Saida Urban Sustainable Development Strategy

Local Expert Team

Strategic Framework Report

Prepared by:

Howayda Al-Harithy

Jala Makhzoumi

Omar Abdulaziz Hallaj

Kanj Hamade

Ilina Srour

In Collaboration with:

Jad Chaaban

Giulia Guadagnoli

Salwa Sabbagh

Habib Debs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Framework presented in this report is largely based on the Strategic Diagnosis of the six transversal issues generated by Descriptive Memory of the city of Saida. The diagnosis of each transversal issue generated a number of specific strategic objectives. The strategic objectives that resulted from the six tracks of investigation were grouped into clusters under the heading of more general objectives. The general objectives are:

A. Improving socio-economic conditions of residents
B. Sustaining environmental health
C. Connecting the city with its surroundings
D. Coordination, cooperation and networking
E. Lobbying with the national institutions for implementing, amending and/or developing legal frameworks
F. Security and Stability

The clusters respect the cross cutting approach of the diagnosis, encompassing different transversal issues as well as different sectors, as presented in the Executive Summary of the Strategic Diagnosis.

During the Strategic Framework phase, the team of experts elaborated the results of the Diagnosis into a set of strategies, which will guide the elaboration of the Action Plan. The cross-cutting approach of the Diagnosis allows for considering each strategy within one comprehensive framework, and pursuing value-adding complementarities and synergies among different objectives related to different sectors. It allows as such envisioning coalitions and coordination among stakeholders active in different sectors, while providing each of them with guidelines specific to their own priorities.

The objectives drawn from the diagnosis phase were further tested and redefined through a program of meetings during the Strategic Framework phase that included the working group, the Association of Traders, the NGO network in Saida, and the School network in Saida. These meetings resulted in the adjustments of some objectives and the addition of a new strategic objective: Security and Stability. This was a result of the general political instability in Lebanon and a more direct result of the armed confrontation between the Lebanese Army and the militant group of Al-Asir that took place in Saida during the Strategic Framework phase.

These meetings were also the catalyst for articulating both the vision and the mission for the city of Saida. A key link between the diagnosis and the strategic framework was the vision for

the city. While conducting the strategic diagnosis, the team adopted, tested and reworked the vision of the city based on discussions and meetings with various groups. The vision and mission are both presented in this report.

1. VISION FOR SAIDA

"Saida and dynamic surroundings offer the successive generations of its residents a healthy diversified economy and a green environment to live and prosper capitalizing on its locational advantages, rich history and cultural diversity."

صيدا ومحيطها الحيوي توفر للأجيال المتتابعة من سكانها اقتصاد متنوع وبيئة سليمة لكي يعيشوا ويزدهروا مستفيدين من موقعها و تاريخها ا لغني وثقافتها المتنوعة.

The objectives and strategies proposed below are meant to provide a framework to meet the vision by guiding the identification of future projects on urban form and infrastructure towards an equitable growth of the local economy. A time frame of ten years was used as benchmark at this stage, to assess the feasibility of the proposed strategies and their ability to make significant breakthroughs, albeit not entirely reversed entrenched conditions. In some cases targets were reasonably feasible within that time frame; in others the structural gaps and initial conditions underpin the full realization of the process within a ten years frame. However, at this stage, the strategic framework is concerned with plausibility more than with actual feasibility. The main strategic objectives, related to urban infrastructure, economic development, governance, heritage protection, and environment are outlined below.

2. MISSION FOR SAIDA

A. Improving socio-economic conditions of residents
1) To ensure the continuous diversification of the economic base of the city and the viability of all sectors through technical support and training to ailing sectors to adapt to new economic realities and conditions
2) To develop full cycles of development to attract and retain qualitative investments particularly in the tourism sector and to link these networks to efforts to preserve the tangible and intangible heritage of the city
3) To integrate marginalized groups into the city services and economic development such as poor Lebanese families, and Palestinian refugees
4) To empower local communities particularly the less advantaged ones
5) To promote innovative economic enterprises

6) To address traditional livelihoods (fishing, agriculture and related cottage industries) by institutional capacity building of organizations representing workers and businesses involved in traditional crafts

7) To restore the historical housing stock engaging the residents through subsidies and training according to consistent and affordable restoration guidelines and techniques

8) To seek employment opportunities for owners and residents of the old city

B. Sustaining environmental health

1) To ensure ecological integrity of water courses, marine and groundwater and safeguard against seasonal flooding

2) To plan for a Blue-Green Network that serves amenity and promotes sustainable use of environmental resources

3) To enhance the system of managing infrastructure

4) To develop a proper monitoring and evaluation process for infrastructure

C. Connecting the city with its surroundings

1) To link the old city culturally, spatially and economically with the greater city and beyond

2) To increase quantity and improve quality of green areas

3) To preserve the city historical link with the sea, with the coastal orchards and the with the hills

4) To develop a collective spatial strategy for the greater Saida area and to link the development of future infrastructure projects to a comprehensive vision for the city

D. Coordination, cooperation and networking

1) To develop a comprehensive plan for the old city to ensure and guide coordination among the various actors and projects for restoration;

2) To develop a framework for true cooperation among the municipalities in the greater Saida area in a manner to ensure that duties and rights of every party are clearly defined and adhered to by the various municipalities

3) To coordinate with the Union of Municipalities of Saida/Az-Zahrani to identify regional development projects and to organize and structure the tax base and tax collection within the Union

4) To assure coordination among the various mega projects and develop cross sectoral synergies and mutual benefits

5) To create formal and informal networks for branding the city and marketing its potential assets

6) To create mechanisms of technology transfer among concerned parties in order to increase quality and quantity of production to meet market demand

E. Lobbying with the national institutions for implementing, amending and/or developing legal frameworks
1) To adopt and implement the decentralization law as well as numerous other laws pertaining to the finances and responsibilities of municipalities
2) To elaborate a new zoning for the old city including micro schemes based on improved data and wider survey
3) To protect Saida's landscape distinctiveness enforcing and enhancing existing legal framework for the protection of water resources and green areas

F. Security and Stability
1) To prove Saida's centrality and and leadership in opening local dialogues about these issues

3. OBJECTIVE A - IMPROVING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF RESIDENTS

The preliminary analysis of the first phase of Saida USDS indicated how the production of urban form in Saida is strongly influenced by an economy dependent on land speculation. These findings were further corroborated in the Strategic Diagnosis report on the transversal issue "Local Economic Development". The report showed how land speculation was actually driving out more productive sectors of the economy, by making urban space scarce and unaffordable to the majority of the residents of Greater Saida. The analysis shed light on the vicious circle where urban form and urban economy intertwine, hindering further growth, and hampering the equitable distribution of the city's locational advantages among the residents, with deficient urban services contributing to poverty and lack of economic opportunities.

During the second diagnostic phase, the meetings with the Working Groups, the Steering Committee and various community stakeholders, indicated possible strategic questions, to be explored and evaluated by the expert team towards a broader consensus over vision and objectives for the future of Saida. These preliminary findings were presented in the Strategic Diagnosis report. Here, in the third phase of the project, they are further elaborated and put forward to the steering committee and to local stakeholders, to provide a Strategic Framework to guide the process forward.

The main challenges, identified during the Strategic Diagnosis on "Local Economic Development" and "Urban Infrastructure," were the following:

- Real estate speculation is driving value-adding and job-creating sectors of the economy out and contributing to the large divide between the rich and the poor in the city.
- Saida is not capitalizing on its locational advantages and lacks a collective vision for promoting its assets.
- The local tax system in place constitutes a disincentive for the municipality to diversify its economic base, while the national legal framework for municipal finance encourages municipalities to develop their local economic bases.
- Investments in the city are relatively high, but not diversified, with small and medium businesses having many structural difficulties to access adequate funding and support.

A1. To ensure the continuous diversification of the economic base of the city and the viability of all sectors through technical support and training to ailing sectors to adapt to new economic realities and conditions

Saida'a economy is a contested field like many other aspects of the city's livelihood. Most stakeholders envision that their sector of the economy is the most relevant one for the city's identity and wellbeing. In doing so, they fail to see the interconnectivity of the various sectors and their mutual relevance in reinforcing and complementing each other. The reality of the matter is that no one sector will have a chance to stand on its own, and no one sector will be able to grow beyond a certain level without bringing other sectors of the economy forward as well. Yet some miracle solutions are being presented as the only hope for the city, such as tourism, the port, and the primacy of the health and education sectors. In reality all these sectors will need substantial infrastructural development before they can be capitalized upon. Any growth of the urban economy will essentially need to remove critical obstacles facing local economic growth: primarily it will have to hamper the uncontrolled real estate speculation that is creating a fictitious bubble, pushing aside all other value-adding and job creating opportunities in the city. To meet this objective a package of actions need to be identified. These strategies cannot be considered separately; rather they shall be mutually reinforcing and complementary to each other.

A1.1 *Setting realistic targets for growth in the near future:*

Given the limitation of the political situation and the entrenchment of certain types of investments in Saida, it will be unrealistic to change the current investment climate in the city. Currently the local GDP of the greater Saida area is estimated to be in the range of about 300,000,000 USD. Lebanon has been facing real difficulty since the outbreak of the civil war in Syria and the influx of refugees, with national growth rates dropping below 2-3% per year, and local growth rates being actually negative in many cases. Moreover, the military confrontation between the army and some militant groups has recently further jeopardized the economic

outlook of the city. Said cannot hope for miracles right away and it will take major work to change its current stifle economy. Collectively, the city should plan its economic growth for next year to be around 3-4% as a first step, and then to aim at augmenting that systematically at about 5-7% in the years to come. The contribution of each sector of the economy towards this target has to be clearly assessed.

Tourism has a great potential for growth but not as the first motor to boost local economy. Major infrastructure will need to be in place, and this will require some years before any tangible returns can be claimed by the sector. Given its limited share of about 2-3% of the local economy, it will require a growth of minimum 20% every year for the next ten years to reach a healthy but modest 10% (provided that today the sector is actually contributing to the overall economy at the rates stated above).. This is a very unrealistic scenario at the present stage. Major investments are required before it can be achieved. Given that most tourism type investments require 5-7 years before they break even, a more realistic scenario would be that the sector achieves such growth level only after a set up period of about five years. In other words it shall be possible to reach the targets envisioned above only within some 15-17 years.

A more realistic growth can be achieved in the health and education sectors. In order to maintain a leader role in the local economy, they would need to grow at rates slightly above the overall target. In other words, they will need to grow at yearly rates of about 6-8% to cover the gaps in other sectors, picking up the tab at first. Manufacturing and small scale production will also need to grow at congruent rates. Meanwhile, retail can maintain a relative growth rate of about 3-4% every year, and shall keep its relative prominent role for several years before other new sectors will kick in.

The sector that is most promising for growth is transportation. Capitalizing on the city's location as the gateway to South Lebanon, the sector should aim at substantial growth in the years to come. However, the current port envisioned in the Alexander Bay will not serve this aim. The city geographical position combined with provisions for a free market of reasonable size can drive the outputs of the sector alone to cover no less than 15-20% of the local economy

Agriculture is not set to see much growth, the way it is being managed at the moment. However, it can still be a major indirect contributor to growth, through marketing the produce of the hinterland of Saida, branding it and capitalizing on it in high end products that can be sold in the local, regional and international economy.

