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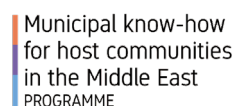
Connective Cities Practitioners' Workshop

Local Economic Development – From Strategy to Action
26 - 28 April 2018, Radisson Blu Hotel, Beirut, Lebanon

Partners of Connective Cities



In cooperation with



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CONNECTIVE CITIES

International Community of Practice for Sustainable Urban Development

Cities are gaining increasing importance globally, and urban actors all over the world are facing similar urban development issues. Although local solutions are required, these issues are becoming increasingly relevant at the global level. While many innovative solutions for sustainable urban development exist at local level, for example in energy efficiency, mobility or municipal services, frequently these are not widely known. Often there is a lack of systematic access to these practical solutions. The pressing challenges posed by worldwide urbanisation call for efficient and innovative approaches, especially in the areas of good urban governance, integrated urban development, local economic development and municipal service provision – our four focal themes.

Connective Cities, the International Community of Practice for Sustainable Urban Development, is a joint venture between the Association of German Cities (Deutscher Städtetag), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the Service Agency Communities in One World (a division of Engagement Global). Connective Cities is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Connective Cities provides demand-based services designed to improve cooperation among urban practitioners at global level. The platform enhances the sharing of good practice examples, expert knowledge and solution-oriented peer-to-peer consulting and creates opportunities for partnerships among different stakeholders. Connective Cities creates a base for knowledge sharing and the development of transformative solutions in local contexts that are customised to local requirements for sustainable urban development.

By conducting dialogue events and project workshops, Connective Cities facilitates exchange among urban practitioners on relevant themes, and functions as a platform for networking. To implement the strategy Connective Cities also organises trainings, study tours, virtual discussion forums and webinars. Working within Connective Cities can result in new forms of cooperation among the actors involved. The platform also aims to facilitate the initiation of joint projects among urban practitioners from various local settings, to disseminate innovative solutions in sustainable urban development.





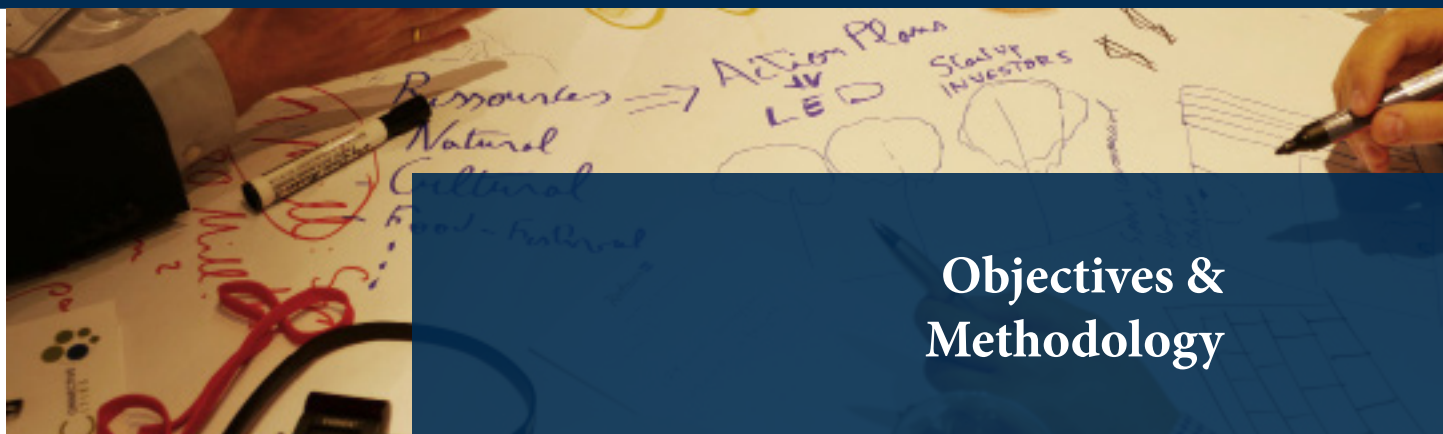
Background

Being a highly urbanised country with about 88% of its population currently living in cities, Lebanon is also affected by the Syrian crisis that has caused the migration of up to 1.5 million refugees to the country accounting for 25% of Lebanese population. Random and uncoordinated fast-forward urbanisation that is mainly taking place in the area of Beirut and some secondary cities in the Greater Beirut area has resulted in growing segregation and inequality between large and small municipalities and between urban and rural municipalities. Against the backdrop of rural exodus, urbanisation in Lebanon is also accompanied by urban sprawl, real-estate issues and sharpening inter-regional competition, contributing further to the existing spatial disparities such as the incidence of poverty.

