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TIBNEEN: A SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM STRATEGY
FOR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

by
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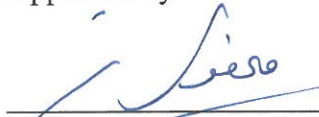
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To my reason, my every reason, mom, I will spend a lifetime thanking you and it will never be close to enough. This is for your village, your precious memory, and my yearning to relate to you every moment along the way. I love you.

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Tibneen: A Sustainable Rural Tourism Strategy for Local Economic Development.

Sustainable rural tourism has proved to be a successful tool in encouraging local economic development while preserving the heritage of place and the respecting the local community. This thesis adapts the main principles of sustainable rural tourism to the context of the Tibneen, a village in South Lebanon. by building on the key physical assets and social capital.

Key local assets for sustainable rural development in Tibneen are identified and analyzed based on their scales, primary value, assets, challenges, and key stakeholders, these are: The Friday Souk, Citadel and historic core, recreation and entrepreneurship, and Al Mashrou' al Akhdar. Furthermore, key finding is that the thick social networks are a key asset to the context.

In Tibneen, the sustainable rural tourism vision builds on the key physical assets and social capital to articulate a planning document, which seeks to attract tourists such as weekenders, expatriates, and regional visitors to spend more time in the village. The planning document proposes an integrated social heritage network through urban design interventions, social capital building, policies and projects to support the vision, and a response institutional setup.

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To My Mother

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction: Sustainable Rural Tourism in Tibneen (South Lebanon)

Sustainable rural tourism development has proved to be a successful approach in driving local economic development in villages while respecting natural and built heritage as well as the local communities that dwell in this environment. This approach to development rests on key pillars such as local participation, consultation, long-term strategic thinking, involvement of the public/private sectors, respect for the natural and built environment and ensuring a economic development with equal distribution.

Sustainable rural tourism was tried mostly in the context of the developed world since the 1980's such as in Canada, USA, and continental Europe (Lane 2009, 15). My interest in this thesis is to extend the framework of sustainable rural tourism development to the context of Lebanon, specifically to the village of Tibneen, South Lebanon. The context of Tibneen, a village insouth Lebanon, is rich with cultural, natural, and built heritage. Key assets in the village include theCrusader Citadel that dates back to the year 1105AD, a large green reserve, recreational sector, weekly market andthick social networks and the attachment of dwellers to the village.

Despite the village's key heritage assets, the villages' development has been very slow. This is due to a set of severe challenges, which Tibneen faces. To begin with, the majority of the village dwellers have left the village, migrating to urban areas or to reside abroad. This has weakened the rural economy, which relied mostly on the agricultural sector. Furthermore, the decline of the agricultural economy has caused many Tibneeners who had invested in farming and agriculture produce to move to

Beirut or to the USA and seek employment in services or in the industrial sector (Harajli and Zeineddine 2012). Third the rising insecurity associated with the Arab-Israeli conflict as of 1948 has been a key factor causing instability on a regional level.

The political instability in the region and specifically in South Lebanon is also one of the key challenges in the context of Tibneen. The village is located only 20km away from the Lebanon/Israel border and has been historically affected by continuous wars with Israel, which result in ruthless destruction and complete “erasure” of lives, homes, and land. The last war on Lebanon in 2006 resulted in the total destruction of vast areas in the village, including erasing most of the built heritage in Tibneen namely in the villages historic core. This continuous threat of a war with Israel presents a challenge for proposing tourism, which is a term associated with “leisure, solitude, recreation” and requires a safe environment as a premise. The facts that villages in the south are always threatened by the political instability in the country, and are always at a risk of destruction by an eruption of a sudden war, would make it seem illogical to propose an international touristic vision. The village’s political dynamics present another challenge, as multiple stakeholders claim ownership and control over the village namely Hezbollah, Amal, and families who have historically resided there. These political and social pressures influence decision-making processes causing in many cases a haphazard kind of planning that encourages private developments and scattered visions.

Today, the village’s economy rests primarily on two sectors. First, Tibneen plays the role of an institutional base in the region as it hosts the Grand Sarai, a governmental hospital, police station, an Islamic court of law, and a bank. The second is its role as a commercial hub with an array of shops including bakeries, supermarkets, pharmacies, local restaurants/cafes, stationary stores, hairdressers, antique shops and

others. These economic activities are strongly affected by seasonal changes, whereby summer visitors/expats and week-enders are considered a main source of income to permanent residents.

Thus, while the cultural, natural and built heritage in Tibneen presents a key opportunity to explore and capitalize on the village's assets, the village still faces key political, security, and social threats. It is in this context that I believe that a sustainable rural tourism strategy, which involves and respects the community, preserves the living, built, and natural heritage, and encourages economic development is attractive. Such an approach would require a particular scenario where given security risks; it is likely that the vast majority of tourists will be expatriates visiting the village during their summer holidays and other members of the village community currently living in Beirut who flock to the village during week-ends as well as regional visitors. This is not to exclude other visitors but to emphasize the viability of this approach because, despite all threats, an estimated 5000 people still visit the village yearly.

1.2. Research Question

How can the principles of sustainable rural tourism, as it has been articulated in the recent planning literature (Bramwell and Lane 1993; Lane 2009; Ruhanen 2004; Page and Thorn 1997; Aronsson 1994; Simpson 2001) be developed, adapted, and applied as a development planning strategy for the village of Tibneen (South Lebanon), in a context where the "tourists" are primarily composed of people originally from the village, meaning week-end and expatriates vacationing in the summer, as well as visitors from neighboring villages?

How can testing those principles inform our understanding of sustainable rural tourism as a development planning strategy?

1.3. Thesis Objective

The thesis seeks to adapt the main planning guidelines on which the literature on sustainable tourism has converged to the context of a particular case study the village of Tibneen in South Lebanon. The thesis seeks to adapt this approach to the specificities of this case study, which is informed by a different framework with a different type of “local” tourists who have a different relationship to the host village and would thus engage in the planning proposal and process. The vision would be developed by addressing the local community residing in Tibneen, weekenders residing in Beirut, expatriates residing abroad, and visitors from Tibneen’s vicinities and beyond to find a balance between what those groups value, their capabilities and potential to contribute to the village and the village’s assets and communal needs.

It is through studying these networks of locals and “tourists” that the thesis paper seeks to test the pillars of sustainable tourism development within a context which has a lot of potential to grow yet faces key challenges and threats on several fronts such as security, political instability, and a weak economic sector. Such a vision would prioritize the preservation of the natural, built, and living heritage in the context of Tibneen and respect norms, practices, habits and memories.

1.4. Thesis Argument

The thesis argues that it is possible to develop a sustainable rural tourism strategy, which is adapted to the context of Tibneen. This would be by building on the physical assets in the village and the strong social capital to propose a multilayered intervention, which addresses the physical urban design, social capital, policies and institutional levels.

1.5. Thesis Significance

The research is significant because it responds to some of the main challenges which are currently faced by this and many other towns in Lebanon: the preservation of a natural and architectural heritage which is essentially valuable to its community and the dire necessity for a strategy that can foster economic development. It addresses the needs of expats, weekenders and regional tourists and their different relations to the village to strengthen their ties with the region and allow them to contribute to its making.

1.6. Literature Review

The literature review will flesh-out the main framework in which the planning literature has investigated sustainable rural tourism, a development framework now applied in several contexts. Based on the literature review, principles of sustainable rural tourism are deduced to be adapted to the context of Tibneen and act as the guiding pillars and tools for local economic development.

The field of sustainable tourism is relatively new in urban research and development, thus the literature review will discuss the evolution of the concept and how/why it has gained popularity. It will then provide case studies of sustainable rural tourism from the western context. The case studies cover examples of strategies undertaken to promote sustainable tourism in rural contexts and their implications on the field of planning in order to derive the major guidelines followed to implement such a vision, in an attempt to adapt these guidelines to the context of Tibneen.

1.6.1. Origins of the Concept of Sustainable Rural Tourism

Until the 1960s, “economic growth” figured as the ultimate development goal

in most contexts. This was however challenged, as environmentalists rose to question and criticize the limits of the concept, particularly the irreversible damages it has caused to the natural environment. One such damage identified quickly by the critics of growth was incurred by “built heritage and traditional societies as well as the natural world” (Bramwell and Lane 1993, 1). Fingers were pointed to tourism development as a particularly damaging industry, particularly in contexts where no planning framework was adopted to control and contain its consequences (Ruhanen 2004, 239).

As of the early 1980s, the term sustainable development started to gain popularity. Stemming from a general concern for the environmental consequences of growth, sustainable development was perhaps first defined in the well-known Brundtland report in 1987, which outlined the principles of sustainable development to include: “the idea of holistic planning and strategy-making; the importance of preserving essential ecological processes; the need to protect both human heritage and biodiversity; the key requirement: to develop in such a way that productivity can be sustained over the long term for future generations” (Bramwell and Lane 1993, 2). The debate widened to address multiple aspects of the society and address issues of power and equity (Bramwell and Lane 1993, 3). Sustainable tourism presented a key nontraditional and less costly tool for development especially in rural areas with their unique “cultural, historic, ethnic, and geographic” characteristics (Wilson *et al.* 2001, 132).

1.6.2. Principles of Sustainable Tourism

With the adoption of sustainability as a guiding principle of planning, and the growing size of tourism as an industry, sustainable tourism developed naturally to encourage a form of development, which respects the natural environment. The basic

principles, which guide sustainable tourism are:

- *Participatory and Inclusive*

Sustainable tourism strategies emphasize the importance of encouraging participation and dialogue between stakeholders, community members and tourism businesses. Local participation and consultation among involved parties is essential at both the strategy making level and implementation process (Lane 2009, 14). It is important to focus on the local level in the plan as it presents a key “opportunity to mitigate the negative impacts of tourism” (Ruhanen 2004, 240). This would be through identifying the important “community values, lifestyle features, critical issues to residents, community attitudes to tourism, and quality of life in the area” (Simpson 2001) in order to ensure proposing a vision that responds to the local community. Dialogue is also important to understand the community’s perception and “openness” (Lane 2009, 15) to the proposed strategy, and to assess the costs and suggest alternative ideas for the vision or funding. Thus ensuring that the community is open and welcoming to receive visitors is an essential step to the success of a rural tourism strategy (Lane 2009, 15).

Consultation is also a key element of the strategy’s success to involve all interest groups ranging from “trade and business, transport, farmers, administrators, and custodians of the natural and historic assets of the area” (Lane 2009, 15). Furthermore, it is important that the team involved in the strategy making process gathers different fields of knowledge and expertise and that the relationship between the members is based on trust (Lane 2009, 15). Simpson (2001) also highlights the importance of setting goals through the plan, which prioritize the “local benefits of tourism development”. Community involvement can “foster a sense of place, help empower individuals and the wider community, and assist in the forging of individual and group identities”

(Bramwell and Lane 1993, 73). Thus if the strategy communicates the value of the environment, culture and heritage the local community would be encouraged to preserve it. The development of a well researched and well written plan backed by the community is beneficial to obtain funding and for good management (Lane 2009, 14).

- *Involvement of Private and Public Sectors*

The planning process and implementation should ensure the involvement of the public and private sectors, creating a balance between both to prevent the focus on a profit driven strategy (Page and Thorn 1997, 61). The process of sustainable tourism development entails encouraging stakeholder participation and a strategic approach to tourism planning (Ruhanen 2004, 239). One of the criteria for the assessment is to ensure that various parties take part in the planning process, namely: Relevant state/federal government agencies, relevant local agencies, local tourism authority, relevant regional tourism organizations, local tourism industries, local non-tourism organizations, and local residents. The assessment also entails how the opinions of these parties influence the final strategic direction. The strategy should be flexible and adaptive to change and should reflect a partnership between “the government, business, and cultural and conservation interests” (Lane 2009, 15).

- *Respect for the Natural and Built Environment*

The concept of sustainable tourism emerged from the same imperative of environmental and social responsibility to articulate a framework in which tourism could develop while maintaining respect of the natural and human resources. Thus the plan respects the living heritage in terms of nature conservation, and including the arts and cultural activities within the strategy-making process and the physical aspects in terms of protecting the scenic, historic and cultural heritage (Lane 2009, 14).

The concept of sustainable rural tourism is rooted in “preservation” and

“development” (Aronsson 1994, 84). By definition, it is a long-term strategy, which respects and preserves the local environment, heritage, landscape, economy, and culture and relies on these assets as the basis for an enhanced visitors’ experience and a tool for regional sustainable economic development. Such a strategy seeks to maintain a “balance between the growth potential of tourism and the conservation of the environment” (Lane 2009, 13). Thus tourism would be a catalyst for “economic regeneration” while “valorizing conservation” (Lane 2009, 13).

- *Economic Development: Equal Distribution*

According to Simpson (2001), one of the broad goals of sustainable tourism development is to encourage economic development. However, he stresses that a successful plan would ensure that the economic benefits are equally distributed at a local level. The sustainable tourism strategy would attract visitors to stay longer at the destination providing the local community with resources, which “can help diversify and strengthen a declining or otherwise weak local economy and create jobs for the unemployed or underemployed” (Bramwell and Lane 1993, 73).

The literature on sustainable tourism development focuses on encouraging local entrepreneurship to create more employment opportunities, enrich the area’s “economic value”, and conserve resources within the local community. It is as important to assess economic, social and environmental conditions to ensure an “enabling” entrepreneurial environment where local businesses would thrive (Lordkipanidze *et al.* 2005, 787 – 791)

Such an environment would provide incentives and policies for business marketing and development, and becomes one of the major forces behind the entrepreneur’s success (Lordkipanidze *et al.* 2005; Lane 2009). However, the entrepreneurial development approach may prove to be challenging in rural contexts

especially with the lack of the necessary resources and the lack of skills, expertise, and knowhow, which would allow for businesses to develop in a sustainable and competitive manner. Promoting entrepreneurship in rural settings does not solely rest on providing adequate physical infrastructure but also “personal support, expertise and mentors are critically important needs” (Lordkipanidze *et al.* 2005, 790). This would help the entrepreneurs create, develop a business, and gain a competitive edge to prevent the possibility of entrepreneurs from other areas to take advantage of the business opportunities (Lane 2009, 15).

It is key to research the private and public sector involvement in promoting an environment, which fosters and encourages entrepreneurship. It is typically the government that creates a climate, which promotes entrepreneurship for sustainable development through policies, support and an examination of new enterprises which feed into the social and economic goals for the area and through targeting motivated people, those with access to financial resources and expertise to take on a new business (Lordkipanidze *et al.* 2005).

According to Lane (2009) the plan to encourage local entrepreneurs should assess the demand and seek to address niche markets in relation to a developing sustainable tourism sector, thus the entrepreneur becomes the link between the “product and service supply” (Lordkipanidze *et al.* 2005, 788-789). “The process could encourage new entrants into tourism such as farm diversification, craft workshops, cycle hire, specialty food production, re-organized public transport, to generate employment and it could bring in new skills into business and politics of the area” (Lane 2009, 14)

Furthermore, it is essential for the strategy to “encourage infrastructural investment in transport, public services, marketing, information, and interpretation and

gain security and stability” (Lane 2009, 14) to encourage economic development and the success of the strategy.

1.7. Thesis Outline

This thesis introduces the concept of sustainable rural tourism as it has been articulated in the literature. The concept explores and analyzes 3 different case studies in England, Spain, and Sweden, in which sustainable rural tourism has been proposed. The three case studies are analyzed to understand the methods, policy implications, proposed interventions and derive the main principles. The main principles guide the adopted methodology, which is explained in the thesis. The thesis presents the profile of Tibneen as the context within which the principles of sustainable tourism will be tested and adapted. The thesis also outlines the institutional map of actors, which operate in this context. Four main local assets to developing sustainable rural tourism in Tibneen are identified which are: 1) The Friday Souk, 2) the Qalaa and Old City, 3) the recreation sector and local entrepreneurs, and 4) Al Mashrou Al Akhdar while focusing on the social capital in the village through the thick social networks. These 4 assets are explored through the networks, which are naturally created by them on a local, regional and national level. For each local asset the main stakeholders are identified, in addition to the assets and challenges, which may encourage or hinder the possibility of strengthening these assets to articulate a concrete and realistic sustainable tourism vision for the area. Based on the research and findings, the thesis proposes the planning intervention on both the institutional and spatial levels towards a sustainable rural tourism vision in Tibneen. Finally the thesis conclusion includes a summary and raising question for further research.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology adopted in this thesis in order to adapt sustainable rural tourism to the local context of Tibneen and its vicinities and to develop an implementation framework for SRT.

The chapter is divided into four sections. It begins by analyzing existing case studies in order to derive the main principles associated with sustainable rural tourism development. In section 2, I show how one of the main pillars of sustainable rural tourism, namely participation, should be adapted to the local context in order to inform an effective intervention. In section 3, I investigate the scale at which the planning intervention needs to be articulating given the multiple natural, ecological, social, economic and political continuities that exist in this region. In the last section of the chapter, I describe the data gathering process that was conducted in order to articulate this framework.

2.1. Articulating an Analytic Framework for Adapting SRT

Researchers and practitioners generally concur that “Sustainable Rural Tourism” primarily rests on the articulation of a planning document, which sets the framework for this form of tourism. This document should reflect the principles of sustainable tourism by articulating a long-term, flexible strategy, that reflects a long-term, participative vision articulated with the local stakeholders and reflecting their values (Simpson 2001; Lane 2009). It should also be based on an adequate assessment of the physical, environmental and economic conditions as well as an assessment of

“assets and constraints” (Lane 2009, 14). Simpson (2001) further specifies that the analysis of the area would include understanding its geography, demographics, land use and ownership patterns, infrastructure, economic activities, level of employment, local business skills, tourism sector, capacity for tourism development, current visitor numbers, length of stay and spending. Furthermore, it is necessary to think of the local tourism strategy in relation to or as a part of “other strategies with other local, regional, state and national plan for tourism development” (Simpson 2001). The articulated planning document needs to be flexible; it should be able to adapt and respond to change and evolves through admitting “its own mistakes and shortcomings” (Lane 2009, 15). Lane (2009) specifies the duration of such a plan (5 to 10 years) and recommends that the plan sets “priorities, annualized work program for at least three years, quantifiable targets, an evaluation process and regular up-dating of objectives”. This is well in line with other researchers and practitioners who all insist on the necessity for “quantified and readily measurable” objectives (Simpson 2001; Lane 2009; Hall 1998).

What are the elements of a SRT? I reviewed several case studies in order to derive a set of principles. I present in boxes 1, 2, and 3 the three most informative case studies I have found. The three cases studies were selected in Berwick (North England), Calvia (Spain) and Soderslat (Sweden). For each of these case studies, I derived the main principles that were used to develop the planning document/ strategy. The following principles recurred as key elements to implement:

- Community based development strategy, designed in consultation with local dwellers;
- Reinforcement of the role of local entrepreneurs
- Building on existing natural and cultural assets;

- Rehabilitation and protection of key natural and built heritage assets in the investigated area;
- Developing a response institutional set-up that could articulate, monitor and follow on existing projects.

1- Berwick England Case Study

The Berwick district, in northern England, is famous for its landscape, hills, river, sandy coastlines, historic heritage and rural farming services. The village was plagued by little job opportunities and a large outmigration. In 1989, the University of Bristol advised the council to develop a sustainable tourism strategy for the whole Berwick area. The process began with social, economic, ecological studies of the area, then the entire region was surveyed and stakeholders were brought into the process. This was followed by public meetings, which were advertised and open to all, for 2 months in the 9 different communities of the region. Through the meetings the strategy making process was explained, and communities outlined their aspirations and visions for tourism development in their context. A draft plan was then developed and more meetings were held with media coverage. Finally the draft was approved a year later. Thus the process included surveys, participatory meetings, scenario projections, advertising and media coverage, and the creation of a draft plan.

The main strategy recommendations were:

Physical interventions: encouraged infrastructural investment and focused on zoning through: directing intensive development to well defined, concise areas, while restraining new development on coastal areas, and marking others as difficult access to conserve "fragile ecosystems". As for the transportation sector, the strategy promoted pedestrian friendly areas and bicycle tourism to encourage social/family activities. To make the visitors experience more friendly a comprehensive footpath, signpost, information and interpretation policy were proposed to help visitors. The recommendations also aimed at developing the farm tourism sector. The strategy focused on developing the entrepreneurial environment by focusing on small-scale markets, which capitalize on and conserve heritage and natural assets, training and education for new entrants to businesses, and encouraging local businesses. Marketing was a key recommendation to promote different kinds of tourism and a marketing plan, which targets specific groups and geographic areas was developed. Recommendations did not propose a new institutional setup however focused on local development groups to ensure grass-roots involvements. (Lane 2009: 16-17)

The Berwick council sought funding from communities and businesses of the areas for the first 3 years. After that, a public sector/private sector joint partnership was sought whereby the public sector funded infrastructure to encourage the private sector to invest. The article warned that funding was the most time consuming and difficult part of the plan. The article concluded that if dwellers loved their rural areas they should pause and slow down to develop a sustainable development plan. (Lane 2009: 17-18)

Fig.1. Summary of Berwick case study process and proposal

2- Calvia Spain Case Study

Calvia in Spain is considered one of the best examples of sustainable tourism destinations in practice in the Mediterranean famous for its "sun, sea, and sand" (Dodds 2007: 300). In the 1960's the area started developing uncontrollably as it became highly attractive for tourists. The tourism industry changed the area from being the poorest to becoming the richest in Spain, however it negatively affected areas of water, energy, transport, urban waste, land use, social integration and education and skilled employees. This caused the decline in the number of tourists, the image of the area, pressure on natural resources and increased competition from other destinations (Dodds 2007: 302), thus creating a need for the development of a sustainable tourism plan.

In 1995, the Tourism Council of Calvia started developing a long-term sustainable development vision with the aim to preserve the resources upon which Calvia's tourism industry relies. The vision adopted the principles global environmental and development act, Local Agenda 21 (LA21), which is one of the most important initiatives to address sustainable development at a local level through "planned, democratic, cooperative means, including community involvement in decision making about the environment and development" (Dodds 2007: 299).

The method of implementation was based on transparency and vigorous participation. This included the involvement of the Management Committee of the City Council, a group of experts, the city council (150 citizens) and consultation through surveys. The process urged citizens to define the main strategic lines of action and the developed action plan through a voting system. (Dodds 2007:304).

The major guidelines and lines of action developed in Calvia could be summarized as follows:

1- Planning and Regeneration: The enactment of a "Declassification law" for 1700 acres for urbanization, limiting hotel development growth, demolition of some buildings, and purchase of urban land to prevent further expansion and development. In addition to the creation of 2 pedestrian zones, a pedestrian and cycling to link tourists to residents "Pase de Clavia", and increasing greening.

2- Heritage Preservation: The prioritization of restoring historical, cultural and natural heritage, and the restoration of residential and tourist population centers. This also included substitution of growth by sustainable quality and the prioritization of the residents quality of life.

3- Environmental Instruments: The enactment of regulations for sustainable environmental management such as mooring, establishment of a park and protected areas to preserve the "wildlife and ecosystems", measures to minimize erosion, recycling and urban waste reduction plans, taxes on water and campaigns to promote water conservation.

4- Economic Instruments: Imposing an "eco-tax" for the preservation of land, sea and natural heritage. In addition to the use of funds by the council for regeneration projects and extending public-private investment. (Dodds 2007: 305)

5- Voluntary Instruments: Renovation programs for hotels and accommodation facilities to attract more tourists to a more pleasant stay.

6- Socio-cultural Instruments: Programs to combat social problems and other multi-cultural and social programs were established such as "dance, underwater photography, etc." (Dodds 2007: 308) Finally, investment in human and knowledge resources was encouraged.

Fig.2. Summary of Calvia case study process and proposal

3- Soderslat Sweden Case Study

Soderslat is one of the most agriculturally and culturally rich areas in south of Sweden, which is known for its castles, museums, and churches. The case study focuses on developing rural entrepreneurship for sustainable tourism development by building on heritage assets to enrich local culture and livelihoods and support economic, socio-cultural and environmental development. (Lordkipanidze et al. 2005: 791). Rural entrepreneurship in Soderslat would focus on tourism, sports, recreation, non-agricultural use of resources and diversification of activities.

The study starts by identifying "entrepreneurial heroes" who manage successful and innovative businesses. Second, farmers who contribute to the predominant agricultural sector were considered key to encourage as entrepreneurs to preserve the regions resources while contributing to sustainable regional development. The study stresses on understanding the entrepreneurial cultural to inform policies, which encourage a motivating and positive environment and public private involvement (Lordkipanidze et al. 2005: 793) and tourism entrepreneurship was analyzed through a SWOT analysis .

The study proposed a multilayered set of interventions:

- 1- **Economic:** Policies to provide profit incentives, economic benefit and employment opportunities
- 2- **Training :** Enabling "active promotion policies" through providing training and education for potential entrepreneurs. An educational program was proposed to support entrepreneurs and "raise awareness about sustainable tourism development" (Lordkipanidze et al. 2005: 797). In addition to establishing a center for rural entrepreneurship development in tourism in Soderslat to conduct research and identify service needs through businesses. E-learning and networking should be encouraged to strengthen the networking and exchange of information and skill development among entrepreneurs.
- 3- **Entrepreneurship:** Market research to identify the market opportunities which respond to the needs of the sustainable tourism sector and targeting and supporting businesses investing in them. In addition to strengthening the local identity, encouraging women entrepreneurs, addressing niche markets such as cultural heritage and tourism, and developing innovative businesses. Opportunities to develop local entrepreneurship were identified as the accommodation sector; transportation sector (bicycle, bus, and boat rides), recreation sector through creating theme parks, game reserves, arts/crafts galleries and festivals to encourage cultural tourism and the local gastronomy sector as a source of local identity. (Lordkipanidze et al. 2005: 796).
- 4- **Marketing:** Efficient marketing is also key in this context to integrate small rural businesses and raise awareness about entrepreneurship through events and media (Lordkipanidze et al. 2005: 797).
- 5- **Institutional:** Strengthening the role of the municipality in involving the local community especially for developing entrepreneurship as the locals have the know-how and control over the land and resources (Lordkipanidze et al. 2005: 796).
- 6- **Policies:** Private and public policies should be aimed towards developing a positive entrepreneurial environment especially by providing education, incentives, financial and training support.

Fig.3. Summary of Soderslat case study process and proposal

Figure 4 below tabulates the three case studies in order to facilitate a comparative analysis of the three adopted strategies.

Case Studies Comparative Table:

Case Studies	Berwick, England	Calvia, Spain	Soderslat, Sweden
ACTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . University of Bristol . Local Stakeholders . Berwick Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Management Committee of the Council . Group of Experts . City Council (150 Citizens) 	
PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Survey of Region . Participatory meetings . Advertisement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Transparency . Participation . Voting system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Market research & Identifying local entrepreneurs . SWOT analysis
INTERVENTION			
Physical	Investing in Infrastructure ZONING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Intensive Development . Restricted Development . Difficult Access Zoning 	Declassification Law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Classified Area for Urbanization . Protected areas . Limiting Hotel development . Demolishing some buildings & purchasing Land 	
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Pedestrian friendly roads . Bicycle tourism . Signage system, information policy, footpath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Pedestrian zones . Pedestrian and cycling path 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Bicycle tourism . Bus services and boat rides
Environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Sustainable environment mngt , Recycling & urban waste plans 	
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Farm & Bicycle Tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Establishing Parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Theme parks . Festivals (Cultural tourism) . Game reserves . Arts/crafts galleries
Accommodation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Hotel Renovations 	Encouraging local entrepreneurs through accommodation sector
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Promoting natural and living heritage tourism & preservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Heritage conservation and promoting environmental sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Local Gastronomy as source of local identity . Niche markets: Cultural heritage tourism
Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Small-scale markets (Heritage & Nature) . Encourage local businesses 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Center for rural entrepreneurship development in tourism
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Marketing plan 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Marketing: integrate small rural businesses . Entrepreneurship awareness: Events/Media
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Local development groups 		Encouraging Municipality/ Local Community engagement
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Training & Education 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Training & education on: Entrepreneurship and SRT . E-learning and networking: exchange of information and skill development
Policies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Eco-tax . Taxes on water . Mooring regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Support educational, financial and training for entrepreneurs . Profit incentive policies . Active promotion policies
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Local communities & Businesses . Public private partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Public private partnership 	

Fig.4. Comparative Table of Sustainable Rural Tourism Case Studies in England, Spain, and Sweden

As seen in the table above, each case resulted in a long-term vision based on a full-fledged analysis of the area, which addresses its key challenges and builds on its

assets. The case studies presented uncover key pillars and approaches to sustainable tourism development, which are to be tested in the context of Tibneen.

