7.0

BAALBEK
BAALBEK

7.0 Geographic Context

Located 86 km east of Beirut, at an altitude of 1200, Baalbek is surrounded by the vast agricultural plains of the North Bekaa region. Around one-third of the population of the Baalbek region, are reportedly non-residents, having migrated to other parts of the country or emigrated abroad. While estimates for the total population of the region vary, FAO and UNDP estimates suggest that the total population of the region falls somewhere between 472,580 and 477,205 in 1997 and 1995 respectively, including non-residents. The large majority of this population is employed in the agricultural sector, scattered in population clusters with strong tribal traditions. However, agro-industrial outlets are scarce and other existing small-scale handicraft industries are dwindling due to the lack of market opportunities and competition from imported goods from neighboring countries and the Far East. Overall, the region also suffers from high levels of illiteracy with about 13.6% of those over 10 years old classified as totally illiterate.

According to UNDP, local leaders in the region have voiced considerable concern over the growing tendency of the youth to migrate first towards the city of Baalbek and then outside the region if not the country, causing dramatic disruption in communal networks and depleting the region’s local talent.

In addition, the micro-region of Baalbek city lacks real sustainable industries.

- Infrastructure for the mechanization, production and export of agricultural products is inadequate.
- Anarchic development along the main highway axis into the area.
- Major economic depression following the eradication of illicit crops.

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1 MOSA estimates place the total population at 250,000 of which 193,466 are resident Quoted in CDR/UNDP, Draft Report of the Strategic Guidelines for the North Bekaa Region Sustainable Development 2001-2005, October 2000.
2 Previously reliant on illicit crops, especially during the civil war whose value in 1989 and 1990 alone according to UNDP estimates was 11,291 and 1,413 million Lebanese pounds, the region has now shifted to a series of other traditional crops more vulnerable to market forces. Since 1994, the government, in collaboration with UNDP and other international agencies are trying to address the dire economic situation through an Integrated Rural Development Program in Baalbek and Hermel.
7.1 Overview of Obstacles to Cultural Preservation and Urban Development

Cultural heritage and tourism development in the city of Baalbek suffers from the same bottlenecks found at the national level, especially legislative and administrative. In addition, other characteristics unique to Baalbek will pose a particular challenge to the project such as:

- The city is the administrative and regional center of its surrounding environment. Consequently, Baalbek attracts the largest portion of regional rural migrants, further augmenting its lower income populations.
- Baalbek’s cultural heritage includes one of the most internationally renowned archaeological sites. It attracts an estimated 80,000 visitors yearly. However, the local community sees little benefit from these activities.
- Dense urban populations surround archaeological and cultural sites.
- The degradation of archaeological remains has been further accelerated by the encroachment of unauthorized construction onto some of those sites.
- Poor connections between the Qalaa archaeological site, the city center and Ras al-Ain.
- Acute congestion in the city center.
- Poor accessibility between different quarters in the city.
- High unemployment and poverty.
- Underdeveloped tourism infrastructure.

7.2 Physical Characteristics, Historical Fabric and Sites of Cultural or Touristic Significance

7.2.1 Baalbek A Brief History

Baalbek, or Heliopolis (the city of the sun) as it was called by the Greeks, was founded in the Chalcolithic period (5th millennium to 4th millennium BC). According to archaeological evidence, the pre-Hellenic site of Baalbek, a poor rural settlement, lies under the courtyard of the Temple of Jupiter. Baalbek began to play an important role as a cult and trade center in the Hellenic period. The earliest phase of the Roman temples dates back to this period.

Following its conquest by the Romans, during the reign of Emperor Augustus (1st century AD) Baalbek, a key node in the natural route between Damascus and Homs, became the religious capital of the empire. During this period, the famous temples of Jupiter, Bacchus and Venus were constructed. Size, unique architecture and decoration made them the most impressive cultic complex of the ancient world. Bustan al-Khan, the quarries, the northern gate, the water canalizations, the monumental staircase leading to the destroyed Temple of Mercury and the necropolis also date back to the Roman period.

Of the Byzantine, the Abbasides (751 AD), the Fatimides (969 AD), the Seljuks (1100), there are no visible remains except for the Ummayad Mosque. Under the Ayyubids (1175-1250) and the Mamluks (1279-1516), Baalbek witnessed a revival of its political and economic role. To defend the city from crusader attacks, the Ayyubids built a citadel on the site of the temples of Jupiter and Bacchus, which continued to be used during the Mamluk period. Of this citadel and the town that existed within, the fortification wall, a gate, the towers and a mosque remain. Outside the fortified citadel, the old Shiite Mosque, the great and the small Ras al-Ain Mosques, Qubbat al-Amjad, Qubbat Douris and Qubbat as-Saadin were constructed.
The defeat of Sultan Kansou El Ghorie (1516), brought the city under Ottoman rule and marked the beginning of its decline as a major regional pole in the area. What is considered today as the “historic” city fabric dates to this era.

7.2.2 Master Plans and Classified Monuments

The major cultural heritage zone in Baalbek includes the historic core of the city and the archaeological sites, namely the Roman temples of Jupiter, Venus and Bachus located within the Arab citadel or Qalaa, as well as the adjacent site known as the Bouleuterion (Photos 1-2). The temples themselves are rapidly deteriorating, especially the cellar of the Temple of Bacchus, because of seeping water and other natural factors. In addition, the scaffolding used for the annual Baalbek festival is causing cracks in some of the masonry. IFAPO has reportedly submitted a restoration proposal to the DGA, but nothing has been signed yet.

Furthermore, this site, situated in the lowest part of the city, is under the threat of further erosion as a result of torrential rain. For example, the Temple of the Muses was severely damaged last year after a bout of heavy rainfall.

Baalbek also boasts another archaeological site: Mugr al-Tahin. Situated to the northeast, the site is located in the al-Charaounah district, which contains tombs, caves and the remains of a Roman settlement. Originally designated as a non-edificandi zone, this zone is now covered with concrete buildings constructed haphazardly during the war. In addition, sewage pours into the area. Moreover, several other sites dot the city such as the various stone quarries, the Temple of Mercury near the Sheikh Abdallah barracks as well as the archaeological site near Ras al-Ain.
The most critical factor affecting the archaeological heritage of Baalbek is that limits of these areas have not yet been marked (Photo 2). Due to shortages in financial and human resources, the DGA, has not been able to carry out an assessment of the extent and significance of the archaeology in the city. Consequently, much of the city’s archaeological remains, are buried underground.