Saida has many of its residents working in Beirut and can potentially capitalize on that human capital to attract qualitative investments, given the still relative low cost of residence and labor

in the city. Corporate service offices, backend support and various Research & Development types of activities can very easily be moved to Saida. Beirut has capitalized so long on other cities resources; it is about time for Saida to think of strategies to attract back some white collar businesses. In essence the city can easily boost its economy by a 5-7% share of its local GDP through direct investments of the sort. This can be achieved by motivating 4-5 medium to big corporations to move substantial parts of their offices to Saida.

Real estate will need to stay at its current level, or even be reduced gradually as a proportion of the total economy. Its contribution to the local economy is actually negative, as it is depriving local production of important assets in favor of people who are not resident in the city, and it creates inflation conditions that are not compatible with the real outputs of the local economy. The sector, however, has made major investments in the past and is not likely to forefeet these investments soon. This sector will need counter measures to slow its growth (proportionally relative to the overall economy and not in actual figures). A minimal growth of about 2-3% will be most realistic in this sector, without creating a major disruption to existing investments and causing a shock wave.

A1.2 *Developing incentive packages to support emerging sectors of the economy:*
Though some of these incentives will need to be adopted on the national level (tax breaks), the city itself can be prominent in lobbying for such measures. Nonetheless, it can adopt some interventions on its own to support the growth of the targeted sectors. The city can work out deals to relax local taxes on certain types of businesses, while seriously tracking and taxing idle real estate investments, to discourage keeping them unproductively outside the market for speculation purposes. Incentives for the emerging sectors can also include specific types of infrastructure needed for these sectors. The city can engage the main stakeholders in each sector in identifying the main infrastructure needed, and develop PPP scenarios to support such development. In this regard, the experience of the city working with the Traders Association to develop urban design and infrastructure for the main market represents a good practice to be built upon. The current package of 53 projects can be better delineated to include the more relevant infrastructure for the emerging sectors. As it stands, the main beneficiary of the current package are the real estate speculators, achieving better access for private cars to their real estate developments. Packages of public transport, communication, and energy can be more effective in attracting qualitative investments to Saida, well beyond the limited potential of real estate developments.

Further indirect incentives can support the productive sectors of the economy, working out health insurance deals in conjunction with local health providers to attract businesses to the city, or developing better urban public amenities to attract white collar businesses to the city.

Better environmental management will also be critical to any effort related to the improvements of tourism prospects for the city.

A1.3 *Setting up financing mechanisms to cover the cost of infrastructural developments:*

The above mentioned improvements to the local infrastructure will still need to be financed. The city can work on developing better mechanisms for financing such operations. Through a better accounting of the rents from future investments, the city can calculate its infrastructural needs and work on setting a special fund to develop these needs. The fund can be partly refurbished from municipal revenues, but also some potential for Public Private Partnerships shall be studied, along with the opportunities to create an endowment with part of the revenues from real-estate. Also, the fund can be nurtured through the contribution of other municipalities who are using the resources of Saida, while the city does not benefit fromany fare share to the maintenance and depreciation of infrastructure.

The trust fund can be a vehicle to attract international donors to Saida, and to develop a special development zone in the city and surrounding region. This will need major work to convince national authorities to allow Saida to set up such a zone. Creating a real port project can be a main motor for instigating such an approach, by combining the free zone of the port with a larger vision for making Saida a special development zone. The World Bank has worked on different models of such zones, and Saida could potentially have all the relevant components to be such a zone not only for Lebanon but for the whole eastern Mediterranean in the long run.

A1.4 *Providing for alternative and diversified land uses in the master plan:*

Any attempt at diversifying the local economic base will also require allocating congruent spaces for such development in the Master Plan of Greater Saida. Currently the official plan provides mainly for mixed use developments. Zones that were kept for alternative uses in the old Master Plan, are being gradually converted for this classification. The quick return on investment in residential and retail speculation, in a political climate not conducive for long term investments, is driving most land owners to seek short term profits, rather than more sustainable productive investments. Assuring that the Master Plan reserves sufficient space for the emerging economic sectors is essential to retaining some land at reasonable prices for such investments.

It is also important to allow for a reasonable level of protection of heritage and environmental assets through conservation planning, if the city is hoping to capitalize on these assets to attract tourists and/or white collar jobs to the city. Other complimentary measures to support growth in the emerging and diverse sectors of the economy are discussed under their own objectives.

A2. To develop full cycles of development to attract and retain qualitative investments particularly in the tourism sector and to link these networks to efforts to preserve the tangible and intangible heritage of the city

Saida's maritime location, rich history and cultural diversity provide the necessary elements for tourism. The development of Saida as a tourist destination should be based on the valorization of its tangible and intangible heritage including the creation of income generating activities. This process would allow Saida's residents to fully acknowledge the need to protect the city's cultural heritage, which should be perceived as a source of income and an integrate part of the city image and provided quality of life.

The diagnostic phase showed that tourism in Saida is under-developed, and is mostly restricted to day visits to the archeological sites and some restaurants. The old city's potential to become a major tourism attraction in Lebanon has not yet been valorized and marketed, due to the haunting stereotype of it being an unsafe ghetto.

Developing the tourist sector and preserving the living and cultural heritage of Saida should be tackled simultaneously, and include:
- An infrastructural component, i.e. the restoration of heritage sites in the old city and neighboring souks (linking to Strategic Objective A7).
- A communication component, i.e. the valorization of Saida's heritage nationally and internationally.
- A socio-economic component, i.e. the creation income generating activities allowing Saida's residents to be integrated in the process and to take full economic benefits of the restoration process.

A2.1 *Increasing communication to valorize Saida's cultural heritage:*

At the local level, awareness raising of the city residents, especially school students, and youth, about the importance of preserving the city's heritage, should focus on its role in inducing economic opportunities. The municipality of Saida would set-up this awareness-raising program in coordination with the local school network, the universities and NGOs. The positive changes that occurred in the city in terms of heritage preservation and restoration should be communicated at the national level. Such a communication campaign would focus on the efforts undertaken to preserve the city's heritage, promote the city's vision and the efforts undertaken by its stakeholders in order to implement it.

Saida's efforts to preserve local heritage should also be promoted at the Mediterranean level. In that matter the USDS program could support in leveraging further promotion in that region.

A2.2 *Promoting income-generation activities to support tourism and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage:*

 A tourism office for the city would provide information to tourists, answer their possible security concerns, offer guided tours of the old city, provide tourists with a city map, and present the potential activities and available tourism packages.

A training program for guides to the Old City would train local young men and women to become urban local guides to tourists wishing to visit the old city. The program can be used to fight petty-crime in the old city by including people prone to petty-criminality and allowing for the re-insertion of previous petty-crime perpetrators.

Business development programs and micro-credit to local craftsmen to diversify economic activity would help diversify their economic activity. These can include: the development of tourist packages, reception of school students within education trails and organized visits to the old city, on the job recreational activity ("do it yourself"), and provision of food and beverage services.

Business development programs and micro-credit to local fishermen willing to diversify their economic activity would support them including tourism packages such as diving, fishing trip, sea excursion, etc.

A3.   To integrate marginalized groups into the city services and economic development such as poor Lebanese families, and Palestinian refugees

Poverty is not only endemic in the Saida region, it is also deeply rooted. Saida is a major poverty zone with poverty rates exceeding the national averages, as well as those of South Lebanon in general. Marginalized groups constitute such a critical mass of the population, that any hope for economic development in Saida will be obliterated if it does not include the poor. The real estate developments in the city did more than exclude the poor from the rents of the local economy: they create social and political conditions that repel further productive investments and related job creation. Saida's economy will never prosper without addressing some of the core conditions for equitable participation of all its residents in the development process. This is not an issue of humanitarian concern only: it is a question of survival for the city as a whole. The city has reached a glass ceiling beyond which it will not grow anymore. This glass ceiling is constituted by the blockage among the diverse social groups, and the political backlog this has created.

A3.1 *More equitable distribution of urban infrastructure:*

Urban infrastructure has a major impact not only on the livelihoods of the marginalized, but also on their ability to contribute to economic growth and integrate into the formal economy. Transportation is of course the most visible example. By increasing their mobility, the poor can

access better jobs and transfer a larger share of their meager incomes to self-improving investments. However, it should be noted that the poor pay a much larger share of their income to cover alternative electricity sources, where the public provision is not optimal. They also tend to spend a larger share of their income on health, as they are rarely able to afford insurance and are thus more prone to emergency medical conditions that set back financially. The examples are abounding. The essential step is to ensure that the marginalized and the poor have better access to services and to efficient infrastructure. The current package of 53 projects has only nominal infrastructure projects serving the poor. The city's investment plan should consider a better representation of their interest in manner congruent to their needs and numbers.

It should be noted however that when benefits are perceived as entitlement, they foster a dependency on the state and can actually be counterproductive to the empowerment of the marginalized. Instead, this strategy should be considered within a framework of equitable distribution both in terms of rights and of obligations alike.

A3.2 *Comprehensive development programs for the refugee camps:*

The refugee camps in the city represent a major challenge. Their urban infrastructure is by far inferior to the rest of the city. Over the next ten years, the camps will need an allocation of double the per-capita spending on infrastructure, to reach a level where they can match the average areas of the rest of the city. However, it is not only technical infrastructure that needs development in the camps. Social and economic infrastructure will also need support and development. Moreover, bridging some of the inherent structural conditions for the camps will be essential. Some form of recognition of private property will enable residents of the camps to use their properties for mortgages to increase their cash flow. Other interventions include reducing risk and increasing resilience of the urban fabric, therefore reducing safety burdens on the population. A strategic development plan for the camps should be developed with a wide participation of the population, to guide public investments and policies, and, most importantly to secure the residents as to the intentions of the public intervention, and allow the community to invest its own resources as their risks are reduced.

A4.   To empower local communities particularly the Less advantaged ones:

Reversing structural conditions in impoverished communities cannot depend on a top down process of economic growth alone. A bottom up process empowering communities and acknowledging and sustaining their agency in the economic sphere is essential. Empowering local communities is not a moral or ethical imperative alone; it is a substantial component of a local development plan that shall engage everybody. Saida will not be able to attract better

business investments if its human capital is not well developed and trained. Larger corporations usually will nurture a myriad of local satellite enterprises. More importantly, the small and informal nature of the enterprises in Saida means that the majority of jobs created in the next period of time are likely to come from the SME sector. Experience have demonstrate that this sector has more resilience and capacity to absorb new jobs, and will be easier to mobilize to create better jobs than other sectors of the economy. Great advances can be achieved within a relatively short time.

A4.1 *Introducing special programs to integrate the marginalized groups into the local economy:*
Key to any strategy of bridging the gap facing the marginalized groups from fully participating in the local economy is the creation of special programs that can offset structural biases in education, access to finance, and social capital. A whole range of programs to empower women, introduce entrepreneurship among the urban youth, provide microfinance loans, vocational training, small grants, and other tools can be envisioned and encouraged by the city, directly through its own resources, or indirectly through mandating certain provisions for businesses to use their corporate social responsibility in that direction.

