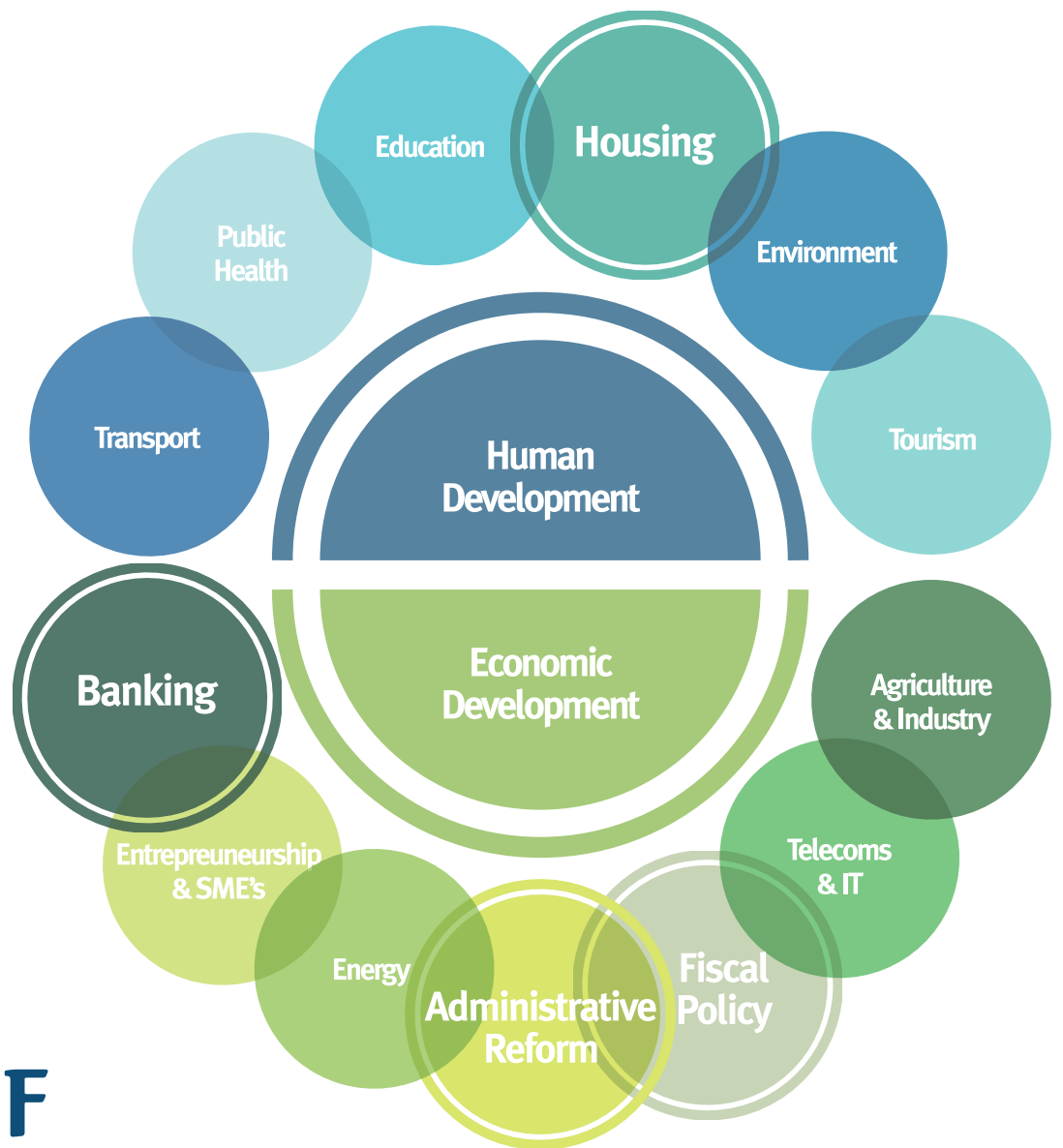


A Youth Economic Forum Project
The Reformists Platform
33 IDEAS TO MODERNIZE LEBANON





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ABOUT THE YOUTH ECONOMIC FORUM

The Youth Economic Forum (YEF, registration numb. 261/AD) was created in 2007 by a group of young activists willing to dedicate time and effort in dealing with complex State issues and socio-economic topics relevant to the public interest and the Lebanese household. This independent, non-profit and non-partisan Lebanese NGO acts as a platform for economic dialogue among youth, policymakers and experts from various backgrounds (political and nonpolitical). YEF intends to empower forum members through knowledge sharing in relation to policy processes related to public finance, public budgeting and socio-economic issues, facilitate access of forum members to government training, conferences, and research opportunities, along with raising awareness of youth on the economic policymaking process and pertinent economic policy issues.

In order to further encourage youth to think, produce, research, write, speak into matters of Lebanese public policies, which is at the core of a citizen's participation in the life of his society, YEF launched the Reformists Platform, a space for youth students, activists and researchers from different backgrounds and regions in Lebanon to think, design, research, develop and advocate public interest related policies.

The project main outcome is this booklet you are holding, gathering youth's 33 ideas to modernize Lebanon, after being thoroughly researched, documented and debated before being raised, now, to the public opinion and relevant authorities.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Everyone among us has his ideas, and every controversial idea is entitled to be meant or achieved.

Every morning, dozens of ideas invade our heads, we are haunted, everywhere, by questions that reflect the anxiety of what we see and experience in this country bundled in its identity and its existence and entity.

The idea is the safest doubt, the less hypocrite, and only much more subtle for criticism. It liberates the mind from the inner caves of ignorance and tries to draw a new reality in a new image. It is up to us, as young people, to play this role.

Ideas are not the result of a dream or some transient flash of boredom, true ideas are built at a deep thinking level that is liberated from any kind of stubbornness, thus faced and confronted by questions, inquiries and doubts, in order to protect the homeland from the evil of what it ignores. This is our role!

The Reformists Platform provides a space for students, activists and young researchers from different backgrounds and regions in Lebanon to think, research, develop and advocate public interest related policies.

This choice is not a coincidence, yet it is indeed the consecration of what YEF believes, such as the necessity of the interaction of the ideas in a comprehensive framework, with clear visions and objectives. To cover the development of Lebanese citizens, all over the Lebanese territory with no exception or discrimination, and thus each area will keep and conserve its nature and characteristics and consequently the scene will be complete by the integration of its conceptual forms.

Here is the task we are trying to achieve through the Youth Economic Forum. In this particular project, we are opening a serious space for dialogue among concerned authorities in local communities of marginalized areas in order to access development ideas on public policy based on scientific methodologies in the preparation, and the data analysis in order to provide the desired effect and impact on the ground.

Young people should be concerned in this hard yet challenging work, under the wing of a political class that punishes the ideas for being genius and numbers for being distinguished. It also imprisons those ideas under points of view that are not useful; except in the policy of sectarian shares and its consequences or its followers!

We have to seriously be involved and engaged in public affairs and we have to liberate ourselves from the inherited complexes to read and look and think and analyze what can develop our country instead of exchanging the mutual blame. This debate is documented in this book - the outcome of the project - in the hope that it becomes a valuable reference for youth, breaking several tough arguments against this youth, and resurrecting in us all hope and ideas.

All of you are partners with us in this project, which triggered a thinking process and ended with a thought, one single idea. Let us hope that this forum turns into a wide reform-oriented workshop so we continue that debate enthusiastically for one and only one idea: Lebanon!

Yahya Mawloud
President of YEF

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ENCOURAGING YOUTH IN DEVELOPING POLICY IDEAS

The Beginings

The Reformists Platform – 33 ideas to Modernize Lebanon, was launched by the Youth Economic Forum in June 2009 as a spontaneous and independent initiative in order to create a platform for YEF members to present alternative policies in twelve different public sectors and offer an exposure of these ideas to the relevant key decision makers. During this phase, up to June 2010, YEF was able to collect 22 concrete policy ideas from the members. Still, the initial approach was severely lacking, since the ideas originated from members located in Beirut and its close suburbs and the related workshops were situated in universities located solely in Beirut.

Hence there was a need within the NGO to widen the representation of Lebanese youth and target a much larger group within the Lebanese population in all regions. To achieve this, YEF applied for funding grants starting November 2010, which resulted positively in January 2011 through the support of USAID¹. From there, the first regional workshop outside Beirut was held in March 2011.

The Workshops

The Reformists Platform held a total of four main workshops with a multitude of follow-up panels, in the North, South, the Bekaa and Mount Lebanon, always within a different university, as the academic circle is considered the most prominent and suitable environment for developing, debating and designing scientific and public oriented policies and ideas. We dedicate a particular appreciation for these faculties for their help and support in holding workshops and follow-up panels: University of Balamand (Koura), Lebanese International University (Nabatieh), Antonine University (Zahle), Notre-Dame University (Zouk), Al Manar University (Tripoli). A total of 293 people attended these workshops, out of which 108 participants joined the follow-up panels to develop their own policy ideas.

Target Group

The workshops targeted young Lebanese between the ages of 18 and 30 years from diverse social, economic, and academic backgrounds. Invitations to the workshops were sent to 32 University campuses, 110 NGOs and 62 Municipalities. In other words, the invitation was open to a very wide range of young Lebanese interested in public management.

Workshop Structure

The workshops were structured in a way to ensure **Knowledge Sharing** and a **Bottom-up Approach**, including:

1. Short presentations by guest speakers and experts who shared their experiences in public policies from a particular point of view:
 - ◇ Mrs. Hala Fadel – Business Ideas for the North
 - ◇ Mrs. Iman El Baba – Components of a Successful Tourism Destination
 - ◇ Mrs. Rola Jadayel – University of Balamand Recycling Project
 - ◇ Mr. Elias Khlaf – Challenges of the Tripoli Railways
 - ◇ Dr. Samer Annous – Mina By Bike
 - ◇ Dr. Yahya Hakim – Public Policy Research Methodology

¹"The production of this booklet is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID.) The contents of these policy briefs are the sole responsibility of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government"

- ◇ Mr. Ahmad Chamseddine – Industrial Entrepreneurship in South Lebanon
 - ◇ Mrs. Gilnar Bou Ajram – Water Sanitation and Hygiene
 - ◇ Mr. Wassim Shmayssani – Disaster Preparedness and Local Communities
 - ◇ Dr. Eugene Sensenig Dabbous – Encouraging Lebanese Diaspora to Invest in their Villages of Origin
 - ◇ Mrs. Alicia Jammal – Challenges in Collecting Public Policy Data in Lebanon
 - ◇ Ms. Hala El Helou – Volunteering, Public Interest Education in Motion
2. A general discussion to identify the possible priority sectors the participants were interested in tackling.
 3. The division of the follow-up panels based on the priority sectors.
 4. An introductory training on Public Policy.
 5. Training on the new approaches to Human Development Policies.
 6. Group work to:
 - ◇ Research and build a case for a priority policy issue.
 - ◇ Frame and design the policy.

Coaching

A two day workshop was not enough for young participants with no background on public policies to design and finalize policy ideas and suggestions. Follow-up seminars and panels were organized with all the groups in each region (North, South, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon) to review and evaluate the progress achieved. At the end, 19 groups were coached in all regions to include:

1. Explaining the different sections of a policy brief
2. Providing examples of similar policies
3. Facilitating group discussions
4. Managing and documenting ideas
5. Providing research material needed
6. Dividing tasks among group members
7. Following up on the tasks

Revision & Selection

The draft versions of the policies were revised and translated by YEF in continuous cooperation with the authors of the ideas. YEF's Steering Committee evaluated the 41 draft ideas presented and selected the best 33 based on the following criteria:

1. The **relevance** of the idea to Human and Economic Development
2. The **logic** behind the recommended solutions, whether they tackle the causes of the problem
3. How **realistic** the recommendations and suggestions are
4. The design and **presentation** of the idea
5. The **sources** and their reliability

The Management of Public Interest in Lebanon, a Broken Concept

Dr. Karim El Mufti*

After the end of the civil war, the 1990's were dedicated to rebuild and reconstruct torn and shattered Lebanon. The Lebanese State and its Public Service could resume its original purpose: managing all affairs related to public interest and drawing the needed public policies to meet the after-war challenges and modernize the country.

Despite the 15 years of conflict, it is important to note that the Lebanese bureaucracy was able to survive the implosion of the political institutions of the State¹, not without damaging consequences: "Although the bureaucracy has survived despite considerable damage and lasting scars, it has succumbed further to economic corruption, favoritism and political intervention in the face of the pressures generated by the intensity of the conflict"².

With the reproduction of the particular Lebanese state model in the aftermath of the war, shaped by the Taëf Accord and ruled by the sacred power sharing system and sectarian representation at all levels, political and administrative, the "public civilization"³ could not overcome its multiple flaws. The latter were perpetuated through political intervention, clientelism and neo-patrimonial practices, rendering difficult any form of consolidation in order for it to meet the technocratic needs of the political class in charge at that time of the reconstruction. As enounced by Thierry Pfister, "Public Service is the legitimate regulator of the stretched clock of the nation, thanks to its cumulated memory, its long-term perspective and its competence in the preparation and execution of decisions"⁴. Because of the war, the Lebanese bureaucracy had already been diminished in its resources and capacities; a survey conducted by Maroun Kisirwani during the civil war stressed on how the conflict "reduced civil service professionalism", kept the civil servants unsupervised, led to the "decrease of coordination among administrative units" and an overall the "dislocation of offices and work force"⁵.

It's only at later stage that the authorities came to understand the importance of bureaucracy to efficiently carry out reforms and execute nationwide public policies: it wasn't until 1996 that the government created a Ministry of State dedicated to manage the modernization process of public administration, the OMSAR (Office of the Minister of State for Administration Reform). Yet, the measure came as a bureaucratic response (the creation of an additional public department) instead of placing this type of public action at the heart of each one of the political institutions which would have symbolized a stronger political will for upgrading the public administration to an efficient working level.

*Researcher in Political Science and Public Policy; Vice-President of the Youth Economic Forum, full research paper available on <http://beirutenterprise.blogspot.com>

¹KISIRWANI, Maroun. *The Lebanese Bureaucracy under stress. How did it survive?* Beirut Review, n°4, Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, Autumn 1992.

²KISIRWANI, Maroun. *The Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Lebanon*. In WHITE, Paul J., LOGAN, William S., *Remaking the Middle East*, Berg, Oxford New York, 1997, available on <http://ddc.aub.edu.lb/projects/pspa/kisirwani.html>

³Expression borrowed from OLIVENNES, Denis, BAVEREZ, Nicolas. *L'impuissance publique*, Calmann-Lévy, Paris, 1989.

⁴PFISTER, Thierry. *La République des Fonctionnaires*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1988.

⁵KISIRWANI, Maroun, PARLE, William M., *Assessing the Impact of the Post Civil War Period on the Lebanese Bureaucracy: A View from Inside*. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, vol. 22, n°1-2, 1987, available on <http://ddc.aub.edu.lb/projects/pspa/impact.html>

1. The Marginalization of the Lebanese Public Administration in the Reconstruction Process

Influenced by the World Bank, the IMF and the UNDP's objectives to "reduce the size and cost of the public administration" in Lebanon⁶, a political decision was taken to bypass the public administration using **mainly three tools**.