Other classified monuments of interest also include a variety of smaller structures, namely religious and domestic buildings from Mamluk or Ottoman period (see Map 3).
7.2.3 Physical and Urban Characteristics

Baalbek comprises of dense residential fabric extending from the citadel and throughout the valley. The city also enjoys a wealth of natural beauty: Ras al-Ain with its water springs and gardens, a green area to the southeast of the temple, the gardens of the demolished Villa Margarita, the Sheikh Abdallah hill and the quarries. However, in the absence of proper planning, the city and its archaeological sites are experiencing acute problems. For instance, Baalbek’s garbage is being incinerated in the antique stone quarry of the Roman Temple.

According to its inhabitants, the government and the Municipal Council have long neglected the city.

In general, the city’s physical infrastructure is in poor condition.

- Electricity is relayed to subscribers by cables hanging across the streets. Some of the more financially strained inhabitants have illegally diverted power supplies from electricity poles in the streets to their homes.\(^5\)
- Pipe connections between the main portable water distribution facilities and many households are non-existent. Consequently, people depend largely on polluted wells for their water supply. In some areas, fresh water supplies average 15 minutes per week. Some businesses hire cisterns to obtain regular water supplies, paying LL10,000 to LL15,000 per each delivery every two or three days.
- Sewage is diverted to the Ras al-Ain river, which runs through the grounds of the temple complex. Farmers irrigate the fields around the complex with polluted water from the river.
- Baalbek also suffers from acute traffic congestion, especially at peak hours. The public works trenches dug in the streets to upgrade services and the renovation of poorly asphalted roads have intensified the problem.
- There are no public telephone booths or garbage bins in the streets.

\(^5\) One example regularly cited is the Israeli bombing of the power station in Baalbek in June 1999, which caused severe power shortages. Syria has been helping provide electricity, but instead of the normal 220 voltage, the power often weakens to 160V. There are long electricity cuts, and rationing schedules are erratic. Shop-owners and households have incurred heavy expenses to repair electrical appliances (refrigerators, TVs, etc.) that were damaged because of the irregular power supplies. They also have had to acquire expensive stabilizers to solve this problem.
7.2.4 Visitor Experience and Site Management

Of all these monuments, the Qalaa (a term referring to the Roman temples inside the medieval Islamic citadel) is possibly the only site visited by tourists. However, like other archaeological sites around the country, there are no information panels or trained staff to guide visitors around the complex. In addition, the deficiency in background documents on the site means that archaeological remains around the Qalaa such as Bustan al-Khan, the Muses Temple, cannot be properly presented to the public. Even though excavated by the DGA, the meaning and significance of these sites was never documented. Specialists in heritage management are needed to interpret the site and explain its many values.

A new museum, inaugurated in 1998, was created in the underground galleries of the Temple of Jupiter and in the Ayyubid tower near the Temple of Bacchus. The museum is designed to highlight the historical value of the site and its monuments to the public. However, it currently lacks the qualified personnel necessary for its upkeep. At the same time, narrative plates will soon be placed in front of the main monuments inside the Qalaa. Baalbek is the only site where a proper presentation of the monuments is available. In fact, the excavation results were thoroughly published. It is a first step towards a comprehensive site management of the city.

The unavailability of public facilities such as bathrooms, information booths, entertainment centers and affordable lodgings, discourage visitors from spending more than a few hours or venturing beyond the temple area. Currently, lodgings are limited to the Palmyra Hotel and its Annex (35 rooms, medium to deluxe) in addition to two motels for low-income tourists (Hotel Shuman and al-Shams Motel, US$5 a night). Hani Awada, owner of a butchery overlooking al-Mutran Square, has fashioned a few rooms in the upper floor of his property hoping to attract tourists.

There are no visitor-related shopping or activity areas and other than the headwear of Bedouin Arabs and a few trinkets related to the sites, few local handicrafts are available. This lack of investment in the tourist industry in an area such as Baalbek is directly linked to the dilapidated state of the physical infrastructure and the poverty afflicting the population. The souk itself is littered with environmentally polluting businesses such as butcher shops and car-repair garages, etc. (Photo 3)

Moreover, the tourist circuit in Baalbek is limited. Prior to arrival in Baalbek, organized tours drop tourists off for a short break in Chtura for food and beverages. Shops and cafeterias in Baalbek do not benefit from these short visits since many of them are not included in the tour-operators’ itineraries. Upon arrival, visitors often visit the temples and leave.
Local stakeholders in Baalbek include national stakeholders with direct influence in the city as well as local stakeholders who are or could be directly or indirectly involved in any potential development project. Given the regional context of Baalbek and the specific physical and socio-economic conditions prevalent on the ground, the importance of civil society and NGO’s is paramount. At the same time, while most of the institutional stakeholders, are directly implicated in most levels of decision-making, other groups are directly affected by all proposed actions especially current inhabitants.

In the following table a rapid assessment of stakeholders in Baalbek was used to outline their relevance to specific actions (on a scale of 1-5). These were combined with an analysis of the current impact of their actions (indicated as either negative or positive or both where the action itself was positive but implementation process had adverse impacts) in the city center and the areas in and around archaeological sites. Their potential for future involvement in outlining design priorities and functional redistribution was also assessed.

What is quite clear from this assessment is:

1. National institutions, such as the DGA, MOT, and DGU play a critical role in revitalization efforts in the Baalbek. As in other contexts, cooperation between those institutions and regional or local authorities such as the municipality must be facilitated and streamlined.

2. Local-National-International cooperation has been relatively successful within the limited domain of archeological preservation, conservation and exhibition (see case studies). However, this cooperation has yet to affect the rest of the city. International organizations could play a larger role in restoration and regeneration efforts.

3. Current inhabitants, most of whom live on their properties, are critical stakeholders in the development of Baalbek.

4. Local professional associations and organizations are actively interested in using the city’s cultural heritage to promote the economic development of the city through tourism and other kinds of activities. The international reputation of the Baalbek temples can be used to build a successful alliance between current stakeholders.

5. The existing network of local organizations is vital for the future success of the project. Current initiatives should be built on and/or modified to enhance the city’s economic potential and that of its inhabitants.
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7.3.1 National stakeholders with direct influence in Baalbek

**Institutions**

**Ministry of Tourism (MOT)**
The Ministry of Tourism has no presence in the city. A promised rest house has yet to materialize.

**Ministry of Culture (DGA)**
The local DGA office in Baalbek, like others around the country, is understaffed and lacks the resources necessary for restoration work, excavation, site interpretation, cultural site management, studies, etc. Even though the DGA should, according to the law, be directly involved in any master plan proposals for the city, staff shortages prevent it from fully accomplishing its tasks. Currently, it has one architect and one archaeologist, neither of them a full-timer.

