Dina Hanna_MRP

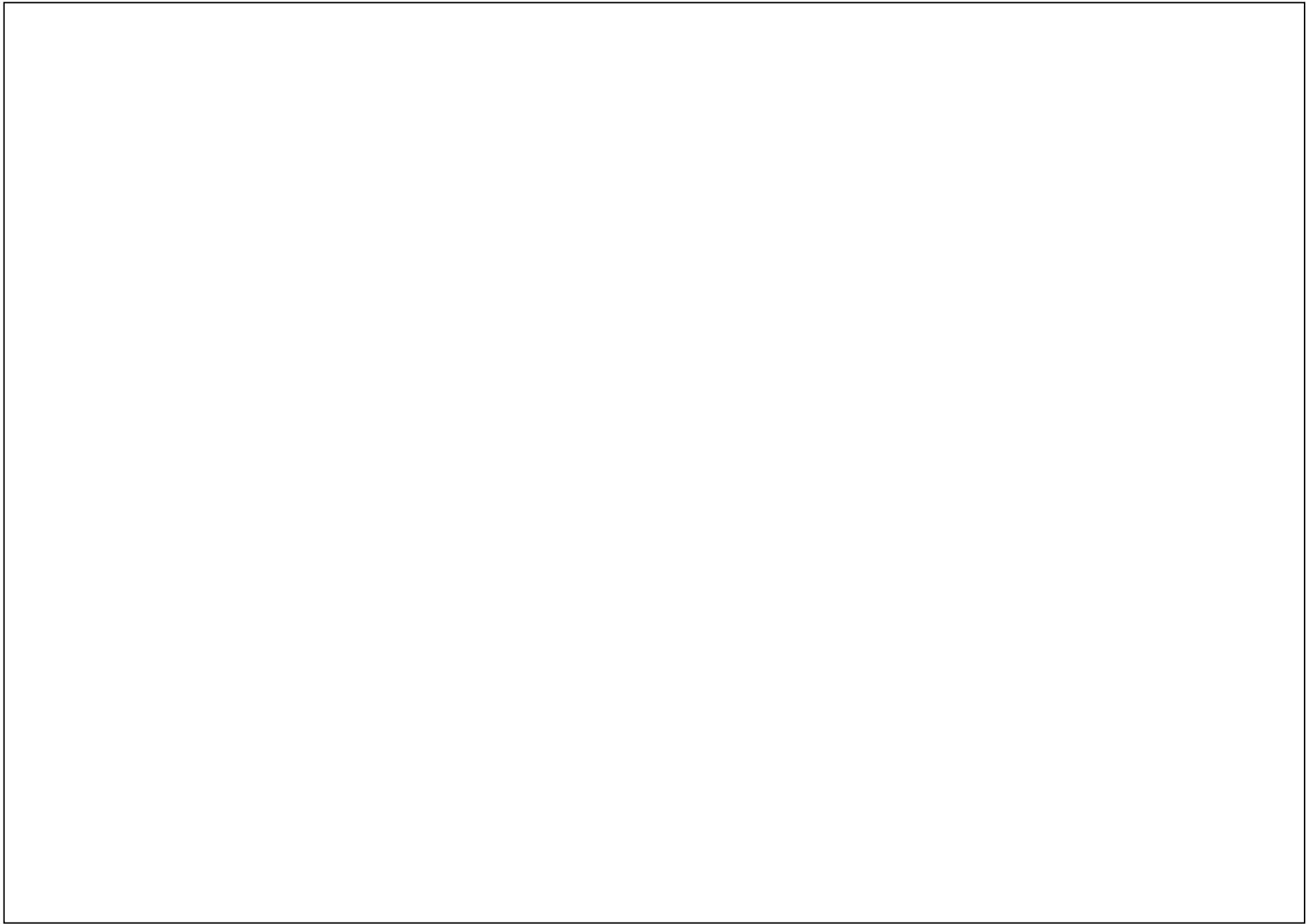*by* Dina Hanna

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social (w)hole.

Nudging the negative impacts of identity claims and cultivating
social cohesion in deeply divided and territorialized cities

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
FACULTY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING

MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT

SOCIAL (W)HOLE

Dina Hanna, BArch.

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Being a Major Project in Urban Design & City Planning submitted to the faculty of
The Built Environment as part of the requirements for the award of the MSc Urban
Design & City Planning at University College London, I declare that this project is
entirely my own work and that ideas, data and images, as well as direct quotations,
drawn from elsewhere are identified and referenced.

Signature

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

For a city to be truly shared, it should aim to cultivate social cohesion amongst its various communities. Thus, it cannot neglect the issue of spatial segregation, but should, instead, encourage community members to willingly and freely cooperate and engage with one another, in spite of their differences, in order to achieve a sense of unity and belonging. However, there are cities that have, throughout history, witnessed daily practices of segregation and the spatialization of identities - which has led to the creation of divorced societies.

Reinforcing the idea of identities and belonging to a certain community that should not engage with 'others,' has resulted in the creation of 'imagined' boundaries. Those boundaries, which spatially and distinctly exist in the deeply divided and territorialized city of Beirut, inhibit exchange and render its societies disengaged and divorced from each other.

This research conceptualizes the aforementioned problem. It uses literature to outline the importance of cultivating social cohesion and how *urban acupuncture* can be used in nudging those divides through the implementation of design interventions within the city. It also draws out the required conditions for the application of this approach. As for case study reviews, they display the impact of providing multiple socially-engaging urban platforms.

Through the amalgamation of academic literature and case study reviews, a practical toolkit, which puts forth design principles that aid in cultivating social cohesion, is proposed for nudging those notions of physical and 'imagined' boundaries that have taken on a spatial form. It is carried out on a network of spaces in the neighborhood of Bachoura, Beirut, to respond to the critical problem that has been fortified over the years. Design principles include creating shared spaces, fostering shared activities, promoting co-design, nudging common perceptions and overcoming physical barriers. In addition to the aforementioned, this thesis exemplifies how the practice of urban design can participate in cultural conflict resolution through the injection of inclusive and collaborative spaces within cities.
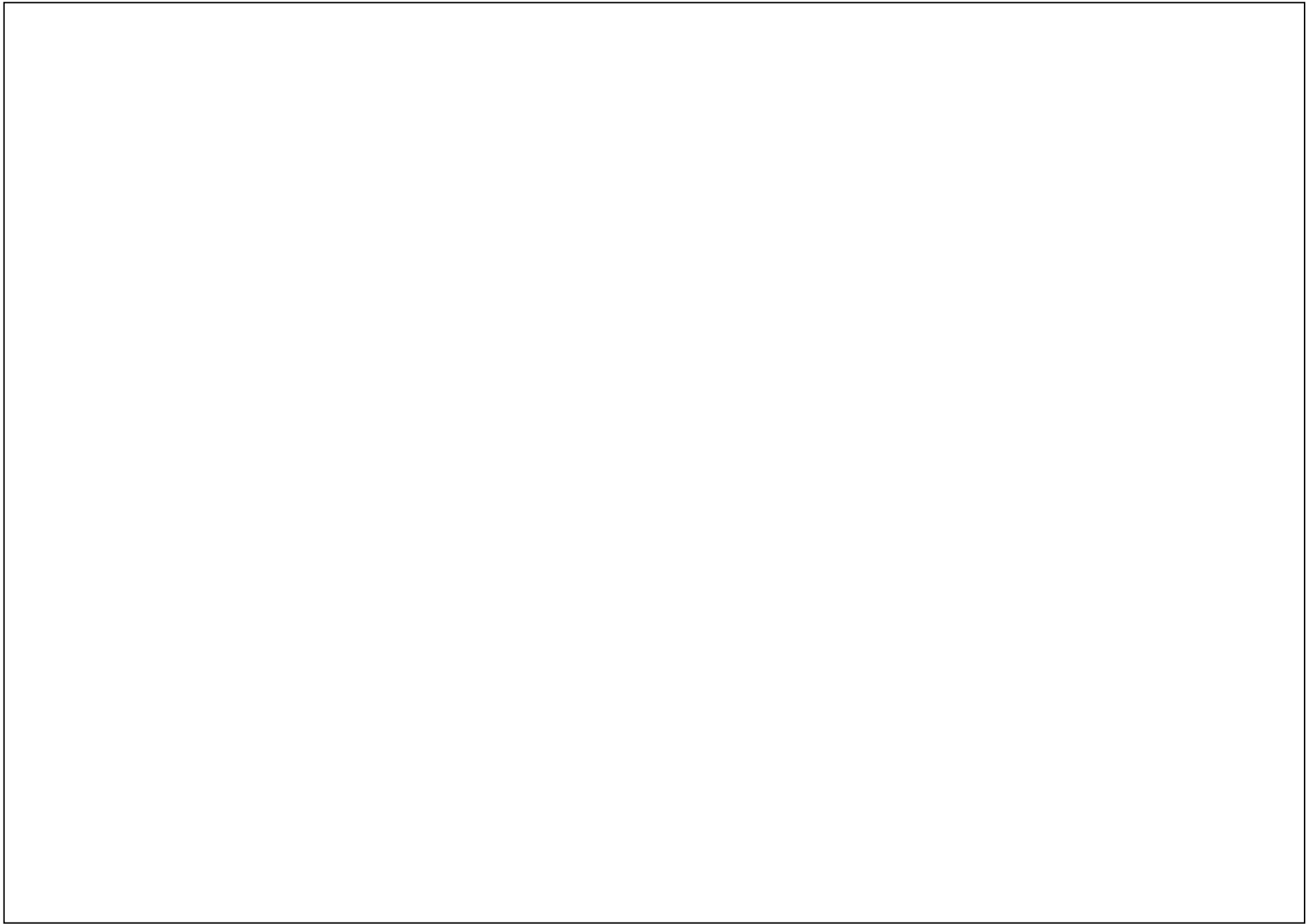
01

Introduction

Conceptualization of the Problem

The built environment has no inherent meaning. It is socially constructed through a series of socio-economic and cultural circumstances that have spatially manifested throughout history (Gaffikin, 2008). Those social constructs play a major role in making or dividing a city because groups often have different readings of the environment, which are contested and change over time.

This may lead to the formation of powerful identity claims - the idea of belonging to a certain community that should not engage with 'others' - that take on a spatial form within a city and render it territorialized and divided. When a city is 'marked,' even through deeply conditioned contours of the 'self,' social exclusion takes a spatial dimension that limits several opportunities for cross-cultural interaction (Seidman, 2009). This is problematic as it restricts groups from constructing subjective ideas of 'others' and subsequently reinforces stereotypes, leads to the creation of imagined and perceived boundaries between groups, and hinders the 'recovery' of divorced societies.

While there may be several cities dealing with the consequences of the aforementioned problem, those consequences are distinctly evident in the territorialized and divided city of Beirut where identity claims subsist.

As they subsist, imagined and perceived boundaries are continuously fortified and can possibly transform into intractable physical divides (kerb stones, walls, fences...etc.), which, in turn, reinforce ideas of the 'self' and the 'other.'

That being said, when creating a shared city is not a priority, an inadvertent effect may be to strengthen this segregated and territorialized lifestyle through the perpetuation of demarcated landscapes. For this reason, a truly shared city cannot neglect the issue of spatial segregation (Mulholland, 2016) and should work on diminishing boundaries and bringing awareness to the negative impact that powerful identity claims can instil.

For the aforementioned reasons, in order to cultivate social cohesion, it is essential to explore various ways to shift common perceptions and create shared spaces that go beyond identity claims to foster a sense of belonging, regardless of cultural differences. In that way, the visceral fear of 'the other' that leads to conflict and spatial segregation can dissolve with time. One method that may aid in achieving the following, is the use of *urban acupuncture* - a small-scale urban renewal method that uses small efforts to achieve maximum efficiency and growth - which can nudge boundaries and help the city become a catalyst of interactions.

Parameters of Context

Cities that are considered to be part of this research have been established to be/have:

War-Torn or Conflicted:
for the past 40-50 years with no sign of progression.

Powerful Identity Claims:
due to previous or ongoing conflicts that reinforced divides between societies.

Territorialized and Divided:
where demarcation lines are defined by physical elements that have become permanent fixtures within the urban fabric.

Weak Government Institutions:
that do not prioritize social integration or provide the means to progress.

Lack of Civicness & Sense of Community:
where areas within the city are mostly homogeneous and do not prioritize cross-cultural exchange.

Lack of Shared, Public Space:
which hinders people, from different backgrounds, from coming together.

Parameters of Context: Examples

Figure 1. Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Figure 2. Nicosia, Cyprus.

Figure 3. Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Figure 4. Damascus, Syria.

Figure 5. Beirut, Lebanon.

Research Question

How can one use *urban acupuncture* to cultivate social cohesion and help overcome the negative impacts of powerful identity claims in a deeply divided and territorialized city, such as Beirut?

Objectives

In order to respond to the research question, the following objectives were put forth to guide this project's research:

1. To understand what identity claims are and how they spatially manifest to generate imagined and perceived boundaries.

2. To explore the negative impacts of identity claims and their role in creating physical divisions that, with imagined and perceived boundaries, result in deeply territorialized and divided cities.

3. To enhance awareness on how *urban acupuncture* can be one of the methods used to nudge imagined and physical boundaries, and cultivate social cohesion.

4. To create a conceptual and design toolkit that uses *urban acupuncture* to cultivate social cohesion, through the injection of disruptive design interventions.

Problem   *Possible Solution*

| The 'self' and the 'other' | Creation of imagined boundaries | Imagined boundaries become intractable physical divides | Cultivate social cohesion |

Self   Other   Self   Other   Self   Other   Self   Other

Imagined Boundary   *Physical Divides*

Figure 6. Conceptualization of the problem.

02

Methodology

Methodology

This research was conducted using a methodology composed of four stages:

Research
During this phase of the project, issues to be explored were established, along with the research question.
Additionally, four objectives were put forth to direct the research process and establish coherence throughout. After that, literature reviews were conducted on issues related to identity claims and their negative impacts on cities, how they spatially manifest and render a city territorialized and divided, and social cohesion and *urban acupuncture*. A summary of findings was then produced, which highlighted the identified problem, what it results in and possible solutions that may aid in resolving it. Next, eight case studies were chosen for their significant relevance to the subject matter, and later reviewed. Key findings of objectives and design characteristics were derived from each case study.
A summary was then produced outlining the compatibility of each case study with the principles derived from the aforementioned literature review, along with implemented urban interventions to better understand what can be achieved under each principle.

Development
After careful perusal of the research, a framework was established through combining findings from literature and case study reviews, where five key principles emerged.
A design toolkit was then developed to highlight the objectives, programs and tools, and diagrammatic of each principle.

This toolkit was developed to answer the aforementioned research question and provide insight on various ways to achieve design expectations.

Application
A site was then selected and justified according to its significant relevance to the research. A focus area was then selected, for which a site analysis was conducted to understand the opportunities and challenges of the area.

After that, the toolkit was tested on the site, where interventions were categorized under the five key principles and explored potentials for change.
After that, all interventions were combined to test their impact on the site, as a whole.