- Creating an institutional setup, which would enable the steering and implementation of the strategy is key to SRT development as derived from the case studies analysis. This is shown through the involvement of the university, which studied the area, involved interested parties in the process, and advised the city council in the case of the Berwick case study. The university involvement added a layer of professionalism and knowledge, which supported the vision in addition to adopting and praising the participatory approach. This is also evident in the case of Calvia whereby the first attempt to address development of the area was steered by the community and municipality however only with the involvement of the Tourism Council, the management committee council, experts, and the city council was the sustainable vision successfully developed.

- Participation is also a key pillar upon which the visions rested, through public meetings, which were held and advertised to involve the community and build on their visions of the area in the case of Berwick and surveys, voting and consultation in the case of Calvia. Participation results in a vision which is supported by the community, however this approach works differently in different contexts and this will be further explored in the methodology adopted in this thesis.

- The proposed strategies in the case studies highlight key projects for sustainable tourism development, which were relevant to the contexts and have great potential if tested in the context of Tibneen. These include local enterprise development, promoting alternative systems of transportation (pedestrian, cycling), farm tourism, infrastructure development, land zoning for development and preservation, marketing and training.

2.2. Developing a Scale of Intervention

This thesis explores an important question in the field of planning practice: On what scale do we intervene? Although I use Tibneen as my entry point, many of the investigated elements' of my strategy are connected to social, economic, and political linkages beyond the boundaries of the village. Tibneen does not operate in isolation of the regional/national context and thus understanding the networks within this context presents a "new paradigm for rural development" (Murdoch 2000, 1) and a new framework for understanding this context. It was therefore necessary to adopt a method to reevaluate the scale at which the case study was conducted, in defining a scale for each of the components of the intervention.

To this end, I mapped the social and ecological networks, which link the studies village to the region. "Networks at the destination level are the frameworks, which binds the place and people together. Interestingly these networks go beyond the destination level to regional, national and international levels... Networks are both inputs and outputs a two way process"(Tinsley and Lynch 2001, 374). In Tibneen, social networks have been created and nurtured through diverse social and economic practices. Their mapping reflects a "new" geography, which extends beyond the borders of Tibneen and thus suggests a new scale of intervention and thus devise a sustainable rural tourism strategy, which responds to these social and natural "networks".

Certain assets in Tibneen may then be looked at as unique in the region and thus can be strengthened as such, while other aspects may be viewed as complimentary to the other assets in the region and would also be addressed as such. For instance, Souk El Jomaa was analyzed by mapping the economic linkages which link the Souk to the surrounding region and the proposed strategy necessitated an intervention at the regional scale. Courtney *et al.* (2000) stress the importance of exploring economic

linkages between small towns and surrounding areas for rural development, as “no economy is spatially bounded, and the economic relations and processes occurring in particular localities are connected through a myriad of links to the wider world”, thus it is important that economic activities in villages are studied in relation to their locality to inform rural development policy (Courtney *et al.* 2000, 280-281). Understanding the production, consumption, and flow of goods between a town and the surrounding areas is key however this has been neglected in the realm of research. Economic linkages are defined as transactions, which should be explored in terms of “number, value, and distance” (Courtney *et al.* 2000, 282) Researching the level of “economic integration” of a town to its locality is an important tool to assess how interventions would reflect on the area and its surrounding and propose planning development strategies which reflect the areas to be prioritized for revitalization (Courtney *et al.* 2000, 289). Understanding economic linkages is important to encourage local economic interactions as a basic requirement for sustainable economic development (Courtney *et al.* 2006, 471).

2.3. Adapting a Participatory Methodology

As noted above, participation is considered a guiding and crucial principle in sustainable development strategies. In all three case studies, participation was achieved through large community meetings where stakeholders met to discuss their projects and strategies. However, as Cees (2000, 931) argues, this has proved to be in many cases based on “inconsistent theoretical assumptions and can easily lead to unproductive development interventions due to an inability to handle conflicts.” In Tibneen, I had to adapt the participatory methodology to respond to the many constraints that undermined the possibility of community meetings. These were of both political/strategic and social (gender nature). They also reflected other findings (Harajli 2013), whereby interviews

with a set of 40 dwellers reflected a strong bias among low-income village dwellers against participatory meetings, which they viewed as opportunities for manipulation, and as too time consuming.

- *Political*: political parties and key families in Tibneen are the controlling powers which steer most of the decision-making in the village to comply to a certain culture. Most of the members of the community refrain from challenging the decisions of political parties in public and thus participation in Tibneen would not result in a transparent and positive dialogue.

- *Gender Issues*: In this rural context, which is male dominated, women are less likely to word out challenging opinions in public. During fieldwork women also stated that they sit on the porches of their houses during their free time while their husbands gather outdoors. Thus, personal visits to these women would result in a more honest conversation especially that it would build trust and allow them to challenge any “public” issue in a “private” space.

- *Trust*: As an “outsider” my role in encouraging such meetings was to be viewed upon with skepticism. Participation in the making of a long-term vision is also a concept that is relatively new to this context, and thus dwellers/stakeholders didn’t believe in the possibility of influencing the strategy-making process. They also felt reluctant to participate in meetings that may not lead anywhere as they have expressed throughout fieldwork in the village a level of mistrust in “people wanting to develop the village”.

Given the political constraints, and gender dynamics, community meetings are unlikely to succeed in involving all interest groups to be “equal” members of the discussion. Thus, I adopted what Cees (2000) terms as “negotiation” instead of

participation to guide my strategies, which requires alternative ways of “analysis, and different roles, tasks and skills for facilitators of participatory processes”. Negotiation in this context is mainly built on one on one personal interviews, which built trust with community members and urged them to speak freely concerning key issues in the village, while assuring them that their names would remain anonymous. Conversations also allowed community members to question issues in the village, which they had been accustomed to viewing as “acceptable” since many lacked the courage to question these issues in light of political and social pressures.

2.4. Data Gathering

The thesis builds on earlier work I have conducted in the context of several classes, which I have complemented in over 20 fieldwork trips conducted during the year 2012/2013. In Fall 2011/2012, I took the Urban Planning and Design workshop at AUB in the fall of 2012 that was taught by Dr. Howayda Al-Harithy and Dr. Mona Fawaz. Most of the data gathering, mapping, and analysis of Tibneen builds on the findings of course specifically building on the urban visions developed by the students through three reports: “Reviving the Agricultural Economy” by Rami Harajli and Ali Zeineddine, “A Green Tibneen” by Kimberly Ventresca and Reem Fayyad, and “Urban Heritage and Tibneen” by Marwa Boustani and Maher Al-Rez. In Spring 2011/2012, I took an independent study with Dr. Chaaban and Dr. Fawaz based on the “Field Study of the Rural Agro-economy” course at AUB. My case study with colleague Zeineddine, specifically addressed proposing a local tourism Strategy for Tibneen. Through the course, more fieldwork, data gathering, and analysis of 27 surveys, which mainly address socioeconomic conditions, agricultural practices, key assets such as sites of heritage and recreation in the village, identify human resource capacities and local

production, challenges dwellers face, their aspirations for the village.

An important component of my data gathering strategy relied on long open-ended interviews with key stakeholders who are knowledgeable, influential, or have social ties and interest in participating in the development of the village and this included:

- *The Municipality of Tibneen:*

The municipality of Tibneen was consulted in informal and formal meetings in more than 20 visits during 2011/2012. Focus groups were also conducted in the premises of the municipality, most importantly when the local community and municipality members attended a meeting whereby students of the “Urban Planning and Design Workshop” (AUB) in 2012 presented their proposals and received feedback.

- *Permanent Dwellers*

- Key dwellers were identified in the village such as key social figures, activists, elderly, who have the knowhow/interest in participating in the articulation of a vision.

- Owners of “successful” businesses in the village were also personally interviewed (Owner of Al Kashef Restaurant, Network/Computer Center, Supermarkets) in addition to locals with potential to develop successful businesses especially those who invest in home production such food, agricultural, cultural, and traditional products.

- *Weekenders, Expats and Regional Visitors:*

- Personal Formal and Informal Interviews: An analysis of socio-economic backgrounds of these groups was done through personal interviews. These interviews sought to understand the demands of these groups, their relationship to the village, and their knowhow, to ensure that the vision

addresses their needs. Interviews also aimed to identify ways to attract expats to spend more time in the village during their vacation, why they visit the village, the activities they would like to engage in, what they deem as important sites/assets to be preserved/enhanced, what projects are important for recreation, how their children relate to the village, and how they can contribute through their skills/interests/funding/ideas to the development of sustainable tourism in Tibneen.

– Focus Groups: After conducting a thorough analysis of the villages’ assets and constraints and outlining the key objectives, goals and vision for the village, focus groups were held to discuss the proposed strategies with key stakeholders and members of the community. However, as participation proved to be a challenge in this context, focus groups only took place in the municipality with municipality members and once through the urban planning and design workshop allowing the interest groups to engage in the making of the vision, assessment of the strategies applicability, and alternative proposals for funding. Focus groups allow the vision to “respond to change and the community” which is one of the key principles of developing a sustainable development strategy.

– The research methodology also included surveys, which were anonymous yet sought to identify general information regarding socio/economic backgrounds and perceptions of the village by the local community (Appendix 1).

– The data was also collected from social media channels through Facebook as a tool essentially to profile expats/weekenders and explore groups created for Tibneen especially to understand how they relate to the village.

– Key people from these groups who are interested in the development of Tibneen were interviewed to share the ideas and include their perceptions/aspirations/know-how in relation to SRT development. In depth interviews were conducted with business owners in the village to understand the reasons behind their success/failure, the major challenges they face and how they overcome these challenges, and the kind of support they need to further strengthen/expand their business.

– Mapping of the village in terms of land use, and key heritage sites built on the maps developed for the urban planning and design workshop. The mapping was complemented with specific maps that sought to explore the scales, which would be addressed in the intervention in relation to social and natural networks in the village.

– The methodology also included mapping of national and regional institutions, which are involved and are key to activate/address for developing a sustainable rural tourism vision would be created. This includes but is not limited to the Ministry of Antiquities, Ministry of Tourism, Directorate General of Urbanism and the CDR. Also as important is the Identification of locally active non-governmental agencies that are committed to the tasks of sustainable development, such as Alpha that organizes a yearly festival in the Crusader's castle, etc. The roles and scales of these institutions were explained to understand their capabilities and involvement on the level of developing a sustainable tourism vision for Tibneen and to assess where the response institutional setup would fall.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY PROFILE

Situated in the Bint Jubayl Caza in South Lebanon, Tibneen is a village, which is rich in its natural, building, and living heritage. The village lies at a distance of 106km from the Lebanese capital of Beirut and 22km away from the Lebanese/Palestinian border. It is situated across several hills at an approximate altitude of 650 – 700m above sea level. Tibneen occupies 7,477,671 m² and is positioned 25km southeast of Tyr and 8km northwest of Bint Jubayl (Oweida 2005).

3.1. Population

The registered population in Tibneen is 9,400 people with the majority of Muslims and a minority of Christians. The municipality of Tibneen estimates the current number of permanent dwellers to be between 3500-4000, with an equal amount of 4000 Tibneeners residing in Beirut who visit the village more or less regularly. The latter group will be referred to in the thesis as “weekenders”. Another 8000 Tibneeners are estimated to reside in the United States, mainly in Michigan. I will refer to them as “expatriates”. Both expatriates and week-end visitors generally maintain strong familial and social ties and many still share a strong sense of belonging to the village. The population of the village however oscillates considerably across the seasons. According to the Tibneen municipality, the village population doubles in the summer, especially during the weekends, when it counts 8,000 dwellers.

Permanent dwellers are relatively low-income and derive their livelihood from small scale enterprises such as small commercial shops that include bakeries,

supermarkets, pharmacies, cafes, stationary stores, hairdressers, antique shops and others. The weekenders living in Beirut are relatively better off. Many have weekend houses in Tibneen and spend their time in the outdoors or visiting relatives. The expatriates, who amount to two thirds of the population, are also relatively middle to high-income groups. Anecdotal evidence indicates that seasonal visitors and remittances constitute the main sources of capital inflow in the village.

Tibneeners	Population	Description
Permenant Dwellers	3500	Relatively low-income and invest in small commercial shops including bakeries, supermarkets, pharmacies, cafes, stationary stores, hairdressers, antique shops and other.
Residing in Beirut	4000	Middle to high income families who mostly visit Tibneen over the weekends. Many have weekend houses in Tibneen and spend their time in the outdoors or visiting relatives.
Expats mainly in MI, USA	8000	Middle to High income families who return to Tibneen during the summer. Those who don't have houses in Tibneem opt to stay with relatives and relate to the village strongly as the facebook study shows.

During summer when expatriates visit Lebanon the population in Tibneen rises from 3500 to 8000 people

Fig.5. Population estimates according to the Tibneen Municipality

3.2. Territorial Offering and Key Sites

The key territorial offerings in Tibneen are archeological sites such as the old city which is marked by the crusader citadel (Qalaa) and another site Al Hosn, the green reserve which is referred to as Al Mashrou Al Akhdar, and spaces of formal and informal social gatherings such as in Souk El Jomaa and the Kazdoura.

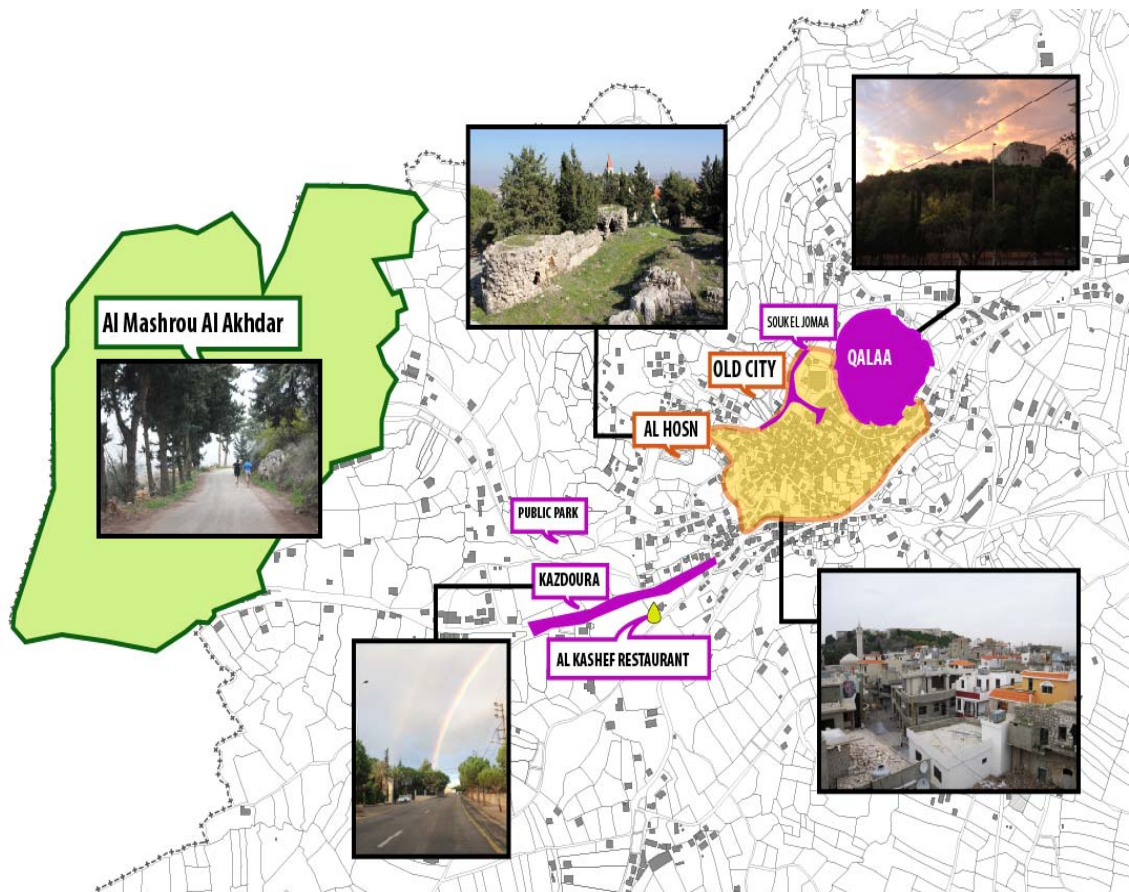


Fig.6. Close up of map highlighting key assets in Tibneen such as the Qalaa, Old City, Kazdoura, Al Kashef Restaurant, Al Hosn and Al Mashrou Al Akhdar

3.2.1. The Crusaders Castle

Tibneen boasts a Crusader Citadel along which the village's residential areas developed historically. The citadel dates back to 1105AD. It overlooks a natural landscape and sits above the village's historic core. Most houses in the historic core are relatively small (100-200m²); its streets are narrow, and many lead to/from the citadel. Looking at the Crusader Citadel from a historical perspective inevitably links this monument to a series of citadels across the region (Lebanon, Palestine and Syria), which were initially built as fortresses of "military architecture" (Rey 1871). These Citadels include the Beaufort Castle (Nabatiyyeh), Byblos Castle (Jbeil), Citadel of Raymond de Saint-Gilles (Tripoli), Mseilha Fort (Batroun), Sidon Sea Castle (Sidon),

Toron (Tibneen), and Krak du Chevalier (Palestine) (Figure 7). The Beaufort Castle and Toron were isolated on hilltops to allow a wider view to observe the territory. While Byblos Castle, Raymond de Saint-Gilles, and the citadel of Jerusalem were created as “part of a system of town defenses” (Setton and Hazard 1969, 141-142). The citadels not only had a military function but were considered to have an economic function for the crusaders, which is “to protect the cultivation round them and to provide a shelter for livestock in times of raid” (Setton and Hazard 1969, 143).



Fig.7. Series of Crusader Castles located in Lebanon

Map of the 6 Crusader Castles located across different regions in Lebanon which include the Qalaa or Toron Castle in Tibneen

The Crusaders citadel, which is also referred to as the castle of Toron is considered among the main and most important historical sites in South Lebanon. With the lack of accurate data, the citadel was the subject of study in two campaigns conducted in 2000 and 2003 to survey the history of the site in order to propose methods of conservation and rehabilitation (Piana and Curvers 2004, 333). The castle was founded in 1105 by the knight of King Baldwin, and was used as military “base for his raids against Fatimid Tyre” (Piana and Curvers 2004,334) and called it “Torone” because of its location on a hill overlooking the village. It witnessed the Toron Dynasty, and was conquered by Saladin, Germans, and Ottomans for it marked a strategic location as it “guarded the main route from Damascus to its main harbor in Tyre” (Piana and Curvers 2004, 334).

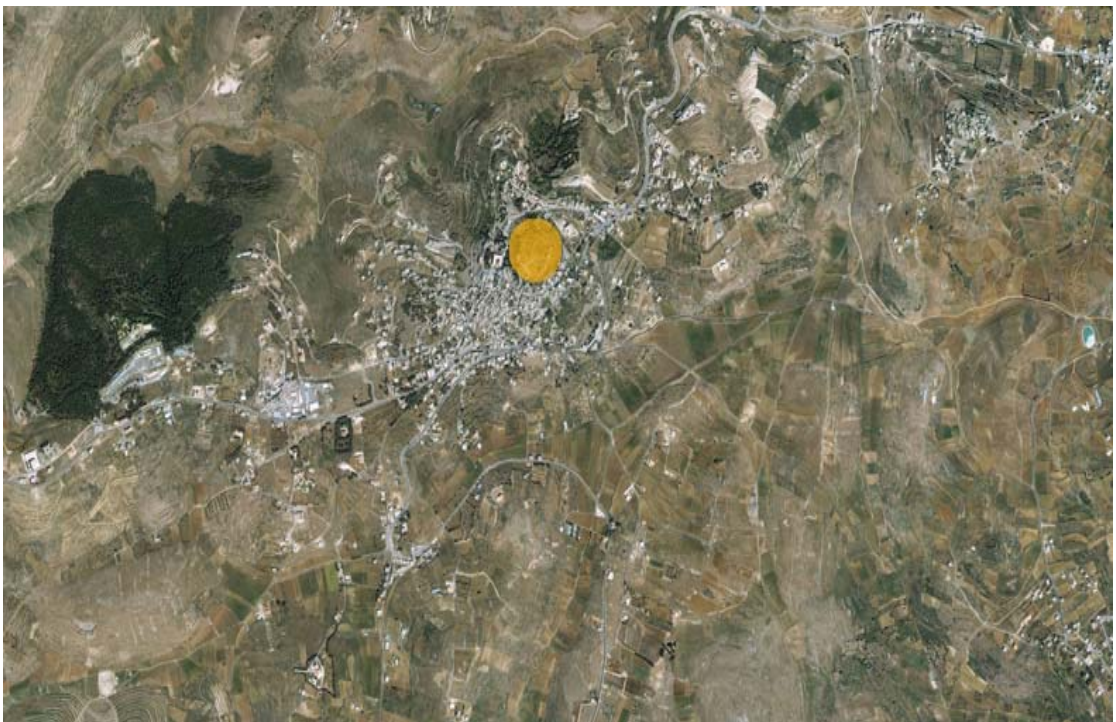


Fig.8. Aerial map of Tibneen highlighting the location of the Qalaa



Fig.9. View of the Qalaa

3.2.2. The Historic Core

The historic core is the traditional residential quarter of the village that unwinds around the citadel. Historically, more houses followed the regional courtyard morphology, with several rooms giving onto an open service/distribution space. Narrow streets, a few remaining old houses and greening practices still mark the space today. The historic core has witnessed significant changes over the past few decades. The most poignant transformation is unequivocally due to the devastation caused by the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon that left many of its structures severely damaged, often completely erased. It has also suffered, however, from a set of modernization strategies, which in line with such interventions elsewhere, disfigured many of the village

characteristics. Some of the houses in the historic core were rebuilt and contradict with the building heritage, and some are in dire interior conditions and have been deserted by the Tibneeners who own them to be rented out to Syrian migrant workers. Still, the village core preserves a number of old houses and traditional maintained practices.



Fig.10. Inner yard of an old house in the old historic core



Fig.11. Top view of Tibneen and the old historic core from the rooftop of a 3 story building



Fig.12. Interior of a house in the old historic core currently rent by a Syrian family with dire conditions



Fig.13. New buildings in the historic core which were rebuilt after the 2006 war and contradict with the built heritage

In the historic core, narrow streets unwind, leading to a large square, a central social hub, which once contained a water-collection pond where people gathered as well as the village's public school. Today, this square has also been disfigured after the pond was dried and replaced by a four story, imposing Saray (public institutional building), the small village mosque replaced by a monumental mosque, and the school demolished and replaced by a public park. As a result, the square has changed significance, trading its social function of a historic core for an institutional role anchored around the large serial that houses several public functions and the religious buildings (mosque and a community center –the Husayniyye). It nonetheless maintains partially this old role, particularly with among older men still setup colorful chairs daily by the mosque at 3 p.m.

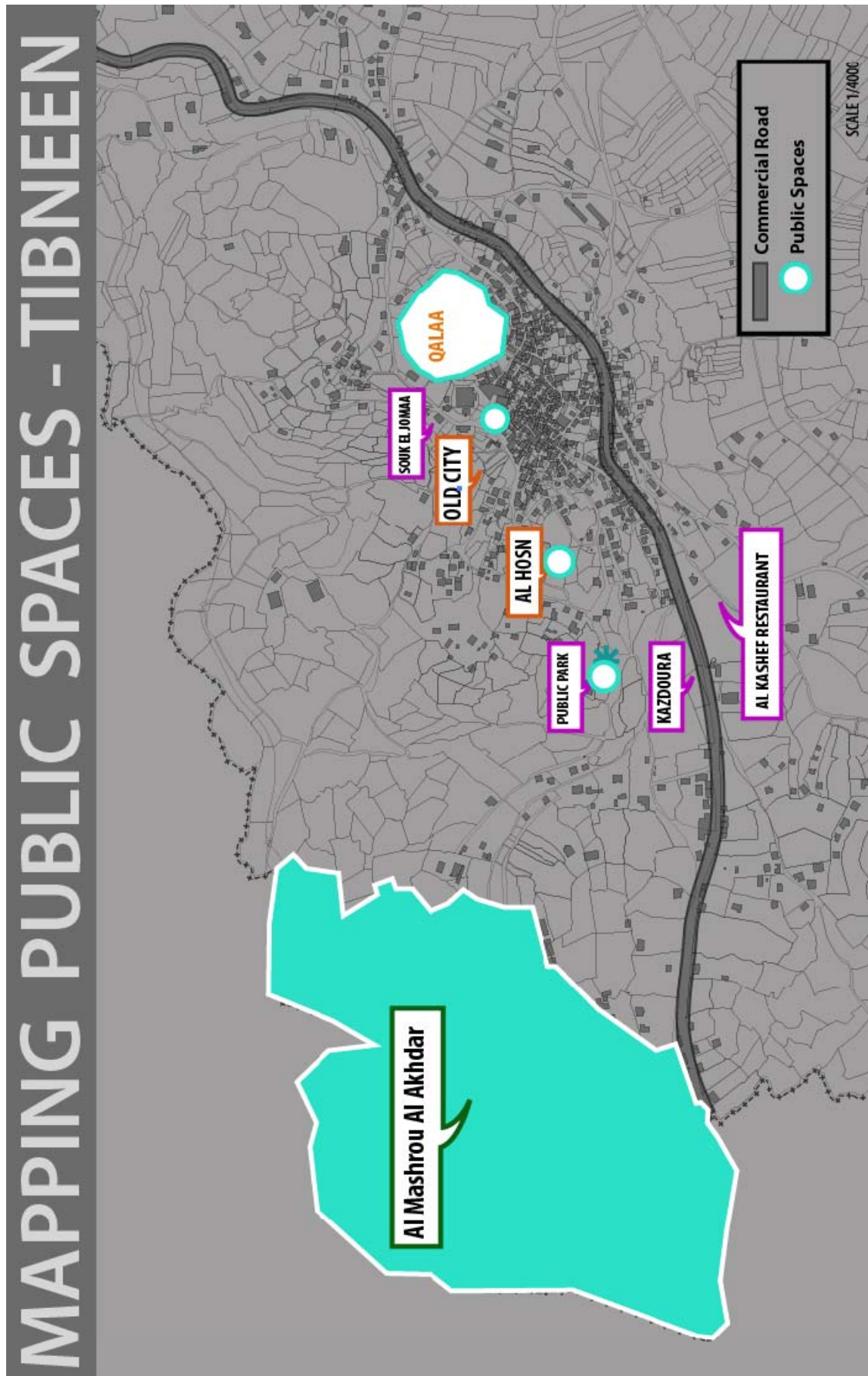


Fig.14. Mapping formal public spaces in Tibneen

3.3. Thick Social Networks: The Living Heritage of the Village

The informal and formal social interactions, which take place in the village, create what is considered its “living heritage”. Permanent dwellers in Tibneen are key in this context as the families who have resided there are essential to its making. As the map (Figure 15), which was created informally by the municipality shows, family names become key landmarks within this geography. The map also highlights in red other landmarks which are known to the village such as Al Mashrou Al Akhdar, UN Camp, schools, public park, Husayniyyeh, Grand Sarai, mosque, centers, gas stations, hospital, Prophet Siddik’s Site, Qalaa, Al Ayn, and the Red Cross while also including Al Kashef restaurant. Family names are key to this road map, which shows that within this context families and key sites, which are well known to the community, are in fact what create its geography. The social networks are key in this context as they activate key sites of heritage in Tibneen.