**Ministry of Transport and Public Works (DGU)**
Under the auspices of the DGU a master plan for the city of Baalbek was commissioned to Dar al-Handasah and Partners in 1998. Following several revisions, the plan is currently with the DGU awaiting approval.

7.3.2 Local Stakeholders

**The Municipality**
The municipality of Baalbek has been quite active in defining a future role for the city, and in making recommendations for the city master plan commissioned by the DGU.

The municipal council considers the cultural sites of Baalbek valuable assets that should be exploited for tourism purposes. In its opinion, the biggest problem facing the city today is the desired decrease in the coefficient of exploitation of private property. Accordingly, the municipality has devised a plan of action to be carried out in two phases:

**Phase 1**

1. The expropriation of around 20 properties to create a green zone around the citadel.
2. The reduction of exploitation rights in the zone extending between the Palmyra hotel facing the citadel and Jammal Bank.
3. The expropriation of around 100 properties between Hajjar street and the intersection of Ras al-Ain.
4. Expropriation of around 100 properties between rue Haidar and Nasser square.
Phase II

1. Renovation of the Serrail Square until rue Haidar and rue Ras al-Ain. Shops are to be rehabilitated in keeping with the touristic and cultural functions of the city.

The estimated costs of the first phase is around US$60 million and the second phase which will focus primarily on encouraging local industry, around US$6 million. Funding for this project has not yet been found.

In addition to this proposal, the municipality is interested in launching what it is terming a Voyage into the Tunnel of History. Initiated by local architect Hassan Kansou and member of the University Graduates Association, the proposal aims at cooperating with local and international cultural and touristic organizations in both the public and private sectors, as well as interested individuals to document the history, culture and traditions of the city. The site of this voyage is to be a virtual tunnel extending from the citadel to the stone quarries in Kayal, the only green area left surrounding the site. According to this plan, this site is to be transformed into a touristic zone in which the different stages in the city's development and the history of the successive civilizations that inhabited the site may be mapped.

Moreover, because there are no incentives for the festival audience to enter the city and spend money and time there, the municipal council feels that shop-owners and small businesses are being deprived of a significant source of income. The municipal council has, therefore, proposed shifting the entrance of the city two km to the northeast. In this proposal, visitors would enter the city from Ras al-Ain perhaps, stop for food, etc. This, in fact, is an important aspect of the master plan, which is being prepared by the DGU.

In addition, the municipality intends to create an industrial zone outside the city boundaries. This project, divided into 11 zones would comprise:

1. Meat and Poultry Processing
2. Construction Materials
3. Warehouses
4. Agro-Industries
5. Diverse
6. Expositions
7. Market

Parts of this project have begun with aid from UNDP and the bank Credit Agricole.
Community

Catholic Waqf  The Catholic Waqf owns some old houses in al-Mutran Square facing the temples as well as the Archbishopric and properties adjacent to al-Mutran Square. Some of these properties are leased out, others illegally occupied. A proposal to create a hotel in the area was submitted by the waqf. The waqf also stated that it wanted to see more effort spent on restoring its church by the responsible authorities. Locally, the waqf maintains a low profile.

The Sunni Waqf  The Sunni Waqf owns various properties in Baalbek, most of which are religious such as the Umayyad mosque, the Ras al-Ain mosque, the Mosque of al-Sagha and various domes (mausolea: Qubbat al-Amjad, Qubbat as-Saadin, Qubbat Douris). It also owns several pieces of property next to the cemetery and overlooking the temple area. Like its catholic counterpart, this waqf also maintains a low profile.

The Husseini Family  Ali al-Husseini, son of former House Speaker Hussein al-Husseini and owner of a tourist enterprise (Palmyra Hotel and annex), believes in the tourist and cultural future of the city. Possibly the only individual investing in tourism projects in the city today, Ali al-Husseini has suggested several projects for the rehabilitation of old crafts in the city and is ready to cooperate with other stakeholder where necessary. One of the projects proposed by the Husseinis is the revival of traditional modes of producing sweet grape preserve, known as dibs, as well as apricot and cherry jams. These agriculture-based products would eventually be located in a crafts center situated inside the city and designed to attract tourists to the old town.

The family has also suggested the creation of a Research Center for Baalbek, which would expound on the history and archaeology of the city, as well as manage its development.

Political Parties

Hizbollah  Hizbollah is the only political party with a significant and determining presence in the city of Baalbek today. The party’s development agenda is regional in nature and focuses on the promotion of micro-industries in the Baalbek-Hermel zones.

Despite a religiously conservative ideology Hizbollah has not opposed tourist activities in Baalbek even when these
contradicted its religious beliefs.6 On the contrary, Hizbollah MPs, who form a significant block of representatives for the Baalbek region in parliament, are cooperating with local groups, such as the UGA over tourism development plans for the city and region. The party is also directly involved in the rehabilitation of the shrine of Sit Khaulā (the great grand daughter of the prophet). The project is considered as a potential pole of attraction for religious tourism.

NGOs

Community Development & Cultural Activity

There are 10 active NGO’s in Baalbek. All of them organize folkloric and political activities. However, none except for the Association for the Safety of the Environment and Heritage is active on the cultural front, and only partially. The activities of this association focus on forestation and cleanliness, some of which were undertaken in collaboration with UNDP. The association claims to be apolitical and interested in the development of the city and the preservation of its environment.

The University Graduates Association (UGA)

Established as a non-government organization, this association brings together a diverse group of professionals from the city of Baalbek interested in the future development of the city. Fully aware of the city’s potential for touristic development, the association has volunteered its services to the municipality on several occasions. Its proposals for the strategic development of the city revolve around 5 main themes:

- Surround the city with a green zone.
- Reorganize the old souk for touristic purposes.
- Construct a highway outside the city to prevent transitional traffic from passing through the city center.
- Create an industrial zone.
- Construct a proper waste-water and sewage system.
- Create an infrastructure for sports activities, currently non-existent in the region.

It estimates the total cost of the proposal at $50 million.

More recently, this association launched the Baalbek 2004 project. The short-term aim of the project is to mobilize local, national and international groups for the promotion, renovation and regeneration of Baalbek and its historic sites. Four planned workshops are to take place addressing various aspects of this development. The long-term aim of the project is to prepare the city for an eventual 2 million visitors per year.

