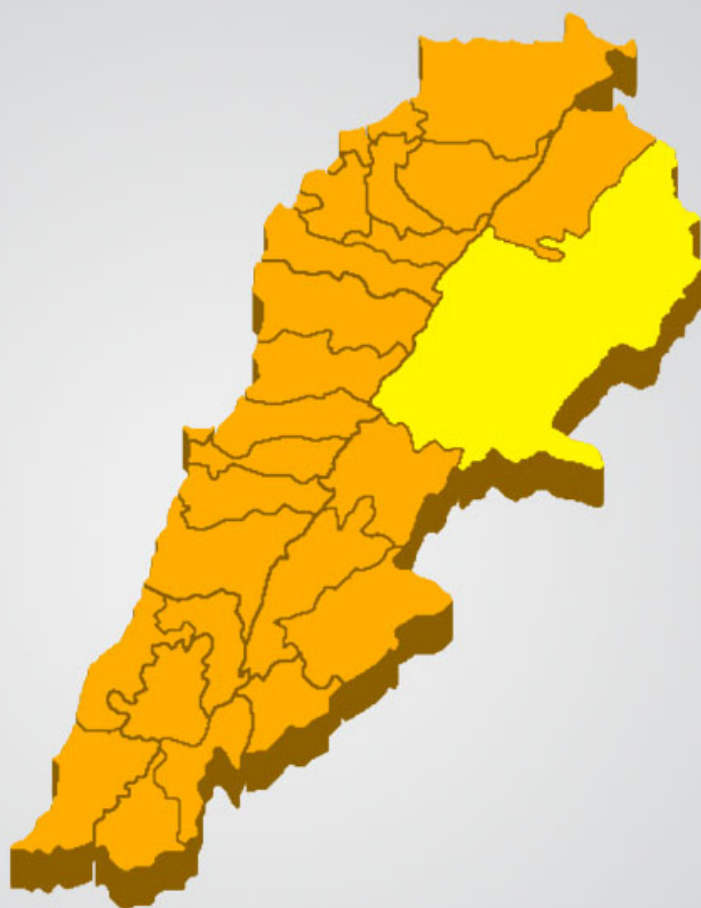



# Human Security: Localised Insights from Baalbek





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## 1. Introduction

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Situated approximately 90 kilometres north-east of Beirut in the Beqaa valley, Baalbek is the administrative centre of Baalbek–Hermel, Lebanon’s largest governorate. The city is home to around 82,000 Lebanese residents and 30,000 refugees, of which 21,642<sup>1</sup> are Syrian and 8,806<sup>2</sup> are Palestinian (living in the Wavell/al-Jalil refugee camp). As such, the city presents a unique demographic makeup to study. Baalbek’s economy is largely based on services and agriculture.<sup>3</sup> Despite having one of the world’s largest standing archaeological sites, tourism in the city has experienced setbacks in recent years due to security concerns. Baalbek therefore presents a suitable case for studying the human security and state-centric security nexus that this project<sup>4</sup> seeks to explore.

Baalbek has seen a number of conflict episodes in the last decade.<sup>5</sup> This is due to its poor socio-economic fabric, rooted in a tribal culture coupled with ever-thriving forms of illicit trade. The situation has only been exacerbated by negligence from local and national authorities. As a result of spill-over from the neighbouring war in Syria, Baalbek has seen 1,193 conflict incidents since 2013.<sup>6</sup> In response to Hezbollah joining the fight in Syria that year, Baalbek has been shelled by ISIS and Jabhat Al-Nusra militants on multiple occasions.<sup>7</sup>

As the situation deteriorated, local residents amplified their calls a stronger national armed forces presence in the area. In response, the Lebanese government committed to run two security plans in the region in order to restore control. In brief, security plans refer to periods of increased presence of military personnel in residential areas to quell unrest and achieve certain security objectives such as the eradication of a violent extremist threat.