Firstly, handpicked existing bureaucracies were upgraded, i.e. strengthened with special prerogatives, like for instance the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). Created in 1977 to deal with the devastation caused by the first two years of the civil conflict, its mandate was amended⁷ making the CDR the lead public institution over the planning of the reconstruction process.

A second measure was implemented in order to sidestep what was considered an inefficient and unreliable public administration, which is **the establishment of an administration within the administration**, with the creation of new categories of better paid contractual experts and consultants (Lebanese and foreigners) that were integrated to the organization charts of the public administration, along the initial civil servants: in order to be able to go around both the archaic legal framework governing the recruitment process⁸ and the ridiculously low pay scales of the public sector⁹, the authorities allowed the recruitment of officers and experts from outside the public service cadre, while leaving the selection process to the original donor (UNDP or the Westminster Foundation for the Parliament).

A third path was set that ultimately sealed the strategy of phasing out the public administration in the post-war reconstruction efforts: outsourcing many aspects of public management directly to the private sector, moreover paving the way towards **privatizing public space**. The main manifestation of this concept lies of course in the well known SOLIDERE project, a private firm (SOCIÉTÉ LIBANAISE POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT ET LA RECONSTRUCTION DU CENTRE-VILLE DE BEYROUTH) created to rehabilitate the urban tissue of the shattered downtown neighborhood of Beirut (Beirut Central District, BCD). As explained by Nabil Beyhum, this company "would simply take over 130 hectares in the city center, thus establishing the biggest instrument of urban management in Lebanon and perhaps the Middle East"¹⁰, and took on to itself to rebuild and restore the traditional Beirut city center. The status of the company as a recognized agent for postwar reconstruction was formalized by law, the same that gave additional powers to the CDR in the same decree numb. 1273 of 7 December 1991¹¹.

The reconstruction of downtown Beirut was a success through an innovative and effective project, but at the price ruining the concept of public space by delegating core aspects of it to the private sector. Since the launch of the reconstruction process, public action confirmed a mindset regarding public service as an idea to be neglected, shrinking the notion of public interest to an imperceptible level.

⁶See the Public Reform Sector section on the UNDP website: <http://www.undp.org.lb/programme/governance/institution-building/index.cfm>

⁷By Decree n°1273 aiming at the amendment of certain provisions of Law Decree n°5 of 1977, promulgated on 7 December 1991.

⁸The Legislative Decree No. 112/59 (Public Sector Staff Regulations), from 1959 continues to regulates conditions of employment of persons in the public sector.

⁹The highest grade within the Lebanese public administration, the first grade category, is paid roughly 3,000,000 Lebanese Pounds (2.000\$) per month

¹⁰BEYHUM, Nabil. *The Crisis of Urban Culture: The Three Reconstruction Plans for Beirut*. *The Beirut Review*, n°4, Fall 1992.

¹¹According to Law 117/1991.

The cas d'école of this model of privatizing public space led to a philosophy of governance based on the erection of sanctuaries for the few, which has established an infrastructure allowing a clear-cut separation of the wealthy from the rest of the population without designing and introducing some type of sophisticated form of civic solidarity. Public sphere constitutes "an idea based on an ideal of a common element, an element shared by all citizens and enforced by law"¹², which would involve necessary concessions from private entities in favor of ensuring a harmonious coexistence within a given society, under the protection of political institutions. This fragmentation of space¹³ was ignored by Lebanese politicians in the last 20 years, which further crippled any public action towards the rehabilitation of the public sphere. Consequently, growing restriction of access of the average Lebanese from public areas has become a rooted mindset: Horsh Beirut (or the Pines of Beirut), the largest green area of Beirut is closed; the Golf Club in Ouzai (South of Beirut) is a select club established on a public lot rented by State holders to a private holding for 1.100 Lebanese Pounds a year¹⁴; marinas and beaches have become private and closed territories that require a membership or a high fee access. Even traditional cafés representing the heartbeat of the Lebanese intellectual scene (Modca Cafe or Café de Paris)¹⁵ have disappeared¹⁶. More importantly, the galloping real estate speculation, ignored by the public authorities (among whom many large land and real estate owners and businessmen), has pushed average Lebanese away from the capital Beirut where renting and buying prices reached unprecedented peaks in a decade. And there is still no comprehensive vision among Lebanese policymakers to create new transportation means for the newly formed families having to establish themselves in Beirut's close and further suburbs in order to facilitate their access to their workplace in the capital¹⁷ which continues to concentrate an astronomical portion of the overall economic activity.

2. A Case Study: Sacrificed Public Transport

Since the dismantlement of the tramway system in Beirut in the 1960's, all the way through the destroyed railway infrastructure and the halt of the national bus transportation system as a result of the civil war, the official policies advantaged the overall and massive use of cars and automobiles. Twenty years later, there is still no tramway, bus, ferry or any kind of substantial public transportation system in Lebanon, except for the privately owned taxis (services) and minivans, and still no nutshell of a vision towards a more comprehensive approach to public transport in the country. At a time where modern cities like Istanbul, Rabat and Beijing have given a new life to the use of tramways within densely urban areas, Beirut's transportation system remains underdeveloped (the same goes subsequently for potentially greater economic development) because of the lack of vision of its policymakers on this issue.

¹²DAHLGREN, Peter, RELIEU, Marc. *L'espace public et l'internet. Structure, espace et communication. Réseaux, 2000, volume 18, n°100, pp. 163-164, available on http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/reso_0751-7971_2000_num_18_100_2217. For a further analysis on the notion of public sphere, read VAN DAMME, Stéphane. Farewell Habermas ? Deux décennies d'études sur l'espace public, Les Dossiers du Grihl, June 2007, available on <http://dossiersgrihl.revues.org/682>.*

¹³Read BARAKAT L., CHAMUSSY H., *Les espaces publics à Beyrouth, Géocarrefour, vol. 77, n° 3, 2002.*

¹⁴Which corresponds to less than a dollar a year, based on a contract with the State back in 1964. This contract initially planned that the land was to be used for a "public service" by the renting company. Even though the agreement was constantly renewed by the successive governments, the rent was never revised up until this day. Cf. An Nahar, 6 April 2011.

¹⁵"Modca cafe to serve its last coffee after 32 years on Hamra Street", The Daily Star, 28 February 2003.

¹⁶The history of Beirut Cafes is studied by Lebanese anthropologist, Dr. Chawqi Douaihy who approached the notion of public space through Beirut cafes, cf. 2005 *دار النهار*. 1950-1990 *مقاهي بيروت الشعبية: Cafes for the Masses in Beirut: 1900-1950, Dar An Nahar, 2005*].

¹⁷It can take up to one hour and a half to reach one's workplace from a close suburb into Beirut by car.

Other than the CDR plan of 1995 envisioning a (costly and incoherent) subway system in Greater Beirut, public transportation projects and initiatives from the public sphere remain inexistent, at a time when “a transportation system built on the automobile is expensive and inefficient. In terms of capacity per lane, single passenger vehicles have the lowest efficiency of all modes. Public transportation is a great way to improve transportation efficiency”¹⁸.

Even when observing the measures taken to secure and regulate the automobile transportation sector in Lebanon, one can confidently point out the absence of coherence and care for public safety: the inconsistent use of cement blocks, little and unsynchronized traffic lights, poor lane marking and road signs, the inexistence of long term planning and lack of enforcement by police forces, all lead to an incredibly high number of deaths and injuries due to car and truck accidents every year.

One of the factors explaining the great attachment of Lebanese public officials to the use of privately-owned cars and automobiles can be found by analyzing the State Budget, as automobile-related taxes generate considerable revenue for a considerably indebted Treasury. When adding up all public revenue items related to the car industry in Lebanon, it shoots up to reach the third largest revenue generating item with 1,398 billion \$ for 2010 (hence higher than the telecom revenues attracting around 900 million dollars to the Treasury per year), with a slight increase from 2009 with 1,385 billion \$. Given the void in researching any fiscal alternative, it is difficult for the present public officials, who have been opposing any fiscal reform, to adopt a radically different policy orientation which would consequently decrease the ownership and use of cars in Lebanon.

Up until today, Lebanon’s public service could not reach a level capable of designing and implementing complex, sophisticated and interconnected public networks and programs handling specific sectors of public interest. As a consequence, the State could not enter the “Organizers’ Era” [L’Ere des Organistateurs] as conceptualized by James Burnham, providing highly qualified expertise indispensable to a sound public management of state affairs.

Rotation of power has yet to produce changes in the way to approach public administration as both an instrument and an object of reform to support any sustainable political enterprise. In order to achieve the vast legislative renovation needed, Lebanese politicians are still to acquire the leadership capacity to finally prepare the Lebanese public to accept and respect a Rule of Law that would fairly protect the citizens’ genuine public space.

Beirut, on 21st September 2011

¹⁸NABTI, Jumana. *Leveraging Infrastructure. Sustainable Bus Rapid Transit Route Planning in Beirut, Lebanon*, Master Thesis in City Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), June 2004, p. 12.

¹⁹In 2010, 4.583 accidents were officially recorded, causing the death of 549 persons and injuring 6.517 others, source: YASA for Road Safety, cf. www.yasa.com.lb

²⁰i.e. Taxes on petroleum, on car imports, on car registrations, motor vehicle inspection (mécanique) and driving license fees.

²¹Source: 2010 Public Finance Report, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Lebanon, available on www.finance.gov.lb

²²BURNHAM, James. *L’Ere des organisateurs*, Calman-Lévy, Paris, 1946.

The Reformists Platform
33 ideas to modernize Lebanon

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Beirut Tramway

Reducing Road Traffic and Use of Cars

Need and Purpose:

Travelling within Beirut, a medium sized city compared to other capitals, relying on cars constitutes an incalculable waste of time, fuel and energy. Other means of transportation should be explored to move around different Beiruti neighbourhoods and areas.

The increasing use of cars have led to heavy road traffic and pollution, along with a high car dependency of the Lebanese people, who need to be provided with a safe and easy means of transportation: the TRAMWAY, as did other modern cities, like Istanbul, Rabat, Beijing and Dubai.

Description:

The idea would be to install a tramway along the lines in the main axis of Beirut and close suburbs (northern and southern), with special stops at the Sea Transportation Line piers (see Policy #2, page 16).

Tramways belong to an economic sector which holds a high level of job opportunities as the service provided would untangle the traffic, reduce the dependency on cars and help the environment, hence demultiplying the contribution to the GDP.

Modern tramways are powered by electricity and do not need to have special lanes as they run alongside cars with special traffic lights and installations which allow them to move pedestrians safely around the city.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Reduce the use of cars in Beirut and thus pollution
2. Reduce traffic
3. Touristic attraction
4. Encourage use of cheap public transportation
5. Create jobs

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Majed El Saadi

Area Covered:

Beirut

Public Institutions Involved:

- Beirut Municipality
- Ministry of Public Works and Transportation
- Council for Development and Reconstruction
- Ministry of Finance

Estimated Timeline:

3 years

Intercostal City Transportation by Sea

Sea Line From Tripoli to Tyr

Need and Purpose:

The road highways from and into Beirut scream jamming and pollution along with wasted time and energy in the country's production potential.

Description:

The idea is to connect intercoastal cities through the sea that runs along the western side of the Lebanese territory. This Sea Transportation System would cover between 8 and 10 harbours (Tripoli, Chekka, Batroun, Byblos, Jounieh, Beirut -northern part and southern part-, Jiyeh, Saida, Tyr), transporting thousands of passengers daily from and into Beirut in passengers ferries.

This policy would be implemented in a PPP format (Public-Private Partnership), creating jobs along the entire coastline of the country and raising considerable income for the Treasury through different taxes.

Large and free parkings at each harbor would allow passengers to drop their car in their departure port and travel to their destination, either for work or leisure. 'Service' and bus stations and stops would be available next to each pier to transport the passengers from the harbor into the city.

Ticket prices would remain reasonable and would not exceed market prices and the daily official transportation benefit.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Decongestion of car traffic from and into Beirut and offering of an alternative means of transportation within the country.
2. Allow easy, fast and cheap way to head back to coastal towns and from there to small villages, thus encouraging citizens to continue living in their regions and slow down the exodus towards the capital.
3. Stimulate local investments and jobs through the nine sea bus stop ports.
4. Draw the regions closer together through an easy and cheap new and modern means of transportation.
5. Encourage the Lebanese Public to use public transportation and make less usage of their cars.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

- Frederic Karam (ELHUB)
- Khaled Taki (Beirut Water Taxi)

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Council of Ministers
- Ministry of Defense
- Ministry of Public Works and Transport
- Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Ministry of Finance

Estimated Timeline:

- 3 years to obtain public authorizations
- 1 year to build piers and launch transportation system.

Establishing a Bus Transportation Network

Establishing Alternative Means for Transportation

Need and Purpose:

Railways and Beirut's electric trams have been abandoned as alternative public transport policies by the Lebanese authorities. The government's railway and bus offices (OCFTC) has recently stopped its activities. The company's bus services was restricted to Beirut after they were resumed when the civil war ended (1990). Given the lack of alternative public transportation means, there is an imminent need to improve bus transportation in Lebanon.

Nowadays, buses travel between Beirut and all of Lebanon's major towns. There are three main bus pick-up and drop-off points in Beirut, Bekaa, and the South. Charles Helou bus station is divided into three sign posted zones which are: Syria / Beirut, Jounieh Byblos and Tripoli.

Lebanon's bus transportation system is unorganized, it does not reach all of the Lebanese territory, it is not safe and there are no specific bus stops. Lebanese citizens find it hard to use public buses, and resort to the use of personal cars. Therefore there is a need for specific measures concerning a public bus transportation network (BTN).

Consequences:

- ◇ Increase in personal car numbers on the road- 434 motor vehicles per 1000 inhabitants
- ◇ Traffic Congestion
- ◇ Waste of time and productivity
- ◇ Increase in fuel consumption and therefore the household energy bill
- ◇ Environmental problems: Air and noise pollution and loss of green areas
- ◇ Insufficient parking lots; parking lots are taking place of more productive projects and green areas
- ◇ Road accidents
- ◇ Road depreciation
- ◇ Waste of government investment to increase road capacity
- ◇ Low ridership leading to oversupply in red plated buses

Workshop: Mount Lebanon

Author:

- Hoda Al-Helou
- Adriana Bou-Diwan
- Maria Noujaim

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Public Works and Transport
- Ministry of Energy and Water Resources
- Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Environment

Estimated Timeline:

3 years

Issues:

1. Unorganized public transportation network (lack of coherent, reliable, and efficient BTN)
2. Deterioration of quality level
3. Bad Road infrastructure

Description:

This policy aims at establishing a national bus transportation network that meets the public needs under certain conditions and standards.