To assume that the city will have a normal curve of income distribution within the next ten years, (instead of the high poverty median at the moment) the poorest 30% of the population will need to have their incomes increase by about 15% (not accounting for inflation) yearly. This is short of an economic miracle. The best practices among urban poverty reduction programs have only been known to produce results on the level of 10% annual growth for poor households. To that extent these programs will be necessary but not sufficient to create a new trend to support the poorest of the poor in the city.

A4.2 *Opportunities for Small Medium Enterprises (SME):*
Currently the SME's comprise the majority of the firms and enterprises in Saida. It is not likely that this type of enterprise will vanish or cede its role to the medium and large enterprises anytime soon. It is therefore important to recognize the role of this sector in creating jobs, and to develop a strategy to support SME's directly and indirectly. SME's can be supported on many levels through training and capacity building, grants and loans, collective deals for insurance to their employees, allocations of facilities in the Master Plan, incorporating them as part of the value chains of some of the bigger production processes in the city, reduction of the red tape facing their registration, reducing risks of registrations for start-ups, supporting their memberships in the chambers, etc.

In principle the City can draft its own SME strategy to be compatible with the national policies while capitalizing on opportunities within the city. The above mentioned package of programs

should be integrated with the SME strategy: for example the city can work out deals to train new employees for special targeted SME's.

A4.3 *Partnership and support to development oriented NGO's:*

Reach out to the marginalized groups is a very complex endeavor that the city bureaucracy is ill equipped to handle. An effective strategy for engaging development minded local NGO's will improve outreach to marginalized segments of the population. The city can develop an effective framework to support local NGO through training, provision of public support and infrastructure, outsourcing of public programs, and other types of incentives. Most importantly, however, the city needs to develop a process of consultation with the NGO's on a regular basis, to ensure the widest possible level of representation of marginalized voices in the decision making process in the city.

A5.   To Promote innovative economic enterprises:

The traditional sectors of the economy are facing structural problems that go beyond the capabilities of a single municipality in Lebanon. In exchange municipalities have still not carefully been able to imagine growing and incubating new sectors to emerge, and, when they do, they are often unrealistic about their expectations. Moreover, they are still doing that without consideration to the fact that emerging sectors of the economy need networking and interconnectivities with other regions and sectors to succeed. The limited mandate of the municipalities in Lebanon has hindered their ability to capitalize on their true potentials as economic motors. In Saida tourism solutions and innovative enterprises can only emerge viable if the city links to surrounding municipalities comprising assets complementary to those of Saida. The potential return on such moves is significantly high indeed.

A5.1 *Incubating new enterprises:*

The city can establish a wide range of physical and virtual incubation settings to encourage new innovative enterprises to settle down. It can also provide some seed funding to support young entrepreneurs in these emerging sectors with research and feasibility studies. An incubation package can involve some exemptions from municipal taxes, ability to use municipal assets, collective marketing and promotion, training and capacity building, developing special types of infrastructure for their work (particularly transportation and communication), etc. It can also organize collective fairs and events to give nascent new enterprises some opportunity to capitalize on larger than usual boosts to the demand for their services, while taking minimal initial risk.

Some of Saida's real tourism and entertainment assets have been poorly capitalized upon so far. The sea shore and the Ziri Island can be better developed to accommodate new types of entertainment opportunities, linked to existing infrastructure (the Municipal Stadium). Other assets so far unexploited could be developed, such as under water tourism in the archaeological sites of Ziri Island. The city can regulate the introduction of such businesses. Each of these interventions in itself will not have a major impact on the local economy, but put together they can be part of a wider marketing and branding strategy for the city. It might be therefore useful for the Municipality to invest in supporting new enterprises in this domain.

Some of this work can be done directly by the city; other components can be outsourced to NGO's and business associations. Currently the traders' associations and chambers are dominated by old enterprises; the City can develop deals with these institutions to make room for the new sectors and new enterprises in their planning and activities. The City must play a constructive role in developing win-win situations, where the old sectors of the economy also see some benefit from the new ones and do not see them as a source of competition.

A5.2 *Establishing networks with nearby municipalities:*

Tourism patterns in Lebanon are still exhibiting a fraction of the potentials afforded by their assets. These patterns will persist for a while until new patterns emerge. The hard reality is that Saida is nothing more than a short stop on the way to other attractions. These could be visited in one day round trip segments from Beirut, since the capital city is reaping all the major yields of tourism. Changing that reality must involve changing the pattern through which tourists make their trips. Saida must be visited at the end of a first day in the south not at the beginning of a round trip journey. To do so the route must involve a long journey in the South to Tyre (Sour). The tourists would then spend the night in Saida, before making the next leg of the trip to Jezzine and the Chouf in the following day. That simple change of the routine will not happen alone. It will require the municipalities working together to make such a change take place, extending the duration of the whole stay in the South for the average tourist from a one day trip to a two or three day trip. However, as each municipality is working on its own, a comprehensive strategy to extend the total stay is lacking.

Moreover, the conservative nature of the city may inhibit certain tourism activities from taking place in the city proper; working a deal with adjacent municipalities may allow some of these activities to take place in less conservative social milieus in the vicinity, without affecting the city potential to attract tourists in its own right.

The initiation of such changes will require also initial investments to collectively organize social events in the South in a complementary fashion. Seasonal activities such as the Beit Al-Din

Festival and the Deir Al-Qamar one, can be linked to each other through comprehensive tours, under common banners and by integrated calendars.

Special types of tourism must be also explored. There is a myriad of religious events that take place around Saida through the networks of churches and mosques. Ramadan festivals, St. Takla in the Mashmousheh area, visit to the cathedral in Maghdousheh, to name but few, can be made part of a procession that starts or ends in Saida. Extending the festival every time by a few hours, the chances of people staying for the night increase significantly. Working with church and mosque leaders is essential in this regard. The city can actually use such events to reinforce its brand image of an inclusive and cohesive society, linking to Strategic Objective F1.

A6. To address traditional livelihoods (fishing, agriculture and related cottage industries) by institutional capacity building of organizations representing workers and businesses involved in traditional crafts

It is acknowledged that economic development in Saida cannot rely solely on traditional livelihoods. However, these economic activities still represent an important element of the city's strategic vision. As a matter of fact, they constitute a commoditization of its cultural heritage and image. The sustainable development of traditional livelihoods highly depends on their ability to introduce technological changes and innovation, linking to Strategic Objective D6, to capture tourist willingness to pay a premium price for their products and services, and their ability to connect to tourism networks through the creation of linkages with tour operators and other tourism stakeholders.

Furthermore, the diagnostic analysis showed that people working in traditional livelihoods suffer from hard working conditions and lack of health coverage and education. Within that context, it is important to build the capacity of organizations representing the interest of people working in these sectors.

A6.1 *Building the capacity of organizations representing workers and businesses involved in traditional livelihoods:*
Organizations representing workers and businesses involved in traditional livelihood should have basic management skills. Especially, if they are to take full benefits of the opportunities that the implementation of the city's strategic vision will create. These organizations could use the newly acquired management capacity to access local and international funds, manage projects, and increase their business development capabilities and marketing skills. Furthermore, training on advocacy skills and tools could help these organizations defend its

members' interest, participate in the city planning and decision making processes, and pro-actively support the preservation of the city's tangible and intangible heritage.

Tourism based on a politically and socially constructed city vision and the resulting marketed image cannot be successful without the creation of networks and synergies between the different economic actors in the city. Traditional livelihoods organizations are to be part of these networks, therefore, building their networking and coordination capacities would support the success of such a strategy and a fruitful participation.

Organizations representing people and businesses involved in traditional livelihoods should undergo a democratization process and enlarge their representative base by opening their membership. Only a representative organization can successfully advocate for the rights of its members and for the preservation of the city's heritage.

A6.2 *Supporting collective actions of organizations representing workers and businesses involved in traditional livelihoods:*

The municipality should support collective actions undertaken by traditional livelihoods organizations that aim at promoting their products and services. Such action would also promote the city's strategic vision.

A7.   To restore the historical housing stock engaging the residents through subsidies and training according to consistent and affordable restoration guidelines and techniques

Socio-economic development is a key dimension of heritage preservation, not only in relation to its relevance in local actors' interests and priorities, and/or to the investments required for rehabilitation projects, but also in relation to its day-to-day management and the creation of opportunities for adaptive re-use. The following paragraph discusses the Strategic Objectives incorporating heritage within the overall aim of improving residents' socioeconomic conditions, building on the link to the Strategic Objective A2 (To develop full cycles of development to attract and retain qualitative investments particularly in the tourism sector and to link these networks to efforts to preserve the tangible and intangible heritage of the city) and A8 (To seek employment opportunities for owners and residents of the old city).

As detailed in the Strategic Diagnosis on Local Economic Development, current trends in financial investments in the city are missing important value adding opportunities by concentrating mainly on real-estate speculation, and blocking lands that could be available for productive investments. Nonetheless restoration efforts in the Old City have an important record of achievements, with a sustained commitment demonstrated by different private investors, missing the necessary coordination and integration of their projects within the overall development of the city.

Full cycles of development entail complementarity not only across economic sectors such as tourism and industry, but also, evidently, cross-cut through infrastructural and environmental concerns. Such cycles require local governments' capacities and financial resources which are currently missing in Saida Municipality. This makes all the more necessary to build networks favoring scale economies which capitalize on Saida's cultural and natural heritage assets.

Saida's natural heritage is addressed by specific strategic objectives concerning landscape, environment and ecology. Its neglect is connected to a circumstantial lack of profitability from agricultural activities, and to the absence of a clear orientation for the public management of water resources and of the coastal area, as described in the Strategic Diagnosis reports on the Green/Open Space Network, and on Urban Infrastructure. Saida's natural heritage is also related to traditional crafts, addressed by Strategic Objective A6 (To address traditional livelihoods (fishing, agriculture and related cottage industries) by institutional capacity building of organizations representing workers and businesses involved in traditional crafts), both for the relevance of agricultural production in the food-processing industry and for that of the sea for fisheries. In this perspective, capacity building of organizations representing workers and businesses in traditional crafts can highly contribute to the preservation of intangible heritage.

A7.1 *Promoting qualitative investments in various economic sectors engaging different actors in networking aimed to valorizing heritage as a local top ranking asset:*
Heritage constitutes one of the top-ranking assets for sustainable development in Saida, with direct impact on opportunities for economic growth particularly in the sectors of tourism, culture, hand-crafts, food-processing and real estate. Heritage preservation requires as such qualitative investments, generating revenue from different sources and for different groups within the community, linking to Strategic Objective A1 (To ensure the continuous diversification of the economic base of the city and the viability of all sectors through technical support and training to ailing sectors to adapt to new economic realities and conditions)The resources channeled in the restoration of architectural heritage in the Old City, for example, would have a much deeper impact if supported by initiatives and investments in tourism services, or in income-generation for the residents.