In this context, social gatherings do not necessarily take place in spaces that are designated as public spaces (Figure 14). Al Mashrou’ Al Akhdar or Green Reserve is a space used for sports, picnics, and gatherings. The children’s park is also designated for public use however it is not always activated and used. Al Kashef restaurant is a café, which is well known among Tibneeners and dwellers of neighboring villages and is mostly crowded during weekends in winter and daily in the summer. Facing Al Kashef, is a space which was known for the famous “Kazdoura” (or promenade), whereby youth cruise by cars or walk in groups of two or three along the main street and interact. The Kazdoura is a historical social practice that is known to many villages of the South, but while this practice took a pedestrian form in the past, it is today mostly confined by the fast paced roads to a “vehicular cruise” thus limiting the possibilities for social interaction. The Saha (Village square) is a space where old men gather and socialize.

The space in front of the Husayniyeh is designated for cars to park, however on Sundays kids informally claim the space to play football.

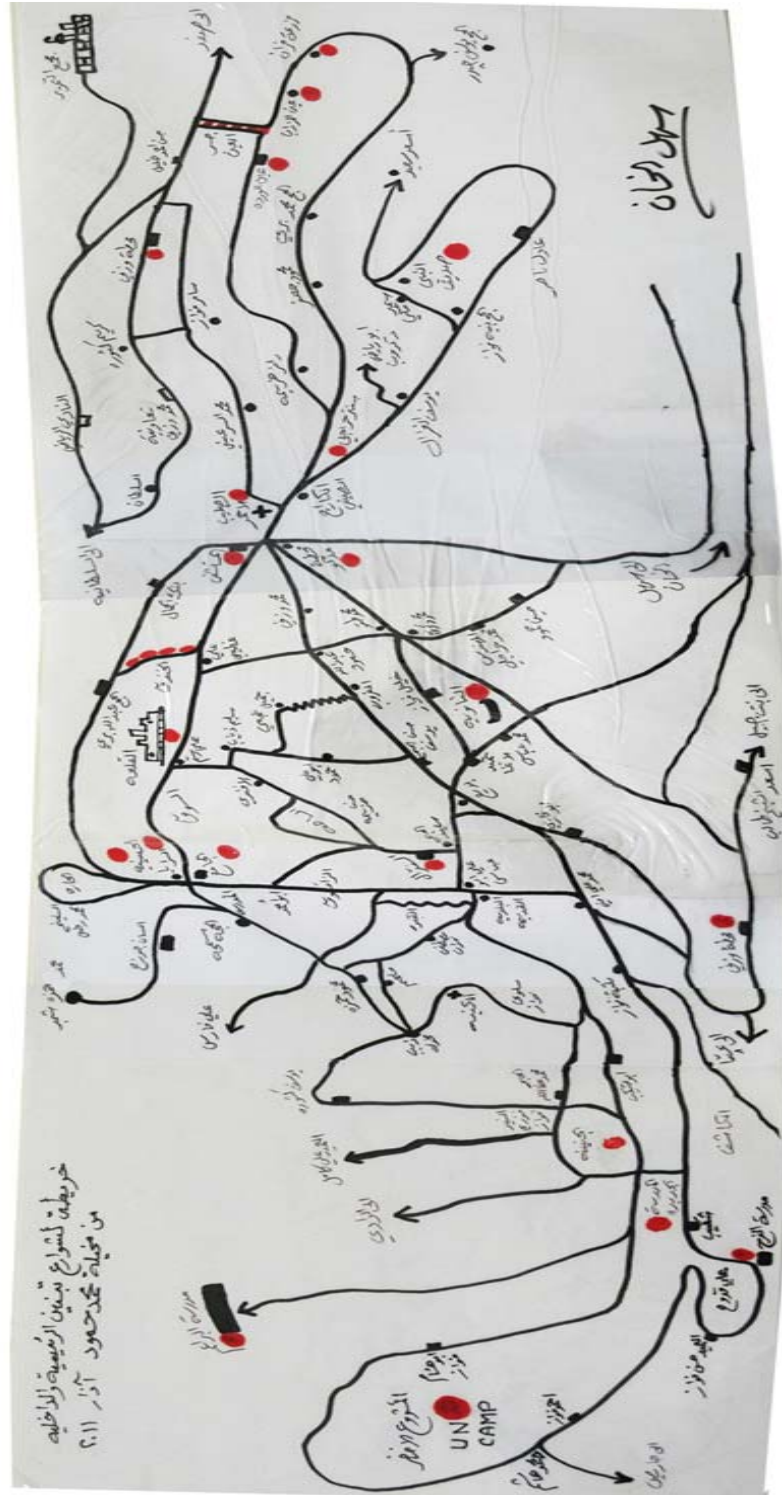


Fig.15. Map of Tibneen created by the municipality highlighting key families and landmarks

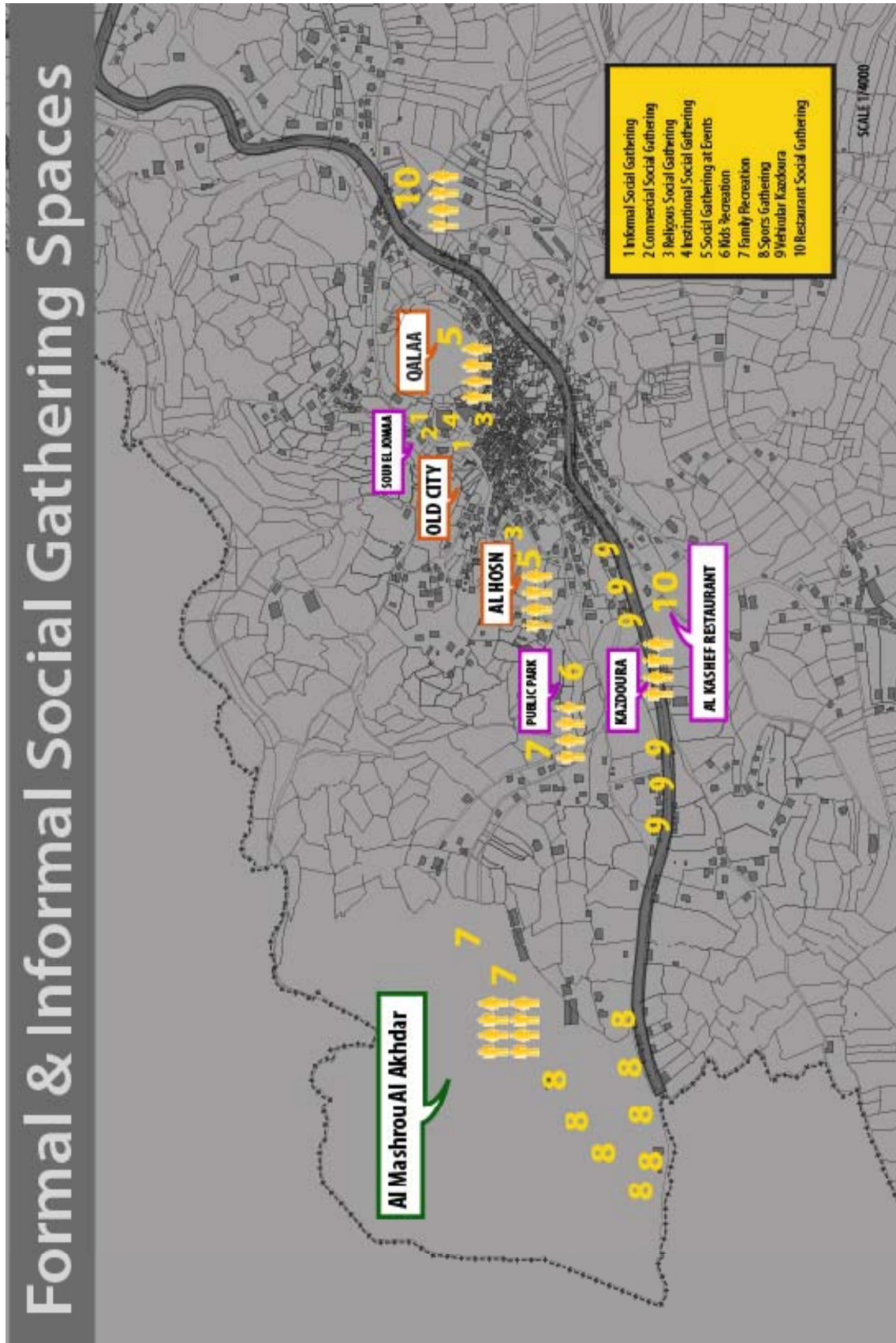


Fig.16. Map highlighting spaces of social interaction in the village
 Source: Boustani, M. and Al-Rez, M. 2012. Urban Heritage and Tibneene. Research Paper, American University of Beirut.

3.3.1. Traditional/Regional Markets

A historic tradition, the weekly market (Souk Al Jomaa'), takes place on Fridays whereby vendors who move around the south setup commercial stands that revive the municipality node and create a path for pedestrians to walk through the souk, interact with each other and with vendors. Souk El Jomaa' takes place in the village square which is a main place for daily informal social gatherings. Souk El Jomaa' is a commercial event however more importantly it is a space where social networks are strengthened between customers and salespeople and is also a space where information is exchanged.

3.4. Profiling Permanent Dwellers

3.4.1. Context of Data Collection

A detailed profiling of permanent dwellers was developed through meetings with the municipality who provided a general overview, informal chats with the dwellers and a quantitative analysis primarily based on 27 surveys (Annex 1), which was disseminated to dwellers in 2012 in Tibneen as part of the "Field Study of the Rural Agro-economy" course at AUB. The collected data provides a general overview of the socioeconomic conditions of the village and the perceptions and visions of the community members. Permanent residents of Tibneen are relatively low to middle income, with no signs of poverty. The respondents stated that they have sufficient food supply and are financially self-sufficient, with 19% receiving financial support from family members namely children working in Beirut or abroad (especially in the United States of America).

- *Level of Education*

The majority of the population in Tibneen is considered to be well educated, it

is very common to hear Tibneeners say that they have invested their money primarily in educating their children and grandchildren as one villager said “unlike nearby villages where dwellers invested their money in building castles or bigger homes”. This is common belief among dwellers; however no sufficient data is available about the level of education in Tibneen in comparison to the villages in its vicinities. The data shows that 84% of the respondents went to school and reached the Baccalaureate level, mainly the school of Tibneen, which was in the historic core and was recently demolished.

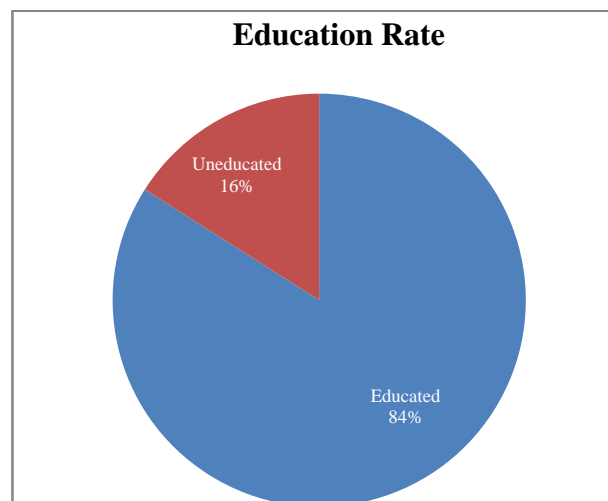


Fig.17. Level of educated vs. uneducated permanent dwellers

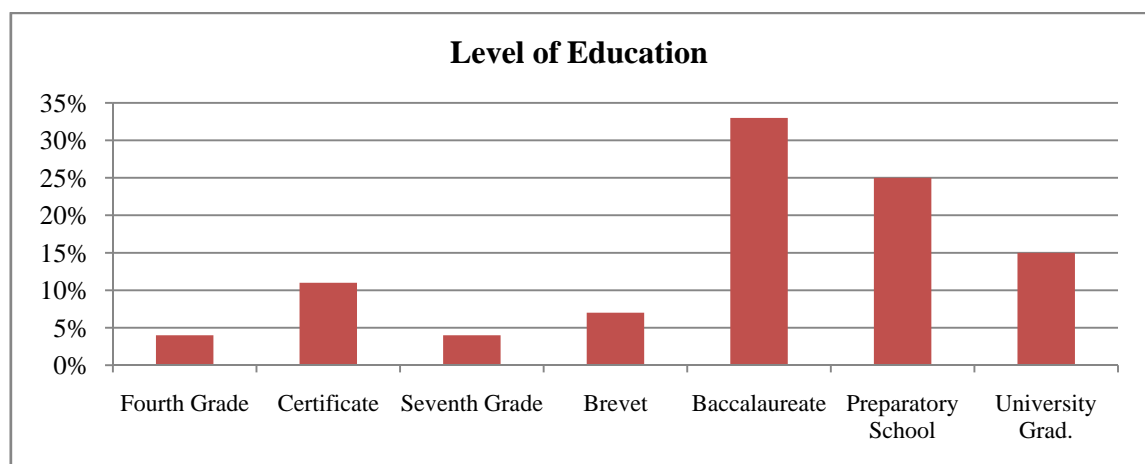


Fig.18. Levels of education of permanent dwellers in Tibneen

- *Level of Employment*

While the level of literacy is relatively high in the village, Tibneen suffers from a considerably high rate of unemployment reaching to 42% while the other 58% are employed in the public and private sectors. This was a major issue that the respondents discussed, stating that no efforts are being done to generate employment especially for the young men who “have nothing to do all day” as one respondent explained.

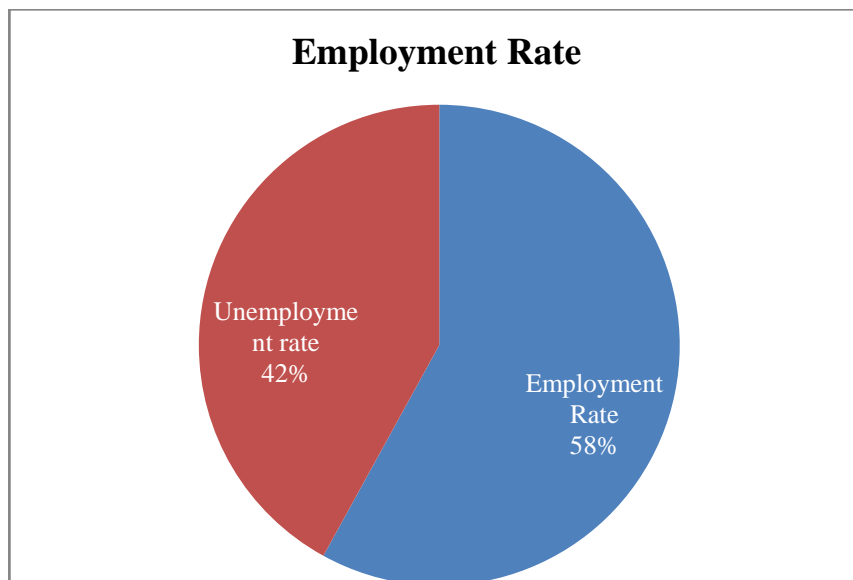


Fig.19. Levels of employment vs.unemployment in Tibneen

- *Health Sector*

Tibneen hosts a major governmental hospital which was recently renovated, however only 15% of the respondents go to Tibneen hospital in cases of illness while 12% go to Bint Jbeil hospital which is 10-15 minutes away and the rest go to Tyr or Beirut. Most of the respondents attributed this to the lack of sufficient high quality health services at the Tibneen hospital stating that they didn't really trust it and would rather go to other hospitals.

- *Agricultural Sector*

As mentioned above the agricultural sector presents a great potential for local economic development, as 66% of the lands in Tibneen are used for agricultural produce (Oweida 2005). Furthermore 35% of the respondents own agricultural lands, and 19% rent agricultural lands. The data shows a lack of investment in this sector for income generation as 23% of the respondents rely on agriculture, half of which do not receive sufficient income from this sector, while 72% rely on income from the public or private sector. All of the respondents attributed the major reasons of the underdevelopment in this sector to the lack of water or governmental support. The questionnaires show a diversity in the types of crops planted in Tibneen including: Water melon, tomato, chickpeas, lentils, melons, wheat, zucchini, cucumber, olives, potato, persil, lettuce, zaafaran, mint, and green tea. It is important to note that there are other crops planted in Tibneen however the report is limited to the 27 respondents. These include olives, grapes, pomegranate, lemon, mandarin orange, figs, and plums and others.

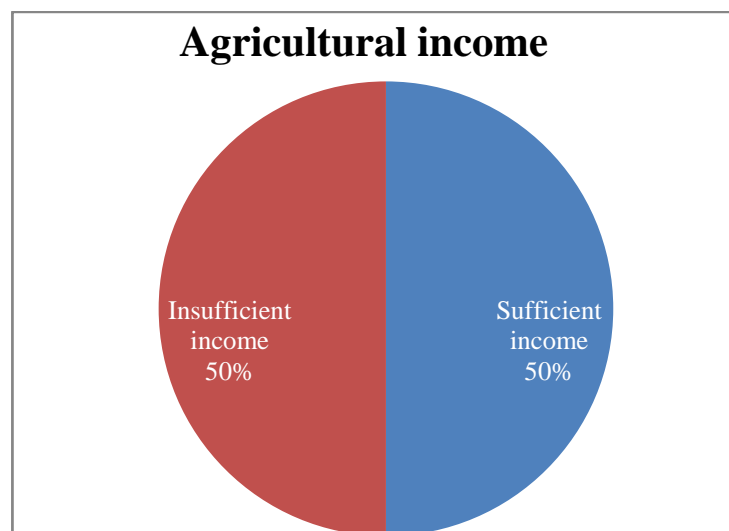


Fig.20. Half of the investors in agriculture in Tibneen receive sufficient income from this sector

- *Housing*

In terms of housing the questionnaire gathered information from all areas in Tibneen such as the Mashrou' area, Berry Hara, Christian area, Ayta Jabal road, Korami area, KHALLET Hassan, Upper Hara, Saha area, Sarai area, Al Hosn area, hospital area, Kazdoura area. The average house size in Tibneen is 235.6m², while the average household size is 5 residents per house, thus the average is 47m²/person which shows that there are no alarming indicators for housing supply. The inequality in house sizes in Tibneen indicates that the respondents or residents in Tibneen are low to middle income families. The type of housing structures ranges from old brick houses, concrete surfaced houses all of which are in relatively good condition. Most of the houses are ground floor houses and the major problems stated in housing was that they were small, destructed after the 2006 war and had no sufficient water supply. All respondents stated that they buy water for household consumption paying 35000 L.L. per tank.

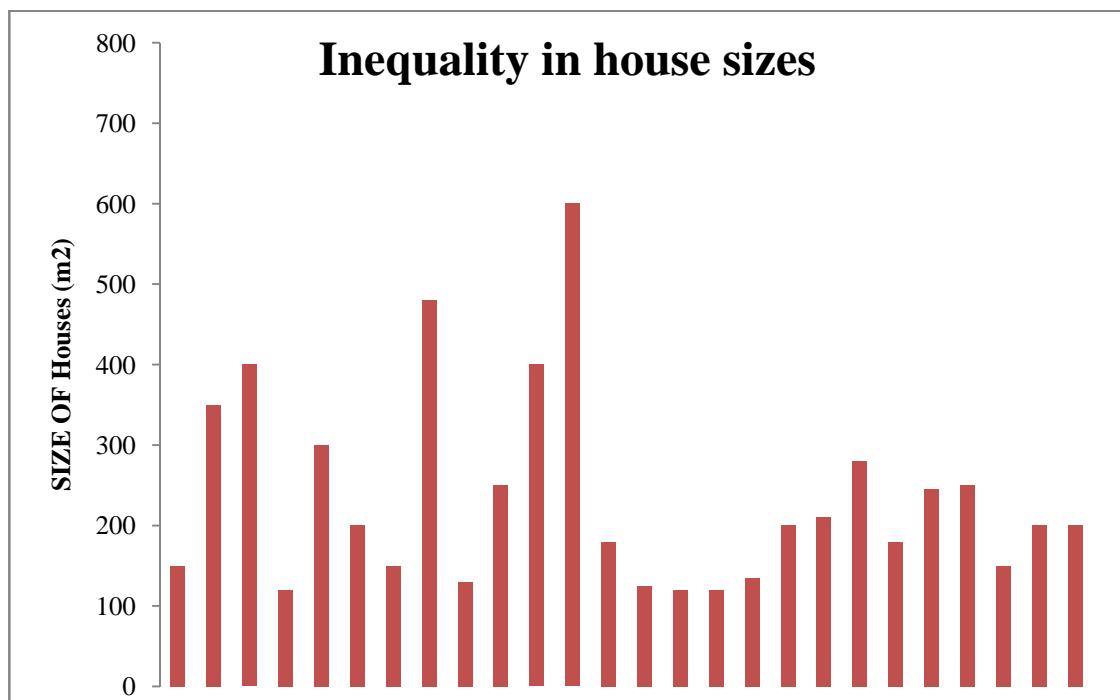


Fig.21. Data about house in Tibneen shows an inequality in house size

- *Recreation and Leisure Sector*

In terms of recreation the majority of respondents spent their time socializing in the Saray saha, whereby neighbors set up chairs informally to socialize. The Mashrou' presented a key area for recreation in the village whereby 24% stated that they visit the Mashrou almost on daily basis as there are spaces where families can gather to socialize or have a picnic or while keeping an eye on their kids, the space is also used for sports. The Qalaa is used for recreation only by 17% however it is visited less frequently (1 to 2 times per month) as the space is inadequate in terms of safety for children, food services, and accessibility. The Hosn is visited by 13% as it remains inaccessible for public use and could be enhanced to host more socialization. The public park which has mainly games for kids is visited only by 8% as the municipality hired someone to take care of the park but the dwellers claim that "he is paid but rarely shows up, and thus the park is closed most of the times, furthermore the games are not safe for kids to use." As for Alkashef restaurant, it is visited by 13% of dwellers who stated it was too expensive, the restaurant relies mostly on expats, weekenders and regional tourists who mostly during the summer and on weekends.

- *Visions for the Future*

In terms of visions for Tibneen 81%, viewed the village in the future as equally green and built while 19% saw it as a solely green village. When asked what Tibneeners wanted to preserve the majority (50%) saw the importance in preserving heritage and the environment while 27% gave the priority to preserving heritage only and the other 23% set the environment preservation as a priority.

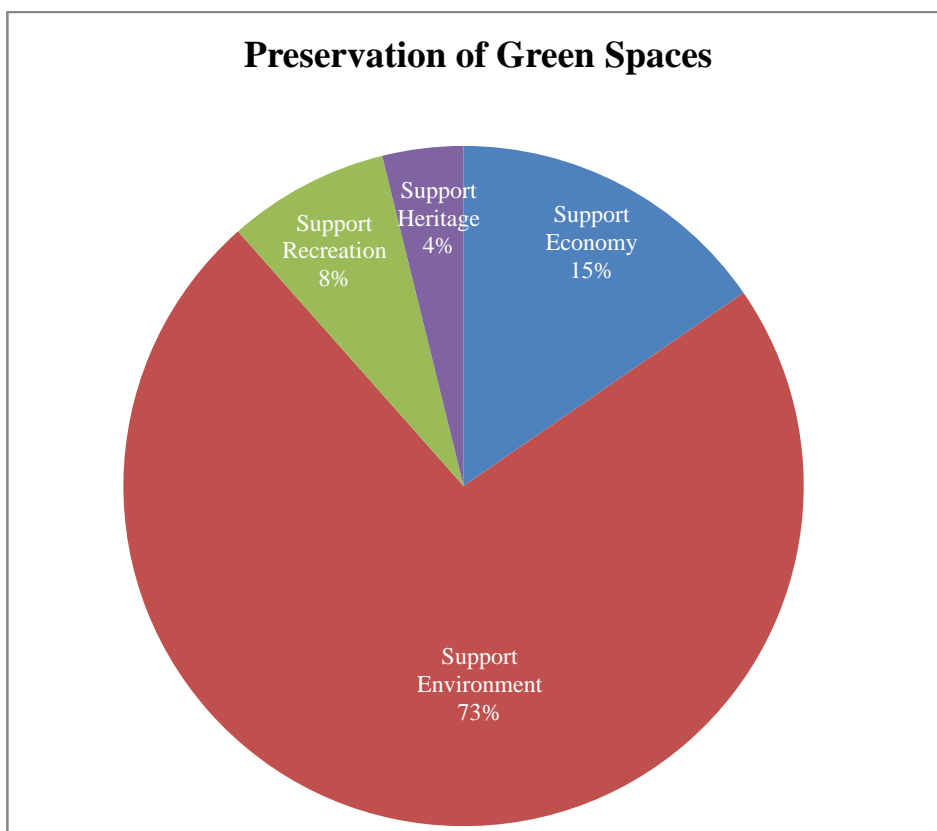


Fig.22. Chart showing why Tibneeners considered the preservation of green spaces to be important

When queried about the main reason to preserve the green spaces in Tibneen the majority (73%) stated that it was important to preserve these spaces to preserve the environment. To my surprise only 15% linked the preservation of green spaces to economic development. Based on the research, Tibneeners saw that agriculture in the village is neglected and hence in the lack of development and support for this sector they could not envision that the preservation of green spaces would encourage agricultural and economic development unless it is paralleled with schemes to develop this sector. Only 4% linked green space preservation to heritage and 8% saw the importance of preservation of green spaces as important to encourage recreation in the village.

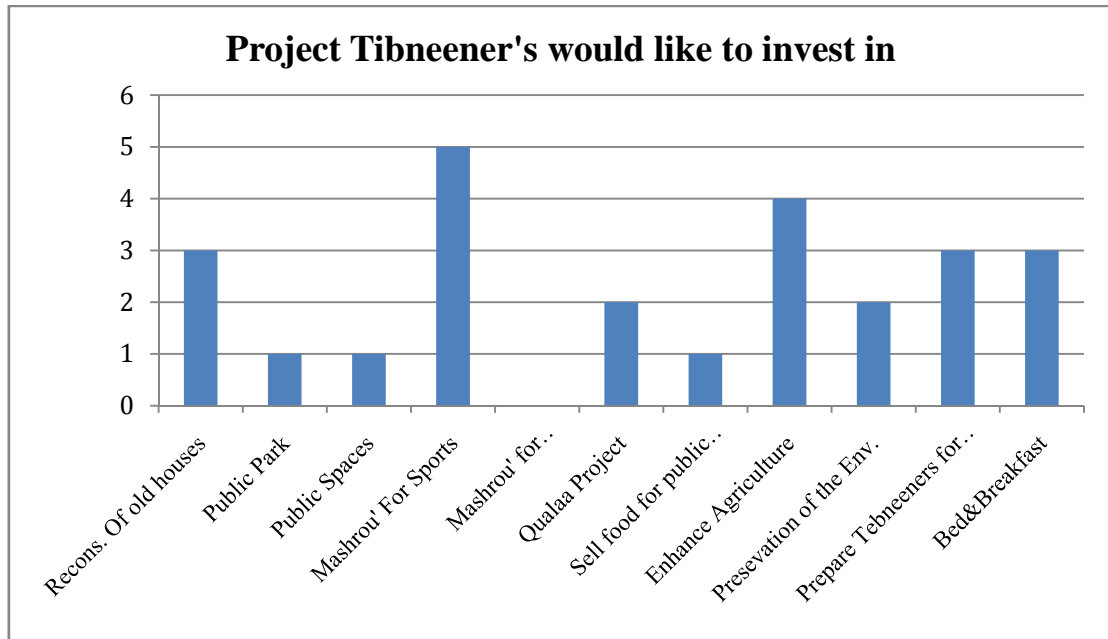


Fig.23. Data marking what projects Tibneeners consider important to invest in

When asked about the future projects which are considered necessary for the village most of the respondents (20%) were inclined for focusing activities and enhancing the Mashrou' to encourage sport practices through the space. Many also stressed on the importance of investing in agriculture for income generation (16%). While others supported the idea of establishing a bed and breakfast (12%), preparing Tibneeners for small businesses (12%), and the reconstruction of old houses (12%). Respondents also stated it was important to invest in events and enhance the Qalaa's accessibility for social use (8%) and the importance of environment preservation (8%). While the minority saw it is important to enhance the public park (4%), invest in more public spaces (4%) and provide food services in public spaces (4%).

