homs: Syria Street
- **East**, along the road connecting with Zgharta: Omar Street
- **South**, along the road leading to Beirut

The French Mandate did not only dictate spatial and functional alterations, but also favored the centrality of Beirut the capital city, while marginalizing the peripheral zones which economies were dependent on the productive sectors -agriculture and industry. The discrepancy between living standards in Beirut/Mount Lebanon and the periphery (the North, the South, and the Bekaa) became more acute. This socio-economic marginalization contributed to a less stable situation in Tripoli and hence to a lack of private investments in its economy.

During this period and through these major political and spatial shifts, the population expanded from 41 474 inhabitants in 1932, to 80 000 inhabitants in 1943 according to a study by the Unesco in 1954.

The urban changes in this period occur in relation to shifting geo-political dynamics in the region as a whole, and shifting urban planning and design ideals.

The beginning of the Twentieth century witnessed the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War (1914-1918). As a result, the map of the Middle East was redrawn by the French and British, and new nations were established. Lebanon, with the current recognized boundaries, emerged as a nation-state in 1919, while being under the French mandate for twenty years (1920-1943) before gaining its independence. These political transformations repositioned the city of Tripoli within the network of Lebanese cities, and hence weakened its tight relations with the Levant inland cities.

The mandate administration in Tripoli settled in Al-Tell Square, symbol of modernity, facing the more popular old city shaped around traditional souks.

In parallel to these political shifts, a rail network linking Tripoli to Homs, Syria was developed in 1911 based on a local initiative aiming to enhance Tripoli’s strategic position and compete with Beirut.

- 1911, Tripoli-Homs link was established
- 1912-1942, Tripoli terminal of L’Orient express train coming from Paris
- 1942-1948, Tripoli-Beirut-Haifa link was established: Africa and Europe linked through the Lebanese coast: Tripoli became an intermediate station.

Shifting planning and design ideals then occurred. Western urban ideologies were imposed through colonialism, and Modernist urban concepts were set for the development of cities: the “sanitary infrastructural urbanism”.

This ideology adopted transportation systems and urban infrastructure (water canalization, power supply, sewage) as a solution for decongesting inner-city traffic and facilitating the accessibility to the commercial and institutional central core of Tripoli.

Road networks were superimposed on the old urban fabric of Tripoli dismissing its urban dynamics in the quest of a functional, ‘clean’ and efficient city accommodated primarily to the use of vehicles. This led to the disruption of the morphology and spatial continuity between districts, as well as the formation of leftover spaces alongside or under these infrastructures.

b. The first half of the Twentieth century: Geo-political and urban radical alterations

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This expansion is attributed to the following major causes:

- Natural population growth
- Introduction of individual means of transport, the car.
- The electrical production enhancing the industry in the 1930’s
- Relocation of IPC (Irak Petroleum Company) in Tripoli bringing in more than 2,000 families of which 500 are foreigners.
- The Palestinian exodus of 1948 and the formation of Beddawi camp.
- Rural migrants from neighboring Lebanese and Syrian regions:

  A large portion of these migrants are Alawites who came from the Tripolitanian hinterland, especially Akkar and Al-Denniyé to settle in Al-Tabbaneh and shape later what is now known for Jebel Mohsen.

  After being oppressed by the Sunni Ottoman Empire, Alawites gained power during the French Mandate which privileged and protected the minorities; and after Syria’s independence bringing the Alawites to power in 1965 with the Assad family².

  To this date, Jebel Mohsen has never had a separate civil registry.

  As the local Tripolitanian bourgeoisie moved out of the inner city into the new quarters, lower income residents of the city and other rural migrants replaced them. The old city hence expanded into the areas of Bassatine (agricultural fields of olive trees), Al-Raml, Al-Tell, and Abu Samra on the left bank of the river and into Al-Kobbeh on the right banks of the river, shaping the middle-class suburbs. Al-Tell square became the hub of the commercial activity in these suburbs, while the traditional souks were frequented by lower-income population.

  In 1933, the wholesale fruit and vegetable market of Al-Tabbaneh was created north of the river, servicing all of Northern Lebanon.

  ¹ http://www.menip.org/meno/meno081212

  In 1947, after the independence, a new Master Plan was proposed by the Swiss planner Egli instructing the construction of a wide road network.

  In 1947-1974. The urban growth in the second half of the twentieth century kept on being influenced by the French Mandate practices, zoning ordinances, planning schemes and building codes were defined along a modernist vision, where vehicular accessibility and traffic fluidity are the main objectives.

  In 1947, after the independence, a new Master Plan was proposed by the Swiss planner Egli instructing the construction of a wide road network.

  The city witnessed rebellion movements by the underprivileged against the State and the Tripolitan bourgeoisie: The Popular Resistance movement initiated in Al-Tabbaneh, where “Dawlat Al-Matlobun” (State of wanted people) was proclaimed in 1971.

  1968-1974. The Rashid Karami International Fair was established. It was conceived by the internationally renowned architect Oscar Nie-meyer 1968-1974. With its futuristic character, it aimed at promoting Tripoli as the city of modernization and recreating Tripoli’s role in the region.

  Civil War 1975-1990. The marginalization of Tripoli increased, and deep alterations hit its urban growth, social and economic dynamics.

  - Unregulated demolitions and haphazard alterations and constructions within protected heritage zones due to prevailing chaos
  - Re-migration of populations originally from Christian areas back to their villages of origin in Zghorta, Koura, Bsharri and Batroun: loss of the plur-confessional character, with 90% of the population becoming Sunni
  - Impoverishment of middle-class neighborhoods (Abu Samra)
  - Relocation of educational and health facilities outside the city
  - Closure of industries and deactivation of major infrastructures such as the railway.
  - Construction of new highways reaching different villages in the North and bypassing the city of Tripoli
  - Immigrants arrival from the northern Lebanese villages (Minieh, Al-Denniyé and Akkar) and Syria.

  These successive spatial alterations influenced deeply the socio-economic structure of the city: the social and spatial gap between low-income neighborhoods in the old city and the well-off neighborhoods in the city’s extension is more evident.

  1970. Port of Tartous was launched as a direct competitor to Tripoli, which severely affected the city’s function as the main maritime port of central Syria.

  The sixty witnessed the declaration of the urban regulations and the Building Law dictating building heights, setbacks and surface exploitations. New large-scale building types (6-7 floors) with setbacks were inserted within the urban fabric, increasing its density and heterogeneity. The boundary between geometrically defined building blocks and smaller size irregular blocks defines the demarcation between the official modern building law regulations and the informal law that cannot be dated.

  Henri Ede and Georges Doumani carried out the last and only master plan proposed for Tripoli in 1964. In 1971, a decree was issued regarding this Master Plan to regulate construction and Land-Uses. Lacking a vision for the urban development, this Master Plan caused deep alterations to the historic urban fabric i.e. the enlargement of some Souks from 4m to 12m to make way for two major vehicular arteries such as Azmi Boulevard. The city extended on its agricultural fields according to a grid connecting Tripoli to Al-Mina, to accommodate middle and high-income housing in Maarad, Azmi and Maitane neighborhoods. These neighbourhoods shaped the “Nouvelle Ville”.

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  1970. Port of Tartous was launched as a direct competitor to Tripoli, which severely affected the city’s function as the main maritime port of central Syria.
On an urban level, metropolitan Tripoli ended up being divided into two parts:

- The Southwestern area comprising modern and affluent neighborhoods (Al-Mina, the International Fair and sea resorts directly connected to the Beirut highway). The area of Saqi Al-Gharbi South-West of Al-Tell, Abou Samra and Al-Bassatine joined this modern area after being subject to a parcelation operation in 1990.
- The Northeastern area facing Al-Denniyeh and Akkar, inhabited by a lower-income population, and including the historic core of the city and its extensions. The internal segregation in this area was intensified by large-scale infrastructure interventions and the presence of the river as such.

The river was subject to an urban intervention in the frame of a wider development operation: CHUD, Cultural Heritage and Urban Development. The operation covered a section of the river in connection with the wholesale market, by a 280m long platform. Aiming to create a commercial platform connecting the old city’s edges across the river, the project did not meet its objectives yet.

The civil war by the end of the 20th century had severe repercussions on the social and spatial structure of the city. It weakened the social cohesion and shaped the city into territories demarcated and ruled by conflicting social groups.

The civil war, the regional political instability, and the economic crisis that followed contributed to the isolation of Tripoli and the governmental neglect of this area. Its role as a pole for administrative, economic, cultural, health and services activities was disrupted and was limited to the surrounding regions. However, the size of Tripoli metropolitan region grew extensively responding to the migration flows of rural migrants, increasing the levels of urban poverty (in 2009, Tripoli and the North were home to 30% of the poor families in the country).

**d. The beginning of the Twenty First century: a deteriorating urban environment**

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6 Pauvreté et conditions socio-économiques à Al-Fayhâ’a : Diagnostic et éléments de stratégie Catherine Le Thomas. Décembre 2009
Though the old city is the second best preserved Mamluk city after Cairo with its landmarks (madrasas, khans, hammams, and mosques) and urban fabric reflecting the lives in the medieval Islamic city, its physical heritage kept on being degraded by the encroachment of unauthorized construction onto some sites, and the uncontrolled urban growth.

The civil war, the demographic changes, the tenure conditions and the deteriorating economic conditions discouraged property owners from investing in the maintenance of their properties and have led to the degradation of the urban fabric.

The resulting adhoc urban growth led to inequalities in the environmental and housing qualities. The density reached 1400 inhabitants/ha in Al-Souaika and Al-Tabbaneh. Many buildings in this area today are structurally unsound as a result of the vertical expansion of the buildings by continuously adding concrete floors onto a sand stone base. This was coupled with the disregard for building and construction laws during the war.

On a socio-political level, the war in Syria since 2011 had undeniable repercussions in Tripoli, particularly in Al-Tabbaneh and Jebel Mohsen areas.

- The massive arrival of Syrian Alawite and Sunni refugees, settling respectively in Jebel Mohsen and Al-Tabbaneh, intensified the conflicts since 2008. Both rivals further demarcated their territories creating a spatial and social break.

Anger, fear and frustration dominate both communities.

On the infrastructure level, Tripoli has issues of traffic congestion, lack of parking facilities and inadequate pedestrians’ mobility. The vehicular infrastructure does not reply to traffic flows, causing acute congestion mainly at the intersections and accesses to different quarters in the city.

The widening of existing roads or the opening of new roads within the city center increases the traffic volume and thus traffic congestion. Trying to adapt the street pattern to the vehicular flows without modifying the circulation pattern is at the heart of this problem.

The infrastructure systems - stormwater drainage, wastewater collection and solid waste- are undersized and obsolete. These systems do not have the capacity to respond to the development pressure. Several houses resorted to the discharge of their sewage to irrigation canals or Abou Ali River, causing severe water, land and air pollution. In addition, users of the vegetable market also use it as their dumping ground for waste and garbage.

1 - The “Mapping of Human Poverty and Living Conditions in Lebanon” study published by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) [in 2009]

2 - Pauvreté et conditions socio-économiques à Al-Fayhâ’a: Diagnostic et éléments de stratégie Catherine Le Thomas. Décembre 2009
This section is the result of an in-depth site exploration and data processing and interpretation which enabled the consultants to properly read the urban structure of the study area. The following tools were used:

FIELD RESEARCH. data collection gathered from archival documents, published data, previous projects, international initiatives, planning regulations, and field observations.

MAPPING the urban morphology, buildings characteristics, public spaces and land uses.

INTERVIEWS with key stakeholders in different local and regional public agencies, citizens, cultural organizations, social activists, religious authorities, allowing us to observe, note and analyze the routine of the daily life.

3.1 Topography

The study area is characterized by a steep topography, particularly through Dahr Al-Moghr and Baal Al-Darawich neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are connected to the rest of the area by a network of staircases, which grants them a unique character and a high pedestrian permeability.

The morphology of the terrain and the effective blockage of the highway along the river make the physical accessibility to this area quite difficult.

3.2 Urban Morphology

The study area is formed by a combination of vernacular and planned urban fabric. The vernacular urban fabric follows a complex organic pattern of streets with varied building shapes intricately interconnected. Regarding the patterns of lots subdivision, most of the lots have small sizes (~200 sq.m in average) and were probably defined in a later stage subsequent to constructions with the establishment of a land registry. This pattern is evident in Dahr Al-Moghr, Al-Souaika and the market area in Al-Tabbaneh, given that these areas date back to formation of the Ummayad city. The resulting network of winding streets and culs-de-sac enrich the urban experience through unexpected vistas towards the Citadel at each corner of the street.

On the other hand, and as explained previously, modern urban and building regulations set a geometric land division with defined building blocks abiding by defined setbacks and exploitation ratios. The resulting linear wide streets cut through the vernacular fabric, and define a different spatial morphology where the void dictates the mass; as opposed to the vernacular spatial configuration where the mass defines and structures the void. The modern morphology started to develop along the newly planned vehicular axis i.e. Syria Street, while progressively replacing the vernacular morphology particularly in Al-Tabbaneh area.

Lots gradually increase in size in the extension of Al-Tabbaneh, Baal-Al Darawich and Jebel Mohsen, demarcating the shift towards a top-down planning process by the mid of the 20th century.