The first plan, which started in August 2017 and was called “Fajr el Jouroud,” aimed at obliterating the threat posed by extremist groups that were hiding in the city’s neighbouring mountains along the Syrian border. The two-week operation was successful and able to eliminate the threat.<sup>8</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> “Syrian Refugee Response: Lebanon, Bekaa and Baalbek-El-Hermel Governorate – Distribution of the Registered Syrian Refugees at the Cadastral Level,” (UNHCR, September 2015), accessed via: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/44813>

<sup>2</sup> “Wavell Camp,” (UNRWA, no date) accessed via: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon/wavell-camp>

<sup>3</sup> Elie Haddad and Najah Chamoun, *Developing the Typical Dairy Products of the Bekaa and Baalbeck-Hermel: Diagnosis and Local Strategy*, (France: LACTIMED, 2014), 24 – 26, accessed via:

[http://www.animaweb.org/sites/default/files/lac\\_diagnosisreport\\_lebanon\\_en\\_final.pdf](http://www.animaweb.org/sites/default/files/lac_diagnosisreport_lebanon_en_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> For more details on the project, see project page at : <http://wanainstitute.org/en/project/towards-more-effective-human-security-approaches-context-emerging-threat-violent-extremism>

<sup>5</sup> Muzna al-Masri, *Between Local Patronage Relationships and Securitization: The Conflict Context in the Bekaa Region*, (Lebanon Support and UNDP, 2015), accessed via: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/42975>

<sup>6</sup> This number comes from a geo-located mapping of conflicts undertaken by Civil Society Knowledge Centre at the Lebanon Support. The mapping aims to trace conflict by localities all over Lebanon. Geo-located mapping of conflicts in Lebanon, Lebanon Support, available at: <https://civilsociety-centre.org/cap/map#defconflict>

The definition of conflict used for the sake of this mapping introduces a socio-political definition of the term, and goes beyond a mere legal and security-based characterisations of “conflicts” often associated with belligerency and violence on the one hand, or a too macro-oriented “social conflict theory” on the other, and sheds light on dynamics underlying a broad spectrum of contention including labour struggles, peaceful demonstrations, social movements, strikes, passing by conflicts opposing minorities (ethnic, religious or sexual among others) as well as local, national or regional actors’ policies including the use of armed force be it internal or in breach of the Lebanese sovereignty

<sup>7</sup> Hawaida Saad and Rick Gladstone, “Border Fighting Intensifies Between ISIS and Lebanon,” *The New York Times*, Aug. 4, 2014, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/05/world/middleeast/isis-lebanon-syria.html>

<sup>8</sup> “Fajr al-Joroud Operation: Army Secures Swift Gains Over Daesh,” (Lebanese Republic: Ministry of Information, Aug. 21, 2017), accessed via: <https://www.ministryinfo.gov.lb/en/15654>

second security plan – ongoing since June 2018 – aims to restrain all forms of illicit trade in the city as well as limit shooting incidents, which invariably result from the local tribal and gun culture. The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies' (LCPS) team conducting the field work in Baalbek witnessed the latter phenomenon in motion when a man was gunned down across the street from their hotel. Multiple army units were swiftly deployed in the area and the suspect was arrested within minutes. However, the project recognises that in order to put a more complete stop to such violence, stakeholders must first be able to identify and address a number of underlying causes.

## 2. Methodology

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This report explores local perceptions in Baalbek toward the relation between human security, state-centric security policies, and violent extremism. The analytical-descriptive approach here aims to offer policy makers localised insights into the policymaking concerns for refining efforts of Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE). The field research – on which the findings are based – is part of the project “Towards more effective human security approaches in the context of the emerging threat of violent extremism in Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia”, implemented by a consortium of partners and spearheaded by the WANA Institute.

Field research activities took place between 19 and 21 July 2018. The LCPS team ran two workshops in Baalbek as well as two focus groups and eight individual interviews. A total of 37 participants were in attendance during the two days of workshops, 35% males and 65% females. The majority of participants were members of local and international NGOs, while the rest were university students, local activists, and representatives of local authorities. The two focus groups were split on a gender basis – between 7 males and 6 females – and all participants were from vulnerable societal groups. The interviewees represent CBOs and NGOs working in Baalbek, the local government, a religious leader, and Hezbollah officials. But it should be noted that the team could not secure an interview with a security official due to the aforementioned shooting incident.

## 3. Human Security Conceptualised

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The local community in Baalbek does not necessarily understand human security as a social science concept with clear pillars and components. Rather, it understands it from its history of deprivation and marginalisation, i.e. human *insecurities*. This observation can be drawn from the fieldwork conducted in Jordan and Tunisia as well.<sup>9</sup> In other words, when exposed to the human security concept, people who participated in the various research activities recognised the importance of such a consolidated and comprehensive approach to human development and communal security.