3.5. Profiling Weekenders and Expatriates

3.5.1. Context of Data Collection

Profiling weekenders in Tibneen was mostly based on informal chats with

weekenders. Profiling expats in Tibneen who reside mainly in Michigan was primarily based on fieldwork and through an analysis of 6 Facebook groups created for Tibneen in order to understand their relation to Tibneen. As an online platform for social interaction, the groups link many of the Tibneeners living abroad who relate to the village as a space of memory and belonging. The Facebook groups show what the Tibneeners relate to most, the group with the highest number of members (645) is called: Tibneen, the land of memory, another group is named after the kazdoura, a third dedicated to the church of Tibneen, and other groups support the Tibneen basketball team. The photographs shared in all groups show old pictures of the village, family members, a cultural event in the Qalaa that took place in 2008, and the discussions show strong social ties and a yearning for Tibneen.

Tibnin Land of Memories Join

Wall Info Photos Events Video

Basic Info

Name: Tibnin Land of Memories
 Category: Organizations – Community Organizations
 Description: Tibnin is a Group formed to support the website www.tibninouncil.com this group shell act as a link between all families. So if you love Tibnin this is the place for you!
 Privacy Type: Open: All content is public.

Contact Info

Email: info@tibninouncil.com
 Website: <http://www.tibninouncil.com>
 Office:
 Location: Tireman, Dearborn, MI

Recent News

News:

الذين قرية عشية قديمة العهد (332 ق. م) - الرابع حتى ثمة بين والذين، تمثيها اللغة وغيرها الحسن. وقبل عنها في التاريخ لها لعل على بالذين بين اسبق وسور. الرابع 700 مار عن سطح البحر، واتعد 120 كيلومترا عن بيروت. عدد سكانها 16 الف شخص بين حريم ومطرب. ولعمروها 800 منزل.

تعدنا شرقا سفد الطويح ورحميت وخرما حاريس وشمالا الشطانية وجنوبا حينا حول وبيت جاحون.

تشكل اسمها من كلمة "التي" الأرامية وجمعها الذين اي مبان، والمعنى المواقع القدير. وهي في حرمها الحالي امتداد لمكان بناء منزلها قديما في منطقة سابق القرية الحالية لثة اللغة شرقا.

يراد اسم الذين بقلتها وحصلها للتاريخيين، فقلتها من اولى القلاع التي بنيت في جبل عمان. ويذكر ان الملك الازمي حزائيل بن بحداد كان اول من اسسها مطلع عام 850 ق. م. حينما وصل بطرحته في فلسطين بهدف الاستيلاء على طرق التجارة القديمة لغزو والسيطرة على ان وسفها الامور الرومي هويج ده مسانك اومير عام 1105 م فأعاد ترميمها وطلق عليها عام 1107 اسم قلعة "شورون" ومعداة قلعة المنعزلة ذات البناء القشيء والبارز من موقده، والتداعها مغللا لغزو صبور. واستمرت امارة للتسيبيين حتى سقوطها في يد صلاح الدين الايوبي على اثر معركة حطين المشهورة عام 1187 حينما لهتها الاميرطور الجرماني فريدريك الثاني ثم عاد واحتفظ بها التسيبيون الى ان تحررت عام 1266 على يد السلطان المشوكي الظاهر بيبرس، وسولا الى عهد الامير اسبل وولده التسيبيء، ثم ابي محمد الذي بنى برجها الغربي وولده محمد بك.

Admins

- Monzer Fawaz
- Ali Berry
- Ali Fawaz (Detroit, MI)
- Ahmad Fawaz (creator)

Officers

Ali Berry
 officer in charge

Kamila Dakroub (Columbia College)
 officer in charge of... what ever she want's

Tarick Salmaci (Los Angeles, CA)

Fig.24. A Facebook group by expatriates residing in the US called “Tibneen Land of Memories.” The group supports the Tibneen Council in Dearborn, Michigan. Photos and wall posts show social and political relations to the area.



Fig.25. Wall posts from groups discussing the famous Kazdoura in Tibneen and Al Kashef restaurant where expatriates/weekenders/others socialize

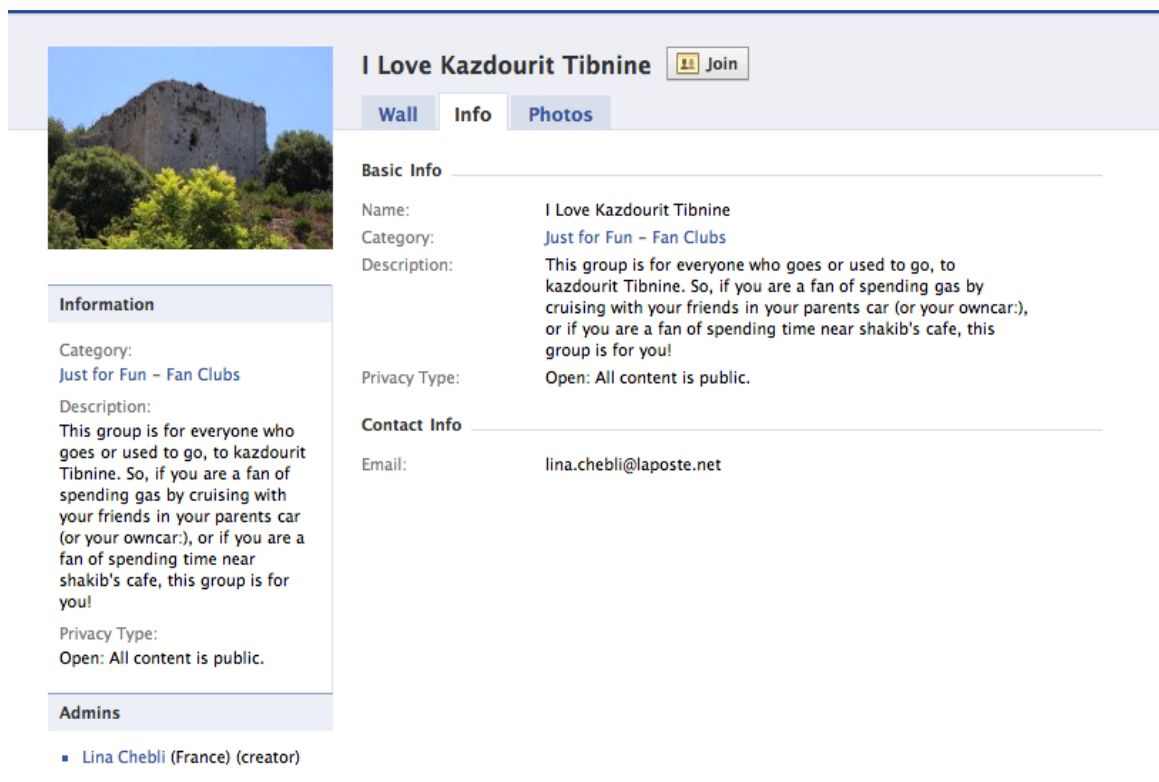


Fig.26. Another facebook group discussing the Kazdoura in Tibneen. The group has 115 member.



Fig.27. An old photo posted on Facebook takes pride in the olive trees in Tibneen and shows an attachment to an imagined landscape heritage

Weekenders who live in Beirut strongly relate to the village as a place of memory, belonging, and a breathing space away from the stressful busy city they dwell in. Many weekenders have studied in the school of Tibneen and expressed the desire for their children to share the same relationship to the village that they “come from and belong to”. Analysis of data shared on Facebook also reveals a strong diaspora for Tibneen. Expatriates relate to the Qalaa in Tibneen and remember events that took place there; they share memories of social networking in the Kazdoura, and relate to the landscape heritage of the place.

However, many of the weekenders and expatriates expressed concerns about visiting the village more often on weekends or prolonged stays. First of all, most of them do not have a place to stay and stated that if they had comfortable accommodation

they would visit more often. Second, the lack of recreational spaces and activities also affected their decision to visit. As many stated that after staying there for more than one day: “it simply gets boring, other than family visits and perhaps Al Kashef restaurant, there is nothing much to do”.

3.6. Regional Institutional Map of Actors

To articulate a sustainable rural tourism vision for the village of Tibneen it is key to clearly identify and define the institutional actors, which operate on the local, regional, and national level within this context. Mapping these actors would show the potential of involving them in the vision as the institutions with a “say” in this context or highlight gaps in the institutional setups requiring an intervention to encourage a sustainable tourism strategy in Tibneen.

3.6.1. Local/Regional Actors

- *Tibneen Municipality*

The Tibneen Municipality is located in the institutional hub of the village. The president of the municipality, N. Fawaz, is actively working on consultations and projects for the development of the village. Members include representatives of political parties in the village, active actors in the village and a professor from the American University of Beirut, Dr. Fawaz. The municipality is responsible for ensuring that development in the village abides by the master plan however due to weaknesses in the developed master plan the municipality has been involved in various negotiations regarding the master plan. The municipality is also responsible for providing adequate infrastructure, providing building permits, and has been involved in various projects/initiatives in the village.

- *The Union of Municipalities: Al-Qalaa*

Municipalities enjoy independence in administrative and financial issues however in most villages in Lebanon lack sufficient funding or human resources which would allow them to operate to their full capacity. The municipal law provides the municipalities with the right to develop their own master plan, designs, and regulations in coordination with the DGUP (UNHabitat 2011, 16). The municipality assigns a consultant to provide the plan, which is to be approved by the CDR and in most cases with the support of the DGU especially for funds. It is key to note that the level of involvement of the municipalities in the process of designing the master plan differs in each specific context. More efforts have been done in Lebanon to empower municipalities encouraging decentralization especially by international organizations such as the UN, World Bank, and others. Tibneen is part of the Union of Municipalities of Qalaa which also includes villages in its vicinities: Kafra, Haris, Aita Al Jabal, Safad El Battikh, Gmaygmeh, Deir Ntar, Kfardounin and Qalaway. The head of the Union of the municipalities is the mayor of Tibneen, which is a key asset.

- *Donor Agencies*

Today the key donors for projects currently taking place in Tibneen are the Kuwait, France, and Saudi Arabia. France is funded a project to provide electricity for the Sarai through solar energy. Saudi Arabia funded the creation of the cultural center in Tibneen. The Kuwaiti fund is also behind two upcoming projects to rehabilitate the Qalaa and develop the sewer system in Tibneen, and an artesian well, which has been implemented.

- *Non-governmental Organizations*

Two NGOs have been identified as successful and active actors in the villages. The first is the Alpha Association, which has activated the citadel in a large scale event

with the support of the French Cultural Center, French Military Force, Caritas, World vision, and the European Union. The second NGO, Tomorrow's Tibneen (Shabab Al Ghad) for youth empowerments was initiated by a local, Mr. Hassan Khazaal and has achieved various small-scale recreational, environmental preservation, sports, educational development, and cultural promotion activities. Tomorrow's Tibneen also publishes a newsletter for its projects.

3.6.2. National Agencies

3.6.2.1. Council for Reconstruction and Development (CDR)

The CDR, which reports directly to the Council of Ministers was first established to devise a master plan for Lebanon. Today, the CDR is responsible for devising plans and drafts which address reconstruction, economic and social development to be proposed to the council of ministers. The CDR provides the general framework of urban planning in Lebanon and implements projects by the ministries and public institutions. (UNHabitat 2011, 16) The CDR works closely with consultancy firms and international organizations. The CDR is currently very active in Tibneen as it is involved in many projects in the village especially that the vice president of the CDR is from Tibneen and dedicated to its development.

The projects include:

- A cultural center, which is funded by Saudi Arabia and is currently under construction
- Rebuilding the school in Tibneen which has been marked for demolishment due to poor conditions by the government.
- A study of the Qalaa for a planned rehabilitation for the Qalaa which is funded by the Kuwait and has started one month ago.

- Sewer system project funded by the Kuwaiti Fund.

3.6.2.2. Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGU)

The Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGU) was created by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport. The DGU is responsible for drafting legislative and regulatory texts in relation to urban planning. The texts are then presented to the Council of Urban planning for approval. (UN-Habitat 2011, 16) The DGU is also responsible for the development of master plans, designs and land use/parcellation, which is mostly conducted by consultants. All drafts receive the final approval from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The Ministry of Public Works has recently funded an 800 000\$ project to rehabilitate the Sarai in Tibneen.

3.6.2.3. Ministries

Theoretically, the Ministry of Tourism would be the ideal institution to involve for a sustainable tourism vision addressing Tibneen. However, the ministry is only visible in Tibneen through the signage at the main entrance to the Citadel marking it as a national tourism site. The ministry has not shown efforts to develop tourism sites in Tibneen however should be mentioned as the actor who is responsible for the sites and should be involved for support and approval. Other institutions would be the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Interiors and the Ministry of Environment.

3.6.2.4. The Council of South Lebanon

The Council of South Lebanon was established after the war on Lebanon to ensure infrastructure development in the South and minimize the devastations caused by the war. While the Council of South Lebanon was very active in the past in terms of

rehabilitation, reconstruction and providing infrastructure, it is less active today namely due to a lack of sufficient funds.

CHAPTER 4

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TIBNEEN: LOCAL ASSETS

One of the main principles of sustainable tourist development is to build on existing assets in the area where it is being introduced in order to strengthen their role and hold with the local communities. In this chapter, I analyze four main assets in the context of Tibneen that I believe respond to the main criteria of sustainable rural tourism. These are (4.1) the Friday Souk, (4.2) The citadel (Qalaa) and old core, (4.3) recreation and local entrepreneurs, (4.4) the green project (Al Mashrou' Al Akhdar).

As noted in the introduction, my selection of “local” assets doesn’t limit their reach to the municipal boundaries of Tibneen. The assets will be analyzed in terms of the interested stakeholders, their primary value, main assets, challenges, and institutions. Each of these entry points is also investigated at the actual “scale” in which it operates, meaning in relation to existing and possible linkages it can draw in the area where it is located. This is shown through Figure 28 below, which provides a primary comparative analysis of local assets.

This section starts by providing an overview of key economic interactions that happen in Tibneen and its vicinities in order to explore assets of sustainable tourism development and propose ways to strengthen these linkages to reinforce the role of local entrepreneurs towards local economic development.

Analysis of Local Assets in Tibneen:

SITE	Souk El Jomaa	Crusaders Castle & Historic Core	Recreation Sector & Local Entrepreneurs	Mashrou Al Akhdar
Who Is it Important to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Sales people and customers from surrounding villages. . Local community . Expats & Weekenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . National & regional tourists . Local community . Expats & Weekenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Local entrepreneurs . Regional tourists . Local community . Expats & Weekenders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Regional tourists . Local community . Expats & Weekenders . UNIFIL Camp
Primary Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Economic . Social landmark . Historical trading practice in the region . Run entirely by local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Archeological site . Site of built, cultural and living heritage . Social memory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Recreational . Local entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Green reserve . Recreation Site
Main Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Linkages & networks of regional salespeople, customers & products . Potential to develop local production . Space for social and information exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . One Urban Element: Site of cultural, archeological, recreational tourism, rural heritage & social interaction . Encourage greening, accommodation sector, local production, pedestrian roads, tourism marketing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Institutions, restaurants, local souk, local production (Cultural artifacts/local gastronomy) . Encouraging sectors: Services, Cultural, heritage, accommodation, recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Most visited site by local for recreation . Sports: Walking, Running, Biking . Environmental preservation
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Seasonal Changes: Decrease in sales during winter . Products exported mostly from China & previously Syria . Weak business development skills and knowhow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Political/Social interference in Events . Physical condition of the Qalaa . Least visited site for recreation by the local community . Locals leaving old historic core / deserting/renting out properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Unstable political situation/ social norms could hinder business development . Seasonal changes: Decrease sales . Lack of investments training, funding, incentivizing policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Accessed by cars . Access road: too narrow to accommodate pedestrians & cars . Weak safety and design features to accommodate children/families for recreation & sports
Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Tibneen Municipality . Souk Committee & Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Tibneen Municipality . DGA & DGU . Ministry of Tourism & Education . Residents of area of archeological importance, active community, NGOs & international organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Tibneen Municipality . Local Entrepreneurs . Expats, Weekenders & Regional Tourists . Residents of the old historic core active community, NGOs & international organizations, Experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Tibneen Municipality . Ministry of agriculture . UNIFIL & Red Cross . Users of the Mashrou: Expats, Weekenders & Regional Tourists
Scale	Regional	National	Regional	Local

Fig.28. Comparative table analyzing the identified local assets in Tibneen

4.1. The Friday Souk

The Friday Souk in Tibneen is part of a historic tradition in the region whereby salespersons mark their own spaces in the main village square, creating a route where customers can stroll by, shop, and socialize. The souk brings a unique verve to various villages across the South, with a regional dependency attracting clientele from other villages who visit throughout the year as well as seasonal expats/weekenders who visit mostly in the summer and identify the souk as one of the main social landmarks in the area. The souk brings in a range of international products, however also encourages local production and business startups, which could feed into sustainable tourism development. The Souk is important as it is entirely run by the local community, has important linkages to other sectors and is known to attract tourists and thus responds to the criteria of sustainable rural tourism.



Fig.29. The Friday Souk

4.1.1. Outline of a Historical Trading Practice

Many villages in South and South/East Lebanon maintain a tradition of the “souk” or weekly market in which temporary stands are set-up to serve the needs of a local community. Souks take place in different villages in the South each day of the week. The souk is setup on Mondays in Nabatiyeh and Chakra, on Tuesdays in Haris and Deir Ntar, on Wednesdays in Meis, Bazuriyeh, Tibeh and Baraachit, on Thursdays in Khiyam and Bint Jbeil, on Fridays in Tibneen and Abbasiyeh, on Saturdays in Khiyam and Majdal Silim, on Sundays in Qana and Aaitaroun and Jowayyah, on Mondays in Nabatiyeh and Chakra, on Tuesdays in Haris and Deir Ntar, on Wednesdays in Meis, Bazuriyeh, Tibeh and Baraachit, on Thursdays in Khiyam and Bint Jbeil, on Fridays in Tibneen and Abbasiyeh, on Saturdays in Khiyam and Majdal Silim, on Sundays in Qana and Majdal Silem (Figure30).

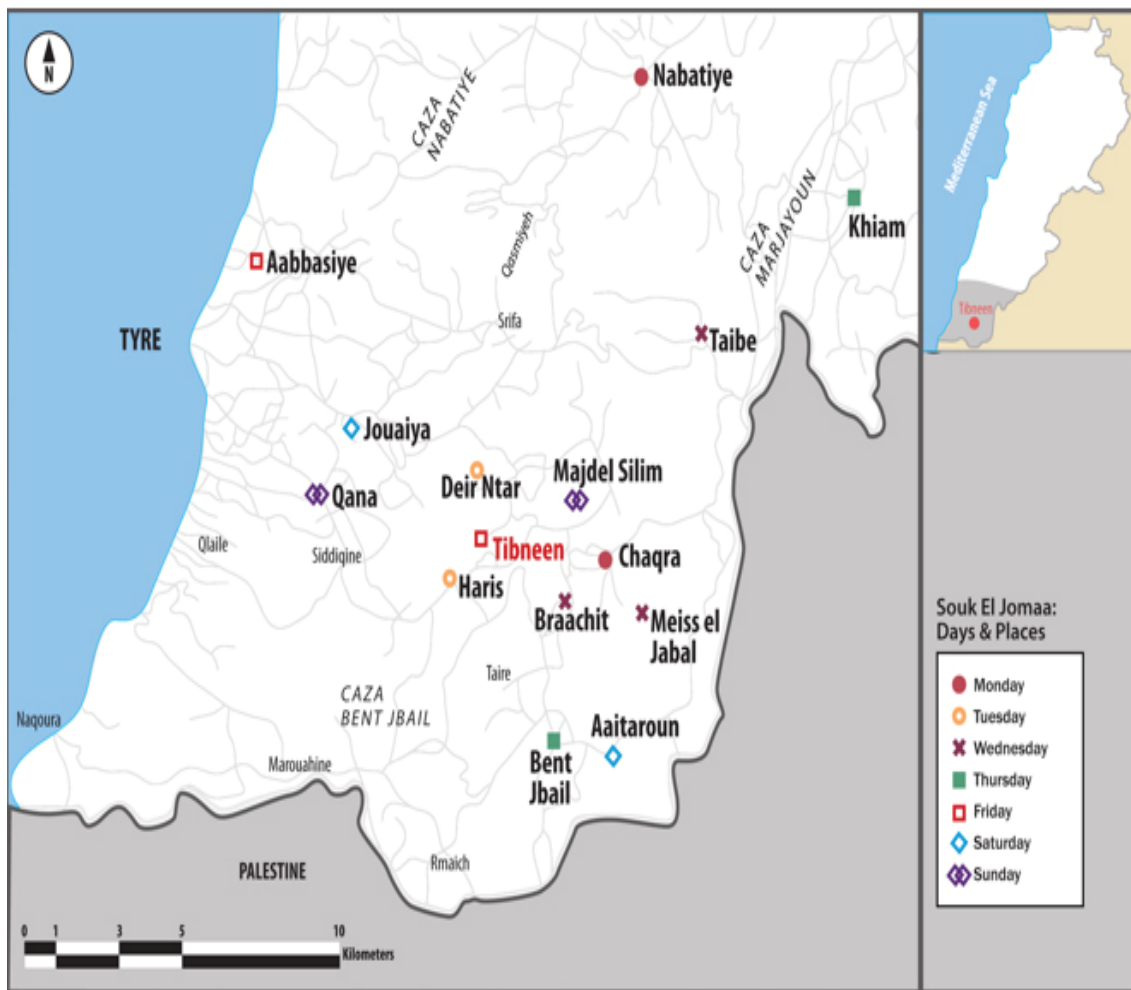


Fig.30. Mapping the regional markets
Map highlighting the 16 villages where the Souk takes place on different days of the week in South Lebanon.

Sales people come from various villages across the South, such as Chakra, Haris, Bint Jbeil, Gomaygmeh, Siddiqine, Deir Ntar, Jouaia, Rmadiye, Nabatiyyeh, Mjadel, Mahrouna, Chhabiyyeh, Qabrikha, Toulin, Kounine, Baffliye, Deir Kifa, Kafra, Khirbet Silem, Ain Baal, Qaaqaaiyet El Jisr, and Aaitaroun. The souk also attracts clients from different areas in the South, whether they are coming to the village as a result of the souk and/or whether they combine other errands to a visit to the south. For example, several respondents explained that they visit the souk in Tibneen on Fridays because it is located near the institutional hub where they were going. My mapping of the Souk was conducted first informally as a visitor in the summers of 2011/2012 and more systematic mapping was conducted through 4 consecutive visits to the souk in October 2012. The fieldwork included speaking to approximately 45 people, including salesmen and customers. Finally more detailed interviews were conducted with a member of the Souk committee and the municipality officer who supervises and maintains the link between the Souk and the municipality.

My mapping of souk users indicates that the Tibneen souk extends over a wide radius on the regional and national levels. While the majority of clients in the souk come from Tibneen, local estimates place the ratio of clients coming from other villages to be about 50%. These villages include: Bint Jbeil, Chakra, Safad el Batikh, Haris, Sultaniyyeh, Deir Ntar, Haddata, Ayta, Kuneen, Deir Ames, Beit Yahun, and other villages within that same perimeter.

The products sold in the Friday Souk include stationary, clothes, fashion accessories, shoes, home products, textiles, fruits and vegetables, spices, cultural artifacts, etc. Tracing the source of these products is essential to identify local production sectors, which may need to be strengthened through their access to the souk.

