



## From Beirut to Lebanon

### ABOUT

- **Name of business/project:** From Beirut To Lebanon
- **Country/Geographic Scope:** Lebanon
- **What stage is the project currently at?** Started in 2011, Database completed for 70 towns, phone application prototype developed and testing of customers' use of database launched.

### WHY IS IT A BRILLIANT IDEA?

**The problem your projects addresses:** Lebanese urban dwellers have limited access to green spaces, while there is wide availability of green spaces in towns outside Beirut, with a potential network of local hosts and micro-entrepreneurs.

**The solution it provides:** "From Beirut to Lebanon" is an online platform that connects urban dwellers seeking green spaces outside Beirut with local hosts providing access to green spaces and eco-activities in their towns.

1. Data generation in a data poor context for economic development and nature conservation
2. Allow marginalized and remote micro-entrepreneurs to access the urban market
3. Increase physical and mental health of urban dwellers by increasing their access to green activities

**The targets:** Beirut residents, Lebanese expatriates and international tourists.

### WHY WILL YOUR PROJECT MAKE IT?

#### What is your concrete business/action plan?

- 2011 to 2015: Databasing and field truthing
- Winter 2016: Mobile application development
- Summer 2016: Testing & bug fixing
- Fall 2016: Market launch
- Continuous capacity building of micro-entrepreneurs

#### What is your financial revenue/sustainability plan?

## Start-Up Youth / Business I.D. Card

- Sales of packages of 10 town maps through GPS enabled mobile application

### **What is the competitive advantage and the market potential of your project?**

Among the 12 million Lebanese expats, the one million international tourists who visit Lebanon and the 1.3 million Beirut residents, we speculated following surveys that 3% (i.e. half a million) users are likely to download the mobile application which will market and disseminate micro-entrepreneurs nationwide.

- The digital platform publicizes an innovative concept, where the entire country of Lebanon is conceived as a megacity, and towns are compensating Beirut's lack of green spaces and eco-services provided by micro-entrepreneurs.
- The community based digital platform, uses data generated by local communities who have identified local landmarks and local micro-entrepreneurs willing to host visitors.

## **MAIN CHALLENGES FACED**

- **Challenge 1:** Political instability reduces interest in local ecosystem based economic development.
- **Challenge 2:** Challenges of segregation against sectarian lines limits in country mobility
- **Challenge 3:** Lebanon being the country with the highest refugee per capita draws the attention of organizations and development agencies to emergency aid rather than sustainable development of marginalized and poverty striking Lebanese rural areas.

## **TEAM**

### **Person/Team behind this brilliant Idea:**

- Salma N. Talhouk, PhD, Director, 25, Lebanese
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### **Contact info:**

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