The workshop participants saw that human security is a combination of legal protection, economic wellbeing, and fulfilment of basic individual rights in socio-economic and political terms.<sup>10</sup> FGD participants imbued human security with wider dimensions, ranging from food security and securing jobs to supporting the elderly with healthcare and other services, to offering affordable education and childcare.<sup>11</sup> This difference in perspectives pertains to the selection criteria of participants in each research activity. Namely, the FGD participants tended to be marginalised and/or stigmatised individuals in the local community. On the other hand, the workshop

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<sup>9</sup> Barik Mhadeen and Neven Bondokji, *Human Security in Tafileh: Trends and Perceptions*, (Amman: WANA Institute, 2019), accessed via: [http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publication\\_Tafileh\\_English\\_0.pdf](http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publication_Tafileh_English_0.pdf) and findings from field research in Tunisia will be published later in 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Females' Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018.

participants were mainly CBO workers, local leaders, and informed local actors. Nevertheless, the widely-held consensus that Baalbek–Hermel is a “deprived area from all socioeconomic services”<sup>12</sup> makes this conceptualisation of human security closer to being a wish-list of how the participants want to see their area rather than a focus on its actual human security situation.

Beyond basic services, participants in Baalbek also conceptualised human security through issues pertaining to personal security and freedoms, specifically freedom of expression and the right to hold different political opinions. Participants also heavily emphasised religious freedoms throughout the research activities, especially during the workshop.<sup>13</sup> The research team observed that support for Hezbollah was the main point of contention here; it split the audience between those enjoying a general state of imposed group conformity to Hezbollah and those who resented the group’s presence feeling a strong sense of exclusion. One participant explains:

“Above all, it is important for people to feel that they have the ability to express their opinions safely, even if it goes against the majority or a specific political party. People must learn how to ‘hear’ different voices and be accepting. When this is achieved, there will be less violence and less extremism.”<sup>14</sup>

Here, not only did participants emphasise the absence of effective mechanisms to achieve these human security concerns, but they also called upon the Lebanese state to commit to achieving them by developing such mechanisms.<sup>15</sup> In addition, participants in Baalbek considered that human security programmes do contribute to conflict containment and resilience in the sense that they provide people with their basic needs (the lack of which is often cited as a cause of conflict)<sup>16</sup> and prevent them from engaging in illegal activities. A female participant explains: “those [individuals] who have no sense of job security and feel that they are in a country where the [rule of] law is absent will resort to violence to meet their basic needs.”<sup>17</sup>

Finally, participants emphasised that human security should be reconceptualised as an integral part of social development efforts.<sup>18</sup> They added that human security programming should moreover be mainly undertaken by state actors as part of a national development plan, in which the state cooperates with local authorities, civil society, community-based organizations, and the private sector. In this effort, the international community can play a major role in providing funding and technical assistance, while the Lebanese state plays regulatory and monitoring roles. This advanced understanding of human security is very much in line with the current debate about the global human security agenda.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Males’ Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> Workshop’s participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Females’ Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> Workshop’s participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> For more details about the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis, see Leonard Berkowitz, *Roots of Aggression: A Re-Examination of the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis*, (New York: Atherton Press, 1969) and Alex O-Connor, “Understanding Who Becomes Terrorist,” *Journal of Young Investigators*, Sep. 2004, accessed via: <https://www.jyi.org/2004-september/2004/9/17/understanding-who-becomes-terrorists>

<sup>17</sup> Females’ Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Males’ Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018 and Females’ Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, *Human Security Handbook*, (New York: United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, 2016), accessed via: <https://www.un.org/humansecurity/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/h2.pdf>

## 4. Human Security Gaps and Priorities

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Throughout the various research activities, participants in Baalbek highlighted the lack of proper human security programming in their area. When asked about specific projects currently being implemented, they perceived most of these projects as targeting Syrian refugees. Thus, rather than out of a genuine development concern for Baalbek's community, participants suggested that Baalbek has made it onto the development agenda lately only as a result of the Syrian refugee crisis.<sup>20</sup> It is thus no wonder that, when asked about existing development/human security programmes, most of the participants cited were related to Syrian refugees. These included Cash for Work (World Food Programme), Education for Syrian Refugees (Ministries of Social Affairs and Education, in collaboration with UN agencies), and Urgent Response for Education (Ministry of Education and UNICEF), to name a few.<sup>21</sup> This societal perception also resonates with those found in the refugee-hosting communities in Jordan, particularly those in the north such as Mafraq and Ajloun.<sup>22</sup>