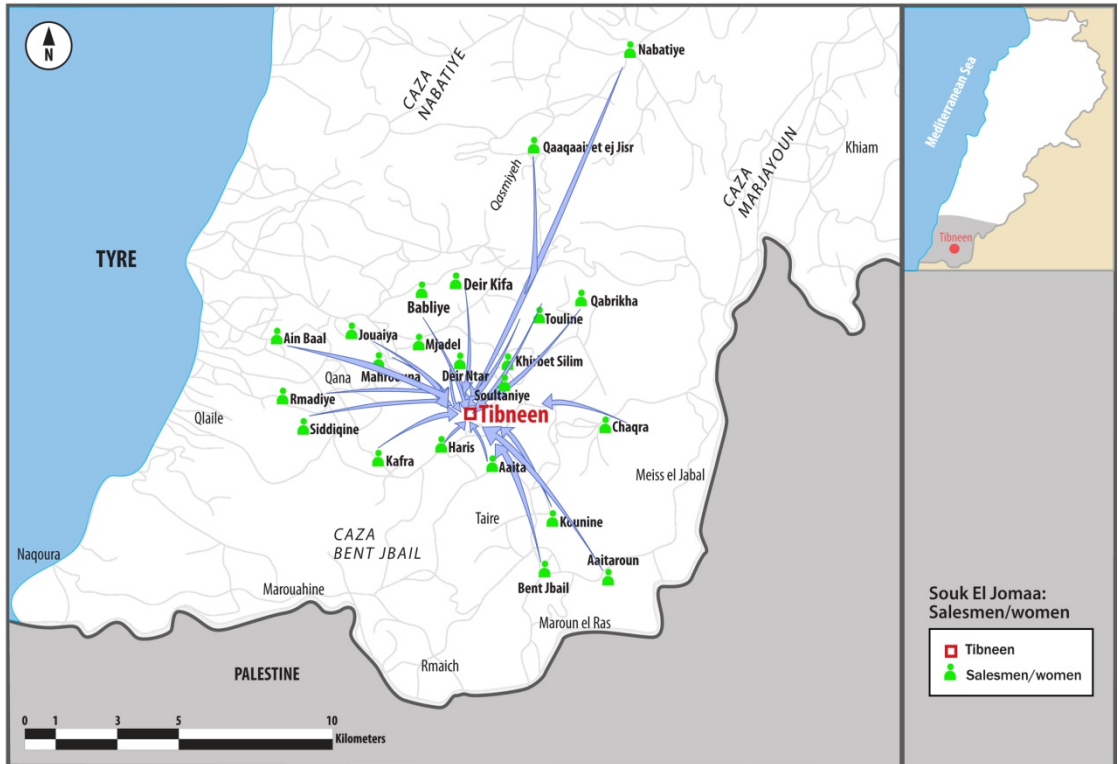


Fig.31. Salesmen/women in Tibneen Market
 Map showing villages where salesmen/women come from to Souk El Jomaa in Tibneen

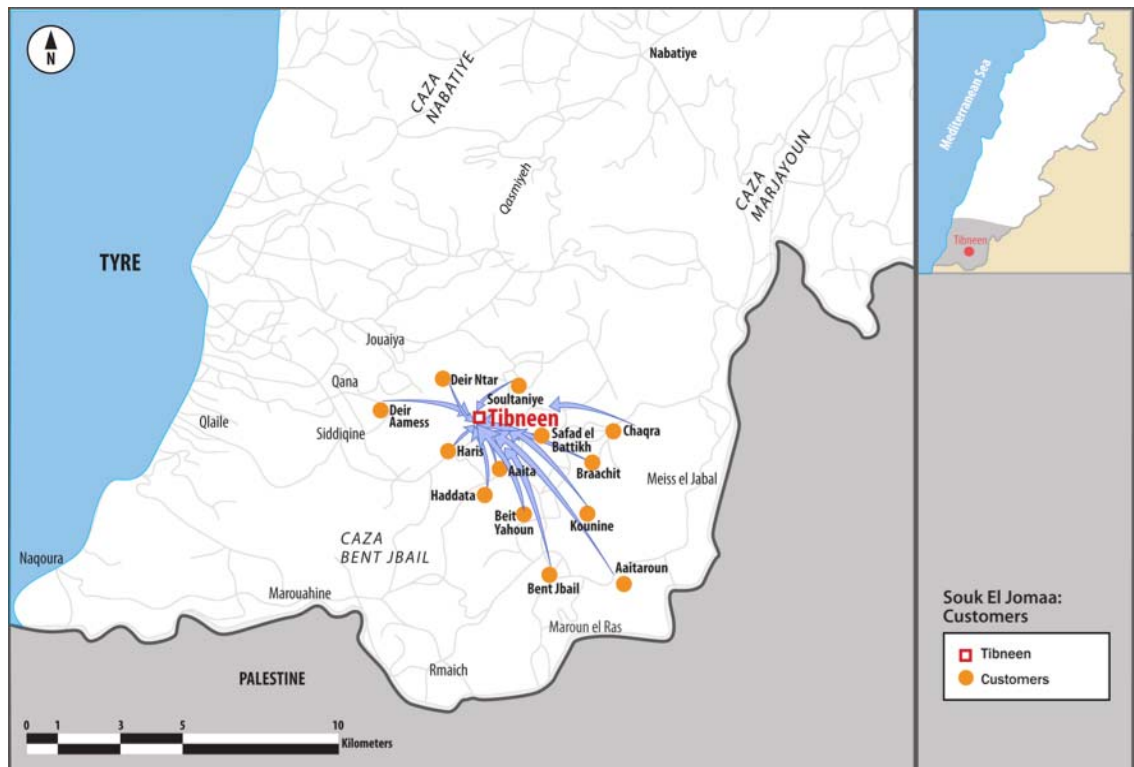


Fig.32. Customers in the Tibneen Market
 Map showing villages where customers come from to Souk El Jomaa in Tibneen

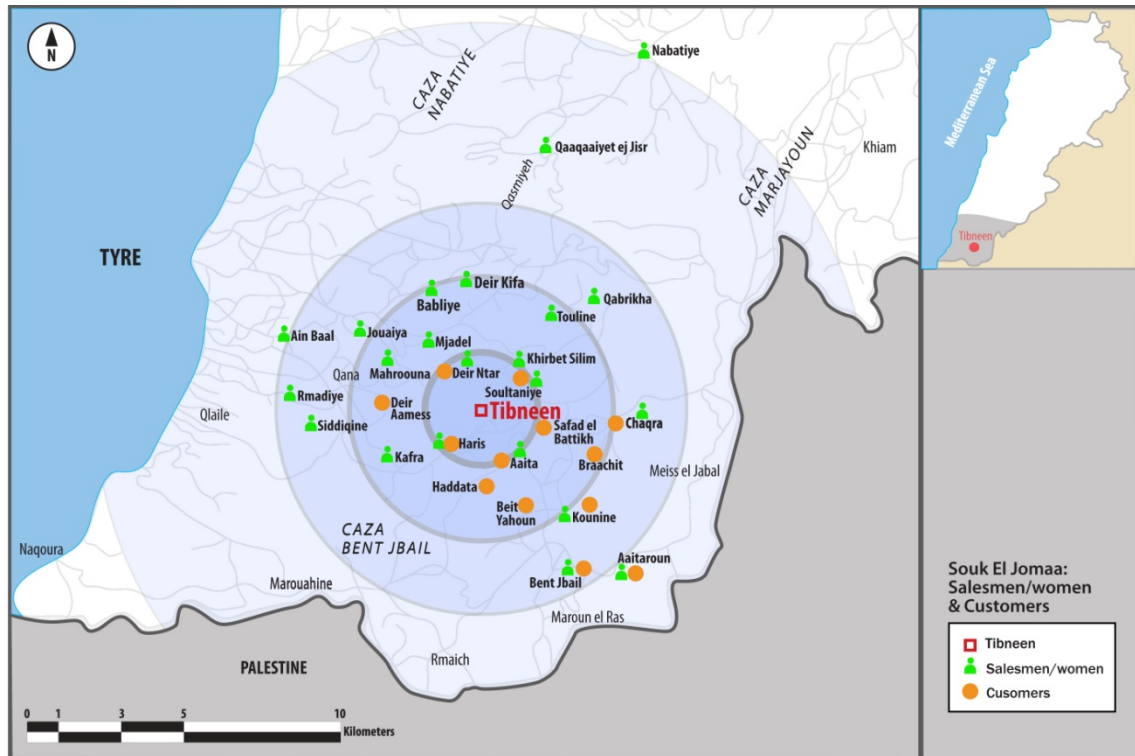


Fig.33. Salespersons and customers in the Tibneen Market
 Map showing the perimeter of salesmen and customers who flock to Souk El Jomaa in Tibneen

My fieldwork indicates that most products are from China, Syria, and a few are also imported from Turkey. With the recent political instability in Syria, many salespersons have ran out of products because they used to travel personally to Syria to purchase cheaper products but are currently incapable of doing that. At the national level the souk products are mostly purchased from wholesale stores in Tyr such as stationary and clothes, jewelry from Beirut, clothes from Bourj Hammoud, textiles from Dikweneh, shoes from Raml El Ali, and various products from the Southern and Eastern Suburbs of Beirut.

Most of the products that are produced in South Lebanon are cultural artifacts, textiles/clothing, and agricultural products. Clothing is produced in Nabatiyyeh and Jouaiya, while cultural artifacts are produced in Chaqra, Wadi Jilo and Babliyyeh.

Agricultural products come from various villages in the South. For instance: sesame from Majdel, Srifa and Siddiqin, Burghul from various villages, chickpeas, lentils and thyme from Siddiqine, Houla, Meis and Tireh, figs and peas from Kafra, and Freek from Naqura. The agricultural products are sold by more than one salesperson and thus while one salesman would sell a variety of fruits and vegetables another would sell a variety of peppers while an old woman would sell a limited amount of 5 products in very small quantities (Figure 34).

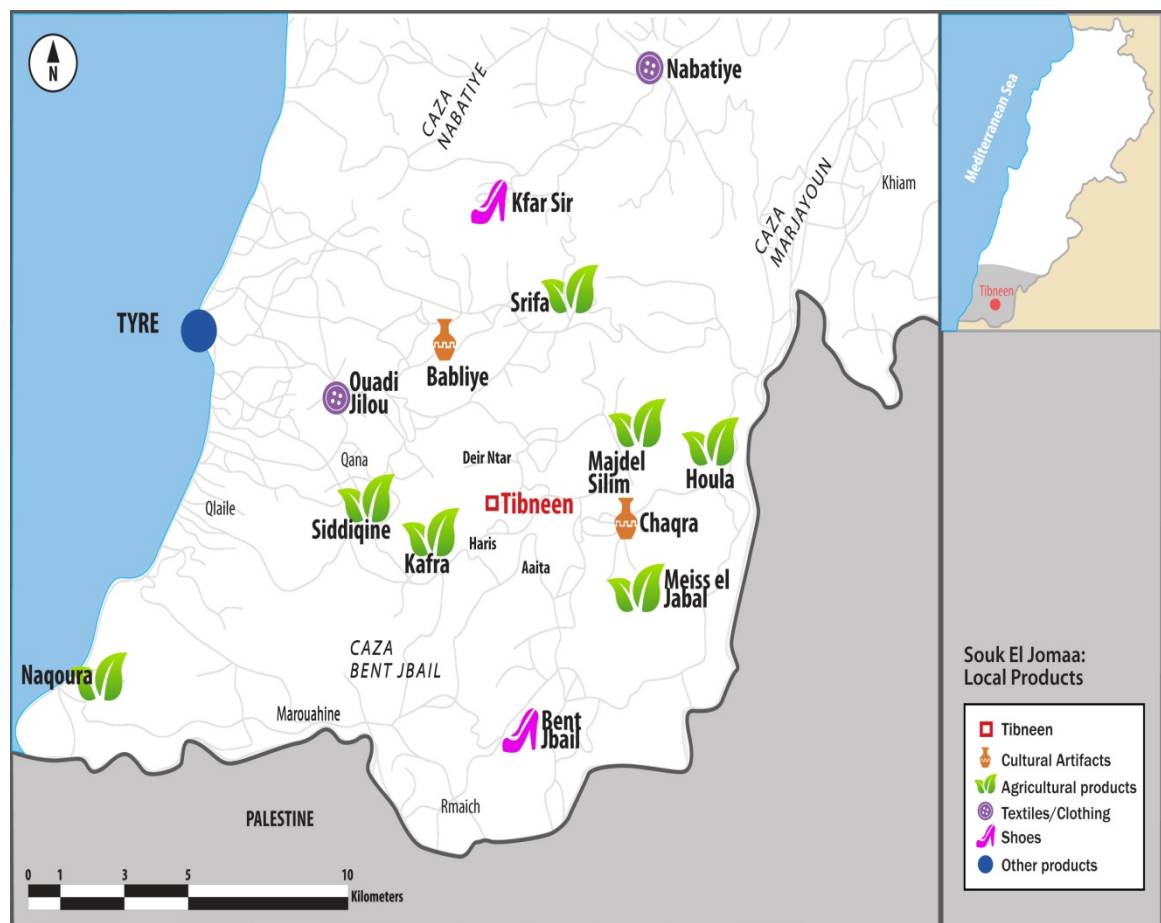


Fig.34. Mapping local products sold in the Friday Souk
 Map showing the sources and types of local products from South Lebanon sold in the souk

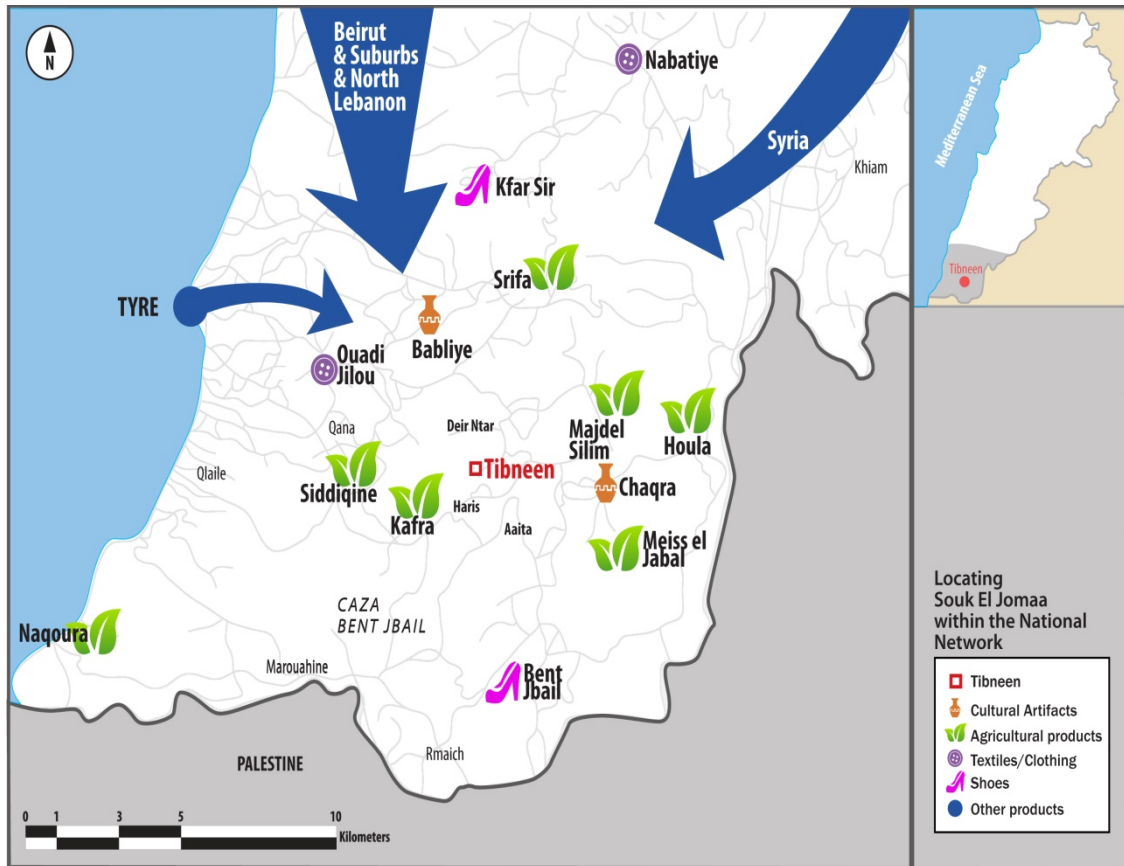


Fig.35. Locating Souk El Jomaa within the National Network
 Map showing the sources of local products sold in the souk on a national scale.

4.1.2. Stakeholders

Municipality

- As a primary stakeholder in Souk El Jomaa, the municipality assigns the spaces where the souk takes place. Moreover, the municipal police is responsible for solving problems that may arise in the souk. Direct interaction between the municipality and salesmen/women takes place on an individual basis, mostly to collect the fees for the rented space. The municipality's taxation committee is responsible for deciding on the fees, however committee members rarely meet in Tibneen. Instead, this responsibility is delegated to Mr. Zeineddine a municipal employee who visits the souk and decides on the fee based on the space taken. The minimum fee is LBP2000

according to the Lebanese government, however in Tibneen the amount varies between LBP2000-10000 according to Mr. Zeineddin's informal estimate.

Souk Committee and Members

- The souk has a committee with a leader and other members who are salesmen in the souk. According to the committee members, the committee is responsible for negotiations with the municipality and is also responsible for solving the salespersons' problems and organizing them spatially. The Souk committee leader, Mr. Ghaleb, was assigned and agreed on informally by members. However, although municipality members conceded that the committee solves problems informally for the souk members, they noted that the committee is not very effective and negotiations between the committee and the municipality rarely take place, as it is not viewed as an important counterpart.

4.1.3. Assets

The souk presents a key opportunity to encourage local production and strengthen regional economic linkages especially that it is entirely run by the local community and takes place on a regional level as shown from the map. The souk brings in a variety of products and becomes a space not only for purchase but also a space of social exchange and where information is exchanged. Expats and weekenders are familiar with the souk, which is embedded in the villagers' memory and traditions, while locals rely on the souk for affordable products. They are often friendly and familiar with the salespeople and sometimes make orders for specific products to be delivered the next week. From sales people to customers and products, the souk links people and products and taps on a regional and national network.

For instance for Abu Hadi, a salesman from Nabattiyeh who produces child

wear locally, the souk has become a space to market and advertise his brand which he sells at his store in Nabatiyyeh. Abu Hadi buys his textiles from the Abu Jawdeh factories in the eastern suburbs of Beirut to produce them for the south. While he also sells children's clothing which is made in Syria, he promotes his Lebanese make to his customers by pointing the higher quality of the products that should justify a slightly more expensive price. Abu Hadi breaks even in terms of profit due to the rise in sales during the summer, especially when expats and regional visitors enlarge the souks pool of clients. For the rest of the year, he still comes to the souk as it is necessary to maintain one's place/location in the souk, and remain within the social network, which he has historically been a part of as a member of the souk committee and among the salesmen who he knows.

4.1.4. Challenges

The souk faces three key challenges. First, the seasonal changes which affect sales namely during the wintertime when less expats and weekenders visit the south of Lebanon. Thus, many salesmen/women state that their sales decrease drastically during the winter season when expatriates leave the country and weekenders visit less. The municipality estimates the number of visitors to the Friday souk in the winter to 400 people (Mr. Zeineddine, Personal Interview 2012), while the garbage men also estimate that this number decreases by more than half in the winter, based on the weight of the garbage that remains after the souk which decreases by half in this season. Second, most of the products are either exported from Syria or China, thus leaving little room for local economic development. This is particularly problematic with the recent unstable political conditions in Syria, for many sellers are facing a key problem whereby they can no longer import products, which are much cheaper than locally produced ones. For

example, approaching a stand with a limited variety of products, the old saleswoman explained that she is broke because of the recent situation in Syria where she used to buy her products. Like most of the sellers in the souk, the lady explained that if she were to buy products locally, the price would be much higher and she won't be able to compete with others in the souk or make enough profit. Finally, many sales people have a lot of potential to grow but a weak knowhow for business development. For example, one of the sellers who has recently joined the souk was creating cultural artifacts, including pottery as it has been his passion and hobby. He however seemed to have little knowhow on how he could develop his work and market it. Walking in the Souk, I met another seller of artifacts seller who has been in the business for many years. Through word of mouth both sellers were introduced and they agreed to work together in a manner that becomes profitable for both. The newcomer would sell his basic handmade pottery in wholesale while the old salesman would perfect the objects through his talented painting and typographic skills.

4.1.5. Summary

The case of the Souk shows that this historical trading practice has a lot of potential to be strengthened on a regional level to strengthen the local economy. The exchange of information and strong social informal interaction within the Souk also presents a key potential to tap on the networks of the Souk and strengthen the exchange of information as a tool to develop local production and respond to a niche market of regional tourists. Given that an institution exists which runs the souk "Souk Committee", its role could also be adapted and strengthened to respond to the need for encouraging networking, local production, and marketing through the Souk.

4.2. The Citadel (Qalaa) and Old Core

Located in the heart of Tibneen, the Citadel dates back to the year 1105 and still stands above the rest of the town. The citadel offers a key archeological site that figures on many tourist books of Lebanon. The Qalaa operates on multiple scales, it is visited by Tibneeners, regional tourists, and expatriates albeit generally in moderate numbers. The Qalaa is disconnected from the historic core and both sites will be explored further below.

One of the main limitations in this research concerning the Qalaa is the missing number and detailed geography of the visitors. As the Qalaa is nearly empty during the winter when most of the fieldwork was conducted, and in the absence of a fulltime guard for the Qalaa it was hard to quantify or find out where the users come from.

4.2.1. A Space of History and Heritage

The Crusader Citadel marks the focal point around which urbanization historically took place and overlooks the historic core and the beautiful landscape surrounding Tibneen.

The historic core not only boasts the Qalaa but is also marked by the Zakouk, Hosn, cemetery, Saha, Mosque, Saray, and Church. The historic core was severely transformed due to the 2006 war on Lebanon when most houses in the Zakouk were demolished. Many houses were replaced by multi-story buildings, adopted the setbacks, hence contrasting with the typology and morphology of the street. Some of the houses were rebuilt to multi-story houses (up to 3 floors) and at least 4 houses were abandoned or rented out to Syrian workers. This area has also dramatically changed as politically influential families and public actors inserted changes in the physical environment changing the way the space is lived and perceived. For instance, a grand Mosque

replaced the old small Mosque, the old school was demolished and replaced by a public park, and the Sarai replaced the old village pond, which was known to be an informal social space.

The heritage in the Zakouk lies in the relatively small sizes of the lots (ranging from 100 to 200 m), the narrow width of the street, the previously contiguous houses, remaining old stone houses, and the relation of the street to the castle, mosque, and school. This combination creates unique visual relations and road perspectives that constitute key elements of the heritage of the space, as they narrate a historic way of life pertaining to this area. Furthermore, informal private planting practices (planting pots, vines) color some rooftops and balconies in the Zakouk and communicate a rich natural heritage that is worth being strengthened and preserved. Colorful chairs and sofas in the outdoors create dynamic flexible social spaces in the Zakouk and create urban furniture, which is unique to this area.



Fig.36. Greening practices in the Zakouk



Fig. 37. Chairs that make up the men's public space



Fig. 38. Sample of outdoor urban furniture

The old houses remaining in the historic core were documented in a research by Boustani and Al-Rez in 2012 and will be mentioned below for preservation and rehabilitation for SRT development. These houses were identified based on their strong presentation of a built heritage and conversations with their owners that showed a possibility of realistically implementing pilot projects through these properties.



Fig.39. Beit El Sheikh Taleb. The picture also shows the stationary store that is closed.

Beit El Sheikh Taleb: A one-story house at the beginning of the Zakouk. The house has a view to the Qalaa and also overlooks a garden got a neighboring house. This house is highlighted for potential rehabilitation.

Najat Al Farran's House: The house of a confident welcoming woman who created a museum inside her house with collectibles from her late husband. She expressed enthusiasm about welcoming any visitor in to see the museum. She also makes local olives and oil that she was having difficulty in selling. Thus her products could be displayed and sold in the proposed multifunctional plaza.

Beit Wardeh: An old stone house, which was demolished during the 2006 war is owned by Ms. Wardeh who also owns a Lebanese restaurant in Hamra. The owner agreed to rehabilitate her house if sufficient funding is provided and establish a motel, which provides a breakfast restaurant in the empty space at the entrance. This project is designed and will be discussed in further detail.

Mr. Ali's House: Mr. Ali works in the municipality and owns a house adjacent to Wardehs house. The property is not old however upon hearing plans to develop the area he was encouraged and stated: "I have my own house in Tibneen and I'm willing to use this property for any proposal that feeds into the development of the village, be it a motel or renting out shops."

Beit El Haddad: A demolished house located on the stairways of the alternative pedestrian path linking the Hosn to the Zakouk. Behind the closed door is an abandoned garden and an old room. Neighbors explained that the owners are expatriates who had planted it and left it open for anyone to walk in.

El Faour Lots: The Faour family also owns a lot with demolished houses. A small land where a house was demolished during the war is now planted with several crops for personal home use. The owner also agreed to invest in the neighboring land as

a space providing services for expats.

Dibeh Aoun and Sikneh's Houses: The oldest two houses in the area identified for rehabilitation. Mrs. Aoun lives in the house with her 3 sons, and cannot afford to rehabilitate her house. The ground floor of the house is rented out to a Syrian family and the interior of the house is currently in a very bad condition.



Fig.40. The garden planted by Al Faour



Fig.41. Dibeh Aoun and Siknehs House

4.2.2. Stakeholders

Directorate General of Antiquities

- Directorate General of Antiquities (DGA), a unit under the Ministry of Culture in Lebanon, is legally responsible for the archeological site. However, according to the Tibneen municipality, the DGA has shown little efforts or involvement in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding maintenance, preservation and rehabilitation of the site to make it more accessible especially for tourists.

Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Education

- The Ministry of Tourism is an important stakeholder as the signage posted on the entrance to the Qalaa claims it as a national tourism site. However, the ministry has only been involved in supporting festivals or yearly events that take place there. According to the organizer of the summer festival of 2012, the Ministry of Education is also a key stakeholder and is entitled to give permission and interfere with events that take place in the Qalaa.

Directorate General of Urbanism (DGU)

- The DGU is responsible for the zoning in Tibneen and the building regulations. The DGU has approved the master plan for Tibneen in 2005, which zones the area of the citadel as an archeological site. However, the DGU marked a zone near the citadel as residential, which not only affects the view of the Qalaa but also threatens the environmental conditions in the site.

Municipality

- The municipality is responsible for the green buffer zone surrounding the citadel and has been involved in all the events that took place in the Qalaa. The municipality has recently received a fund from Kuwait to implement a rehabilitation project for the Qalaa. The municipality also intervened by “planting pine trees in the

buffer zone, though poor planting methodology has led to severe subterranean root encroachment on the Citadel's walls" (Ventresca and Fayyad, 2011). The municipality also assigned a member from the village the job of guarding the Qalaa, however he follows the daily schedules assigned by the government leaving the Qalaa unguarded during the night-time and on Sundays.

Residents of the Area of Archeological Importance

- Families residing in the area are important stakeholders. They reside in around 27 houses, which range between 1 to 3 story houses and an average size of 150m². Most of the houses have a view to the citadel especially from their rooftops and engage in local planting practices.

Active Community, NGOs and International Organizations

- The activation of the citadel through yearly events and festivals involved many institutions and international organizations namely the Alpha Association represented by Ms. Salwa Fawaz, The French Cultural Center, French Military Force, Caritas, World vision, and the European Union. Ms. Iman Berry an active figure socially is also involved in the organization of cultural events in the Qalaa, in addition to families and representatives of political parties which may have a say in the events which take place there.

4.2.3. Assets

- *Large-scale Events*

Activating the Qalaa for large-scale events has proved to be a tool to attract large numbers of tourists, and activate the site. The number of visitors reached 3000 regional and national tourists per day in the 3-day summer heritage festival organized by an executive member of the Alpha Association, Ms. S, in July 2012. Such festivals

also mark the memories of many Tibneeners who take pride in the Qalaa as the picture of the 2008 festival Figure 42 posted on Facebook is seen as “number 1 in the whole south according to associated press, local and national media.”



Fig.42. A picture of the Tibneen Festival in the summer of 2008 posted on Facebook

Events have the potential to promote the site, improve the conditions of the Qalaa, and involve various stakeholders as the local community, political parties, municipality members and institutions/NGOS which supported the festival such as SAWA Association, French military Forces, the French Cultural Center, Caritas, World vision and the European Union (EU). The Ministry of Tourism contributed by providing

free brochures of Tibneen, while the Ministry of Education provided the permission for the event. This raises awareness about the importance of the archeological site for international donors as Ms. S stated that the EU representative expressed interest in contributing to a rehabilitation project for the Qalaa after the event.

Events also improve the conditions of the Qalaa. The heritage festival necessitated the cleaning of the Qalaa, which was an achievement and internal lighting for the site, which was offered by the French. The lighting was removed and safeguarded by the municipality so as not be vandalized and later setup for other events. Moreover, the event encouraged others such as the Malaysians, Irish, and community members to use the site for small-scale events such as distribution of medals and a poetry night.

- *Qalaa and Historic Core: One Urban Element*

The Qalaa presents a key site to encourage sustainable tourism in Tibneen especially when studied in relation to the historic core as one urban element. Building on current practices, the urban fabric, and present typologies in the old city, analysis of the old city as one urban element highlights its potential as a site of cultural, archeological, and recreational tourism. The Citadel for instance does not solely project a built heritage, but also a site of social memory preserved. Connecting the site as one urban element strengthens and unifies the heritage of the place with regards to the built, social and natural heritage. This includes the greening practices, old houses, urban furniture, and sites of social congregation.

- *Local Economic Development*

The Qalaa and historic core have a great potential attract the local community to invest in and sell local produce such as artifacts, local gastronomy products and others and encouraging local economic development. Local products were especially

sold during festivals in the Qalaa with salespeople from Saida, Tyr, Deir Qanoun and other villages. Workshops funded by an Italian NGO to train women to create handicrafts were held in the municipality by Ms. Iman Berry, an active dweller who works with the social security, the cultural institution and a Lebanese organization working to empower women who believes women in Tibneen have a lot of potential to develop small-scale businesses yet lack the know-how.



Fig.43. Workshop on cultural artifacts conducted in the premises of the municipality of Tibneen

Other women are also known in the village for their cooking skills and showed interest in investing in local businesses and teaching expatriates, weekenders, and visitors how to cook traditional Lebanese food. This would be key to reviving the living heritage of Tibneen and encouraging local economic development. Offering women microcredit to buy the necessary tools would also provide them with an incentive to create and expand their small businesses.

Furthermore, activating the Qalaa would increase the number of tourists and benefit the local businesses. The manager a restaurant in the neighboring village, Sultaniyyeh, stated: “the key to encourage economic development and boost our businesses starts in the heart of Tibneen, by activating and restoring its Citadel.”

- *Rural Heritage*

The Old City has a great potential to promote rural heritage. For instance the festival in the Qalaa invited local singers from Hasbayya, Hermel and other villages, hosting a play by the youth of Tibneen, cultural shows. SAWA association also provided banners, which were posted in the Qalaa during the festival with visuals celebrating and explaining traditional clothing and the origins of traditional sayings in rural areas in Lebanon.