Review
A reflection was conducted on the successes and possible limitations of the applied toolkit, as well as how this research may contribute to urban design practices.
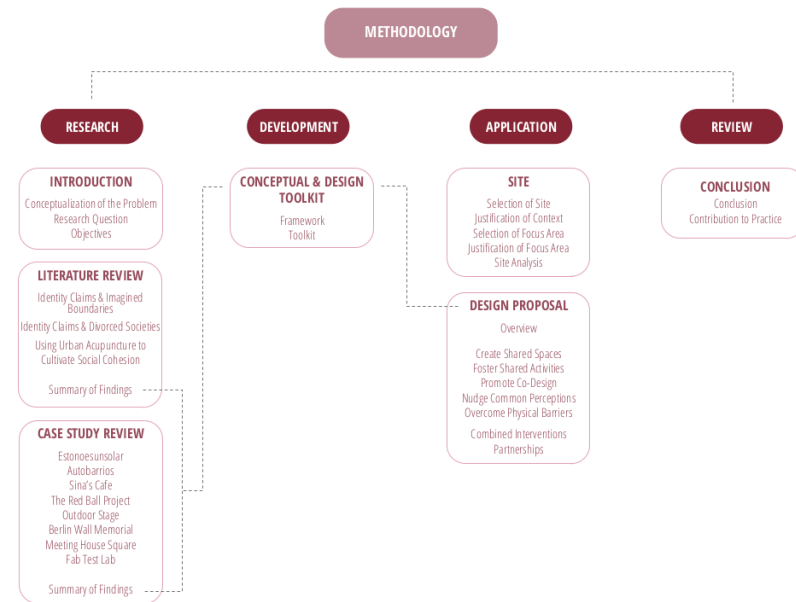
Figure 7. Methodology.
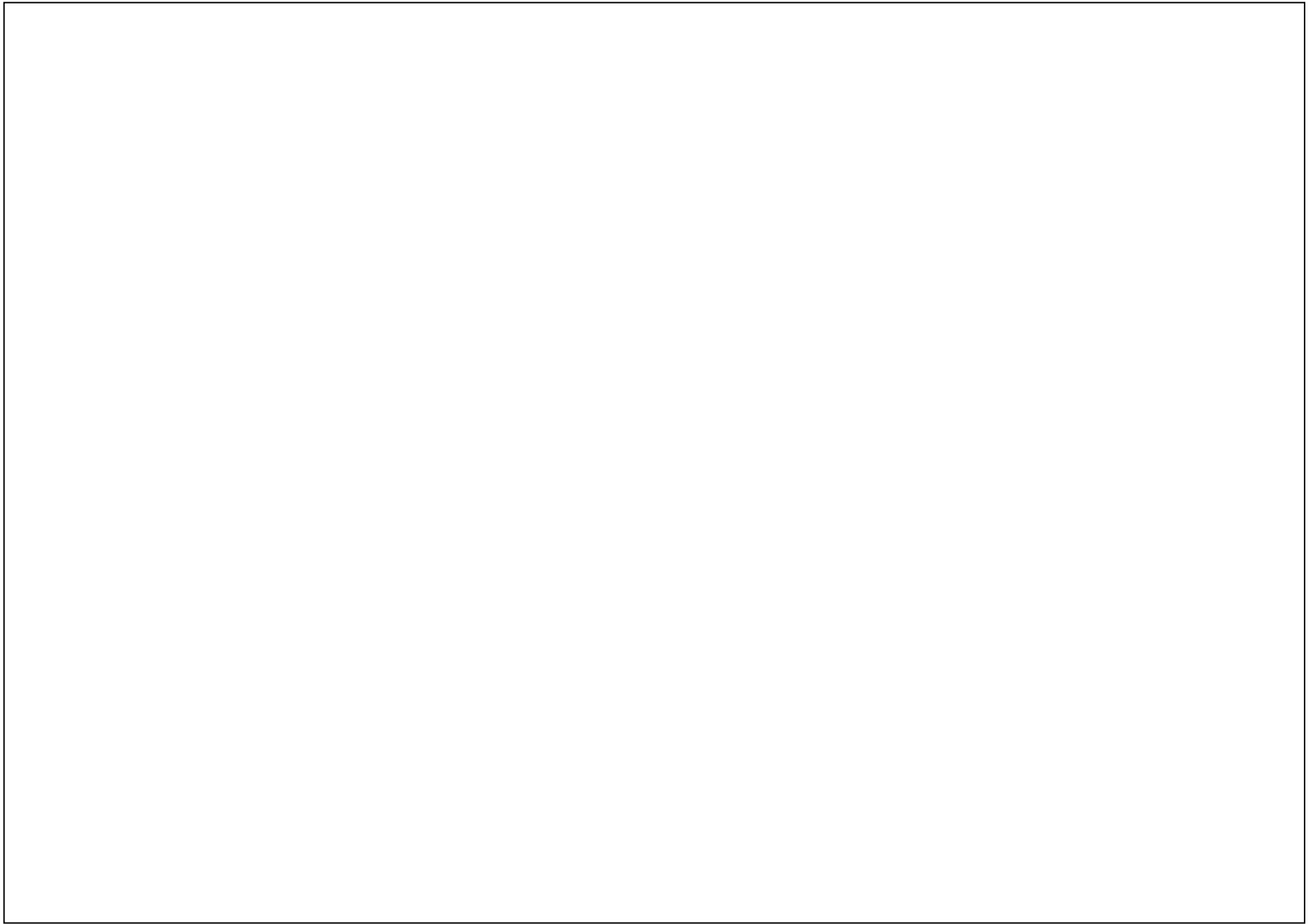
03

Literature Review

Identity Claims and Imagined Boundaries

When it comes to contemporary cities, there are several daily lives that need to be accounted for. Cities are places where social differences are gathered at various scales and levels of intensity. For this reason, urban dwellers are always "in the presence of otherness" (Sennett, 1990:123), or "at an encounter with difference" (Jacobs, 1998:5). However, those ideas of 'otherness' and 'difference' engender several assumptions and prejudices and cause social distinctions which revolve around issues of religion, culture, gender, socio-economic status, political affiliations, and other aspects that set one person aside from the other. This leads to the formation of identity claims.

Identity claims are claims that are recognized or rejected within particular normative acknowledgements and understandings of citizenship and belonging. They tend to affect recognition values through shaping the contours of the 'self' and how the 'self' engages with the 'other' (Seidman, 2009). People often identify with those claims as if based on pre-given categories, when in fact they are a set of ideas or opinions that are formulated without having had concrete evidence of what they entail. Identity is not an inborn trait, it is a social construct that stems from the subjective feelings one may have towards a group of people who share 'common views or beliefs' (Griffiths, 2017). However, under certain social influences, people may integrate those constructs into their own personal identity and self-categorize themselves. This creates a strong sense of belonging and emotional attachment towards one's 'group,' and a tendency to act on behalf of it, regardless of whether other members within it are personally known or not (Anderson, 2006).

When identity claims are that powerful, and people begin to confuse social distinctions with their own personal identity, the presence of 'otherness' no longer portrays a positive sense of diversity and social integration. Instead, it leads to the creation of 'imagined communities,' in which Anderson depicts a nation as a socially constructed community. He claims that communities are imagined because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 2006:15).

Furthermore, this idea of identity claims and imagined communities strongly links to territories, within cities, where the idea of 'otherness' can spatially manifest. Cities are in a constant process of moulding and remoulding and identities are in a constant process of definition and redefinition (Majed, 2014). For this reason, people inherit preconceptions and misconceptions of socially-constructed notions that often become "arbitrary constructions but also evocative, imagined ones in the building of 'otherness'" (Meier, 2013:354). Thus, imagined and perceived boundaries can be generated through powerful identity claims, and become spatial practices that lead to demographic changes within cities, where 'imagined communities' begin to demarcate areas through reinforcing their identity and claiming their space.

'Otherness' & 'Differences'

through social distinctions

| Religion | Political Affiliations | Socio-Economic Status | Culture | Gender |

result in

Identity Claims

which create powerful distinctions between

Self   Other

which result in the creation of

Imagined Communities

through socially-constructed notions that lead to the formation of

Imagined & Perceived Boundaries

Figure 8. Findings.

Identity Claims and Divorced Societies

There may be no shortage of the positive successful qualities that create a sense of identity and sense of place in local environments. However, in many cases it is the negative aspects of identity claims that overshadow the positive ones and lead to the demarcation of 'exclusive' enclaves, which fortify and entrench patterns of social segregation (Gaffikin, 2008). Additionally, visible legacies - such as wall murals glorifying certain sects or political parties, commemoration sites dedicated to 'war-dead heroes,' kerb stones painted to signify tribal turf, confrontational flag-waving also used to signify tribal turf, and other symbols of hatred, bigotry and territorialization - reinforce those patterns, scar the landscapes of cities and hinder their growth by rendering social inequalities wide, exclusion widespread and voicing of dissent unlikely (OECD, 2011).

Divisions within and between societies due to identity claims are very much present in the contemporary world. This notion of urban segregation being rooted in cities where some areas are continuously reinforcing their homogeneity is seen as an inevitable precursor to significant conflict (Mulholland, 2016).

For the aforementioned reasons, this research considers that notions of boundaries can be a result of daily practices of segregation and the spatialization of identities which continuously reinforce "the regime of 'otherness' (Meier, 2013:354). They can remain deeply rooted in the memories of generations who have lived through a city's radical conflicts and passed on to younger generations through interaction, the interplay of socio-political and cultural dynamics and the constant renewal of socially-constructed frontiers (Mermier, 2013). Thus, the idea of avoidance of, or conflict with, the 'other' - outside the 'imagined community' - is reiterated and fortified, which leads to continuous patterns of segregation with increased predicaments of insecurity and hostility (Mulholland, 2016).

When the walls in a city (imagined or physical) are built to offer short-term solutions, they can become part of long-term problems (Gaffikin, 2008); they may become 'walls of hate' that treat the 'other' as a hostile stranger and keep people across 'divides,' from communicating and cooperating. However, these types of walls need to be addressed in order to encourage cross-cultural communication and cultivate social cohesion.

Figure 9. Findings.

Using Urban Acupuncture to Cultivate Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is the willingness of a society to cooperate with another in order to unite and prosper. A cohesive society works towards the well-being of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalization, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust and offers its members multiple, shared platforms that foster active participation and exchange (OECD, 2011). It aims for the creation of a more shared and reconciled society where civic values of equity, diversity and mutuality should take precedence over ethnic or community values that are rooted in tribal partisanship.

Strengthening social cohesion requires a long-term vision and commitment. It requires cultivating increased engagement and familiarity and consequently, empathy and reciprocity across 'divides'. Those, in turn, dissolve boundaries, diminish 'fear of the other,' and decrease social segregation (Gaffikin, 2010). For those reasons, the approach towards achieving social cohesion should be progressive. It should start with securing the center (which is usually a more heterogeneous area with notable pedestrian flow) and branch out to 'de-sectarianize' and 'de-territorialize' more homogeneous areas through the subtle removal of flags, emblems, kerb stones and political symbols. It is not until then that issues in homogeneous neighbor-hoods should begin to be addressed (Gaffikin, 2010 & OECD, 2011). Furthermore, the formation of 'transnational' identities and communities requires a space that is place-centered, in that it is embedded in particular and strategic locations; and it is 'trans-territorial' because it connects sites that are not geographically proximate yet are intensely connected to each other (Sassen, 1996).

One method that aids in doing do is *urban acupuncture*, which is a small-scale renewal method, based on ancient Chinese acupuncture, that uses the smallest effort, in the most strategic point, to trigger healthy responses and achieve maximum efficiency and growth (Lerner, 2014 & Shidan, 2011). It puts forth a more localized and community approach that is quick, cheap, requires multiple actors, focuses on local resources and direct community engagement and catalyzes revitalization.

According to Lerner (2014), a plan itself cannot bring about immediate transformation to a city, for it involves a multitude of actors, issues, and long-term guidelines. So, sometimes a simple, focused intervention can create new energy and shed light on the possibilities of a space in a way that shifts people's perception and motivates them to engage with their community. This in turn, promotes socio-diversity - which includes the need to celebrate the multiplicity of people with different backgrounds within the city, while simultaneously preserving the traits that define their identity. In order to achieve this, a catalyst of interim spaces should be intervened on. They should be designed to draw people out onto the streets by creating multiple platforms for citizen participation, that encourage democratic actions and human expression. Consequently, meeting spaces can be provided, a sense of involvement and belonging can be cultivated and social cohesion can be fostered (Haydn & Temel, 2006, Lerner, 2011).

Social Cohesion

Cohesive Society
- Fights Exclusion & Marginalization
- Creates Sense of Belonging
- Promotes Trust
- Fosters Active Participation
- Aims for a More Shared & Reconciled Society
- Prioritizes Civic Values of Equity, Diversity & Mutuality
- Cultivates Empathy & Reciprocity Across Divides
- Dissolves Boundaries & Diminishes 'Fear of the Other'

Context Specific
- Start with Securing the Center *(heterogeneous area with notable pedestrian flow).*
- Be Progressive
- Branch Out to More Homogeneous Areas

Urban Acupuncture

Benefits of Urban Acupuncture
- Quick & Cheap
- Requires Multiple Actors
- Uses a Localized & Community Approach
- Focuses on Local Resources
- Focuses on Direct Community Engagement
- Creates a New Energy
- Sheds Light on Possibilities of a Space
- Shifts People's Perception
- Promotes Socio-Diversity
- Creates a Catalyst of Interim Spaces
- Draws People Out on the Street
- Encourages Citizen Participation, Democratic Actions & Human Expression

Context Specific
- Area with Pedestrian Flow
- Area with No Active Citizen Participation
- Area that is not 'Shared' or Inclusive
- Area that Needs a New Energy
- Area that Requires Changes of Habits

Figure 10. Findings.

Summary of Findings

Through the literature review, key problems and possible solutions have been identified. Those problems have to do with issues of territorialization in cities, which calls for the need to cultivate social cohesion using the explored method of urban acupuncture.
Possible solutions have been drawn out under two questions:
1. How can social cohesion be cultivated in cities?
2. What principles of *urban acupuncture* aid in cultivating social cohesion?
Identified solutions lead to desired outcomes that aid in driving the project forward.

identified problem

Territorialized & Divided Cities

result in

Conflict with the 'Other'

Imagined & Physical Boundaries *(which reinforce divisions)*

Divorced Societies

which call for the need to cultivate social cohesion (method: urban acupuncture)

Cultivating Social Cohesion

1. Create Meeting Spaces
Providing a meeting space for people from different backgrounds to come together & instilling a sense of belonging.

2. Provide Shared Activities
Promoting activities that bring people together for a common purpose (music, culture, events, markets, shopping...etc.).

3. Encourage Cross-Cultural Exchange
Providing scenarios that stimulate conversation & interaction between people from different backgrounds to instil a sense of familiarity & acceptance.

4. Promote Community Participation
Providing an opportunity for co-design - for locals from different backgrounds & disciplines to proactively come together & create (painting a wall, making furniture, revitalizing an area...etc.).

5. Nudge Imagined & Physical Boundaries
Disrupting intractable boundaries that have been accepted as part of the everyday.

Using Urban Acupuncture

1. Create Catalyst of Interim Spaces
Creating in-between spaces that change people's daily path. This is done through introducing elements that are attractive.

2. Encourage Citizen Engagement
Inviting citizens from different backgrounds to engage in activities taking place within the area.

3. Disrupt Common Perceptions
Changing habits that have been established over a long period of time through introducing elements that alter common perceptions.

4. Draw People Out
Providing activities or elements that would arouse people's curiosity & draw them out on the streets (events, performances...etc.).