The human security gaps, or perceptions thereof, must therefore be considered within the wider spill-over impact of the Syrian crisis. Given their geographic and societal proximities to Syria, this is perhaps more so in Lebanon and Jordan than in Tunisia. In Baalbek, these gaps can be divided into three main categories:

- Socio-economic (as in access to quality health and education services): Participants named expensive and unaffordable healthcare; high rates of drop-out from middle school, especially among male students; teachers' weak capacities; and school violence.<sup>23</sup>
- Freedom of expression and the right of individuals to hold different political opinions without encountering any forms of violence or intimidation: Namely: the gender/sect/area-based discrimination.<sup>24</sup>
- Addressing gender-based discrimination and ensuring equality before the law for all: Namely: civil status laws which are seen as unjust towards women, especially in cases of divorce and child-custody; the inability of Lebanese women to pass on their citizenship/nationality to their foreign husbands or children; the difficulty of criminalising rape and harassment along with the spread of honour-crimes.<sup>25</sup> It is worth noting that participants identified the human security pillar of women's empowerment as the foremost human security gap that needed to be addressed in Baalbek.<sup>26</sup>

## 5. Trusted Actors

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In addressing these gaps and priorities, research participants considered that the Lebanese government is the most capable actor for ensuring human security in their community, including

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<sup>20</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Neven Bondokji, Barik Mhadeen and Lina AlHaj, Determinants of Human Security and Hard Security in Ajloun, (Amman: WANA Institute, 2019), accessed via: <http://wanainstitute.org/en/publication/determinants-human-security-and-hard-security-ajloun> and workshop's participant, Mafraq, 30 – 31 August, 2018.

<sup>23</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>25</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Verification Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 12 February, 2019.

local authorities. **This holds true at least in theory since it is not always the most trusted actor**, given the long history of negligence and marginalisation from which Baalbek has suffered.<sup>27</sup> In other words, participants consider that human security cannot be ensured unless properly undertaken by the state. But by the same token, they do not trust the willingness of the latter to actively pursue that goal.

This highlights the role of para and non-state actors such as **prominent political parties, tribal entities, and civil society groups who participants identified as the de facto implementers of human security programmes on the ground**. With that in mind, participants nonetheless cast doubts about the impartiality, outreach, and actual effectiveness of initiatives led by these actors throughout the research activities.

Few examples illustrate this doubt and division of opinion. In the Baalbek context, one interviewee said that the practice of “vigilante revenge”<sup>28</sup> is still carried out by some families taking matters into their own hands, “even after fifty years [of a crime],”<sup>29</sup> whilst other families submit to law enforcement and security agencies to bring about justice. The responsibility of providing security and protection was another point of contention. Another interviewee who self-identified as a member of Hezbollah stressed that “we, as Hezbollah, work towards securing our area. We build hospitals, Islamic schools and [medical] labs.”<sup>30</sup> It seems for him, human security means meeting medical and educational needs. In obvious objection to the rise and influence of para- and non-state actors, a third interviewee proclaimed, “we want the security [provided by] the state alone.”<sup>31</sup> It seemed that his main concern is driven by the use of weapons; that para and non-state actors should not be allowed to use weapons as the state must have the sole monopoly over their usage and the exercise of power.

## 6. Human Security and Preventing Violent Extremism

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Participants in Baalbek identified two kinds of grievances that led to violent extremism. The first kind pertained to basic material needs and the lack of job opportunities. The second kind pertained to social justice, rule of law, personal freedoms, and freedom of expression.<sup>32</sup> In this context, they argued that violent extremism is a **personal reaction to contextual grievances rather than an action by itself**. As one participant puts it: “When the ruling political elite exercises a firm grip over the whole country, does not listen to citizens, and fails to secure jobs, then one can say that radicalisation is a result of pressure and deprivation.”<sup>33</sup> This is why a comprehensive human security approach that enhances the economic, agricultural, security, and industrial situation not only “compacts violent extremism, but eliminates it all together.”<sup>34</sup>

As such, participants argued that human security programming in the aforementioned social areas can significantly contribute to national PVE strategies. These long-term priorities are very much

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<sup>27</sup> Caroline Akoum, “85% of Lebanese Don’t Trust Their Politicians,” *Asharq Al-Awsat*, Feb. 22, 2019, accessed via: <https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1603436/85-lebanese-don%E2%80%99t-trust-their-politicians>

<sup>28</sup> Male interviewee from CBO, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 19 July, 2018.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Male interviewee from security, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 21 July, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Female interviewee from CBO, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 19 July, 2018.