4.2.4. Challenges

- *Physical condition of the Qalaa*

Currently the Qalaa is not safe, easily accessible or tourist friendly. The Qalaa is also disconnected from the rest of the village, and the service road leading to the citadel allows visitors to use the entrance to the Qalaa as a parking spot. The conditions of the path to the Qalaa, and the interior of the Qalaa are unsafe especially for kids to access. Furthermore, the absence of guards or lighting in the Qalaa at night also makes

it less inviting for visitors especially that tourism development relies on safety as a premise. Thus during most of the visits to the Qalaa the range of visitors documented varies between 1 to 8 people.

- *Qalaa: Least Used for Social Gatherings*

The lack of services in or near the site to invite tourists to spend more time has made the Qalaa a space that is least activated by social informal gatherings. The data gathered from the questionnaires shows that most of the locals (85%) rarely visit the Qalaa for recreation or other purposes as many states that it is “inaccessible, and not safe for users especially for kids and there is nothing to do there”, another respondent stated: “if you have seen it once in your life then why would you go there again?”

This presents a key challenge especially that the Qalaa has the potential to attract a regional and national network of tourists and boost the local and regional economy.

As Mr. Zeineddine of the municipality of Tibneen explained, many regional schools contact them to visit the Qalaa yearly and take permission to access the site and introduce it to their students as a national archeological site.

- *Political/Social interference in Events*

Political and social dynamics in the village affect and interfere with types of planned events. This presents a challenge to the site for cultural tourism in this context. Planning for the 2012 heritage festival, Ms. S. found it challenging to coordinate between various stakeholders especially with political parties and families of the village interfering to impose their ideas during the process of organization. Furthermore, Ms. S. saw the disinterest of the Tibneeners in the organization phase of the festival to be a challenge and a disappointment; she stated that they only showed interest during the festival and after seeing that it was a success.

- *Locals Leaving Old Historic Core /Deserting/Renting Out Properties*

After the 2006 war and with the deterioration of the quality of houses in the historic core many houses were either abandoned or rented out. Syrian workers who pay minimal fees would rent the houses, which are in dire conditions and cannot afford to rehabilitate them. This situation became more common especially with the current unstable situation in Syria when many immigrants flocked to Lebanon. The municipality estimates that at least 5 houses in the historic core are rented by Syrian families, and in many cases up to 3 or 4 families live in one house.

- *Master Plan: Zoning Residential Near Qalaa*

The residential zone proposed near the area of archeological importance is a challenge and many local community members still own lands close to the Qalaa. One lot towards the bottom of the Qalaa path is privately owned, and owners plan to build on it, which threatens the view to the Qalaa. Classmates Kimberly Ventresca and Reem Fayyad developed the ideas explored in the Saha earlier this semester. The project suggests the use of the land as a public space that softens the current edges between the Zakouk, the Qalaa and it's green buffer zone. The proposed intervention re-introduces terracing to the buffer zone using left over materials from the Qalaa, while providing a flexible gateway space that invites users to linger while enjoying the view and greenery.

4.2.5. Summary

This shows that the Qalaa in Tibneen has a huge potential to be a key site for cultural tourism, which would act on a local, regional and national level. The Citadel is key archeological site, which could accommodate Tibneeners to visit more frequently if activated as a site, which is friendly for social interaction.

Furthermore, social, cultural, and traditional events should become more

recurrent in the Qalaa to strengthen it as a social space. The preservation of old houses in the historic core is also crucial to conserve the built heritage. Through rehabilitating these houses for accommodation, tourists would have a comfortable place to stay and more reasons to spend more time in the village. In conclusion, it is necessary to rehabilitate the Qalaa to prioritize safety and accessibility, revive it as a space of memory that Tibneeners take pride in, and strengthen it as a social congregational space, cultural and strengthen its connectivity to the historic core.

4.3. Recreation Sector and Local Entrepreneurs

4.3.1. Adapting Principles of Entrepreneurship to the Context of Tibneen

One of the main principles of sustainable rural tourism development rests on economic development through the reinforcement of the role of local entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprise development. In the framework of sustainable development, promoting local entrepreneurship relies on and requires an “enabling environment” (Lordkipanidze *et al.* 2005, 790 – 791) thus it is key to understand the entrepreneurial culture of the specific context (Figure 44) including social/cultural conditions which influence entrepreneurship. This is relevant to the context of Tibneen whereby social status, education, family businesses and social ties influences the success or development of a business over the years.

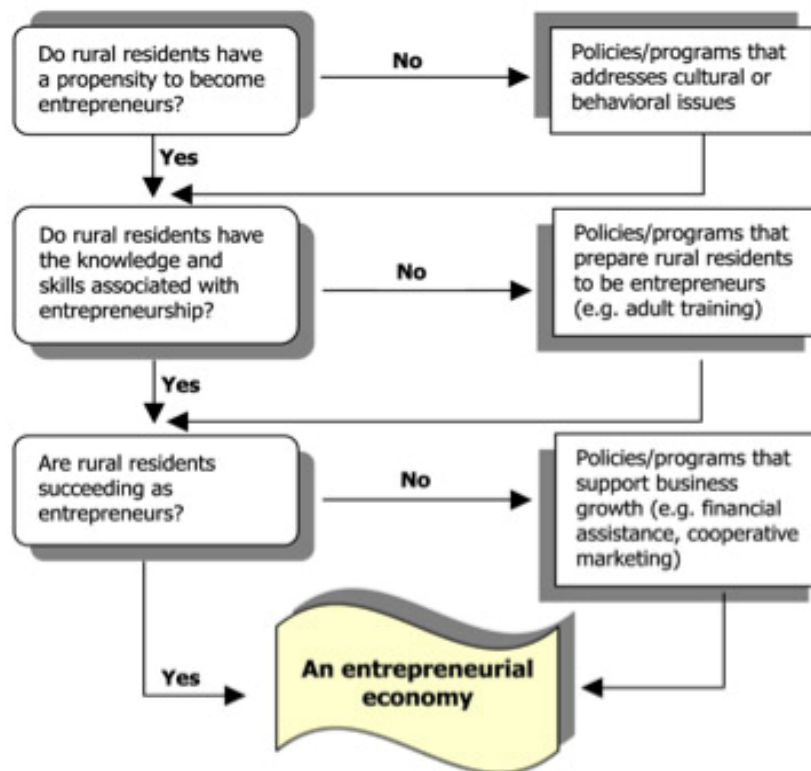


Fig.44. Framework for encouraging rural entrepreneurship
 Source: Lordkipanidze, M. and Brezet, H. and Backman, M. (2005). “The Entrepreneurship Factor in Sustainable Tourism Development.” *Journal of Cleaner Production* 13: 787-798.

- *Government’s Role*

According to the literature, the government has a crucial role to play in encouraging a thriving entrepreneurial environment. However, in Tibneen, the governmental/public involvement may be limited to the support of the municipality with an absence of policies/regulations and governmental support for local economic development. Thus the focus of this section would be to investigate the potential of developing this sector through private initiatives as a starting point and researching ways to develop them.

- *Businesses and Natural Heritage*

Encouraging businesses, which build on the existing natural heritage, is

important for encouraging local economic development and thus key to the context of Tibneen.

Research shows that most small and medium rural businesses “turn initially to local markets” (Courtney *et al.* 2006, 472) to outsource products or develop their businesses and thus foster local economic development. As Courtney *et al.* (2006) conclude in their research study on rural areas in Scotland, “the natural heritage ‘reliant’ firms, with their relatively strong export base, were also found to source more locally than all other types of firms. It would therefore suggest that such firms, which include tourism accommodation, recreation and entertainment and food and craft manufacture, are able to stimulate local economic growth through sales of goods and services to visitors, and help generate income and employment multipliers through the retention of income by local sourcing” (Courtney *et al.* 2006, 480). Thus heritage is a crucial sector to focus on in relation to tourism for “local economic integration” (Courtney *et al.* 2006,480).

4.3.2. Geography and Scales

This section locates successful entrepreneurs and local businesses in Tibneen and seeks to identify reasons behind their success, the main challenges they face, and strategies they adopt to face these challenges. The research also identifies the linkages these businesses create on a regional and national level.

- *Al Kashef Restaurant - Tibneen*

In the village of Tibneen, a famous restaurant/café opened by a local entrepreneur known to Tibneeners residing in Lebanon and abroad and to locals in the region is taken as a case study. Al Kashef is considered a success story as the business has expanded over the years and endured political instabilities, seasonal changes, and is

still considered a landmark in the village. Preliminary analysis on the online social platform, Facebook, shows that Al Kashef restaurant as one of the main places which users reminisced about the good times they spent in the village. Today Al Kashef marks the memory of many expats and weekenders who socialize there and also attracts many visitors from neighboring villages and the region. One of the key challenges faced by the restaurant is the seasonal changes whereby the restaurants visitors rate drops by 40-50% in the winter. As a result, the restaurant increases the number of employees from 10 permanent employees in the winter to 25 employees in the summer. Attracting mostly regional tourist, 90% of the customers come from nearby villages such as Khirbet Silem, Aynata, Safad, Yaroun, Bint Jbeil, Shaqra, Meis El Jabal and Tyr. For instance, during the month of Ramadan in 2012 the restaurant was fully booked everyday till late night hours to mostly accommodate customers from Tyr. The summer of 2012 was marked by a drop in the rate of expats who visited the restaurant due to security and stability issues in the region. The local entrepreneur explained that he doesn't rely on local Tibneeners much to generate profit as they cannot afford to visit frequently, and expats do not always return to the village in big numbers during the summer depending on the security conditions in the region (Mr. S., Sept 2012). Mr. Fawaz explained that the average number of customers ranges between 100-150 over the weekends and rises to 300 when the restaurant hosts certain events such as weddings or engagement dinners.

- *Al-Sultan Restaurant - Sultaniyyeh*

In the neighboring village of Sultaniyyeh, Al Sultan Restaurant has also made its way through years of instability in the South and remains among the successful famous café/restaurants in the area. The restaurant is well known in the region and visited mostly by locals from Sultaniyyeh. Al Sultan however also relies on regional

customers mostly from Khirbet Silem, Tibneen, Shaqra, Bint Jbeil, and Dayr Ntar. The restaurant also relies on expatriates and weekenders and reflects the same seasonal changes. Mr. A., manager of the restaurant since its opening 11 years ago, explained that he has 25 employees during the summer time and decreases the number gradually by 25% in the autumn and by 10% during the wintertime. More customers visit Al Sultan when the restaurant hosts events (Weddings/Celebrations) or when an event takes place in the area such as a funeral when people flock from the city and neighboring areas and stop by on the way for lunch/refreshments. Although the location of Al Sultan is in Sultaniyyeh, when asked in what way could sustainable tourism be developed in a way which would boost the local economy, Mr. Jaffal replied: “The solution starts with no doubt in the Tibneen’s Qalaa! It should be activated through activities, music events, carnivals, handicrafts and would no doubt attract tourists to the region and not only to Tibneen.”

- *Accacia Land Restaurant and Resort – Majdel Silem*

Accacia Land is one of the recent large-scale businesses in Majdel Silem the South, which is slowly gaining recognition among regional, and national tourists. Accacia Land recreates the sense of the southern “heritage” and “tradition” through its architecture, design, scenery, landscape, and food. Covering an area of 70,000 m² Accacia Land is a restaurant/café with newly opened cottages, which offer tourists accommodation. In an interview with the management team at Accacia, 80% of the visitors to the restaurant come from Beirut, Saida, Bekaa and expats in the summer while only 20% are regional tourists who visit from the village’s vicinities including Tibneeners. Records of the people who booked the cottages for short-term accommodation since its opening 2 months ago show that they come from Bint Jbeil, Nabatiyyeh, Tyr, Beirut, and 3 families from Tibneen. The manager stressed on the

importance of advertising through Manar TV channel, which marketed the opening of the cottages and attracted more visitors.

4.3.3. Stakeholders

Municipality

- While the entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs in the village are the most important stakeholders in the entrepreneurial sector in Tibneen, the municipality also has an important role to play as the institutional power which could foster a positive entrepreneurial environment, propose small scale businesses, and activate certain sites/sectors of tourism which would create the need for businesses to address new niche markets.

Residents of the Historic Core

- Families residing in the area are important stakeholders as they are owners of the old empty and used houses/stores and they are also the creators of the natural and living heritage practices which take place in the old historic core. This area presents a key site to be activated in relation the Qalaa for tourism purposes and thus the community residing in it is key.

Local Entrepreneurs

- Owners of successful businesses are key to be consulted and/or included in the strategy to foster a positive entrepreneurial environment as their experience is key to the analysis of conditions in the village and would be informative to potential entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it is key to address community members who are selling products in the village on a basic level as potential entrepreneurs. It is also key to locate members who may not be engaging in any form of selling but have the potential to work in or support a new growing market.

Expatriates, Weekenders, and Regional Tourists

- It is important to address expats, weekenders and regional tourists and their potentials to contribute to the entrepreneurial environment and their needs for tourism and recreation in the village. Their educational backgrounds, careers, or interests may propose new niche markets for businesses.

Active Community, NGOs and International Organizations / Experts

- To foster a positive entrepreneurial environment it is key to involve NGOs, which are working in the field within this context especially to target the development of specific production such as agriculture, clothing, cultural events, services

4.3.4. Assets

Assets in terms of the recreation and entrepreneurship sector in Tibneen were derived from a SWOT analysis, which was performed to assess the entrepreneurial environment in Tibneen as adapted from the case of Soderslat in the literature review (Figure 45).

SWOT Analysis of Tibneen Tourism Entrepreneurship Development	
<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural and heritage assets Strong institutional hub and services sector Family and social ties Archeological Sites Educated population Network of expats and weekenders Network of regional visitors 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unstable political situation in the south Social norms/traditions may conflict with potential tourism business Lack of investment in key assets (built and living environment) Seasonal changes diminishes the population by half during the winter Lack of training Lack of funding Lack of governmental support through policies and incentives A weak entrepreneurial environment Lack of sustainable tourism vision
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area acts as regional hub Creating job opportunities Recreation sector potential for development through green spaces, archeological sites, and services Market and product diversification (heritage/farm tourism) Opportunities in accommodation sector, farm tourism, agricultural production Cultural tourism, local gastronomy 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political instability Lack of local community involvement in the process

Fig.45. SWOT to assess the entrepreneurship environment in Tibneen

- *Social Dynamics*

The social dynamics in the village and strong social ties affect businesses in this context. While this is not the only condition for the success of a business, entrepreneurs who are known/familiar to the local community are more likely to attract local customers and gain popularity in the village. Furthermore, the strong social ties in Tibneen are an asset especially for the development of local entrepreneurship as weekenders and expatriates mostly live in cities and many are owners of successful businesses and could share their know how and ideas with the local community.

- *Potential Sectors and Businesses*

Encouragement of entrepreneurship would build on the existing services sector in the village and the weak yet potential local production in the village. However, entrepreneurship in Tibneen may build on an array of sectors, which are projected to develop as part of the sustainable tourism vision which include: services, cultural, heritage, accommodation, and recreation. Entrepreneurial development has potential to build on the cultural and heritage assets including the key archeological sites, recreational sector, green spaces, strong services sector, and the village as an institutional hub in the region. Furthermore there is a huge potential for market and product diversification through heritage and farm tourism, agricultural production, cultural tourism and the development of local gastronomy. The most important opportunity also lies in strengthening the souk as a site of local business exchange and development, and investing in locals who have been involved in selling local products on a very small scale yet lack the resources to develop it as a business.

4.3.5. Challenges

- *Political and Social Dynamics*

The unstable political situation in South Lebanon, the political dynamics in Tibneen and the region, and the social norms and traditions may conflict with potential tourism business and constrain certain events. This may affect the types of businesses and behaviors, which are socially “acceptable” within this context. This presents a challenge especially if niche markets were to be addressed in the strategy for sustainable tourism development and innovative businesses were to be established. Thus businesses in this context would have to abide by the social norms of the village.

- *Seasonal changes: Decrease sales*

The seasonal changes are one of the key challenges to be faced by businesses in Tibneen is shown in the case of Al-Kashef and Al-Sultan Restaurants. The seasonal changes drastically affect the sales of the businesses and salesmen/women in the souk and thus would greatly affect the decision to open a business and make it a success story.

- *Lack of Incentives*

The lack of investments in business development, training, funding, or incentivizing policies in Tibneen, lack of governmental support and a weak entrepreneurial environment are a key challenge in this context. This makes it harder for a new business entrant to take the risk of establishing a business in a context where he/she are bound to face many challenges.

4.3.6. Summary

This chapter shows that the sustainable tourism development would make room for and at the same time necessitates strengthening existing businesses and establishing new and innovative small-scale businesses, which would strengthen the various sectors to be developed in Tibneen. The vision may build on the existing assets

especially the strong social ties and knowhow to strengthen the sharing of information especially through locals, expatriates and weekenders for developing the entrepreneurial environment and local businesses in Tibneen.

4.4. Al Mashrou Al Akhdar

4.4.1. Geography and Scales

The Mashrou' Al Akhdar is a green space zoned as "green" and occupying 546,000m² which is 7.28% of Tibneen's total area. It is located near a large UNIFIL camp in Tibneen with raised walls, which create a clear separation between the two spaces. An access road cuts through the Mashrou, which is mostly inaccessible due to the steep topography. Structures are setup in the Mashrou such as benches, garbage cans, a few play structures however they are scattered and in poor conditions and seen as "uncomfortable or inadequate" for recreation as stated by users at the site. Thus users prefer to adapt and create their own spaces in the Mashrou while rarely using the setup furniture. The site remains weakly managed especially that cars are allowed to use the access road, which is mostly used by pedestrians for sports. Users mostly use the upper part of the Mashrou, which is more accessible for picnics, leaving behind garbage and litter.

"The Mashrou was planted in the 1950's with thousands of pine and quercus trees by the Ministry of Agriculture as part of its Green Project program." (Vantresca and Fayyad 2012) The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for the space, which was zoned as "Green" and prohibited subdivisions in the space. However, lots which cover an area of 10,000 m², permit building and thus a community member rent the space and built a huge recreation and sports center which is still under construction. The community member stated that all trees, which were removed, were rebuilt elsewhere in

the Mashrou.



Fig.46.Paved access road in the Mashrou

Source: Vantresca, K. and Fayyad, R. 2012. "A Green Tibneen."Research Paper, American University of Beirut.

4.4.2. Stakeholders

Ministry of Agriculture

- The Ministry of Agriculture, which zoned the Mashrou as Green, currently administers the site and thus it is responsible for managing, maintaining the site and making administrative decisions.

Municipality

- The Municipality considers the Mashrou to be a key asset as a green reserve in the village, however is not very present in the management of the site. The

Municipality has limited resources and has not been able to completely take care of its technical responsibility in terms of waste management.

Users of the Mashrou

- The users of the Mashrou are mostly the Tibneeners from all age groups who visit to exercise daily or as families who wander or appropriate spaces for picnics. Young men and women also cruise in the Mashrou to socialize or interact with the pedestrians.

UNIFIL

- UNIFIL members were observed there in groups of two or three, mostly jogging starting 5 p.m. daily. A UNIFIL military tank would park at the start of the Mashrou mostly around that time to observe the users and ensure security for its members.

4.4.3. Assets

The Mashrou presents a good example of environmental preservation in the village. It is also a prime site for recreation for Tibneeners after the village square. The Mashrou is visited almost daily by 24% of the local community for leisure especially when accompanied by children or families. It is also used by the UNIFIL camp, Red Cross employees, and the local community on a daily basis for sports such as walking, running, and sometimes biking at peak times from 5 to 8 p.m. The Mashrou is busiest on weekends especially during the spring/summer time when the weather is ideal for outdoor recreation.

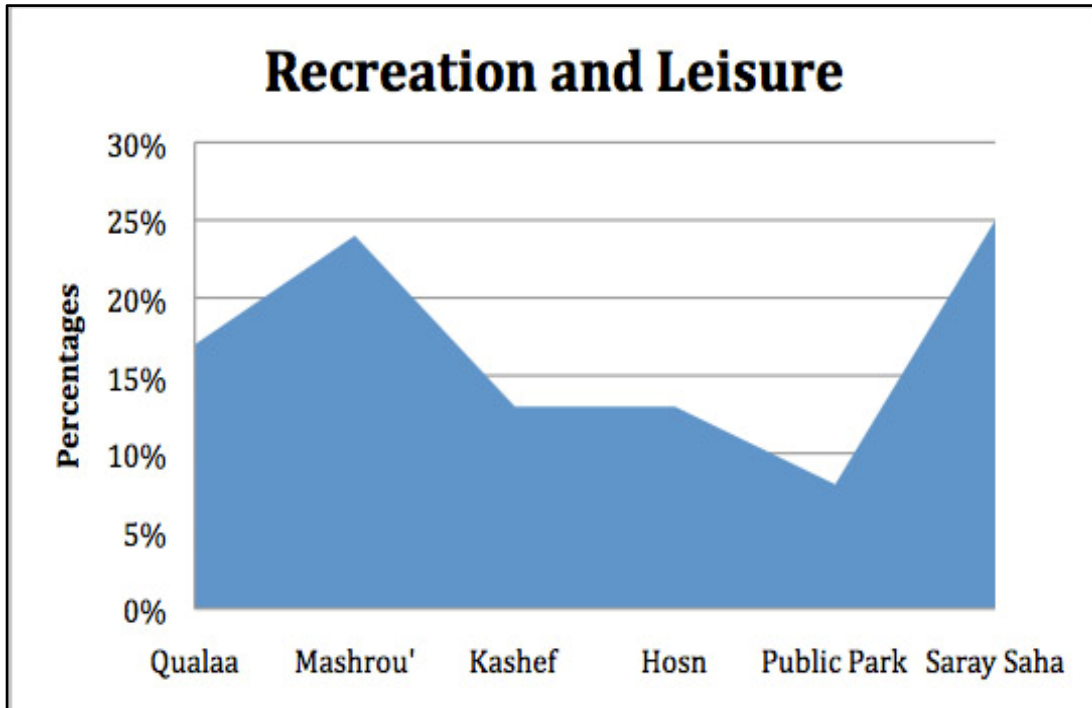


Fig.47.Data showing that the Saray Saha and Mashrou are the most used spaces for recreation and leisure

4.4.4. Challenges

The Mashrou remains unsafe at night especially that the space is isolated without safety guards. Furthermore, the structures are not very user friendly especially for picnics and do not provide a diversity of games for kids. On a sunny day in 2011, mothers were gathered on the benches while their children played nearby them. They explained that they were coming from the nearby village Haris to spend the day. The mother raised her concerns stating: “The benches are uncomfortable for use, the space could be strengthened more for kids to use, and most importantly the space lacks basic services such as a toilet or snack shop.” Permitting cars to use the access road creates a vehicular-pedestrian conflict whereby users have to stop their workout and step aside for cars to pass at some point or cars have to slow down and pay attention to pedestrians. The fact that the access road allows for cars to go both ways makes it

impossible for people to use this road primarily for biking. While most of the users of the Mashrou are pedestrians, the site is disconnected to the village making it harder to arrive their by bike or by walking and necessitating people to come by cars which are parked on the sides of the narrow access road.

4.4.5. Summary

Based on analysis of the Mashrou and its users, and the data, which shows that it is the most used space for public recreation, the proposal is to strengthen the space as a social space for family gatherings and picnics. This would be by removing the fixed benches and tables that many users see as “uncomfortable and rigid” and by providing people with chairs or picnic mats so that they create their own flexible comfortable social spaces. We also recommend creating spaces for children to play (tree-houses, picnic spaces.. etc.) and activating a nearby food stand. This would encourage social congregation and especially parents to visit the space they can enjoy the scenery while keeping an eye on their children. The use of the Mashrou for sports and recreation is heightened daily from 3 to 6pm and during the weekends. Thus on weekends in the morning and during weekdays from 3 to 6 cars we propose that cars be forbidden from accessing the Mashrou. The road in the mashrou’ would also be divided to allow a separate path for biking and one for pedestrian use/jogging. The public space, which is designated for kids should also be rehabilitated to include safe games for the children as many respondents raised their need for a public space for kids.

CHAPTER 5

PLANNING INTERVENTION

The literature on sustainable rural tourism development concurs on the fact that the first step of instituting sustainable rural tourism rests on the articulation of a planning document with a long-term strategic vision for the area. This chapter proposes a multilayered set of interventions, which adapt the principles of sustainable rural tourism and respond to the specificity of this context. The assets that the strategy has built on were profiled in Chapter 3 and analyzed in Chapter 4. They are: (i) physical assets, such as the archeological remains and the green areas, (ii) social assets, particularly strong social networks connecting dwellers, maintained practices such as the souk, local gastronomy and the “kazdoura” or promenade. The main vision proposed in this thesis to respond to a sustainable rural tourism strategy is to develop and upgrade a network of spaces that connects the physical assets to the spaces of social gatherings in an effort to widen and enliven the lived spaces, enhance the visitors’ experiences, and hence extend and increase their stay. Such a strategy will rest on targeted interventions as well as the overall upgrading of the public and private infrastructure in the village, providing incentives and facilitating the works of possible private partners, and devising an institutional structure through which such a vision would be performed. This chapter outlines each of these elements separately, after detailing the overall thesis vision.

5.1. The Vision: An Integrated Social/Heritage Network

For the sustainable rural tourism vision to work in Tibneen, it will be necessary

to attract more visitors to Tibneen, targeting first weekenders, expatriates and regional tourists. These would come to a network of rehabilitated archeological sites, preserved green spaces, public spaces and pedestrian friendly roads, which connect the different key sites in the village. Activities in these areas should generate employment opportunities, especially for the unemployed local youth. They should also build on local traditions and skills and work towards their conservation.

It is important to point out that given the thickness of the social networks connecting the local population to members of the community who have immigrated abroad or moved to the city, week-end visitors and expatriates provide a natural, reliable pool of visitors that the strategy can tap on. Given that these groups are already mobilized and connected to the village, it was possible to learn from their preferences and frustrations in order to respond with a strategy that would respond to their preferences. This is not to exclude other types of visitors from coming to the village. The proposed program is indeed sufficiently flexible to respond to the needs of other visitors. This study however only probed and interviewed expatriates and week-end visitors.

The vision is developed through interventions to address different levels: 1) Physical Urban Design, 2) Social Capital, 3) Policies and 4) Institutional setup. In the first part of the chapter, I outline the physical interventions proposed by the thesis, including infrastructural rehabilitation as a premise to SRT development. The proposed urban design interventions are based on the plans developed by students in the Urban Planning and Design Workshop in 2012 at AUB. The interventions address various sites namely: the Qalaa, the saha, the entrance to Tibneen, and urban Heritage. In part two, I propose building on the social capital in the village to encourage local entrepreneurship and marketing, which would support heritage tourism. In section three, I propose

policies, which target heritage preservation in terms of archeological, environmental, agricultural, and green sites. In the last section, I flesh-out the proposed institutional set-up, the Sustainable Rural Tourism Council.