1. Establish a main focal institution to lead, monitor, and direct the BTN
2. Establish fixed routes based on the transportation needs
3. Locate specific bus stop places (convenient, accessible, and safe)
4. Develop a specific time schedule (departure and stop periods)
5. Establish specific lanes, where possible, for bus transportation means in high traffic roads
6. Coordinate with private buses in order to integrate them in the BTN. (2400 buses are owned by the private sector)

Conditions to implement:

1. BTN must be eco-friendly maintained for the longterm
2. Implementation of traffic and BTN laws
3. Involvement of the private sector to achieve more acceptance of the BTN

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Reduce the need for road construction and maintenance (less road and car use areas expenditure) -110 Billion LL (73 Mn \$) is earmarked for the execution of road projects from the Government Treasury (Ministry of Public Works and Transport) for the year 2011¹. This does not include the Council for Development and Reconstruction projects which are projected to cost 498 million dollars between the years 2010 and 2012 for roads and intersections only².
2. Use areas for more productive and efficient projects by redirecting public investment into profitable projects
3. Reduce pollution, traffic and waste of time
4. Benefiting the public treasury on the long term; reduce expenditure on negative consequences of the unorganized BTN (accidents, health bill, pollution)

¹Source: <http://www.finance.gov.lb/en-US/finance/BudgetInformation/Pages/AnnualBudgetDocumentsandProcess.aspx>

²CDR Report, October 2010.

Reviving the Railway System

Reviving the Lebanese Rail Roads in Accordance to International Standards

Need and Purpose:

In 1891 engineers began a study concerning the rail lines between Beirut and Damascus¹ and in less than three years and using unsophisticated tools this line was opened in August 1895².

Today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with bulldozers and communal services and topographical advancements and railway land previously expropriated by the state, this project can see the light in less time and cost than what was used in the late nineteenth century.

The coastlines were established during World War II and took around two years to be built; they can now be revived with lower cost and time³.

In the seventies of the previous century, Railways began to fade after the failure of the concerned authorities to work on its development in accordance with international standards due to pressure from the owners of personal interests. Then the Lebanese war came as an excuse to eliminate this vital facility.

The internal lines have not been functional for nearly 35 years, while the coastlines have ceased working for about 20 years.

Currently, there are about 600 workers in the S. L.R (The Lebanese State Railways)⁴. If this institution operates with financial loss it will not cost the state what is equal to the salaries of the current 600 idle employees. Today, the work of this institution is to protect it from violations knowing that the biggest violations against this sector are made by the Ministry of Works and Public Transport that converted the lands of the railroads to freeways. It is important to note that the S.L.R. possess 90 million square meters of Lebanese land⁵.

Direct issues:

The Lebanese citizens are experiencing daily wars on the roads. Traffic on the roads is lengthening very short distances and paralyzing all economic sectors.

Indirect issues:

Environment: In the European Union, only 2% of carbon dioxide emissions in the transport sector result from the railway system (including electricity consumption). In addition to that, each train can reduce the use of about 350 cars and 40 trucks.

Tourism: Most tourists travel using train, which costs less, enabling them to know the country faster, and allowing them to engage directly with the citizens. The presence of the train facilitates the movement of tourists to the areas far from the capital and thus contributes to the distribution of tourists, and thus promotes a balanced tourism sector.

Workshop: Bekaa

Author:

Train Train NGO
Elias Maalouf

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

Ministry of Public Works
Ministry of Energy and Water
Ministry of Economy
Ministry of Environment
Ministry of Tourism
Ministry of Labor
Ministry of Defense
Ministry of Culture
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Social Affairs
Ministry of Interior
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Industry
Ministry of Public Health
Ministry of Agriculture

Estimated Timeline:

5 Years

¹Lebanon newspaper, 15/27 August 1891

²State of Beirut, Dr. Elias Jreij page 720

³Middle East rail way circle cahp.4 page 45

⁴Bshara Asi - Head Of Syndicates railway workers - an interview with annahar newspaper, Monday, October 11, 2010

⁵<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/20050>

Culture and Education: Transport problems are one of the reasons that lead to a high rate of illiteracy in towns and remote areas as universities are far away, leading to a higher transportation costs (See the policy on Public Transport for University Students in Rural Areas Policy #6, page 23)

Industry: Industries in Lebanon suffer from poor access to raw materials from within and outside of Lebanon and a difficulty in transporting products from their manufacturing plants to the merchants.

Economy: The traffic on the roads leads to the delay in the transfer of goods and thus paralyzing the economy.

Social: with the increase in poverty, higher living costs, the citizen can no longer afford the acquisition of vehicles (maintenance, registration, road use fee, driving license, insurance, traffic violations, parking ect.)

Health: There are high rates of diseases caused by the pollution that is produced from the use of automobiles.

Military: There is a difficulty in transporting vehicles, equipment and military personnel on public roads.

Police: High traffic on the roads leads to an increase in security personnel that work in the traffic services. Traffic also blocks the work of emergency services.

Agriculture: The Lebanese farmers suffer from the high cost and difficulty in transporting animals and agricultural products inside and outside Lebanon.

Description:

This policy seeks to revive the Lebanese railway lines between:

- ◇ Beirut-Damascus
- ◇ Naqoura-Beirut-Tripoli
- ◇ Rayak-Homs

This should include:

1. Converting small lines to double lines to cope with the international Double lines
2. Opening tunnels in accordance with the tunneling studies by the rail workers union in 1971
3. Restoration of the stations on these lines
4. Construction of new stations, according to the requirements of housing and industries
5. Use electric lines to power the system
6. Creating parking lots on every station
7. Hiring and training engineers and workers to run the institution

The plan should also create a line between Riyaq and Marjayoun according to the studies of DHP (Damascus-Halab Prolongement) Company with taking into account the suggestions mentioned above.

Terms of implementation: these lines should comply with international specifications, taking into account public safety and the environment.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

The railway sector is not considered very profitable, but its usefulness is far beyond the public financial cost for operating the sector. These results include:

1. Reducing the number of cars and trucks on the roads of Lebanon, and therefore:
 - ◇ reduce crowding of cars
 - ◇ reduce the pollution caused by cars
 - ◇ facilitate and reduce the cost of movement for citizens between areas
 - ◇ facilitate and reduce the cost of transportation for students
 - ◇ facilitate and reduce the cost of transportation for tourists
 - ◇ facilitate, accelerate and reduce the cost of transporting goods, including animals and agricultural materials
 - ◇ reduce the number of security personnel that work on traffic control
 - ◇ reduce the number of casualties resulting from car accidents
 - ◇ timeliness in reaching destinations
 - ◇ facilitates the transport of military equipment and personnel
2. Revitalizing the economy through:
 - ◇ the creation of a fast means to transport goods
 - ◇ facilitate land import and export
 - ◇ activate the sea import and export by facilitating the transport of stockpiled goods in the ports
 - ◇ activate air transport by facilitating the transport of passengers and goods from the airport
3. Contributing to a sustainable development by:
 - ◇ connecting villages to cities
 - ◇ reviving the areas through which the railway passes
 - ◇ creating jobs distributed on all the Lebanese territory

Encourage the Safe Use of Motorcycles

Untangle Traffic and Keep Roads Safer

Need and Purpose:

1. Congested roads due to cars.
2. Motorbikes are less expensive to buy, register and use.

Description:

Lebanese authorities have installed a tradition of heavy and incoherent repression against motorcycles and motorcycle drivers. The most recent one is the radical and absurd decision from the High Security Authority to ban the use of motorbikes in Greater Beirut starting 1st of November. The latter are accused of causing chaos, accidents, noise pollution and street theft. Although a small proportion of motorcycle users fall indeed within these categories of wrongdoing, it is nevertheless utterly unfair and illogical to regulate against the use of motorcycles because of such.

Motorcycles should be encouraged as a safe and fast means of transportation, especially within crowded Beirut, and for Lebanese of limited income, as costs of having a motorcycle (registration, gas, mechanic fees and maintenance) are drastically lower than those of a car.

In the absence of structured and effective means of public transport, a safe and regulated use of motorcycles in Lebanese cities should be strongly encouraged by the Lebanese authorities to reduce the number of cars in circulation, especially at peak times. It would also reduce pollution and boost the economic productivity through the time gained from being stuck in traffic jams.

In that order, enforcing the wearing of the helmet and a legal situation (registry papers, mechanic and mandatory insurance) as being enforced presently are necessary measures that should be continued, along with a strong repression of drivers who do not follow traffic signs (namely red lights and one way streets). However, the overall prohibition of the use of motorcycles, whether after 6pm or more recently the decision to ban its use radically from Greater Beirut, aside from being unconstitutional on the basis of the Preamble of the Lebanese Constitution guaranteeing the freedom of movement on Lebanese soil, should cease to be implemented in the vague name of security.

By promoting the use of legally registered bikes on Lebanese roads, authorities would contribute into reducing traffic, parking issues and pollution.

YEF Members

Author:

Karim El Mufti

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

Ministry of Interior

Implementation:

- A Decree from the Minister of Interior cancelling the prohibition of the use of motorcycles in Saida.
- A Decree from the Minister of Interior cancelling all limitations of use of motorcycles

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Reducing traffic
2. Reducing parking problems
3. Reducing pollution
4. Improving Economic production

Public Transport for University Students in Rural Areas

Looking into Student's Public Transport in South Lebanon

Need and Purpose:

Our public transport sector lies between theory and application, and the distance between the two is 35 years of waiting and anticipation for the sector in Lebanon to be put on the right track to reach all the villages of Lebanon without limitation. It is regrettable that the State did not notice this, and did not play its role in order to adopt a clear and comprehensive plan for public transport throughout the Lebanese territory, enabling the citizens to move at will without being restrained by the time that is imposed by the passage of taxis and private buses.

The dimensions of the issue lay in the absence of a clear governmental policy for the public transport sector in Lebanon, especially in remote villages and its students who are obliged to program their day according to limited private buses, rather than the other way around. This surely has a negative impact on educational performance and local production, which encourages the use of less efficient alternative means such as cars and raises the economic bill of consumption, noting that not everyone can afford this solution.

This type of situation is obvious in the south, as a large number of villages, and specifically the border villages, from "Marjayoun" to "Kfar Kila", "Al-Khyam", "Al-Oudaysse", "Markaba" and "Bint Jbeil" where public transport is almost entirely inexistent, and its presence is restricted to taxis and some buses that cross through these villages at specific and limited times. This means the student who wants to leave "Al-Oudaysse" and would like to go to his university in "Nabatiyeh", has to leave at six in the morning because the bus runs only at this time and returns to the village in the afternoon. In addition to that, the cost of transportation of these villages to Nabatiyeh, Sidon and Beirut is very high as it can reach 375 thousand Lebanese Pounds per month (see table below). These conditions apply to many other remote villages of Lebanon.

In "Akkar", for example, a student pays approximately 20 thousand Lebanese Pounds for moving from the village of "Old Akkar" to Tripoli, and in the Bekaa the students pay from the town of "Al-Fakiha" to the town of Zahle about 10 thousand pounds back and forth.

Workshop: South Lebanon

Author:

- Rana Jouni
- Ahmad Yassin
- Ali Raslan
- Nisrin Rammal

Area Covered:

Rural Villages

Public Institutions Involved:

Ministry of Public Works
and Transportation

Estimated Timeline:

3 Years

Time	To Nabatiye (Starting)	From Nabatiye (Return)	To Sidon (Starting)	From Sidon (Return)
6.00 A.M.	-	-	-	-
7.00 A.M.	2250	-	2750	-
8.00 A.M.	7000	7000	9000	9000
9.00 A.M.	7000	7000	9000	9000
10.00 A.M.	7000	7000	9000	9000
11.00 A.M.	7000	7000	9000	9000
12.00 P.M.	7000	7000	9000	9000
1.00 P.M.	7000	2250	9000	2750
2.00 P.M.	7000	7000	9000	9000
3.00 P.M.	7000	2250	9000	2750
4.00 P.M.	7000	7000	9000	9000
5.00 P.M.	-	30000	-	40000
6.00 P.M.	-	30000	-	40000
7.00 P.M.	-	-	-	-
8.00 P.M.	-	-	-	-

All prices in this table are in Lebanese Pounds

Description:

The aim of this policy is to make public transportation available for university students in all remote areas at affordable prices and at times that coincide with university schedules.

In order to implement this policy we suggest:

1. Providing public transportation services on all the Lebanese territory
2. Providing public transportation services between the remote areas
3. Identifying special prices for students
4. Encouraging the private sector to increase its investments in the development of the public transport sector under state supervision
5. The organization of stops and bus stations in remote areas (see Bus Transportation Network Policy #3, page 17).
6. Finding alternative means of land transport in remote areas (see the Railway Policy #4, page 19, and Tramway Policy #1, page 15).

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Increase the proportion of university graduates in remote areas
2. Decrease internal migration to major cities for educational purposes
3. Reducing higher education expenses for families in remote areas
4. Improve the quality of human resources and thus encourage investment in these areas

Review of Speed Limits on Roads

Ensuring Reasonable and Enforceable Speed Limits

Need and Purpose:

Despite an increasing number of roads in Lebanon having been equipped with speed limit signs, the latter are constantly ignored, putting the safety of drivers, pedestrians and bikers at risk.

According to the Internal Security Forces statistics, the number of accidents recorded in 2010 is 4583 accidents, 549 deaths, 6517 injured¹. Most victims are young Lebanese, under the age of 25.

Many associations such as Kun Hady and YASA organize regular events and campaigns to spread awareness on the importance of driving responsibly and obeying rules. Eventhough such organizations are playing a big role in promoting safety regulations and trying to protect people from this issue, their work is considered insufficient without the direct interference of the relevant authorities.

Unfortunately, there is an important lack of coherence in the way speed limits are quadrilling the Lebanese terriroty today. A dangerous mountain road in the Chouf would be limited to 70km/h whereas the Ring bridge in Beirut is limited to a ridiculous 50km/h, giving the impression to citizens that unsensible limitations are used as a way of legal extorsion through unfair fines and hence de-credibilizing the use of road signs when they are not set up in a proper scientific way.

Description:

The relevant authorities need to review the entire network of road signs related to speed limits, review scientifically the needs of each strip, road, street, mountain road and highway in order to ensure public safety and build the necessary credibility to enforce the law and coherent speed limitations.

Once the roads are equipped with a coherent network of speed limit signs, authorities can and should be more strict in dealing with offenders. It would then make sense to increase the fine for speed limitation in proportion to the offense, i.e. the fine would be doubled if the offender violation meets twice the speed limit. Also, keeping records of offenders would also help prevent the violation of speed limitations. After three heavy fines, the driving license of the offender could be suspended.

YEF Members

Author:

Mario Nassar

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

Ministry of Interior

Estimated Timeline:

One year

¹Source: YASA, available on <http://www.yasa.org/ar/Sectiondet.aspx?id2=1532&id=24>

The use of fluorescent signs and road marks should also be covered in order to be more visible at night.

Finally, there is a need in setting temporary and permanent radars on dangerous roads and highways to punish offenders and create safer roads. Also, police motorbiker patrols (set of two) should be ordered to pursue and pull over offenders and stop relying on patrol checkpoints, which choke traffic.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

The first important outcome would be limiting car and truck accidents on Lebanese roads and making them safer as hundreds of lives could be saved and hundreds of injuries prevented.

The heavy fines and the procedures to re-issue another driving permit after losing it to consecutive violations would also count as additional sources of state revenues.

Regulating Traffic of Trucks

Untangle Traffic and Keep Roads Safer

Need and Purpose:

Many of the hundreds of accidents on the roads of Lebanon involve a truck or a heavy load vehicle, killing yearly dozens of automobilists and pedestrians along the way. At the same time, the thousands of trucks circulating freely at peak times contribute to the extreme jamming of the road traffic (early morning and early evening).

The growing number of victims on the roads involving trucks in Lebanon is unfortunately not on a decreasing path, hence creating a serious issue of public safety.