5. Utilize Local Skill & Resources
Providing an opportunity to boost and promote the economy through the use of local resources (those resources can range from carpentry & steel-work to using local cafes...etc.).

desired outcomes

Increased Civic Values of Equity, Diversity & Mutuality

Increased Empathy, Engagement & Reciprocity Across Divides

Increased Sense of Belonging

Increased Sense of a Shared City

Increased Societal Reconciliation

Figure 11. Summary of literature.

04

Case Study Review

01.Estonoesunsolar: This is Not an Empty Site

In 2008, Zaragoza was affected by the recession; it was no longer an international stage and it witnessed a strong increase in unemployment rates.

In the midst of all the chaos, a group of architects, citizens and community organizations brought their skills together to imagine new possibilities for the city. They founded Estonoesunsolar, which is an experimental *urban acupuncture* program that turns the city's vacant lots into a network of usable public spaces. Community members were employed to help bring interventions to life, and so employment rates began to rise.

"Taken together this network of transformed public spaces has become a powerful vehicle for citizen involvement, social cohesion and a rekindling of public life." (Di Monte cited Mackenzie, 2015)

01
Zaragoza, Spain

Pilot Phase:
(July - December 2009)
Temporary, flexible, and low-cost interventions were launched in 14 sites - both public and privately owned. Abandoned plots were repurposed into urban gardens, playgrounds for children and street bowling courts.

Second Phase:
(2010)
Due to its success, 14 more sites were added throughout the city. The projects in this phase were slightly larger in scale and budget, and more permanent, with walkways, newly built plazas and squares. Each site invites multiple spontaneous uses, while many also host a variety of planned recreation and educational opportunities such as outdoor movie screenings and concerts, public horticulture programs and dance classes, or hands-on architecture workshops for children.

Figure 12. 110 employed workers.

Figure 13. Playground, all-ages game center and multi-use site.

Figure 14. Public green space and vertical garden.

Figure 15. Multi-use basketball court.

Figure 16. Multi-use facility and event space.

Key Findings:

- Use of local skills & resources for the community to imagine new possibilities for the area. This encouraged community participation and engagement, provided employment opportunities and helped improve the socio-economic status of the area.

- Success of small urban acupuncture projects (providing public spaces for play, dance, gardening and graffiti) lead to the creation of more permanent design interventions (basketball courts, enhanced walkways, playgrounds, event area and multi-use spaces for movie screenings, concerts and workshops), & helped cultivate social cohesion through bringing people together.

- Revitalization of empty lots and their transformation into public spaces, created a sense of belonging to the area.

02.Autobarrios: Auto-Neighborhood

Autobarrios was launched in San Cristobal. It is a collective process that aims to reactivate abandoned spaces and reinvent their function by designing urban spaces for neighborhood residents of all ages.

It targets various local organizations and has connected and strengthened the network of local resources within the area through the use of local amenities to bring the projects to life.

02
San Cristobal, Spain

03
Belfast, Northern Ireland

Figure 17. Abandoned space.

Figure 18. Platform for cultural and social activities.
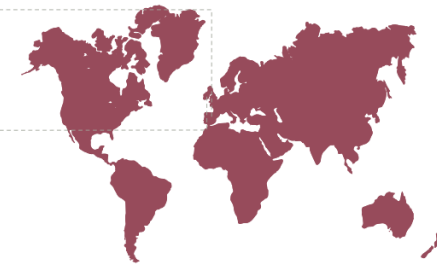
03.Sina's Cafe

Sina's Cafe is a convenience store that is located on a former bonfire site along the Belfast peace line. It's a friendly spot to stop for coffee, cigarettes, newspaper, as well as fresh eggs from the free-range hens outside the container. While bureaucrats have been determined to shut it down, Sina's is still standing due to the fact that it's run by and for locals. Its presence on the boundary between the Protestant and Catholics has had a transformative effect as a place for people of both communities.

Figure 19. Local owners.

Figure 20. Sina's Cafe.

Key Findings:

- Use of local skills & resources to revitalize abandoned spaces within the area & transform them into public spaces that bring people of all ages together.

- Use of colors to create attractive & welcoming spaces.

- Multi-functional spaces (hosts events, performances & talks) that encourage freedom of expression & foster social integration.

02

Key Findings:

- Use of a sensitive & strategic location that arouses curiosity.

- Nudging of long-term perceptions of intractable imagined & physical boundaries.

- Bridging across divides through the injection of a modest cafe that caters for all locals, in spite of historic divides.

03

04.The Red Ball Project

Red Ball is a traveling public art piece that has been installed in 25 cities. It is put in different site, within every city and aims to be a catalyst for new encounters and access people's imagination.

"I have experienced it across continents, diverse age spans, cultures, and languages, always issuing an invitation. In that moment, the person is not a spectator but a participant in the act of imagination." (Perschke, 2015)

Figure 21. Toronto.

Figure 22. Antwerp.

05.Outdoor Stage

This project was initiated in Victoriapark and brought together by an informal group of local people. A common brief was initially established, by different interest groups and locals, which presented the desire for a physical intervention that can host cultural and community events within the park.

The structure offers flexibility in its forms of use, and was initially only granted permission to stand for a few months. However, due to its success, it has become a permanent feature within the park.

Figure 23. Local performance.

04
Multiple Locations

05
Kronberg, Germany

06
Berlin, Germany

06.Berlin Wall Memorial

The Berlin Wall Memorial is the central memorial site of German division. The memorial contains the last piece of the Berlin Wall with the preserved grounds behind it and is thus able to convey an impression of how the border fortifications developed. It helps make the history of Germany's divisions comprehensible by introducing different ways of understanding or perceiving it.

Figure 24. Markers.

Figure 25. Visual connections.

Key Findings:

- Use of a 'foreign' or unfamiliar objects to arouse curiosity, stimulate interaction, activate people's imagination & alter their perception of space.

04

Key Findings:

- Encouraging local talent & skill, as well as freedom of expression through injecting a platform for performances to take place.

- Success of temporary interventions may turn them into permanent ones.

- Opportunities for mutual exchange through bringing people together.

05

Key Findings:

- Arousing curiosity through creating visual connections across intractable divisions.

- Nudging perceptions through implementing 'markers' that trace divisions that no longer exist in such intensity.

06

07.Meeting House Square

Meeting House Square is a multi-purpose, flexible, outdoor performance space that includes a screen, projection booth and stage. The edges of the square are formed by several, vibrant cultural organizations. It is surrounded by the Gallery of Photography, The National Photographic Archive, a stage and the retractable canopy. This square is a cultural venue in the heart of Dublin. It hosts several cultural and corporate events (including outdoor screenings, book signings, local performances ...etc.), as well as markets.

Figure 26. Meeting House Square.

Figure 27. Concert.

Figure 28. Movie screening.

07
Dublin, Ireland

08
Washington DC

08.Fab Test Lab

Fab Test Lab is a Do-It-Yourself collaborative space that contains fabrication equipment to help locals bring their ideas to life. It provides laser cutters, 3D printers, sewing machines, hand and power tools, CNC machines, computers and laptops, as well as makers tools that aid in making. It offers workshops and classes that encourage the developing of skills.
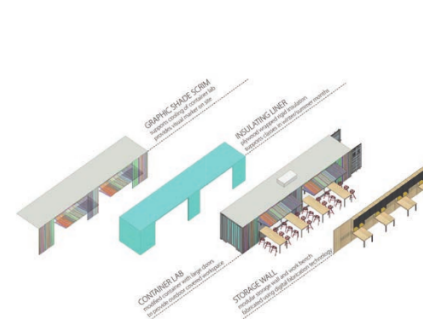
Figure 29. Fabrication lab.

Key Findings:

While this is a more permanent and costly example, it shows a clear understanding of a multi-functional welcoming space:

- Holds screenings, concerts, local performances.
- Hosts events related to culture, food & music.
- Brings people together and fosters social cohesion through creating several shared activities.

Key Findings:

- Injecting fabrication labs & a co-working spaces, within the city, for locals to come together & bring their ideas to life. This creates an opportunity for freedom of expression, collaboration & mutual exchange through bouncing ideas around.

- Providing workshops for locals to learn new skills.
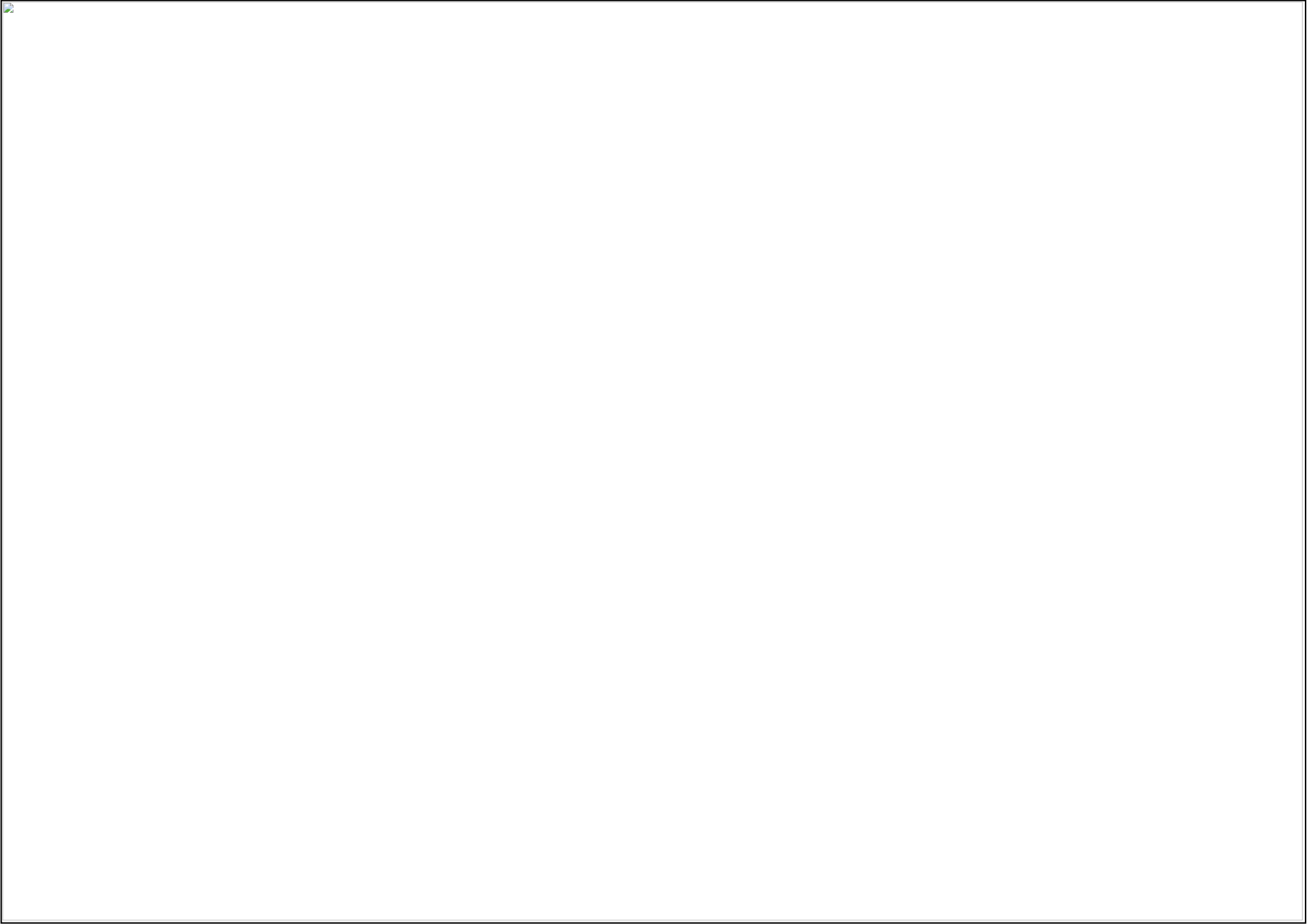
Framework

The previous chapters provide an overview on the importance of cultivating social cohesion in territorialized and divided cities, and how *urban acupuncture* can aid in doing so. The combination of literature and case study reviews, related to findings on the benefits of urban acupuncture and principles of a cohesive society, have led to the formation of a conceptual framework. A design toolkit was then developed to aid in the recovery of divorced societies in territorialized cities.
The design toolkit is then tested on a specific site that follows the parameters of context that this research covers.

Cultivating Social Cohesion

Using Urban Acupuncture

Create Meeting Spaces
Provide Shared Activities
Encourage Cross-Cultural Exchange
Promote Community Participation
Nudge Imagined & Physical Boundaries

combining principles according to relevance

Create Catalyst of Interim Spaces
Encourage Citizen Engagement
Disrupt Common Perceptions
Draw People Out
Utilize Local Skill & Resources

Create Meeting Spaces
Create Catalyst of Interim Spaces

Provide Shared Activities
Encourage Cross-Cultural Exchange
Encourage Citizen Engagement
Draw People Out

Promote Community Participation
Utilize Local Skill & Resources

Disrupt Common Perceptions
Nudge Imagined Boundaries

Nudge Imagined & Physical Boundaries

Key Principles

Create Shared Spaces

Settings that draw people in, foster inclusion, celebrate diversity & contain various uses.

Foster Shared Activities

Social interaction opportunities that prompt citizens to come together for a common purpose.

Promote Co-Design

Projects & Initiatives that promote the use of local skills & resources, & get citizens to proactively participate.

Nudge Common Perceptions

Distinctive design interventions that shift common perceptions & diminish the effect of imagined & perceived boundaries.

Overcome Physical Barriers

Design interventions that enhance connectivity & reciprocity across physical divides.

Figure 31. Framework.

Toolkit

Key Principles	Objectives	Potential Programs & Tools	Concept
01. Create Shared Spaces	- Create non-partisan, attractive meeting spaces, that go beyond identity claims and divides, to foster diversity and inclusion. - Revitalize neglected spaces and empty lots that are overlooked, contested or under-maintained. - Help the city become a catalyst of interactions - Restore cultural identity of place and community.	**Program 01:** Parks, Squares, Plazas, Cafes, Playgrounds and Sports Facilities (basketball court, tennis court, football field, gym...etc.). **Tools 01:** - Defined Landscape: clearly distinguishing between spaces through landscape; Trees. - Furniture: Benches, Tables, Trash Bins, Street Lights, Fences, Shading (if necessary), Gym Equipment, Playground Equipment. - Mixed Uses that attract different user groups.	*Imagined Boundary* *Self* — *Shared Space* — *Other*
02. Foster Shared Activities	- Animate streets to draw people out, through providing activities that go beyond identity claims and partisanship, to foster diversity and inclusion. - Encourage cross-cultural interaction and exchange. - Promote human expression and sense of belonging. - Trigger positive chain reactions.	**Program 02:** Events Space (screenings, performances, concerts, workshops, talks ...etc.), Markets (related to food, music, culture...etc.), Festivals. **Tools 02:** - Defined Landscape: clearly distinguishing between spaces through landscape; Trees. - Permanent Furniture: Benches, Tables, Trash Bins, Street Lights, Seats, Lighting (specific for certain interventions). - Temporary Furniture: Stage, Market Stands, Screen, Necessary equipment for screenings and performances.	*Imagined Boundary* *Self* — *Shared Activities* — *Other*
03. Promote Co-Design	- Privilege cross-community projects that bring people from diverse backgrounds together for a common goal. - Encourage optimum level of citizen participation when it comes to collective projects and initiatives. - Respecting all social groups and representing them. - Improve socio-economic status of the area through utilizing local skills and resources. - Restore sense of community and belonging.	**Program 03:** Co-working Spaces (used by citizens to work individually, in groups or with an organization to bring their ideas to life). **Tools 03:** - Workshops, studios and digital fabrication labs (providing tools and facilities needed to produce a project - such as ones for carpentry, steel work, carving, paint, computers, digital fabrication, makers' tools...etc.). - Furniture: Flexible Seating (that can be used individually or joined to fit a group of people), Fixed Seating (chairs and tables), Whiteboard Wall (to express ideas visually).	*Imagined Boundary* *Painter* *Community Groups* *Blacksmith* *Potter* *Common Goal* *Carpenter*
04. Nudge Common Perceptions	- Intervene on contested spaces. - Disrupt habits and challenge common perceptions through injecting elements of surprise that aid in transformation. - Issue invitation to engage by arousing curiosity, stimulating the senses and accessing the imagination.	**Program 04:** Disruptive Installations (in contested locations, such as: screenings, exhibitions, convenience stores...etc.). **Tools 04:** - Public art (murals, graffiti, sculptures...etc. - can be used to rebrand antagonistic art). - Meanwhile Temporary Uses (installations that have alternating uses, such as one that can act as an exhibition for one day, and a book-sharing space on another day). - Furniture: Seating (can include tables, hammocks...etc.), Shelves (for book sharing), Necessary Equipment for Installation.	*Imagined Boundary* *Public Art* — *Installations*
05. Overcome Physical Barriers	- Create connectivity, accessibility and exchange across physical divides (walls, bridges, roads...etc.). - instil a sense of belonging through opening up spaces with physical barriers.	**Program 05:** Connecting Interventions (such as ones that create pedestrian paths across divides) **Tools 05:** - Pathways, Promenades, Crosswalks, Traffic Lights (Pedestrian & Vehicular). - Markers that highlight a previously existing divide. - Punctures or slits that create visual or physical connections.	A — B A — B *Physical Barrier (preventing direct access)* *Breaking Physical Barrier (creating connection)*

Figure 32. Toolkit.