One of the most radical cuts into the urban landscape is drawn by Syria Street of 1000 meters long stretching from Al-Mallouleh neighborhood to Al-Souaika neighborhood, demarcating the edge of Al-Tabbaneh and Baal Al-Darawich neighborhoods.
JOURNEY FROM DAHR AL-Moghr TO Jebel MOHSEN
3.3 Spatial Dynamics

- **Open spaces & Public Spaces Activities**

The spatial configuration of the city responds to social values and practices attached to privacy and protection through a separation of public and private spaces. In other words, the organic morphology responds to an informal law designating accepted practices in space. Our study area presents four typologies of open spaces: the vehicular street, the alley, the garden, and the undeveloped lot.

While the street, the alley and a number of gardens are public propriety, gardens within lots and undeveloped empty lots are private property.

The transition between public, semi-public and private spaces - the street, the alley and the private garden is particularly noticeable in Dahr Al-Moghr and Al-Souaika historic neighborhoods.

These four typologies of open spaces are each articulated by a particular set of social and spatial practices. The following elaborate on four particular open spaces in order to reflect on their typology and use.

**Syria Street** induces an infrastructural break within the study area, as well as a social boundary between the Alawite and Sunni communities.

Street vendors’ carts merge with taxis, mini buses and cars, whereby drivers socialize with shopkeepers alongside the street when the traffic slows down. The transversal pedestrian crossings from one side of the street to the other as well as the longitudinal moves along the street and its ground floor shops activate the space; however these soft moves are dominated by the vehicular circulation.

The street edge longing Al-Tabbaneh neighborhood is defined by buildings whose balconies are painted in blue as an initiative for building renovation by Al-Moustakbal party, as they claim.

This spatial intervention on the color palette of the buildings accentuates the gap between the two communities and further demarcates conflict lines.

Throughout the alleys in Dahr Al-Moghr neighborhood, one can still hear the distant noise from the vehicular streets. Yet one starts to experience the transition into a more private space partly appropriated by the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Some of the alleys feature:

- Plantings in recycled planters from wheels and colorful graffiti on the wall;
- Ground Floor level craftsmen’s workshops extending out onto the sidewalks (Wooden and steel items...);
- Children playing in the shade of their houses away from vehicles;
- Men playing backgammon ‘Tawlieh’ and smoking the Narguileh;
- Women wiping the space in front of their doorsteps as if this section of the alley is an integral part of the house itself;
- Women bargaining street vendors and share their daily routines with other women.

The garden/playground established in Baal Al-Darawich neighborhood, is a critical open space in an area bordering two conflicting communities. During conflict and post-conflict periods, this playground is abandoned, and is occasionally used during religious festivities, similarly to all public spaces in the area such as the playground in Jebel Mohsen: kids play when they are given an excuse to play, which is the Eid (holiday).
The undeveloped lots are mostly privately owned, and come in different states:

-Awaiting development (Jebel Mohsen and Riva neighborhoods)

-Had its buildings demolished or severely damaged during conflicts, and hence abandoned by their occupants

-Serve as a garbage dump where trees and shrubs grow unintentionally and occasionally

-Exploited and activated by the inhabitants as communal gardens and a space for gathering i.e. Oum Ahmad productive garden and gathering space along the stairs connecting the north side of Dahr Al-Moghr to Al-Hariri residential compound; The open space resulting from a cross-roads transformed by Mohammad into a birds display, planted and well maintained. 

Within all these open spaces, the Lebanese Army’s presence alters in a way the usual spatial dynamics via its checkpoints, tanks, barricades, sand packs and reinforced walls. These spatial obstacles define specific patterns of pedestrian and packs and reinforced walls. These spatial outcomes are not technically sound and endanger its occupants. Nonetheless, the final architectural outcome is not technically sound and endanger the lives of its occupants.

In the extension areas planned according to the modern grid, the buildings generated anew take advantage of the allowable exploitation ratio and height to reach eleven storeys in the Riva neighborhood.

Furthermore, the study area features historic structures such as khans and mosques dating back to the Mamluk era. Knowing that the religious structures are still operating, the khans are currently adopted by the Lebanese army as a military basis in the conflict areas. These deteriorating heritage structures are potential attractions due to their value, scale and form.

Economy

The study area is economically and spatially activated by the presence of a main commercial hub on its western edge longer the river: the wholesale vegetable market. This market is the major source of livelihood for a considerable number of residents. In addition to this major commercial node, localized commercial shops serve the basic needs of different neighborhoods in the area.

The artisanal activities constitutes less a very minor economic input. This sector has been slowed down by the advanced mass production mechanisms and the consumerism pattern. Wood crafts, soap making, sewing, are traditional crafts which lost their value and market.

The industrial activities are limited to car repair workshops almost spread along all main local roads, furniture and few textile workshops particularly in Jebel Mohsen, and some small industries in Mallouleh.

Based on a study by ESCWA9, Al-Tabbaneh and Al-Souaika are the poorest districts in Tripoli. The study links poverty to security threats originating from these areas. In fact, 50% of the families in Al-Tabbaneh and Jeb el Mohsen have an average salary of 333$/month, which is very low particularly with the large household size10.

On a larger scale, the study area is characterized by poor social conditions and is marked by confessional tensions and security issues.

Property Ownership

Land ownership is subdivided into three general categories:

-Private ownership traditionally by the older families who lived at one point in this area before leaving it to the city’s modern extensions as elaborated previously.

-Public land owned by the municipality, which include the streets, the municipal gardens and the undeveloped leftovers in the public domain.

-Waqf ownership or land held in endowment for one of the religious groups, sects or families, which includes parcels of mosques and churches.

Stakeholders and related initiatives

The stakeholder analysis informs the study and the design intervention in later stages, by offering a better insight into the power relations and interests of various stakeholders on different levels. This analysis induces four key subjects. First, which stakeholders influence what type of development; second, which stakeholders can be involved in the development process and how; third, which stakeholders will be affected positively or negatively; fourth, what is the strategy to adopt to enable the participation of all stakeholders.

The local community stakeholders group:Awqaf, the affluent families, Ngo’s and political parties. There are around 30 NGO’s (Non-Governmental Organization) in our study area, of which we have noticed 5 actively involved. The following elaborates on some of main initiatives led by each.

Utopia: regeneration of Dahr Al-Moghr alleys through plantings and wall paintings, and infrastructure installations in Al-Mallouleh

Rouwad Al-Tanniya: securing education for youth in return for community servicing

Sanabel Al-Nour: organizing an event for recycling and re-using wheels as planters

Al-Safadi foundation for social affairs: Installings along the stairs in Dahr Al-Moghr in the occasion of Al-Adha.

The national stakeholder involved in the study area is the municipality and its active local development bureau through renovating schools and establishing some gardens. Minor infrastructure improvements are conducted from time to time in very specific locations.

The International stakeholders group first the World Bank and its organization working in the local context: their involvement in the study area materializes with the realization of the platform covering the river.

Second, US.aids is involved through its Middle East bureau for democracy, conflict and humanitarian conflicts: OTI, Office of Transition Initiatives. Their objective is to assist locals advance peace and democracy while targeting key political transition and stabilization needs. This institution financed the renovation of many schools in the aftermath of March clashes, amongst others Ebh Rushid school directed by Mrs. Wafa’ Shehade and Al-Kobbe school directed by Mrs. Raghiba Shamis.

9 Geostategic Maritime Review n°1, fall/winter 2013

10 Tripoli, North Lebanon: The Forgotten City Al-Akhbar English (Lebanon) - 16 mai 2012

11 Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Cultural Heritage And Urban D Development Project, Lebanon Submitted By Dr. Mutasem El-Fadel Prepared For The Council For Development And Reconstruction Beirut, Lebanon June 2002
Based on GIS data received from Tripoli Municipality.
Based on GIS data received from Tripoli Municipality.
3.4 Infrastructure

The infrastructure systems—stormwater drainage, wastewater collection and solid waste management—are undersized and obsolete. These systems do not have the capacity to respond to the development pressure. Several houses resorted to the discharge of their sewage to irrigation canals or Abou Ali River, causing severe water, land and air pollution.

3.5 Planning Framework

- Current Legislations

P1: Restoration zone

No demolition is allowed in this zone. For existing buildings, restoration is only allowed. The construction of new buildings shall abide by a strict set of regulations defined in the specific code for historic areas. The protection of the traditional urban fabric is ensured through the protection of the existing parceling scheme, which defines the street pattern and the configuration of the buildings. Land Pooling and re-parcelization are only allowed if the resulting lot has a surface less than 200 m². The protection of this parceling scheme, and hence the multiplicity of small lots, ensures the social base of this fabric. The adapted regulations were based on the informal guidelines of the building process in the neighborhood, regarding the field of vision and height criteria.

P11, P12, P15: Residential and commercial zones

The building regulations in these areas define plots sizes, building heights and setbacks, and exploitation ratios to define the building envelop. The resulting masses are not thought of as elements in a coherent urban fabric but as components in individual lots: the zoning code allows for a large margin of building configurations that do not necessarily fit in combination with one another. This translates in the current developments particularly in Jebel Mohsen and Riva neighborhoods.

Tripoli Vision 2020

In order to respond to the critical socio-economic and spatial conditions, Tripoli Vision 2020 takes a comprehensive approach to accelerating the development of the city. It is prompted and supported by Tripoli’s elected representatives and different political parties: Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri, Prime Minister-Najib Mikati, Minister of Economy Mohammed Safadi and Tripoli MP Robert Fadel. A comprehensive apolitical development plan for the city was proposed by analysts at SCAS. The plan aims at reviving the economy by creating 30,000 jobs opportunities by 2020 in order to reduce unemployment, and provide training for those currently employed. Links between academic and corporate environments is encouraged to ensure a long-term reduction in unemployment, as suggested by SCAS. The plan suggests as well creating fertile ground for development of new businesses in the fields of industry, service and agriculture.


4. HOUSEHOLD SURVEY ANALYSIS

4.1 Survey Methodology

The goal of the household survey was to understand the social and economic environment of Jabal Mohsen, Bab el Tabbaneh, and Qobbeh in order to inform an urban development plan that is responsive to residents' needs and aspirations. The survey instrument included both general and specific questions categorized by livelihood, education, health, security, transportation, infrastructure, services, and government. The questions were open-ended to allow enough space to capture narratives that illustrated the lived realities of households, and responses are anonymous to allow for an uninhibited interview. The interviews were conducted by two researchers, one from Beirut and one from Tripoli. Individuals who are focal points in the different neighborhoods assisted the researchers and were present during the interviews.

Households were chosen using nonprobability convenience sampling split among various neighborhoods proportionally to the geographical size:

- 8 interviews in Jabal Mohsen
- 7 in Bab el Tabbaneh
- 5 in Baal al Darawiche (frontline neighborhood that is part of Bab el Tabbaneh)
- 5 in the Harini project area
- 4 in Dahr el Moghr (this is in Qobbeh)
- 3 in Omari in Qobbeh
- 3 in Bakkar
- 5 in Riva

The total was 40 interviews. Although the primary respondents were individual heads of households (men or women), most of the interviews were conducted with more than one family member in the room contributing to the answers. All interviews happened during the day time, and time allocation varied between 15 minutes and two hours, depending on the conversation. They took place in either the family’s home or, in some cases, adjacent place of work. All interviews were conducted in Arabic, using a paper and pen survey, with researchers taking hand-written notes. The study objectives were explained to all participants and verbal consent was acquiesced. No incentives were needed to bring interviewees on board. The analysis in this report is based primarily on the household interviews, with secondary sources from conversations with stakeholders and media reports.

- Challenges

Residents of all the neighborhoods were cordial in accepting or declining the interview and respondents were generous with sharing their views and stories. However, everyone in the sample expressed skepticism with municipality initiatives as well as fatigue with NGO or charity interventions. The frustration was noticeable and is reflected in the responses. While the researchers had initially assumed that one challenge would be the absence of a guarantee for results after surveying the problems, it was clear from the majority of respondents that expectations for action or solutions was very low.
4.2 Socio-Economic Living Conditions

The Social Fabric

In addition to the confessional segregation of residents along the demarcated lines, the neighborhoods are also clustered by tight-knit units of extended families. Households interviewed ranged from single families of four persons up to three connected families living in the same house. Relatives and extended families live close by in the same building or on the same street. Livelihoods, jobs, and security depend largely on these family relationships with almost all respondents citing regular or occasional financial support from other family members. All cited large familiarity with their surroundings such as knowing everyone in the neighborhood and recognizing any strangers quickly. They also perceive religious or political extremists as alien to their communities and infiltrated through outsiders such as Palestinian and Syrian refugees.

The Social Fabric of the neighborhood. I don’t recognize them and they intimidate us and our children on the streets. The sons and daughters of Tabbaneh have always helped and respected each other. For example, during prayer times, shop owners would leave their shops open and ask neighbors to keep an eye on the store until they are back.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

For families living around the hill, they fear violence from the direction of the elevated region, which they perceive as a domineering landscape that gives their adversaries a military advantage. And both sides expressed feelings and experiences of discrimination not only from each other but from the rest of Tripoli.

Residents also conveyed feelings of rejection and abandonment from all of Lebanon, which they attribute to negative media portrayal. Visitors no longer come to their areas from other regions in Lebanon or even the North. Children present during the interviews told hurried stories about discrimination at school. In Tabbaneh one mother cited discrimination as the main challenge for her children in school, where “even the administration assumes they are inferior.” In Jabal Mohsen, the stories are similar.