There is a need to balance trade and commerce necessities and the safety of roads, along with a specific focus on reducing traffic.

Description:

Different steps, namely three, can be taken by relevant authorities in order to ensure a safer means of transportation for goods and merchandise in Lebanon.

1. A first step towards relieving the flux of road traffic would be to regulate the circulation of trucks and heavy load vehicles on the streets and keep them off the roads at peak times. This decision would be enforced by Internal Security Forces: heavy fines would be given to offenders (the corporations employing the trucks) and drivers would face the withdrawal of their driving license.

This step is usually among the very first measures carried out by any new Minister of Interior and Minister Marwan Charbel issued a Decree regulating the circulation hours of trucks when he took office. Still, there is a great need for enforcement of this measure by ordering ISF units to use the authority they are entrusted with to enforce the law on that matter.

2. Another step to be taken is complementary to the first one, which forbids WHEN trucks can circulate in Beirut but do not tackle in any way WHERE they can circulate or not. This is why it is very important to set a detailed road map within Beirut of the streets where certain types of trucks (the largest ones) should NOT be allowed access.

In that order, the Decree of the Minister of Interior should indicate clearly all the streets, roads, neighbourhoods in Beirut that cannot sustain any passing of large trucks, in cooperation with the Beirut Municipality. Heavy fines and permit withdrawals should fall onto who contravenes these regulations.

As an alternative, large spaces are available in the Port of Beirut where containers can be emptied into smaller city and delivery trucks that can safely drive through small streets of Beirut without jamming the traffic and creating safety concerns.

3. Last but not least, another alternative should be explored to reduce the heavy dependancy of the transportation sector (of goods) on trucks in Lebanon is the Fret System by Railway, through reviving the Railway System in Lebanon (see Policy Brief #4, page 19).

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Karim El Mufti

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

Ministry of Interior and Municipalities

Estimated Timeline:

One year

These steps and reforms would drastically limit truck accidents, reduce traffic at peak hours, favor a safer transportation of goods and merchandises in, through and from Beirut.

Improving Housing Affordability for Youth

Introducing a tax policy that encourages Lebanese citizens to own apartments with a high tax policy for profits on real estate trading

Need and Purpose:

Lebanon has witnessed in the past few years a rise in the construction field and a growing movement in the market for real estate sale. This phenomenon has been the subject of interest for economic and financial analysts. That is why they have praised it and they have put it as an evidence of a healthy and confident economic growth and some of them declared it a salvation for Lebanon.

But if we properly analyze the situation, taking into account all financial, economic, developmental, environmental, humanitarian aspects we see that this phenomenon may be devastating, especially on Lebanese youth, who are facing difficulty in finding housing, which is a fundamental humanitarian right.

Problem:

“There is a great difficulty among Lebanese youth to afford houses due to high prices in the real estate market.”

Main causes:

- ◇ Foreign ownership: the high purchasing power of foreigners, especially Arabs has made property owners raise the price in parallel with the purchasing power of these people. The Lebanese state has not made anything to stop this phenomenon, but on the contrary, encouraged it by reducing property registration fees from 16% to 5.8% for foreign investors (the same tax percentage paid by Lebanese citizens), according to Law No. 299 04.03.2001. In addition, the rate of foreign ownership in Baabda, has hit the red line as it approached the 3% of the space allowed by law for foreign ownership of lands and apartments, followed by the “Metn”, “Aaley” and “Shouf”. This also applies to Administrative Beirut, which has a 6.5% rate out of the 10% allowed by law¹.
- ◇ Increase in demand: the real estate market in Lebanon has seen an increased demand and as it is in all cases, the increased demand brought an increase in prices.
- ◇ Absence of controls: The absence of controls by the Lebanese State over this market has led to chaos, which opened the way for big investors to monopolize the market.
- ◇ The absence of balanced development: the absence of balanced development between regions and the absence of state services in some areas led to local migration of inhabitants of these areas to major cities. This increased the demand in cities pushing the prices up in these areas.
- ◇ Increase in the cost of living: If we have to compare between the minimum wage in Lebanon and the price of a square meter of land or apartment we find a large gap impossible to overcome by average Lebanese youth.
- ◇ Tax policy: it does not exist in this context, as there is nothing related to profits resulting from the trade of individuals in real estate.

Workshop:
Mount Lebanon

Authors:
- Omar Abi Shahla
- Mirna Kassamary
- Wissam Nasrallah

Area Covered:
Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:
- Council of Ministers
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Economy and Trade

Estimated Timeline:
2 Years

¹<http://www.ketleh-chaabieh.org/NewsDetails/11-07-10/news-10-7-11-lands-lebanon.aspx>

Description:

This policy is designed to enable the Lebanese people with low and average income to own housing facilities in Lebanon through the application of the following recommendations:

1. Create a regulatory body to observe prices: what is needed from the Lebanese state and public administrations is to continuously prepare accurate and comprehensive studies, taking into account the different factors affecting housing quality (Green spaces, land value, accessibility, social services...). This body will continuously publish suggested price rates by region as a reference for buyers and sellers. This will prevent over pricing.
2. Develop a taxation policy on profit resulting from the trade of real estate: the Ministry of Finance, in coordination with the Ministry of Economy, municipalities and other departments concerned should put a financial and tax plan and review the fees, as profits from trading in real estate bring back huge profits on traders.
3. Support raw construction material and preventing monopoly: as these material became almost necessary in the construction boom, the Lebanese state must support the raw material used in this field in the form that it sees appropriate without effecting other sectors. In addition to that, the Lebanese state should not let the material used in the urban sector be monopolized by some people enabling them to determine prices.
4. Consideration of taxes on foreign ownership: it is remarkable to see that the Lebanese state recently amended this law in terms of tax and has done the opposite of what was expected, that is lowering tax rates, which encouraged foreigners to own property in Lebanon at the expense of the Lebanese citizen who does not have the purchasing power that foreigners have. This is especially surprising especially that we know the foreign ownership is nearing its legal limits (3%) in the Mount Lebanon Governorate.
5. Consideration of minimum wage: the employee in the public sector and overall private sector no longer has the ability to provide housing as the high prices of real estate are not logical in relation to household incomes.
6. Promoting a balanced development: as some areas have more facilities than others, which led to the displacement of large groups of citizens and obliged them to live in certain areas in order to take advantage of these facilities
7. The government can also encourage the development of a financial plan to encourage housing loans. This will allow private banks to grant more housing loans to these categories of the population without making them face higher loan risks. In the following financial scheme, risks associated to housing loans will be reduced following two mechanisms. The first mechanism involves the financial markets while the second one calls upon a Common Mutualisation Fund. An example will be used to illustrate the idea. This financial mechanism will allow the middle class and the lower classes to access the housing market through more lenient channels. On the other hand, households and private investors through financial markets will bear the risk of these transactions.

Example:

In 2011, household A, B and C all take mortgages to finance the purchase of their house or apartment. The bank will then issue bonds in these mortgage-backed real estate loans through a securitization process. It is important to note that the pool of underlying assets won't include non-real estate related loans and that the securitization process should be highly regulated by the competent authorities in order to avoid an artificial dilution of risk. At the registration of the property, each household will have to pay a small percentage of the acquisition value (0,5-1%) to the "Common Mutualisation Fund 2011"(CMF 2011). This CMF 2011 will be used to cover the banks if a household defaults in his mortgage payment. Indeed, if household B defaults and the bank have to sell the hypothecated property for a price lower than the amount of the loan, the CMF 2011 steps in to cover the difference. After the loan arrives to maturity and the mortgage is paid, the CMF 2011 is liquidated and the funds are redistributed to the different households according to the contributions they made. Hence, a small fraction of the default cost would have been supported by each household that bought in the year 2011.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Improve the possibility for the largest number of Lebanese to own housing facilities in Lebanon.
2. Increase living standards
3. Decrease the average age of marriage
4. Encourage balanced development
5. Increase the revenues of the State Treasury

Safeguarding Lebanese Heritage Buildings

Creation of Special Funds for the Conservation of the Country's Memory

Need and Purpose:

From 1000 heritage buildings in Beirut at the end of the civil war, this figure has dropped down to around 200. Heritage activists started pushing for a law more than 10 years ago. It has been drafted, but it is still gathering dust on the parliamentary shelves until now.

If these buildings disappear, Lebanon will lose its historical value as it will also be affected economically since they are part of the Lebanese touristic attractions. Many of the people who own these buildings cannot afford to renovate them so they find that selling is the easiest and most convenient way. This has led to:

1. A historical massacre of Beirut's memory through the destruction of its Old Buildings.
2. The need to find a balance between economic development and entrepreneurship with the conservation of national heritage.

Description:

Therefore, this policy idea seeks to create special funds to help in the renovation and conservation of these heritage buildings, under the strict supervision of the Central Bank.

The Ministry of Culture and the Beirut Municipality would coordinate efforts to identify the remaining old houses that can be restored by benefiting of these investment funds, hence encouraging potential dynamic businesses such as government housing, boutique hotels, pensions, restaurants, offices and NGO houses.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

Lebanon will preserve its historical and ancient patrimoine. Many people visit the country for its historical beauty, thus the need to preserve what the city of Beirut has left and use it for its advantage.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Nada Nohra

Area Covered:

Lebanon.
Specifically Beirut

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Culture
- Municipality of Beirut
- Central Bank

Estimated Timeline:

10 years

Increasing Green Spaces in Urban Areas

Creating and maintaining “Green Roofs”, “Pocket Gardens” and “Green Streets” in Lebanese Cities

Need and Purpose:

The absence of policies during the periods in the table below concerning the issue of Green spaces has resulted in a serious lack of an environmental sphere in urban areas. Indeed, Beirut counts only 0.8 square meters per capita of green space while the World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a minimum of 12 square meters per capita. All in all, Beirut counts 5 public gardens (Sanayeh/Rene Mouawad Garden, Hippodrome, Jesuit Garden, Sioufi Garden, Gibran Khalil Gibran Garden) and the Pine Forest Garden remains closed to the public (Horsh Beirut).

This obvious lack of public spaces has many consequences on different levels:

1. Health problems due to air pollution
2. Social problems: limited space for interaction, civism and play space
3. Psychological problems: Stress, anger, depression thus violence

Historical Background:

1943-1975: Lebanon has not had clear policies concerning public spaces for its different cities, especially Beirut. The development of Beirut has, since the end of the French mandate, neglected the serious creation and/or maintenance of green public areas.

1975 - 1990: The civil war and the lack of an actual government for a period of 15 years lead to the deterioration of the already existing green public spaces.

Post-1990: The several plans for Beirut reconstruction have mentioned green public spaces but it has only been applied to limited areas for commercial purposes ignoring actual population concentrations.

2000-2011: The SDATL (Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement du Territoire Libanais), conceived in December 2005, has proposed a development for all the Lebanese territory with a slight intervention concerning public green space in the cities. However this plan has not been implemented.

Workshop: Mount Lebanon

Authors of Pocket Gardens idea:

- Zeina Ammar
- Hala El Moussawi
- Grace Aaraj
- Natasha Feghali
- Richard Khalil

Author of Green Roofs idea:

Mario Nassar

Area Covered:

Urban Areas in Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Environment
- Municipalities

Estimated Timeline:

4 Years

Description:

The purpose of this policy is to **increase green public spaces in all Lebanese urban areas.**

Green Roofs:

Local Committees should be encouraged to plant trees and green spaces on the roofs within cities and towns on the coast and in the mountains, which would slow down the anarchic ugly urbanization of cities and towns throughout Lebanon.

Dedicated space would be designed and engineered on roofs for household Solar Water Heaters.

Pocket Gardens:

Implement “Pocket gardens” in each district of urban areas. Pocket Gardens represent a shared space in a neighborhood where residents who live in apartments can have a green public place similar to a backyard for recreational purposes.

Unused public spaces can be easily converted into a “Pocket garden”.

Conditions:

- ◇ Create low maintenance Pocket Gardens
- ◇ Allow free entrance to the gardens
- ◇ Encourage citizens to donate money to preserve these public spaces (inspired by the successful initiative taken in the Cedars Reserve where donations have been relatively generous)
- ◇ Environmental problems: Air and noise pollution and loss of green areas
- ◇ Any extra money should be re-invested in the gardens themselves.
- ◇ Plan activities in collaboration with the local communities to animate the pocket gardens

Green Streets:

In the urban districts where the creation of such Pocket Gardens is not feasible, municipalities would assign a certain period of the week during which some designated streets become strictly reserved for pedestrian use.

Conditions:

- ◇ Strictly stop vehicles from circulating in these streets when closed for pedestrians
- ◇ Provide guards/police personnel for security and control

Recommendations:

1. The Ministry of Environment should encourage local committees managing shared properties (known as “building committees” to cluster together and manage the creation, maintenance, security and activities of these pocket gardens and green roofs.
2. The Municipalities should facilitate all authorizations needed to enable the creation of these local pocket gardens and green roofs.
3. Charge the local committees to plan activities and animate the street, under the coordination of the Municipalities
4. Rehabilitate the designated streets and make them green, pedestrian-friendly and pet-friendly

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

Enhance the Quality Of Life (QOL) of citizens living in urban areas by:

1. Reducing air pollution and the resulting health problems
2. Involving the local communities in planning and developing their public spaces
3. Increasing the actual quality and economic value of real estate
4. Reducing stress, anger and depression, hence reducing violence
5. Promoting free dynamic recreational public spaces for all ages and providing a space for cultural activities and playgrounds for kids
6. Creating employment and/or volunteer opportunities: gardeners, security and animators

Disseminate Parking Towers in Beirut

Larger Parking Spaces in Beirut

Need and Purpose:

It is not news to say that parking spaces for cars are rare in Beirut. The recent efforts of the Beirut Municipality in installing parking meters along the main arteries of Beirut have contributed in increasing the availability of parking spots in the capital, but without providing a long-term sustainable solution.

One of the factors of heavy traffic in Beirut is due to cars having to circulate at speeds sometimes not exceeding 20km/h while looking for a parking space, and hence reducing the flow of traffic and creating jams.

Description:

Instead of seeking the destruction of the few remaining public green spaces in Beirut to replace them with parking spaces, an idea imagined by the Beirut Municipality, an alternative idea would be to build Parking Towers (at least 10 stories of parking spaces, 5 underground and 5 aboveground in the capital).

A pilot project could start with three strategically crowded areas of Beirut: Hamra, Sami Solh and Gemmayze. Locations would be strategically close to business/leisure centers by walking distance (with electric carts used, like in the Downtown area). In Pasteur, for instance the Charles Helou area holds many strips of land that can be used in that purpose with the construction of electric stairways to connect the parking to the main street.

An innovative idea would be to identify large shattered buildings from the war and instead of relying on the vanished owner(s), or waiting for their owners to deal with the inheritance highly complex procedures, the State could partly expropriate the buildings (80% of its 2400 shares), leasing it to a private companies to build and run the Parking Towers (PPP system), then ensure that 20% of the yearly revenues of the parking go to a Central Bank Account in the name of the inheritants and original owners of the building.