<sup>32</sup> Workshop’s participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>33</sup> Male interviewee from local government, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 21 July, 2018.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.



in line with the approaches of human security as highlighted in the literature,<sup>35</sup> especially the focus on education and the right to decent work.

This perspective relates not only to threats of violent extremism, but also to other forms of anti-social and criminal behaviour that research participants identified as violent extremism. For example, they consider the use of drugs and the wide-spread use of weapons as forms of violent extremist behaviour.<sup>36</sup> In this regard, a number of participants lamented the partial and ineffective PVE and CVE strategies that have reinforced the stigma of Baalbek as a hub of drugs and weapons without addressing the actual threats of violent extremism.<sup>37</sup>

One cannot escape the contradiction here; if locals perceive drug abuse and weapons' use as forms of extremist behaviour, then state measures targeting the use of drugs and/or selling of weapons must be welcome, not lamented. More so since drugs and weapons were seen as forms of violent extremism. On the other hand, others limit their definition of violent extremism to the behaviour and ideology of extremist groups currently operating in Syria. This is a key dividing line that stems from the negligence of offering a clear and locally-owned definition of violent extremism.

## 7. State-centric Security Policies

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State-centric security policies<sup>38</sup> have recently been reintroduced in Baalbek, after a long period of negligence and laxity.<sup>39</sup> These include introducing new security plans which involve criminal pursuit raids – as well as increasing the army's presence through the use of check-points.<sup>40</sup> Nonetheless, some of the hard security measures that the state recently implemented created resentment among the local communities. They were perceived as selective, biased, and unfair in that they only target perpetrators of minor crimes.<sup>41</sup>

Referring to the pervasiveness of weapons, the participants thought that these security measures have, at best, decreased the frequency of shooting incidents but have not eliminated gun culture all together. Speaking volume into the scale of the issue, multiple sources reported over 1,200 wanted individuals in Baalbek who already have some 37,000 arrest warrants issued in their name.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> In 1994, a UN Human Development Report was released, outlining 7 key pillars of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal physical, communal, and personal political. The core definition of Human Security is "freedom from fear and freedom from want". United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1994*, (New York: UNDP, 1995), pp. 24-33, accessed via:

[http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr\\_1994\\_en\\_complete\\_nostats.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Male interviewee from CBO, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 21 July, 2018.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Generally, security is defined by its "referent objects" that it seeks to protect. State-centric security policies are measures and policies that has the state as the referent object that it seeks to protect. For a discussion on this, see Barik Mhadeen, *Reconceptualising Security: Why Not?* (Amman: West Asia North Africa Institute, 2018), p.4-5, accessed via: [http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publication\\_YouthAndSecurity\\_English.pdf](http://wanainstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publication_YouthAndSecurity_English.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> "Machnouk: Security Plan in Baalbek So Far Successful," *The Daily Star*, Jun. 27, 2018, accessed via:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2018/Jun-27/454487-machnouk-security-plan-in-baalbeck-so-far-successful.ashx>

<sup>40</sup> Male interviewee from INGO, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 20 July, 2018.

<sup>41</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018.

<sup>42</sup> "Asharq Al-Awsat: 37 Thousand in Bekaa Demanding a settlement of their Situations," *MTV*, March 9, 2015, accessed via:

[https://www.mtv.com.lb/news/articles/454506/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%82\\_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B3%D8%B7\\_37\\_%D8%A3%D9%84%D9%81\\_%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A8\\_%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9\\_%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%86\\_%D8%A8%D8%AA%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%A9\\_%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%88%D8%B6%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%87%D9%85](https://www.mtv.com.lb/news/articles/454506/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%82_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B3%D8%B7_37_%D8%A3%D9%84%D9%81_%D9%85%D8%B7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A8_%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B9_%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%86_%D8%A8%D8%AA%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%A9_%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%88%D8%B6%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%87%D9%85)

Paula Astih, "Security Hotbeds Threats the State Authority," *Elaph Newspaper*, Dec. 23, 2018, accessed via:

<https://elaph.com/amp/Web/NewsPapers/2018/12/1231762.html> and Paula Astih, "The Security Situation in Baalbek is