06

Site

Site Selection: Beirut

Why Beirut?

Imagined and physical boundaries distinctly exist in Beirut, where notions of powerful identity claims have been inherited and reinforced for years.
Contemporary Beirut remains a polycentric city with several territorialized areas, which is why its urban fabric calls for the spatial examination of its several layers of inherited boundaries. Those boundaries are a result of daily practices of segregation, and the spatialization of identities throughout its history and its 15-year civil war (1975-1990), which territorialized the city and reinforced "the regime of otherness" (Meier,2013:354). "Lebanon's population became increasingly polarized socially and spatially, with everyday violence, intimidation, and retaliation, displacing individuals and communities and creating homogeneous sectarian zones" (Nagel, 1991:227).

Today, Beirut's streets expose the wounds of the violent conflicts it has encountered and display innumerable evidences of its ongoing social and political ruptures (kerb stones, army booths, security barriers, 'tribal' flags, wall murals, political pictures marking areas...etc.).

As for identity claims in Beirut, they are multi-faceted, go beyond religious and sectarian affiliations, and include political and social implications - they are powerful enough to have, over a long period of time, come to expose one's religion and sect by decent, probable political affiliation, societal belonging, and communal loyalties, just by specifically indicating one's surname. Notions of those identity claims remain deeply rooted in the memories of the generations that have lived through the War and continue to live through Beirut's radical conflicts.

N.B. There has been no formal census or population count done in Beirut since the 1930s. Population numbers are estimated and vary from one source to the other. However, it can be said that it is the most religiously diverse city in the Middle East, with recognized religions varying between 4 Muslim sects, 12 Christian sects and a Jewish sect.
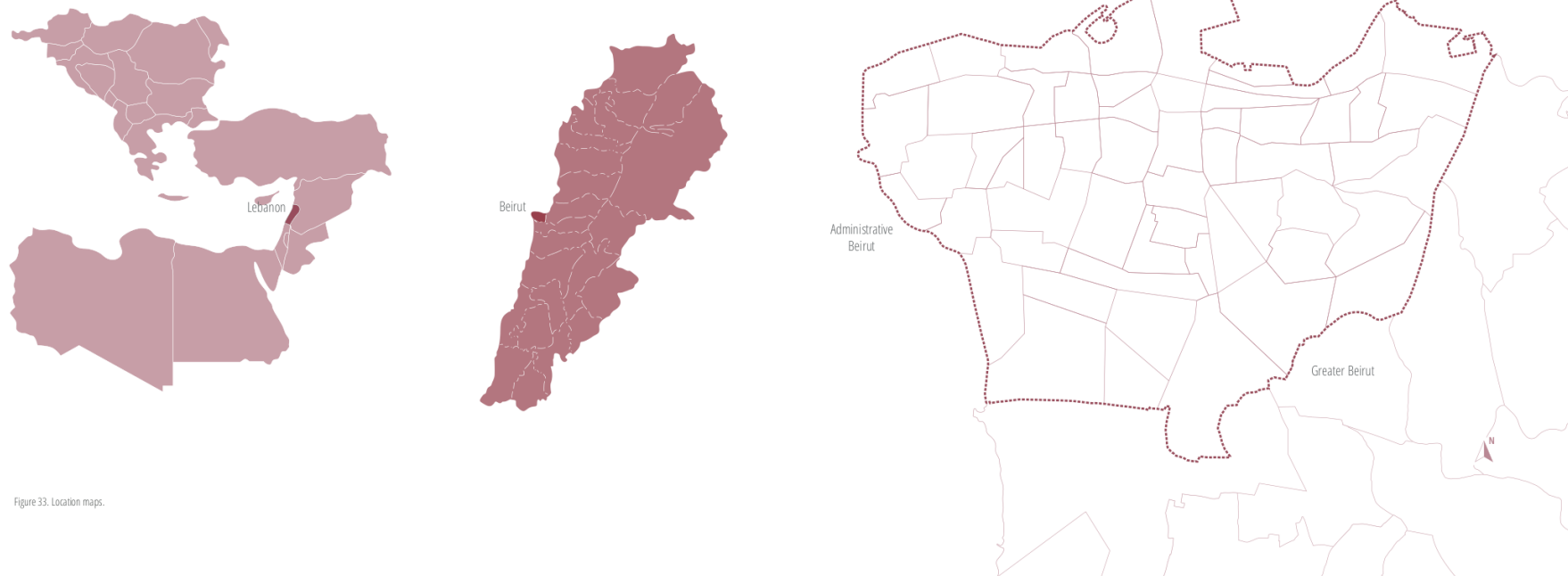*(Retrieved from: World Population Review)*

Figure 33. Location maps.

Territorialized & Divided

Civil War (1975-1990): Mostly Sectarian Boundaries

The Lebanese Civil War separated the predominantly Muslim West Beirut from the predominantly Christian East Beirut. Throughout the 15-years of segregation, the demarcation line that came to be known as the Green Line because plants began to grow along the entire stretch after it had remained uninhabited for a long time. Many of the buildings along the Line were severely damaged or destroyed; however, many have been rebuilt since the war has ended.

Figure 34. Green Line

Figure 35. Green Line

Figure 36. Muslims & Christians celebrate Christmas on Green Line.

Figure 37. Performance on Green Line.

After 1990 - Present: Religious, Political, Social & Economic Boundaries

After the war, citizens' vision of the city was directly affected by violence. Although the post-war generation has not experienced those acts of violence in such intensity, spatial fragmentation still exists as a result of daily practices of segregation.

Below are a few examples of the aforementioned territorialization & divisions in Beirut:

Tarik El Jdideh (Religious, Political & Economic):
A low-income, predominantly Muslim Sunni area. Most dwellers, being Sunni, are aligned with former Prime Minister, Rafic Hariri's political orientation: Al-Mustakbal (meaning 'Future').
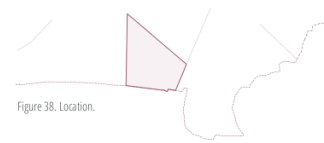
Figure 38. Location.

Figure 39. "We are all Sheikh Saad Rafic Hariri."

Zeitunay Bay (Socio-Economic):
A coastal pedestrian promenade with expensive and luxurious restaurants along its stretch. Although it provides a public space for citizens to enjoy a walk, the offerings are distinctly high-end and mostly unaffordable.

Figure 40. High-end stretch.
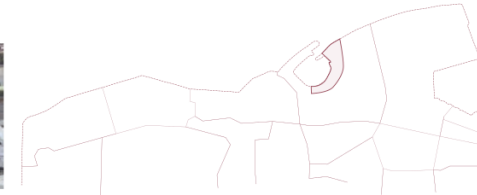
Figure 41. Location.

Haret Hreik (Religious, Political & Economic):
Haret Hreik is a Hezbollah-dominated (Muslim Shiite political party) district, located in Beirut's suburbs.

Figure 42. Location.

Figure 43. Poster of Hassan Nasrallah (leader of Hezbollah).
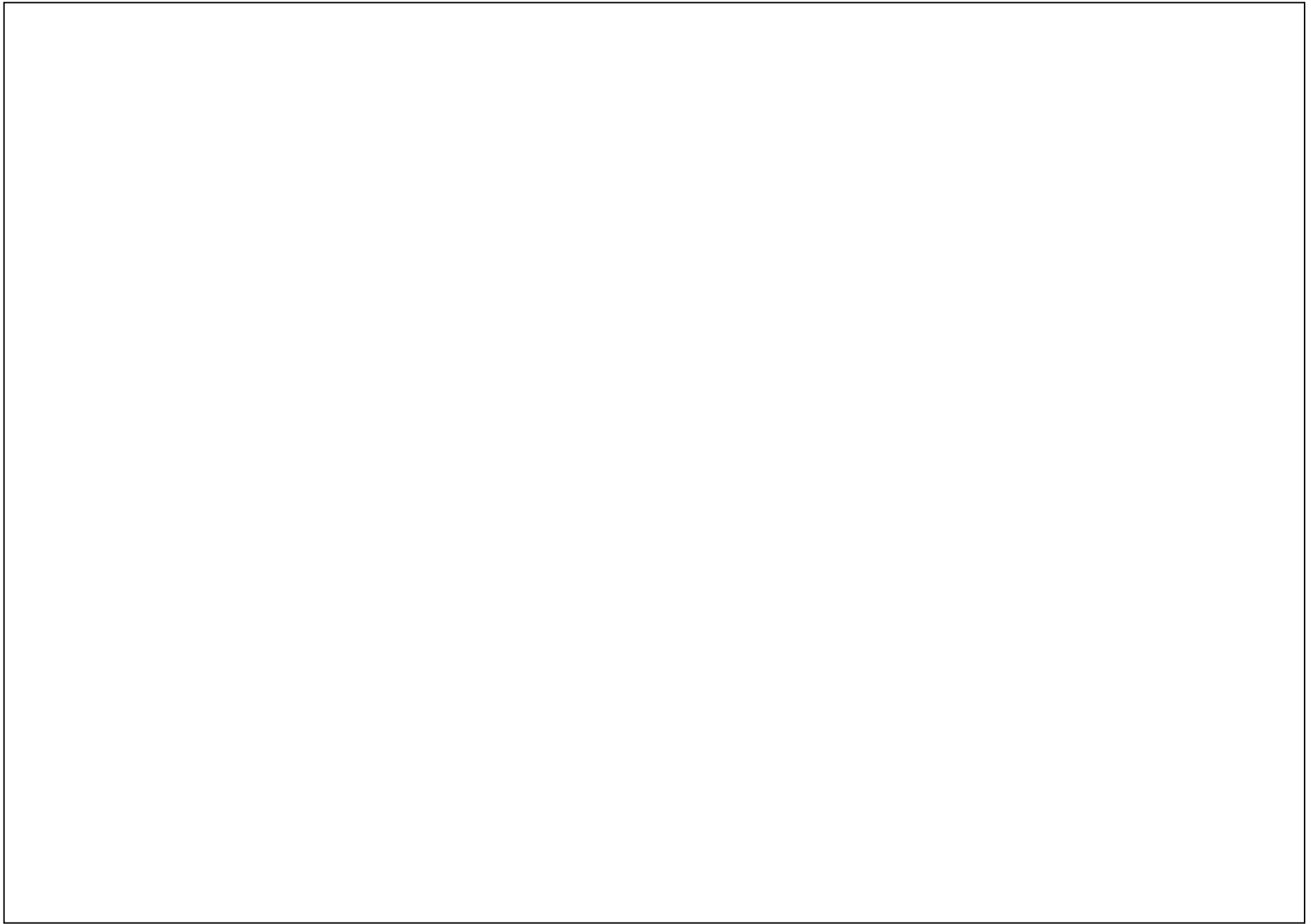
The Red Line

Beirut City Center Master Plan:

The reconstruction of Beirut City Center's master plan was presented after the Civil War, by a company known as Solidere.
Today, at first sight, the area instils a soothing and charming feel with its archaeological sites, which serve as a reminder of the civilizations that have passed through it, its bullet-riddled buildings, which serve as a reminder of the Civil War, and its adjacent mosque and cathedral which serve as a reminder that the war has ended.
With all those multiple layers, it only takes a few discussions with locals to sense the opposition many feel towards the area, as well as the proposed reconstruction plan.
After reconstruction began, the area played a major role in improving communication and infrastructure networks. In spite of that, many citizens were against the idea that the reconstruction of their capital had fallen into the hands of a single company (van Pinxteren, 2005). Additionally, the company's shares were initially restricted to Lebanese people only and were then sold to foreign companies, which increased citizens' rage, as they felt alienated. The 'center of the Eastern Mediterranean's most vibrant and cosmopolitan port city' then became rather 'dead.' At times, it has been labelled as 'ghost town,' (Mohsen, 2012) because Solidere has been so focused on providing quality land and real estate development services, that it has overlooked how unaffordable the area has become.

Today, most of its 'luxury apartments' remain empty, its restaurants and shops almost completely vacant, its large office blocks almost windowless and its streets blocked by security barriers that prohibit urban life and interaction.
Moreover, the boundary set for the master plan interrupts some administrative boundaries and renders those areas divided.

All the aforementioned reasons have led to the creation of the Red Line, which separates Beirut's central district from the rest of the city.
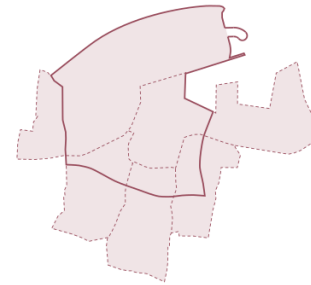

Figure 45. Red Line dividing administrative boundaries.
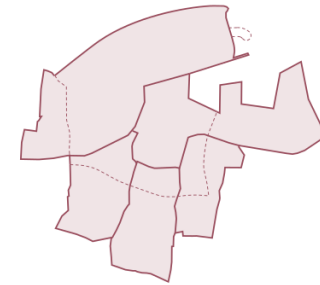
Figure 46. Administrative boundaries.
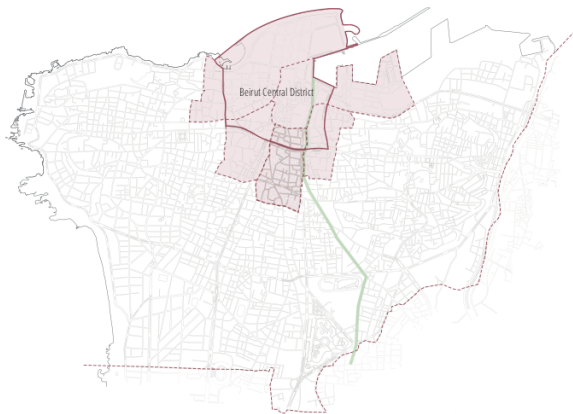
Figure 44. Red Line.