To counter the above-mentioned issues, several programmes, projects and collaborations aimed on promoting LED were implemented on national, regional and municipal levels. These initiatives include the National Physical Master Plan of the Lebanese Territory (NPMPLT), the UN-led project “Enhanced Municipal Governance for Effective Decentralisation in Lebanon”,

and efforts to strengthen the Unions of Municipalities (UoMs). Lacking sometimes adequate capacities and financial support, these initiatives appear to be an important step in strengthening territorial development at the local level. In particular, efforts of UoMs aimed at developing their own strategic planning frameworks for improving territorial potentials are moving towards LED. This resulted in the establishment of the Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDA), a model for public and private sector partnership with civil society, setting such objectives as strengthening capacities of local actors and supporting economic activities.

Implementation of an intelligent LED strategy may face many challenges, as it has to be addressed holistically and consistently, supported by strong leadership and cover a wide variety of aspects - from local infrastructure and public services, to city-marketing strategies, regional value chains and supporting tools for entrepreneurs. Yet, the potential for sustainable local economic solutions exists in Lebanon, i.a. due to the vibrancy of the entrepreneurial scene and a wide prevalence of micro-, small- and (to a lesser extent) medium enterprises.



Objectives & Methodology

The practitioners' workshop on "Local Economic Development – From Strategy to Action" was geared specifically towards defining local strategic frameworks for LED in Lebanese municipalities that aim to

- strengthen local leadership on LED strategy and action,
- improve municipal infrastructure and public services related to LED,
- develop local marketing concepts and sectoral economic strategies at local level,
- enhance innovation and value chains in the context of regional, urban-rural linkages,
- enhance entrepreneurial skills for integration of the informal sector.

The strategic framework encompassed the assessment of the current economic base, the establishment of goals and criteria and the determination of possible courses of action to implement possible projects. In this sense, the workshop did

- facilitate the exchange of experiences among municipal practitioners from Lebanon and from Germany,
- analyse the local context, identify challenges and elaborate strategies for local economic development,
- formulate concrete project ideas and envisaged solutions for resolving challenges on local economic development.

The workshop's substance comprised subject matter inputs on the various core elements of LED strategies, based on existing good practices, as well as training

modules to facilitate the elaboration of LED strategies for the participants' municipalities and the identification of project proposals to implement the strategy.

The **outputs** of the workshop were locally specific, strategic considerations for LED as well as a number of concrete project ideas developed by the participating municipalities. Project ideas between a German and a Lebanese municipality will have the possibility to be further supported and set up as joint bi-lateral municipal projects, which could receive advice and funding for implementation through the financial instruments of the Service Agency Community in One World of Engagement Global.

The work process involved the following steps:

1. Good practices as well as challenges of local economic development from both Lebanon and Germany provided insights into the specific success factors of LED and the lessons learnt.
2. During peer-to-peer sessions, participants discussed the presented issues and advised each other on how to apply them for the elaboration of local LED strategies. Following the analysis of specific local conditions in the respective municipalities, actual challenges were incorporated.
3. Based on the LED strategy framework, concrete projects which focus on specific needs, challenges of and opportunities for local economic development in the respective municipalities were elaborated. Those ideas can be forwarded to future collaboration between Lebanese and German municipalities.

Local participants included representatives of different municipalities who contributed their know-how and expertise to identify the underlying challenges in the urban and regional economic context.



Workshop Introduction

The workshop was opened by Mrs. Faten Abou Hassan, the director General of Departments and Municipal Councils in the Ministry of Interior. This was followed by a word from Dr. Bechir Odeimi (President of Cités Unies Liban/BTVL), a word from Mr. Raymond Tarabay and Mr. Christian Kirchen from the German Embassy, a word from Dr. Christiane Gaehtgens from GIZ Lebanon, and a word from Dr. Manfred Poppe from GIZ Connective Cities. At the end, the welcome remarks were closed by Ms. Silvia Boehmsdorff from Engagement Global/SKEW.

With regard to the declared objectives, the establishment of economic cooperation and relationships between the Lebanese and German municipalities and institutions was one of the key-targets of the event. In this sense, the workshop followed three main tasks:

1. Define the work of Lebanese municipalities to understand the challenges faced in their cities which have an impact on the local economic development
2. Highlight the strengths of the Lebanese municipalities
3. Set a base for future work and target the economic and local development

In this regard, Dr. Manfred Poppe noted that the focus should be on the community of practice which ought to establish networks and connections among urban practitioners. Through knowledge sharing and the exchange of experience, these networks can create new innovative project ideas. Thereby, knowledge exchange is the key aspect for 'Good Practices', which illustrate application-oriented strategies for local economic development.

Dr. Poppe and Ms. Boehmsdorff highlighted the work of Connective Cities and Engagement Global/SKEW, which creates a base for knowledge sharing and furthermore advises municipalities about the acquisition of funding.



