

3. A PEACEFUL CITY: BYBLOS WILL BE A PEACEFUL CITY THAT EMBRACES AND PROMOTES SOCIAL COHESION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Byblos has a long history as an inclusive, multi-faith society populated by a diverse range of people and communities including native residents, migrant workers, and refugees.

Peacefulness is a strong value for the city's citizens; to date, Byblos has remained largely unaffected by unrest in other parts of the country. However, with rapid population growth, internal migration and an influx of refugees from Syria, maintenance of social cohesion is a growing challenge. 1.5 million Syrian refugees have recently sheltered in Lebanon; a country whose own population is just 4 million. The wider region is also threatened by armed conflicts resulting from injustice, oppression, lack of freedom, radical ideologies, violent autocratic governments and religious extremism. The initiatives identified under this goal are aimed at ensuring ongoing changes in the city do not jeopardize social cohesion or affect the peacefulness and tolerance that have characterized it for so long.

Inclusivity is another key priority for Byblos. We are acutely conscious of the vulnerable groups that reside within the city, including those who are elderly, physically or mentally challenged, and socially or economically disadvantaged. This goal seeks to ensure these groups have a voice and their needs are adequately addressed. It further promotes the integration of vulnerable groups in all aspects of the city's social, cultural and economic life. These principles are closely aligned with Goal 5, since by embracing the diversity of our people we can turn our unique city characteristics into a catalyst for diverse economic development.

Inclusivity and peacefulness also mean improving communication and engagement between citizens and local authorities, particularly outside of election times.. Actions under this goal are aimed at improving ongoing relations with our citizens and caza communities to minimize the risk of instability, especially during volatile or strained periods. This will lead to improved governance for the city through actively engaged and empowered community.

GOAL 1: ENCOURAGE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

Goal objective: To engage Byblos' communities to tackle local issues and maintain an excellent quality of life for the people of the city, including vulnerable groups.

ONGOING ACTION: A. CREATE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES TO REPRESENT AND ADVOCATE FOR THE COMMUNITIES WITHIN BYBLOS

Description: We want to create neighborhood committees that will:

- Work together to change and improve their neighborhoods to achieve better outcomes for the community living and working there
- Become the link between the Municipality and the community.

The committees will be made up of 4-5 people. The city of Byblos currently comprises more than 20 neighborhoods which could be regrouped to form 7 larger neighborhood groups. The representation of vulnerable groups will be essential in each neighborhood committee.

Action objective: To include the community and vulnerable groups in the decision making and implementation of city actions while boosting social cohesion and nurturing cross-cutting city relationships.

Action owner: Byblos Municipality.

ACTION: B. CREATE A YOUTH TASK FORCE TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CITY'S OPERATIONS

Description: The youth of Byblos are an asset to our city's resilience. They represent the dynamic and creative backbone of the city. The aim is to set up a volunteer Youth Taskforce to connect the future workforce to the city's economic and social activities,

WE WILL:

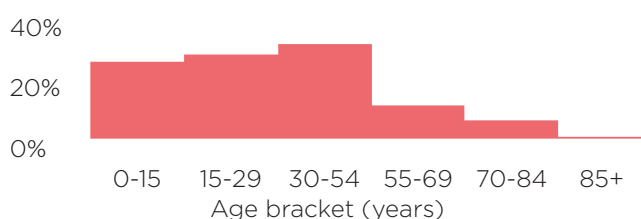
- **Encourage civic engagement and participation in decision making**
- **Manage safety risks, threats and civil unrest**
- **Promote social networks and relationships between the caza communities**

provide our Youth Taskforce with the required training, skills, and support to participate in the city's present and future activities and to encourage them to participate in the city's actions, and suggest proposals and initiatives at the city level. Activities can include tourism, hospitality management and others. The youth taskforce will be formed by the high school and university students, and other members of the community.