- — BCD boundary
- Retained buildings
- Low density
- Medium density
- High density
- Green open space

Figure 47. Solidere's master plan.

Figure 48. Current status.

Bachoura

Why Bachoura

Bachoura, a historically wealthy area, was home to people from different backgrounds. However, today, it is a predominantly Muslim area marked with pictures of political figures and political symbols, untouched by developers, and falls partly within the Red Line (northern side), belonging to Beirut's Central District.

This means that the northern part of Bachoura is handled by Solidere under a set of planning policies, while the southern part, belonging to the same administrative area, but following different outdated policies, is mostly neglected. Separating the two sides is the 50-meter-wide 'Fouad Chehab Highway,' which reinforces the Red Line.

Recent works have been done on Bachoura's northern end where Beirut Digital District has emerged to create an innovative hub. However, one cannot ignore the fact that derelict buildings still remain, and its status, in terms of infrastructure, remains almost dormant.

Ironically, the southern side of Bachoura is a hub for long-standing local businesses that foster social interaction and commercial exchange, while the part within Central District is almost vacant and mostly made up of parking lots. The latter, however, looks more welcoming than the former.

Bachoura can be seen as an opportunity to break through the Red Line and transform its urban scars into new shared landscapes.

Figure 49. Bachoura.

Northern side of Bachoura
(within BCD)

Bachoura

Red Line
Fouad Chehab Highway
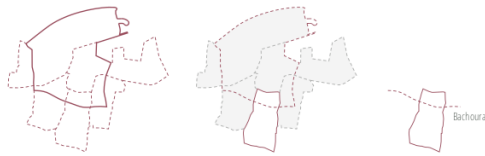
Southern side of Bachoura

Figure 50. Divisions.

Figure 51. Fouad Chehab Highway.

Above the Red Line: Bachoura or BCD?
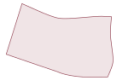
Figure 52. Military presence.

Figure 53. War-torn vs. renovated.

Figure 54. Parking lot.

Figure 55. Underutilized public space.

Figure 56. New building.

Below the Red Line: Bachoura

Figure 57. Low-income neighborhood.

Figure 58. Low-income neighborhood.

Figure 59. Low-income neighborhood.

Figure 60 Low-income neighbourhood.

Figure 61. Graffiti.

Figure 62. Below Highway.

Rafic Hariri Burial Site

2005 — Assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister (1992-1998) (2000-2004) Rafic Hariri.
Beirut put on a high state of alert; as it is the first major act of violence ever since the Civil War had ended.

— Burial of Rafic Hariri next to the Mohammad Al Amine Mosque - which was built due to a donation he had made. The mosque was previously named after him.
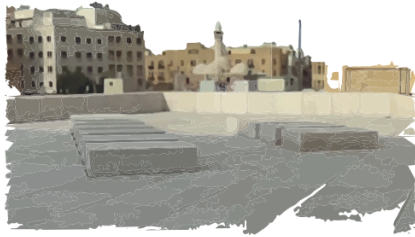
Martyr's Square

1931 — The square is named Martyr's square to commemorate the martyrs who were executed in the area under Ottoman rule.

1975 - 1990 — Martyr's square becomes part of the demarcation line that separates east Beirut from West Beirut.

2005 — Competition is launched to design the new square.

— New square re-establishes Martyr's square as Beirut's 'main public space' in the capital's center.

2006 - present — Martyr's Square stands as a popular spot for civil gatherings and demonstrations - a place for citizens' voices to be heard - and has been programmatically activated since the assassination of Rafic Hariri, when a protest was held in his honor.

Adjacent Cathedral & Mosque

1894 — Completion of Maronite Cathedral of St. George.

1975 - 1990 — Cathedral severely damaged.

2005 — Competition is launched to design the new square.

2008 — Completion of Mohammad Al- Amin Mosque, adjacent to the Cathedral.

2016 — A church tower is constructed to match the height of the mosque's four minarets to send a message of solidarity and harmony.

Figure 69. Burial site.

Figure 70. Martyr's Monument.

Figure 71. Cathedral and Mosque.

Physical & Imagined Boundaries

Road Network

Figure 72. Road network.

	Fouad Chehab Highway
	Primary Roads
	Secondary Roads
	Tertiary Roads
	Pedestrian Roads with Strong Security Presence

The road network analysis clearly portrays how primary roads act as physical barriers that do not only separate Bachoura from its surroundings, but also cut through it.

This has played a major role in creating economic, social and political divides between Bachoura's northern and southern parts.
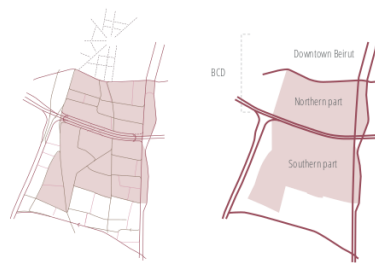
Figure 73. Summary.

Political & Religious Divides

Council for Redevelopment & Reconstruction

Lebanese Parliament

Grand Serail

Ministry of Finance

UN Headquarters

Muslim Cemetery

Al Makassid Muslim School
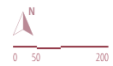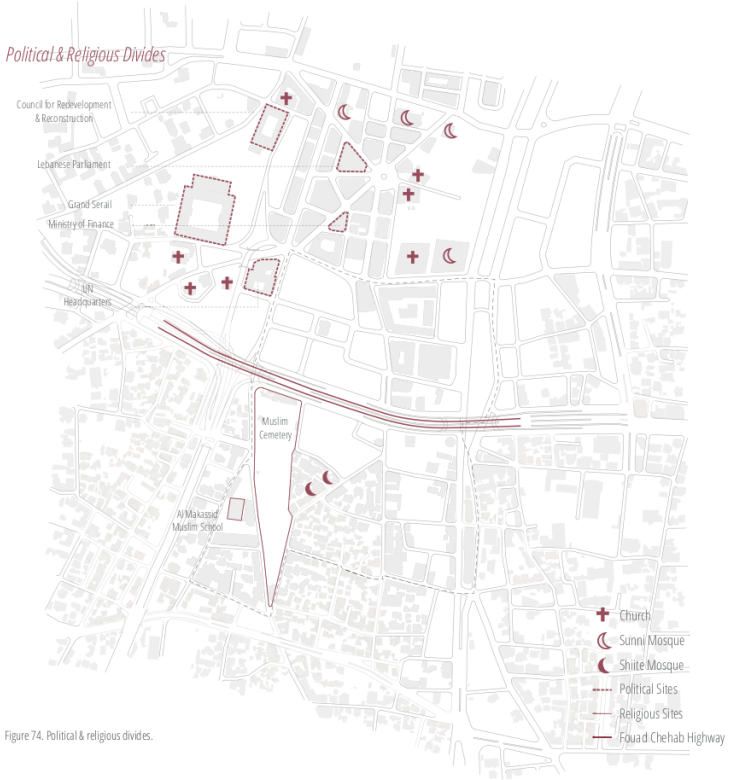
Figure 74. Political & religious divides.

	Church
	Sunni Mosque
	Shiite Mosque
	Political Sites
	Religious Sites
	Fouad Chehab Highway

Northern part of Bachoura:
Has more 'heterogeneous religious groups' (presence of mosques & churches). The mosques belong to the Muslim Sunni religion.
As for the political sites, they all have governmental roles and show no affiliation to a certain political party. In addition, no political symbols are present.

Southern part of Bachoura:
More homogenous religious groups (presence of mosques, a Muslim school and a Muslim cemetery).
The southern part of Bachoura is predominantly Muslim Shiite. This is evident due to the posters and symbols that glorify political figures and parties affiliated with the Muslim Shiite religion.

Figure 75. "Beirut" + Riad El Solh, Lebanon's first Prime Minister.

Figure 76a. Nabih Berri, leader of Amal, a Shiite political party.

Figure 76b. Hassan Nasrallah, leader of Hezbollah, a Shiite political party.

Security Measures
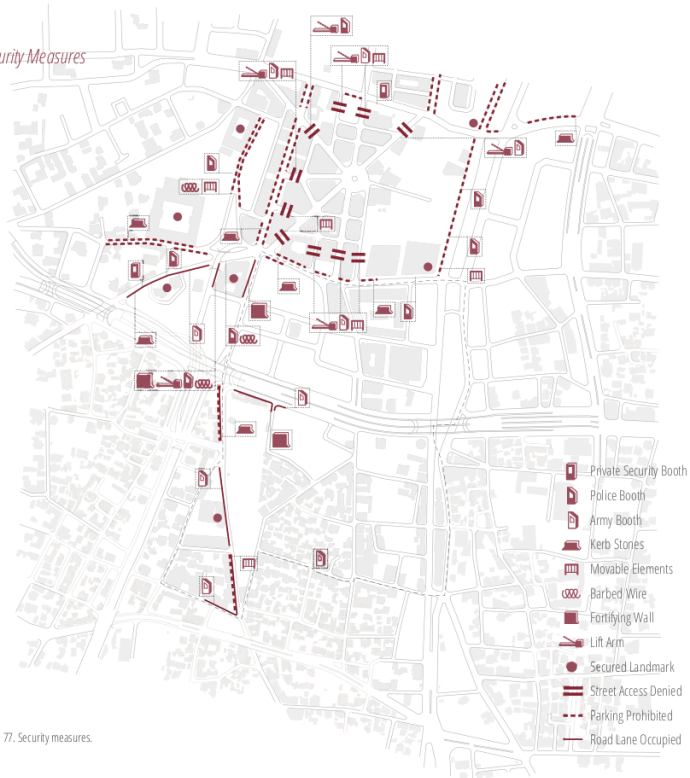
Figure 77. Security measures.

Private Security Booth
Police Booth
Army Booth
Kerb Stones
Movable Elements
Barbed Wire
Fortifying Wall
Lift Arm
Secured Landmark
Street Access Denied
Parking Prohibited
Road Lane Occupied

Security measures are generally orchestrated by the military, police, and private security (hired by politicians).

Although there are some security measures taken within Bachoura, there is a clear increase in security when entering the part of BCD just above it, reinforcing the separation between the two and creating boundaries that discourage people from entering.

Strong sense of security
no security measures
few security measures
BCD
Bachoura
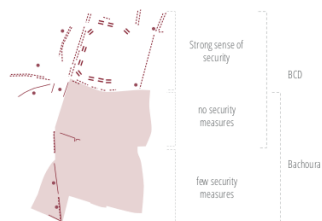
Figure 78. Summary.

"You are not allowed to be here" (Fawaz, 2009)

Underutilized Spaces

BCD
High Rent = Vacant Shops/Restaurants
Strong Security Measures = Hinders sense of belonging and feel of public space

Public Space Commemorating Riad El Solh
(First Lebanese Prime Minister)
Lack of furniture = Hinders sense of belonging
Located at crossroad = Hinders accessibility and connectedness

Gibran Khalil Gibran Garden
Strong Security Measures = Hinders sense of belonging and feel of public space

Public Space
Hidden = Hinders accessibility
Lack of Furniture and Amenities = Hinders feel of public space

Public Space
Located Between Parking Lots = Not much to do in the area - hinders sense of belonging

X   Vacant
P   Parking
Public Spaces
Plots

Figure 79. Underutilized spaces.

Beirut is known to be a city with very little public space. The value of land within it is high, so investors prefer to exploit the surface area with profitable projects. Moreover, its municipality hasn't come up with projects that would help in the creation of public spaces (Khamis, 2018).

In the Bachoura area specifically, most underutilized spaces are used as parking lots that benefit offices in BCD and BDD. Those parking lots, and the revitalization of existing public spaces can be seen as an opportunity to create shared spaces.

Southern side of Bachoura
Fouad Chehab Highway
Northern side of Bachoura

Figure 80. Parking lots.

Physical Barriers that Interrupt Pedestrian Flow

Put on hold due to the uncovering of ruins during excavations.

ruins

Put on hold due to the uncovering of ruins during excavations.

Cemetery   ruins

P   Parking
X   Vacant
▬   Highway
—   Concrete Wall
---   Construction Site Fencing
▬   Fortifying Walls

Figure 81. Physical barriers.

Those physical barriers isolate the sites from their surroundings and hinder pedestrian flow through creating impenetrable blocks within the area.

Large proportion of enclosed sites.

N

0   50   200
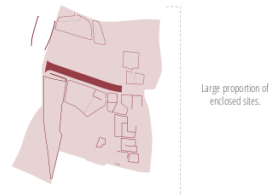
Figure 82. Summary.
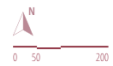
Imagined & Perceived Boundaries

Solidere's Red Line & Fouad Chehab Highway:
This strong physical barrier dividing Bachoura into two parts, results in an imagined boundary that reinforces political and socio-economic divides.
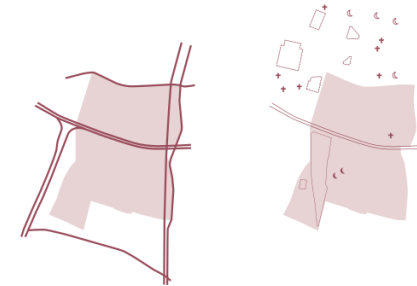
Beirut Central District's Security Measures:
The physical elements enforced on the area create a strong separation between Northern Bachoura and Downtown Beirut. This creates a divide within the divide. Furthermore, the implemented security measures throughout Bachoura create imagined boundaries through the narrowing down of pedestrian walkways, and the creation of unwelcoming spaces.
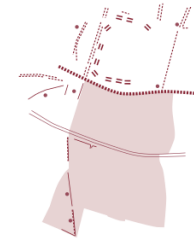
Enclosed & Public Spaces:
The underutilized public spaces, and their lack thereof make the area unwelcoming and hinder cross-cultural interaction.
Additionally, the high proportion of enclosed spaces show that the area is dormant, with little or no work being done to it. Instead, it is filled with parking lots that serve BDD and BCD employees.
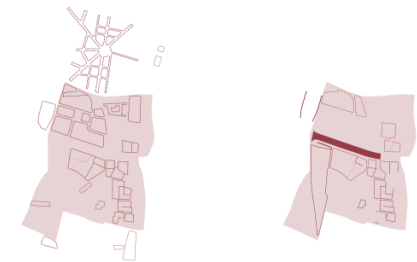
Figure 83. Overview.

07

Design Interventions

01. Create Shared Spaces

Park I

Reason for Location:
Lack of shared spaces in the area.
Partners Involved:
Municipality of Beirut, Solidere, Nahnoo, MARCH.

Park II

Reason for Location:
An extension of BDD's existing 'private shared garden.' It welcomes people from different fields and backgrounds, and therefore celebrates diversity.
Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, BDD, Nahnoo, MARCH.

Sports Facilities

Reason for Location:
Located between BDD buildings and residential buildings. They nudge BDD's masterplan and serve as a statement that the area can be shared.
Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, BDD.

---- Area of intervention

Scale: 1:2500
Figure 85: Interventions.

Park I

Under-used existing public space due to lack of seating

Benches, Trash Bins & Street Lights

Benches

Stage

Events Space

Program of Events

Defined Landscape

Trees

Possible pedestrian connection will increase footfall

Scale: 1:4000
Figure 86. Park I.