6 Alcohol consumption was permitted during the Baalbek International Festival (2000).
International Organizations

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) UNDP has been actively involved in development programs in the Baalbek-Hermel region for the past decade. Initially aiming to help local framers with substitute crops after the eradication of illicit crops from the area, the program, in partnership with other United Nations and International donors is now actively involved in a whole range of other development issues including tourism. With the long-term goal of encouraging community participation in the formulation of strategic plans for the area, the program has helped create a series of micro-regional committees. These have been directly involved in the formulation of strategic plans for their respective area. In addition, under the auspices of the strategic framework for action set by UNDP and CDR, United Nations Integrated Rural Development Program (UNIRDP), helped establish 22 local Development and Credit Committees (LDCC) in the North Bekaa region, and which included elected municipal authorities as well as representatives of civil and professional associations who have been active in development initiatives locally. These committees, which have now been transformed into 12 Regional Development Committees, may potentially help insure local community participation in decision-making.

Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) Since 1997, the Cooperative Housing Foundation, an international development organization has been active in Lebanon with funding from USAID, and specifically in the Baalbek-Hermel region. Generally focused on economic opportunity and enterprise development, through public-private enterprises, CHF has a wide range of programs that include micro-enterprise, housing, environment, infrastructure and community development. CHF activities in Lebanon have been geared towards rebuilding the rural infrastructure by helping repair schools, roads, housing, water/sewage and irrigation systems. CHF has been working with the local committee and Baalbek municipality leaders on a long-term plan that will create two coherent retail centers, one for food and one for tourism, as well as enhance the aesthetical aspects of the area. Other potential opportunities for CHF to provide assistance include urban development, micro-credit, solid waste and waste-water management.

UNESCO UNESCO has taken an active interest in Baalbek for the last few years especially since the site is considered a world heritage site. The organization is particularly concerned with the archaeological sites.

The German Government The German government was involved in partial financing and execution of the Qalaa Museum (see significant case studies). It is also preparing the signage for the main archaeological sites.
7.3.3 Significant Case Studies: Relevance to Project Design

The Qalaa Museum

Inaugurated on November 7, 1998, this project was jointly financed by the German government, represented by the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) and the Lebanese Government, represented by the Department of Antiquities (DGA). It is the first example of a successful regional museum created through a joint venture with the DGA as a major stakeholder.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the German Emperor's visit to Baalbek which had been followed by German excavations of the site, a German professor in Classical Architecture wrote to the former Director General of the DGA suggesting that they organize a small exhibition of the original plans and photographs made by the German archaeologists. The DGA proposed that in cooperation with German scholars they use this event to undertake a major site management project that includes the creation of a museum. The German Archaeological Institute in Berlin agreed to collaborate. Following a series of meetings, an agreement was signed between the Lebanese Minister of Culture and the President of the German Archaeological Institute. According to this agreement, the Lebanese party was responsible for all the physical infrastructure work: rehabilitation of the galleries and tower including waterproofing, paving, lighting and doors. The German party was responsible for all the design, the scientific documentation and the production of the panels, showcases and stands. An executive committee was formed by the Lebanese Minister of Culture to oversee the project. The Baalbek museum was officially inaugurated on Nov. 7, 1998 under the patronage of the President of the Lebanese Republic and in the presence of the representative of the German Government, the German Ambassador and a descendant of the German Emperor.

Collaboration between the different parties was deemed as excellent. The Baalbek municipality and local inhabitants cooperated fully wherever they could. Moreover, the National Association for Lebanese Heritage offered to open and manage a boutique similar to the one it runs in the National Museum. The idea was that it would serve as an outlet for local handicrafts from the area. However, no financing for the project could be found.

Problems faced in the implementation of the project were primarily related to financing. The inability of the DGA to cover infrastructure costs meant that money had to be found elsewhere. Eventually, the government provided money, while
the German Archaeological Institute used donations by Lebanese-German businessmen to cover its end of the agreement.

These budget deficits continue to adversely affect the museum. Since the DGA is unable to allocate money for guards and maintenance of the project, the museum is slowly decaying.

The local and foreign community criticized two aspects of the project. First the over-emphasis on the temples, which are already well publicized, was seen as unnecessary. Second, the use of concrete on ancient masonry in the rehabilitation of the space underneath the Temple of Jupiter was viewed as detrimental to the future upkeep of the site.

The mosque, a waqf property and an historic monument several hundred years old, was in an abysmal state of decay and neglect. Garbage had accumulated inside and it was dropped from tourist itineraries. In 1998-1999, the Hariri Foundation undertook its restoration. As with the museum, the project came under diverse criticism. Institutionally, the DGA claimed that the restoration was not faithful to the history of the building, leading some to comment that the mosque looked more Egyptian-Mamluk than Umayyad because of the added wooden sculptures Mushrabiya. A number of historical and archaeological problems tied to the origin and date of the building were not clarified. More importantly, the lack of supervision and proper expertise in excavation carried out within the mosque led to the loss of important information regarding the history of the city and the building itself. At the same time, local perception of the project was embroiled in national political rivalries. In the absence of public awareness campaigns speculations and counter speculations over the “agenda” of various agencies proliferated.

The Umayyad Mosque

The mosque, a waqf property and an historic monument several hundred years old, was in an abysmal state of decay and neglect. Garbage had accumulated inside and it was dropped from tourist itineraries. In 1998-1999, the Hariri Foundation undertook its restoration. As with the museum, the project came under diverse criticism. Institutionally, the DGA claimed that the restoration was not faithful to the history of the building, leading some to comment that the mosque looked more Egyptian-Mamluk than Umayyad because of the added wooden sculptures Mushrabiya. A number of historical and archaeological problems tied to the origin and date of the building were not clarified. More importantly, the lack of supervision and proper expertise in excavation carried out within the mosque led to the loss of important information regarding the history of the city and the building itself. At the same time, local perception of the project was embroiled in national political rivalries. In the absence of public awareness campaigns speculations and counter speculations over the “agenda” of various agencies proliferated.

Hotel Palmyra

Even though an 1876 historic landmark, this hotel has not been classified by the DGA. Originally constructed by Greek Pericles Menicaki, it was sold in 1986 to Taha Miqati and Ali Husseini, who acquired it from Michel Aluf. In the year 2000, an annex was added to the complex, consisting of a traditional 1860 Lebanese house which was both badly preserved and housing a car-repair shop and a butcher on the ground floor. The building was restored and refurbished by Architect Assem Salam and converted into a new, 35-room luxury hotel. In the high season, the hotel’s night rate is set at US$100 per room. However, the hotel remains largely empty for most of the year.
The owners try to promote their hotel culturally by holding piano and violin concerts. They have also encouraged the French Cultural Center in Baalbek to organize activities there.