Action owner: Mayor's office

Action partners: Local NGOs, schools, universities, local cultural associations, tour operators, travel agents, local restaurants.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF BYBLOS



Source: Statistical Bulletin of the Ministry of Health, 2012

ONGOING ACTION: C. PARTICIPATORY BUDGET PLANNING

Description: We want to empower our community and engage them in the municipal or public budget allocation. A budget will be allocated to each neighborhood committee to decide on how and where the money shall be spent. This can include local neighborhood level projects, training, education and others.

Action owner: Byblos Municipality

Action partners: Nahnoo NGO



INSPIRATION FROM PORTO ALEGRE

Participatory budgeting as catalyst for collaboration

The 100RC process provided a platform for networking between Porto Alegre, Medellin and New Orleans which has helped the cities exchange experiences, collaborate to build resilience, and identify common initiatives and actions that respond to similar challenges. For instance, New Orleans' 'Icons of Peace' has inspired Porto Alegre to launch a similar initiative. Porto Alegre also recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Medellin to promote and share peacebuilding best practices. Along the way, Porto Alegre shared its extensive experience with participatory budgeting with these cities and discovered ways to increase effectiveness of this process through improved information sharing.

GOAL 2: MANAGE SECURITY RISKS, THREATS AND CIVIL UNREST

Goal objective: To preserve the peace of our community and mitigate potential risks to our unique historic assets.

ACTION: A. DEVELOP A COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

Description: We want to develop an integrated security strategy to ensure the safety of our community and to protect our cultural heritage. We will collaborate with the national security forces, the local police stations, and the community to have a comprehensive strategy suitable for Byblos and its growing population to address the surrounding security threats.

Action objective: To ensure Byblos' peacefulness is retained for future generations.

Action owner: Mayor's office, with the municipal guards section.

Action partners: Byblos Municipality, national security forces, local police, businesses, and neighborhood committees, specialist advisors.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN AND BETWEEN THE CAZA COMMUNITIES

Goal objective: The strong community networks within Byblos have contributed to maintaining the peacefulness that the city has been known for. Our aim is to build on our social networks, strengthen them and expand them to include the rest of the caza communities. Establishing these social networks will become the catalyst for economic, cultural and political collaboration.

PRIORITY ACTION: A. ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY CENTER, PARTICULARLY TO SERVE VULNERABLE GROUPS (INCLUDING REFUGEES) IN BYBLOS

Description: The Municipality has conducted a survey in 2014 asking the citizens to prioritize projects and services that the city should take forward to address the community's needs. Services for vulnerable groups, elderly people, and children were among the top priorities. Establishing a community center to contribute to our community's development and cohesion is one of our priorities. The center will become the social hub for the city, and will offer appropriate services for the elderly, children and vulnerable groups, host the Youth Taskforce and neighborhood committee meetings, and become the venue for a variety of community and public events. **Action objective:** To address the citizens' needs, improve the quality of life and contribute to the community's development and level of participation.

Action owner: Byblos Municipality

Action partners: Community Based Organizations (CBOs), local NGOs, International NGOs.

Timeline: Short to medium term.

Resilience value:

- Increase in social cohesion
- Promotion of active and engaged community
- Support for livelihoods
- Empowerment of a broad range of stakeholders
- Development of a central hub to draw together the two areas of the city.