A7.2 *Supporting small businesses and improve working conditions in the sectors employing the residents of the Old City:*
Owners and residents of the Old City are two important groups playing a key role in the valorization of Saida's architectural heritage. Their economic gains through employment and small investment opportunities can highly contribute to the preservation of the Old City. Their interest and capacity in preventing decay, and enhance the historical urban fabric, can lead to

longer lasting impacts and lower aggregate costs than those required from projects run by public agencies.

A7.3 *Attracting and channeling investments on restoration of the housing stock into subsidies and training for the residents according to coherent and affordable restoration guidelines:*
Engaging the local population in the restoration of the housing stock by mutually supporting subsidies and training could thus maximize the impact of available funds, however limited and scattered. The definition of consistent and affordable restoration guidelines and the creation of incentives for their application can in turn ensure efficient allocation of both private and public resources. Long term occupancy rates among the residents suggest that this population is yet an important component of intangible heritage in the Old City, in addition to other vulnerable sectors of the population working in fisheries and traditional crafts. Backing tangible restoration of historical buildings and sites with preservation of intangible heritage means to attain the regenerative quality of living heritage, which allows not only for a distinct identity for the city, but also for its branding, and for leveraging private investments adding to the overall quality of urban living. As addressed under the section of the Strategic Framework dealing with livelihoods and employment, creating local incentives towards self-help and pro-poor advocacy constitutes an enabling condition for developing several key sectors for economic growth in Saida, including heritage, linking to Strategic Objective A4 (To empower local communities particularly the less advantaged ones)

A8.   To seek employment opportunities for owners and residents of the old city

Tourism and related activities are expected to create employment opportunities for business owners and residents of the old city. In addition to the income generating and employment opportunities mentioned under Strategy A2.2, hospitality and accommodation activities can be an additional source for employment generated by the development of the tourism sector. However, not all residents of the old city will be working in tourism, they should be given the necessary skills that would allow them to find a job and/or to create their own businesses.

A8.1 *Employment opportunities in activities supporting the development of tourism:*
The city's stakeholders should facilitate the creation of hospitality and accommodation services such as bed and breakfast, youth hostels, coffee shops and restaurants.
 In addition to that, the establishment of local cultural and youth centers within the old city would create job opportunities for local animators and have a social positive impact. It can be integrated to an overall program aiming at fighting petty-crime in the city and support the re-insertion of previous perpetrators. Furthermore, it will create a dynamic of positive social

change by offering recreational activities, access to books and magazines, as well as after school support and study-space.

A8.2 *Providing vocational training and enhance entrepreneurial skills:*

Vocational training should target youth living in the old city and that have dropped-out of the education system. The training program should be need-tailored; it should prioritize skills needed in the local labor market, in order to allow trainees to find a job within greater Saida. Also, the training should introduce innovative formation, such as support to elderly citizens, social workers, animators, local tourist guides and others. A parallel program should help local men and women to improve their entrepreneurial and business development skills to start new businesses or undertake self-employment activities.

A businesses development service program would target already existing businesses to increase competitiveness and turnover: this in turn would induce the creation of additional job opportunities.

4. OBJECTIVE B - SUSTAINING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The 'holistic landscape framework' adopted throughout Phase II, Strategic Diagnosis, is integrative of environment and natural resources, socio- economic and cultural objectives, moving away from the generic concept of 'urban park' towards a dynamic, place and culture. The diagnosis establishes a foundation for establishing a network of green areas that is anchored in the natural and cultural landscape of Saida, for example, the sea, rivers and watercourses, agriculture.

Given the limitations arising from the Strategic Diagnosis (Threat to Marine Resources & the Waterfront; Threat to Rivers and Watercourses; Threat to Urban Agriculture; Degradation of Saida's landscape distinctiveness, the Strategic Framework for the Landscape, Environment and Ecology layer draws on the identified threats, limitations and potentials to aim for a network of green areas that are anchored in the natural and cultural landscape heritage of Saida (for example, the sea, rivers and watercourses, agriculture) moving away from the generic concept of 'urban park'.

B1.   To ensure ecological integrity of water courses, marine and groundwater and safeguard against seasonal flooding

Sea, rivers and streams are a key geomorphological feature that underlies the urban character of Saida just as it is engraved in the collective memory of the city's inhabitants. It follows that securing the ecological health of water resources, including marine, riparian and underground aquifers, underlies the vision for a sustainable urban future.

It is evident from the Strategic Diagnosis, Phase II, that water resources in Saida are under threat. With the exception of the Awali, rivers and streams have become open or partly open sewers, channeling waste water from villages and towns upstream in the Saida and Zahrani Union of Municipalities. The newly established treatment facility operates in the summer. In the winter, rivers discharge sewage during the winter through nine outlets into the sea polluting and disrupting marine ecologies. The Saida coast, especially in the vicinity and north of the harbor, is one of the most severely contaminated areas of the Lebanese coast as a result of industrial, domestic, agricultural and solid waste dumping south of the city for more than thirty years.

At the same time, the combined sewer/stormwater drainage network leads to wasting precious rainwater rather than collecting and/or redirecting underground to recharge the Saida Aquifers. Groundwater is also under pressure from excessive pumping resulting in seawater intrusion into groundwater and increased salinization.

In the aim of ensuring the environmental health of water resources and protecting the integrity of riparian and marine coastal ecosystems the following strategies are proposed:

B1.1 *Safeguarding riparian ecologies:*

Integrative re-design of all seasonal watercourses that include the channel section, banks and river verges to address the following: (a) ensure healthy riparian ecologies (b) accommodate peak flow in the winter and safeguard against seasonal flooding and (c) provide for a river landscape that can serve as green amenity corridors.

Planning and sustainable management plans for Saida Rivers as multifunctional landscape. The plans will respond to the specific limitations and potentials of each of Saida's seven watercourses. The Awali River is conceived as a national-scale greenway. The statuary protection zone, 100 meters north and south of the river, should be respected and reincorporated as integral to ecological health. Plans will include regularizing existing leisure and recreation activities and proposing new ones. The overall plan should take into consideration plans for diversion of the Awali Water northward to the capital. The Sainiq River is similarly included in the statuary protection zone of 100 meters north and south. Although smaller than the Awali in scale and almost negligible in terms of water flow, the spatial integrity of the Sainiq is a key ingredient for successful conversion into a greenway and important amenity landscape, all the more so because of its proximity to the Ain Al-Helwe Palestinian Camp. The Bi Ghayath and Ain Zaytoun are the smallest of the Saida Rivers but still relative un-urbanized. Even if they are not protected by statuary law, still these seasonal watercourses are integral to the memory of the city and an opportunity to punctuate future development. The Qamleh and Bargouth Streams are the most degraded. As such, redesign should take into consideration maximum capacity during peak flow to prevent flooding.

B1.2 *Protecting coastal marine resources:*

Seasonal effluent discharge into the sea, the 9 discharge outlets north and south of Saida Harbor, should be redirected to protect coastal marine ecosystems and marine biodiversity and safeguard public health for users of Saida beaches. Continued assessment of the Saida coastline should be undertaken to address the impact of changes caused by the new marina in the Alexander Harbor, south of the historic city, and continued dumping of debris. Dynamic and multifunctional planning of the waterfront should accommodate a diversity of water and land leisure activities, provide for work opportunities and contribute to the overall character of Saida as a harbor town.

A comprehensive management plan should be initiated for long-term protection of coastal fisheries to secure local livelihoods that are integral to Saida the coastal city. The management plan will include mitigation of adverse impact on fisheries of effluent and port pollutants and sustainable fishing practices.

B1.3 *Recycling storm water:*

The sustainable management of storm water includes reuse of this valuable resource that should neither be harvested, nor wasted. Innovative strategies include (a) injection into existing wells (b) separate network within the rivers and streams (c) collection and reuse of rainwater runoff from buildings and open areas.

B1.4 *Developing an administrative framework to manage water resources:*

Strategies to promote multi-jurisdictionality of the water sector, to coordinate sewage and storm water collection. The latter includes all municipalities within the Union of Municipality of Saida and Zahrani, the ministries, CDR, and the Mouhafaza. Despite the political division within the Union of Municipality that is crippling decision making, Saida Municipality's willingness to engage in and develop sustainable practices is a positive and also the availability of funds to develop a strategy for sustainable water management.

B2. To Plan for a Blue-Green Network that serves amenity and promotes sustainable use of environmental resources

Urban green areas are increasingly re-conceptualized in response to the expanding footprints of cities. Saida is lacking in public green areas, which are a necessary component of top ranking cities in the Mediterranean. In the case of Saida, green areas are not only necessary but imperative in the light of recent political polarization and internal conflict that plagues the city. Public green areas provide neutral spaces where people can escape political tension and where youth can establish healthy dialogue to build a better future. Nor can a conventional city park

serve the purpose. Rather a more radical greening framework is needed one that proliferates spatially just as it provides diverse amenity experiences.

Planning for a Blue-Green network aims to integrate existing green areas and proposed ones with the aim of:

(a) Improving pedestrian and soft movement connectivity, for example cycling routes throughout Municipal Saida

(b) Connecting the historic city and outlying districts and the foothill suburbs beyond

(c) Providing place and culture specific green areas, not generic urban parks, ones that respond to the specificity of Saidawi society and traditional leisure practices

(d) Ensuring the continuation of Saida's landscape distinctiveness, linking to Strategic Objective E3

B2.1 *Developing the river corridors as amenity landscapes and greenways:*

The general protection of water courses, linked to Strategic Objective B1, should target in the first place the Awali and the Sainiq, but equally the Bi Gayath, Ain Zaytoun and, to a lesser extent, the Bargouth and Qamleh.

B2.2 *Protecting the Qanaya:*

The Qanaya, the historic Ottoman irrigation network that feeds agricultural lands from the waters of the Awali River, is a heritage landscape that is as significant as the historic city. This intervention entails warranting protection also to the orchards connected by the Qanaya in the eastern edge of Municipal Saida.

B2.3 *Developing the waterfront into a dynamic multifunctional landscape:*

Thinking beyond the monotonous sidewalk, the waterfront should be rehabilitated as a dynamic multifunctional landscape, including a diversity of marine activities and enmeshed with the built heritage, harbor and marina.

B2.4 *Upgrading the abandoned Railway tracks into a Green Corridor:*

This Green Corridor could echo the north-south axis of the waterfront. The railway corridor is especially important because it stretches along the base of the foothills linking the Ain Al Helwe Palestinian Camp with the rest of the city

B2.5 *Integrating the traffic related green areas towards visual continuity:*

The landscaping of traffic related areas should include minor roundabouts and small green enclaves, which will serve more for beautification than for amenity purposes, and will contribute to the creation of a green spatial continuity along the main arteries of the city.

B3.   To Enhance the system of managing infrastructure

Saida has been mainly developing its infrastructure as a response to haphazard urban growth rather than by a planned and organized growth. As a result its infrastructure is sub-optimal, and its diverse systems may contribute to solving a technical problem but have limited social, economic and environmental impacts beyond that. The Municipality is acting as a manager of last resort, mainly to accommodate the failures of other institutions to politically push for better funding and resources from central agencies. It has done an incredible stride in the last few years to catch up with lagging and urgent infrastructural needs, to remedy dire environmental conditions such as the solid waste and the waste water situations. The city can still do much more proactive planning on behalf of the environment. Yet, in a country with limited resources like Lebanon, planning and implementing such expensive infrastructure cannot be justified on environmental grounds alone. Closing the circle of economic benefits and local gains as part of the environmental planning is essential for bringing new investments into Saida, and ensuring the sustainability of these investments.