Social Discrimination

Adults and children alike face social and economic discrimination in Tripoli. Residents of Jabal Mohsen perceive themselves as hated by the rest of Tripoli and cited Zgharta as the only nearby town accessible for people of the area. Topographically, the geography of the region, adversely enforced by military and para-military blockades, contributes to the physical segregation and lack of interaction between people. On the hillside, Jabal Mohsen interviewees discussed feelings of isolation and being trapped.

“My friend and I were chased last year by kids in our school [in Zgharta]. They wanted to beat us up. I got away but he got beaten badly.”

- 10-year-old child, Jebel Mohsen

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“We are trapped, surrounded from all sides (...). During conflicts, the people stuck in Jebel cannot leave it and have no access to hospitals. We prefer to stay in Jebel and die in our homes than go out of Jebel and die on the roads.”

- Female, Jebel Mohsen
The same situation was expressed by residents of the Hariri Compound: gangs of young men lurking around the complex at night, shouting and playing loud music. One respondent cited lack of jobs as a reason why they stay up all night and sleep all day. Most residents do not leave their homes at night. This, they attribute to the “falatan amni” (chaotic security environment). Dahr el Mogher residents only enter Jabal Mohsen on a needs basis, although it used to be a shopping destination because Souk El Ameh was the cheapest in the area. Today, they shop in Tabbaneh, which they see also as dangerous. One woman told the story of how women look out for each other:

“If it is urgent and a woman has to go out [at night], we each sit at our windows to keep an eye on our sister, and one of us will stand next in her doorway and shout her name to let people know that we are waiting for her to come back.”

- Female, Dahr el Mogher

Disability and Access

People with disabilities suffer limited access to the badly managed roads that have no wheelchair accessibility. The same problem poses challenges for the elderly. One woman who lives with and cares for her elderly mother said the latter remains confined to the house because she cannot move around the neighborhood with her walker because of holes and bumps on the roads.

“My stepson received a wheelchair by donation and he uses it to move around in the neighborhood, but the road are bumpy and he often falls and hurts himself.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

Market

Respondents indicated their preference to buying groceries and basic needs at nearby markets within walking distance of their homes. For some, this is to financially support their struggling neighborhoods. One woman from Bab el Tabbaneh recounts:

“I try to buy everything from Tabbaneh in order to help the small businesses because they depend solely on the residents of the neighborhood. No one from outside the neighborhood shops here, except perhaps in the vegetable market. Even if I am visiting my daughters, I buy them snacks and gifts from Tabbaneh and carr the bags all the way to El Mitein no matter how heavy.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

Indeed, this is also true in Jebel Mohsen, where residents used to have access to Tabbaneh markets but have closed off those routes for safety and to keep the economy within their area. They reported preferring to purchase any unmet needs in El Mina or Azmi.

“We used to get our groceries from the vegetable market in Tabbaneh but now we buy everything from local stores. Sometimes, shop owners in the Jebel take advantage of our limited access and raise their prices.”

- Male, Jebel Mohsen
These route embargos also place a strain on manufacturing supply chains that previously used skills and services from both sides of the conflict. A carpenter in Jabal Mohsen, for example, explained that they used to collaborate with carpenters from Bab el Tabbaneh to make furniture. The latter would supply the wood structures to Jabal craftsmen who are famous for their upholstery and carving skills. These would work on the pieces and then send the furniture back to Tabbaneh for selling in Tripoli markets. This chain is now broken. The same is true for other regions of Qobbeh in relation to Tabbaneh or Jabal Mohsen.

“...I don’t go to Tabbaneh anymore even though I need to work with merchants from Tabbaneh. It is just too dangerous.”

- Male, Omari

### Infrastructure & Basic Services

Almost all of the houses surveyed, regardless of the location, pointed to interior and exterior bullet holes in their homes. The holes date back five years and some are as recent as in the past month. Cracks are visible on balconies and ceilings and across the neighborhoods some windows remain broken or poorly and temporarily fixed. In Tabbaneh, a woman reported that they would temporarily fix the windows with nylon wraps because all the money they spend on glass and paint is wasted in the next round of fighting. In Riva and other parts of Qobbeh, residents complained about delays in municipality or government aid:

“The streets are not lit at night and this creates fear and mistrust. Army checkpoints are lit but their surroundings are dark. So of course when someone passes by the checkpoint, they can throw a grenade at them because they can see the soldiers clearly but the soldiers can’t see them in the dark (...). The Municipality needs to maintain street lamps.”

- Male, Riva

In the majority of the surveys, the men of all ages – teenagers included – were seeking jobs. Most households had a sole male breadwinner for the family or extended family. Two had zero income and lived off savings or charity. In the only two cases where women earned income, they were single mothers.

Residents in Jabal Mohsen reported losing businesses in other parts of Tripoli after the fighting erupted in 2008 due to discrimination, threats, and physical attacks on their shops.

“My husband is unemployed and we currently rely on savings. He used to have a barbershop on the Boulevard (the region from Behsas to Sehet El Nour), but he had to sell it after the conflicts started because his life was threatened. The value of the store was $100,000 but he sold it at half its price because he needed to sell it immediately.”

- Female, Jebel Mohsen

### Electricity

Residents of the study area reported unreliable power supply and unstable currents for their electricity at an average of 6-hour cycles on and off. Those who can afford it depend on generators or UPS back-up power. Chaotic wiring is a hazard and has resulted in deadly accidents as reported by one woman in Bab el Tabbaneh:

“I know 2 people who have died from electrocution. One man passed because of a shrit felit (loose wire) and one woman died when doing the laundry.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

### Sanitation

Scarcity of running water in Tripoli is directly linked to electricity outages because households depend on electrical pumps to get the water up to the tanks on the roof. In most areas, neighbors collaborate to set up common water tanks and systems. In Bab el Tabbaneh, residents dug up a well and contribute a monthly fee 10,000 to 15,000 LBP for access. All interviewees reported water running every other day. Half of the interviewees in Jabal Mohsen said they drink from the tap water with varying opinions on whether or not it was safe. One source said it was the Rachc hen Spring in Zgharta and they believe it is potable. Other said they were forced to drink tap water, although they believed it was contaminated, in order to save on water costs.

In Bab el Tabbaneh, a women reported “sewage water constantly trickling down the street next to the grocery shops that sell vegetables, meat, and chicken, causing a horrible smell and diseases.”

“The municipality doesn’t pick up the garbage in the region and the garbage just keeps on piling up. This needs to be solved.”

- Male, Bakkar

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### Employment

The cutting off of economic routes with Syria after 2011 and the lack of railway routes with Beirut and other vital cities in Lebanon have increased the poverty levels in Tripoli, which the Ministry of Social Affairs set at 57% of the population in 2009. A 2011 field survey by the UNDP in on economic conditions in the Bab el Tabbaneh – Jabal Mohsen area revealed alarming rates of poverty. 67% of the population lives under the upper poverty line and 33% percent under the lower poverty line. Income levels of households surveyed ranged between zero to $800 monthly with only two families reporting making up to $1,100 (variously) per month.

The instability of income was a constant factor in the conversations because most residents depend on small local businesses or services within the community as opposed to stable jobs. This economic model is highly vulnerable to decline during violence because the blockades and gunshots stop people from accessing the shops. Over the past 3 years, the paralyzing fear has taken its toll on the local economies.

“...There are serious economic problems here. People who have shops, small businesses are not working as much as before because there are no new customers or opportunities. The families in these regions barely manage to make enough money to pay for their expenses.”

- Female, Dahr el Mogher

### Sanitation

In the only two cases where women earned income, they were single mothers.

Residents in Jabal Mohsen reported losing businesses in other parts of Tripoli after the fighting erupted in 2008 due to discrimination, threats, and physical attacks on their shops.

As long as the damages of the fighting are visible in people’s houses, you cannot get over the hatred. That is the first step: to fix the damages before you fix other problems.”

- Male, Riva

However, keeping the streets dark was interpreted by some as a deliberate strategy to help the fighters. One woman in Dahr el Mogher reported that she had forgotten to switch off her light on the balcony one day and after spending the day in the village, she came back to find the bulb shot.

“...I know 2 people who have died from electrocution. One man passed because of a shrit felit (loose wire) and one woman died when doing the laundry.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

“...I don’t go to Tabbaneh anymore even though I need to work with merchants from Tabbaneh. It is just too dangerous.”

- Male, Omari

Residents in Dahr el Mogher and Riva highlighted the lack of lighting on the streets at night, something they identified as critical to safety:

“The streets are not lit at night and this creates fear and mistrust. Army checkpoints are lit but their surroundings are dark. So of course when someone passes by the checkpoint, they can throw a grenade at them because they can see the soldiers clearly but the soldiers can’t see them in the dark (...). The Municipality needs to maintain street lamps.”

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“My husband is unemployed and we currently rely on savings. He used to have a barbershop on the Boulevard (the region from Behsas to Sehet El Nour), but he had to sell it after the conflicts started because his life was threatened. The value of the store was $100,000 but he sold it at half its price because he needed to sell it immediately.”

- Female, Jebel Mohsen
Respondents directly related the struggle for employment and jobs with the deterioration of the security situation with many young men turning to fighting for militias on either side. They also specified varying rates and opportunities for promotion to higher pay rates depending on the task. For example, the average stated was 10,000LBP a day for shooting guns, 20,000LBP a day for throwing grenades, and up to 40,000LBP a day for snipers.

“Badna nistarzi2” (we need to jobs). You can make 20,000LBP a day by throwing a few grenades and snipers make even more money. Of course young men are going to go fight if they can’t find that money anywhere else.”
- Male, Riva

Syrian Refugees
The UNHCR currently estimates the Syrian population in North Lebanon as a whole to be over 250,000 with most concentrated in Akkar. Particularly in Bab el Tabbaneh, interviewees complained about Syrian workers taking up jobs because they accept cheaper wages. This causes resentment and frustration, although the proposed solution from interviewees in Dahr el Moghr and Bab el Moshen was to hire equally between Syrians and Lebanese to find jobs for everyone.

“Lebanese and Syrians are all humans and there is no difference between them. But the Lebanese citizen here is living in the worst conditions. I prefer to buy from stores that employ Lebanese and not Syrians.”
- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

One household interviewed in Bab el Tabbaneh was composed of two Syrian families. The 2 brothers walk to Nahr Abu Ali every day and look for work in construction, moving coal, moving furniture, in the market. They don’t have a stable source of income and make an average of 500,000LBP per month, 300,000LBP of which is spent on rent.

Education
Schooling is provided by a number of private, public, and semi-free schools in the area. Every family interviewed in Jabal Moshen whose children attend school reported that they send them to schools in Zgharta or Mejdiaya and said it was very rare for Jabal children to go to schools in Tripoli for fear over safety and of discrimination. On the other hand, parents in Bab el Tabbaneh and Qobbeh expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of public schools in Tripoli and also prefer to send them to other areas. For example, children from both Tabbaneh and Jabal Moshen attend the Tony Beik Frangieh public school in Zgharta. Across the board, all families expressed severe challenges to their children’s schooling.

“I have no choice but to send them to Meryata because of the condition of local schools: the buildings are not well-equipped, the teachers are unprofessional and the overall atmosphere is bad. The kids enter the school and come out as ‘ze3ran’ (hooligans)”
- Male, Dahr El Moghr

Challenges to Education
Schooling presents a major challenge for residents across neighborhoods because of four main problems. Firstly, for many households, private school tuition is unaffordable and public school fees of 90,000LBP per child per year constitute a financial burden, especially for families with 3 or more children, which was the case of most households interviewed. Before schools opened in October 2014, two elementary school principles reported that registration numbers were still at half compared to the previous year. The reason was that parents wait for financial assistance from charities or for schools to waive the registration fee all together before enrolling their children. Secondly, parents’ experiences with rushing to get their children out of school under fire in the past 5 years has resulted in a preference to keep children at home rather than risk their safety or further trauma of being trapped inside a school, a bus, or on the road when fighting erupts. The proximity of the school did not make a difference in this case. One father in Jabal Moshen said his neighborhood had a contingency plan with the school to initiate a “khat 3askari” (military line) manned by volunteer parents to get the children to safety when fighting erupts.

Thirdly, the inconsistency of classes created by the security situation, as well as the atmosphere of war, has led to a decline in children’s ability to concentrate on school subjects or to pass official exams. As reported by a father in Jabal Moshen, families preferred to choose the school closest to their homes, which resulted in overcrowding of classrooms and a lower quality education.

And fourthly, teenagers in middle or high school struggle with the option of forfeiting their education to find menial jobs in their neighborhoods. A 14-year-old boy in Riva, for example, sitting among a group of younger friends said he dropped out of school last year to work in a metal shop earning 10,000LBP every day.

Access to Universities and Technical Schools
Access to universities was especially a challenge in Jabal Moshen, where two young men interviewed expressed interest in higher education but cited challenges of transportation out of and into their neighborhood given that there aren’t any institutions inside the area. The primary college motivation expressed by young people was to find jobs. Qobbeh houses the Lebanese University and is the main destination for higher education for residents of the region. The technical institute in Qobbeh was also highly attended by children of the respondents from across the neighborhoods and was identified as a very good school, set in an old building but undergoing renovation.