Local Economic Development from an International Perspective

Mr. Frank Waeltring, the moderator and partner of the knowledge firm 'mesopartner', presented the principles and success factors for a local economic development (LED) process. He presented LED from an international perspective by illustrating it by means of a Hexagon as a strategic LED framework for practitioners. This Hexagon emphasises the key elements for LED, symbolised by 6 triangles. At the same time, the figure emphasises the synergies between the associated aspects of each key element. The 6 key elements are the following:

1. Target Groups

First of all, LED initiatives have to focus on the key target group for economic development at the local level, which is composed by existing local firms, new start-ups and new investors. Questions for successful LED projects in Lebanon as well as in Germany are thus the following: Do we target these actors in our initiatives? Do we focus on the group as a whole or do all our initiatives focus on one particular actor? Dynamic LED locations strengthen all three actors at the same time and also work on synergies between e.g. existing companies and new start-ups as potential suppliers. In this respect, new investors could also close a processing niche that strengthens the value addition in the respective location.

2. Locational Factors

LED is also about making the location more business friendly. The *triangle* differentiates between the improvement of tangible factors (e.g. real estate availability, the geographic location, taxes etc.), the improvement of intangible factors relevant for firms (e.g. business friendly municipality, existing suppliers and qualified labor, active associations etc.) and factors relevant for individuals (e.g. life quality of the place including green space, dynamic, housing, cultural attractiveness etc.) The objective of a successful LED initiative should always be to make the location more attractive and competitive. Thus, Frank Waeltring

emphasized that LED goes beyond pure infrastructure projects but to create a business and life quality atmosphere that is conducive for business and social relations.

3. Governance and Change of Coalition

LED is a network governance task. The municipalities should not only promote their own objectives, but have to integrate motivated citizens, businesses and business networks. In many municipalities infrastructure projects are rather promoted without integrating the private sector and without looking at their requirements and priorities for action.

4. Process and Action Orientation

LED is an iterative process that lives from its dynamic in the place and from interaction. Thus, to promote catalytic effects, it is necessary to combine concrete short-term projects with the integration of the local businesses themselves, as well as to initiate demand-oriented, long-term activities based on concrete findings. In between, it is always important to test what is possible through "safe to fail" experiments. Within these, the buy-in of new initiatives is tested at a small scale. This is the way how trust and knowledge sharing is created and used.

5. LED as Innovation Promotion

LED is about promoting competitiveness through innovative activities. These can include product or process innovation within certain companies, e.g. in the agricultural sector through adding value to certain products, quality improvement or through further processing activities. But innovative activities can only be promoted when there are businesses who are willing and searching for innovating their products. At the same time innovation is not only about economic innovation. Social and environmental innovations are necessary to create network relations, to promote

environmental-friendly business models and to identify a balanced and sustainable innovation approach.

6. LED as Continuous Knowledge Extension

LED requires the accumulation of knowledge. Apart from creating knowledge among the local stakeholders, it is relevant to open the networks to others outside the own region. This includes learning from other national and international good LED practices, as well as from national and global buyers who are (potential) customers of the locally produced products, and searching for external knowledge providers who might not be based in the location but can be integrated or invited. These knowledge providers can be training organisations, NGOs, or research organisations that transfer innovative information to local producers

The focus on the target group and the development of locational factors can be seen as the core elements of LED. The network governance aspect and the process orientation are highly relevant success factors for LED. The emphasis on innovation and the continuous search and integration of additional knowledge are additional factors to LED that should be considered once the core principles and success factors have been realized.

Frank Waeltring emphasized in this introduction the importance of looking at the Hexagon triangles also when reflecting on the case studies from Germany and from Lebanon. Throughout the workshop process, the Hexagon became the framework for the reflection of the case studies.





Local Economic Development from a Lebanese Perspective

Mr. Fawaz Hamidi, Director at the Business Incubation Association Project in Tripoli (BIAT), introduced the work of his project in a keynote presentation. BIAT supports small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by giving them administrative assistance, access to finance and information about new potential markets.

Furthermore, BIAT links SMEs to internal and external networks by providing them contact to experts and coaches, as well as to technology and knowledge organisations. Despite a lack of government funds and innovative LED policies, BIAT started its own initiative in Tripoli supported by the local municipality and the business sector. Its final objective is to reduce Lebanese brain drain and to reduce the informality of SMEs. Mr. Fawaz emphasized concrete requirements to promote SMEs despite the non-favorable business environment:

1. Setting up a community strategic plan in which business involvement plays an important role
2. Adopting a Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach, including governance strategies for networking, integration of private partners in the development and the municipality as facilitator
3. Mapping the local economic and social resources based on the target group of LED and starting with concrete initiatives
4. Connecting with other national and international initiatives and knowledge providers as well as becoming a long-term lobbying factor to the central government for supporting LED with an policy-based approach.

The LED Café – Reflection on 3 questions

Before moving into group discussions, Mr. Waeltring introduced the LED-Café instrument to encourage communication in a large group. It is based on the World Café methodology that encourages the participants to discuss and reflect in groups on three relevant questions. In the case of the LED Café, the focus-questions were the following:

1. What are current LED activities in the locations you are coming from?
2. What are main challenges you face to promote LED?
3. What are key success factors for LED in your context?