The City needs to change its role, from political supporter of last resort to a visionary leader and advocate for the city's environment and wellbeing. Technical infrastructure is too important to be left to sector technicians: the city needs to insist on developing supra level coordination mechanisms among the various infrastructure providers. Strategies in this regard include:

B3.1 *Establishing an effective coordination among the municipalities in the Federation of Saida and Al-Zahrani:*

It is important that the vision for the comprehensive infrastructure is planned, implemented, managed and paid for by all beneficiaries in an equitable manner. Saida cannot be the backyard of all the more prosperous suburbs. A political compromise is needed to assure a stronger and more effective role for the Federation in collective contribution to the vision of greater Saida. Petty political differences must be put aside. But this is easier said than done. The latest incidents in Saida are a clear indicator of the difficulties ahead. Yet these incidents themselves have shown the potential for solidarity among wider municipal neighbors.

This kind of approach is not done overnight, and will require organizing brainstorming sessions, involving neighboring municipalities in the strategic planning and visioning exercise, and formulating win-win prospects within the identified vision. The selection of major projects to be adopted in the fourth phase of the USUDS is a good starting point to rehearse such dialogues.

B3.2 *Establishing a technical coordination bureau in the Municipality:*

Most of the municipality performance at this stage relies on the self-initiative of the Mayor and the council members.. These efforts brought about some important changes, but also incurred

in some serious shortcomings. Coordinating infrastructure development is a highly technical task requiring systemic knowledge management to retain and cumulate local know-how, while council members are prone to change after elections. A technical bureau would have the time and resources to backstop coherently the work of the various service providers. Such a bureau can be staffed by high level technocrats from the various local branches of national utilities, but it must have an independent management function supervised directly by the Municipality.

B3.3 *Cost recovery for investments in infrastructure:*

The municipality has financed most new infrastructure through grants and gains by national and international stakeholders and partners. The community was not required to contribute to the capital cost of such projects, nor to their depreciation. Even maintenance and operation costs are sub-optimally recovered, leading to rapid deterioration of the assets. The city considers a success receiving central funds for projects such as the port, when in fact port projects generate profits that the city could directly manage, if it was able to play an active role in planning and attracting investors by itself in the first place. Other less directly profitable infrastructure is contributing to local economic growth: in these cases, the city must find ways to recover costs directly through user fees, or indirectly by enhancing its tax base.

One of the main hindrances in this regards is the fact that politicians are often reluctant to impose such solutions on their constituencies. In fact, this is a question of public communication as much as it is a question of better public accounting. The City needs to improve its communication channels with the citizens and residents of Saida, to explain what is happening, but most importantly, to involve them in the decision making process. Instead of building a highway to a suburb for free, the city needs to involve those residents in discussing the merits of such a move, explain the cost sharing mechanism, and reach an agreement that would be advertised and properly communicated. As it stands today, the resident's sense of entitlement to infrastructure is not linked to any moral obligation to contribute to the effort themselves. According to the dominant rationale, if other parts of Lebanon are getting highways because their politicians are capable to usurp the political system, then Saida politicians need to prove their worth and do the same. Nonetheless, politicians can only manipulate the system to a limited extent: infrastructure is not being developed at a satisfying pace, and won't be sufficiently developed until cost recovery schemes are integrated into planning and implementation.

B4.   To develop a proper monitoring and evaluation process for infrastructure:

The city at this stage is moving progressively towards completing some essential infrastructure vital for serving its residents and protecting its environment. But beyond the work done by the

Municipality to implement the new systems by lobbying for funding and easing out bureaucratic hurdles, the City has little control over the quality of the outputs, nor over the final outputs effective match with the purposes they were intended for. Furthermore, most of the thinking in the municipality at this stage is focused on implementation but not on maintenance and operation. To move into the next phase of infrastructure management, the City needs to be tracking the way infrastructure is actually serving the community, protecting its environmental assets, improving its quality of life, increasing the equity in the distribution of services, enhancing the mobility of residents and goods. For that purpose the City needs to develop an effective capacity in monitoring and evaluation, establishing the basic framework for planning future systems.

Monitoring & Evaluation is an essential mechanism to verify not only that systems are working properly, but also that the population is aware and participates in the evaluation process. M&E is the corner stone to build a constructive relation between the municipal institution and the public. It is the backbone of the social contract of local governance that will enable the city to achieve cost recovery for its projects and to move forward on new projects. The M&E is not a technical bureau with experts running the show; it is an open dialogic process that involves two-way communication with the community. The residents of the city should not be mere recipients of services; they need to be active partners for the service providers. To achieve such goal, the following strategies are needed:

B4.1 *Establishing an urban observatory:*

Urban observatories are not to be reduced to a unified function with a single model. Each city can develop a tailored model to meet its basic needs and conditions. The general framework is to create an entity that reports to the municipality administratively, but is open to engage stakeholders from the civil society and private sector in open participation and continuous dialogue. The observatory will collect relevant sets of data to formulate the basic indicators used for tracking impacts of projects, looking beyond the mere verification of project outputs delivery. Recording how many kilometers of sewer lines are being built is the responsibility of the competent national institutions. Instead, verifying if the built systems are resolving the environmental problem, equitably serving different areas of the city, assuring that citizens complaints are addressed, and that public money is being used efficiently, or collecting any other set of relevant information that the city agrees to monitor, are all direct interests of the city residents and by default of their representative local institutions.

Such institutional functions are often established with technical support and seed funds provided by many cooperation programs: many municipalities in the region have already set up similar functions. However, they often failed to make proper provisions for sustaining them.

Public funds must be used to ensure continuity of these functions. As such, these funds must be justified. Therefore, these functions shall be identified through a wide debate involving the public and the different stakeholders. For example, in order to secure support from the business community of the project, the observatory could undertake the role of collecting socio-economic data and carry out research into the business environment of the city. Accordingly, it could also track progress in education and health. In Saida, these latter sectors are not just important social infrastructure services: as stated above, they are potential growth poles for the local economy. In short the observatory shall be more than a facility to collect and store data. It shall constitute a small think tank to develop evidence based development strategies and vision for the city. The observatory should also publish available data and make its findings accessible to the public. Information shall be used at different levels for the assessment of the feasibility of new public and private investments.

B4.2 *Formalizing stakeholder participation in the decision making process:*

The current leadership of Saida Municipality has done a great job opening a very wide network of consultation with the different stakeholders in the city. Yet, like the rest of Lebanon, the city is suffering from political blockages, and from the discontinuity of policies at every change of government. Many issues vital for the city's present, not to mention its future, are currently stalled because of the inability to create consensus among different stakeholders on the way ahead. Establishing a framework for dialogue and discussion is essential to move certain issues beyond political divides, and to ensure that adopted measures would not be reversed when the tables are turned politically. A myriad of techniques can be used from establishing an advisory board, to opening town halls, or promoting "Meet the Mayor" meetings.

5. OBJECTIVE C - CONNECTING THE CITY WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS

Saida position as former center of the South is nowadays reduced to that of gateway to the South, while its urban form lacks integration among a number of adjacent areas within a relatively limited surface. The Old City and 'Ain Al-Helwe camp constitute the two bulks of urban poverty, as detailed in the Strategic Diagnosis report on Local Economic Development. The rest of the city is marked by the commercial highway, crossed by daily commuting of residents living on the hills, the industrial area, and the northern redevelopment area.

C1.   To link the old city culturally, spatially and economically with the greater city and beyond

The Old City suffers from its neglect as cultural and commercial center of the city, and from being considered by the residents of Saida's outskirts a dangerous place to go to, as emerged

from the discussions with the working groups. Its outstanding state of integrity as a whole original urban fabric, and its vital community of long term residents seem remarkable resources for sustainable housing policies, and for the valorization of cultural assets in marketing the city. Still the Old City suffers from a state of isolation and marginality which affects the capacity of the residents and owners to generate revenue to invest on the quality of urban space.

C1.1 *Promoting cultural activities and events in the Old City:*

Public celebrations and festivals would encourage visitors to come to the Old City, would support the sense of belonging of the local population to the Old City as a primary element of Saida identity, and would restore a positive representation of the Old City in the eyes of the Saidawis.

C1.2 *Promoting commercial fairs to revitalize the souqs:*

Linking to Strategic Objectives A6 and A8, commercial fairs would encourage the Saidawis to purchase goods from the souqs, in addition to encouraging other business to use the attractive historical venue of the recently restored souqs to exhibit their goods, at the same time increasing the number of visitors to the Old City, and supporting una-tantum reuse of locales and shops currently closed.

C1.3 *Implementing restoration projects of key structures and open spaces along the Old City perimeter:*

The isolation of the Old City is also reflected and supported by specific spatial arrangements, which cut off the original relation of the urban center with the sea, with the construction of the Maritime Boulevard, while leaving unmanaged the points of access along its perimeter, with the exception of the construction of the Zweitini Garden. Luckily enough, the urban fabric of the city offers along its perimeter very interesting opportunities to open spatial continuities among the Old City and its surroundings, if supported by accurate design. The Fréres Excavation Area and the Land Citadel, together with the Municipal plots at the entrance of Abou Nakhle Street, and the parking lot facing the gate to Khan Al-Franj along the Maritime Boulevard are but a few of the potential points of access promising rewarding results, as detailed in the Strategic Diagnosis report on Heritage.

C1.4 *Envisioning tourist trails connecting the Old City to the other heritage sites and green spaces around the city:*

The presence of a relatively high number of heritage and archaeological sites in other areas around the city also constitutes an important potential connection linking the Old City with Greater Saida, by the progressive improvement of the road network so to favor pedestrian or

public transportation trails for tourists and residents alike, linking to General Objective C3 (To preserve the city historical link with the sea, with the coastal orchards and with the hills).

C2.   To increase quantity and improve quality of green areas

Amenity spaces and green areas in cities are increasingly used to benchmark the wellbeing of urban inhabitants, a strategy to promote healthy lifestyles. In its concern for public health, the World Health Organization (WHO), states that every city should have a minimum of 9.00 m2 of green space per person.

Existing green areas in Saida total to 318,000 m2 which include municipal green areas (street medians and verges, the maritime boulevard, roundabouts and small gardens, excluding the proposed park, sports and cemeteries). The per capita green areas is 3 m2 per, which is triple the per capita allocation in Beirut, the capital city. If agricultural lands are included, the per capita green area raises considerably, up to 24.6 m2/capita. The latter is a hypothetical exercise that demonstrates that even if 1/3-1/4 of orchards is protected, they will impact the quantity and quality of green areas in the future.