According to Ali Husseini, there are three categories of visitors who come to Baalbek: the voyageur-like visitors and the transitory tourists. Those in the first category come for a day to contemplate and discover, but end up spending several days, thus the term voyageur - a reference to the old European travelers such as David Roberts. The second category of visitors stops in Baalbek en route to Beirut or other destinations. These tourists spend a few hours in the Qalaa and then leave for their next destination. There are also bird watchers, who are known to visit Baalbek to observe the migratory birds that build their nests in the classical temples.

The future plans of the Husseinis include refurbishing the Palmyra Hotel. An additional surface of 8,000m2 has been purchased in the immediate proximity of the hotel and its annex. The plan is to convert the space into a tourist oasis with a swimming pool and a Turkish bath. The plan consists of extending this area to 12,000m2 to accommodate up to 150 tourists. Currently, the Palmyra and its new annex have 40 rooms, or a maximum capacity of 80 customers.

The Baalbek International Festival

The Baalbek International Festival is one of the most important annual cultural festivals in the country. It was launched in 1955, but suspended for 23 years during the civil war. Currently, the festival draws an annual 15,000-20,000 visitors to Baalbek during the months of July and August. On an international level, the festival has succeeded in reestablishing Lebanon’s reputation for cultural excellence. The festival has also played a big role in promoting these sites.

Theoretically a source of income for the city, in practice the municipal council gets only half of the 5% tax collected by the Treasury department on ticket sales. Moreover, visitors to the festival tend on the whole to visit the city for the evening of the performance and then leave. Viewed as an elite activity, city residents see marginal benefits from the festival. However, festival organizers are attempting to partially remedy this situation within their limited means. The first evening of Arabic performances is traditionally dedicated to city residents with ticket sales at a standard LL10,000. All profits from this evening are given to the municipality. In addition all personnel related to local sales and ushering, as well as companies undertaking stage construction, lighting etc. are recruited locally.
7.4 Socio-Economic Profile

7.4.1 Urban Social Geography: Population Profile and Settlement History

Historically, the site of Baalbek developed due to a number of physical characteristics, which gave it a natural geographic advantage. First, the presence of the Ras al-Ain spring at the highest point of the Bekaa Valley and whose water flows northwards, water into the Assi (Orontes) River and southwards into the Litani (Leontes) River, in an otherwise arid region gave it a geographic centrality for travelers in the area. Second, this centrality was bolstered by the physical proximity to the east of Baalbek, the Sarghaya pass linking the Bekaa Valley to the Barada Basin, which reaches Damascus through Bloudan and Zabadani. This physical peculiarity transformed Baalbek in ancient times into a natural and unique stopover on the road from Damascus to Homs in the north, and from there either to Aleppo or to Tripoli. This antique route remained in use until modern times so much so that even the now disused late 19th century Beirut-Damascus railway follows the Sarghaya pass (see Map 4).

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Political transformations in the late 18th and 19th centuries, the spread of turbulent local tribes as well as the construction of modern infrastructure in the second half of the 19th century, such as the Beirut-Damascus highway and railway, and the eastern Damascus-Homs road, eroded this natural advantage. Baalbek was progressively reduced to a small village whose confessional and family structure, despite massive rural migration into the city remains distinct from its surroundings to this day.

The transformation of Beirut into the port of Damascus vitalized the Chtura-Anjar axis, further marginalizing Baalbek’s historic role. On the one hand, limited water resources in the area in general, with the exception of the small oasis that surrounds the city, irrigated by Ras al-Ain’s water meant that the agricultural potential of the Baalbek district was quite limited in comparison to the water-rich central Bekaa valley. On the other hand, the physical proximity of Zahle to this axis and its location as a gateway between the valley and the central part of Mount Lebanon, transformed it into the economic and administrative capital of the Bekaa province.

Today, Baalbek city is located in a micro-region that includes the three adjacent villages of Younine, Douris, and Iaat. As the administrative and economic capital of the region, this micro-region holds the largest human concentration in the area, with 93,000 inhabitants and a population density of 234 persons/hectare. Of those, 55,000 live in Baalbek city,8 and 38,000 in the surrounding villages whose population varies between 2,000-10,000 inhabitants. Of the total resident population in Baalbek, the city is also home to around 25,000-30,000 Palestinian refugees, the majority of whom live in the Wavel camp, located south west of the city center.

The size of this population is due in part to the establishment of drug cultivation in the 1970’s. Sizeable incomes and large profit margins severely limited the scope of migration and immigration, which other parts of the country were witnessing. As a result, the economic base of the area after the eradication of drug crops could not support the existing population surplus. Baalbek became a target of a surge in rural migration from neighboring areas. The city was forced to expand eastwards since the west was blocked by the presence of ruins and of land expropriated by the DGA. The old town itself continues to be restricted to the inner semi-circle of the agglomeration and since the road coming from Beirut has to reach the ruins directly, it also irrigates the old town, preserving an acceptable level of commercial activity in the area.

Table 1: Population Growth in Baalbek

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRFED</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>16,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>17,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bechtel/Dar al-Handasah</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>50,300***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>34,173**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dar al-Handasah master-plan</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>60,368***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP/CDR</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>55,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes Dourine and Iaat
** The total number of primary residential units multiplied by the average family size of 4.6 in Hermel.
*** The total number of primary residential units multiplied by the average family size of 5.67 in Baalbek.

8 This figure is quoted in the CDR/UNDP profile of the micro-region of Baalbek, Younine, Douris and Iaat. The master plan carried out by Dar al-Handasah and Information International assumed the total population of Baalbek to be 60,000 inhabitants, based on 10,647 residential units and an average family size of 5.67 as a result of a comprehensive enumeration and survey of Baalbek city.
The city of Baalbek itself is composed of a dense residential fabric that extends out to the east and north along the two major routes from the north (Hermel-Homs axis) and the southwest (Zahle). This fabric is interspersed with commercial and communal facilities such as schools, clinics, mosques and churches. In addition, low-density development villas have developed on the outskirts of the city and on privately held land (see Maps 2, 3 & 5).

Characterized by mixed-use functions, the city center of Baalbek contains some 1503 buildings, 69% of which include residential structures. It is also the only area in the city with multi-story buildings. The rest are subdivided amongst commercial and other facilities, including health, government institutions, industrial facilities, worship centers etc. At the same time, most local services such as barbers, tailors, carpenters etc. as well as small commercial stores, such as garment shops and supermarkets are also located in this area. Moreover, almost 2/3 of these buildings are 1-to 2-story high.
In addition, the small marketplace located in the historic core of the city, as well as the prevalence of private institutions and offices and government facilities have transformed this section of the town into the services sector of the city (see photographs 4-5).