Principle Program 01: Park

Tools 01: (Defined landscape, benches, trash bins, street lights, trees)

Secondary Program 02: Events Space

Tools 02: (Program of events, stage)

Surrounding Uses
Amenities that are directly adjacent to the park can prove useful to the functioning of the park and the boosting of local businesses. Citizens can buy coffee, food or snacks and spend their time at the park.

A - Outdoor Stage *(Overlap of Principles: Create Shared Space [Park] + Foster Shared Activities [Events Space])*

- Events: Performances, Concerts, Talks, Festivals...etc.

Scale: 1:200
Figure 87. Citizens gather to watch a local performance.

B - Seating Area

Street Lights & Benches

Trash Bins

Scale: 1:200
Figure 88. Citizens at the park.

2m   2.5m   2m

Figure 89. Plan.

Park II

Possible pedestrian connection will increase footfall

Benches, Tables Trash Bins & Street Lights

Cafe

Street Lights

Defined Landscape

Benches, Tables Trash Bins & Street Lights

Benches, Tables Trash Bins & Street Lights

BDD's private shared garden

Scale: 1:750
Figure 90. Park II.

Program 01: Park, Cafe

Tools 01: Defined landscape, benches, tables, trash bins, street lights, trees
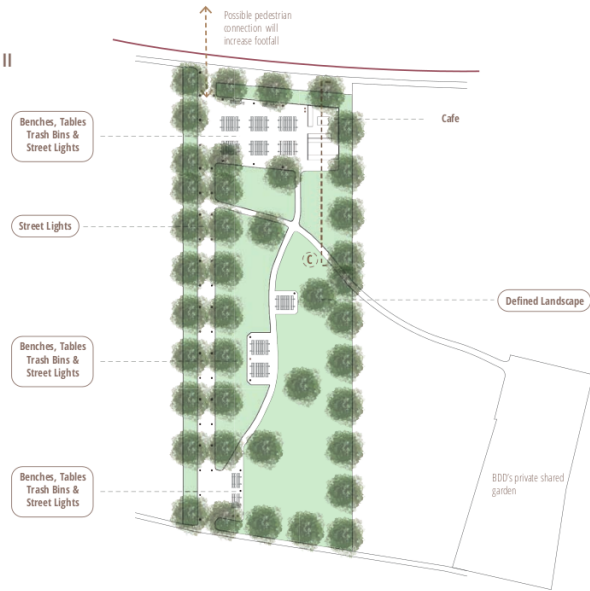
Surrounding Uses
There are no amenities directly adjacent to the park. However, a cafe can be found within the park, which caters for BDD's employees, Bachoura's residents and passers-by and creates a shared space for them to interact.

C - Cafe within Park

Highway

BDD employee approaching
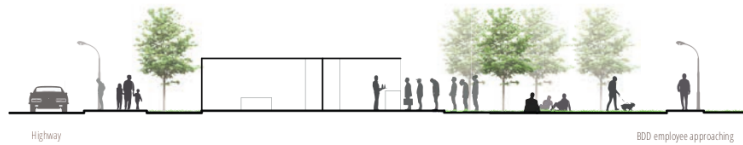
Scale: 1:200
Figure 91. Citizens queueing at lunchtime.

Sports Facilities & Playground

Towards Park II

Trash Bin

Fence

Street Lights

Benches & Tables

Basketball Court

Locker Rooms

Trash Bin

Fence

Street Lights

Benches & Tables

Trees

Defined Landscape

Basketball Courts

Trash Bin

Fence

Street Lights

Benches & Tables

Tennis Courts

Trash Bin

Street Lights

Benches & Tables

Playground Equipment

Playground

Street Lights

Outdoor Gym

Gym

Gym Equipment

Scale: 1:750
Figure 92. Sports facilities & playground.

Program 01: Basketball courts, tennis courts, gym, playground

Tools 01:
Defined landscape, benches, tables, trash bins, fences, street lights, gym equipment, playground equipment

Surrounding Uses
The sports facilities are surrounded by BDD and residential buildings within the southern side of Bachoura. It caters for people from different fields and backgrounds and encourages them to come together through sports activities.

03. Promote Co-Design

Co-working Space (*Overlap of Principles: Promote Co-Design [Co-working Space], Create Shared Space [Cafe] + Foster Shared Activities [Events Space]*)

Co-working Space

Transformed from war-torn church to co-working spaces.

Reason for Location:
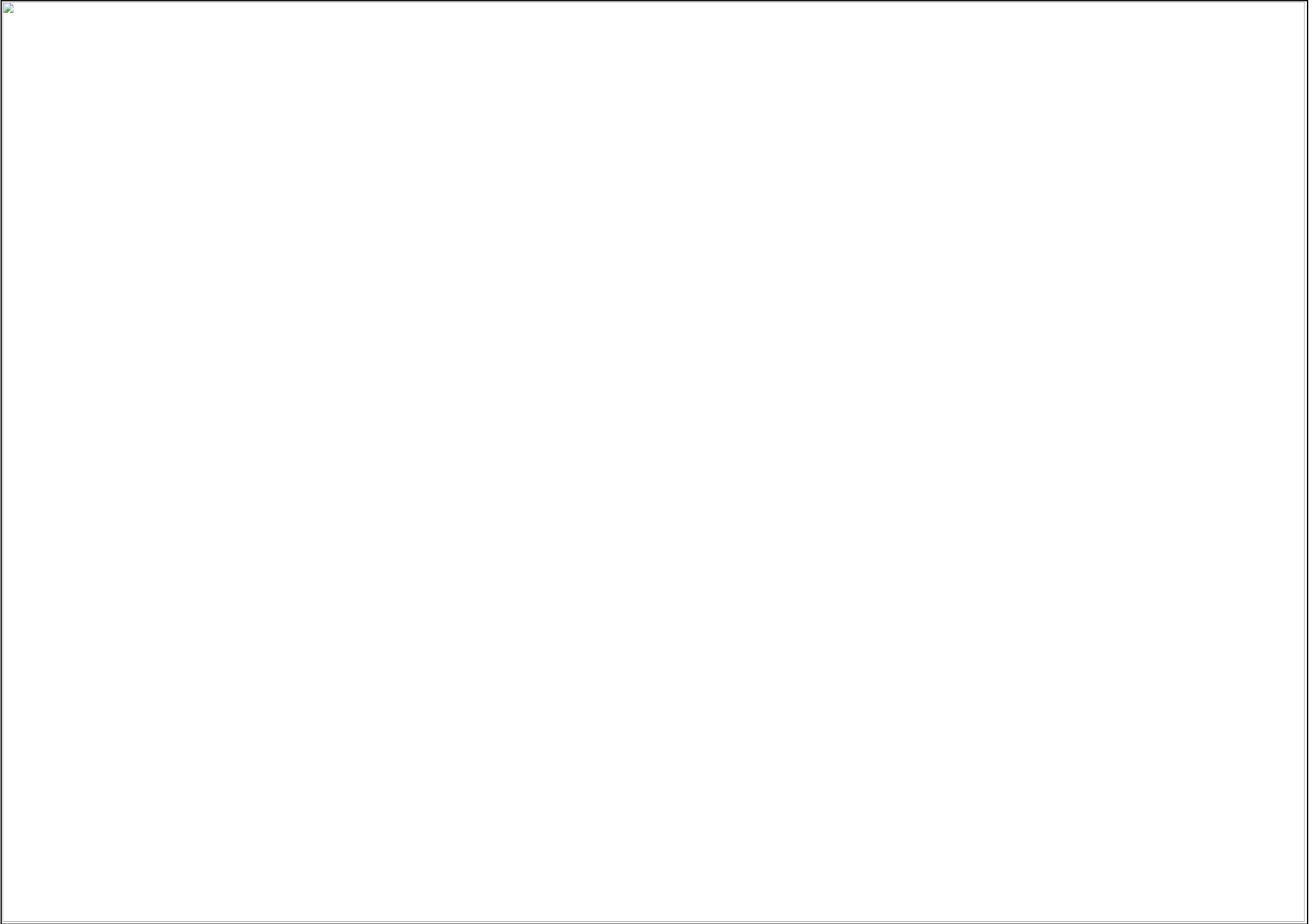Within close proximity to BDD and local services, this co-working space aims to utilize local skills and amenities and use some of BDD's facilities, while providing a space for locals to collaborate, engage and be inspired.

Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, Beirut Madinati, BDD, LiveloveBeirut, MARCH, Nahnoo, Dihzahyners.

Carpenter

Print House

Paint & Coating

Stone Carving

Publishing House

Tailor

BDD
Amenities
Area of intervention

Scale: 1:2500
Figure 103. Interventions.

Studios
used by initiatives and locals
B

Benches, Tables & Street Lights

Defined Landscape

Cafe
C

Trees

Events Space
Program of Events
C

Co-working Space
C

Workshops A
Woodwork
Ceramics
Paint
Print

Possible pedestrian connection will increase footfall & have a direct connection to BDD

Digital Fabrication Lab
A

Flexible Seating

Fixed Seating

Whiteboard Wall

Scale: 1:750
Figure 104. Plan.

Principle Program 03: Co-working Space

Tools 03: Workshops, studios, digital fabrication lab, flexible seating, fixed seating, whiteboard wall

Secondary Program 01: Cafe

Tools 01: Benches, tables, street lights, defined landscape

Tertiary Program 02: Events Space

Tools 02: Program of Events

04. Nudge Common Perceptions

Screening

Reason for Location:
This intervention focuses on hosting screenings on the war-torn theater's facade, as a statement that it should be brought back.
Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, Beirut Madinati, MARCH.

Hang Out Space

Reason for Location:
The gap between the Mosque & Cathedral was left vacant. An urban intervention would disrupt common perceptions due to its sensitive and strategic location.
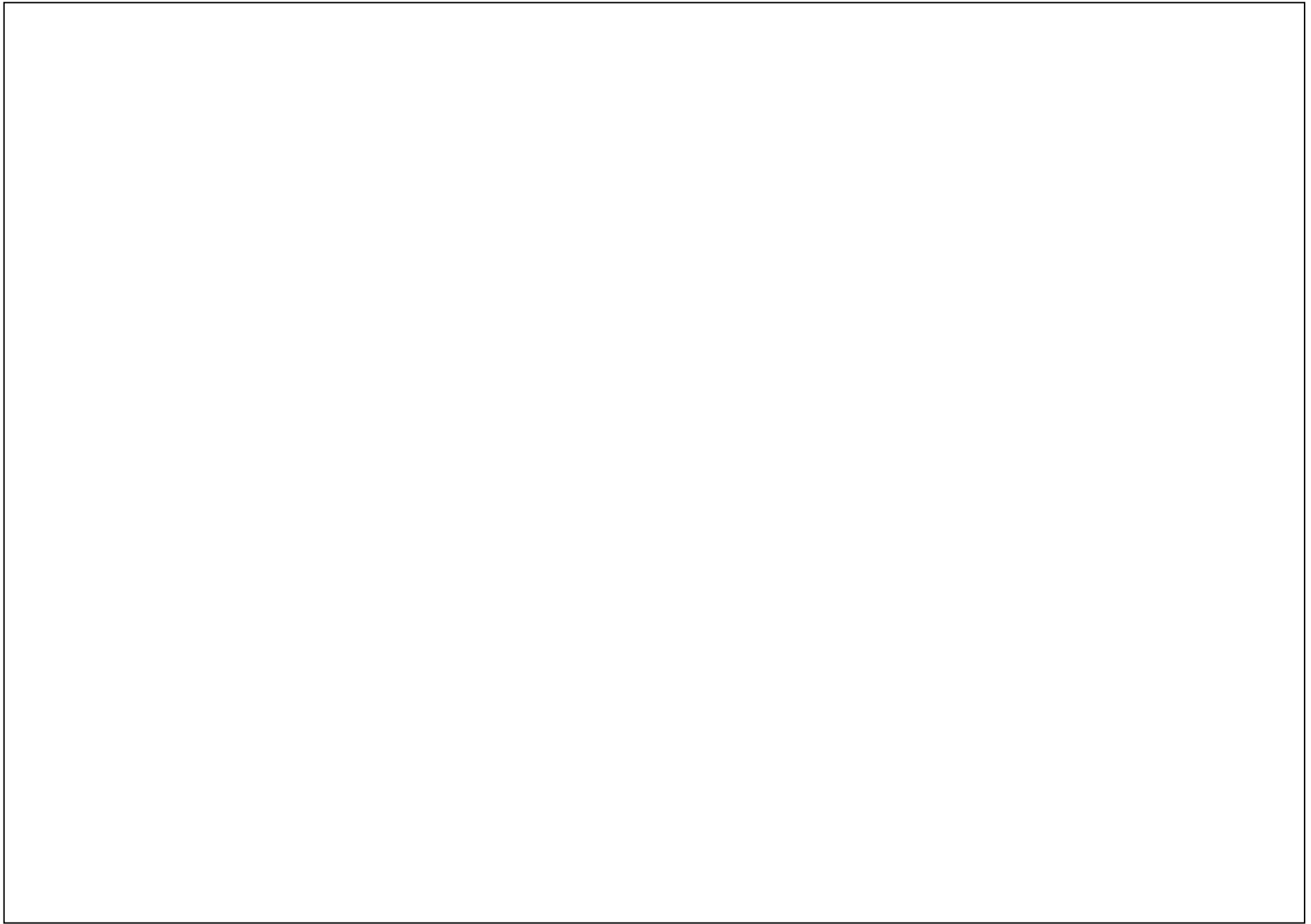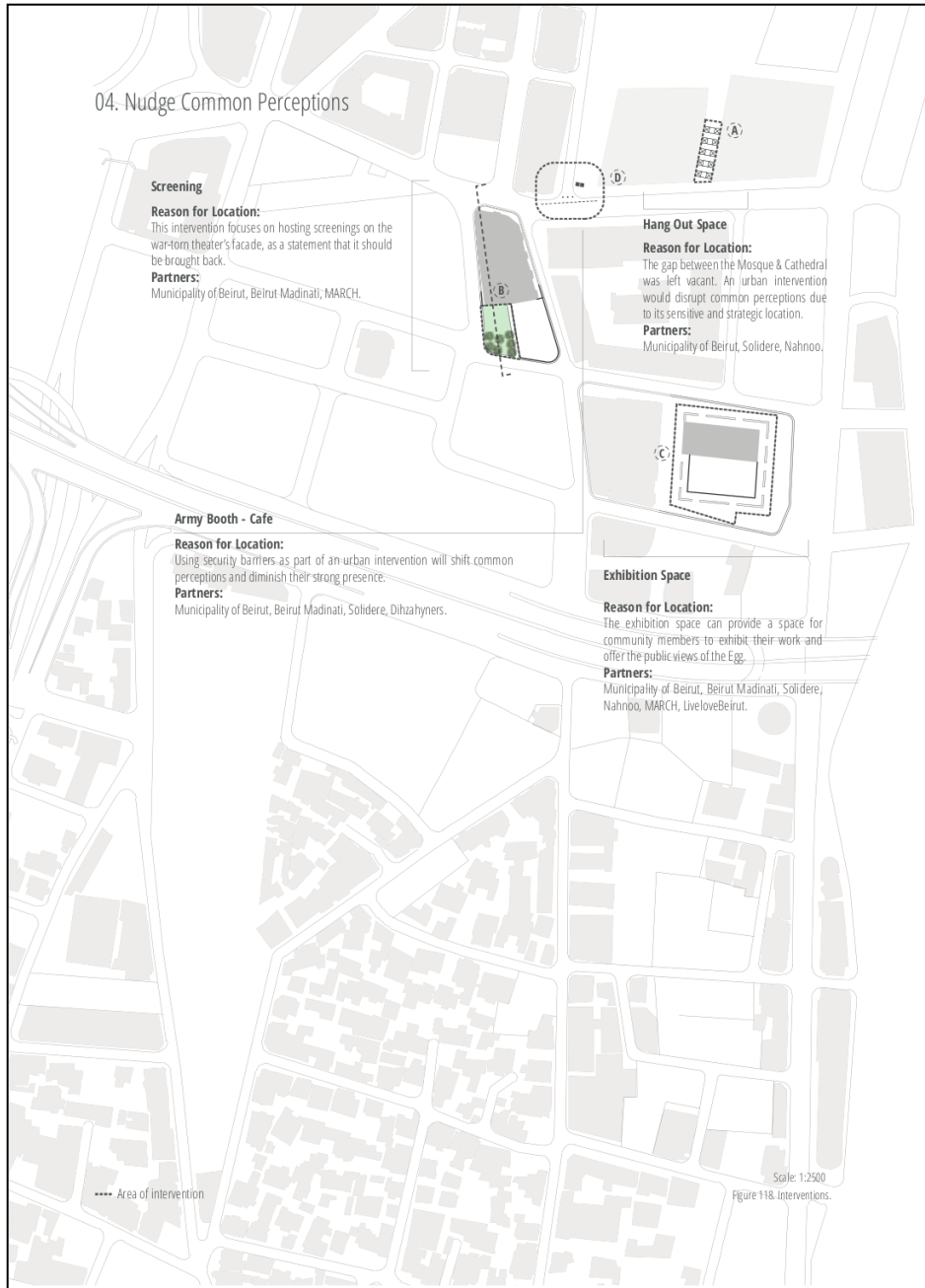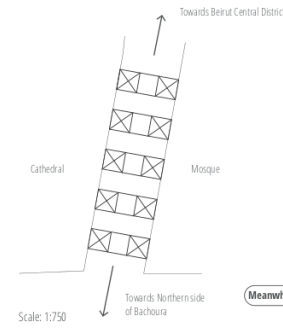**Partners:**
Municipality of Beirut, Solidere, Nahnoo.