This way would provide a just and sustainable solution to get rid of shattered buildings in Beirut that have not been restored by their owners and that are ruining the image of the capital. Parking tickets would not exceed the market's level.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Offering significant parking space in Hamra, Sami Solh and Gemmayze, hence relieving traffic through these three city arteries.
2. Stimulate the culture of walking within the Lebanese society.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Youssef Aziz

Area Covered:

Hamra, Sami El Solh, Gemayze

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Transport and Public Works
- Beirut Municipality
- Ministry of Finance

Estimated Timeline:

3 Years

Zero Waste and Low Carbon Policy

Transform the Lebanese Society into a Low Carbon & Zero Waste Society by 2050

Need and Purpose:

The Lebanese society produces 1.5 million tons of waste each year, with an increase rate of 8% per year. Only 10% of this amount is actually recycled.

The dependency of Lebanon on non recycable resources leads to stress on natural resources. Plus the lack of correct waste management policies causes an increase in waste generation rates. All this waste goes into Lebanon's rivers, soil, air and sea.

As for carbon emissions, the point is to limit the emissions of greenhouse gases since these gases are the main reason for global warming, a problem that is threatening life on earth as we know it. Therefore by limiting these emissions we contribute to the fight against climate change that has physical impacts on all species, the weather, biogeochemical cycles, oceans and human civilization.

The carbon emissions in Lebanon are estimated to be 3.2 metric tons per capita, while the global average is 4 metric tons. Eventhough Lebanon's levels range in the global average we still need to work on achieving lower and sustainable levels by following an action plan which should involve all sectors such as industries, transportation, and energy.

Description:

Zero Waste Policy

The aim is for Lebanon to adopt the Zero Waste concept in order to solve the waste problem in the country. The Zero Waste concept looks at waste as a problem resulting from the way material flows in human society. So Zero Waste is not about waste management, but material management. To solve the waste problem we have to redesign our products, as well as all industrial and commercial practices, in order to be able to recycle most of our waste.

In a time where technology allows for plastic to be recycled back into petrol, this policy could be made possible if manufacturers accept the burden of recycling their products.

Workshop: Mount Lebanon

Author:

IndyACT - The League of Independent Activists

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

Both Policies:

- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Industry

Zero Waste Policy:

- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Ministry of Culture

Low Carbon Policy:

- Council of Ministers
- Ministry of Energy and Water
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Public Works and Transportation

Estimated Timeline:

Zero Waste Policy: 3-5 years
Low Carbon Policy: 1.5 years

Low Carbon Policy

It is time Lebanon pushes towards a low carbon society by 2050. In order to achieve this, we need to develop and adopt a national plan that aims to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions to the maximum.

The plan needs to include how we transform from a fossil fuel based economy to renewable energy, such as wind and solar. The plan will include steps to using our energy more efficiently, by for example designing more energy efficient buildings.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Environmental protection (solving the waste problem and the pollution resulting from it)
2. Reducing global greenhouse gas emissions
3. Assisting local industries by providing them with raw material thus reducing imports
4. Economic sustainability and development
5. Environmental and ecological benefits:
 - ◇ Saving the collapse of species and sustainability of current natural processes
 - ◇ Improved air quality
 - ◇ Conservation of Earth's natural resources
6. Health benefits:
 - ◇ Less pollution
 - ◇ Less diseases and deaths
7. Energy Saving

Solid Waste Consumption and Management

Changing Consumption Behavior to Preserve the Environment

Need and Purpose:

In an ever increasing consumption based society, solid waste production has become a common problem, as indicated by the table below showing that Lebanon generates the largest amount of waste in the Arab region with 363 kg per year per person.

In all the Lebanese regions, we find a difference in lifestyle with high demand on complex commodities, which contain many environmental disadvantages. That is why there is an urgent need for a policy for modifying consumption behavior to prevent any further depletion of our natural resources. Intelligent consumption in Lebanon is an environmental, social, economic and health need. It is also the first step towards sustainable development, taking advantage of local natural resources and the preservation of society and a safe environment.

Country	Annual per capita production of waste (kg)
Lebanon	363
West Bank and Gaza	362
Jordan	349
Egypt	247
Morocco	246
Syria	243
Tunisia	211
Algeria	192
TOTAL	277

According to a World Bank study in 2000

Description:

Principles and values of the public policy:

1. Preserve the right of future generations for a healthy environment
2. Educate on proper environmental behavior
3. Advertise Full consumption of goods
4. Apply the principle: The polluter pays
5. Involve everyone in environmental efforts (producers and consumers)
6. Adopt sustainable development

Workshop:
North Lebanon

Authors:
- Jeanette Al Chami
- Fetnat Yamak
- Amira Halabi

Area Covered:
Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:
Ministry of Environment
Municipalities

Estimated Timeline:
2 Years

Points for the implementation of this policy:

1. Reduce to the minimum ratio of waste through full consumption of materials
2. Recycle waste from consumption
3. Recycle and use the recycled material in a productive way which benefits the economic cycle
4. Raise awareness on the importance of consumption behavior for individuals and groups
5. Strict application of the laws relating to consumption and recycling in big and small health institutions, including health centers located in community centers
6. Activate the role of civil society institutions in the issue of consumption behavior
7. Encourage and stimulate industrial and agricultural initiatives that rely on proper consumption and recycling

Household consumption:

1. Work towards the reduction of the household economic bill in parallel with the environmental bill
2. Adopt behavioral skills for the maintenance and recycling to reduce consumption, especially in the field of electricity, water, food and household goods
3. Find centers that collect recyclable material

Consumption in public institutions:

1. Work to reduce the job consumption bill in parallel with the environmental bill
2. Rely on the mechanisms of recycling in public institutions
3. Develop encouraging mechanisms for public institutions and staff who recycle and consume properly
4. The use of renovated buildings and green buildings

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

Reduce individual production of household waste, which decreases the overall production of waste, and this leads to:

1. Reducing the cost of waste collection
2. Reducing the ratio of toxic gases emanating from the burning of waste and thus reducing diseases caused by air pollution
3. Reducing pollution of groundwater resulting from landfills
4. Reducing the proliferation of organisms such as disease-carrying rats, cockroaches and flies

National Disaster Preparedness Plan

Develop Emergency Plan for Natural Disasters and Wars

Need and Purpose:

As it is known, the weakness of the state's capacities and capabilities makes it unable to manage any crisis in the event of a disaster and for that, it needs to cooperate and coordinate with Civil Society Organizations in order to avoid any exacerbation of the humanitarian and health situation for the victims.

Therefore, planning and intense preparation are a necessity in case of any emergency. From one hand, it would develop the capabilities of the service providers, and on the other, it would avoid confusion and competition among the humanitarian organizations, turning it into cooperation. Hence, a comprehensive plan on that matter would lead to a better use of the service providers' resources.

Description:

The idea seeks the creation of a National Emergency Plan for Intervention, on the base of a bottom-up approach, starting from the local level to the national level according to the following mechanisms:

1. Urge and assist Municipalities to plan for emergencies in collaboration with Civil Society Organizations working in the humanitarian and civil service sector.
2. Study the needs, assign roles, train, provide equipment and conduct drills.
3. Circulate successful experiences and apply them on the level of Municipal Unions and then Governorates.
4. Combine the plans made at the level of Municipal Unions and Governorates into a full comprehensive national plan.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

The planning, preparation and equipping will surely result, in the event of a disaster, in the reduction of human casualties and an improvement of relief services towards the victims.

The qualifications and experience of working organizations, as well as cooperation and concerted efforts will improve the level of service and will employ resources in the right places, thus easing the suffering of the people in need.

The local planning bodies will speed up interventions at the local level, calculating damages and thus help in a fast recovery from disasters.

Workshop: South Lebanon

Authors:

- DAYS Association
- Nabatiye Relief
- Red Cross - Youth Department, Nabatiye

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Council of Ministers
- Municipalities and Municipal Unions
- Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
- Ministry of Public Health
- Directorate General of Civil Defense

Estimated Timeline:

18 months

Increase Tax On Tobacco

Reduce Tobacco Consumption and Raise Treasury Revenues

Need and Purpose:

1. Heavy and dangerous smoking phenomenon in Lebanon.
2. Dangerous impact on Public Health and the Environment.

Description:

Statistics show that 30% of Lebanese are heavy smoker, with an average of 23.3 cigarette sticks per day per smoker.

According to the Ministry of Health, 3.500 persons die each year due to a tobacco related disease. Furthermore, 250 to 300 million dollars are spent every year to treat the pathologies linked to smoking. Another 900 million dollars are spent every year in medicine to fight diseases due to tobacco.

A study published by the Economist in October 2009 on tobacco consumption in the Middle East and Africa places Lebanon in a very bad position, holding 65.8% of smokers who are 11 to 15 years old boys, for 45.1% for girls the same age.

The rate of chemical particules which can be found in the closed environments in pubs and restaurants is also abnormally high, with an average of 309 particules per sq meters (10 times more than the maximum standard set by the WHO). The parliament recently passed a law intended to ban smoking from public spaces, which is an excellent measure to fight against passive consumption of tobacco and related illnesses, but it remains insufficient.

With all the harm done from smoking, on the people's health and the environment, and the difficulty of implementing strict smoking regulations, a serious policy needs to be undertaken, hence a strong political decision to increase an extra \$0.5 (750 LBP) Tax on all cigarette packs. Moreover, this tax is much more reasonable and just than raising the VAT rate to 12% or the tax on bank savings from 5 to 8%.

Despite being a very unpopular idea and decision, this would ultimately lead to a decrease of the number of smokers in Lebanon, with a positive result as far as cardiovascular accidents and lung cancers are concerned.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Reduces smoking among public, benefits for public health
2. Benefits the environment
3. Increases Treasury's revenues.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Hady Haddad

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Public Health
- Ministry of Finance

Estimated Timeline:

Needs to be inserted in the next Budget Cycle before the month of October, then adopted by the Lebanese Parliament.

Design Model for the National Educational Policy

Reshaping the educational system in Lebanon for development through creative empowerment.

Need and Purpose:

The current situation of the educational system in Lebanon can be summed by the following points:

1. Lack of initiatives on the macro level fortified by the bureaucratic approach
2. Lack in qualified human resources
3. Limitation of choices and specializations when it comes to university majors
4. The lack of coordination between ministries (education, culture and labor) is leading to:
 - ◇ Gap in the orientation programs
 - ◇ Gap between schools, universities and the labor market
5. Absence of adequate updates in the curriculum
6. Low quality teaching environment in public schools

Description:

1. Implementing new approaches in the discipline, curriculum and environment in educational institutions.
2. Restructure of the teaching / learning methodologies and strategies within educational establishments.
3. Empowering instructors and administrators through trainings and workshops.
4. Sustainable collaboration between Ministries (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Labor).
5. Provide the students with an orientation program starting from schools leading to a higher level of education at universities.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

Enhance the actual situation of the Lebanese educational system and therefore increase the quality of education leading to a:

1. Reduction of the rate of school drop-outs
2. Increase in the rate of university enrollment
3. Reduction of the unemployment rate
4. Increase in the average household income
5. Improvement in Public Health status due to increased awareness
6. Reduction in crime levels among juveniles
7. Creation of informed and more responsible citizens

Workshop:
Mount Lebanon

Authors:
- Commune (NGO)
- Nancy Issa
- Reem Ismail
- Nelly Baz
- Wissam Daibess
- Halim Choueiry

Area Covered:
Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:
- Ministry of Education & Higher Education
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Labor
- Ministry of Economy & Trade

Estimated Timeline:
5 Years

Reducing the Number of Street Children

Reducing the number of street children through Voluntary Juvenile Social Centers

Need and Purpose:

The Lebanese government's limited contribution to maintain and boost the level of education has led to negative effects on Lebanese society and its brain power. Both, the absence of legal regulations that ensures the right to education and the weak orientation and follow-up have been a driving force behind the high dropout rates from schools at a very young age. As a consequence, dropping out of schools has become very common, especially in marginalized areas.

Issue: Low education rate in Lebanon

- ◇ High dropout rate in Lebanese schools can reach 25 percent before the ninth grade for the following reasons:
 - ◆ Economic reasons, the family can't afford to school their children
 - ◆ Economic reasons, the child leaves school to enter the work force
 - ◆ Student sees that there is no future for his/her education, especially if there is no way of continuing education in the case of refugees or stateless persons
- ◇ 8.4% of children of primary school-age are out of school¹
- ◇ The educational level of working children is much lower than the educational level of the Lebanese labor force as a whole. Thus, while the proportion of illiterates is about 49% among the labor force in general, that proportion is 95% among working children aged 10-13 years and 84% among working children aged 14-17 years².
- ◇ 77% of the Dom³ population surveyed reported never having attended school, 10.4 % of which is because they do not have IDs⁴

Workshop: Bekaa

Authors:

- Lebanese Society for Children Capacity Building (LSCCB)
- Rola Accad
- Myriam Kharma

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Social Affairs,
- Ministry of Education & Higher Education,
- UPEL (Association for Protection of Juveniles in Lebanon) is in charge of the juvenile representatives in Lebanon

Estimated Timeline:

3 years

Indirect consequences:

1. High Delinquency rates
2. Illegal Child labor
3. Organized crime: Theft and Drugs

¹www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/oosc05-en.pdf CDR Report, October 2010.

²UNICEF - Situation assessment of the working children in Lebanon, based on the data made available by the Population and Household Survey conducted by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 1996

³Dom are an Indo-Aryan ethnic group generally referred to as Gypsies

⁴http://s3.amazonaws.com/webdix/media_files/945_Lebanon_publication_en_web_original.pdf

Description:

This policy aims at providing continuous action on the behalf of the juvenile representatives to ensure the right of education for all children in Lebanon through Voluntary Juvenile Social Centers that follow up on their educational state when found working or begging, regardless of their nationality or the presence of identification papers.

Recommended Actions:

- ◇ Train a certain number of social workers to become experts at dealing with street children.
- ◇ Among the responsibilities of these social workers, locate street kids, and guide them to housing facilities.
- ◇ Use current children care centers, such as the orphans' centers and specialized NGOs for housing street children when found on the streets. This will also promote social inclusion.
- ◇ Any child who wishes to enter the center because of family problems, child labor, or any other legally valid reason may request to be enrolled with the support of a Juvenile representative.
- ◇ Social workers or the juvenile representatives should make sure that the child is enrolled in a school regardless of the identity of the caretakers of the child in question, and regardless of the nationality or presence of identification papers.
- ◇ If the child is not Lebanese, or has no identification papers, it is the social workers responsibilities to acquire a Petition Request (Talab Esterham) from the ministry of education to allow him/her to be enrolled in a school and sit official exams.
- ◇ As a follow up procedure, it is the center's responsibility to make sure that the child is enrolled in a school until the age of 15, as stated in Lebanese law, by coordinating every year with his/her school.

Conditions:

1. The Juvenile Social Centers would be spread on all the Lebanese territory with a special concentration in marginalized and low income areas.
2. The centers have an adequate number of social workers and juvenile representatives.
3. The social workers and juvenile representatives are oriented on the Petition Requests (Talab Esterham) procedures at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education for Non-ID children.
4. The centers accept all street children regardless of religion, race, sex and citizenship.
5. Public funding will be allocated to support the centers.
6. The centers comply with all Health and Safety standards.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Reduce the number of Street Children.
2. Reduce the rate of Child Labor.
3. Increase literacy rates especially in marginalized areas.
4. Reduce extreme poverty.
5. Improve health of street children.
6. Reduce Juvenile violence.