The findings were finally summarized in the plenary. It became clear that most of the current LED activities in Lebanon are focusing on infrastructure projects and less so on networking initiatives. Main challenges were identified in the difficult framework conditions including the lack of funds and supportive policies, the refugee crisis and the inflow of additional people into the communities, the lack of experiences with successful LED promotion and the lack of expertise to promote successful initiatives. As key success factors were mentioned, among others, a real policy support especially in the smaller communities as well as support with regard to finance, knowledge and implementation management procedures. It was also mentioned that the provision of basic infrastructure, like water supply, energy supply, housing etc. is an important prerequisite for further initiatives.



Presentation of Good Practices: LED cases from Germany and Lebanon

The presentations of good practices of local economic development focused on local experiences from Germany. Speakers and case study providers were the following four experts from Germany: Ms. Petra Thieme, Mr. Thomas Lilienthal, Ms. Birgit Neyer and Dr. Clemens Goetz. Furthermore, Ms. Rita Rhayem from CARITAS International presented the case of the Deir Al Kamar Christmas Village, a good practice from Lebanon. Afterwards, the presentations ended with a final wrap up and a reflection on key learnings around the different case studies along the Hexagon framework. The details of the case studies will be summarized in the following:

Case study 1 – Gera Town in Thuringia:

Promoting a tourism lighthouse project as a starting point for additional and related tourism marketing

In the first topic, the focus was on promoting a tourism lighthouse project that can also be interpreted as a change initiative to initiate and link further tourism activities. Mrs. Petra Thieme presented the project of

developing an old farm estate from AD 1505 situated in the East German town of Gera. The area faces a high unemployment rate (10-12%). During the last decade the old farm was unused. In 2014, a family bought the farm in an attempt to promote it as a touristic site by restoring the timbered house and facilities. They started horse breeding and provide guesthouses and introduced other touristic activities, such as establishing a development care farming and producing organic products.



This project faced several problems regarding planning permission and legal regulation (as it was listed as a historical monument). Nonetheless through different networking activities and the search for financial and institutional support, the project is currently in the process of implementation. Key learnings of this initiative were mentioned in the following plenary reflection:

- It is highly relevant to start a concrete project to demonstrate change in a location. One initiative can then become the starting point for further network initiatives.
- Making use of existing infrastructure is important and less costly.
- A project like the establishment of this touristic site can be the start of an LED process that requires further activities in the short and medium term by the municipality and the local private sector. It requires efforts to convince the other stakeholders to see it as a potential for further development.



Case study 2 – Rheinsberg in Brandenburg:

Initiating and linking concrete LED initiatives through a green business park, investments and start-up promotion

Rheinsberg is a town that is approx. 50 miles away from Berlin. Mr. Thomas Lilienthal, the head of the Economic Development Department in the city, introduced the city that was known for its proximity to a former nuclear power plant. The town had an averagely structured commercial park, and the objective was to turn it into a unique commercial green park for organic products. This project faced several obstacles, including low accessibility of the location, bad road conditions, and its reputation of being close to a former nuclear power plant. Instead of falling into depression, the city started

to search for its strengths like highly qualified engineers and workers, and emphasised its innovative vision and unique sales angle. Rheinsberg promoted networks to start and enforce corporation, kept the conversion process always in motion, attracted and promoted additional investors and companies, and identified synergies between the existing companies, new start-ups and new investors.

The green business park has become a successful project that has changed the town's image, attracted new companies and investors, strengthened the employment generation in the town, and also created green business opportunities. Key learnings that were reflected in the plenary after the presentation were the following:

- The city took its crisis as a chance to change its image. Promoting a green business park has changed the image from a nuclear plant location to an innovative city.
- Linking the promotion of existing businesses to new start-ups and new investors was a successful approach and facilitated synergies to boost local competitive advantages.
- The green business park was supported by local companies that became strong promoters of the project with the interest to change the image of their location.
- The green business park was only one project linked with many other initiatives that also involved the youth and citizens of the place. It becomes an example of network governance.
- Promoting green business models and linking new economic initiatives can be interpreted as a highly innovative approach that is also looking for more sustainable business solutions over the long-term.



Case study 3 – Althengstett in Baden Württemberg:
Promoting competitive advantages in a city through joint efforts by professional private sector and municipality



Althengstett has got some 8.000 inhabitants distributed among three villages near Stuttgart. Dr. Clemens Goetz introduced the project of a small supermarket that was established in one of the three villages (Ottenbronn, 1.300 residents). The local super market can be interpreted as a place where local producers can exhibit and sell their products and where residents as well as tourists can have joint access to locally produced goods. It is just one of the projects where the community started to work together to find innovative solutions to a common problem. Additional initiatives were promoted like creating a local business association to reflect about additional LED activities that make the location more competitive than others in the surrounding area. With the comparison to the neighbouring village Ostelsheim, the decisive impact of business sector and local citizen networking on local development and attractiveness can be demonstrated. Based on the different initiatives, Ottenbronn has been able to establish a lively city center, where an attractive public place has been created where locals and visitors gather together. These competitive advantages cannot be observed in Ostelsheim where there is little civic participation in public decisions.