Army Booth - Cafe

Reason for Location:
Using security barriers as part of an urban intervention will shift common perceptions and diminish their strong presence.
Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, Beirut Madinati, Solidere, Dihzahyners.

Exhibition Space

Reason for Location:
The exhibition space can provide a space for community members to exhibit their work and offer the public views of the Egg.
Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, Beirut Madinati, Solidere, Nahnoo, MARCH, LiveloveBeirut.

---- Area of intervention

Scale: 1:2500
Figure 118. Interventions.

A - Hang Out Space

Towards Beirut Central District

Cathedral   Mosque

Towards Northern side of Bachoura

Scale: 1:750

Program 04: Disruptive Installation

Tools 04: (Meanwhile uses, seating, public art)

This installation changes uses in order to keep the space interesting and keep arousing curiosity, inviting people in and disrupting common perception.

(Seating)

(Meanwhile Uses)

Figure 119. Seating areas.

Figure 120. Hammocks.

Figure 121. Book-sharing.

Figure 122. Live local art.

(Public Art)

B - Screening *(Overlap of Principles: Promote Co-Design [Disruptive Installation], Create Shared Space [Park])*

Principle Program 04: Disruptive Installation

Tools 04: (Screen)

Secondary Program 01: Park

Tools 01: (Defined landscape, trees)

Screening on Le Grande Theatre de Beirut

(Screen)

(Defined Landscape)   (Trees)

Scale: 1:200
Figure 123. Citizens gather for screening.

05. Overcome Physical Barriers

Connecting Promenade

Reason for Location:
Cutting through the site not only gives the public access to the ruins, but gives direct pedestrian access into BCD.

Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, Beirut Madinati, Solidere.

Program 05: Connecting intervention

Tools: (Promenade, puncture)

Towards BCD

Ruins   Ruins

Promenade

Puncture

Public Space

Towards Bachoura

A

B

Crosswalks

Reason for Location:
This intervention aims to connect the two sides of Bachoura to increase footfall and eventually foster exchange and engagement across the divide.

Partners:
Municipality of Beirut, Beirut Madinati, Solidere.

Traffic Lights
Area of intervention

Scale: 1:2500
Figure 128. Interventions.

Crosswalk A

Program 05: Connecting intervention

Tools 05: (Traffic lights, crosswalks)

Crosswalks

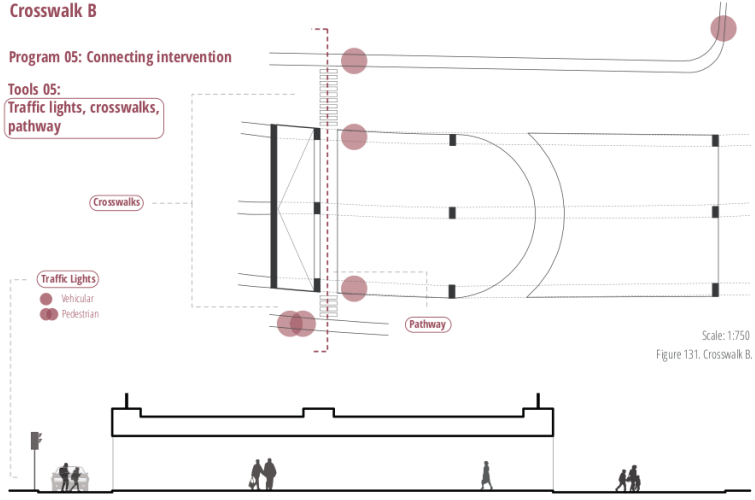Traffic Lights
Vehicular
Pedestrian

Scale: 1:750
Figure 129. Crosswalk A.
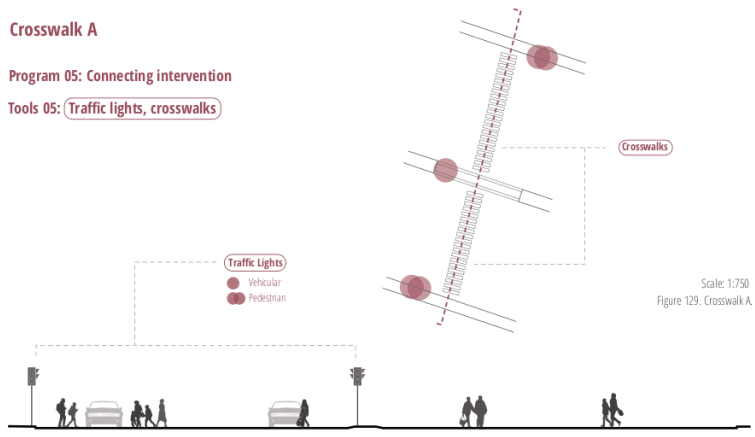
Scale: 1:300
Figure 130. Pedestrian crossing.

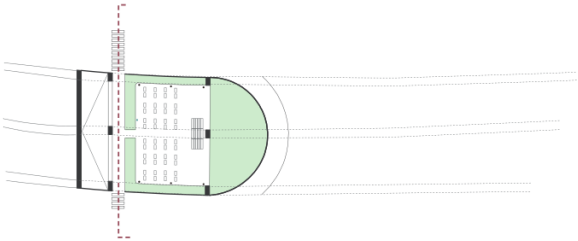### Crosswalk B

Program 05: Connecting intervention

Tools 05:
Traffic lights, crosswalks, pathway

Crosswalks

Traffic Lights
Vehicular
Pedestrian

Pathway

Scale: 1:750
Figure 131. Crosswalk B.

Scale: 1:300
Figure 132. Pedestrian crossing.

Seating | Trees | Traffic Light | Crosswalk | Traffic Light | Seats | Stage | Pathway | Traffic Light | Trees | Cafe

Co-working Space (03) | Crosswalk B (05) | Events Space (02) + Pathway (Connects Crosswalks B) (05) | Crosswalk B (05) | Park I (01)
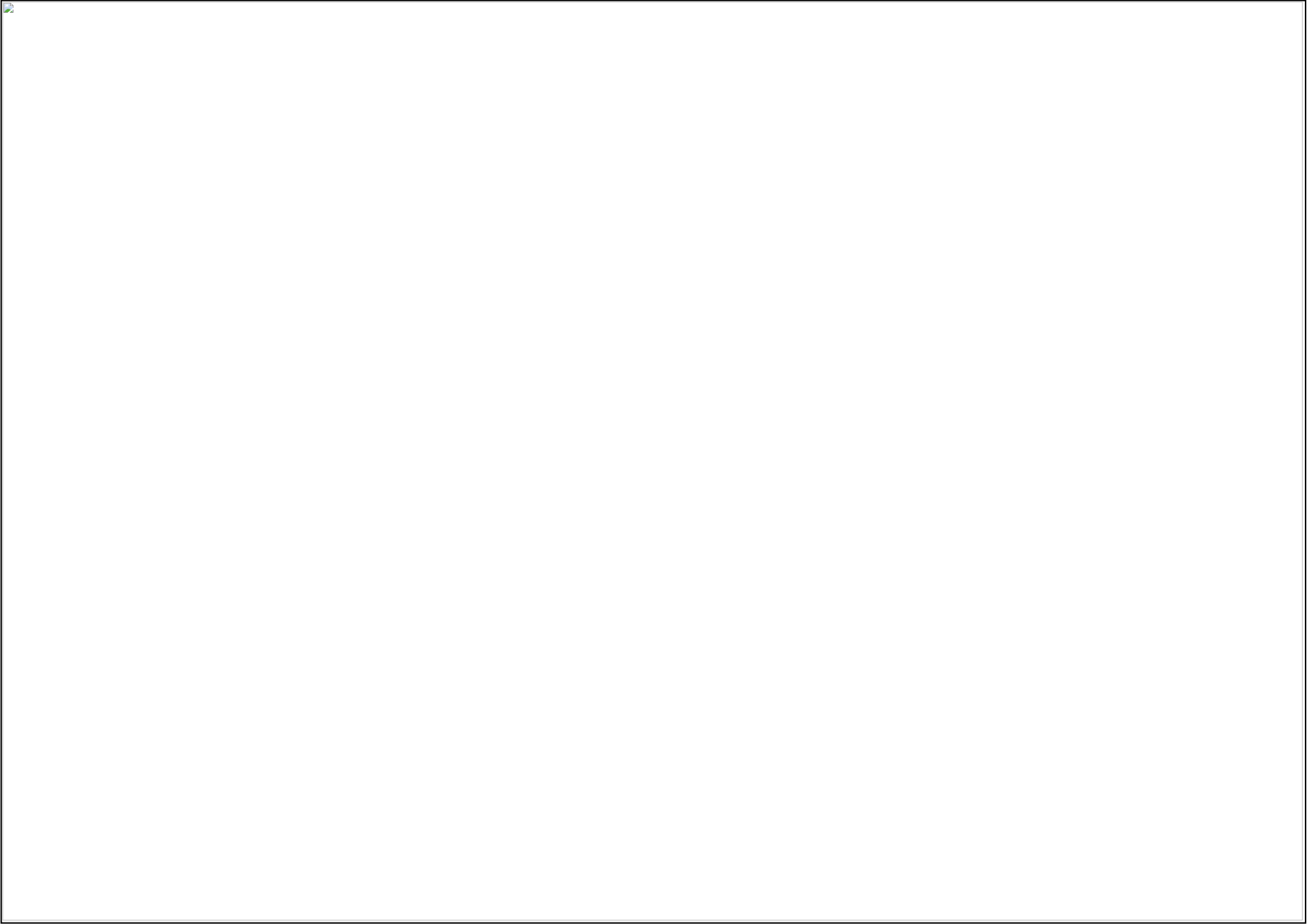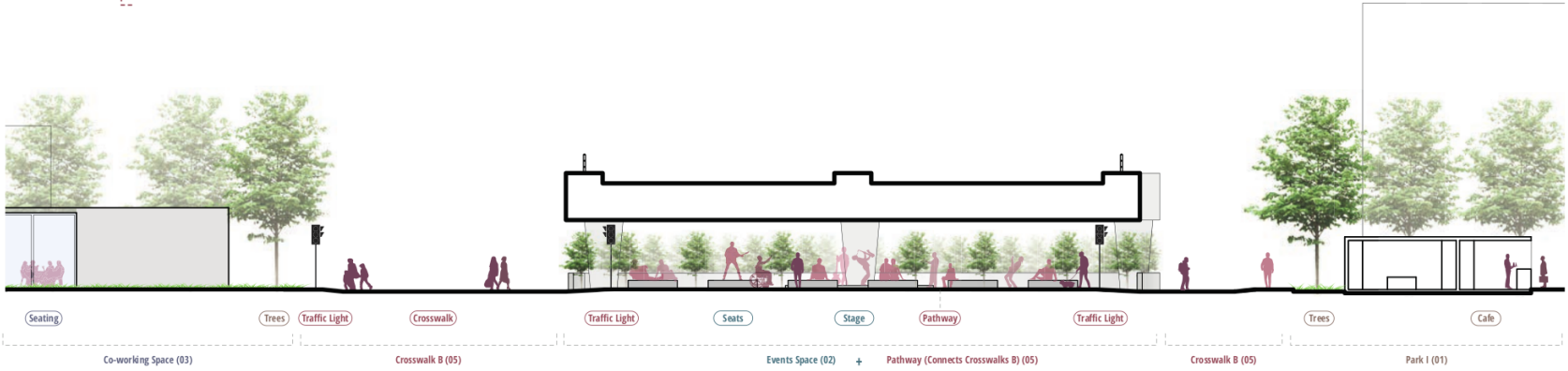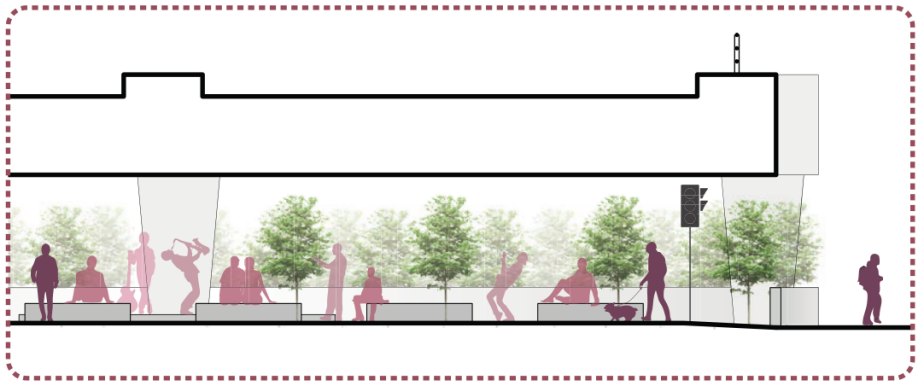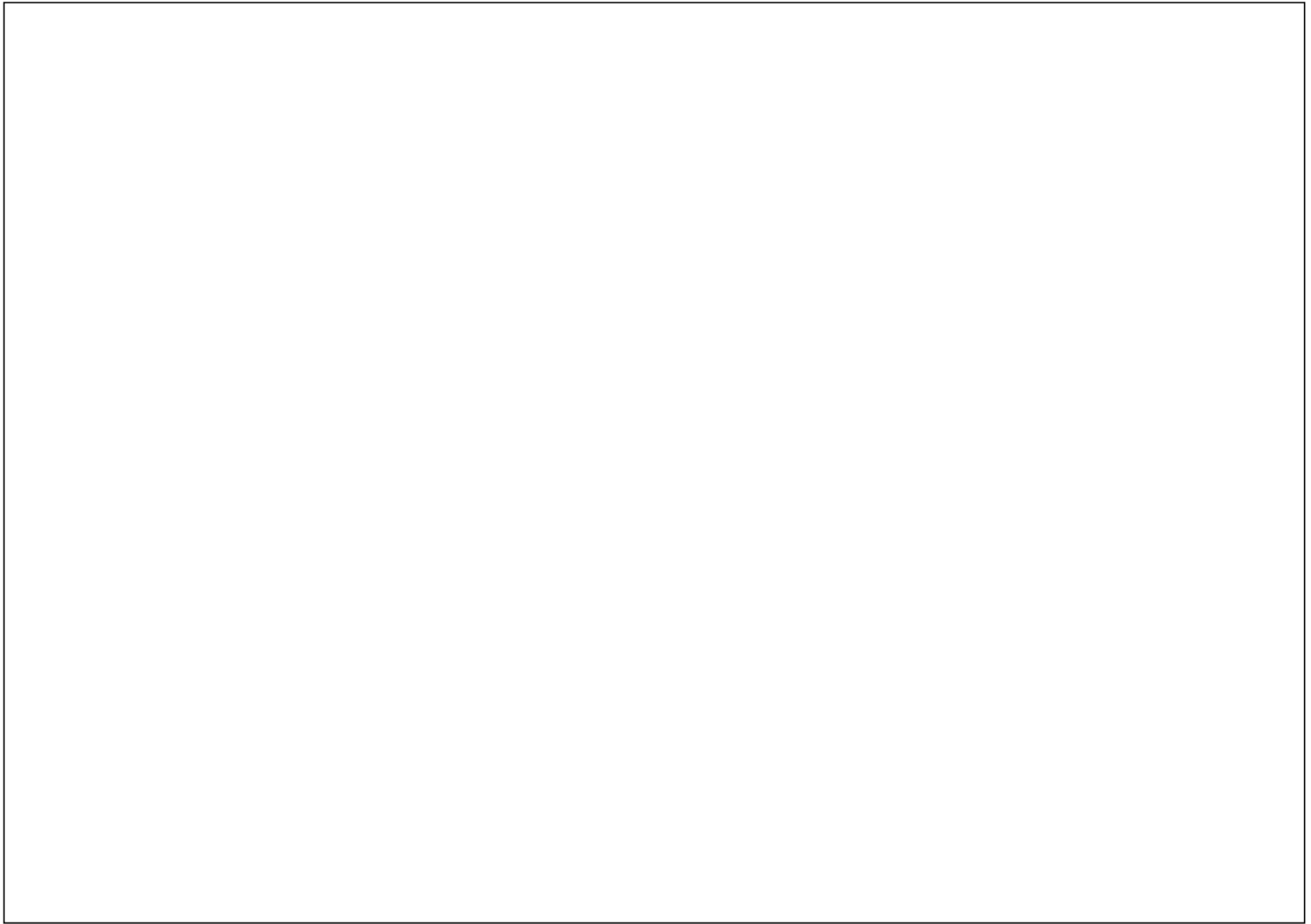
Scale: 1:200
Figure 135. Co-working space to BDD.