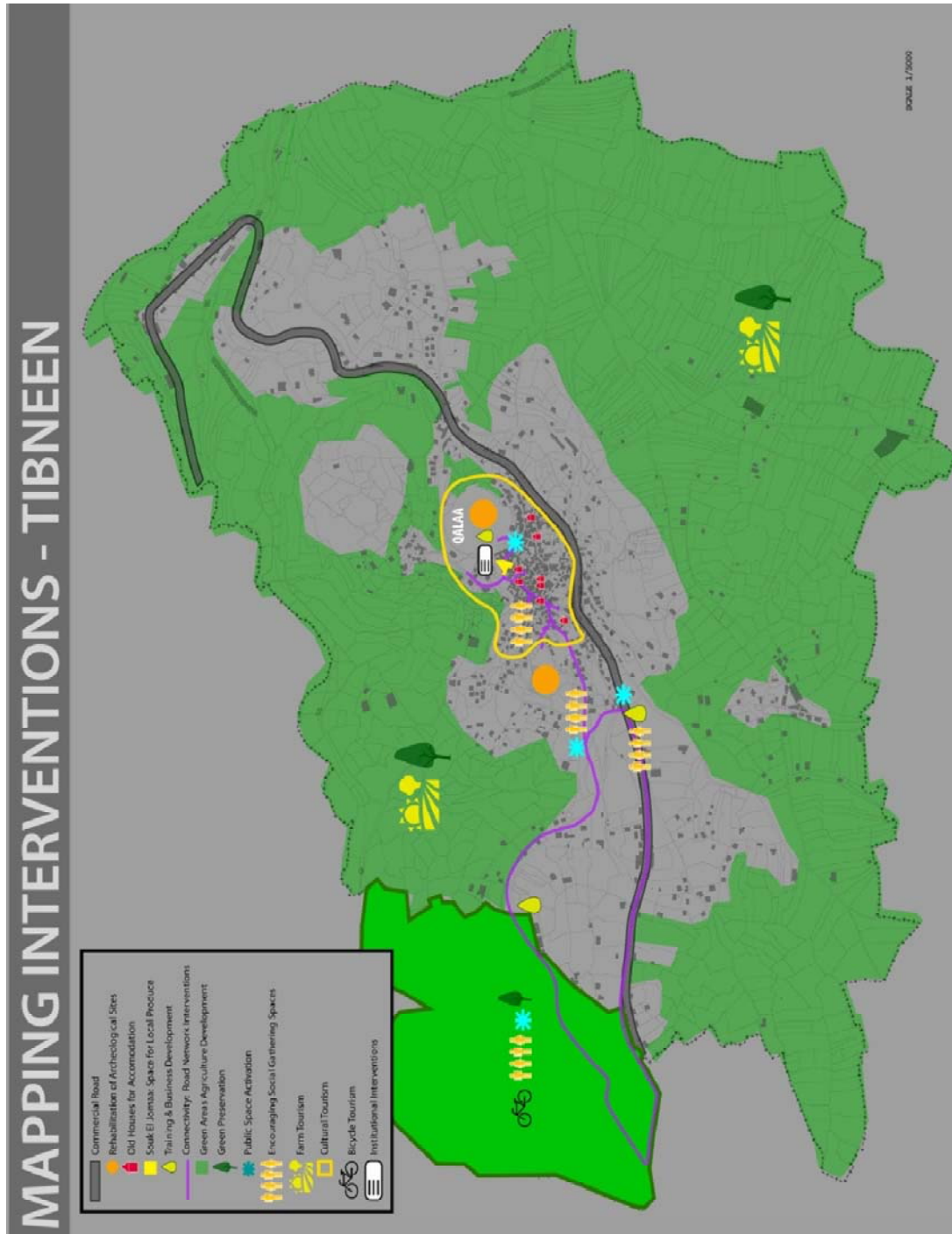


Fig.48.Intervention map

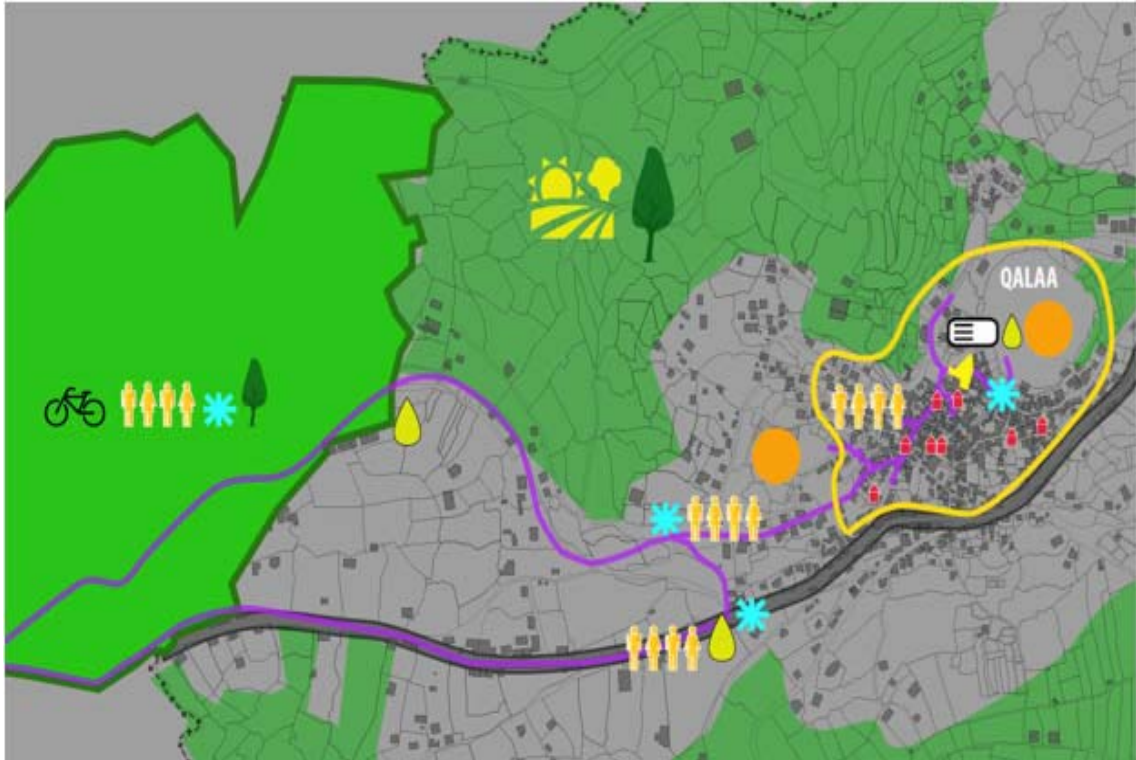


Fig.49.Intervention map close up

The table below shows the guidelines proposed for SRT development in Tibneen.

5.2. Physical Interventions

5.2.1. *An Integrated Urban Design Intervention*

The vision proposes an integrated urban design intervention for the space, which activates key sites of heritage and links social spaces. The vision proposes linking the Qalaa, to Al Mashrou through a loop, which creates pedestrian friendly spaces and encourages users to start from the Qalaa and walk through a loop with key stops such as the old city, Al Hosn, the public park, Al Mashrou, and the kazdoura. The urban design intervention also proposes the use of certain key lots in Tibneen to encourage heritage preservation and public interaction.

Table 1. Guidelines proposed for SRT development in Tibneen.

INTERVENTION	TIBNEEN
Actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Tibneen Municipality . Local Stakeholders . DGU and UoM and Ministries . NGOs, Int'l Organizations, Unis
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Survey of Region . Negotiation
PROJECTS	
Infrastructure Upgrading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Investing in Infrastructure (Electricity - Water - Sewer System)
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Pedestrian friendly zones: Kazdoura and Mashrou and Old City . Bicycle tourism (Mashrou) . Signage system
Environmental Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Water Mngt . Sustainable Environment Mngt
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Farm and Bicycle Tourism . Cultural Tourism (Old City) . Recreation: Public parks, urban pockets, Mashrou
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Rehabilitation of old houses for accommodation
Heritage Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Qalaa and Hosn rehabilitation . Rehabilitation of Zakouk
Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Local Business development . Incentives to address Niche Markets . Encourage local production
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Creating Tibneen Brand . Marketing local products . Municipality/SRTC Marketing (Website - Social Media)
Institutional Set-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Sustainable Regional Tourism Committee (SRTC) . Expat fund in municipality . Strengthen Souk Committee
Training Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Training and Education : Entrepreneurship and tourism . Encourage networking and exchange of info
Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Incentives: entrepreneurs, local production, owners old houses . Preserve archeological sites . Qalaa Area: Lands as public . Environmental Protection . Traffic reduction and pedestrian zones . Master plan revision
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expatriates/Weekenders NGOs and Intl Organizations Municipality and CDR

Rehabilitation of the Qalaa, old houses, and Al Hosn are key to the preservation of and the activation of key archeological and heritage spaces. Furthermore, farm tourism would be encouraged in green and agricultural areas to preserve the green landscape and attract families to the village. This intervention however requires further research and the SRTC is advised to conduct an assessment on agricultural lands with owners who would be interested in investing in such a project.

5.2.1.1. The Qalaa

Building on the original urban design intervention in the studio, my thesis proposes to use the historic citadel and its vicinities as an integrated site of social/communal interaction, a recreational space that could be integrated with the historic core. To this end, several interventions need to be conducted. They include:

- The rehabilitation of the citadel proper, rendering it safe, landscaping its location, and protecting the archeology.
- Dealing with the entrance by reworking the lot below, expropriating it and strengthening the connections to the historic core.
- Dealing with the landslides, and with the trees, surrounding the Qalaa.

The planning workshop developed a sustainable water management system starting from the site of the Qalaa through proposing seasonal river collection ponds in agricultural areas, rain water collection in the urban core, and waste water treatment and reuse.

The students also addressed the private lot that lies at the end of the road to the Qalaa as a key site of intervention that links the Qalaa to the Zakouk. The project suggests the use of the land as a public space that softens the current edges between the zakouk, the Qalaa and its green interface zone. The proposed intervention re-introduces

terracing to the interface zone using left over materials from the Qalaa, while providing a flexible gateway space that invites users to linger while enjoying the view and greenery.

More importantly, the Qalaa should be improved in terms of its physical structure to promote safety and accessibility. This would be through A) Implementation of the Qalaa rehabilitation project which was commenced in March 2013 through CDR and funded by the Kuwaiti Fund

5.2.1.2.The Main Village Square

The historic core of the village has become an institutional hub and was designed as such, with a large-scale mosque, municipality, and the public garden. Given existing conditions, it would be difficult to transform it. However, this space is still activated by the traditional regional souk and thus the main intervention in the village square is to facilitate and encourage local production through the souk.

Souk El Jomaa, should be strengthened as a space of exchange of information, networking, and local production. The vision proposes marking the upper space of the souk solely for selling major local products especially agricultural, traditional, and cultural artifacts. This would be backed up by policies to be explained below to encourage salespeople to use this space and invest in local produce. The space would offer traditional services and produce, which would attract weekenders and expats to consume products from the village and encourage local economic development

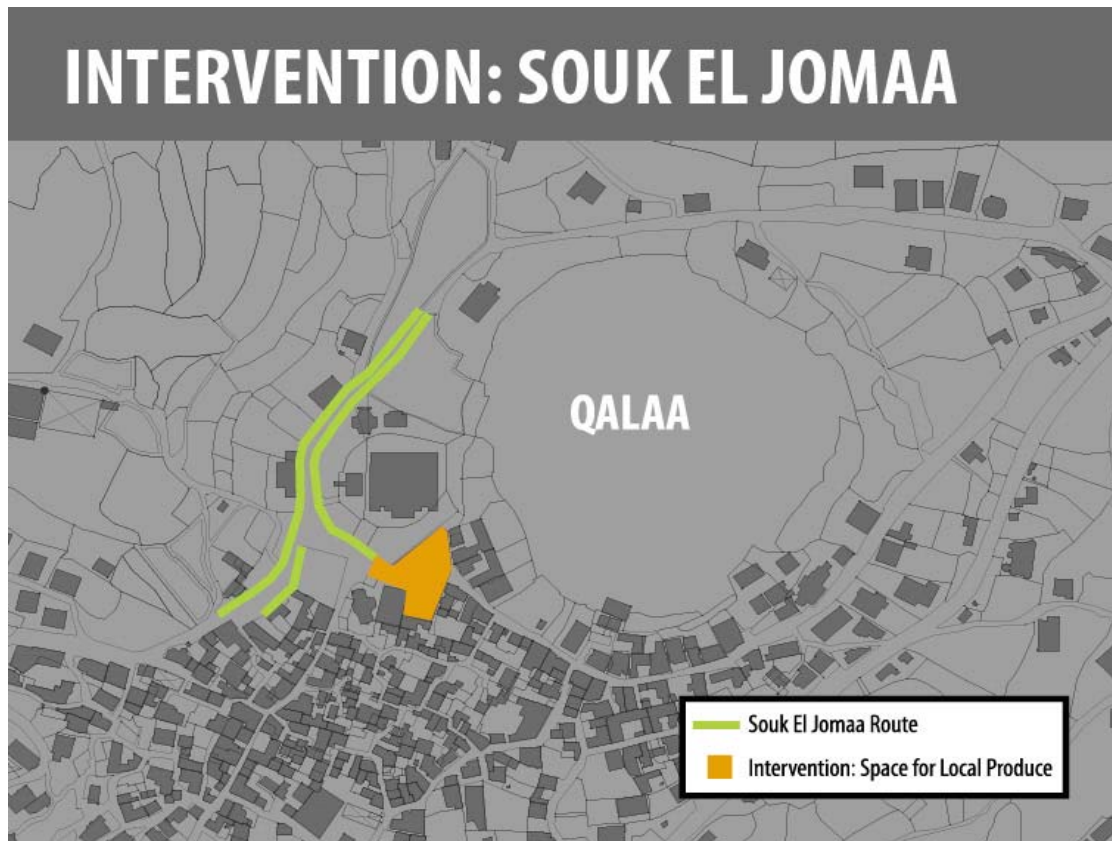


Fig.50. Shows the space of the Souk to be marked for local produce only

5.2.1.3. The Entrance to Tibneen

The intervention proposed by students Ali Zeineddine and Marwa Boustani addresses the main national road as the entrance to Tibneen, which in its present condition undermines the entrance to the village, discourages the pedestrian kazdoura practice, and causes traffic especially with no parking spaces facing the commercial shops. The design intervention mainly proposes creating a *shared space* that allows cars, pedestrians, and bikes to use the same street safely. Along the main road design procedures were proposed (Figure 51) with the objective is to slow down the pace of the cars gradually to encourage pedestrian use and strengthen the role of the intersection as the entrance to the village. The intervention also provided designated parking spaces along the commercial strip.

Traffic Control Design Interventions

1. Midblock Chicane
2. Midblock Neckdown
3. Narrower streets and wider sidewalk
4. Center Islands
5. Speed Cushions
6. Raised intersection and paving treatment

Fig.51.Design procedures proposed to slow down vehicles and provide a safer encouraging environment for pedestrians

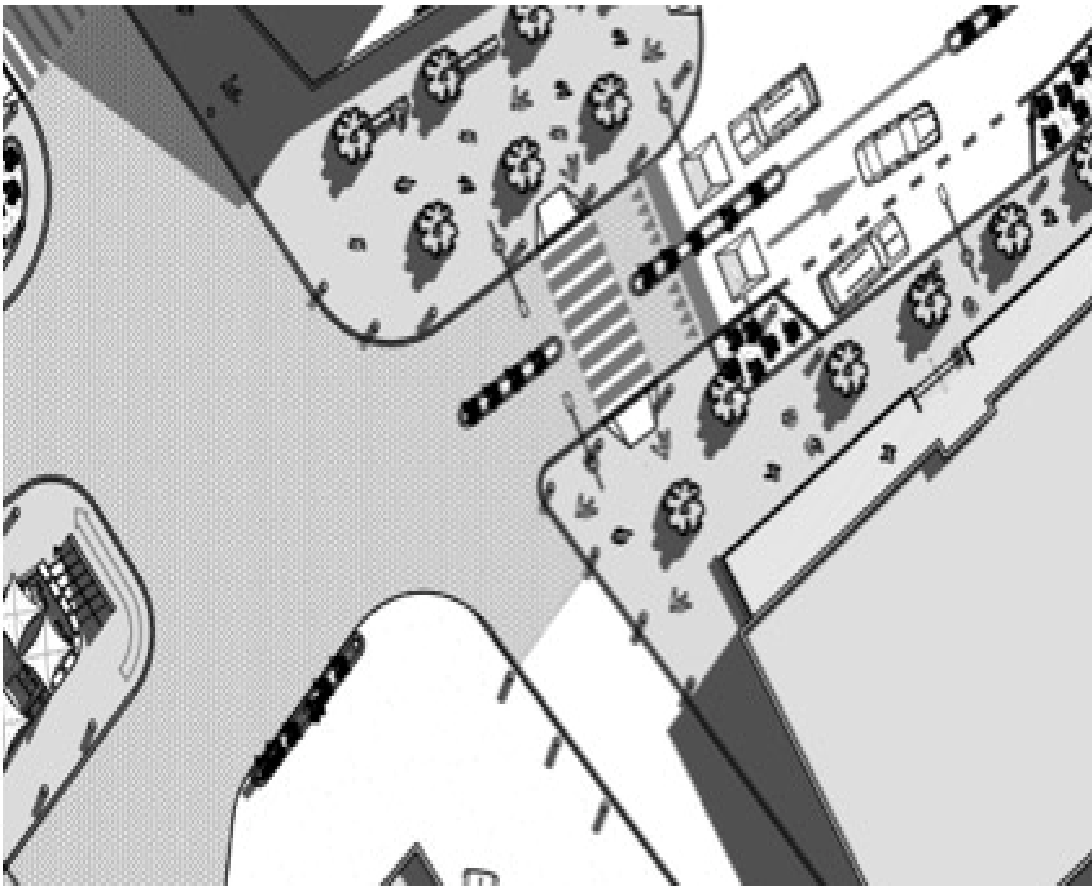


Fig.52.Close up of crossing shows the details of the traffic calming design interventions and transforming this area to a shared space
Source: Zeineddine and Boustani, 2012.

The design intervention solves issues of traffic and proposes safety measures for both vehicles and pedestrians to coexist in the same space. Through introducing linear paths of trees, edges that mark a slower paced vehicular use, stronger edges for social gathering spaces, the design allows Tibneen to reclaim this space as its gateway. The design does not hinder the main roads function as a highway but discourages its use in this particular area as a high-speed route.

5.2.1.4. Restoration of the Old Homes

Many old remaining houses in the historic core have been abandoned or rented to Syrian migrant workers. These houses have been identified to propose an intervention that would help rehabilitate, activate and integrate these houses within the sustainable rural tourism vision. Based on data analysis of weekenders, expatriates, and regional tourists, the need for accommodation to promote more frequent visits and longer stays in Tibneen is key for SRT development, thus the intervention proposes the rehabilitation of the identified old houses to encourage the accommodation sector. The houses could be turned into bed and breakfast and or facilities to be rented out with a café of place to serve meals for all of them run by a woman's communal kitchen that is managed by the local NGOs identified in the village. In terms of accommodation and based on the findings of this thesis it is important to:

- Hire consultants for rehabilitation of old houses including
- Create a separate unit of within the SRT for rehabilitation of old houses for accommodation. The manager of the unit would be selected through a process of voting by municipality members and members of the SRT based on proposals of youth in the village.

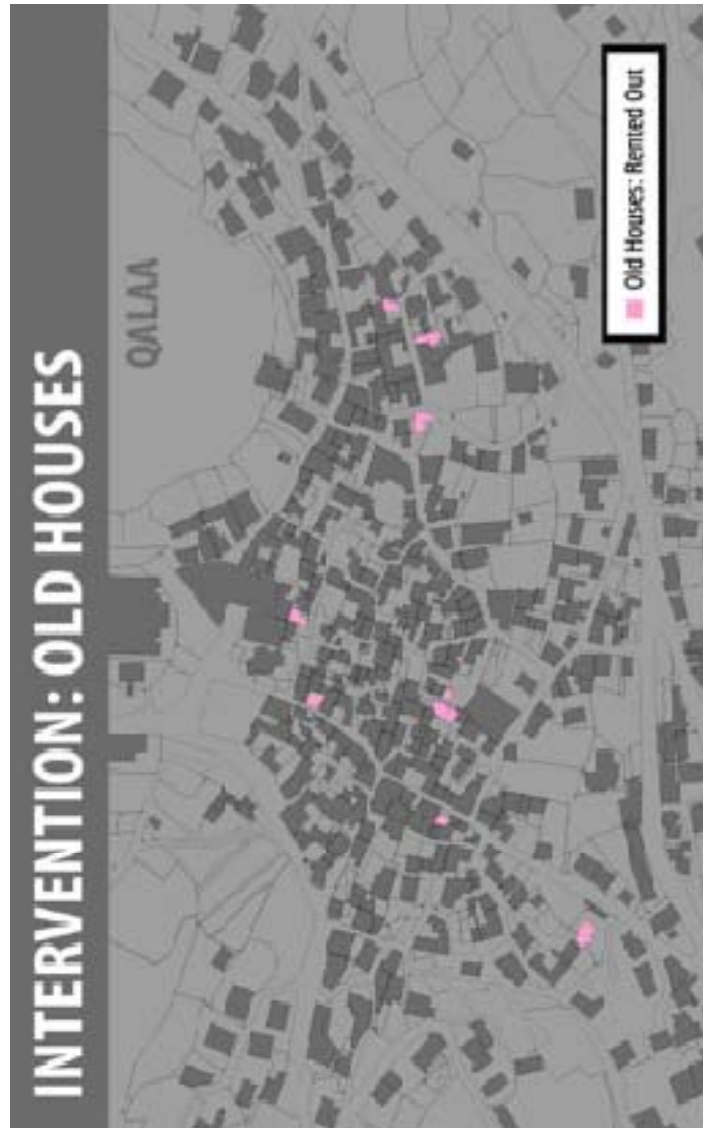


Fig.53.Map showing remaining old houses in the old city rented out by Syrian migrant workers

Public spaces should also be encouraged in the historic core by opening up urban pockets of privately owned lands to a semi-public semi-private space and encouraging local stands to set up and attract social congregation to this space. Furthermore, the design scheme proposes encouraging greening at recesses to maintain old greening practices and strengthen the natural heritage layer.

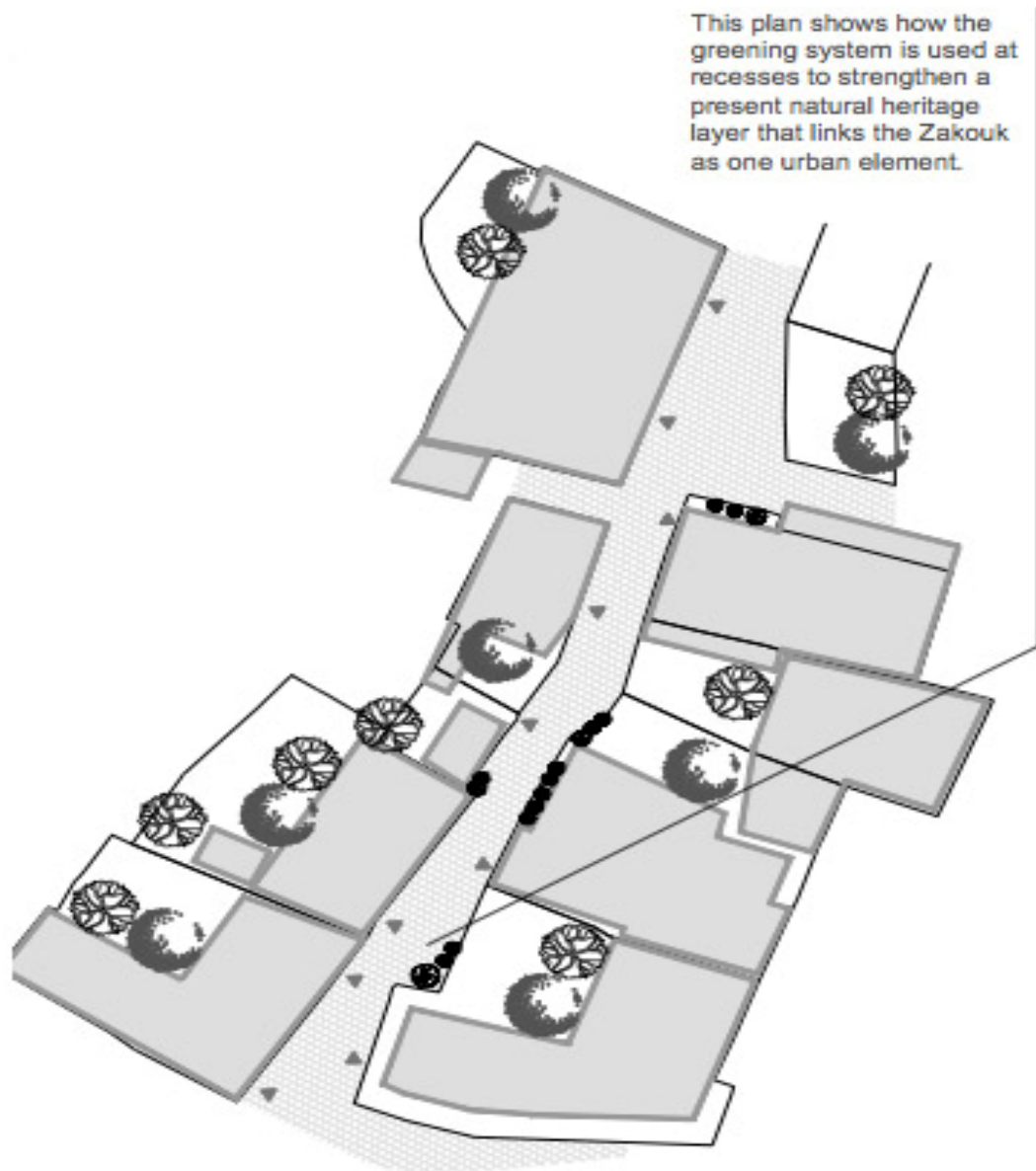


Fig.54.Design scheme proposing greening at recesses in the historic core
Source: Boustani, M. and Al-Rez, M. 2012. Urban Heritage and Tibneene.Research Paper, American University of Beirut.

5.2.1.5.A Pedestrian Network

The vision proposes to link these interventions through a network that connects all these areas with pedestrian passages. This would be namely to connect heritage sites such as the Qalaa, the historic core, public park, Al Mashrou Al Akhdar, and commercial road (kazdoura) to encourage social practices and users to activate these sites. The passages will be made through:

- Reducing traffic speed on the commercial road especially on the town

entrance and to promote the traditional Kazdoura and enhance social and commercial interaction.

- Connecting key sites of heritage: Qalaa, old city, Hosn, public park, Mashrou Al Akhdar, and the space of the Kazdoura through a pedestrian track in order to enhance the users experience.
- Zoning the Mashrou as a pedestrian only zone to prioritize the use of the space primarily for recreation through sports, picnics, and biking tourism and promote safety for its primary users.
- Rehabilitating the path from the zakouk to the Hosn to provide an alternative pedestrian path through stairs and green alleyways.
- Implementing the signage system (proposed by Boustani and Al-Rez 2012) to guide users by locating spaces according to family names and locating key sites of heritage. The signage system builds on the importance of social networks in the making of this geography as seen in the municipality map.