In spite of this, they still “frighten innocent civilians on a daily basis by firing random shots.”<sup>43</sup> Not to mention that the drug market is still, according to a security official, “thriving and accessible on a large scale.”<sup>44</sup>

Research participants argued that state-centric security policies are essential for meeting long-term human security goals. However, they thought that the security policies applied thus far in Baalbek are still far from complete or effective. They highlighted that the security measures in their area lack sustainability and are not implemented fairly; these measures only target committers of petty crimes and misdemeanours who usually belong to vulnerable societal groups, while “true” criminals, they argue, are ensured escape routes.<sup>45</sup> Rather than addressing its root causes, selective and ineffective implementation of SSC policies instead ends up regenerating a sense of social injustice.

As such, the researchers observed the general perception that “security plans have actually had little impact on enhancing the security situation in the area; those wanted by the police are still out on the street instigating trouble. And ‘security plans’ have been limited.”<sup>46</sup>

Whilst a majority of participants considered hard security measures necessary for containing illegal activities, including violent extremism, most argue that these policies alone cannot achieve the desired objectives. For them, an effective security approach has to be sustainable, long-term, and implemented equally without any political interferences or discrimination.<sup>47</sup> Participants also recognised the importance of human security programmes in addressing threats of violent extremism, more so given the persistent marginalisation and absence of opportunities, especially for youth.

Based on this perspective, research participants generally believe that human security and hard security measures should go hand in hand to ensure a comprehensive approach towards preventing the threat of violent extremism. However, they distinguished between them in terms of state priority. In the short-term, hard security policies should be prioritised to meet immediate security needs. But for long-term prevention of violent extremism, human security programming should be prioritised, as it guarantees addressing all root causes of violent extremism.

## 8. Recommendations

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The community suggested a number of practical measures that could be taken to improve the lives of people in Baalbek and hence contribute to preventing violent extremism, mainly:

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Out of Control,” Asharq Al-Awsat, May 31, 2018, accessed via:

<https://aawsat.com/home/article/1285376/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B6%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%83-%D9%8A%D8%AE%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%B1%D8%A9>

<sup>43</sup> Paula Astih, “The Security Situation in Baalbek is Out of Control,” Asharq Al-Awsat, May 31, 2018, accessed via:

<https://aawsat.com/home/article/1285376/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B6%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%83-%D9%8A%D8%AE%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%B1%D8%A9>

<sup>44</sup> Male interviewee from security, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 19 July, 2018.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Male interviewee from INGO, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 20 July, 2018.

<sup>47</sup> Workshop’s participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018, Males’ Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018 and Females’ Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 22 June, 2018.

- Legalising cannabis cultivation, an activity that has been essential to Baalbek's economy, especially during the civil war, but is still prohibited by Lebanese law. This is considered a major income-generating activity in the city, and an opportunity to limit poverty and foster development. This perception stems from the previously flourishing cannabis trade market in the area prior to its prohibition in 1992.<sup>48</sup>
- Supporting and assisting productive sectors through a number of policies and procedures that might nurture an enabling environment. These include agriculture and agro-industry sectors, major assets for Baalbek.<sup>49</sup>
- Rehabilitating infrastructure in the region, which would contribute to improving the lives of local communities as well as reactivating tourism and trade. This recommendation was directed to the Ministry of Tourism, Municipalities, and to local actors.<sup>50</sup>
- Devising and introducing a well-studied security plan, which is mainly the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and Law Enforcement agencies, in close deliberations with local actors and political parties. The aim is for more effective, sustainable, and impartial implementation of security policies and measures.<sup>51</sup> As it now stands, these plans are announced prior to their execution, which according to participants gives perpetrators and wanted individuals time to escape.<sup>52</sup>
- The Ministry of Interior should devise and introduce rehabilitation programmes addressing former convicts – especially youth – to allow for their constructive reintegration in society and contain the chances of them falling back into criminal activities.<sup>53</sup>
- Building universities in Baalbek since the city does not have one. This will address the city's education and employment needs as pillars of human security, and falls on the shoulders of both the Ministry of Higher Education as well as the private sector.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Male interviewee from security, interviewed by LCPS in Baalbek, 19 July, 2018.

<sup>49</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018

<sup>50</sup> Verification Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 12 February, 2019.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018

<sup>53</sup> Workshop's participant, Baalbek, 19 – 21 July, 2018 and Verification Focus Group Discussion, Baalbek, 12 February, 2019.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.



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