After-School Activities and Playgrounds
Only a handful of families interviewed said their children attended after-school activities which were a learning center, sports, and music lessons. The remaining sample all said their children don’t take part in any activities after school and spend their afternoons playing outside the house or on the “sikki” (street) although most parents said they considered this unsafe.

“There are no public gardens or playgrounds [the children] can go to. Their school friends don’t like to come to their house for a visit because they find it dangerous.”
- Female, Hariri Compound

Boys in Riva said they sometimes go to the “Seven” soccer field which is a 15-minute walk away and charges a 3,000LBP entrance fee. Almost every family interviewed said they wish the children had a playground that is safe, clean, and well-lit close to home.
“Last year, we had to run under fire to fetch our children from the schools in Tabbaneh. This year, none of the children here go to school. They are depressed doing nothing, but what if I can’t make it to them in time and they are trapped in? What if I can’t get out of the house to go get them?”

- Male, Baal al Darawich
Health Services

All survey participants of Jabal Mohsen, where there are no hospitals, cited going to Zgharta for medical services that they cannot access in the neighborhood’s clinics. When asked about ambulances, they conveyed a mistrust of the ambulance’s efficiency because it takes between 35 minutes to one hour for the Red Cross, for example, to reach the Jabal from Nadim El Jisr street where traffic is often congested. All interviewees emphasized the urgent need for a hospital in Jabal Mohsen.

During emergencies, they cited bumpy dirt roads and army checkpoints as a hindrances that slow down access to emergency rooms. Two respondents from the Jabal cited using army tanks for emergencies when ambulances can’t enter, although one man said the tank was not a suitable option because it is slow, unequipped, and provides a bumpy ride.

“Pregnant women worry about reaching the hospital in time during labor, especially if the fighting is raging. Once a woman had labor during a conflict and the ambulance couldn’t make it into the Jabal so the Army took her to the hospital in a tank and on her way she gave birth to the baby inside the tank.”

- Female, Jebel Mohsen

Tabbaneh residents also criticized ambulances refusing to enter the area during night and gave examples of people having to meet the ambulance outside of Tabbaneh to transport relatives to hospitals. They also pointed to the poor condition of the roads as an obstacle to any quick trip.

All of the respondents said pharmacies in their neighborhood provided good quality services, although some complained they sometimes raised the prices. They identified dozens of semi-free clinics across the region, which are inaccessible during the shootings. Doctor fees cost between 5,000LBP and 8,000LBP and although most respondents complained about the quality of healthcare, they said they didn’t expect any better in return for the low fees.

“[The clinic] is neglected. It is a semi-free clinic where we only pay 8000LBP so we are not expecting the best service. However, the doctors working there are should not treat people like cattle.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

General, all respondents complained of the low quality of medical services across Tripoli and the “wasta” (connections) needed to access hospitals even when residents should be covered by social security or the Ministry of Health.

“If the problem is serious, we go to a doctor in Jbeil because I don’t trust the doctors in the region.”

- Female, Hariri compound

Mental Health

A few of the interviewees, all women, cited worries about anxiety and depression particularly among the youth population. They said the children (and the adults) need positivity, play, fun, lightness because all they experience is stress and destruction. Many spoke of children suffering symptoms of trauma such as waking up crying or screaming at night, reclusion, speech challenges, and fear of leaving the house.

“My niece is 5 years old. She sometimes wakes up in the middle of the night and starts rambling, unable to speak in clear words or meaningful sentences because she is under shock.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

Gender

The gendered effects of the war were present throughout the interviews, as demonstrated in the sections above. In the context of conflict, women are especially vulnerable to violence, sexual harassment, and rights violations. A UNDP field survey of the living conditions in Bab el Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen in 2011 stated that 91.5 percent of women are unemployed. The majority of the women respondents take on childcare as their primary role and some supported family-owned stores without an income. The only two women who were breadwinners of the family were the single mothers, one divorced and one widowed. They face multi-layered discrimination and hardship in caring for the house, raising their children, and providing an income. However, many young unmarried women expressed their desire to get the skills needed to find jobs, but they complained about the scarcity of jobs for women. Women, according to the interviewees, take no part in the battles yet bear the burden of the family in danger and fall casualty to the bullets. Their primary concern is to hide or flee to protect their children when fighting ensues. One mother in Baal el Darawiche tells the story of her two-year-old’s death:

“She would often get startled by the shooting and wake up crying and alarmed every night. We couldn’t get her out because it was never safe and the fighting continued for days. One morning, after a grenade had dropped near the house at night, I tried to wake her up but she was gone.”

- Female, Baal el Darawiche

Sexual Harassment and Public Spaces

All women interviewed in all regions expressed fear of walking down the streets as early as 6pm in the evening. Except in urgent times, they avoid leaving their homes and even sitting on their balconies. This is not only because of fear over security but because of sexual harassment on the streets.

“We have no place to go to; the streets are filled with coffee shops but we can’t walk by them because “bitalcho 3layna” (they sexually harass us). I wish we had coffee shops or restaurants we can go to with our friends.”

- Female, Jebel Mohsen

Echoing the need of the interviewee cited above in Jabal Mohsen, women in Tabbaneh, Dahr el Moghr, and the Hariri compound expressed wishes for public spaces that are accessible to them and their children. They named the gangs of men who occupy the streets in the evenings as the main source of intimidation and exclusion in a socio-cultural environment that links women’s behavior to morality norms and stereotypes.

“If a woman goes out alone, if she is not veiled, she is considered loose or “mabteswa” (bad). I don’t dare to walk in Tabbaneh at night without my brother by my side.”

- Female, Bab el Tabbaneh

Another woman told the story of her child who used to play on the swings of a nearby playground. Some people spread rumors about her saying that she was “swinging for all the boys to look at her.” Her father beat her as a result and forbade her from going to the playground. Nevertheless, interviewees blamed these problems on young men’s lack of jobs rather than cultural norms or social discrimination.

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Residents of all areas surveyed expressed a deep disappointment with their local and national governing bodies. They also spoke of skepticism that their own leaders are financing the war for their own political interests and have no real intention to contribute positively to the situation. One female interviewee in Bakkar stated the politicians are fully able to end the fighting because when they reach an agreement, the snipers immediately disappear.

“The politicians have turned Tripoli into a dump. One Prime Minister, 5 ministers, and 8 members of Parliament just from Tripoli and Tripoli is the worst area to live in. What do they do for our city? The second biggest city in all of Lebanon and the capital of the North, what have they done to help its people? Nothing. Why do we even have representation?”
– Male, Riva

Although the region is commonly portrayed in mainstream media as one where religious fundamentalism is on the rise, it is noteworthy to state that none of the interviewees mentioned religion in direct relation to politics, except for one who talked about a Sheikh at a mosque behind her house in Dahr el Moghr who is constantly bashing the army. Out of the entire sample, two respondents in Bab el Tabbaneh mentioned the Islamic State (ISIS), both stating that the ISIS crimes are used to scare children and that a few flags have appeared in Tabbaneh’s vegetable market.

“Every time we want to get our basic rights, we have to protest, threaten, and block the roads and, even then, we barely get any needs met. One time we blocked the road on Syria Street because we were without water for many days on end and finally they brought us one tank of water for only one building.”
– Male, Baal el Darawich

The war prevents education, investments, trade, and mobility, creating an environment which in turn preserves poverty and despair and pushes more young men into the battle-field. The cycle of reconstruction, destruction, followed by reconstruction, also prevents the improvement of neighborhood infrastructure, businesses, environment, and culture. The buildings – like the social problems – are merely patched up after a battle for fear that too big of an investment in fixing the fundamentals would be wasted in the next round of fire. On the flipside of this morbid picture are opportunities for breaking the cycle. Collective awareness of the economical underpinnings of the war dominated sectarian discourse or hatred or political allegiance. “Therefore, the space exists for urban interventions that can facilitate access to markets, opening of trade routes, mobility and exchange, shared resources and facilities, and contributions towards the flourishing of local businesses and creation of more job opportunities. With many interviewees reporting the loss of previous jobs outside their neighborhood due to threats or risks, reclaiming transportation routes offers a contribution towards access to income and employment.

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– Male, Riva

Interviewees also expressed disillusionment with democratic representation or municipal and parliamentary elections, naming protests as their only way of forcing the municipality of fixing water, sewage, or electricity problems.

“In contrast, all 40 respondents spoke of economy in relation to politics. Responses mentioning the army varied from support to blame and from empathy to animosity. Outside of Jabal Mohsen, respondents expressed feelings that the army sides with the Jabal against them. However, most defined the army’s command as helpless without political cover and gave politicians most of the blame for allowing the national military institution to be manipulated by politics.”
– Male, Omari

The mantra “jobs are the solution” was repeated several times during the interviews, as well as during informal street conversations with residents both men and women, young and old, middle and working class, East and West of the battle lines. Money burdens appear across the areas examined and the stagnation of the economy engines was the main culprit for all of the struggles. This represents more than an expression of financial need. Rather, it is a fundamental collective understanding of the motivation for fighting, often presented in mainstream media as religiously or politically inclined. The cycle of violence was articulated clearly by the respondents as one maintained by all political factions through a deliberate strategy of starving the people so that they risk their lives in return for salaries as militia men.

“Every time we want to get our basic rights, we have to protest, threaten, and block the roads and, even then, we barely get any needs met. One time we blocked the road on Syria Street because we were without water for many days on end and finally they brought us one tank of water for only one building.”
– Male, Baal el Darawich

“WE HAVE NO ONE TO DEPEND ON BUT OURSELVES”
Mistrust of local and national government is a common theme in the interviews. Built up over years of discard and negligence, the residents of the Tripolitan areas surveyed have concluded that the democratic system is broken and that corruption is rife in Lebanese politics. They are skeptical about any aid, charity, development projects, NGOs, political media stunts, promises, or even the Lebanese Army.

“Every time we want to get our basic rights, we have to protest, threaten, and block the roads and, even then, we barely get any needs met. One time we blocked the road on Syria Street because we were without water for many days on end and finally they brought us one tank of water for only one building.”
– Male, Baal el Darawich

“‘Law ayya 7ada ijinnon wakt il intikhabet, baddi isif2o bil mishayi’ (If any one of [the politicians] dares to come here during the elections, I’m going to hit him with my slipper.)”
– Female, Baal el Darawich

And, as a result, residents have turned to self-organizing and community-based solutions to their problems, relying on teamwork, emergency communication chains, shared assets, and creative solutions. While some of these responses are neither sustainable nor favorable, and while plastering a deep wound could give rise to a bigger infection, the resilience demonstrated by communities, against the difficult odds, presents opportunities for community-driven urban interventions. People-centered plans and actions are allowed the potential to succeed. And community-based projects that are already inherent to the local culture galvanize the neighborhoods and can be most strategic when linked to fit in a larger scale plan for integration and collaboration.
EMBARGOS: MILITARY AND SOCIAL

In different phases, depending on the political tactics, military embargos are set up by the Lebanese Army including checkpoints, curfews, road blocks, and patrols. These are spread throughout Tripoli and on both sides of the conflict, particularly at intersections that delineate the source locations of gunfire. At the time of the interview, Syria Street was punctuated with heavily armed checkpoints at both ends. Stationing of militia fighters along strategic firing locations, additionally, contributes to this zoning and separation of neighborhoods. This has created a map of intricate borders perceived as dangerous “hot zones” for the residents who do not cross from what they see as one side to the other for any needs from the urgent (like medical emergencies) to the daily (like grocery shopping).

Sectarian demarcations of neighborhoods have also been enforced over the past 30 years by social ostracizing and discrimination, as is evident from the interviews. Perceptions about those on “the other side” are rife with favoritism, bias, violence, and trepidation. The interviewees did not use any religious terms to refer to residents on opposite sides of the battle, but refer to geography as a sufficient indication of difference and animosity. They also used “the events” as a synonym for battles.

Therefore, it is crucial for any urban design plans to contest these lines of both real and perceived security risk and to organically open up mobility flows that are of larger economic and livelihood benefit to residents than the embargos. While it is extremely challenging to address social barriers and borders during a time of ongoing conflict, urban interventions have the potential to chip away at the barricades that divide a naturally intertwined city.

4.4 Solution & Aspirations

The majority of households interviewed cited basic infrastructure as the most urgent problem in need of solutions, and sanitation was on the top of the list. Next were public goods: improving roads to solve access problems and building safe playgrounds for children and teenagers to play together. None of the respondents expressed faith in seeing any solutions to the area’s problems in the near future. Most cited a war much bigger than Tripoli or Lebanon and political interests of the wealthy dominating the lives of the people.

“Nobody in Tripoli wants this war, but now it is too late to stop it.”

– Female, Hariri Compound

Therefore, they perceive temporary community-initiated solutions as their only current means. And, yet, they do hold the municipality, government, and political parties responsible for a long list of urgent violations of the basic demand of a dignified living.

From the larger aspiration of ending the fighting to the day-to-day need for a clean glass of water, the residents of Qobbeh, Jabal Mohsen, and Bab el Tabbaneh continue to stand against difficult odds. They struggle abandoned by politicians and elected representatives and they struggle in complete isolation from their countrymen and women in the rest of Lebanon. Perhaps it is the second neglect that history is less likely to forgive.