Scale: 1:100
Figure 136. Citizens working.

Scale: 1:100
Figure 137. Local performance under Highway.

Partners

Municipality of Beirut.

Live Love Beirut is a crowd-sourced love campaign made for Lebanon. It aims to re-imagine Beirut as a city of culture, sports, history and innovation, and brings together engaged citizens & partners to create social impact.

Solidere is a Lebanese joint-stock company, founded after the Lebanese Civil War, that is responsible for the planning and redevelopment of Beirut Central District.

Nahnoo is a youth-led non-governmental organization that brings together volunteers from all over Lebanon to work for an inclusive society through advocacy campaigns to promote: Good Governance, Public Spaces, and Cultural Heritage.

BDD is a built community that aims to provide a hub for digital and creative industries in Lebanon.

MARCH Lebanon is a local non-profit, non-governmental organization. It works to promote social cohesion and personal freedoms and instil respect and acceptance within the heterogeneous Lebanese social structure.

Beirut Madinati is a volunteer-led political campaign that was launched due to the ongoing protests on power and water shortages, trash and failing urban infrastructure. It built its campaign around a ten-point program, amongst which are community spaces and services, cultural heritage and socio-economic development.
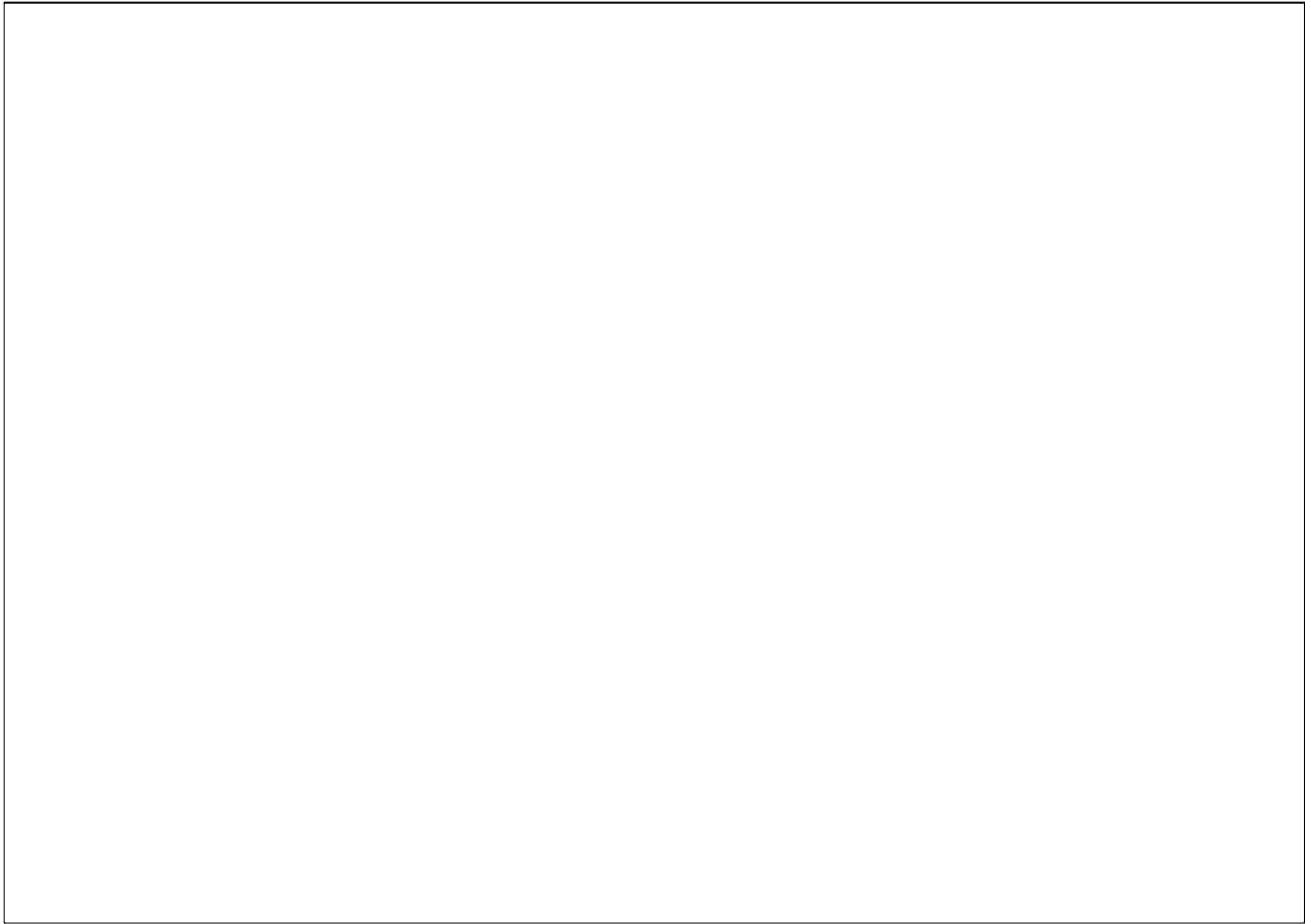
DIHZAHYNERS

Dihzahyners is a community organization founded by a team of artists, aimed to create initiatives to make Beirut brighter & more beautiful through color.
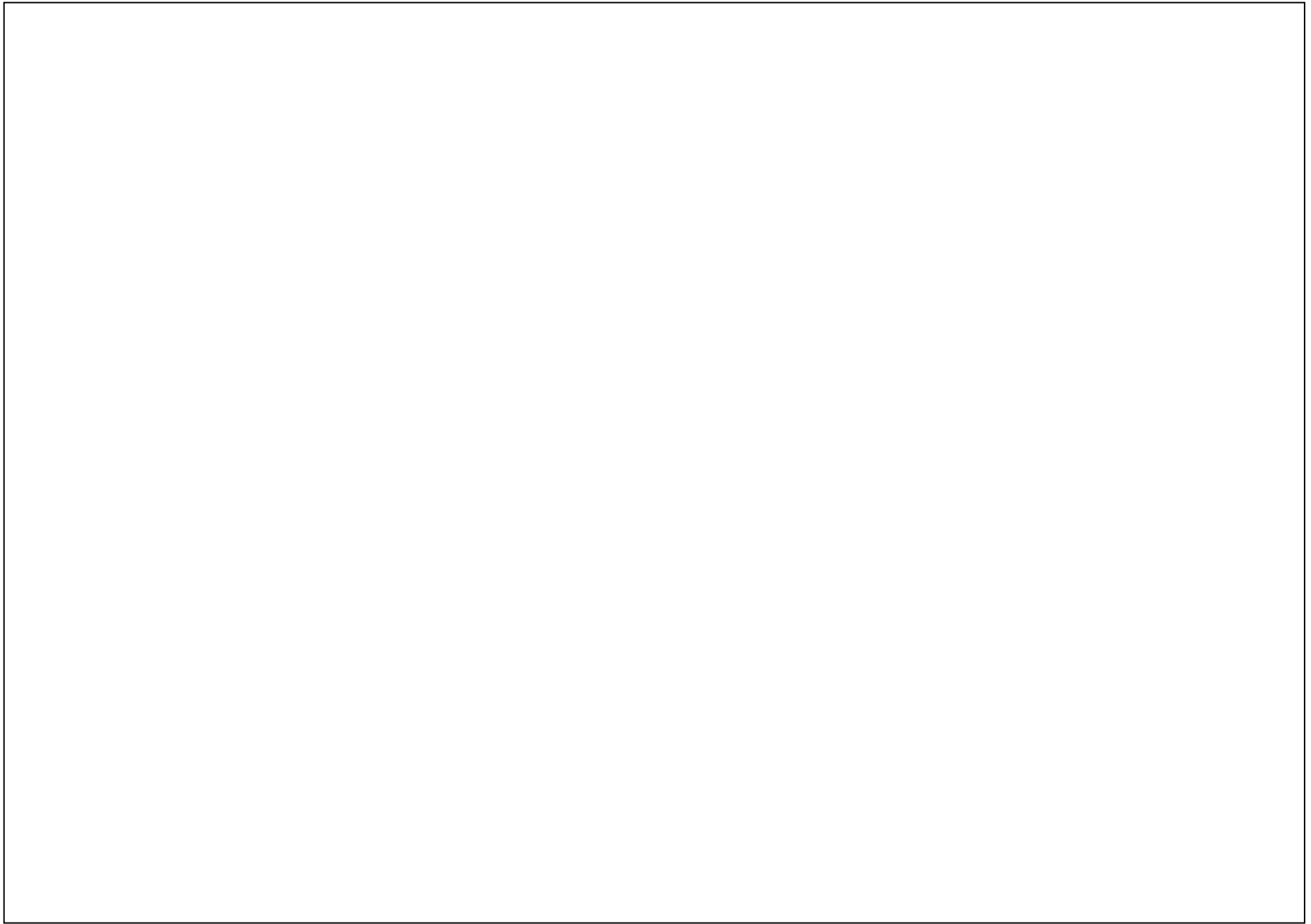
08

Conclusion

Conclusion

This major research project addresses the pressing issue of territorialization, generated by the negative impacts of identity claims, in cities. The intention behind it is to provide an urban design solution, which would aid in cultivating social cohesion. The project's proposal aims to use urban acupuncture as a method to do so, through developing a toolkit that consists of five key principles: create shared spaces, foster shared activities, promote co-design, nudge common perceptions and overcome physical barriers. The toolkit was applied and tested in Bachoura, an area within Beirut, that fits the parameters of context that this research covers.

Bachoura is currently divided and lacks shared spaces; however, there is a desire amongst certain communities, in Beirut, for "reformulating social norms and reinventing coexistence in public spaces freed from inherited representations of the Other" (Lefort, 2017:102). Thus, the provision of those spaces and the ability to access them shows potential in bringing people together, shifting common perceptions of space, as well as that of the 'self' and the 'other,' and creating reciprocity across divides. In addition, building on the presence of war-torn buildings that have been inaccessible for years has the potential to overcome physical and social barriers, arouse curiosity, draw people in, and instil a sense of living in a shared city.
It can be said then, that interventions may be successful when operating individually (such as the injection of a park, market, co-working space, public art installation...etc.). Moreover, the combination of interventions increases connections between shared spaces within the city, which in turn, increases citizens' sense of belonging to it.

While the use of *urban acupuncture* and the application of the toolkit focus on one area, that is more heterogeneous than others, in order to foster cross-cultural familiarity, it is hoped that it will have a lasting impact that will aid in eventually branching out to more homogeneous areas.
With all that in mind, there are some challenges that may arise during the application of the proposed toolkit. Although it shows a certain level of flexibility (such as the use of meanwhile uses and the ability for locals to collaborate and bring their ideas to life), Creasy (2008:12) states that "there is no 'magic bullet' that can sustain community cohesion. A range of factors contribute to shaping social relationships, and what works in one place may not be suitable elsewhere." Furthermore, there is a key variable that cannot be overlooked, which is the appropriation of those spaces, and whether or not they will be used.

In light of this research, it is apparent that in some cities, the segregated and territorialized lifestyle is continuously reinforced. For this reason, the issue of spatial segregation cannot be neglected and creating shared cities should be a priority. It is hoped that this report will shed light on the issue at hand and take the proposed toolkit into spatially segregated cities, with divorced societies, with the aim of transforming scarred landscapes into shared spaces, and consequently cultivating social cohesion.

Contribution to Practice

This research focuses on reducing the negative impacts of powerful identity claims on deeply divided and territorialized cities. It calls out researchers, designers, urban activists and community members and asks them to actively participate, collaborate and contribute to create shared spaces within socially segregated cities.

The project specifically contributes to urban design practice through presenting design principles that highlight the importance of creating a network of shared spaces, that bring people from diverse backgrounds together, to proactively shift mindsets of the 'self' and the 'other,' diminish the effect of intractable boundaries, and collectively re-write the narrative of a place. It also indicates the necessity of adopting comprehensive human values within a collective urban framework.

While the application of this toolkit is focused on the city of Beirut, the flexibility of its uses and programs can be applied to other cities, that fit this research's parameters of context.
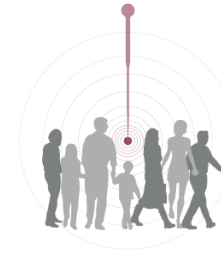

Figure 138. Using *urban acupuncture* to cultivate social cohesion.

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