During the reflection in the plenary on key learnings for LED the following aspects were mentioned:

- Making a difference requires networking between the local stakeholders.
- The development of competitive advantages is a key element of LED. It entails the objective to make the location more attractive for businesses and humans.
- The involvement of the private sector in concrete initiatives as well as the local citizens is a key for trust building and for continuous motivation.
- It is not the municipal planning of the process alone, but the PPP that makes the whole process a success.
- It does less depend on the size of the location to be able to promote LED but on the motivation, the responsibility, participation and role-allocation of each stakeholder involved in the process of the project.

Case study 4 – District of Steinfurt in Northrhine-Westphalia

Promotion of a start-up network and a business angel network through the cooperation of cities in a region



Ms. Brigit Neyer, executive director of the local economic development agency of Steinfurt District, presented the work of the agency done in the German Münsterland region as a rather rural territory. The agenda of their work included building a startup network in Münster and the establishment of a business angel network. Business angels are individuals who invest in start-ups and who offer their coaching expertise to young companies.

One of the key objectives of both initiatives is the promotion of new knowledge intensive businesses that are able to provide fast growth, new innovative business models and high employment potentials. Ms. Neyer emphasized the importance of promoting such approaches also in Lebanon. In many of these companies, digital business solutions play an important role as well as innovative business models that react on new demand requirements in the local and international market.

The example of the activities also demonstrated that the promotion of innovative start-ups is not an issue only for larger metropolitan areas, but also for the rural

regions in Germany and Lebanon. The start-up network includes partners that initiate individual coaching, start-up weeks to match creative people, discussions and workshops, as well as micro-lending for new startups. The two initiatives were also promoted by the creation of a larger network between business associations, the University of Applied Sciences in Muenster and the different municipalities. Additionally, the business angel network provides pitching events, financial support, and the creation of innovation contests. Key learnings from these two initiatives were reflected in the plenary after the presentation:

- Locations like Lebanon should also focus on innovative businesses and the promotion of new start-ups. This can also successfully be done in rural areas.
- It is important to cooperate with other communities at the district level and to integrate dynamic organizations like universities, associations and other innovative players.
- Making use of the existing knowledge and experience. While Business angels usually organize themselves regionally, useful input can also come from (Lebanese) people abroad.
- The creation of a start-up network can be combined with many other activities like the initiation of innovation contests, the joint identification of new local innovation initiatives and the promotion of new business solutions for social and economic problems.



Case study 5 – Deir Al Kamar Christmas Village *The case of Caritas Lebanon*

Deir Al Kamar is well known in all of Lebanon for its touristic destinations. However, Deir Al Kamar was only



alive in the summer but empty of tourists in the winter. Caritas Lebanon came up with the idea of bringing in the German Christmas market tradition to the village. Deir Al Kamar was very suitable for such an idea as it had the beautiful scenery, old buildings, and a village square (Saha). Wooden cabins for the Christmas market were produced and rented out to civil society groups, local vendors, and women to sell their products. Also German products were present on the market. The market also included further activities such as animations, performances, puppet shows, parades and so on. This event activated the local economic cycle and hotels, shop owners, and women who started selling their products, counted among the diverse group of beneficiaries. It became a gathering event as well as an income generating project.

Some of the main reasons for success of this event are the strong cohesion in the local community, the inclusive approach that Caritas followed throughout the process, and the creative implementation that included fireworks, music, and decoration. Caritas agencies from all over Lebanon came to Deir Al Kamar for this event. The village square gained back its function as a meeting and gathering space for all people, while the idea of the Christmas market transformed into a vision of a whole Christmas Village.





Presentation of Lebanese LED cases and Peer-to-Peer Reviews

The presentations focused on Lebanese LED cases that are in the planning or implementation phase. A peer-to-peer process was initiated in which the different community representatives from Lebanon presented their LED projects before all experts jointly reflected about further implementation steps at round tables. In the first round of group discussions, participants from the Lebanese municipalities were asked to present their cases in the peer-to-peer groups and to jointly identify quick-win initiatives based on challenges they face within their municipalities. They were then asked to design a first action plan for these quick win initiatives with the help of the German experts.