“We’re just asking for our basic rights. It’s a vicious circle. Unstable security situation equals no investments and no jobs. No jobs equals people will fight just to get paid. Who is trying to stop this? No one.”

– Male interviewee, Riva
# SWOT ANALYSIS

## WEAKNESSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spatial</th>
<th>Infrastructural breaks: river and highway disconnecting the area from the old city of Tripoli</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open spaces used as garbage dumps</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decaying heritage buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peripheral green spaces consumed with new developments responding to rapid urban growth</td>
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<td></td>
<td>High density settlements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Social segregation, Confessional conflict, Identity crisis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marginalization and Lack of knowledge and awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient cultural and recreational facilities (theatres, public libraries, recreational areas and parks)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weak collaboration between multiples initiatives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>lack of people’s trust in official institutions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bad reputation for schools in tebbaneh and high rate of school dropouts in general</td>
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<td></td>
<td>lack of high school capacity in Qobbeh and Jabal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Relocation of the Lebanese University to Zgharta</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Absence of Healthcare facilities and weak accessibility to external facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Poverty and Scarcity of financial resources</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High unemployment rates and lack of specialized resources</td>
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<td>Large presence of low cost illegal workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>River pollution by garbage and sewage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Air pollution due to traffic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Inadequate infrastructure services (Solid waste management/ Water drainage/Garbage collection)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Roads are never fixed outside of the elections</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Congested main roads</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>No accessibility for people with disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## STRENGTHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spatial</th>
<th>The area is a node linking links Tripoli to the surrounding towns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of open spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional urban fabric with efficient pedestrian network and heritage buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unique topography ensuring exceptional views to Tripoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Strong social ties among residents of one neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presence of the Lebanese University campus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A considerable number of schools in Qobbeh and Jebel Mohsen, with a minimal school dropouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Functional riverside Market servicing the area and its surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>High levels of pedestrian mobility in a traditional urban fabric partly inaccessible by vehicles, with stairs and alleys connecting different neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Politics & Security

- Implementation of the security plan
Opportunities

Spatial
- Available public property along the river
- Reclaiming the river as a natural infrastructure
- Abundance of empty lots
- Potential abandoned heritage buildings
- Public spaces with spots of drinkable water
- The Market as a space with major potentials to become a central open space rehabilitating spatially and economically the area
- The proposed planning is not fully executed yet

Social
- Rehabilitation of existing schools
- Despite media perceptions, most of the citizens are seeking solutions to end the violence and live in dignity
- Municipality social agenda implemented via its development bureau

Economic
- Availability of cheap local labour
- Availability of specialized craftsmen (sewing)

Mobility
- Pedestrian accessibility to community facilities

Politics & Security
- Tripoli is a significant population of voters and has large number of MPs
- Invetestments for setting an Inclusive urban strategy and action plan

Threats

Spatial
- Historic urban fabric hit by the planned highways
- Execution of parts of the planning
- Unsound building structures

Social
- Violence, feelings of hatred and mistrust towards one another

Politics & Security
- Abuse of religious confessions by local and regional political movements
- Political instability: Unexpected re-occurrence of conflicts and violence between divided communities
- A continued lack of political will to offer sustainable solutions to the area

Empty potential land overlooking to the city of Tripoli along Al-Omari street
6. CASE STUDIES

6.1 Methodology

The case studies investigation covers basically three fields chosen according to the complex existing urban conditions and the challenges of the study area. The three fields of investigation are the following:

- divided cities such as Beirut, Nicosia and Mostar, that present sectarian or religious separation emphasized by the presence of a demarcation line, and the related implemented projects of urban rehabilitation;
- strategies of interventions in conflict/post-conflict setting, such as in Birzeit and Gaza in Palestine, where war and military occupation are constantly menacing communities and affecting the quality of the built environment;
- urban design methodologies with a focus on urban rehabilitation, participation and sustainable design.

A grid of analysis has been built to facilitate cataloging, comprehension and comparison of different cases. The grid aims to offer an overview of the project, its similarities with our area of intervention and the lessons learnt from the study. Moreover the grid outlines the challenges faced, the main initial objectives as well as the way they have been pursued. In some cases this allows the better understanding of the initial choices that conditioned the outcomes of the project by analyzing and comparing the challenges, the strategies and outcomes.

6.2 Literature Review

The main body of the theoretical research was conducted through a literature review. The book “Architects Without Frontiers: War, Reconstruction and Design Responsibility” by Charlesworth, Esther (2006) has been used as main reference because it offers an overview of post-conflict condition and projects implemented in major divided cities, as well as an evaluation of the outcomes.

The issues n. 26 and 40 of the Dutch journal Volume with the title “Architecture of Peace” and “Architecture of Peace Reloaded” gave a good and overwhelming panorama of examples in post-conflict environment, covering a broad field from urban reconstruction to architectural intervention.

The book “Architecture After Revolution” by the Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (2013), art and architecture collective and a residency program based in Beit Sahour, Palestine, defines some strategies for architectural experiments to rethink today struggles for justice and equality taking the point of view of the displaced and extraterritorial refugee.

Literature has been built through searching the database of scientific journals and websites dealing with contested cities, sectarian and ethnic conflict, post-conflict rehabilitation, participation processes, planning scenarios, landscape and architecture interventions.
6.3 Post-Conflict Case Studies

- BEIRUT, Reconstruction of the City Center (LEBANON)
- NICOSIA, project of reconstruction (CYPRUS)
- DIP KARPAZ / RIZOKARPASO (CYPRUS)
- MOSTAR, project of reconstruction (BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA)
- GAZA Repair Strategies (PALESTINE)
- BIRZEIT, Rehabilitation Project (PALESTINE)

BEIRUT. Reconstruction of the City Center. (LEBANON)

Overview and Similarities
- Sectarian division along the green line
- Blocked roads and limited open passages
- Segregated Public transportation
- City center transformed into a military zone and citizens cut out
- Suspend economical activity during the war (commerce, banking, business... etc.)
- Abandoned port activity
- Cut telecommunication and caps
- Destroyed souk, the only democratic place without confessional belonging
- Religious and confessional roots of society
- Similar area of intervention (~1.8 km²)

Team
- APUR (Atelier Parissienne d'Urbanisme), 1991
- Directorat General d'Urbanisme
- Council for Development and Reconstruction (Substituted the Ministry of Planning)
- Horizon 2000 by Council for Development and Reconstruction
- Solidere (private capital from Lebanon and Arab Countries), stocks owned by previous land owners and investors.

Challenges Faced
- Recovering the damaged economic system and creating an economic hub
- Restoring symbolic function
- Creating a modern district
- Promoting social pluralism through the neutral ground of the city center

Strategy/Approach
- City as heart
- Urban surgery
- Complete demolition of damaged urban fabric and preservation of 400 low-rise buildings
- New business district
- Privatized fast-track development: Create a story, a vision to attract investments
- Reconstruction as national and international symbol
- Redevelopment of the waterfront into a promenade as a continuous corniche
- International competition to rebuild the souk and Saifi village housing project
- Eviction of land owner via very low compensation, or participation in the shared holding but exclusion from participatory process.

Pilot Projects
- Absence of small pilot project

Economic Incentives
- Private investment from Lebanon and abroad

Phases
- First phase: preservation of city's heritage
- Second phase: modernization of the city center
- Third phase: development and enhancement of the road network

Outcomes/Evaluation
- Lack of public consultation, Middle and lower-classes disempowered and excluded from any process of participation while decisions were exclusive to investors who were not necessarily Lebanese
- Lack of transparency, overlapping private and public interests while minimal assistance was offered to land owners to pay or borrow money for restoration
- Lack of cultural appropriation
- Over-planned central urban area and under-planned greater Beirut metropolis evidence in the low consideration of regional impact, very little public transportation planned, no interest on how to accommodate massive post-war demographic shift of displaced persons, exclusion of the demarcation line and the periphery, absence of public spaces as urban linkage, the ring road separates the city center from the rest of the city
- Process of expropriation and rebuilding through a real-estate speculation
- Isolated island: urban integration ignored that produced segregated enclaves by creating a city center as “glamour zone”, with housing accessible only to rich, creation of new urban scar that reinforced social and confessional division, social polarization
- Social, touristic and entertainment capital of the Middle-East as a resemblance of hope and future to some Lebanese

Lesson Learnt
- Reconstruction as a collective project, and not to increment sectarian division
- Keep long-term reconstruction independent from private and foreign investments
- Avoid the island mentality
- Prioritize the demarcation line in the reconstruction process
- Make use of public spaces for urban linkage
- Adopt small pilot projects
- Adopt transparent legal processes
- Actively involve landowners and public partners into the process
NICOSIA. Reconstruction Project
CYPRUS

Overview and Similarities

- Segregated communities: Greek (western side) and Turkish (eastern side)
- Divided city due to the UN-controlled Green zone
- Accelerated deterioration and decay of the old divided city center
- Declining socio-economic conditions for many years
- Declining commercial activity in the walled city
- Common heritage for all

Team

- Interdisciplinary team of urban planners, architects and sociologist from Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities
- Collaboration of both municipalities and respective leaders.

Challenges Faced

- Twin priorities: Contributing directly to the revitalization of the historic centre and providing to the public sector the opportunity to act as catalyst in stimulating private initiative
- Social: Relating to the rehabilitation of old residential neighborhoods, community development and population increase
- Economic: Aiming to revitalize the commercial core and increase employment opportunities
- Architectural: Preservation and restoration of individual historic monuments and of groups of buildings, with significant architectural and environmental qualities

Strategy/Approach

- Bi-Communal investment projects
- Bi-Communal buffer zone survey to realistically envision the future city of Nicosia
- Bi-Communal negotiations (political and ethnic collaboration)
- Understanding the city as the sum of its neighborhoods or identifiable fragments
- Proposing two urban scenarios to mitigate oppositions: the city divided and reunited
- The buffer zone as the most important “gluing area” for the functional integration of the city
- Small urban incisions
- Small scale projects (architectural landscaping or engineering) to be implemented as part of a long-term rebuilding project
- Series of projects to control and give continuity to the urban character
- The city center as a common heritage for all the communities of Nicosia, it was considered by the NMP (Nicosia Master Plan) team as the most precious part of the city;
- Planning objectives: Balanced distribution of mixed use areas, Density of development in harmony with the scale of the historic centre
- Environmentally improving the commercial axis to allow it to compete with the historic centre
- Rehabilitation of the buffer zone: the creation of a record regarding the architectural heritage, the preparation of the architectural survey of the facades of 265 buildings, the proposal of emergency intervention measures to save collapsing buildings

Pilot Projects

- Common sanitary sewage system (at that time Nicosia had not sewerage system)
- A system of small scale public spaces initiatives by expropriating former buildings and space through the existing Cypriot land tenure.
- Two housing rehabilitation projects at both sides of the green line (Chryliniotissia and in Arab Ahmet quarter): Thirty houses have been restored and open spaces have been rejuvenated to attract new residents through increasing available housing units; provision of community facilities; improvement of public open spaces quality
- 32 houses for artisans and workshops with supporting grants to keep family in them (low-middle income groups).

Funding sources

- UNDO and international development agencies: to former residents and lower-income residents to return to the area close to the Green Line
- USAID through UNHCR & UNDP: rehabilitation project in Chryliniotissia and in Arab Ahmet quarter
- European Union through UNDP/UNOPS: rehabilitation project in Omeriye and Selimiye, Phaneromenei and Samanbahce
- EU: Pedestrianization scheme
- USAID through UNDP/UNOPS: the buffer zone

Phases

- Phase 1: starting with the two main areas (Omeriye and Selimiye)
- Phase 2: progressing involving the other part of the city (Phaneromenei and Samanbahce).
- Phase 3: the buffer zone in the walled city (2000-04) was considered the most important “glue” including vital contemporary functions to bring people together

Outcomes/Evaluation

- Project launched but depending on funds from UNDP and other foreign development agencies. This model is only possible with a lot of aid and local authorities support.

