

## Establishing a Bus Transportation Network

### Establishing Alternative Means for Transportation

#### Need and Purpose:

Railways and Beirut's electric trams have been abandoned as alternative public transport policies by the Lebanese authorities. The government's railway and bus offices (OCFTC) has recently stopped its activities. The company's bus services was restricted to Beirut after they were resumed when the civil war ended (1990). Given the lack of alternative public transportation means, there is an imminent need to improve bus transportation in Lebanon.

Nowadays, buses travel between Beirut and all of Lebanon's major towns. There are three main bus pick-up and drop-off points in Beirut, Bekaa, and the South. Charles Helou bus station is divided into three sign posted zones which are: Syria / Beirut, Jounieh Byblos and Tripoli.

Lebanon's bus transportation system is unorganized, it does not reach all of the Lebanese territory, it is not safe and there are no specific bus stops. Lebanese citizens find it hard to use public buses, and resort to the use of personal cars. Therefore there is a need for specific measures concerning a public bus transportation network (BTN).

#### Consequences:

- ◇ Increase in personal car numbers on the road- 434 motor vehicles per 1000 inhabitants
- ◇ Traffic Congestion
- ◇ Waste of time and productivity
- ◇ Increase in fuel consumption and therefore the household energy bill
- ◇ Environmental problems: Air and noise pollution and loss of green areas
- ◇ Insufficient parking lots; parking lots are taking place of more productive projects and green areas
- ◇ Road accidents
- ◇ Road depreciation
- ◇ Waste of government investment to increase road capacity
- ◇ Low ridership leading to oversupply in red plated buses

#### Workshop: Mount Lebanon

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#### Area Covered:

Lebanon

#### Public Institutions Involved:

- Ministry of Public Works and Transport
- Ministry of Energy and Water Resources
- Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Environment

#### Estimated Timeline:

3 years

#### Issues:

1. Unorganized public transportation network (lack of coherent, reliable, and efficient BTN)
2. Deterioration of quality level
3. Bad Road infrastructure

**Description:**

This policy aims at establishing a national bus transportation network that meets the public needs under certain conditions and standards.

1. Establish a main focal institution to lead, monitor, and direct the BTN
2. Establish fixed routes based on the transportation needs
3. Locate specific bus stop places (convenient, accessible, and safe)
4. Develop a specific time schedule (departure and stop periods)
5. Establish specific lanes, where possible, for bus transportation means in high traffic roads
6. Coordinate with private buses in order to integrate them in the BTN. (2400 buses are owned by the private sector)

**Conditions to implement:**

1. BTN must be eco-friendly maintained for the longterm
2. Implementation of traffic and BTN laws
3. Involvement of the private sector to achieve more acceptance of the BTN

**Outcome and General Interest Benefits:**

1. Reduce the need for road construction and maintenance (less road and car use areas expenditure) -110 Billion LL (73 Mn \$) is earmarked for the execution of road projects from the Government Treasury (Ministry of Public Works and Transport) for the year 2011<sup>1</sup>. This does not include the Council for Development and Reconstruction projects which are projected to cost 498 million dollars between the years 2010 and 2012 for roads and intersections only<sup>2</sup>.
2. Use areas for more productive and efficient projects by redirecting public investment into profitable projects
3. Reduce pollution, traffic and waste of time
4. Benefiting the public treasury on the long term; reduce expenditure on negative consequences of the unorganized BTN (accidents, health bill, pollution)

<sup>1</sup>Source: <http://www.finance.gov.lb/en-US/finance/BudgetInformation/Pages/AnnualBudgetDocumentsandProcess.aspx>

<sup>2</sup>CDR Report, October 2010.