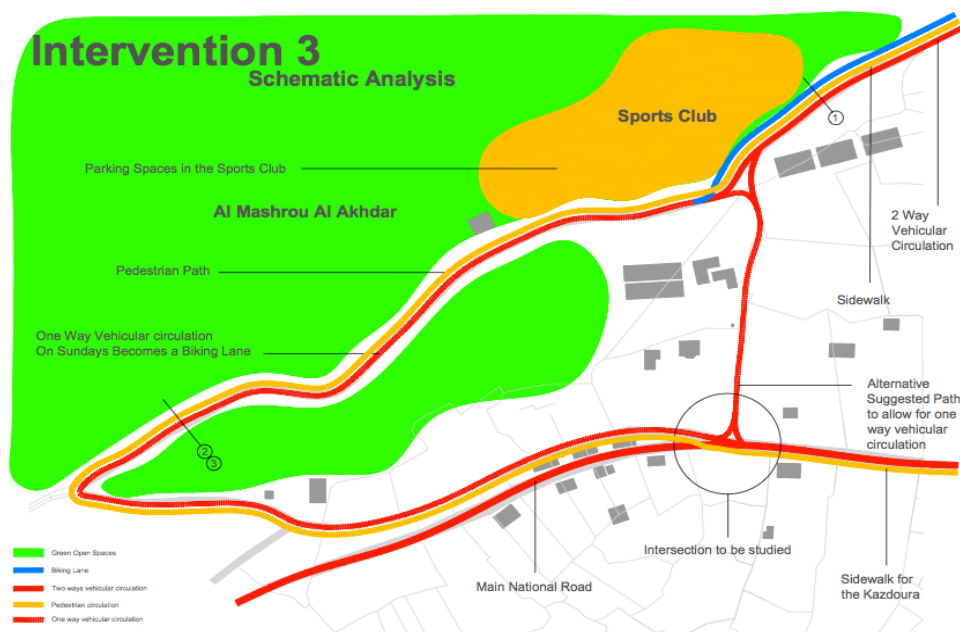


Fig.55.Intervention in Al Mashrou

Source: Boustani, M. and Al-Rez, M. 2012. Urban Heritage and Tibneene.Research

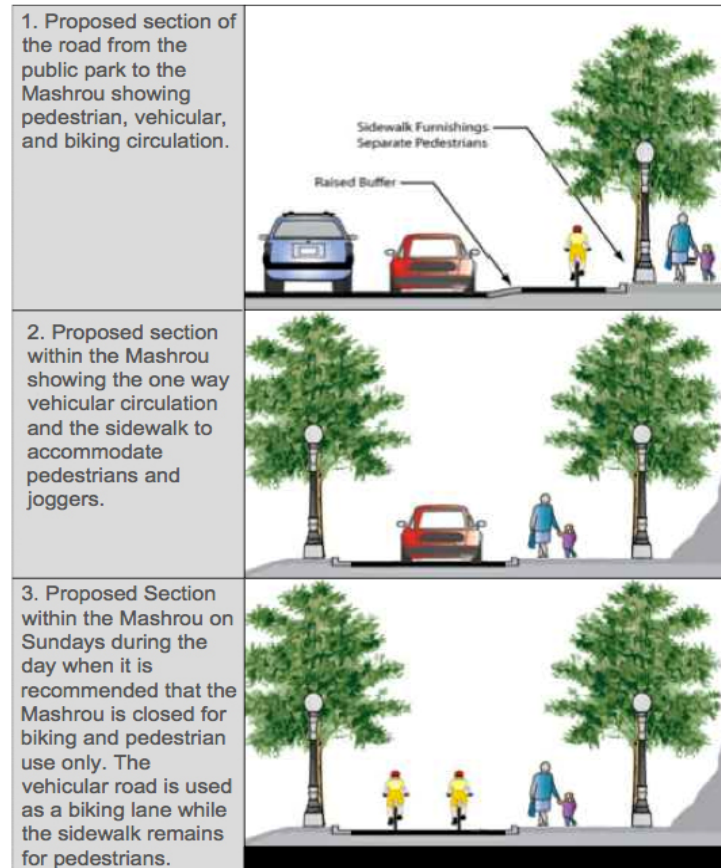


Fig.56. Proposed sections to prioritize pedestrian and biking circulation

5.2.2. Infrastructure Works

- *Electricity*

The need for 24/7 electricity in the village is considered a premise to attract tourists to the area. The municipality is currently working on a project to develop the availability of electricity by 3-4 hours a day however it is still not sufficient. Thus the SRT with the municipality should set receiving a fund to provide 24/7 electricity for the village as a priority.

- *Water Management*

The lack of sufficient and clean water was stated by 100% of the respondents as one of the major problems, which hinder the development of the agricultural sector.

Furthermore, it is also a problem for households, which have to pay to buy clean water when it was traditionally taken from the 3 “Eins” which are in the village, yet according to Mr. Fawaz in the municipality water now reaches all houses in Tibneen. Thus it is highly recommended that the SRT hire consultants to conduct research on water management in Tibneen. Studies and proposals would address management studies for rainwater gathering and distribution. Furthermore, filters to cleanse the Ein water for household consumption, investing in systems for water transportation from the village to agricultural lands and providing reservoirs to gather rainwater is key.

- *Sewer systems*

The expansion of the sewer systems to the village is important and this is also currently being taken care of by the municipality.

- *Rehabilitation of roads in the old historic core*

5.2.3. Social Capital: Incentives, Training Programs, and Linkages

Based on the analysis of the social capital as a key asset in the context of Tibneen, the intervention addresses 1) Involving the local community, expatriates and weekenders in the making of the SRT vision namely through the institutional set-up which will be further explored below. 2) Providing a positive entrepreneurial environment and local entrepreneurship development which is necessary especially to respond to the needs of the SRT vision. 3) Fostering linkages between existing economic venues (restaurants and souks) and local/regional production.

5.2.3.1. Entrepreneurship

Promoting a positive and thriving entrepreneurship environment is key to encourage local businesses, which are sustainable and locally managed and supported is

key to address the needs of the developing SRT sector. This would be through:

- Incentives to encourage selling local products in the souk. This would be by exempting salespeople in the allocated space for local product from the municipality fees and providing them with stands that are branded and setup by the SRT with bags to use in the selling of their products with the Souk Tibneen brand.

- Trainings for entrepreneurs would be provided through workshops conducted in the municipality on week-ends. The agenda of the training would be created by the SRTC and conducted by volunteers including successful local entrepreneurs, weekenders who run successful businesses, perhaps expatriates in the summer, and interested university professors. Trainings would also provide local entrepreneurs with the tools and skills to develop businesses, which are not only profitable but sustainable despite the seasonal and political challenges so they have a competitive advantage in the market. Potential local entrepreneurs to be trained include: women who are involved in local workshops conducted to train on the production of cultural artifacts, new businesses in the souk committee.

- Businesses to be encouraged include: stands/cafes in touristic hubs such as the old city, Mashrou, Public Park, local gastronomy, cultural artifacts, hosting of events, sports stores, bike rentals, and bed and breakfasts.

- Cultural Tourism: More cultural events would be organized in the Qalaa attracting local/regional and potentially national tourists. Hosting major events that attract more regional and eventually national visitors. The space is also key to encourage cultural heritage especially by encouraging the production and sales of local traditional products by women in the village and encouraging local gastronomy

- Sports and Biking Tourism: Such activities would be encouraged namely in the area by activating the public park and Mashrou.

5.2.3.2. Networking

One of the main assets in the souk is its potential to become a space for networking, which should be tapped on in order to connect the salespeople with products in order to strengthen local production such as agricultural products or small-scale markets and expand the salespeople's market on a regional level. Further research needs to be done to locate regional industries that could benefit from and add to the souk as a market. This is especially important with the current unstable situation in Syria, which raised concern among many salespeople who rely on exporting most of their products from there. One saleswoman stated that she used to visit Syria regularly with her family to buy products to be sold in the souk however currently has little income with nothing to sell in the souk because she no longer can go to Syria. Thus this increases the need for strengthening networks between salespeople and local products on a regional level.

5.2.3.3. Marketing

Marketing is key as a tool to promote all sectors to be addressed by the SRT vision. On this level it is recommended to:

- Use the proposed brand for Tibneen based on the adaptation of the municipality logo developed in 1892 (Boustani and Al-Rez 2012). The traditional Arabic typography and colors of the logo respond to the one of the vision's priorities, which is heritage preservation.



Fig. 57. The municipality logo in 1892



Fig. 58. The adapted logo and use in signage system

The brand would be used develop a signage system as explained above to guide tourists and provide them with a unified experience of the area.

- Encouraging local products: Using branding to unify agricultural, traditional, local gastronomy and market them as local produce through the village (souk, Qalaa), in Beirut or even exported to Michigan where the Expats reside.

- Placing Tibneen on a National Map of Tourism: It is important to advertise Tibneen as a site of Tourism in Beirut. Tibneen would be marketed through local tourism offices in Beirut in order to encourage people to visit and inform them of the important sites to see, different activities, accommodation, and transportation.

Marketing would focus on the Qalaa as a national tourism site with the help of the Ministry of Tourism and Al Mashrou Al Akhdar to encourage national tourists to visit the site. As a local entrepreneur in the region mentioned: “The Qalaa is the key solution to encouraging tourism and economic development not only for Tibneen but for the region as well”.

- Social Media Marketing: Through the social media and enhancing the municipality website to include a page for the proposed Sustainable Rural Tourism

Council (SRTC). This would ensure transparency and heighten interaction specifically with expatriates. A media officer as part of the entrepreneurship and marketing unit in the SRTC would be responsible for updating the website to share ongoing projects and research and data about Tibneen.

5.2.3.4. Training Programs

Training programs would build on the social capital by involving weekenders and expatriates who are running successful businesses inviting them to conduct sessions for business knowledge and development. As a first step trainings would be conducted on weekends as explained above in the municipality to educate locals about the importance of entrepreneurship for tourism and possible niche markets that could be addressed in the region. Trainees would be encouraged to network and exchange information about possible small-scale business ideas and strategies for Tibneen.

5.3. Policies

Policies should provide incentives for all initiatives, which would encourage and promote the SRT, these are:

5.3.1. Heritage Preservation

Incentives should be provided for owners of old houses to be rehabilitated for accommodation. The owners would receive a percentage of the profit raised from renting out the houses to local tourists. Policies for conservation of key archeological sites should be enacted: they should include a survey of all the old houses and/or sites, considering the landscape as a heritage and looking to preserve it, and stop further demolition of old houses. Furthermore what is to be preserved is essentially a road

network especially that the narrow streets in the old city key aspects of the heritage of the space. Thus, policies and building regulations should aim to preserve the existing road network especially in the old city.

These would include governmental policies targeting all houses and buildable lots in the area of the Qalaa to become publicly owned and rehabilitated as public spaces to support the SRT vision. Incentives should also target residents of the historic core encourage them to increase their traditional greening practices and preserve the built heritage in this part of Tibneen. Policies should also target the reduction of traffic in the old city in addition to zoning the Mashrou as pedestrian only to promote the sites for safe and accessible public use.

5.3.2. Environmental Protection

The Mashrou is a good example of environmental preservation in Tibneen, which attracts the local community to use the site for sports and outdoor recreation. Thus, encouraging environmental sustainability in Tibneen is important not only to conserve the landscape and green areas, which are key assets for tourism development but also to attract tourists to spend more time and engage in activities in Tibneen. This would happen primarily through: 1) Zoning green areas 2) Encouraging farm tourism.

Zoning maybe one solution however has proved to conflict with the residents in this context who rebelled against not being able to build in their “green” or “agricultural” plots. Thus one way would be to encourage farm tourism by encouraging owners of green lands to setup farms which maybe visited by families with children, or to provide one/two bedrooms as accommodation on these lands provided they build 1 story level rooms which take up to a maximum of 10 percent of the land. Cars should be prohibited from entering Al Mashrou and local NGOs would be responsible for starting

cleaning initiatives and biking activities in this area. Policies for environmental protection will be further developed specifically for Al Mashrou Al Akhdar by student Reem Fayyad in her final thesis. While, student Rami Harajli devised policies targeting agricultural areas in his final thesis.

5.3.3. Local Entrepreneurship

The municipality should adopt a policy to hire, employ, and/or provide incentives for all local people. That includes hiring workers, trainers, and/or others from the region in an effort to encourage people from the area to take charge. It could also include using all products in restaurants from the region, not importing in order to increase reliability on local resources and encourage local economic development.

The municipality would exempt salespeople selling local products from the fees for setting up the stand in the souk in addition to giving them a separate space in the souk. Policies should support entrepreneurs through encouraging education, training, and microfinance programs for business establishment and development.

5.3.4. Master Plan Revision

The master plan devised for Tibneen should be revised to comply with the key premises for developing SRT is heritage preservation. The master plan should forbid any residential lots in the area of archeological importance. Furthermore, it should maintain the built heritage in the old city by revising the current regulations, which promote pooling, and setbacks in an area where the small lot sizes and narrow streets are key assets for the heritage of the place. The master plan should revise the agricultural lands zoning to comply with the territorial offering and provide incentives for people to invest in these lands.

5.4. Institutional Set up

5.4.1. Sustainable Rural Tourism Council

As Tibneen is an institutional hub in the region, and considering the findings of this paper show that the local assets in the village are highly connected to and embedded within a network of regional assets and potential markets, it is highly recommended to create an institution which is responsible for sustainable tourism development on a regional level. The institution would be a key actor in implementing the sustainable rural development vision with the specific projects that will be further explored. As the head of the Union of Municipalities of Qalaa is the mayor of Tibneen it would be ideal to setup this institution in the premises of the Sarai where the Tibneen municipality is located. The council would be backed legally by public institutions as it would be created based on a formal written request from the mayor while being steered by private actors.

5.4.1.1. Institutional Setup of the SRTC

The SRTC would be managed by a member of the local community. There are a sufficient number of qualified youth in the village who are active in the community and thus the manager of the SRTC would be assigned in a process of participatory meetings between members of the municipality and members of the SRTC. Private actors in the SRTC would include weekenders with an academic background and expertise in planning with an interest in sustainable development for. Given that Tibneen also counts family divisions as well as members of influential political families who have intervened in the village in numerous occasions, it will be important for the SRTC to include voices from all these families. The council would also include

members of active NGOs (e.g. Alpha, Tomorrows Tibneen NGO, etc.).

The members of the council would also coordinate closely with the local community, municipality and especially with the CDR which is currently coordinating various projects in the village.

Objectives of SRTC:

- Research and development especially for creating and implementing a short term and long term tourism vision for the area

- Implementing the articulated planning document for sustainable rural tourism development

- Supervision and implementation of heritage rehabilitation projects

- Branding and marketing the region for local tourism

- Maintaining strong links with the local community and using new and alternative methods to ensure transparency and the participation of expats/weekenders and regional tourists.

- Ensuring sufficient funding and a strategy whereby the profits of this expanding tourism sector would feedback into providing adequate infrastructure and local economic development in the village

- Fostering an environment that would encourage entrepreneurial development

- Fundraising for the implementation of the SRT projects

Main Activities:

- Data gathering and analysis on the regional assets for tourism development and especially on the networks that naturally link the region starting from the local assets and practices of the people.

- To hold meetings with key stakeholders and identify a short term vision

with the priorities to kick start tourism in the region and a long term vision

- Implementation of proposed urban development projects to encourage sustainable tourism in the region
- Developing a rehabilitation strategy and host various events, which activate the Citadel and sites of heritage. The 7 citadels could be linked through tours or a set of events throughout the year.
- Redesigning the municipality website and using it as a platform to share news and relevant data and connect with expats/weekenders and regional tourists. Through other social media channels these groups would be invited to contribute to the making of the village through ideas or even funding
- Provide incentives for new business startups especially the ones responding to the needs of the tourism sector.
- Trainings on business development to encourage local production and local businesses and providing a space to sell the produce.

5.4.1.2. SRTC Main Units

- *Research and Development Unit:*

As Tibneen is a village that takes pride in its high level of educated population, the experts in various fields would be invited as voluntary members to share their knowledge and discuss pressing issues or innovative ideas to feed into tourism and local economic development in the area. The SRTC would maintain strong links with universities especially that the American University of Beirut through its Urban Planning and Design program which has conducted various studies on Tibneen and other areas in the south. This could be managed by locals from the South or members who are working with the municipality and at the same time involved in research about

the area. The members who are volunteers in the beginning may decide to meet once every 2 months to pool their information together and share them with the SRTC committee.

- *Tourism Management Board:*

This unit is essential, as it would have the main stakeholders as members on board as well as consultants with specific expertise. The members of the municipality, stakeholders such as local entrepreneurs, and influential expatriates, weekenders, and regional actors who are contacted by the municipality to be members would hold monthly meetings to initiate the sustainable rural tourism vision starting from Tibneen. It is key to have a member who has strong links with or is based in the CDR on the board so as to ensure the participation of or support of the institution which implements large scale development projects in Lebanon. The board will discuss and setup a priority of projects or initiatives to start with on the short term under the umbrella of a long term sustainable tourism vision for the area. The board would assign an officer to be responsible for writing proposals for funding from international organizations or expats.

- *Entrepreneurship and Marketing Unit:*

Members of this unit include the main successful entrepreneurs in the village in the fields of recreation, agriculture, and services and members of the Souk el Jomaa Committee. This unit would be backed by the tourism management unit that would consult or recruit trainers in the field of entrepreneurship development or business management to provide trainings/coaching for potential entrepreneurs. Marketing would be through tourism branding and boosting the local market. Members of the marketing team would include representatives from the Tibneen municipality who has created the new website for the village. Local/regional graphic designers would be hired on a contractual basis to follow up on the branding identity for Tibneen and the region. The

brand would be used for signage systems that would enhance the experience of the user in the space, and also to market local products in this context. It is key to provide training for one or two locals who are interested in design to become consultants to the municipality who are in charge of design, branding and social media.

- *Tourism and Recreation Unit:*

The key actors in the village who have been involved in events in the Qalaa or cultural and recreational events in the village would manage this unit. Thus, local dwellers already active in this sector who have been mentioned in the research would be invited as members of this unit. They would work together to initiate projects that would activate the key local assets in the village such as the cultural events, activities for youth and kids, and setting up trainings for women in the village. It is key for this unit to start by activating the Qalaa to become a social cultural landmark especially that the castle is a source of pride to the community, as a weekender describes it to be: “the secret escape that will forever hold the dreams and memories of our youth”. The vision for the Qalaa would integrate it to a national tourism network of crusader castles in Lebanon. Thus, the unit will also focus on activating the Qalaa through a sustained vision of episodic activities and perhaps using it to brand Tibneen as the “Castle City”.

5.4.2. Institutional Intervention: Municipality

The first intervention on the institutional level is the Sustainable Rural Tourism Council, which has been explained above. The second intervention targets the municipality to strengthen its role especially with the links it has with expatriates as the mayor has strong links to expatriates and recently visited them in Michigan to give a speech about Tibneen. A new unit, the expat fund, would be established in the municipality with the aim to communicate with expats and possible donors to attract

funding for projects.

Funding

In the case of Tibneen, similar to the case studies in this thesis, the most difficult part is receiving funding to implement projects. While most of the interventions address changes on the institutional level, funding is important to kick start the vision by investing in infrastructure and rehabilitation of key sites. In this context, funding should be sought from:

- Expatriates and weekenders in the beginning as they come from middle to high income families and would want to invest in their “hometown” if they were encouraged by a detailed applicable vision for Tibneen.
- The municipality through taxation
- NGOs such as Youth Association and Alpha could invest in hosting activities and events in Tibneen with the aim to attract regional tourists and receive funding for the SRT
- Funding would also be sought from the CDR, which is currently very active in Tibneen and the Kuwaiti and Saudi Funds.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1. Thesis Summary

This thesis adapts the principles of sustainable rural tourism to the context of Tibneen by addressing the key challenges and building on the assets to attract and respond to the “tourists”, which are defined as expatriates, weekenders and regional visitors. Key challenges identified in this context are economic, security, political, and social while key assets are namely the physical assets such as the archeological and heritage sites and thick social networks which are key to this context. The main principles for sustainable rural tourism are derived from the case study analysis and could be summarized as: community involvement, reinforcement of the role of local entrepreneurs, building on existing natural and rural assets, rehabilitation and conservation of heritage sites, and finally developing a response institutional set-up to steer and implement the sustainable rural tourism vision. The methodology adapted for this context addresses the different scales which are created by exploring and mapping social networks and economic practices which link Tibneen to the region. Furthermore, negotiation is adopted as a means for eliciting participation in a context where participation proved to be challenging due to political, gender, and trust issues.

Key local assets for sustainable rural development in Tibneen were identified and analyzed in this thesis based on their scales, primary value, assets, challenges, and key stakeholders, these are: The Friday Souk, Citadel and historic core, recreation and entrepreneurship, and Al Mashrou’ al Akhdar. The analysis of each of these local assets through people’s practices and origins shows strong regional links and networks that

dictate the necessity to address Tibneen within the region. The Friday souk is a space, which attracts salespeople, customers and products on a regional level. The Citadel may stand alone in Tibneen, yet it has been historically linked to and built based on a network of 7 citadels starting from Palestine and thus acts on a national scale. Successful businesses in Tibneen also attract a regional network of local tourists in addition to the expatriates and weekenders. Finally, Al Mashrou' Al Akhdar is used by the local community, and regional visitors as a space for recreation and sports.

A key finding is that the thick social networks are intrinsic to this context and should become a thread that activates the physical assets and ties the sites of heritage to encourage sustainable rural tourism in Tibneen. Thick social networks create an intrinsic bond between the local community, weekenders, and expats in relation to each other and to the village as a place of memory, belonging and family. Furthermore, social gatherings take place in informal spaces which are not allocated specifically for public use which enlivens many areas in the village and present an asset to be integrated in a series of social spaces as part of the sustainable rural tourism vision.

The intervention devises a planning document, which builds on the physical assets and social assets in order to develop a network of spaces which links social spaces to physical assets to attract more tourists to spend more time in a village with lived spaces. The vision for Tibneen is to be developed through an integrated social heritage network, which is proposed through urban design interventions, social capital building, policies and projects to support the vision and a response institutional setup.

Urban design interventions namely address the rehabilitation of the Qalaa for heritage preservation to develop it as social and cultural landmark. The physical intervention also targets the souk to allocate a space for local products in order to encourage local agriculture or other small-scale products and attract more visitors to the

souk. Furthermore, design intervention addresses the commercial road to become a shared space, which is more pedestrian friendly to reclaim the kazdoura practice and enhance the entrance to Tibneen. A pedestrian network is also proposed in order to enhance the visitors experience and connect key sites of heritage. Finally, design interventions address the historic core to rehabilitate old houses, which are rented out to be turned into bed and breakfasts, encourage greening practices and public/private urban pockets to enliven the space and attract more tourists to it. The vision proposes infrastructure upgrading as a premise to sustainable rural tourism development by enhancing the electricity, sewer systems, water management, and rehabilitation of the road network.

The proposed vision builds on the social capital to propose various incentives, training programs, and linkages. Trainings and workshops are proposed to encourage weekenders to volunteer and share their knowledge with the local community for business development. Marketing is also proposed in order to brand Tibneen as a village, its local products, and enhance its signage system. Marketing is also key to advertise the Qalaa as a national landmark in relation to the other crusader castles in Lebanon. Finally, websites are key to be developed as a way to interact with weekenders, expatriates and other tourists and to ensure transparency.

Policies are proposed on various levels namely to address heritage preservation, environmental sustainability, local entrepreneurship and master plan revision. Finally, the Sustainable Rural Tourism Council, a public/private institution, is devised with clear objectives, activities, and units. The institution is public in the sense that it is located in the premises of the Sarai and backed by public stakeholders, however to ensure that the vision is implemented, the council would be managed by a local with other members who are weekenders, political families, and members of

active NGOs.

6.2. Further Research

Further research may build on this thesis to explore the replicability of this case study in other contexts. Further research should also build on the findings of this thesis regarding the centrality of the souks as traditional historical trading practices as a space for networking. It is key to explore further and identify the networks and linkages that the souk creates with regional economies to strengthen the local economy.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PERMANENT DWELLERS IN TIBNEENE TO UNDERSTAND THE VILLAGES' KEY ASSETS AND CONSTRAINTS

Date: _____

SOCIAL

- 1- Name of Area:
- 2- Name of Neighborhood:
- 3- Residing in Tibneene / Beirut / Abroad?
- 4- If residing in Tibneene do you stay here during the winter?
- 5- Number of people/household:
- 6- Number of people older than 15 yrs:
- 7- Relation to the head of the household:
- 8- Marital Status:
- 9- Nationality:
- 10- Did you go to school?
- 11- Highest level achieved in school:
- 12- How many years did you complete in this level at school?
- 13- Name of school/university last attended?
- 14- Occupation:
- 15- Hours of work completed weekly
- 16- Type of work (Manager/owner/works with family/governmental
- 17- work/nongovernmental work/private sector)
- 18- Did you receive a payment in the last week?
- 19- Did you look for a job in the last week?
- 20- Since when have you been looking for a job?
- 21- Seasonal job?
- 22- Job based on a signed contract?
- 23- Do you suffer from an illness?
- 24- If yes, where did you go to cure illness?
- 25- Signs of depression/fear/hopelessness/nervousness in the past 12 months?

- 26- Do you get financial support?
- 27- If yes from who?
- 28- How often? Weekly/monthly/seasonal/yearly/never
- 29- Number of family members residing in Tibneene
- 30- Number of family members residing in Beirut
- 31- Number of family members residing abroad (specify where)
- 32- Average financial support received from members residing in Beirut/abroad
- 33- Do you have what you and your family needs to have adequate food
- 34- How do the walls of your house look like?
- 35- What is the roof made of?
- 36- Do you have problems in the house structure?
- 37- How many rooms?
- 38- How many bedrooms?
- 39- The area of your house?
- 40- Do you or any of your family members own
- 41- A car / motorbike / Van / Pick Up Van
- 42- Do you own:
- Cell phone/House phone
 - Refrigerator/Fridge/Freezer
 - Gas or Electric Stove/Microwave
 - Washing Machine
 - Computer/Internet
 - AC/Heater/DVD/Generator
- 43- How do you heat your house?
- 44- Is your family in debt?
- 45- Do you engage in any homemade production?
- 46- Which type of production/expertise would you like to engage in or develop?
- If yes please specify
- 47- Would you be willing to sell these products?
- 48- How should Tibneen be in your opinion?
- a) "Green Tibneen"
 - b) Urbanized village
 - c) Green and Urbanized
 - d) Other
- 49- `What in your opinion should be preserved in Tibneen?

AGRICULTURE AND WATER

50- Rank from 1 to 4 why green spaces in this village are important?

- a) Economic Development
- b) Environmental Development
- c) Recreational Sector Development
- d) Heritage Preservation

51- Do you rely on agriculture for personal income? Yes/No

- a) If you do then what are the principal crops you plant?
- b) Does this personal income satisfy your needs? Yes/No
- c) Do you own the land or are you renting? Own/Rent
- d) What is the area of the land you are planting?
- e) How many laborers help you in your task?
- f) Who are these laborers?
 - 1) Family
 - 2) Friends
 - 3) Seasonal Workers

52- If you don't rely on agriculture, how do you generate income?

53- How do you think the local agricultural production could be developed?

54- Do you think agriculture activities should be the principal source of income in Tibneen? Yes / No

If yes, Do you think the agricultural sector is well subsidized? Yes/No

55- Do you think a water management project is necessary for the village? Yes/No

a) If yes then:

What kind of project should the government/municipality undergo?

56- Do you think there is a problem of access to potable water? Yes/No

57- Is the problem only concerning consumption or does it also concern agricultural practices?

58- Do you think the water from rainfall is well managed? Yes/No

59- Do you transport the irrigation water easily to your land? Yes/No

60- Do you consume water from the "Ain"? Yes/No

a) If yes, do you think the water is well managed? Yes/No

61- Do you always find water in the "Ain" and is it always clean and safe to consume? Yes/No

RECREATION

62- What do you do mostly for recreation in the village?

- a) Socialize with neighbors
- b) Public park
- c) Sit in the outdoors (specify where)

- d) Restaurants/Cafes (specify which)
- e) Network/Computer center
- f) Kazdoura
- g) Qalaa
- h) other please specify

63- How many times did you visit these places in the last month:

- a) Qalaa
- b) mashrou'
- c) Al kashef
- d) Al hosn
- e) Public park
- f) Town square

64- What would you like to do for leisure in the village that is not currently available?

HERITAGE

65- What do you consider to be the most important heritage sites in Tibneene

- a) Qalaa
- b) Old Houses
- c) Greening Practices
- d) Green Spaces
- e) Food/Traditional practices
- f) Souk El jomaa

PROJECTS

66- Which development projects would you be willing to engage in and how? (rank in order of importance)

- a) Housing/Rehabilitation
- b) Public park reactivation
- c) More open public spaces
- d) Closing the Mashrou for specific days for sports
- e) Enhancing the mashrou for leisure and recreation
- f) Events in the Qalaa
- g) Closed space for hunting
- h) Food stands in public spaces
- i) Encouraging agricultural produce
- j) Encouraging greening practices
- k) Water collection and management
- l) Specialized training for small businesses
- m) Bed and Breakfast for expats/weekenders

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