As part of its vision for a 'green Saida' the USDS aims to align amenity landscapes with international standards through the following strategies:

C2.1 *Increasing the per capita allocation of green areas:*
Incorporating new landscapes as part of the Blue-Green Network, for example green river corridors and the proposed railway corridor, and upgrading existing green areas and intensifying their use, for example the waterfront and agriculture enclaves doubles the per capita allocation of green areas raising the existing figure to 7-8 m^2/capita.

C2.2 *Improving the quality of green areas:*
Diversifying amenity landscapes is a key to the overall quality of green areas in Saida. The proposed Blue-Green network proposed embraces: marine (coastal landscape); riparian (river corridors); infrastructural (railway corridor, streets and traffic related); agricultural (protected enclaves); and heritage landscapes.

Quality is equally an attribute of the alternative approach to green area landscapes, namely interactive green areas that are planned and managed through the active participation of schools, NGOs and civic societies. Innovative strategies are necessary to ensure public engagement in the proposed Blue-Green Network.

C2.3 *Ensuring sustainable management of green areas:*

It is imperative that sustainable landscape management strategies are introduced that embraces existing municipal green areas and newly proposed landscapes of the Blue-Green Network. Sustainable management prioritizes on water efficient planting, recycling of garden waste, and energy efficiency, using solar panels for lighting and power generation.

C3.   To preserve the city historical link with the sea, with the coastal orchards and the with the hills

The Mediterranean, lower foothills and rivers geomorphologic features that shaped the landscape of Saida in the past, are a key to local distinctiveness and the unique perception of the city today. Saida's diverse landscape setting is a valuable resource in future development of the city because it counters the homogenizing trends that are transforming Lebanese coastal cities.

Utilizing existing landscape components, the river corridors and the waterfront, integrating them into the blue-green network, together with urban agriculture and the railway corridor, protects and reinforces the much valued perception of a green Mediterranean city that is associated with Saida. Geomorphic features and the strategic protection of orchards have the potential to frame future development, anchor it in local place and culture while protecting Saida's natural and rural landscape heritage.

C3.1 *Valorizing the river corridors as landmarks defining the distinctive character of Saida's urban texture:*

The transversal orientation of the river corridors is a key to punctuating the north-south spread of the urban footprint. Together with the coastal waterfront landscape the water courses ensure the continuity of Saida's landscape distinctiveness. The protection of the river corridors and the waterfront, and their development as amenity landscapes is discussed under Strategic Objective B1 and B2.

C3.2 *Re-conceptualizing agriculture within a multifunctional framework:*

A multifunctional framework for agriculture should aim to secure both local livelihoods (organic farming of orchards and related traditional agriculture related production, orange blossom water) and amenity services (agri-tourism). Proposed strategies are threefold:

The protection of agricultural lands in strategic locations in Municipal Saida should adopt innovative urban planning tools, including upgrading existing urban agriculture towards economically and environmentally sustainable production.

Linking to Strategic Objective B2 (To plan for a Blue-Green Network that serves amenity and promotes sustainable use of environmental resources), a spatial and ecological framework should aim to protect Saida's landscape distinctiveness by bridging marine and land ecologies, albeit reframing them as amenity landscapes that have the potential to address 21st century vision for the city and contribute to sustaining its environmental health.

C4.   To develop a collective spatial strategy for the greater Saida area and to link the development of future infrastructure projects to a comprehensive vision for the city

Most of the spatial planning taking place in Saida seems rather fragmented, even at the level of each single municipality. Roads are being developed to serve neighborhoods without consideration of how the latter link the various metropolitan areas; infrastructure is being developed without a comprehensive sharing of spatial allocations for basic infrastructure facilities. Moreover, real estate developments are being created without an understanding of the larger housing and retail needs and state of play in the greater metropolis. As such, the area is saturated with empty real estate, and yet more projects are being authorized across the municipal borders, because most people cannot afford the empty speculative developments. Meanwhile, some very important economic opportunities are being by-passed and forgone, because the Federation cannot envision cooperation mechanism to ensure win-win situations to all its members.

From the points of view of economy, services, infrastructure, environment, and urban design, Greater Saida is a single entity. The municipalities of Greater Saida would amount to nothing more than neighborhood committees in other metropolitan areas. Yet, because of the delicate political and sectarian fabric of the region, they are maintained with separate legal personalities. This deadlock cannot be bypassed at the level of Saida alone, as it will also require changes to the constitutional framework and the nature of the political institutions in Lebanon. However, the Federation can still develop a more consorted effort with its current mandate, to better link the various parts of Greater Saida together and to optimize the return on new developments so to ensure the widest possible benefits to all members of the Federation.

C4.1 *Developing a strategic spatial vision for Greater Saida:*
Though this is not necessarily an output of the USUDS process, in Saida it can be one of its most relevant outputs. The plan would not be legally binding as a Master Plan, but would be adopted through a local council resolution and would consolidate the vision for Saida. This would be used to decide on the general direction of development in Greater Saida, which would then be consolidated in detailed master plans for specific zones. The strategic spatial vision is a flexible

document that would require regular update, based on continuous assessment of the ramification of its elements on the whole context of Greater Saida. The spatial vision is not a product or a map. It is rather a process of consensus building, and requires a proper platform for dialogue and decision making, linking to to the Strategic Objective D.4 (To assure coordination among the various mega projects and develop cross sectoral synergies and mutual benefits). Different institutional frameworks have been proposed for coordinating infrastructure works in this document, linking mainly to Objective B.3 (To enhance the system of managing infrastructure). The coordination of infrastructure should be part and parcel of the spatial planning of the city and not a reaction to the haphazard speculative growth of the city.

C4.2 *Create real linkages between the various parts of Greater Saida:*

It is not enough to map the vision: major physical developments must take place to ensure that the desired linkages are integrated within the design of major projects and in their funding requirements. The planned periphery highway should not be limited to the creation of the main bypass ring road: it has to include the secondary arteries linking together the various parts of the metropolis. The more Greater Saida is interlinked physically, the more the institutional boundaries would become irrelevant. Developing a port could be an essential project to link Saida with Ghazieh, where the main industrial zone of the whole Federation is located.

C4.3 *Capitalizing on the assets of the regional hinterland of Saida:*

The spatial plan shall develop a wide vision for Saida and its surroundings also by identifying its linkages to the hinterland eastward and southward of Greater Saida. Important opportunities for tourism, trade agriculture, and agro-businesses) can arise, if the spatial vision for Greater Saida is defined by maximizing its linkages to the hinterland. Saida nominal status as the capital of the South needs to be actualized by reconnecting the city to the rest of South Lebanon. In order to reclaim its relevance, its role as the "Gateway to the South" must be translated from a mere geographical location into important economic, social, and cultural networks.

6. OBJECTIVE D – COORDINATION, COOPERATION, NETWORKING

Cities are facing increasing competition for national resources, investments, tourist visits, new developments, retention of capital, and cultural relevance. Many cities respond to this type of competition by protectionism and closing in on themselves. Developing a competitive edge is certainly the name of the game on the larger urban development scene. Yet, as most cities that have started their strategic development processes some time ago would testify, the most important factors in developing a competitive edge is to be densely linked to relevant networks, and to ensure getting multiple shares of different pies rather than retain the largest share of a single pie.

Tourism can only be developed by immersing one's tourism assets in a wider network of tourism destinations; agriculture products can only be sustained in complete value chains; and services can only be made viable by looking at wider catchment areas. Embedding Saida within a solid network of cooperation and mutual development is one of the main priorities for its strategic development.

D1. To develop a comprehensive plan for the old city to ensure and guide coordination among the various actors and projects for restoration

A city development strategy entails by definition collaboration among a wide range of actors, across central authorities, local government and civil society. As described in the Strategic Diagnosis on Urban Infrastructure, Saida has enough lobbying capacity to gain several projects of national relevance. Nonetheless, these projects do not seem to be identified according to a comprehensive strategy based on regional development plans, due to the difficult relation among Saida and neighboring Municipalities. Moreover Saida counts a significant number of NGOs active in different fields, and already organized in an NGO forum, which is a privileged interlocutor for state agencies in planning development projects.

D1.1 *Promote exchange and debate among the patrons of past restoration projects:*
As described in the Strategic Diagnosis Report on Cultural Heritage, the remarkable restoration efforts spent on the Old City in the last ten years did not achieve a substantial impact on the long term preservation of the historical fabric due to lack of coordination and the application of different standards for restoration. Nonetheless these efforts indicate a sustained will, confirmed also by the working groups' sessions, to invest on the preservation of the Old City. Linking to Strategic Objective D4 (To ensure coordination among the various mega-projects and develop cross-sectoral synergies and mutual benefits), concerned actors need to shift towards concerted plans to capitalize on each other's contribution, reversing the general lack of integration affecting several layers of governance and urban management in the city, as detailed in the Strategic Diagnosis report on the Institutional and Legal Framework and in the one on Urban Infrastructure.

D1.2 *Develop and apply restoration guidelines:*
Coordination among restoration projects would be substantially supported by the definition of restoration guidelines drawn on the basis of the comprehesinve strategy outlines in the USDS Strategic Framework.

D1.3 *Complement physical interventions on the urban fabric with social programs to engage the residents in the preservation efforts:*

Linking to Strategic Objective A7, (To restore the historical housing stock engaging the residents through subsidies and training according to consistent and affordable restoration guidelines and techniques), social programs should support preservation of the intangible heritage of the Old City.

D2.   To develop a framework for true cooperation among the municipalities in the greater Saida area in a manner to ensure that duties and rights of every party are clearly defined and adhered to by the various municipalities

The development of Greater Saida has been shaped by the movement of Saida's middle and upper-middle class towards the neighboring hills that fall under the jurisdiction of other municipalities. However, since the municipality is electorally accountable to citizens registered in Saida but resident in the neighboring areas, it continues to provide services from wastewater and solid waste management, to fire fighting and prevention to the entire region, i.e. Greater Saida, without being compensated through taxes collected by the other municipalities.

On another front, Greater Saida is home to a large number of Palestinian refugees (Ain Al-Helweh and Mie w Mie camps). Unclear delimitation of jurisdiction between several municipalities from one side and the UNWRA from the other side has hampered services provision and infrastructure development in the camps. This has had detrimental effects on the livelihood of Palestinian refugees and poor Lebanese families living in and around the camps.

D2.1 *Organizing the tax base and tax collection within Greater Saida:*

Saida should initiate and lead a process of responsibilities towards the other municipalities in the Greater Saida in order for them to be aware of the importance of common funds and common action. These actions should lead to better coordinate tax collection and therefore better management of funds, provision of services and accountability.

D2.2 *Coordinating on services provision and integration of the Palestinian refugees in the overall development of the city:*

Since the largest part of the camps is within Saida municipality, it could lead a process of cooperation and coordination with the other municipalities. In addition, the municipalities should set a work agenda with the UNRWA to build adequate infrastructure and integrate the camps into the development of Saida and the surrounding municipalities.

Saida has witnessed a successful experience in enhancing Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue. The municipality can build on it to institutionalize and organize the Lebanese-Palestinian relations in Greater Saida. This can further support the coordination of services provision and the socio-economic integration of the camps.