The Union of Chouf-Soueijeni Municipalities *Overcoming the deterioration of agricultural sector*

Due to several factors, such as urban sprawl and youth migration, the agricultural sector in the location is witnessing a decline, despite the availability of vast tracts of unused land. The Union of Chouf-Soueijeni Municipalities sought to re-activate the agricultural

sector through the integration of distinctive varieties of vegetables and fruits to make better use of the economic resource potential. These projects will enhance both productivity and human welfare on a sustainable basis. The union also plans to make use of an existing abandoned building to establish a common dairy factory for all farmers in the region. The following joint reflection between the Lebanese and German experts came to a common understanding about possible and necessary quick initiative steps:

- Starting the organization of workshops with the farmers, NGOs, story tellers, quality controllers and all municipalities in the union to hear about suggestions and also to initiate concrete next steps. These workshops are necessary to include the farmers and also encourage network governance in the sense of joint motivation and distribution of roles for the realization of the project.
- Incorporate expertise on farming to identify key opportunities for quick success and concrete necessary measures.

- Organization of a strong network with motivated, eager farmers. Only such can push for product improvements and innovations. Over the long-term, the network might evolve into a cooperative.

After the peer-review of the presented project, the municipality plans to open a dairy factory and support the organization of farmers. The suggested first step as a quick win would be to create a cooperative for all farmers to encourage them to join the factory later on. This cooperative will encourage at first a small number of farmers to join the factory. The municipality will focus on these farmers by training them to be key-players and experts in dairy production including the observation of health standards, etc. . Later on, when other farmers want to join, they can benefit from the already experienced farmers. As next steps, it was suggested to identify a building for the project and to do a market analysis about demand and supply.

Municipality of Chekka

Rehabilitation of the Old Souk

The municipality of Chekka suffers from a lack of proper marketing know-how and from the migration of the youth towards Beirut. Rehabilitating the Old Souk can attract industries and customers to buy from local shops and consequently will create new job opportunities and hinder the deterioration of the local economy. Therefore, the municipality organizes a series of festivals to revive the area and has built a public garden in the middle of the Souk. The latest plan of the municipality is to restore the buildings in the Souk and to incorporate green areas.

Possible next steps that were generated through the peer-to-peer reflection were the following:

- Integrating experts for the best possible design of the buildings and facilitating a design contest for universities.
- Including the traders and producers in the Souk through participatory planning workshops.
- Initiating a marketing campaign about the Souk as a social and business place with specific highlights

Municipality of Bourj Hamoud

Social Housing

The municipality of Bourj Hamoud presented a proposal for social housing in the area, in order to provide shelter for all those in need. The project yet missed a clear vision, as it is still in an early study phase. Thus, it was difficult to make concrete suggestions in a peer-to-peer discussion. It was agreed that the municipality should further detail its plan, think about a sustainable financial concept, and how to include the community in the process.

Municipality of Al Hebbariyye

Improve Archeological Sites to Promote for Tourism, & Setting up an Agricultural Plant for Job Opportunities.

Al Hebbariyye is a village in the south of Lebanon on the borders of both Palestine and Syria. The village is characterized by its natural beauty. Its altitude ranges



between 500 meters and 1.600 meters above sea level giving it a diverse ecosystem. The village has two main economic assets on which the municipality wants to build on. First, its agricultural production sector that produces 60.000 gallons of olive oil a year and a variety of fruits and vegetables depending on the season. The second asset is its five archeological sites, one of which is a roman archeological site. The first municipality's LED project is focusing on the promotion of a packaging plant for the agricultural products to promote exports and to increase the production. The second project is an archeological/Eco-touristic project that aims to brand Al Hebbariyye as a tourist destination. The latter project should also encourage to promote the establishment of a hotel and to improve the service sector in general. It was emphasized in the peer-to peer discussion that

- The tourism project needs the strong involvement of the private sector as well as potential investors.
- Both projects require a solid demand analysis: Is there enough demand and production potential to package and export the goods? Are the farmers also willing to take a share of the costs as well as use the packaging offer?
- Have the farmers as well as the service sector been involved in the design of the project ideas? Are they committed to contribute to the realization of the projects?
- Has a participatory analysis of best LED activities as well as implementation methods been made, in order to identify more concrete next steps?

Municipality of Naher Ibrahim

Ecotourism to Create Job Opportunities and Attract Investors.

Naher Ibrahim municipality is working on three different projects: Eco-tourism in Naher Ibrahim, the extension of the existing university, and a new centre to house all of the village's amenities. In the first project the municipality is trying to build on the natural resource of the village which is the valley of Adonis that has the river Ibrahim passing through it and some archeological sites. The river is nationally known for its attractiveness as a tourist destination. The project includes the creation of camping and activity sites, kiosks, restaurants, hiking trails etc. on the banks of the river. It seeks to attract investors and create new jobs for both Lebanese and Syrian workers. There are several obstacles that prevent this project from moving on. The main obstacle is the lack of sufficient infrastructure (roads, lights....) which is hindering any kind of major development.

In the peer-to-peer discussions, the experts advised the mayor to start with small scale activities that don't require heavy infrastructure on the grounds. For example, camping sites could start to become realized without high costs but community efforts.