Lesson Learnt

- Aim for Bi-communal involvement
- Involve local administrations and local people (architects and planners)
- Adopt short term and long term design process
- Envision small interventions into the dividing line to reactivate it as a common ground
- Use environmental renovation for socio-economic change

- Project launched but depending on funds from UNDP and other foreign development agencies. This model is only possible with a lot of aid and local authorities support.
DIP KARPAZ. RZOKARPASO  
CYPRUS

Overview and Similarities
• Missing know-how on project management and community organizing
• Limited effects of the governmental policies on to the local administrations’ decision rights
• Limited belief/support of local administrations in bi-communal/multicultural projects
• Mental barriers, ethnic based prejudices or discrimination
• Lack of sustainability in project investment
• Lack of infrastructural masterplans and service provisions for the community
• Lack in achieving a systematic and strategic sustainable planning for regional development
• Lack of investment in and support for smaller towns and villages on the island
• Conflicted ownership issues
• Long bureaucratic procedures and authorizations
• Difficulty in engaging donors due to unsettled ownership situation, ban onto construction, problematic procedures

Team
• Archis intervetnions Cyprus (mediating body)
• Administrative units
• Local community

Challenges Faced
• To enhance multi-perspectivity and awareness of ‘otherness’, by focusing on the characteristic advantages of multicultural realities and interaction

Strategy/Approach
• Strategizing on an urban scale
• Defining main transition routes within the central village area to create lively urban public spaces in the village
• Developing a series of participatory projects on various scales, beginning by prompting the creation of an event (or a series of events held at irregular intervals), initiated however by the village communities themselves, for their own social and economic benefit

Phases
• Set-up / Research: defining the main obstacles faced in the course of major spatial development projects that aimed to deal with the impact of multiculturalism, i.e. by promoting new ways of dealing strategically with space, communities, and the politics of space
• Warm-Up / “a starter”: an initial catalyst intervention aiming to get into the society to collect data, learn about primary needs and capacities, and test the boundaries of the politics of space making
• Program & Re-program the Implementation Phase: defining action hubs and repeating activities, it aims to activate the use of space and the interaction between communities through neutral social interactions and support services. The main aim of the intervention is to implement temporary structures and thus upgrade the spatial quality
• Futuristic Aspects > Governance: supporting the community and the municipality as “mediators/agents” of participatory governance serves the long-term aim, which is to share concepts and ideas about how to improve public spaces and local activities, empower youth and women, and involve all members of the community in responding to local needs and capacities.
• Communication: presenting the results in exhibitions, conferences, and in different media in order to raise public awareness and encourage participation.

Outcomes/Evaluation
• Main transition routes across the center of the village

Lesson Learnt
• Architects as mediator
• Participatory governance
• Double speed program: short-term (reactivating public spaces with neutral social interaction and supporting activities) and long-term (mediate to define hot to improve local activities)
• Seasonal repetition of interventions and activities to upgrade urban practices and spatial qualities
• Using events in public spaces to build identity
MOSTAR. Reconstruction Project
BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA

Overview and Similarities
- Shift from centralized socialist economy to dynamic market-based economy
- Absence of functioning economy and systems of local and national governance
- Divided city into two communities with two local governments, two universities, two water-supply agencies, two electricity distributors, two chambers of commerce, two municipality bus companies
- Former dividing line: Boulevard along the west side of the river Naretva.

Team
Phase 1, International experts because of the lack of functioning Bosnian state:
- UNESCO
- EU administration in Mostar (EUAM)
- Reconstruction team with representative of both side but not really dialoguing, and with design expertise from UNESCO, AKTC and World Monuments Fund (WMF)
- Locals excluded from the process

Phase 2 team:
- Aga Khan Historic Cities program (AKTC) with local authorities and residents.

Challenges Faced
- Reconciliation
- Security and creating a unified force
- Establishing freedom of movement, holding democratic elections and establishing a city council
- Improving the climate for reconciliation by the recognition of common heritage
- Building local capacities
- Stimulating new job opportunities

Strategy/Approach
- Reconstruction of the old monuments and the old city after the urbicide
- Reconstruction of urban basic services (EUAM)
- Rehabilitating the collective memory
- Network of reconstruction activities; 2000 new masterplan a portfolio of 15 different sites in need of immediate assistance, the establishment of a local management office, a training programme for local preservation and the development of a conservative brigade attached to the Preservation Institute (AKTC)

Phases
- 1995-98: International
- 1998-2005: Aga Kahn Program

Pilot Projects
- Restoration of historic neighborhoods adjacent to the old bridge
- Restoration of key monument (i.e. Old Bridge)

Economic Incentives
- International development agencies; Turkish Government; World Bank
- DM 170 million on repairing 6000 houses, 30 public buildings, 25 schools, 20 health buildings, 70 water projects, 5 bridges
- 20 million $ for the Old Bridge, discrepancy of funding between the bridge and the problem for the pollution of the river Naretva

Outcomes/Evaluation
- Success in immediate repair of the infrastructure, health and civic facilities
- Deficiency in the long term strategy: chronic unemployment, reconstruction project without real political and economic consequences, ethnic division;
- Success on having an international scenario;
- Limited progress in the physical and social reconstruction of Mostar and in reuniting the eastern and western sectors of the city
- Lack of long term employment strategy
- Domination of international development agencies in all phases has limited the capacity of local architects.

Lesson Learnt
- The need of immersion in the local condition for a deeper capacity to empathize with the residents
- The need for public consultation to understand fundamental challenge of establishing reconciliation through consulting and invoking inhabitants in the future form of the city through a process of participatory democracy (consultative decision-making). Architects play a more substantial role of mediators
- External funds could force priorities which can lead to unfortunate results and omissions, because decisions are made according to short-term political expediency without reference to long term impact
- The need to better spend funds on long-term projects
- Physical reconstruction is insufficient in case of a persisting political division
- Reconstruction of the old city as a top priority is questionable.
GAZA. Repair Strategies
PALESTINE

Overview and Similarities
- Huge damages after 2008/2009 conflict (referred to as “Operation Cast Lead”) in (Al-Zayton neighborhood)
- Stagnant economy (unemployment 50%; poverty 80%)
- Israeli-imposed blockade since June of 2007 has hampered rebuilding and repair efforts
- Few repairs undertaken by families themselves with cash assistant through UNDP and UNWRA (54,000 families, US$ 5,000 per family)
- Much of the infrastructure, schools, hospitals, and factories are unable to function

Phases
- Basic needs (domestic water, sanitation, roof replacement); 40 homes
- Life safety (exterior plaster, handrails); 97 homes
- Improved (windows, utilities); 98 homes
- Cosmetic (tile, interior plaster and paint); 98 homes

Pilot Projects
- Intervention for Basic needs phase
- Improvement of water supplies (i.e. rainwater harvesting, well water filters, reverse osmosis treatment)
- Re-directing sanitary water because it pollutes ground water
- Roof replacement

Lesson Learnt
- Integrating community into every step of the reconstruction process with clarity, transparency, and organization in order to prevent conflicts with the community members before, during and after the reconstruction effort
- Community engagement in a friendly environment
- Transparency on selection of beneficiaries
- To find a reliable, competent, and knowledgeable building partner
- Building partner should be responsible for the training the laborers
- Create a clear set of ground rules that describes the roles and responsibilities of each partner in effort
- Through multiple workshops, town hall meetings, private conversations, and public forums, the community should understand their role in the rebuilding efforts. By contributing ideas, skills, and manual labor, the community members will seamlessly gain a sense of ownership, pride, and understanding toward the new structures. This will ensure the sustainability of the project and the community members’ positive views.

Challenges Faced
- Re-establishing a sense of normalcy in the lives of people, especially the young, by engaging youth in the mental and physical reconstruction of their communities
- Identifying viable, safe options for repairing and rebuilding damaged homes in Gaza, and increasing communities’ access to feasible alternatives and needed resources to repair homes
- Combining psycho-social assistance
- Practical support to needy families
- Housing repairs

Team
- UUSC (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee)
- AFSC (The American Friends Service Committee)
- Youth Bank
- Architects for Humanity

Economic Incentives
- Source of incentives: donations
- $330,000 would provide the materials to repair all 333 houses (in 6 neighborhoods) in this study to their original condition. A little bit more would not only return the homes to their previous conditions, but enable the improved use of sustainable, durable materials and systems.
- $70,000 could completely repair the 40 most damaged homes.
- $18,000 could provide windows for the 40 most damaged homes
- $7,000 could replace broken solar water heaters and water storage tanks in 40 homes.
## BIRZEIT. Rehabilitation Project
### PALESTINE
#### Overview and Similarities
- Intact Historic Area (108 Historic building)
- Many Archeological Sites
- Cultural landscape (olive tree terraces & springs)
- Close to city of Ramallah; Close to Birzeit University; Concerned institutions.
- Diverse cultural backgrounds

#### Team
- Founded by SIDA (Swedish)
- RIWAQ (a consortium of conservation architects, historians, planners, archaeologists, artists, sociologists, administrators, theorists and practitioners)
- NG Architects (project partner)

#### Challenges Faced
- A vital hub of multiple activities & services by using its historical buildings and spaces not only for residents but also for a range of cultural, educational, & touristic activities.
- Rehabilitating and reusing the abandoned buildings and infrastructure with the involvement of the residents.
- Developing public spaces and infrastructure and upgrading public services and tourism.
- Encouraging economic, cultural and touristist activities.
- Setting a model to rehabilitate 16 historical centers in Palestine and create a nationwide rehabilitation network.
- Protection of heritage values.
- Developing public spaces & infrastructure.
- Promoting residential, cultural, educational & tourism activities.
- Empowering local residents & institutions.
- Solving property ownership

#### Strategy/Approach
- Cooperating with the National Authority to create a national policy for the protection of cultural heritage, placing the protection, rehabilitation and development of this heritage on the list of National priorities.
- Establishing a constitutional and legal framework for the protection and development of Palestinian cultural heritage, including ratification by the Palestinian Legislative Council of the new law for the protection of cultural and natural heritage.
- Creating a partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and with municipalities and local communities to allow them to take an active role in rehabilitation efforts.
- Developing a plan that encourages the private sector and groups involved in economic development to invest in cultural heritage within specific guidelines.
- Short-term (5 years) + long-term (20 years)

#### Phases
- Data collection (Survey work; Open space study; Relation with environment; Legibility and social mapping; filing; environmental and socioeconomic study; legal study)
- Workshops and activities (public meetings, workshops with technical teams, Birzeit heritage week workshop with NGA about NGA’s experience in Regeneration & development)
- Community involvement (Stakeholder group & strategic planning: common vision, strategy & potential projects; Tours for students of Birzeit schools inside HC; Al-Rozana Heritage Week; Trips for cultural organizations & NGO; Brochure about The Birzeit Project)
- Improving the physical environment

### Sources of funds
- Sida (The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)
- The Ford Foundation
- The Representative Office of the Federal Republic of Germany in Ramallah (ROFRG)
- The Spanish Cooperation—the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECID)
- The Representative Office of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- The Consulate General of Belgium in Jerusalem—the Belgian Cooperation Kuwait for Jerusalem
- The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development
- The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC)
- The European Commission through EU partnership projects

#### Lesson Learnt
- Legitimacy
- Communnality
- Identification
- Ownership
- Skills
- Employment
- Time

#### Outcome/Evaluation
- Created employment through conservation and revived vanishing traditional crafts.
- Community involvement: local NGOs, the private sector, owners, tenants and users, all working with the municipality.
- Rehabilitated historic buildings and public spaces into community activity hubs.
- Affordable traditional techniques and local materials were used throughout. Where no historical models were available, new elements were made in a contemporary spirit.
- 50 Historic Buildings; 5 Alleys; 14 Courtyard
- 3651 Work Days (35% Unemploy.)
- Strategic planning for future development: Contract based public-private initiative (residential use): Improvement of natural environment inside; Improvement of natural environment inside HC; Architectural Competitions (local and international); Riwaq’s Prize for environment (built & natural); Attracting BZU activities to the HC & Attracting BZU activities to the HC & surrounding areas. Riwaq’s 3rd Prize THINK TANK in rd Biennale “THINK TANK” in cooperation with NGA; Riwaq with BZU & La Combre: Zoo, Parade, Virus; Mutual Heritage project: Mutual Heritage project: “spaces in between spaces in between”: Several cultural actives with cultural organizations (residency program); Naming streets buildings and spaces; A website about the project.
6.4 Urban Rehabilitation Strategies and Practices

- **MEDELLIN. Infrastructure renovation (CO-LUMBIA)**
- **KIMSAGARA. Football for peace (RWANDA)**
- **COPENHAGEN. Superkilen (DANEMARK)**
- **CURITIBA. City Renovation Program (BRAZIL)**
- **AMSTERDAM. Playgrounds (NETHERLANDS)**

### MEDELLIN. Infrastructure Renovation

**COLUMBIA**

**Overview and Similarities**

- La Independencia and Santo Domingo neighborhoods (favelas)
- Urban violence
- The most dangerous district of Medellin
- Pedestrian infrastructure unsafe and unpleasant
- Lower rates of investment

**Team**

- Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano (EDU), or Urban Development Corporation
- EDU boasts an in-house architecture studio providing the most disadvantaged communities with the youngest and brightest Colombia-educated architects.
- Multidisciplinary team of engineers, architects and community social workers linking educated professionals with undereducated communities

**Challenges Faced**

- Integrating residents with the rest of the city
- Widening the economy
- Guaranteeing security
- Urban renovation through developing a functional infrastructure system and city’s education development program and redevelopment efforts that includes new public libraries

**Strategy/Approach**

- Urban acupuncture (new public libraries for each district as urban collector)
- Intervention inside a plan to renovate the infrastructure system (40 approved projects across the city ranging from public parks, libraries, elementary schools, housing and pedestrian infrastructure)
- Participation of neighborhood parents and children during the design phase, the municipal architects communicated the benefits of the new transportation network and taught safe and respectful practices when riding.
- Including the community even in model-building workshops with the architects
- Improving mobility through pedestrian connection

**Phases**

- Re-shaping of the stairs system and pedestrian areas
- Building of the escalator
- Covering to protect from the inclement weather
- Public educational buildings

**Pilot Projects**

- The intervention is considered itself a pilot project for the city of Medellin

**Economic Incentives**

- $6.7 million for the escalator
- $4.6 million for the San Javier Library Park
- $4 million for the Parque Biblioteca España

**Outcome/Evaluation**

- Shorten the 35-minute hike on foot up the hillside to six minutes. Use of the escalator is free
- No attempt to formalize the informal sector
- Rehabilitation through an efficient system of better services and infrastructures
- Better conditions have driven the possibility to residents to get loans to improve their houses
- Creating the connections inside the neighborhood and between neighborhoods (La Indipendencia and Santo Domingo)

**Lesson Learnt**

- Free infrastructural system accessible to everyone
- Engage a dialogue with the community
- Respect daily life without imposing radical changes

**Challenges Faced**

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- Engage a dialogue with the community
- Respect daily life without imposing radical changes
**KIMSAGARA. Football for Peace**

**Overview and Similarities**
- The ethnic groups of Rwanda today still struggle with the legacy of the genocide in 1994.
- The centre is located within the heart of the Kimisagara valley; the most densely populated, disadvantaged area in central Kigali with few opportunities for young people and alarming school dropout rates.