D2.3 *Rethinking the administrative boundaries of the Municipalities of Greater Saida or their administrative framework to increase social cohesion and integration:*

On the long term, the redrawing of the administrative boundaries of the Municipalities of Greater Saida could increase social cohesion and integration. However, it is acknowledged that for the time being several political issues stand in the way of such an objective.

D3.   To coordinate with the Union of Municipalities of Saida Al-Zahrani to identify regional development projects and to organize and structure the tax base and tax collection within the Union

As discussed in the diagnostic phase, the de facto social integration and interlinked economic activities between Saida, Greater Saida and the neighboring cities, requires a regional approach to development. This can be done through the collective efforts of cooperation between the municipalities of the union. Developmental projects should be evaluated and implemented based on a regional view of development that will feed into the overall benefit of the entire region, looking at regional cooperation as a long term goal.

D3.1 *Launching a political dialogue between the political parties and stakeholders influencing the Saida Al-Zahrani Union of Municipalities, both at the national and municipal level:*

The institutional problems and the lack of cooperation and coordination witnessed within the Union of Municipalities of Saida Al-Zahrani are largely due to the current political conjuncture. Thus, the resolution or at least the neutralization of the political conflicts should come prior to institutional development. Saida has interest in decoupling political conflicts from economic development. Since the municipality and local stakeholders are engaging in the implementation of an holistic strategy and are aware of the necessity to implement it in coordination and cooperation with the Union, and since Saida has vocation in acting as the capital city of the union, its municipality, political elites and stakeholders should initiate the political dialogue.

D3.2 *Organizing the tax base and tax collection within the Union:*

Saida should initiate and lead a process of responsibilities towards the other municipalities in the union in order for them to be aware of the importance of common funds and common action. These actions should lead to better coordinate tax collection and therefore better management of funds, provision of services and accountability.

D3.3 *Coordinate regional development with the Union of Municipalities of Jezzine-Ain Majdaleen:*

Saida should think in terms of regional development beyond the limits of the Saida Al-Zahrani Union of Municipalities. Jezzine area is undertaking strategic changes to become a major destination for rural tourism. Saida stakeholders have interest in taking full benefit of the increasing influx of tourists visiting Jezzine area. Several tourist packages and tours that include activities in both Jezzine and Saida can be developed.

D4. To assure coordination among the various mega projects and develop cross-sectoral synergies and mutual benefits

It is important to develop wider multiplier effects to the larger projects being carried out by the city. The package of the 53 projects being pushed by the city will not be sustainable by itself. It is important to guide other development interventions to complement these projects, and assure that they are producing more value to affect real economic and social impacts. As evidenced in the Strategic Diagnosis reports, some of the projects will actually be a burden on the city to manage and operate, as it will be responsible for the assets but will not generate sufficient returns to compensate the maintenance and operation costs. The feasibility of some of the projects urgently needs to be re-addressed, to ensure that assets being added to the city's infrastructure are optimal and useful.

At a later stage, there needs to be a system in place to assess the viability of new projects, together with a mechanism of prioritization. Selecting projects should move away from the political patronage mentality, to widen the participatory process of defining urban priorities in an inclusive manner. The USDS is only the first step in the process. It will instigate the process and develop its very first iteration. Beyond the work being carried out directly by the experts through the USDS methodology, in the future the city will need to institutionalize the process, and ensure that its findings are continuously verified and supported by the local council, as well as by other stakeholders. The main strategic issues to be followed up in this regard are:

D4.1 *Formalizing the USDS process:*

The Working Groups and the Steering Committee for the USDS are progressively getting more involved in the process, and their experience is a resource to capitalize upon. This is also applicable to the municipal personnel and council members that have collaborated with the project. It is important to retain and codify the knowledge now developed around the project. This can be done either by creating a special unit in the Municipality to follow up on the process in the future, either by ensuring that Saida's Urban Observatory (linking to Strategic Objective

B4) is pro-active and not a mere data collection center, defining its mission according to the lessons learnt through the USDS experience.

The set of projects that will be selected in the fourth phase of the project should be implemented with an eye on creating a sustainable structure for projects follow up in the long term, and not just for the follow up of the projects implemented in the first iteration of the USDS. An agreement on the governance structure of such a backstopping function will be one of the key indicators of success for Saida USDS.

D4.2 *Developing feasibility studies for the major projects:*

The identification of many of the larger projects is grounded either on dated feasibility studies, either on no study whatsoever. In some cases the feasibility study targeted locations and scopes different from those eventually covered by the project. The port project is a primary example of such case, and so is the project for the museum. The city, willing to capitalize on available residual funds, have tended to forfeit the feasibility study, and to act on available small windows of opportunity to attract the funds to Saida. As a result, the tendency to be defensive about the viability of such projects prevails. Assessing the feasibility of these projects does not mean to approve or reject them, but to foreground maximization of their benefit, and to estimate marginal costs and benefits, as well as externalities for such projects. This can help develop opportunities beyond what is visible at the moment, with minor transformations in the design or scope of these projects. Moreover, it is important to assess the maintenance and operation modalities of these projects, to define schemes for users' fees and other cost recovery mechanisms.

D4.3 *Developing innovative solutions to problems:*

In most instances problems in Saida were addressed separately, limiting the possibility of considering innovative solutions that can transform problems into opportunities, or maximizing returns on systems by considering economies of scale and implementing different systems at the same time, linking to Strategy B3.1.

D5. To create formal and informal networks for branding the city and marketing its potential assets

To attract visitors and investments, to promote products and services, and to create a sense of belonging and well-being, cities around the world are now considering branding strategies. Like any branding process, the development of the brand should be promoted in different mutually reinforcing sectors, beyond the single use of the brand only in one context. When a city is famous for tourism, this will also be beneficial for it to sell its products in other parts of the

world; when it has a vivid cultural scene, it will also be more successful at retaining businesses; when it achieves major benchmarks in cleaning its environment, it will increase its viability as destination for medical tourism; and so on and so forth. Also, like for most branding processes, the brand could be made in one place and the products in another. Saida can no longer afford to produce certain products, because of the pressure of real estate development. Yet it can still capitalize on these products being made in its vicinity and its hinterland, using its brand power to keep a substantial part of the value chain in Saida.

The Saida brand must be open, one that capitalizes on its history and location, but shall also look towards the future. Health and education assets are, despite their prevalence in the city, still sub optimal in creating local major economic breakthroughs. As we have seen in the Strategic Diagnosis phase, the health and education assets are barely capable of meeting demand from the immediate region around Saida. Yet these assets can be capitalized upon in the Saida brand. Eventually, the branding process will attract not only more customers, but also more investors to expand available assets.

Most importantly the branding process of Saida should be inclusive. At the moment the political divide over the city is being translated into conflicting branding visions for the city, with each side staunchly representing their image as the more realistic one for the city. Statements such as "we envision Saida to be a touristic town" are not innocent statements, they are brand statements for a particular political project in contrast to statement such as "we envision Saida to be an Islamic heritage site". In reality, Saida is kept a prisoner of political slogans. A brand is different from a political slogan in that it does not close the imagination, but it opens along with new possibilities and opportunities. As such, the issue of branding is not about asserting one vision of the city against the others, but it is about creating consensual and inclusive representations.

D5.1 *Creating public-private partnerships to promote the city:*
Key in this regard is to engage the municipality in moderating specific sectoral promotions, for instance promoting the health facilities in the city, the higher educational programs, and the heritage assets. This initial promotional effort can take shape through promotional events (e.g. an open house week for Saida's universities), through web site developments (e.g. a virtual tour of Saida), or through promotional campaigns by media adds, for example. Starting with non-conflicting sectoral campaigns will build the municipality's experience in dealing with communication tools, and will help the city assess the returns of early branding efforts on the local mood and the local economy. Later successful elements of the campaigns can be used to develop a more comprehensive approach to branding.

D5.2 *Developing a branding strategy:*

Iconic representations of Saida may be known to the Saidawis but are hardly known beyond the city borders. The process of branding the city would start with classic brand recognition exercises, leading to better assessment of values and images corresponding to the brand that needs reinforcement. Negative brand values must be minimized, while positive ones should be reinforced. One way to minimize the negative values is to reinforce the positive way in which the city is dealing with it. The project for removing the garbage mountain (a major stigma for Saida) should not be merely a local news item. It should be communicated as a positive part of the "healthy" image of the city. Divided Saida must be substituted by the image of "inclusive and diverse" Saida. The conflict prone city must be substituted by an image of a cohesive urbane city. Of course empty slogans do not make brands. The city must work on strengthening these aspects in their projects and programs, and build partnerships towards these ends with NGO's and private sector. In essence every project in Saida should be communicated and not just implemented, and it should be communicated as a "healthy inclusive and cohesive" expression of Saida. Branding is not cheap. Branding is a process that requires many resources. However, its resources are often available with ready partners, and just need to be tapped to through adopting some clear and transparent partnership models. It is vital that branding efforts are made as widely inclusive as possible. This can be done by engaging a wide stakeholder networks in creating the brand. Certain elements of the brand will be developed for external communication, while others will be for local use. Some partners will prefer to contribute to one or to the other. All contributions must be made welcome. Eventually the city should be in charge of setting the brand, and the process of branding must be as widely diffused as possible. The brand will be steered by the city but will belong to all its economic and social components.

D5.3 *Creating protected domains:*

Many of the specific products typical of Saida region are easily replicated in other places, and sold as part of the authentic Saida legacy. It is important for the city to inventory truly authentic products, and to start a process for creating protected domain to restrict the use of Saida brand to products made in Saida and its hinterland, where the city plays the main value adding location to the value chain. Creating a domain will entail different kinds of registrations, nationally and internationally. The city of Saida can collect royalties back from the use of the name, and revenues from such operations might be dedicated to develop and train emerging businesses to capitalize on the Saida brand.

D6.   To create mechanisms of technology transfer among concerned parties in order to increase quality and quantity of production to meet market demand

The diagnosis analysis has shown the need for increasing technology and introducing innovation for traditional crafts. However, this diagnosis can be expanded to the various economic sectors in the city. Saida is home to a national re-known university level institute for technology as well as several private and public faculties coordination between these educational institutions and local professional would help in upgrading production technology and increase competiveness of Saida's businesses.

D6.1 *Increasing cooperation between Saida Institute for Technology and local industries:*

Saida is home to a national re-known university level institute for technology as well as several private and public faculties coordination between these educational institutions and local professional would help in upgrading production technology and increase competiveness of Saida's businesses. The scope of this cooperation can include: developing new curriculum and training programs based on the market need, such as formation of agro-food production technicians, archeological restoration professionals, as well as nursing and para-medical professions; providing technical assistance and innovation training to traditional crafts and establishment of traditional craft incubators.

In order to be competitive, traditional crafts need to introduce new technology their production process and design innovative products. It is important that tourists who visit the city, as well local consumers and expats, are able to find good quality products that meet their consumption requirements. It is important that the program combines technical know-how, product development and business and entrepreneurship skills. In that context, the establishment of the Khan Al-Qishleh incubators and cultural center for traditional crafts would come in support to this action.