The second project is an extension of the university that is owned by the municipality. The university has around 1.000 students enrolled, and more than 1.500 students on the waiting list, 500 of which are Syrian students. The extension aims to add new programs to the university that are directly related to the huge industrial sector that exists in the village. The peer to peer review came to the



result that it will be important to not start a parallel kind of university but to integrate possible new courses into the overall structure of the university to prevent two parallel systems.

The third project aims to provide facilities for the village's amenities (library, clinic, childcare centre) in one building. The current amenities' are located in rented buildings that are dispersed all around the village and cost around 100.000 USD annually for rent. This project has not been intensively discussed in the peer-to-peer review.

After the peer-revision of the presented projects, the municipality plans to implement the eco-tourism project in the valley of Adonis on the river of Ibrahim as a quick win project. It can be realized, if the municipality works on the four target points: natural environment, commerce, archeological sites and marketing. In the discussion the experts specified what type of small achievements each step should include to finally achieve the overall project. In regard to the improvement of the natural environment, it was agreed that they should work on designating specific camps, reducing pollution from rock cutting, creating adventure trails and promoting renewable energies. For the archeological sites, they should restore and clean them up, create foot paths to ease access, in addition to setting up visual post signs. On the commercial level they can attract small investors, establish guest houses, camping sites, outdoor schools, and promote local handcrafts. Finally, the marketing should include an introduction to safety measures for awareness reasons, provide public security, create field trips for youth and establish a canoe club.

Municipality of Al Qrayeh *Vocational Center for Locals.*

Al Qrayeh is situated 5km from the city of Saidon. It has around 5.000 inhabitants and around 1.000 Syrian refugees. The village suffers from severe unemployment due to a lack of job opportunities, excessive numbers of university graduates, early retirement, and competition with Syrian refugees. The high unemployment rate is leading the youth to resort to harmful habits such as alcoholism, gambling, and so on. Some of the main obstacles that prevent solutions is the absence of governmental support, the absence of basic services, and the limited municipal resources. The municipality is proposing two projects to reduce unemployment and help mitigate its effects. The first is to create an industrial zone in the village for crafts and light industries, and the second is to build a vocational training center to teach unemployed people. The main obstacle to realize the projects is the absence of funding. In the peer-to-peer review the experts pointed out the importance of networking with other stakeholders and to reflect about possible alliances that can help to realize these projects. The alliances could be Lebanese people from the villages living abroad, local citizens and enterprise engagement as well as donor projects. Finally, it will be important to see if these two projects present a main priority for the citizens. If this is the case the projects could start with some concrete workshops with key stakeholders to see if small first steps could already be realized. If the project ideas do not have the highest priority in the community, others could be identified that do not require the financial support in the first place but are based on joint efforts.



Municipality of Jezzine

The Rehabilitation of Day'aa Sector in Jezzine

Jezzine was known as a main tourist destination for its natural setting, moderate climate, and rich traditional and architectural heritage. However, because of the civil war Jezzine passed through a phase of chaos where locals started to construct buildings without permits which lead to the overall deterioration of the scenery. As a result, this contributed to the overall decline of Jezzine's tourism sector. In order to revive tourism, the Union of Municipalities of Jezzine is launching an awareness campaign to promote Jezzine as a tourist destination. The campaign mainly consists of rehabilitating all the roof tops of the houses in Jezzine and to give them the traditional Lebanese armid (red roof tiling). This kind of approach is a territorial marketing approach that will brand the entire territory of Jezzine with the traditional Lebanese village characteristics. Once the project is implemented, tourism will increase and consequently the economy as well. This project will be under the authority of the Municipality of Jezzinee. The main actors and partners in this project will be the local residents and various organizations that may provide financial or technical support. The peer-to-peer review emphasized the following suggestions:

- Linking the ongoing project with direct additional concrete projects, e.g. improving the tourism service sector in its client orientation and supply of services.
- Linking the marketing initiative with the organisation of concrete events that attract people.

- Promoting a narrative that is telling about the history of the area and the efforts of the community to recover local potentials by means of innovative ideas and actions.

Municipality of Ayn Tenta-Fsaykin-Ayn Achma

Social and Cultural Complex

Located in the east of Akkar province, North Lebanon, the area suffers poverty and minimal infrastructure endowment. With close proximity to the Syrian border this municipal area hosts a lot of Syrian refugees, which affects the already scarce job opportunities. Taking this situation into consideration, the project aims to create a vocational training center for needed handicraft jobs, such as car mechanics, specific construction jobs and small industries. In addition, the center will host the municipality as well as activities for the local community, like sport events, weddings etc. It shall also provide space for other services, like e.g. funerals. According to the mayor, the first step is to build the center. Comments from the peer review and the involved experts were the following:

- Such projects can be started by the municipality by renting out rooms, or with the support of schools close-by (using their rooms in the afternoon)
- Although the project appears to focus on infrastructural interventions, it lacks a profound concept, which needs to be defined in the first place. Seeking for local support could also present financial advantages.