ONGOING ACTION: B. PROMOTE CONFLICT RESOLUTION WORKSHOPS AND PROGRAMS

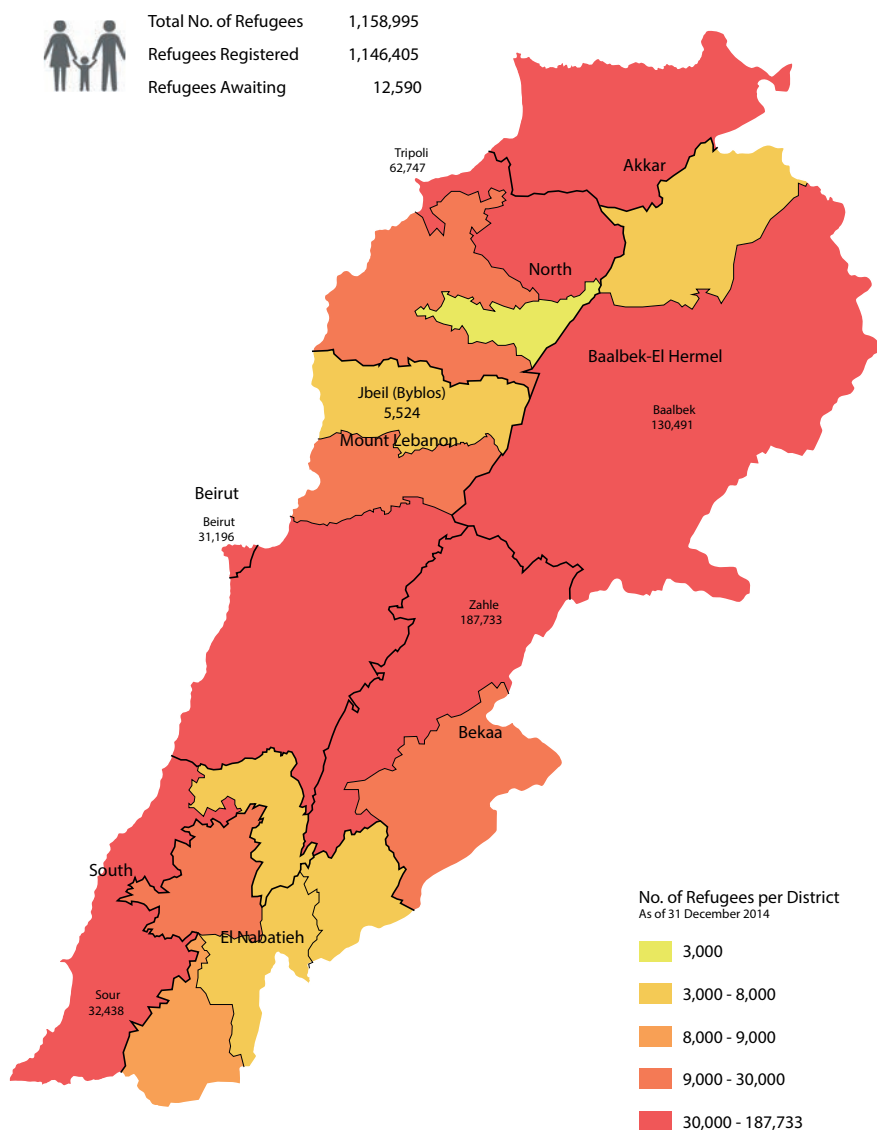
Description: Lebanese American University in Byblos, in collaboration with the Institute for Peace and Justice Education and the United Nations (UN), organized a two week conflict resolution workshop in summer 2014. Topics covered included an introduction to conflict, the root causes and triggers of violent conflict, causes of the Lebanese civil war, the political economy of civil wars, the UN and conflict resolution in the Middle East, prevention of violent conflict, power sharing and constitutional reform in Lebanon, and bottom up conflict resolution. Similar

courses are delivered on a regular basis by the LAU, including Fundamentals of Conflict Resolution, Cross-cultural Communication and Conflict, Community Conflict and Conflict Resolution. The cultural center of Byblos, in coordination with the Youth Taskforce, will coordinate the delivery of similar courses to selected young people, who in turn will deliver training to other community groups in the city.

Action owner: Byblos Cultural Center, under the support and direction of the Municipality, can coordinate these activities between LAU, volunteers and the community.

Action partners: LAU, local NGOs, International NGOs, UNDP

LEBANON Syrian Refugees Registered
31 December 2014



Source: UNHCR Beirut, Lebanon