D6.2 *Increasing quality of hospitality services in the old city:*

Train local hospitality businesses on quality management and on reception of tourist. The municipality in coordination with local NGOs, vocational schools and hospitality businesses can undertake a training program, with a specific focus on how to receive and interact with tourist.

7. OBJECTIVE E – LOBBYING WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING, AMENDING AND/OR DEVELOPING LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Under this general objective, three strategic objectives were defined. One of these was developed based on the finding of the Strategic Diagnosis for Transversal Issue 6 on the Legal and institutional framework.

E1.   To adopt and implement the decentralization law as well as numerous other laws pertaining to the finances and responsibilities of municipalities

The Municipal Act, Decree-Law 118/1977 imposes constraints to municipalities' actions. The main constraints are:

- the inability of municipalities to establish their own fees and rates.
- the absence of legal options for collection and enforcement of municipal taxes and fees.
- the absence of a voice for municipalities in decisions that impact their revenues.

E1.1 *Creating a municipal legal committee:*

The committee would be in charge to review and propose amendments to the decentralization law draft. It would also review laws and regulations that need to be changed to empower municipalities. This committee will provide suggestions to Saida's municipality and local stakeholders and support the lobbying action of strategy E1.2.

E1.2 *Developing a national lobbying strategy with other municipalities:*

Being one of the largest municipalities in Lebanon, and having strong networks with influential national-level policy makers, Saida could play a leading role in bridging municipalities together in order to lobby for changes in legislation. This includes the adoption and implementation of the decentralization law as well as numerous other laws pertaining to the finances and responsibilities of municipalities.

E2.   To elaborate a new zoning for the old city including micro schemes based on improved data and wider survey

As detailed in the Strategic Diagnosis report on the Institutional and legal framework, municipal urban management in Lebanon is hampered by a centralized government structure, and by the limited opportunities for local governments to access municipal funds and to decide on revenue generating regulations and taxation. Legal reform is as such a very important component to enable municipalities to actively contribute to sustainable development. Particularly relevant

for Saida's heritage seems a new zoning law to be approved by the central planning authorities, based on survey carried out at the local level. Zoning regulations for the Old City shall also be grounded no an overall regulatory framework protecting Saida's distinct landscape, in its natural and cultural heritage, green areas and water resources, linking to Strategic Objective E.3 (To protect Saida's landscape distinctiveness as bridging marine and land landscape albeit reframing the landscape to address 21st century vision for the city)

E2.1 *Complete extensive social and spatial survey of the Old City:*

The definition of these schemes requires extensive documentation on the physical and social conditions in the Old City, by detailed building and population survey currently unavailable. Such documentation could be ideally managed by an institution ensuring continuity of data base management, in coordination with Municipal planning authorities.

E2.2 *Map different options for applying different building schemes in different areas of the Old City:*

The rich and complex morphology of the Old City fabric requires careful and targeted interventions which would be better supported by a regulatory framework based on micro-schemes. Such schemes can guide tailored projects to respect and valorize the variety of urban forms and functions densely clustered in a seemingly unite built environment. They can also allow flexibility of building codes to residential upgrading, while preventing damaging accretions.

E2.3 *Present and discuss options for building schemes with legal experts and national planning authorities:*

Overall, locally based efforts to improve zoning and building codes for Saida heritage sites have to face the structural shortcomings of the centralized structure of government affecting all Lebanese Municipalities. Any effort towards reforming legal frameworks needs to be connected to the decentralization process at the national level, linking to Strategic Objective E.1 (To adopt and implement the decentralization law as well as numerous other laws pertaining to the finances and responsibilities of municipalities).

E3.   To protect Saida's landscape distinctiveness by enforcing and enhancing existing legal frameworks for the protection of water resources and green areas

The legal framework is a key to the realization of strategies proposed under the "landscape, environment and ecology" sector. The problematic of the legal framework is twofold: landscape features that are protected by existing laws; second, proposed landscape features that will require new legal framework/tools for their realization.

E3.1 *Enforcing Existing Legal Frameworks on Riparian and Marine Resources:*

The Lebanese law provides a clear legal framework for the protection of river domains, to prevent pollution of aquifers and marine resources. Decree 05/23107 ensures a protection/buffer zone on both sides of rivers that should be free from built structures. The reason lies partly in the need to accommodate seasonal fluctuations of water flow but also to ensure that water flow is not restricted through building. The problem lies in the inability to reinforce these laws. The absence of legal enforcement, and because riverbanks are public land, has seen rampart building encroachment and solid waste dumping into the river domain. The key therefore is to find innovative ways of reinforcing existing legal framework enforcing. Nevertheless, state legislation is a sound foundation not only for protecting rivers and streams but also to re-conceptualize them as green amenity corridors. More specifically, river buffer zone for the Awali and Sayniq Rivers is 100m on each side, north and south of the watercourse. The four smaller streams are not included in river protective legislation. Instead they have been incorporated together with adjacent municipal land into road infrastructure in the city.

The waterfront forms the largest potential open space in the city stretching for a length of 4.5 km from the municipal stadium north to the dumpsite south. Three types of spaces were identified in the waterfront: the boulevard proper, vehicular channel and sidewalk; leftover spaces on the city edge; and the beach. Decree No 144/S defines maritime domain as public and decree No 4809 states that the Lebanese coast defined as the waterfront land including the seawaters, is public inalienable property, which means that it cannot be modified or reshaped. A legal framework for the new Marina in Alexander Bay and the solid waste dump at straddling sea and land is a key to the protection of the coastal environment.

E3.2 *New Legal Frameworks for Urban Agriculture:*

The protection of agriculture dictates a new legal framework that aim to protect strategically located agricultural lands to maintain the landscape distinctiveness of Saida, linking to Strategic Objectives B2, C2 and C3. Here urban strategies, for example land pooling or re-parcelization, can be explored to ensure economically equitable subdivision of ownership and investment rights.

E3.3 *Hybrid Legal Framework for the Railway Corridor*

Ownership of the railway corridor is complex, generally joint state and private ownership. To realize the railway green corridor, innovative strategies are necessary to deal with the complexity.

8. OBJECTIVE F – SECURITY AND STABILITY

The recent incidents in Saida have created a visible manifestation of the political deadlock facing the city. The events brought the local economy to a standstill and hampered many of the ongoing development processes and social events. Yet these incidents are not born of a single manifestation of violence. The political deadlock in the city (and across all of Lebanon) has diminished the power and respectability of the state and the public order. It has also hampered the normal work of the government, and its ability to attract new public and private investments. Saida in many ways is a victim of a national political crisis that manifests itself in continuous strife and sectarian tensions. The eruption of violence in August was simply a culmination of many factors and not an isolated incident. Despite the fact that it resulted in a considerable deterioration of the general mood in the city, reversing the mood will need to address the root causes and not just the symptoms.

F1.   To prove Saida's centrality and leadership in opening local dialogues about security and stability

At this stage, it is impossible to develop a consensual narrative about the problem of security and stability in the city, though there is a general consensus that the situation is hearting everyone and hampering the local economy. The process for rebuilding security and stability will involve strategies that require a much larger involvement than that of the city of Saida alone. Issues like reinforcing the public order, strengthening the role of the army and of the police, resolving electoral process are not in the hands of the Saidawis to resolve. Yet, there is no reason why Saida cannot prove leadership in opening local dialogues about these issues. Setting up platforms for the different stakeholders in the city, to emulate and replicate the National Dialogue process being carried out by the bigger political forces, is certainly an opportunity to make the national dialogue process more tangible locally, with cities and localities contributing to the national effort. However, there are more tangible issues that can be addressed locally and promoted as part of resolving part of the specifically Saidawi political stalemate. Some have already been mentioned above in the strategies. The above proposed objectives include strategies such as creating an inclusive urban observatory, or creating a platform for re-evaluating major urban projects to make sure they are more inclusive, could be complemented by the following.

F1.1 *Setting up a confidential dialogue process, to engage the different stakeholders in negotiating issues related to the city:*
The current quibbling about the port, for example, could be addressed constructively in such a platform, as opposed to exchanging accusations that the project is being developed for the

benefit of this or that group exclusively. The city of Saida could actually request help in setting up such a dialogue platform from the national platform. Another area where dialogue can also learn from the national process is the work on the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee. This committee could provide a viable framework to address not only national problems but local ones as well.

F1.2 *Encouraging small initiatives of local NGO's and businesses creating local platforms for reconciliation and peace-building*

Over the long run, the safest way to address issues of security and stability is to ensure that development strategies of the city are mutually beneficial to all stakeholders, and to create win-win situations to accommodate them in the development process. Mitigating the winner-takes-all mentality (prevalent on the national level and promulgated through the regional proxy wars and conflicts going on in the region) cannot be left to be addressed on the national level alone. Each city must take the challenge of creating the necessary measures to defuse the crisis. Diffusing the crisis does not mean intervening in the affairs of the national state, but it means creating local platforms for reconciliation and peace building, through mutual agreements for better and more inclusive development. The process can start with small initiative by local NGO's and businesses. The Municipality can encourage these initiatives and incorporate them into its branding strategy of a cohesive city. Small initiative can then be capitalized upon to create open gestures for participation and dialogue.

9. IN CONCLUSION

In parallel with the Strategic Framework phase, the team of experts and the Municipal team, initiated a number of small projects under the umbrella of the USUDS. The projects were intended to inform the public, to build partnerships and to engage the community. A number of meetings were held towards that end with the Trader's Association, the Schools Network and the NGO network in Saida. These meetings were also intended to facilitate for a process of healing and reengaging key actors after the Abra events that the city suffered from. Three projects have already been launched:

Bher El Eid – "مهرجان بحر العيد" Project
"Baher El Eid" is part of Saida'a heritage. It is the space where the Adha Eid celebrations have traditionally taken place every year. The partnership that was established between the Municipality and the Trader's Association and a number of NGOs (Blue Mission, DPNA, Abnaa Saida Association, ChaCha & SOso Colony) granted the children of Saida, especially underprivileged children, this year a special event over the Adha Eid with a better more secure space and a more enhanced entertainment program (such as clowns and folklore dances). The objective was to highlight the cultural identity of the old city by preserving one of its well-known venue and cultural celebration in "Eid".

"Let's Imagine Saida" Workshops with the Schools Network in Saida and Neighboring Villages
A meeting of the School Network of Saida in the presence of its president, Mrs. Bahia El Hariri launched the activity "Let's Imagine Saida – تعو نتصور صيدا". Thirty four schools participated in the project and involved their eighth graders. Students take photos of places they like and others they dislike. The photos are intended to establish a dialogue among the students about their perception of the city of Saida through visual means. The workshops are expected to end in November, and a grand entertaining exhibition of their photos will follow as an outcome of all the workshops.

The Green Railway Tracks
A third project was a greening of the old railway tracks to be a recreational space in the city, and an environmental campaign that will be launched in the near future. This project is a product of the ideas shared by the Saida USUDS Strategic Diagnosis report and by the "Shajar wa-Bashar" NGO in Saida. This project is currently unfolding and will soon be implemented.

Such projects are small steps but are certain to pave the way for the Action Plans, in the next phase of the USUDS project, and are also certain to pave the way for long term civic engagement and partnership building in the city of Saida.