**Team**
- FIFA
- Architecture of Humanity network in Rwanda

**Challenges Faced**
- Using Football as tool for reconciliation, education and awareness
- Promoting the responsibility, creativity and peace of the youth in Kimisagara

**Strategy/Approach**
- Creating 20 Football of Hope Centers across Africa, combining the program of public health, education and football
- Placing the field along new infrastructure, in this case the re-engineered water channel that is used for washing clothes and as a commercial center that connect the center to the residential area
- Located within a local primary school’s ground
- Activating the pedestrian way (informal) along the water course

**Outcome/Evaluation**
- Low-cost and low tech solution
- The water collected from the channel is used to flush the toilets and showers
- All the electricity comes from solar panels
- Due to the steep hills, densely developed, rising in every direction from the site is easily seen giving the roof a prominent role as the fifth facade and identity to Esperance’s social space in the community.

**Lesson Learnt**
- Using existing infrastructure system
- Use of topography for accessibility and belonging (the field can be easily seen because of its position)
- Sustainable features
- Sport

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**COPENHAGEN. Superkilen**

**Overview and Similarities**
- Ethnically diverse and socially challenged neighborhoods

**Team**
- City of copenhagen
- Realdania foundation
- BIG architects
- Topotek 1 landscape architects
- Superflex, artists collective

**Challenges Faced**
- Integration for the cultures represented by the area
- Strategy / Approach
- Involving the inhabitants within the design process, conducting public meetings as well as providing a ‘suggestions box’ for the public to submit their ideas for the urban proposal
- Extension of an adjacent sports hall
- 1 kilometer long park

**Outcome/Evaluation**
- Transforming public procedure into proactive proposition
- More transparent infrastructure, easily recognizable
- To meet each other through physical activity and games
- Flexible edges

**Lesson Learnt**
- Peer to peer design
- Collection of global urban diversity
- Sport as a vehicle where people can still agree on the rules
CURITIBA. Urban Renewal
BRAZIL

Overview and Similarities
- Shortage of electricity, telephones and paved streets
- One third of the inhabitants had access to sewage
- Traffic problems in downtown area

Team
- Municipality

Challenges Faced
- Curitiba as “educational city”
- Encouraging the residents to live closer to their workplace
- Program for food protection
- Preserving of city open spaces
- Affordable housing
- Priorities for children and environment
- Easy access to micro-credit
- Developing educational programs and widening the access to education

Strategy/Approach
- BRT (bus rapid transit)
- Connective corridors: concentric circles of local bus lines connect to five radial lines that go outward from the center of the city
- Designing multiuse buildings
- Acupuncture in vulnerable points of the city to trigger a positive chain reaction
- Understanding of where the food is produced/distributes

- Individual garbage collection: teach the children for six months how to separate garbage so they can teach to their parents / Employ disadvantaged people to collect garbage and to sell it to local industry
- Recovering of an old mine with the built of a new opera house with recycled materials
- Municipality pays incentive with food and bus tickets
- Install of an Open University to trigger environmental education to citizens and policy-makers at little or no-cost
- Shared interests in public transportation: the municipality provides trees and bus stops while the privates run the bus lines
- Architects are asked to work with low-cost materials
- Contract between public and private owners: landowners were allowed to develop the 25% of the area while the 75% has been destined to park
- System of attractive parks at various size: anchor parks of big size (5+) and neighborhood parks, max. 500 for each home (1000+)

Economic Incentives
- Cheap intervention considering national economy
- Federal Grand used to address flooding, acquire land along the river and built concrete walls
- Private-Public Collaboration for bus lines

Outcome/Evaluation
- Top-down process
- Availability of many form of transportation
- Work / play / shop are available at the same area
- Re-use of wastelands and abandoned areas

Lesson Learnt
- Articulation of strong, local core values in a city plan
- Creation on an independent municipal authority to provide continuity and implement plans
- Integrated planning process to assure that planners in all area knows the strategy and work on a shared vision
- Developing inexpensive and creative urban solution
- Close relationship between public transportation and land-use legislation
- Physiological understanding of urban development (the relationship between the parts and the whole)
- Process chain
- Speedy developments through small scale changes
- Acupuncture with low cost and rapid intervention to obtain immediate results
- Promotion of design intervention
AMSTERDAM. Playgrounds
NETHERLANDS

Overview and Similarities

- Post-conflict context (after WWII)
- Shortage of housing stock
- Dysfunctional infrastructures
- Ravaged urban context
- Existing private playgrounds

Challenges Faced

- Recovering the new generation from the war
- Bottom up architecture
- Stimulating and investing in children’s imagination
- Preserving city open spaces both private and public
- Creating a feeling of “being at home”
- Shifting from a functionalist approach to the city to leisure and creativity
- Enhancing the idea of the Playful man (homo ludens) or creative man
- Working with existing sites, material, and people
- Making incremental changes to city planning through small scale playgrounds
- Winning the support of residents to increase the request for new playgrounds and to expand the programme to the whole city

Team

- Architect Aldo Van Eyck under the Department of Urban Design (1946-52), later under the Municipality and with his private practice (1952-78)
- Local associations

Strategy/Approach

- 700 new public playgrounds
- Site-specific compositional techniques
- Non-hierarchical composition
- Strategic acupuncture, in vulnerable points of the city, abandoned plots, “in-between” spaces
- Choice of low-cost materials
- Use the children to test the intervention
- Minimalist design
- Strategic acupuncture, in vulnerable points of the city
- Use of empty plots as a tactical solution, vacant places and derelict and bomb damaged sites
- Collaboration with local associations, to give every neighborhood its own playground
- Choice of low-cost materials
- Use the children to test the intervention
- Minimalist design
- Temporary interventions
- Interstitial character: recreating space through incremental adaptation
- Use of empty plots as a tactical solution, vacant places and derelict and bomb damaged sites
- Collaboration with local associations, to give every neighborhood its own playground

Pilot Project

- The first playground on Bertelmanplein: Eyck designed a sandpit bordered by a wide rim. In it he placed four round stones and a structure of tumbling bars. The pit was placed in the north corner of the square, diagonally across from three tumbling bars. Bordering the square were trees and five benches. The playground was a success.

Economic Incentives

- Public investment by the Municipality

Outcome/Evaluation

- Increased request for new playgrounds from citizens
- Child development (sensory, kinesthetic, vestibular, tactile and auditory sense)
- Regeneration of the city through the re-use of wastelands and abandoned areas
- Symbol of new urban possibilities

Lesson Learnt

- Ground up popular support
- Involve civilians and policymakers
- Partner with communities to design appropriate structures that respond to the needs of locals
- Use resources and skills found near each project location
- Keep designs and plans simple and easily replicable
6.5 Synthesis

POST-CONFLICT CASE STUDIES

PLANNING IDEOLOGIES
- City as heart
- As real-estate speculation of the city center as a symbol but taking off the demarcation line and the periphery from rebuilding strategies and the absence of any comprehensive metropolitan vision
- City as spine
- The city as a dynamic and democratic entity, reconstruction as a longer sequential process based upon gradual implementation of a number of small regeneration projects

PRECONDITIONS

War to Peace Transition
- Transformation of cultures of violence;
- Establishment of tradition of good governance including respect for democracy, human rights and development of civil society;
- Healing of psychosocial wounds and long-term reconciliation;
- Integration into co-operative and equitable regional and global structures;
- Balancing of stable long-term macroeconomic policies and economic management and locally sustainable community development;
- Impossibility to foresee future development and how communities will react to the planning

Continuities in Transition from Conflict to Peace
- A continuation of violent risks to survival during rehabilitation;
- Persistent features of war economies that influence the humanitarian dimension;
- The continued involvement of security forces in humanitarian activities;
- Continued dominance of fragmented ‘project-ism’ within a donor-driven paradigm of social-civil activity

Structural Preconditions for Successful
- Regeneration and Peacebuilding (applying in different phases);
- Repatriation and resettlement;
- Public safety;
- Infrastructure recovery;
- Food security and agricultural rehabilitation;
- Health, education and social welfare needs;
- Governance and civil society;
- Macroeconomic stabilization;
- Renewing social relations, fostering dialogue and building confidence

Structural barriers / Obstacles to participation
- Structural barriers to community based reconstruction relate to the nature of post-conflict, state and authority may be week, business and land may be controlled by an elite minority, so the informal sector represent the most dynamic force in recreant, moreover intellectual and entrepreneurial section may have been migrated the human costs of conflict disrupt or destroy existing social patterns of decision-making;
- Guerrilla war economies disrupt social-economic patterns of bargaining and decision making;
- Political and ideological patterns in decision-making will be affected by continuing hostility towards former enemies;
- Misperceptions on the part of external actors about the general and particular social capital, which they arrive to support, is liable to inhibit participation;
- The conditionality adopted by external actors to manipulate participation by creating or empowering only local institutions that demonstrate a commitment to externally-determined goals may be a strategy resulting in social exclusion

Stages
- Crisis, post-crisis (before settlement);
- Post-settlement and longer term;
- Reconstruction

PROCEDURES

Coordinating Funding Procedures
- Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Network (CPR) to coordinate international funds

Economic generator
- Driven by donor or privatized agencies with the risk of island mentality;
- Huge private investment can bring international economic success but create social problems or not solving reconstruction challenges;
- Financed by international development agencies (EU and World Bank) but create dependency on these funds for investment;
- Economic investment for the reconstruction are not enough;
- Necessity to re-create condition for a sustainable economy as a long-time challenge

Develop skills and competences
- To drive initial investment as catalyst for economic regenerator;
- Shortening the period during which emergency aid is required, in order to control the costs of the operations;
- Achieving real sustainability for the peace;
- To find joint objectives which are attractive both to international organizations and businesses, and to create public-private cooperation for specific business projects that contribute to recovery

Political and ethnic/confessional collaboration
- Consult with non spatial professional such as politicians, environmentalists, sociologists, psychiatrists, economists and community representatives;
- Multi-disciplinary and multi-ethnic team;
- Strong will from both sides to line in a unit ed city;
- Synergy and partnership between humanitarian and development agencies;
- To bring conflicting parties to the table of political mediation process

Public consultation and participation
- Information disclosure: people are merely informed ex post facto about matters that affect them, often on a need-to-know basis:
- Public consultation: people are given a voice about issues where external actors have defined problems and processes, control analysis and have no obligation to take people’s views into account;
- Procedural participation: people are encouraged to engage in achieving project goals to reduce its costs and comply with procedural requirements;
- Interactive partnership: people participate with external actors from an early stage in project design, implementation and assessment;
- Self-mobilisation: people take initiatives independently of external actors who in turn facilitate the achievement of goals defined by local communities;
- Legitimacy of the planning process;
- Masterplan as negotiation tool for re-establishing community relations

Extension of the ‘top down’ process to all levels of state and society in order to link with a ‘bottom up’ strategy – support for fostering the peace process in the population;
- Representation from all sector of population, necessity of a comprehensive overview of the population;
- Engage local design professionals and students in small project pilot
- Small project to test design and reconstruction theories on the ground (small scale permit collaborations) such as lower-income housing developments;
- Projects that help built local capacity;
- Creating a series of local public space and development projects to enhance the quality of the environment and public participation;
- Built capacity in community participation processes design workshops and long term master plans.