Excursion

During the excursion, the participants visited different LED projects in Tripoli. The principal visit on the agenda was the Business Incubation Association in Tripoli (BIAT) in the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture. After the arrival, the group was welcomed by Dr. Fawaz Hamidi, the director of BIAT, and by the mayor of Tripoli. Dr. Fawaz presented the profile of BIAT, its accomplishments, scope of work, and objectives. Afterwards, the group visited BIAT's incubator center which provides rooms and services for new startups. Two of these startups presented their work. The first one manages the relationship between car owners and car service providers via an app that connects them together and eases the logistical process of securing car maintenance. The second startup is a digital augmentation application that is designed for enhancing the learning process and integrating technology into it.

After the BIAT office visit, the group went to Tripoli Citadel, the Old Souk, and to "Khan Al Saboun" (Soap Khan). Main learnings from the field visit were:

- Projects like the BIAT are very innovative but require clear local support, efforts and a clearly targeted strategy
- BIAT learned also from other experiences, but it was at the same time necessary to develop its own approach. The context matters, and it is not possible to just copy it to other contexts.
- The Souk and the Citadel in Tripoli have strong potential to become tourist attractions. Both projects require further development and a better connectivity to make them more attractive.

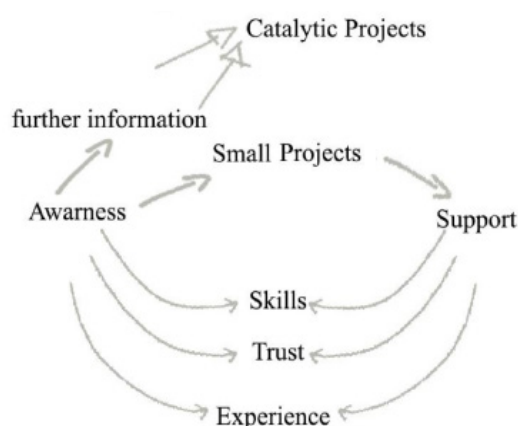




Quick Win Projects in Local Economic Development

When Mr. Frank Waeltring summarized the presentation of and discussions around the presented LED projects, he noted the diversity of the projects and the professional communication between the municipal representatives from Lebanon and the German experts.

As a way to explain the importance of quick win and catalytic LED projects for a dynamic development process, Mr. Frank used the following diagram:



It explains the importance of beginning LED in a small way and defining quick win projects. Many of the previously presented projects from Lebanon focused rather on large scale infrastructure projects that were not able to be implemented due to lack of funding, but also due to lack of local support.

In this respect, Frank Waeltring mentioned again the importance that successful LED projects start with activities which can be realised through local finances and manpower resources. Starting LED from the scratch then also requires to get other stakeholders on board, to integrate them in the project definition phase and to design projects based on real demand and participation of the local stakeholders. While planning and implementing concrete projects, this is an important process to create trust and skills, as well as, finding a coalition of people that want to change something.

After quick win initiatives have been realized more concrete catalytic or larger scale projects should be implemented as long as they find the real backing of the local community.



Closing Statement

Before officially closing the workshop, the moderator opened a question session from both the German experts and the representatives of the Lebanese municipalities. The questions addressed were the following:

- Where to find the right German partners and how to get in contact with them?
- What are the requirements for partnership?
- Can we create an Email contact list with pictures with a face
- What are Municipalities in Germany that want to cooperate with Lebanon?

Responding to those questions, Dr. Poppe mentioned that while the workshop provided participants the chance to enhance individual knowledge and capacities on LED approaches and practices, the biggest challenge to continue the program is to identify German municipalities that want to support the LED projects in Lebanon. Connective Cities would make every effort to mobilize German municipalities that are interested in a partnership and link them up with Lebanese municipalities based on the substance of the project ideas elaborated.

Ms. Silvia Boehmsdorff from Engagement Global/ SKEW explained about the envisaged project partnerships and the financial support that could be made available for project implementation. The tools to support partnerships include matching a partner municipality, information and advice, that include study tours, intercultural training, and networking in addition to financial support. The main requirement for entering into a project partnership is to find a German partner who is eligible to apply for funding and willing to co-manage the project with the respective Lebanese municipality.

Furthermore, Connective Cities plans to run a survey among workshop participants to verify the interests and requirements for a virtual networking facility to continue the professional exchange.

Dr. Manfred Poppe closed the workshop by stating the importance of focusing on projects that can have an impact on the local level. He stressed on the need to create networks and collaborate with local and international experts. On behalf of the workshop organizers, Connective Cities and Cités Unies Liban, he expressed thanks to the moderator, facilitators and participants alike for their active participation, enthusiasm and support!

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