IT Education in Rural Areas

Opening High-Speed Wireless Zones in Villages

Need and Purpose:

Rural Lebanese have difficulty to be familiar with the optimal use of IT material and equipment, and use it as job and business opportunities and information gateways.

Description:

Recently, the government connected a series of public gardens in Beirut with free wi-fi. More importantly, high speed wireless internet zones have to be set up in rural villages, so local inhabitants can use modern technology, access educational platforms and get information from the internet with the help of special coaches and trainers from specialized NGOs.

Coordination between both the Ministry of Telecoms and social entrepreneurship NGOs could sparkle IT Education programs in identified rural areas that could constitute platforms for local economic development in many areas, such as the development of startups and web-tourism (see Policy Brief #26, page 60)

The introduction of high speed internet into rural areas and trainings on web access to smaller communities must also benefit the education sector, as school students should benefit from surfing on low cost internet (free internet in schools or special municipality centers) to accumulate knowledge, develop their know-how and connect to larger networks.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Improve education.
2. Improve literacy.
3. Creation of job opportunities.
4. Develop critical thinking and research skills.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Majed El Saadi

Area Covered:

Rural villages

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Telecom
- Municipalities and Municipality Unions
- Ministry of Education & Higher Education

Estimated Timeline:

2 Years

Community Service School Program

Promoting Volunteerism And Citizenship

Need and Purpose:

1. Lack of volunteerism spirit.
2. Lack of engaged and aware citizens.
3. Lack of hands-on skills of students graduating from schools.
4. Lack of leadership, communication, management and planning skills of most students graduating from schools.
5. Sharp need for numerous volunteers to assist the NGOs in implementing change.

Description:

Coordinated by the Ministry of Education, the development of a community service program would be implemented in schools by giving students a certain amount of monthly hours for community service, or mandatory summer civic programs. In return, students' community service hours will be recorded in their transcripts as they'd be given recommendations accordingly.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Educating new generations of active, aware and engaged citizens.
2. More competent and skilled students, preparing future competent professionals and social entrepreneurs.
3. Students gaining more discipline, understanding and commitment.
4. More productive actions to promote general interest related projects.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Afif Tabsh

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

Ministry of Education and Higher Education

Estimated Timeline:

2 Years

Supporting Young Book Writers

Supporting Publication and Continuous Reading Among Youth

Need and Purpose:

In Lebanon, there are a lot of talented people in so many fields, but the general economic and political situation has left this special group depending on tiring and stressful individual initiatives. These initiatives frequently disappoint their holders when they find out their talent is not appreciated with society distracted with its own problems. In addition to that, neither the media nor the public situation encourage talents. The situation was exacerbated with the civil war, lack of vision and public funding.

The low reading ratio is also considered an important problem facing our community. The percentage of reading in Lebanon is less than 17 percent, and statistics show that Americans read about 11 books a year while in the Arab world, especially in Lebanon does not surpass one book a year¹.

Therefore, ensuring the right conditions for young book writers is necessary to reflect the nation's cultural image and highlighting youth's ideas that carry the energy for change. Introducing the writers to each other and to society are two important issues to be addressed if we are to increase the reading ratio.

General Issues:

- ◇ Not considering reading and writing as a priority ◇ Cultural issues are not identified as a priority
- ◇ Young writers lack the financial capacities to publish their books
- ◇ The absence of promotion and support
- ◇ Lack of coordination between relevant ministries and stakeholders
- ◇ Low National reading rate
- ◇ Society and Families impose their ideas thus limiting creativity
- ◇ Lack of media interest in cultural affairs
- ◇ The low budget of the Ministry of Culture
- ◇ Lack of coordination between relevant ministries and stakeholders

Workshop:
North Lebanon

Author:
Yahya Mawloud

Area Covered:
All Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Education and Higher Education
- Ministry of Information
- Municipalities

Estimated Timeline:

One year to lay the foundations

Reading Deterrents

- ◇ 3 out of 4 non-readers in the Arab world would read more if they could find more interesting topics
 - ◇ Having no time and completing education are the other reasons why people do not read much
 - ◇ Having TV or Satellite is the next big reason why people read less
 - ◇ The typical age at which Arabs stop or reduce reading is age-groups 15-18 and 19-25
- (Next Page Foundation Study, 2007)**

¹According to Imad Hachem from the Lebanese Ministry of Culture

Description:

This policy aims to support young writers, and to encourage reading by:

1. Publishing their work through the Ministry of Culture
2. Working on supporting the marketing of intellectual production
3. Ensuring meeting points for these groups and displaying their work in public libraries
4. Allocating a cultural space in all media by identifying at least one hour weekly for TVs and one page for newspapers to follow all the publications of writers and related topics
5. Establishing discussion circles in all schools and high schools, to talk about writers' publications within school hours
6. Collecting books that were issued by young Lebanese writers under the age of twenty-five
7. Allocating a private space for youth publications in all the national libraries
8. Exchanging cultural missions with interested States
9. Establishing a special fund where revenue is generated through donations and book sales. The revenue will be used to help publish other books of young writers.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

This policy has several positive aspects that will help in launching an intellectual revolution among youth by:

1. Increasing of youth Publishing
2. Increasing the interest of young people in cultural matters
3. Creating a cultural, interactive and constructive environment among youth
4. Increasing national reading ratios
5. Increasing the cultural responsibility of media and publishers
6. Promoting Domestic and International cultural exchange
7. Introducing the students to the ideas of people of the same generation
8. Create a distinctive cultural space in a new format of Lebanon in the World

Promoting Cultural Tourism

Open New Horizons for Lebanese Tourism through its Cultural Image

Need and Purpose:

The cruel civil war, the Israeli occupation and the unstable political situation negatively affected the touristic sector in Lebanon while nearby countries developed this sector by improving their image and creating modern destinations leading to an unequal competition in leisure tourism.

By considering the economic policies of previous governments, we find that tourism was a priority at the expense of other sectors such as industrial, agricultural and cultural sectors, where these sectors have receded. And due to unfortunate events the leisure tourism alone hasn't been able to ensure the required income needed, that is why the economy weakened and our culture was lost between insufficient individual initiatives.

Cultural tourism remains the touristic ingredient that is not replicable providing distinctive cultural content directed to tourists for the improvement of the tourism sector and balanced development. Nearby countries preceded Lebanon in the areas of entertainment and infrastructure, but the nature of the Lebanese mentality, open to all the civilizations of the world, offers an unrivaled advantage.

General Issues:

- ◇ The absence of a touristic plan that highlights the advantages of the nation as a whole
- ◇ Cultural issues are not identified as a priority
- ◇ The absence of global promotion and support
- ◇ Failure to allocate funding
- ◇ Lack of coordination between relevant ministries and stakeholders
- ◇ A weak transportation network unable to fulfill tourist needs
- ◇ Social sensitivity in some areas

Workshop:
North Lebanon

Author:
Yahya Mawloud

Area Covered:
Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Information
- Ministry of Industry
- Municipalities

Estimated Timeline:
3 preparatory years

Cultural Tourism in Switzerland:

Rafael Venegar Marketing Director of the Basel Tourism Office, said that nearly a million tourists head to Basel yearly to take advantage of what the city, located on the shores of the Rhine River, has to offer culturally and artistically. In addition to that, it embraces this year a major exhibition on Tutankhamun (Egyptian pharaoh), whose visitors are expected to reach half a million people by the end of October, more than half of them are foreign tourists. www.swissinfo.org

Description:

This policy aims to support cultural tourism through:

1. The Publication of a guide of all archeological sites that attract cultural tourists;
2. The creation of a website about Cultural Tourism in Lebanon linked to related sites;
3. Ensuring the necessary promotion, in addition to the preparation of a cultural touristic map that helps tourists know the characteristics of Lebanese tourism;
4. Establishing a touristic transportation map and securing means of transport intended for cultural tourists;
5. Publishing a map containing the locations of public libraries and cultural centers;
6. Publishing a booklet about traditional handicraft industries;
7. Encouraging Lebanese Diaspora to travel to Lebanon;
8. Communicating with the cultural missions of other countries and activating the role of the Lebanese missions in them
9. Issuing an annual cultural diary by:
 - ◇ Coordinating with all the municipalities to organize cultural festivals in the regions;
 - ◇ Coordinating with literature and artistic cultural centers in order to create activities that reflect the image of the lebanese creativity;
 - ◇ Organizing special exhibitions for handicrafts in addition to the fine arts galleries, fashion and popular food exhibitions;
 - ◇ Preparing cultural conferences.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

This policy has an important impact in giving Lebanon an improved image between the countries of the region through:

1. Domestic tourism, which brings Lebanese citizens together
2. Creating job opportunities
3. Creating a “Lebanese Cultural Brand”
4. Domestic and International cultural exchanges
5. Increasing the income of the State Treasury
6. Maintaining the Lebanese cultural heritage

Conservation of Electric Energy

Providing and Conserving Household Electrical Energy

Need and Purpose:

Since the civil war and despite all the attempts and studies, Lebanon continues to suffer from an intense issue in the energy sector, as most of the solutions adopted were not comprehensive, but circumstantial and shortsighted. In addition to that, the solutions contemplated did not take into account the demographic growth, the rising standards of living, the country's development needs, the increasing energy demand and technological developments to generate and distribute energy.

On the other hand, the thermal power plants and the types of fuel used do not respect environmental concerns, not to mention the growing consumption of energy in Lebanon, where the consumption rate per capita exceeds the consumption rate of energy in neighboring countries (see table below).

Therefore it is necessary to search for alternative solutions to this issue, and most importantly, develop a policy to decrease the use of energy, in light of sustainable development criteria, in order to ensure the preservation of power supply and extend the life of the non-renewable sources.

Workshop:
North Lebanon

Authors:
- Nariman Faek
- Radwan Beiruty
- Mohamad Dib

Area Covered:
Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:
- Ministry of Energy and Water

Estimated Timeline:
3 years

Country	Electricity consumption kWh/y	Year of Data	Source	Population	Year	Rate of energy per capita (W)
Iraq	35,840,000	2007	Wold Bank	28,807,000	2005	142
Jordan	8,490,000	2005	Wold Bank	5,703,000	2005	170
Syria	34,000,000	2007	Wold Bank	19,043,000	2005	204
Lebanon	10,580,000	2005	Wold Bank	3,577,000	2005	337

Description:

Principles:

1. Economically: Saving Energy
2. Environmentally: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and their negative effects on the environment and public health
3. Ensuring production quality:
 - ◇ Better maintenance of the power plants
 - ◇ Adopt successfully proven renewable energy practices
4. Collaboration between the public and private sectors

Practical points:

- ◇ Develop and issue maximum consumption standards for equipment and electrical systems, and work on the application of these specifications on domestic and imported production.
- ◇ Introduction of standards for thermal insulation of buildings.
- ◇ Introduction of necessary legislation to provide the energy-consuming equipment with labels showing their rates of energy consumption.
- ◇ Scientific and transparent evaluation of the real price of energy (either fuel or electricity or water ...).
- ◇ Increasing the price/kWh based on progressive consumption.
- ◇ Increasing the level of human resources in the field of energy conservation.
- ◇ Develop programs to raise awareness on the benefits of energy saving.
- ◇ Serious follow-up on waste and corruption in the energy sector.
- ◇ Investment in alternative energy (solar energy, movement of sea waves, etc.).
- ◇ Establish a high committee for energy that includes experts, representatives from relevant ministries, municipalities and civil society.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Reduce energy waste, which leads to delivering energy to a greater number of people as well as reducing emissions of harmful gases.
2. Energy saving on a household level
3. Increasing electricity production.
4. Economic savings for citizens and state.
5. Better management of waste and corruption in the energy sector.

Guidelines for Household Energy Saving

1. Turn off lights in unused spaces.
2. Use natural lighting through windows and translucent roofs.
3. Adopt methods to determine the distribution of lighting, by reviewing extension keys (plugs), to provide more lighting in a specific area.
4. Use automatic lighting particularly in commercial buildings through the installation of timers and sensors.
5. Rely on compact fluorescent light bulbs, which consume about 80 percent less than the normal incandescent bulbs.
6. Isolate the hot water pipes with insulators to prevent heat leakage into the wall if buried, or in the air if external.
7. Turn off the water heater when not in use and set the thermostat of the heater at a temperature of 60 degrees Celsius.
8. Clean lamps from accumulated dust for good lighting.
9. Use bright paint colors in the house because they reflect light in a better manner.
10. Use household appliances as washing machines and dryers, and others in non-peak times if possible.

Water Management and Conservation

Reducing Water Consumption per Capita due to Scarcity and Pollution

Need and Purpose:

The need for Lebanon to develop a policy for the management of its water resources is necessary for the following reasons:

1. Water is a strategic weapon and plays a key role in re-mapping the distribution of political powers and alliances between countries of the Middle East and one of the most important issues related to the struggle for survival in the region.
2. The outbreak of conflicts over water, according to the report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington in March 1996, will result in 15 disputes mostly located in the Middle East. The World Bank report issued on the occasion of World Water Day on 22 March 1996 stressed that the problem hindering the development process in the Middle East and in the world is not related to the lack of lands, but to the lack of water and the absence of guidance and that future wars will be for water rather than land¹.

In the absence of supervision and proper legislation resulting from government neglect for water resources, we are faced with the following problems:

1. **Water scarcity or water shortage:** caused by unsustainable consumption of water resources and irregular rainfall and this is a problem that directly affects the economic situation. The problems worsen with climate change and increasing population growth and demand increases for water for various economic, agricultural, industrial or touristic sectors, especially in the summer when most Lebanese areas experience intensive disruptions of water. During these periods, citizens are forced to buy water for their daily needs that increases the economic burden on families. This issue is related to poor water supplies in remote areas in particular.
2. **Water pollution:** The pollution of rivers, lakes and groundwater is one of the most serious environmental problems. The source of the pollution is dumped household and industrial waste that leak into sewage networks along with the bacteria and contaminated chemical materials. The sources of pollution are wastewater, industrial waste, pesticides and chemical fertilizers. In 2002, the analysis of the Central Laboratory of the Ministry of Health showed that there is Microbiological contamination in 40% of 863 samples collected from potable water networks in parts of the country, and in 37% of 450 sample collected from springs and groundwater. Even "Achrafiye" and "Burj Hammoud" suffer from unpleasant odors that are due to the wastewater flowing directly into the summer dry Beirut River, and the "Ghadir" River in the southern suburbs suffers from the same problems with several more similar cases existing².

Workshop: Bekaa

Authors:

Association for Working Women
Daad Houssein

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Energy and Water
- Ministry of Environment

Estimated Timeline:

3 years

¹According to World Bank studies in 1996

²Boulos Asi: *Lebanese citizen concerns and issues, the first edition Beirut 2008, Dar-Al Hadasa for printing and publishing and distribution, p.117*

The Litani River

The “Litani” River is the best example of water pollution, as it is a vital artery for many internal Lebanese areas in the “Bekaa” Valley and the southern coast of Lebanon.

The “Litani” River is practically dead, due to the 150 million cubic meters that run into this river annually from contaminated water carrying sewage and waste from factories. This large river that occupies 2175 square kilometers, reached the red line of contamination; one of the engineers in the national Water company of the “Litani” River said that battery factories alone send to the river five kilograms of toxic mercury every day as well as tons of various industrial Chemical pollutants, coming especially from paper factories³. In addition to the violations that had invaded both riverbeds along the waterway, and that can be removed under the supervision of the State.