Women as agents of change
- Community-oriented initiatives for women;
- Women were engaged in campaigns to disarm combatants, using their traditional roles and acceptance in society for broader mobilization.
Diagnosis & Urban Scenarios Report

Positive outcome of the intervention

• The principle of ‘inclusivity’ of all relevant stakeholders, especially of competing elites
• The solution of the security dilemma (reducing and reforming armed forces and police, guaranteeing their political control and establishing state monopoly of force and public security)
• Reconstruction or renewal of the political system and administration, establishment of a legitimized government and power sharing models
• Mutual trust-building, capacity for dialogue and agreements and readiness for peace of the former warring parties;
• Creation of a social and economic basis for the peace process by reintegration of those who suffered from the war, guaranteeing access to nutrition, health and education, trust building
• In local community networks and transformation of war economies to peace economies by investments in the human capital of the war-torn society
• Respect for the principles, norms and institutions that are linked with the history and culture of the war-torn society if they are useful for consent
• Efforts of external actors should take into account
• Intervention on the line of demarcations
• Sufficient resources allocated for a long-term reconstruction process
• Taking into consideration of structural barriers

Ideas (City for people)

• A lead: that should represent a guide and an example for the community
• Action

• Culture (ex. the organization of a marathon)
• Creativity: how to do things without budget
• If you build it, they will come. (Jan Gehl)
• Start with the children (Arktiii)

ROLE OF THE ARCHITECT

Diplomat
• Diplomacy by design
Pathologist
• Action-planning
• Providing a wide range of stakeholders with the opportunity to participate in the planning process.
• A range of action planning technique (observation, semi-structured interviews, brainstorming, diagramming, role-plays, group work)
• Need of a larger urban design vision to start the development retching of the torn urban fabric. reconciliation and rebuilding strategy

Social Reformer
• Collaboration with other disciplines

Collaborator
• Doctors - for wounded and traumatized, re-fit hospitals and health centers
• Engineer - repair root and walls, water purification, waste-water treatment

URBAN REHABILITATION STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

PROCESSES

• Integrated planning process to assure that planners in all area knows the strategy and work on a shared vision
• Acupuncture
• Speedy developments through small scale changes
• Process chain
• Physiological understanding of urban development (the relationship between the parts and the whole)
• Municipality is active win small incentives, etc.
• Respect daily life without imposing radical changes

PARTICIPATION

• Involving the inhabitants within the design process. conducting public meetings as well as providing a ‘suggestions box’ for the public to submit their ideas for the urban proposal
• Engage a dialogue with the community
• Respect daily life without imposing radical changes
• The community even participates in model-building workshops with the architects
• Participation of neighborhood parents and children during the design phase, the municipality is active win small incentives, etc.
• Peer to peer design
• Collection of global urban diversity

ECONOMY

• To create better condition and trust to allow small loans
• Free access to public infrastructure

DESIGN INTERVENTION

• Low-cost and low tech solution
• Promotion of design intervention
• Flexible edges

INFRASTRUCTURE / ACCESSIBILITY

• Free infrastructural system accessible to everyone
• Using existing infrastructural system
• Intervention inside a plan to renovate the infrastructural system
• Connective corridors: concentric circles of local bus lines connect to five radial lines that go outward from the center of the city
• Availability of many form of transportation
• Close relationship between public transportation and land-use legislation
• Unhanding pedestrian connection thought the improvement of existing system of stair, also by introducing new connections, mechanical systems escalators)
• Water collection and sewage system

ACTIVITIES

• Sport as a vehicle where people can still agree on the rules
• Work / play / shop are available at the same area
• To meet each other through physical activity and games

ENERGY

• Re-use of water collected
• Use of solar panels
• Sustainable features
• Developing inexpensive and creative urban solution
• Reduce distances and movements
• Understanding of where the food is produced/ distributes
• Individual garbage collection

TOPOGRAPHY

• Re-use of wastelands and abandoned areas
• System of attractive parks at various size:
• To collect water, planting, green corridors
• To create visual connections
• To avoid territorial control by one group of people
7. PLANNING DIRECTIVES

SPATIAL AND URBAN GUIDELINES

• Achieve an urban cohesion amongst the conflicting entities by exploiting urban voids and urban breaks and rehabilitating the built fabric
• Address the infrastructural break created by the river by converting the riverbeds into a public attraction
• Counteract the proposed planned roads that cut into the urban fabric, and offer this planned public domain to community facilities and open green spaces
• Re-use of heritage buildings for public functions
• Re-conversion of dump empty lots into a system of public open spaces
• Employ water as an infrastructure for the creation of a system of public spaces
• Enhance walkability
• Take advantage of the unique topography to create views and panorama

SOCIAL GUIDELINES

• Sustain the cultural and confessional mix while pushing for Social Inclusion and Gender equity
• Engage the local community through participation: Inclusion of local communities in the rehabilitation process
• Engage local designers and students
• Creating platforms for social meetings aiming reconciliation
• Adopt policies for Public Private Partnership PPP

ECONOMIC GUIDELINES

• Reinforce cycles of local production and consumption through an economy adapted to change
• Job Opportunities especially for youth
• Propose interventions attracting local and external investors and funds
• Initiate with the low cost interventions with fast implementation and immediate results
• Create good conditions for a sustainable and local economy
• Develop skills and competencies

INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES GUIDELINES

• Improve access to basic infrastructure, good education and better health services
• Upgrade the sewage and water collection systems
• Enhance public transportation systems and additional forms of transportation
• Set a waste management policy whereby citizen are fully engaged in the implementation of this initiative

Deteriorated house in Al-Qobbe neighborhood
8. URBAN SCENARIOS

The following presents three urban scenarios responding to the previously established diagnosis, the residents’ aims and aspirations, the lessons learnt from similar case-studies, to the constraints and opportunities and the guiding planning principles.
WE NEED TO DRAW LINES IN THE GROUND AND SAY ‘THE CONCRETE STOPS HERE.’

Patrick Moore, co-founder of Greenpeace

SCENARIO 1.
RENATURALIZATION
Scenario Brief

This scenario tackles the re-naturalization and the creation of new, common, environmentally friendly spaces and facilities. It aims at establishing a landscape framework for growth through greening and environmental renovation: creating uniform quality landscaping and living environments, profiting from the topography and available natural resources and the availability of drinkable water spots “Sabil” for the creation of new public spaces. This scenario focuses on the immediate creation of job opportunities mainly in the recycling business.

This scenario follows basically a linear typology of intervention that would result in focal ‘green’ axis, destined to become the future valued common urban spaces. In addition, secondary transversal connections aims at achieving maximum pedestrian walkability within the study area.

These linear spaces will serve as the visual, physical and dynamic link between the many neighborhoods of Qobbeh, Bab Al-Tabbaneh and Jebel Mohsen. They will equally host a large set of amenities and communal facilities: playground, football field, memorial, museum, clinic, watchtower, kindergarten, public library, visitor center, restaurants etc.

Investing in the existing cultural heritage is a main target, which in turn acts in synergy with the new facilities to rebuild the local identity and collective memory as well as the shared future aspirations. “HOW” to design becomes just as important as “WHAT” to design, soft infrastructure becomes social infrastructure.

Main goals/objectives:

- Enhancing area value
- Common play-grounds
- New cultural and educational spaces.
- New public spaces (river, water points)
- New economical activity: Recycling

Municipal Intervention

Converting a major infrastructure (railway) into a linear park

Highline Park, New York, USA
Linear quality Landscaping
Old Montreal, Place D’Youville

Inspired by the “playable cities” concept: “cities that play together stay together”

Creating a space built “for” the Community, to be affectionately appropriated “by” the community

Redrawing accurate and rapid vision of public space

Integrating Art and Architecture into Quality Landscapes

Reallocating resources to equity and justice

Integrating sustainability Guidelines: equally assessing the economical, environmental and social aspects
“THERE IS NO LOGIC THAT CAN BE SUPERIMPOSED ON THE CITY; PEOPLE MAKE IT, AND IT IS TO THEM, NOT BUILDINGSS, THAT WE MUST FIT OUR PLANS.”

Jane Jacobs. American-Canadian journalist, urban writer and activist.

SCENARIO 2. ONE HUB
Scenario brief

This scenario sets as top priority the issue of reconnecting the old city center, by reconnecting the market and the old city’s edges through bridging interventions to reverse the current disconnection caused by the widening of the river and the addition of major vehicular roads.

The scenario strategy aims at providing complementary activities within the Khans which in turn act as a 'social magnet' for pedestrians, thus using the full potential of the “Khans” as local, regional and national attractions to bring people (consumers/tourists) in.

This scenario also aims at equally empowering individuals and communities by supplying a wide network of community centers and learning/capacity-building centers within the different neighborhoods. Both the community and learning centers are thought of in connection to an open public space that invites the different communities to animate, shape and appropriate.

These different community/learning centers would connect via pedestrian links which in turn would breed social interaction.

The aim is to empower production and boost the economic activity by giving individuals the opportunity to acquire needed skills and knowhow.

The community centers however, aim at empowering the local communities by suppling a multi-purpose space where residents would gather and socialize and organize different cultural events.

In this scenario the typology of intervention is mixed having a central large scale operation on one hand and many medium scale punctual interventions on the other:
- Central operation: Market reconnection
- Medium scale Punctual Interventions: community and learning centers in connection to public spaces.
“Nothing in the world is more simple and more cheap than making cities that provide better for people.”

Jan Gehl. Danish architect and urban designer

**Scenario 3.**

**City-Scale Cohesion**
Re-establishing city-scale cohesion
Addresses city-scale exchange with local placemaking for sustainable change

Scenario brief
This scenario follows a localized (Acupuncture) typology of intervention with two completely different scales:

• City-scale XL projects
• Neighborhood S placemaking projects

The two sets of projects each serve a different purpose.
The 4 Primary city-scale XL Projects (hospital, sport and recreation complex, theater, transportation hub) serve to quickly reestablish trust in the municipality by the residents of Qobbe, Jebel Mohsen and Bab Al-tabbaneh on one hand and to incite Tripolitans in general to reconnect with the study area and reappropriate it as an integral part of the city of Tripoli. These major projects will help break the social and psychological barriers by bringing people in.

The vast network of small S placemaking projects will serve to create quality open spaces that allow different events and manifestations to take place.

"not just a decoration, but an urban strategy"

Placemaking
Lanternen, Sandnes, Norway

The sculptural cover element aimed at revitalizing the area, and creating a place where many different activities could take place: a meeting point, markets, informal music concerts and other happenings.
A place able to shelter, invite and encourage more social events and to sustain new practices

Authors are invited to monitor, play the role of mediator or catalyst, for events to take place and are to allow shaping the future of such spaces by the communities and to allow them to affectionately appropriate the space...

This system of XL and S projects would transform the larger urban context at an incremental pace, “creativity calls for creativity”
XL projects, municipal scale

Municipal performing arts center
San Antonio, USA

Small projects: Placemaking

Penang, Malaysia
Creative placemaking
calls for more grassroot creative initiatives

Events

Graffiti for enhancing urban esthetics
Li Beirut Graffiti, Beirut

Street activities and events
Lights festival, Lyon, France

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S / Placemaking
XL / Sports and Recreation complex
XL / Healthcare hub
XL / Municipal performing arts center
XL / Main Transport hub
### Scenario 1: Renaturalization

**Slogan**
Natural Environment for development

**Approach**
Adresses interconnection between environmental and societal changes

**Short Brief**
Establish a landscape framework for growth through Greening and Environmental renovation. Inspired by the “playable cities” concept: using fun events and activities as tools for social cohesion

**Objectives**
Create quality landscaping and healthy living environment, and enhancing area value

**Typology of Intervention**
Linear operation along main axis and the riverbeds

**Focus**
Walkability and Recycling

**Decision Making**
Initially Top-down and evolves into participatory

**Starting Budget**
Considerable starting budget

**Funding Sources**
Municipal/national funding

**Example Projects**
- Preventive action: Intervention on the Planned but unbuilt highways (mainly in Dahr el Moghr)

### Scenario 2: One Hub

**Slogan**
Connect and fill the gaps

**Approach**
Addresses the break of socio-economic ties with the old city and the personal and community initiatives and exchange as drivers for change

**Short Brief**
Reconnecting the old city center, by reconnecting the market and the old city’s edges through bridging interventions + a network of community centers and learning/capacity-building centers

**Objectives**
Experience the encounter with the others, feel the interchange and accept the difference.

**Typology of Intervention**
Mixed: Central market operation + localized interventions on community scale

**Focus**
Commerce and capacity-building and learning centers

**Decision Making**
Balanced: Participatory and inclusive of different stakeholders

**Starting Budget**
Moderate starting budget

**Funding Sources**
PPP funding is key

**Example Projects**
- “moving together” storyline: an inclusive bus network for the whole of Tripoli is key

### Scenario 3: City-Scale Cohesion

**Slogan**
Re-establishing city-scale cohesion

**Approach**
Addresses city-scale exchange with local placemaking for sustainable change

**Short Brief**
The two sets of projects each serve a different purpose: City-scale XL projects + Neighborhood S placemaking projects

**Objectives**
Re-building trust with municipality / reasserting local distinctiveness / transforming community spaces

**Typology of Intervention**
Acupuncture: localized interventions XL city-scale + S neighborhood scale

**Focus**
Services and Events

**Decision Making**
Barbelled: top-down (for the XL projects) + bottom-up (for the S projects), heavily weighted on both ends and nothing in between

**Starting Budget**
Minimal starting budget

**Funding Sources**
Diverse sources of funds

**Example Projects**
- The two sets of projects each serve a different purpose: City-scale XL projects + Neighborhood S placemaking projects
Way Forward

This report is the backbone along which the future reports will be based. It presented a historical overview which contributed to a better understanding of the study area development. An in-depth analysis of the urban fabric in terms of its morphology, spatial dynamics and stakeholders was then elaborated. A household survey analysis was then presented in order to better comprehend the social and economic environment of the study area. Reflections on the obstacles and potentials this conflict territory offers were then elaborated on, to conclude with planning directives guiding the resulting three urban scenarios. The latter aimed ultimately at re-activating the study area operating currently as a background for the city of Tripoli while achieving a physical, social and economic rehabilitation.

AS PART OF THE NEXT PHASES, THE SELECTED URBAN SCENARIO SHALL BE DEVELOPED INTO A STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN, IN TERMS OF ITS SPATIAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS.

Graffiti for the renowned artist Banksy in Palestine