In addition, several health institutions are located here as are most educational facilities and industrial factories. Adjacent to the center and along the northern edge of the Qalaa lies a high-density residential area of about 1565 individuals in 313 dwellings with a large number of small industrial shops, which include blacksmiths, carpet weavers, upholsters, among others.

The majority of Baalbek residents are of Lebanese origin, primarily from the caza of Baalbek itself. The resident population of Baalbek is composed of 50.5% males and 49.5% female, which are almost identical to the wider Baalbek/Hermel region (see CBS, 1997). The overall age-sex pyramid indicates a more even pattern of growth in the female side of the pyramid rather than that of males in the same age group. At the same time, this pyramid also points to an overall decline in the “youth” population. Those in the 0-4 years old age group who form 8% of the total population, are less than the 11.6% in the 5-9 age group and significantly below the
13.7% of the total population formed by the 15-19 age cohort. Moreover, there is also a significant decrease in the younger adult age groups (22-44) that constitute the bulk of the labor force.

The particular characteristics that this population exhibits can be attributed to several possible reasons. First, the decline in birth rate may be the result of a larger trend to move towards smaller families. Second, the in-migration of school-age children (5-19) into Baalbek for better schooling facilities, tipped the age distribution. This possibility is further supported by the relatively high portion of extended families in the city (14.7%). Third, the in-migration of young adults (15-19) into Baalbek for employment, could have also tipped the overall percentages of the respective age groups. Fourth, the out-migration of segments in the labor force (25-44) into Beirut and abroad seeking employment would also have a negative effect on the sex-age distribution in the city. Finally, the truncated appearance of the 25-44 year age groups could be attributed to losses during the war.

From this perspective the population profile of those living in the immediate vicinity of the city center and which is characterized by the overwhelming predominance of youth appears almost paradoxical. Almost 42% are 19 years of age or less, 10% are at college age level between 20-24 years old while 27% of the total population in the city center is of an active age. This can in part be explained by the predominance of residential units in this zone as well as its particular role as the main service provider in the city with a large percentage of educational and other facilities.

The educational level of the overall population also varies significantly across age groups and amongst the sexes.

The educational level of the overall population also varies significantly across age groups and amongst the sexes. As is evident from figure 4, the percentage of individuals with elementary level education only is significantly high especially among females. At the same time, the number of
illiterates increases with age, again in significantly higher numbers among the female sector of the population. However, these factors have not accounted for a significant number of graduates of vocational training programs, either because of the paucity of such programs or due to a lack of interest and work opportunities in what is currently on offer. At the same time, the percentage of university graduates in the 20-24, and 25-44 age groups is the same across genders.

These population trends do not vary in any significant way within the city center with one exception. The percentage of male university graduates seems to be significantly higher than the rest of the city; a factor which may be attributed to the large number of professionals and civil servants in the area. At the same time, the number of individuals enrolled in vocational training programs is practically negligible.

The traditional societal structure of the city’s residents is reflected in the dramatic difference in participation in the active labor force among the sexes (see Figure 6). Of the total population in the city center only 5% of the total female population is employed. At the same time, only 35% of the total male population is employed. Moreover, of the young adult population (15-19) 12% of the males are employed as are 2.8% of females, whilst 41.8% of the 20-24 year old males are working as opposed to 6.8% of the females. These figures and the difference between the sexes increases dramatically in the active labor group (25-44) whereby 79.9% of males and 11.4% of females are employed. In the same vein 81.8% of males in the 45-54 years age group and 66.7% of those in the 55-65 years age group also work. As expected, female employment within the same age groups is dramatically less with 9.8% and 2.9% respectively.

These characteristics can be attributed to a series of possible influences. First the religiously conservative social structure of the city is not conducive to female employment in general. Second, when combined with the low-income levels of the large portion of the population,
females tend to be the ones removed from school leading to an increase in illiteracy. Consequently, females who for the large part tend to be either housewives or are informally employed at home producing local artisanal goods, are discounted from the formal labor market. Second, the decrease in male employment in the overall total for the city is reflective of the larger economic crisis that the country is experiencing. The eradication of illicit drugs and the failure of replacement crops programs further aggravated the impact of this crisis on the region as a whole. Unemployment is high, promoting in-migration into Baalbek and migration out of it. Third, the significant increase in males employed in the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups reflects a growing pattern of school dropouts, a large portion of them enrolled in vocational training programs. Consequently, more than half of those who graduate from secondary schools in Baalbek are female.

These population characteristics are again skewed in the city center of Baalbek where the large concentration of government, health and other facilities insure higher formal employment rates, especially for females.

7.4.2 Property Relations and Tenure Structure

With an average household size of 5.5, slightly higher than the national average of 4.6 household characteristics, which vary across the different zones in the city are not reflected in the average dwelling size of the population.

Even though Baalbek is characterized by the significantly high portion of home-owners (73.7%), an increasing number of rented apartments are becoming available especially in the center of the city. This phenomenon can be attributed to several factors. On the one hand, the continued rural structure of most property ownership in the area, despite rapid urbanization accounts in part for the large share of homeowners. On the other hand, the increase in rentals in the city center specifically points to a rising demand by migrants into the city and perhaps by new families for dwellings within the major employment sector. At the same time, the relatively high share of shareholders in the city center (20%), which is double that of
Baalbek as a whole (11%) is probably due to inheritance laws and fragmented ownership.

The relative stability of the resident population in Baalbek in general and in the city center in particular is reflected in the residency patterns of local inhabitants. More than half or 55% of those residing in the center have lived there for the last 20 years or more as opposed to 41% of the overall population of Baalbek. When combined with the total number of residents who have lived in the city and/or its center for the last 11 to 20 years, the evident growth that the city underwent beginning in the 1970’s and during the civil war period becomes more evident. At the same time, the continued in-migration into the city is evident in the increase in residents.

7.4.3 Investment Dynamics and Economic Development

Located along a principle axis linking Beirut to Damascus, the micro region of Baalbek contains a high portion of economic activity found in the north Bekaa. Unofficial surveys of economic activity in the Baalbek micro region suggest that agriculture, the primary economic sector of the region, draws only 21% of the active population, a relatively low percentage when compared to other micro regions in the Bekaa. Industrial production, which includes local industries, construction, artisanal products and commerce absorbs 25% of the active population, whilst 54% are employed in services (Figure 9). The latter were subdivided amongst the public (administration, health, education, and army) and private sectors (private medical services, banks, and tourism or leisure activities).