Sources of pollution of the “Litani” River:

1. **Pesticides and chemical fertilizers used in agriculture:**
the use of globally prohibited substances and without control in a non-technical way and the use of large quantities of fertilizers contribute to the chemical contamination of the river through its transition from the soil by water flow or through air or through precipitation in its various forms. When they reach the water, they directly or indirectly affect all life, including humans, animals and plants.
2. **Waste:**
Villages along the Litani basin dump their waste as well as construction rubble and dead animals.
3. **Drainage systems:**
The waste of the majority of the villages and cities in the “Bekaa” runs directly from sewage into the river without the presence of refineries or any other ways to resolve this issue, and wastewater contains large quantities of organic material, which escalate the bad odors. The city’s industrial factories in the city of “Zahle” send its disposals of industrial waste directly into the “Litani” River, and these plants use in its industry lead, acid and arsenic in the tanning and battery factories and sponges, in addition to the animal farm wastes.

We note that the regions of “Zahle” and West “Bekaa” suffer more from the pollution of the Litani River because of the deployment of large industrial establishments and animal farms which threatens the life of living beings and the lives of people living on both sides of the river because of what the river issues from bad odors and insects, in addition to that it also carry germs that cause birth defects and cancers and infections like typhoid, cholera, malaria and other chronic diseases.

Description:

Due to the decreasing potable water per capita, it is necessary to develop a policy governing this resource to provide water to all villages and cities by integrating principles of sustainable development in order to protect rivers from pollution in addition to the rational use of water through the implementation of sustainable projects.

This policy seeks to address these issues by calling for the cooperation between relevant ministries, including (energy, water, agriculture, environment, health, economy, financial); in collaboration with organizations concerned with water and environmental problems. This cooperation is translated by launching a series of activities:

1. Implementation of a number of local water projects (improvement of water distribution networks, creating reservoirs for water, applying maintenance and installation of water equipment).
2. Adoption of environmental education programs on proper water use in order to protect water from pollution and to lay the foundations to awake the sense of water awareness for citizens in order to have a proper rationalization of water.
3. Promote transparency in the way of presenting facts on the issue of water now and in the future.

³Boulos Asi: *Lebanese citizen concerns and issues, the first edition Beirut 2008, Dar-Al Hadasa for printing and publishing and distribution, p.123*

4. Work in a serious way to harness private capital to invest in the development of water resources, and contribute in its management.
5. The development of basic scientific and applied water researches and exchange of research results.
6. Promote cooperation and establish close links with concerned organizations, regional and international bodies.

The human person, the state, municipalities, associations that are concerned play a key role in resolving the problem through effective collaboration and:

1. Finding a solution to landfills by finding ways to sort and manipulate the waste by the establishment of landfills that meet the requirements of environmental and health standards to maintain the safety of the environment.
2. Finding solutions to sewage through refining or processing it, and putting political interests aside by agreeing on the company that will build the station of "Zahle" for wastewater treatment after the foundation stone was laid; in addition to that reviewing of the Council for Development and Reconstruction in order to build a treatment plant for waste water in "Jeb Jenin" after the land of 36 thousand square meters was defined for its construction⁴.
3. The state should put laws that take into account the environmental situation, especially water use and conservation.
4. Finding ways to enforce the Laws to preserve the environment and it should be applied.
5. Removal of encroachments on the river, specifically the "Litani" River, to prevent flooding in winter.
6. Improvement of irrigation tools and processes.
7. Regulating and monitor the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers, cleaning rivers and monitoring water quality.
8. Completing the "Litani" River project for irrigation and energy production.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

Direct results:

1. Reduce the level of water consumption.
2. Reduce the level of water pollution.
3. Increase awareness on methods of water use.
4. Recycling water for irrigation of industrial crops and thereby expanding the cultivated area, which increase production, decrease imports, improve the trade balance, and increases the living standards.

Indirect Results:

1. Commitment to the establishment of the principles of social and economic justice through overcoming poverty by ensuring access to uncontaminated water for all.
2. Creating new jobs
3. Achieving a balance between population growth and water resources, and between production and consumption patterns by achieving the concept of sustainable development that responds to the needs of present generations without compromising the needs of future generations.

⁴Boulos Asi: *Lebanese citizen concerns and issues, the first edition Beirut 2008, Dar-Al Hadasa for printing and publishing and distribution, p.. 123*

Re-Assessing Mobile Sector Policy

Between Commissions and Monopolistic Practices: A Development Oriented Vision

Need and Purpose:

The Launching of Mobile Phone Services:

In the early nineties the Lebanese government initiated the communication service via cell phone as a viable and objective alternative to the lack in the infrastructure of landlines in order to meet the basic needs of the Lebanese population. The destruction made by the civil war was the main reason in the development and management of public services. Therefore the government granted concession contracts (BOT) for two companies Libancell and Cellis for 10 years from 1994. In that period the mobile service steadily expanded, where the proportion of participants in 2003 reached 20.81 percent of the population of Lebanon, while in the same year in other countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia the proportion of participants did not exceed 7 percent. It is also noted that the steady growth in the service rose between 1995 and 1999 where there was a growth in the proportion of users from 2.91% in 1995 to 20.10% in 2000. In addition to that, the level of prices per minute stayed under 20 cents which is an acceptable price for an emerging market.

It is worth mentioning that this achievement was marred by ignoring the consumer's interests as the average user used to spend a monthly regional high reaching \$73 in 1999, this rate of expenditure is high even compared to countries with a higher purchasing power such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. This shows that policy was based on expanding the high class users with the goal of making profit from the monopolized process and not on a vertical expansion related to services or horizontal expansion related to coverage. This is confirmed by the official website of the companies operating in the market at that time, which admitted that it has invested approximately 277.5 million dollars between 1995 and 1999, while its total income in the same period reached 802 million dollars, and said that the companies have achieved a net profit which is estimated at 140.8 million dollars and the Ministry of Telecommunications received 403.4 million dollars.

A Change in Policy - The Pursuit of Strengthening State Revenues:

The Government that launched the hands of the private sector in order to invest in the mobile phone sector changed in 2001 and started taking another course of action. The two contracts were broken by the government before the end of the period specified by 3 years. In return, the government paid 179 million US Dollars in compensation to the two companies and the government referred to the international arbitration claiming that the 2 companies did not pay the 600 million dollars that belongs to the state after a huge dispute between the two. Despite of the rule of the invalidity of the claim by the international arbitration court, what concerns us is the change in the public policy and strategic direction of the sector influencing investment in the sector and the well being of the Lebanese consumer and at last the economy.

With the goal of increasing state revenue and maximizing financial gain of the communications sector, especially the mobile phone sector (which is around 1.5 Billion US Dollars) to direct this surplus to cover the deficit in the electricity sector (around one billion dollars) and other public expenses, government public policy went towards a new trend that began with the issuance of the law No. 431 of 2002 related to the regulation of the communications sector.

Authors:

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- Abo Al-Naja
- Ziad Mabsout

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Telecommunications
- Council of Ministers
- The Parliamentarian Committee on Telecoms
- The High Council for Privatization

Estimated Timeline:

2 years

This transformation was accompanied by state control over both company shares that exist today in the market, thus changing the situation of the sector. The implications have been identified in favor of the state treasury in several ways including:

1. Relying on the monopolized intakes of users where the average percentage spent by the users per month has reached \$ 41 per month in 2010 and \$ 55 in 2009 which is of the highest in the world and the region, matched only by the State of Kuwait (with half the population of Lebanon).
2. Reaching a percentage of users to population of 64.77% in 2010 only, which means that the service still is not used by several groups of the Lebanese society reducing economic growth. On the other hand, other countries of the region reached much higher rates.. For example, this percentage was in the same year about 78% in Egypt, 99% in Tunisia, 104% in Jordan, and 153% in Saudi Arabia where the number of subscriptions exceeded the population.
3. Excessive increase on the average price per minute, which exceeded the 30 cents, considered an excessive price by all standards. The amount in Egypt for example is 0.04 cents.

The Laws concerning the Governing Body of Communications:

The Telecommunications Regulatory law No. 431 of 2002 approved the powers of the governing body of communications which included:

1. The control of multiple services and especially the mobile phone in accordance with Article 19, paragraph B of the law.
2. The duties and powers of the commission is to promote competition in the communications sector which is included in Article 5, paragraph C.
3. To determine the prices and mechanisms to be used in case it found that the tariffs and prices that exist in the market are the result of a monopoly (the control of one person or a cartel) and this is under Article 28 of the Law.
4. Article 30 of the Law confirmed that the Commission's role is to monitor competition in the market and to take any measures to ensure fair competition for example, measures taken to address the use of information by the competitors who lead to non-competitive results.
5. Article 18 included the principle of equality and competition in the licensing for service providers.
6. Article 4 of the law included the independence of the administrative and financial bodies and its relation to the council of ministers and not to the ministry of communications.
7. Article 6 talked about the composition of the board of directors from technocrats by a decree from the council of ministers upon the suggestions of the minister of telecommunications.

In spite of this, the governing body did not fulfill its role to combat the current monopolistic practices in terms of prices, network coverage in some areas and services. This was mostly due to the body's lack of resources to activate its role and power due to its conflict with the government policy to keep prices high to maximize state revenue. This is mainly because the governing body cannot oppose the policy of the ministry of telecommunications despite the independence of this body from the ministry, because in the article 11 of the law, the governing body revenues are limited to the revenues from conditional grants, payment for licenses, oversight fees, and what is allocated for it from the ministry each February and July of each year. This conflicts with the right of the governing body as being administratively and financially independent in accordance with article 4 of the law which indicated that the body should have direct income from the general budget of the state except during the years of its establishment which is a maximum of 2 years. Therefore the body actually became part of the ministry.

Description:

After analyzing the problems, we find there is a need for immediate action for new development strategies to improve the sector on the short and long terms.

Activating the Governing Body of Communications:

1. Instant activation of the role of the governing body with regards to the competition between the two companies that are owned by the state and especially in the area related to the competitive pricing that is mentioned in the article 28 of the law.
2. It must be taken into consideration that cutting off the funding of the body from the general budget of the state that is represented by article 11 will seriously hinder the ability of the body on activating its role in the protection of the competition due to the dependency of its monetary body which means that the article must be amended.

Public Private Partnership (PPP):

A long term measure would be launching a partnership between the public sector and the private sector (PPP-Public Private Partnership) that will insure competition between the operators of the market but won't affect the plans and the priorities of the state to support other facilities and sectors.

1. All dues are paid to the private partner based on the measurable development targets in terms of service, price and quality for citizens.
2. It should be emphasized that the private partner benefits are paid to him only after achieving the targets so the government will be receiving revenue before its payments to the partner are due.
3. PPP contracts are usually done for 25 years where the state remains the true owner of the project and the private partner is only the executing party for the establishment, management, operation, maintenance, marketing and funding of the project.
4. The activation of this proposal requires the ratification of Parliament for the bill on the PPP which was sent to the Parliament in accordance with the council of ministers decree No. 840/2007.
5. There are compensatory measures for the strengthening of state revenues which is present by reconsidering raising the tariffs in a small way on the values of some non primary items which does not lead to the emergence of a smuggling market.
6. It should be noted that the current system based on the annual renewal of contract led to restrictions on any expansion projects by companies and subservience to the monopolistic practices, especially the monopolistic prices, rather than expanding in order to provide the service and marketing for the other half of the population of Lebanon, or improve service quality for existing users.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. The possibility of combining maximized revenues from the productive sectors, particularly the communications sector by applying procedures and service-orientation and development that secure the consumer's welfare.
2. Stop developing some sectors at the expense of other sectors.
3. Positive implications on the various economic sectors:
 - ◇ Commercial sector
 - ◇ Banking sector
 - ◇ Entertainment sector

Promoting Youth Tourism

Target a Specific Tourism Segment

Need and Purpose:

Tourism is essential to the Lebanese economy, according to the World Council of Travel and Tourism, the contribution of tourism to the GDP in Lebanon for the year 2011 will be 9.5 percent and will provide jobs for 122 thousand Lebanese (9.1% of the total job market).

However, despite these indicators, Lebanon is still suffering from the absence of a clear policy related to the tourism sector. Most state initiatives aim to increase tourism without specifying the characteristics of the targeted segment of tourists (the country, income, age group and sex). This led to a random and unbalanced growth of tourism that does not take into account that various tourist groups have different needs upon which the government should regulate the sector:

For the above reasons, Youth Tourism is weak in Lebanon and concentrated in the city of Beirut and its suburbs.

Description:

Suggestions for Implementation:

Encourage the creation of attractions for youth tourists and expatriate Lebanese youth through:

1. Supporting Eco-Tourism (mountain climbing, scuba diving, water sports, exploratory trips,...)
2. Reviving and Promoting traditional and cultural events along with youth sports clubs
3. Promoting twinning projects with foreign cities to create cultural exchange projects
4. Creating a proper environment for investing in sustainable seaside projects
5. Supporting creation of a detailed and modern electronic tour guide for youth
6. Supporting the creation of an internet published youth touristic map
7. Supporting the creation of Web-Tourism Enterprises
8. Encouraging the establishment of Youth Hostels in all areas of Lebanon
9. Training and Preparing Tourism Police on how to deal with youth tourists

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Improving the economic situation in remote areas by benefiting the residents of those regions.
2. Increasing employment opportunities in all areas of Lebanon, which leads to a reduction in internal migration to the Capital.
3. Reducing population density in the Capital.
4. Maintaining tourism, natural, and cultural resources for future generations.
5. Promoting cultural exchange between Lebanese youth, expatriate youth and foreign youth.

Workshop: North Lebanon

Authors:

- Rayan Shahal
- Khadije Homsî
- Najwa Zakkour
- Hind Mereai
- Nabila Tebbo
- Ibrahim Al Oter
- Ilham Dallal

Area Covered:

All Lebanon, with an emphasis on regions outside Beirut

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Transport and Public Works
- Ministry of Environment
- Municipalities
- Ministry of Youth and Sports

Estimated Timeline:

3 years

Principles:

Sustainable tourism and balanced development in order to:

1. Create jobs and provide income for local communities
2. Preserve for future generations the:
 - ◇ Natural Environment
 - ◇ Cultural Environment
 - ◇ Social Environment
 - ◇ Architecture and Traditional Construction Methods

Promoting Small Industries Outside Beirut

Support the establishment and development of small industries in the Lebanese regions outside the Governorate of Beirut

Need and Purpose:

Lebanon has witnessed over the past decades a policy that supported the services sector at the expense of industry and agricultural sectors, thus relying on the import and a culture of consumption rather than production. We see that imports in 2010 reached 17,964 million dollars compared to the 4,253 million dollars of exports¹. In this context, several economic needs have emerged:

1. Economic instability: the proportion of agriculture from the GDP for 2009 is only 5% and 17% for industry, while the services sector has the largest portion of 78%. This increases the risk of an economic collapse in case the services sector faces a crisis².
2. Focusing on big industries while neglecting the small factories and thereby increasing the rate of unemployment mainly due to the adoption of mechanization by the big industries.
3. Increase internal migration to the cities because of the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas.
4. The disappearance of local craft industries, leading to a reduction in the competitiveness of Lebanese industries in the face of imported goods due to the decrease in the geographical and cultural added value of craft industries.