In Baalbek city itself, the predominance of tertiary and commercial activities is even clearer. Furthermore, the high percentage of military personnel (14%) is also noteworthy9.

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The dominance of professional and commercial services within the city center is more evident in comparison to the whole.

However, despite the relative stability of much of the economic activity that predominates in the region, high unemployment continues to prevail with around 30% of the active population unemployed, superseding the national figure of 24%.10

Furthermore much of this activity is characterized by small-scale manual labor based industrial enterprises. Even the two largest agro-industrial enterprises in the region; a diary and meat enterprise and a plastic factory hire less than 50 employees. In city of Baalbek itself, the predominance of small-scale enterprises is even more evident with 2316 enterprises employing

less than 5 individuals as compared to 131 enterprises employing more than 5 workers (Photos 6).

The majority of those are commercial enterprises, mainly located in the old city. They consist primarily of barbers (40), tailors (23) and carpenters (17). In addition around 136 private offices and institutions are located in this zone, as well as 17 government institutions, 90 health institutions (of which 69 are clinics, 5 dispensaries, and 1 hospital).

The absence of industrial investment in the region is being tentatively addressed by the municipality, which has designated an industrial zone just outside the city. Moreover, sporadic individual investment is taking place primarily by the Husseini family, the owners of the Palmyra hotel who are also interested in re-developing local agro-industrial skills especially in the production of jams. Such investments can pave the way for other future development of tourism related industries.
7.5 Project Overview- Potential for a Participatory Action Plan for the city

7.5.1 Structural and Physical Constraints to Current Rehabilitation and Coordination Efforts

Even though the city of Baalbek has one of the most internationally renowned archaeological sites in the world, and with the highest annual turnover of visitors in the country, local inhabitants have seen little economic benefit from this activity (see photos 1&2). In part, the outcome of the continued absence of nationwide strategic planning, local efforts to initiate a city development strategy are limited. On the one hand, and as the projects discussed illustrate, the considerable international, national and local interest in the tourism potential of its cultural heritage sites, has not translated into strategy for the overall development of the city in its regional context. In fact, the temple area continues to be viewed as a singular monument rather than a node in a wider regional network of associated sites. On the other hand, on a citywide level, the infrastructure necessary for the development of a tourism industry remains considerably lacking. At the same time, the depressed economic state of the city and region have further hampered the city’s ability to act as a regional pole of attraction for other economic activities.

In sum, various factors continue to affect the development of the city:

1. **Promotion**: Most promotional activity so far has focused on the temples or citadel area. As a result, there is considerable public ignorance about other sites around the city.

2. **Facilities**: The lack of tourist facilities and Baalbek’s wartime reputation as a bastion of the conservative Hizbollah has been detrimental to the development of extensive tourist activity. Currently, most visitors stay only a few hours, to visit the temple en route to another destination.

3. **Coordination**: Little effort is exerted to coordinate between the different institutions, such as the DGA, the municipality and the MOT over specific activities, whether for restoration or promotional purposes. Moreover, and as outlined in the national stakeholder analysis, the municipality, even though active in Baalbek, has very limited leeway to implement its projects. The most it can do at this point is coordinate with the DGU. However, the DGU is only required to consider the views of the municipality.

4. **Initiatives**: Stakeholder initiatives, such as those of the Husseinis and others remain sporadic and uncoordinated. However, there are increasingly significant efforts being undertaken by local associations and NGO’s.

5. **Socio-economic**: Socially, the current population profile indicates high levels of unemployment and illiteracy, often higher than the national average. Inhabitants in this area also feel and are to a certain extent marginalized. They lack basic access to infrastructure and basic public services such as health, education etc. As such, any regeneration efforts in the city have to integrate vocational training programs, especially ones related to the tourist industry. In addition, public awareness campaigns that inform and involve citizens over cultural heritage issues will be important for the eventual success of the project.

6. **Regional considerations**: These include the absence of real industries, high levels of poverty and an inadequate infrastructure connecting the city to its wider context. In addition, a coherent cadastral plan for current land use and occupancy patterns in the region needs to be developed.
The problems and obstacles facing the city as outlined by the stakeholders are:

1. Haphazard restoration of individual structures.
2. Decay of key historic buildings and some archaeological sites.
3. Encroachment of residential, and sometimes irregular, construction onto archaeological sites.
5. Rehabilitation of physical infrastructure: Water and sewage networks need to be rehabilitated and directed away from the city’s archaeological sites. Electricity networks need proper upgrading and restoration.
6. Environmental pollution: Sewage network is directly connected to Ras al-Ain river.
7. Traffic congestion between Ras al-Ain and the citadel. Suggestions were made by local stakeholders to transform this street, or a section of it, into a pedestrian route.
8. Lack in communal facilities as well as other services such as health and education.
9. The need for clear specifications to regulate certain activities such as butcheries.

7.5.2 Project Approach

While local stakeholders had a concrete list of priority projects and needs for the improvement, restoration and upkeep of Baalbek’s various monuments, neither a stakeholder alliance framework nor a strategy for implementing these projects within a cohesive whole were proposed.

7.5.2.1 Accessibility: Regional Context and the Diversification of Activities

As in other cities discussed in this report, accessibility and form of intervention are critical to the success of the project. At the macro scale, a cultural heritage and tourism development project in Baalbek must begin by considering the regional context of the city and its potential for growth. As the UNDP report on strategic guidelines for the sustainable development of the North Bekaa indicates, there is considerable scope for Baalbek city to be integrated into a wider network of tourist itineraries that include eco tourists. The North Bekaa, a considerably unexploited region with a significant number of unknown and varied archaeological and natural sites, holds considerable potential in this respect. More critically, this particular form of tourism requires a minimum of investment whilst supporting a wide-range of medium and small enterprises, both existing and new. In addition, the interest of eco tourists in traditional foods can positively benefit local agricultural production. Associating this form of tourism with high-quality international festivals such as the annual Baalbek International Festival, can serve as an attraction node for these tourists.

At the micro-regional scale, peripheral historic sites in the villages of Younine, Nahle, Douris, and al-Allak, should be made part of the promotion campaigns for the region. In these cities and in Baalbek itself, the participation of the local community especially those living adjacent to the site will be critical to the eventual success of the project (see Map 6).