Description:

This policy aims at encouraging local industries to produce high quality items with added value while adhering to environmental standards during production. This is achieved through:

Workshop: South Lebanon

Authors:

- Safaa Hanjoul
- Ziad Alwiya
- Hassan Hassan
- Ali Nakr

Area Covered:

All Lebanese regions outside the Governorate of Beirut

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Industry
- Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
- Ministry of Economy and Trade
- Chambers of Commerce and Industry
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Energy and Water
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Education and Higher Education
- Ministry of Tourism

Estimated Timeline:

4 Years

¹Ministry of Finance Reports

²World Bank Study 2011

Encouraging the establishment of small factories operating according to local production strategies for organizing and developing local value chains to:

1. Create a network between the local industries.
2. Create new products with an added value characterized by its geographical location.
3. Provide a new market for local agricultural products by creating Agro-food industries.
4. Attract a rural tourist segment interested in learning traditional and local production techniques (Cultural Tourism, see Policy #22, page 49).

Recommendations to implement:

- ◇ Establish Local Research and Service Agencies to determine the priorities of local production composed of Municipalities, Universities, and the Private Sector. Coordination between all the centers should be emphasized to integrate their work over all Lebanese small industry production. These Agencies operate as:
 - ◆ a tool to provide efficient services to small factories.
 - ◆ a tool to help the most disadvantaged population.
 - ◆ a tool to link between the industries at the local, national and international levels.
 - ◆ a tool to link financial and non-financial support to industries.
- ◇ The allocation of a Chamber of Commerce and Industry for each Governorate in Lebanon and link their strategies to support small industrial enterprises.
- ◇ The development of university and technical degrees for the management of small industrial enterprises.
- ◇ Facilitate loans from commercial banks and institutions concerned (IDAL and Kafalat, etc.).

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Encouraging small industry enterprises and thus transform the culture of consumption to a culture of production.
2. Moving the economic wheel in areas outside Beirut and creating jobs in these regions.
3. Reducing unemployment and therefore decreasing internal migration to cities.
4. Reducing population density in Beirut.
5. Preserving and reviving of local traditional craft industries.
6. Creating a market for local agricultural products.
7. Encouraging cultural tourism in rural areas thus contributing in the transformation of Lebanon's mass tourism industry into a sustainable balanced one.
8. Increase the competitiveness of lebanese products in international markets.

Diversify VAT Rate

Promotion of a Just Fiscal Policy

Need and Purpose:

1. 10% VAT rate is discriminatory and affects more the budget of underprivileged Lebanese than wealthy.
2. Need to push prices down to support the middle classes and underprivileged classes.

Description:

Lebanon has two VAT rates since this indirect tax was introduced in 2001, a 0% rate for goods that are VAT-free (basic necessities basket, NGOs and very small businesses) and a 10% VAT rate which touches all other goods in the market.

A general 10% rate on all goods is an extremely discriminatory tax since it weights on the budget of all social classes and contributes to slowing down consumption level on the marketplace, which slows down production and weakens businesses.

Diversifying the VAT rate would introduce more social justice in the Lebanese fiscal policy, increase the Treasury's income, support internal consumption and can be used as a very efficient public policy tool to encourage specific sectors which constitute potential niches of prosperity (IT, Green Energy, Eco-Tourism...). The diversification process would be done in a way so the State fiscal revenues do not decrease but increase, but with a more just distribution of the tax effort among the different social classes in the country.

Hence, luxury items (to be determined by the Finance Parliamentarian Committee in partnership with specialized NGOs and in consultation with the private sector) would be additionally taxed, raising the VAT rate from a range of 12 to 20% depending on sectors, raising by that the State's revenues.

Sectors that would be supported would see their VAT rate scroll down to a range of 5% to 7%. Other basic goods could stay at a 10% range.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Decrease prices on ordinary goods
2. Encourage investment and consumption in promoted sectors
3. Increase fiscal revenues for Treasury

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Karim El Mufti

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Council of Ministers
- Ministry of Finance
- Parliament

Estimated Timeline:

Introduce the changes in the 2013 Budget

Steps to be taken:

1. Restructuration of the VAT Department in the Ministry of Finance needed with training of staff for a successful implementation of the diversified rates.
2. Determining different rates according to sectors, to be supervised by the Finance Parliamentarian Committee.

Tax Deductions for Donations to Civil Society Organizations

Encourage Donations and Civic Action

Need and Purpose:

NGOs in Lebanon suffer from lack of funding and have to rely on personal spending from volunteers, politically motivated donors or international funders.

Improving the Tax Deduction System for donations would motivate smart and efficient donations, and invigorate the flow of resources within civil society, corporations, and the government.

This initiative would benefit the proficient civil society organizations which hold the status of public utility are conducting a mission of general interest for the Lebanese population with the status of “recognized public utility”, but this label is not given in a scientific and rational way in our country.

Description:

In a first phase, the status of “recognized public utility” has to be reviewed and the eligibility of Civil Society Organizations organized and specified by setting strict guidelines in order to grant this label to NGOs only carrying a mission of public service and public good. This task could be carried out by a special committee assigned for that task, like for instance the Parliamentary Committee for Social Affairs, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Finance.

When an NGO becomes a “recognized public utility”, whenever a taxpaying citizen or corporation donates to this NGO, he/she/it would benefit from tax deductions in proportion with the amount donated. The calculation would include a threshold and maximum tax cut one can benefit from. This has to be elaborated in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, along with the proper bureaucracy linked to the fiscal procedures.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

This important step would increase funding opportunities for non-profit organizations in Lebanon, which would increase their means and resources, for a better developed civil society more capable of addressing gaps in social services.

Individuals/entities would be encouraged to get involved in civic support, which feeds into increased awareness and social responsibility from citizens.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Abdel Karim Kreidieh

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Lebanese Parliament
- Council of Ministers
- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Ministry of Finance

Estimated Timeline:

2 years

In order to be implemented this policy needs:

◇ National Commission of experts (appointed by the Parliamentary Committee of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Finance) to be created within 6 months.

◇ Label status criteria and requirements proposed within 3 months.

◇ Approbation and Decree by Council of Ministers issued within 6 months

◇ Introduction of the reviewed Tax Deduction System in 2013 Budget, in October 2012.

Cease Payment of Allowances to Ex-MPs and their Families

Investing Public Money into More Urgent Policies

Need and Purpose:

In Lebanon, the Budget includes 18 million \$ of payments to ex-MPs and their families per year (source The Monthly numb. 75, Oct. 2008). As a matter a fact, an MP who was elected to one mandate and then leaves parliament is entitled to 25% of the parliamentary salary (8 million LPB); if he was elected for two terms, he/she is entitled to 50% of the salary and for three terms, he/she is entitled to a maximum of 75% of his/her salary. If the MP dies, the entitlement is inherited by the close family.

By ceasing such payments, this policy would cut unnecessary spending for the State Treasury, which can also be used to more useful social and economic policies.

Description:

This generous system is a spending the Lebanese people and treasury cannot afford, given the level of debt the country is in. Putting a stop to those unfair allowances to the political class would give the State Treasury 18 million dollars that can be spent on more urgent policies and more just types of allowances as presented in this platform.

For this change to be done, the policy needs to be introduced in the Budget 2013 cycle, by October 2012.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Ending unjustified privileges to members of the political class.
2. Additional revenues to be used on social and health policies as expressed in ideas #10 (page 31); #18 (page 43); #20 (page 46).

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Karim El Mufti

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Finance
- Parliament

Estimated Timeline:

Budget 2013, to be introduced by October 2012 in new Budget Draft.

Develop Parliament's Human Resources

Providing MPs with Professional Parliamentary Attachés

Need and Purpose:

Most of the MPs complain of the lack of time and resources within their parliamentary institution to accurately conduct their duties. With their social activities (weddings / funerals / political and social visits), MPs do not have the time to effectively implement their political agendas, make required laws, along with their constitutional duty of controlling the act of the Executive branch.

Hiring a team of three parliamentary attachés for each MP answers a direct need on many levels, mainly the legal research, legal preparation and drafting of law proposals, questions to the government, etc...

Description:

The idea is to transfer part of the annual financial provision for asphaltting roads each MP holds (100.000\$) to the creation of three positions of Parliamentary attachés within the office of each MP.

Parliamentarian attachés constitute valuable aides for MPs in coordinating their agendas with the staff of the Parliament (mainly the office of the Secretary General) and parliamentary committees, conducting research on specific public policies, briefing their MP on incoming law proposals and law projects, organize MP's work and action, keep his/her official record, etc.

1. The recruitment process would be left to each MP.
2. Offices for the attachés would be made available within the buildings of the Parliament.
3. This measure requires the revision of Budget Law.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Creation of 384 qualified jobs for political science / law graduates and postgraduates. Within the offices of the Lebanese MPs (three each, three times 128).
2. Strengthening MPs work capacity in accomplishing their constitutional missions and pushing the Parliament's dynamic, in line with the Parliamentary nature of the Lebanese political regime.

Beirut Workshops

Author:

Karim El Mufti

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

- Parliament
- Ministry of Finance

Estimated Timeline:

Budget 2014, to be adopted by the Budget Law by October 2013.

Facilitate Administrative Procedures to Limit Corruption

Generalize the use of e-transactions

Need and Purpose:

The absence of a government strategy for an effective reactivation of the public administration goes back to the end of the civil war which lasted 15 years and reflected negatively on public administration. The result was the generalization of corruption, in addition to a lack of will from the Lebanese Government to restructure public administration.

According to the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2010, Lebanon occupied the 127th place on a list of 180 countries surveyed. Lebanon rated a low rating of 2.5/10 (compared with its 2008 rating of 3/10 and the position 102), knowing that Egypt ranked 98th and Morocco 85th. Moreover, other indicators clearly reflect the poor standards of good governance in Lebanon, poor transparency, accountability, and the lack of access to information and poor mechanisms for decreasing corruption.

Workshop: Mount Lebanon

Authors:

- Anne-Mary Bou Aziz
- Rachel Challita
- Mary-Joe Alavalas
- Nivine Bissar

Area Covered:

Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:

Public administration

Estimated Timeline:

4 years

Issues:

1. Flawed mechanisms of accountability and complaints
2. Little respect for the rule of law in public administration
3. Corruption / bribes / nepotism / underqualified human resources
4. Unfair hiring of contracted workers
5. A centralized administrative system, which renders transactions for rural inhabitants more difficult

Description:

The goal of this policy is to combat corruption in public administration by modernizing and facilitating transactions, through:

1. Specifying deadlines for completing administrative transactions
2. The use of websites and electronic means of payment
3. Activating monitoring and accountability tools
4. Passing new laws that define and generalize the concept of e-transactions
5. Updating the portal www.inform.gov.lb in order to inform citizens about administrative procedures and updates in order to make them aware of the procedures and documents necessary before commencing a transaction
6. Adopting new systems for completing transactions and automating these systems
7. Clearly defining the duties and responsibilities of the civil servants within every level of administration
8. Adopting mechanisms to objectively evaluate the performance of the civil servants and rely on it to issue promotions
9. Automating procedures:
 - ◇ Link the administrations' databases together
 - ◇ Train the civil servants on the use of computers and related software
10. Activating performance management systems based on the principles of reward and reprimand instead of relying on political protection benefiting the offenders
11. Create a fair salary scale to motivate qualified people to work in the public sector

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

1. Facilitate the transactions of citizens
2. Decrease corruption in the public administration
3. Decrease nepotism for the completion of the transactions thus increasing the credibility of public administration
4. Encourage investment in Lebanon as we witness an improvement in corruption ratings (such as the CPI mentioned above)

Develop Organizational Role of Municipalities

Involve Civil Society Organizations in the Committees of Municipal Councils

Need and Purpose:

The municipalities and the local community play an important role in local development, the deteriorating reality of the municipalities in general requires cooperation and interaction with civil society. The process of communication may be shy in some places, and it is only limited to festivals and concerts, but what is needed is the involvement of civil society in local committees so that the process of communication with them will be binding and will become more effective in local development. This is included in Article 53 of the Municipality Law: "The Municipal Council can also elect members of committees to study issues related to its region and can also be assisted by committees including non-council members."

The initiatives exist but they are uncoordinated and difficult to implement, which creates the need for mandatory adoption and implementation of those initiatives, and this is not limited to municipalities, but also includes Municipal Unions.

Lebanese citizens have always perceived the concept of municipal work only related to services such as sanitation and solid waste collection. This creates an urgent need develop to the concept of comprehensive strategic local development that includes all sectors.

Description

The aim of this policy is to involve civil society organizations in the committees of the local municipal councils and the development of the accustomed view of the municipality by obliging municipalities to set up committees representative of local civil society organizations specialized in:

1. Culture
2. Women
3. Environment
4. Health
5. Youth

Workshop:
Mount Lebanon

Author:
Institute of Progressive
Women

Area Covered:
Lebanon

Public Institutions Involved:
- Ministry of Interior
- Municipalities

Estimated Timeline:
3 Years

Doing such a step helps in better reading of the actual situation, identifying the problems, reordering priorities, identifying development needs, preparing development plans as well as monitoring and evaluating these plans. This enables the community to develop the results obtained from the assessment of the situation by taking part and turn them into pragmatic projects that address the needs of society. Therefore:

1. The municipality should invite all local civil society organizations that work on these issues in the region to participate as members of these committees.
2. Each institution or association has the right to participate according to needs and purpose.
3. The municipal council is obligated to consult with the committees before any decision is made related to a committee sector.

Outcome and General Interest Benefits:

The formation of such committees facilitates and helps in:

1. Increasing the participation of citizens and civil society in planning and preparing strategies to address the real needs of their society.
2. Closing the gap between municipal councils perception of the problems and the actual situation of social issues to determine the real causes.
3. Direct monitoring and evaluating the drawing and implementation of plans by independent associations.
4. Increasing the commitment and follow-up of plans by local communities as they partook in the planning phase.
5. Increasing participatory democracy.
6. Promoting the exchange of experiences between civil society organizations and municipalities and building each other's capacities.

From Policy to Reality, Implementing the Reformists Platform

Public policy has several approaches and schools as it is still a relatively new science. However, it is agreed upon that the main objective of policies is to resolve a public issue or need. To measure whether a policy solution has succeeded, evaluation methods and techniques are used to determine whether the related issues were solved or at least improved from the initial situation. Writing a policy brief hence comes as the first step of a more global process destined to resolve a public issue.

During the coaching sessions, it was extensively explained to the authors that their policy brief did not represent the solution, but a certain vision of a given solution, which now needs to be advocated upon and pushed forward in the direction of the policymakers.

Advocacy and Lobbying

With the policy briefs now drafted, the authors of these papers can now pass onto the stage of advocacy and lobbying, in order to convince the key decision makers of the solvability of their vision, so it can be inserted within a policy agenda and eventually be adopted.

Monitoring and Reporting

Once the decision maker adopts the policy, it is the job of the civil society organizations to follow-up on all implementation stages of the policy according to the conditions set, and report accordingly to the general public. In addition, pressure needs to be constant on the decision makers to implement the policy according the solutions offered, in order for **youth's vision to become reality.**

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- ◇ Karim El Mufti, Vice President
- ◇ Youssef Aziz, Treasurer
- ◇ Ziad Mabsout, Secretary
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