11 See CDR/UNDP, (October 2000), unpublished report, Draft Report of the Strategic Guidelines for the North Bekaa Region Sustainable Development 2001-2005. Suggestions include the establishment of a public-private entity that can provide financial support to individual municipalities for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of natural, archaeological and natural sites.
Map 6 Cultural Heritage and Tourism Plan (Source: UNDP unpublished report)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Action Required</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility of the Site</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Accessibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility linking up with the masterplan for Baalbek with region</td>
<td>Municipality, MOT, DGU, CDR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to the city and the temple area</td>
<td>Municipality, Local inhabitants, DGU</td>
<td>Planning, re-directing main access to the city</td>
<td>From current location to Ras al-Ain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Functional Accessibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Functions</td>
<td>Municipality, Local Government Institutions</td>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Located in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Municipality, universities, Foreign Cultural Missions, Husseini family</td>
<td>To be created or supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Municipality, LU, CNAM</td>
<td>Technological &amp; market research, part of regional Technopark</td>
<td>Superior Technical Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Iteniaries</td>
<td>MOT, DGA, Municipality</td>
<td>Planning, Infrastructure, Documentation, Facilities (Information booths, public bathrooms)</td>
<td>Regional connections, ecotourism, local circuits within the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Accessibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading of Existing Economic Activity</td>
<td>Municipality, Local Government Institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Al Mutran square, Street to Ras al-Ain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocation of Activities</td>
<td>Municipality, Local Manufacturers</td>
<td>Planning, financial incentives</td>
<td>Al Mutran square, Street to Ras al Ain area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Training: Handicrafts, Specialized construction techniques agro-industrial products</td>
<td>Municipality, NGOs, Community, Private sector, Superior Vocational School of Baalbek</td>
<td>Identification of needs</td>
<td>Crafts Center, Local NGO offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Training</td>
<td>Municipality, NGOs, MOL, private sector</td>
<td>Expanding tourist industry, Technopark</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, building up on available interest by a variety of local stakeholders to revive certain agriculture-based products such as jams could be a useful tool for transforming the city into a regional outlet. Other sectors such as food processing can also be included. In a region such as the one in north Bekaa, such proposals could also play a role in addressing existing gender discrepancies and help empower the production of local women. From this perspective, the plethora of local handicrafts such as sewing, wood making etc. could also be developed to cater for both a local and international market. Here, the necessary legislative changes required at the national level (see 3.4) will be critical for the success of such enterprises.

However, the eventual success of these projects will be contingent on the ability of the municipality to integrate these activities into the urban environment. In this respect, clear technical guidelines for such industries have to be provided.

7.5.2.2 Rehabilitation of the Urban Environment and Community Participation

Physical intervention into the exiting environment in Baalbek would primarily focus on improving and upgrading the physical infrastructure, public areas and access to the city as well as the creation of communal facilities. Access to the city should consider both approach to the Archaeological site, the most monumental aspect of the city’s cultural heritage, as well as opportunities to draw visitors into the city and involve them in other activities. These would also be critical for the even distribution of benefits to the local community. In this respect, the municipality’s proposal for redirecting incoming traffic to the Ras al-Ain entrance is worth considering.

Such proposals will require two modes of action: 1) the expropriation of zones adjacent to the archaeological sites with the aim of demolishing existing structures 2) intervention in the public domain through the rehabilitation of the infrastructure, public areas and communal facilities. While the first will require extensive relocation of citizens, the second will necessitate the relocation of specific activities to other areas in the city. It will also cause a temporary disruption in the daily lives of the inhabitants.

As such small-scale projects should be established with the explicit aim of integrating local communities. For example, with the help of the municipality, the rehabilitation of street front facades can be implemented through street based committees and associations. The recently established Regional Development Committees can be useful in the organization of these efforts.

Of critical importance to this project is the potential for integrating the local community in a fully participatory process. Interviews with residents indicate a large degree of citizen alienation from their local environment. On the one hand, important finds being discovered in Baalbek are promptly whisked away to the National Museum and kept in storage. The people of Baalbek are not given the chance to appreciate their heritage. In turn this has led to the sporadic destruction of found objects especially on private properties. On the other hand, the inhabitants see little economic activity from the annual Baalbek festival, an event many consider as an elite cultural activity.
More critical perhaps is the official attitude towards the city as perceived by its inhabitants and exposed by government actions during the annual summer festival. During the 1999 festival, for example, tanks were stationed along the main square, preventing visitors from going into the city and reinforcing stereotypes of the city as an unsafe ghetto. Following complaints from inhabitants, the municipal council succeeded in convincing the internal national security forces to keep a low profile. However, visitor entrance into the city was kept the same, and visitors were indirectly discouraged from entering the city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Action Required</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation of Urban Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading and Renovation of existing zones</td>
<td>Municipality, DGA, Owners</td>
<td>Renovation</td>
<td>Mutran, al Qalaa and Serrail Squares and their surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation/Conservation Areas- Creation of Pedestrian routes</td>
<td>Municipality, DGA, DGU, International community</td>
<td>Planning, Rehabilitation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of individual structures</td>
<td>Municipality, DGA, Owners, MOT</td>
<td>Renovation, new uses</td>
<td>see DGA listings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to the existing circulation network</td>
<td>MPW, Municipality, DGU</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading of physical infrastructure</td>
<td>MPW, Municipality, DGU</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>sewage, paving, electricity, water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected environmental improvements:</td>
<td>Municipality, Local community</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping</td>
<td>Municipality, Local NGO's, Local Community</td>
<td>Identification of needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Facilities</td>
<td>MOT, DGA, Municipality</td>
<td>Documentation, Facilities (Information booths, public bathrooms)</td>
<td>Temple and other sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of community facilities</td>
<td>Municipality, Local Vendors, NGO's, Community Associations</td>
<td>Planning, Infrastructure</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, local residents, professionals and the municipality itself recognize the economic potential of cultural heritage and tourism activity. This is particularly evident in the efforts currently exerted by the UGA in collaboration with around 20 local NGO’s and other civil organizations, as well as the municipality to rally national and international interest in the Baalbek 2004 project. More critically this is evident in local initiatives such as the one undertaken by to clean up, protect and promote the stone quarry of Hajar al-Hibla. Originally used as a garbage dump, the site is now a tourist destination with two “Arabic” style Iwans or coffee shops as well as a small store selling postcards, and other tourist related trinkets (Photos 7 -10).

If adopted this approach will not only integrate Baalbek into its wider local, but will also address the larger needs of the immediate sub region. In the short term urban and environmental improvements in the city center and around the archaeological sites will not only enhance the quality of urban life but will promote the development of tourist related industries as well as the economic growth of the city. In the long run, this approach may aid in re-connecting the citizens of Baalbek to their immediate locale through their systematic participation and community capacity building. As one local phrased it “we need to work on communal peace, that can only come through economic stability, in itself is a national project.”