Citizen Scientists as stewards of community knowledge in Hamra, Beirut

Mayssa Jallad, American University of Beirut and Relief Centre, UCL

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RELIEF Centre is

● A Multi-disciplinary research centre.
● Led by Institute for Global Prosperity, in collaboration with departments at AUB, LAU, and UCL.
● Developing new approaches to prosperity in the context of mass displacement.
● Work strands on (R1) liveability of cities, (R2) entrepreneurship and innovation, (R3) educational solutions, (R4) understanding and measuring prosperity in context.
● R4: Developing a co-designed Prosperity Index for neighbourhoods in Lebanon.
The RELIEF Centre’s Values

- **Locally grounded and inclusive** – focus on the prosperity of locales, to the benefit *all* residents.
- **Collaborative** – we work with partners to co-design measures and solutions and to support existing initiatives.
- **Citizen-led** – engage with communities through citizen science and outreach activities.
- **Driven by research excellence** – our work begins with high quality data, rigorous methodology, and the latest social science thinking.
Hamra
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Number of CSs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestinian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hamra Citizen Scientists

- Nour Bachacha
- Jamal Chatila
- Riwa Chatila
- Adel Ali Ismail
- Aya Itani
- Ahmad Itani
- Mona Kolom
- Mostapha Kolom
- Mohammad Mikayes
- Alaa Nouri
- Alaa Shehab
- Yara Younes
- Ralph Obeid
- Abd Alsattar Saleme
- Mayssa Jallad
- Rachel Saliba

Find out more on: www.relief-centre.org
Our Partners on the ground in Hamra (Prosperity Index)

- Conference Space
- Community Knowledge
- Intervention Feedback and Implementation
- Anonymized Data Access

- Office Space
- Director Dr Maha Shuayb, member of R3
- Connection to Education Field

- UNHabitat Hamra Neighborhood Profile per guidelines, publication
- Data sharing agreement in progress
The person himself, goals, opinions, aims, perspective, life experiences (Everything that happened with the person that made him/who he is) - the unique self her.

To be able to identify with a specific group/culture/place/religion, etc, where you can express your needs and personal opinions without barriers.

It's an essential component of any social group which allows innovation and promotes prosperity. It's also being able to acknowledge other opinions and perspectives while respecting the individual's "core" without getting rid of his/her own identity.
Prosperity Index: Hamra

East London
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Data</th>
<th>Quantitative Data</th>
<th>CS Knowledge Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prosperity Index Research</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging with concepts of wellbeing-memory and personal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with: acquaintances (20), key stakeholders: NGO (7), religious (4), political (2), notary public (3), health(2) and education (2), enterprises (20), Municipal (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging in depth with active community members POV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Survey Ethnography (3)</td>
<td>Building Survey: Building conditions and census-type population count (634 buildings)</td>
<td>Engaging with the built environment, and inhabitants/superintendents who know about other neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Survey Ethnography (6)</td>
<td>Household survey: 1 hour questionnaire (688 HH surveys)</td>
<td>Engaging with every aspect of a household’s wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group Discussions (8/9 completed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging in a group conversation of different points of view about wellbeing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This collected information will be used in published research as well as in academic presentations. Your individual privacy and confidentiality of the information you provide will be maintained in all published and written data analysis resulting from the study. All information you may give will be treated in the strictest confidence and any information you give will be fully anonymized. No individual participant will be identifiable in any discussions, publication or presentation of the findings. Data will be monitored and may be audited by the AUB’s IRB while assuring confidentiality.

We anticipate that this study will lead to a number of benefits to local residents. The information that we collect will be used to write a profile about the neighborhood and the biggest challenges and benefits of living here. This report will be made publicly available and accessible. The data we collect will also be used to inform decision making about how entrepreneurs, NGOs, academics and local government decision makers can best focus their efforts to address people’s local concerns.

I would like to record this interview so as to make sure that I remember accurately all the information you provide. If you do not wish to be recorded, please let me know, and I will not record the conversation.

If you do not agree to be recorded, I would like to take notes manually on a notepad or a computer, depending on your consent.

If you do agree to be recorded I will keep the recordings secure and password protected in a secure server and they will only be used by members of the research team working on this project. Even within the research team, no identifiers other than your voice, gender and age will be used. Three years after the project ends (in 2022), the data will be securely destroyed. Where applicable, handwritten notes will be typed up onto a word file and stored on the secure server while the handwritten copy will be shredded and disposed off.
Hamra is a host community

- All Residents of Hamra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>عدد الأسر</th>
<th>%الأسر</th>
<th>تعداد السكان</th>
<th>تقدير</th>
<th>نسبة السكان</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>76.94%</td>
<td>5166</td>
<td></td>
<td>72.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>13.44%</td>
<td>1312</td>
<td></td>
<td>18.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>8.81%</td>
<td>622</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRL</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.77%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2463</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>7158</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hamra is socio-economically diverse, and not all Syrians are refugees. Many inhabitants of Hamra are migrant workers, some of whom work in homes.
# Household Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Survey Participant</th>
<th>Number of Household Surveys (out of 2463)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>688 (28% of total population)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Asmaa posed some of the hardest questions I have heard about the utility of social science research and its (non-)entanglement with social and non-governmental work. She bluntly asked, “is this only ink on paper? // هل هو بس حكي عالورق؟”

At a later point, Asmaa said, “we welcomed and respected you although we are scared. We are scared even as we are speaking to you; we are thinking about the risks of telling you all of this. You know we are Syrians, and our situation is critical.” They rightfully expected a service or an intervention back. She questioned why we would conduct this kind of research if not to provide or enhance services.
Focus Group Discussions
Interview with CS
Co-Designing Local Interventions

- Social
- Entrepreneurial
- Spacial

The Neighborhood Initiative
First Intervention Meeting
Results of 1st meeting: Community Center

There are many uninhabited buildings in this area, like old buildings, even churches or mosques. Can be converted to a medical dispensary. To make people benefit from his services.

- No public schools inside Hamra
- Gap between residents
- Children out of schools

Educational Center where only students work.

- Participation of students from different social classes.
- Create an alternative for the children who have not attended schools or are were forced to leave.
- Create a platform to reduce the gap between residents of Hamra starting with students.
- Transfer this experience to parents and so bridge cultural, social and economic diversity.
Results of 1st meeting: Entreprise App

Proposal 2

- Findings:
  
  Old shops and workshops are facing many difficulties such as the economical situation, less clients, high competition with malls and chain Stores …

- Intervention:
  
  - A Platform that connect users from all over the country with local old shops and workshops
  - Connect online but shop local (in Hamra)
  - Encourage handcraftsmanship and local goods
Results of 1st meeting: Green Canopy

Planning Intervention

- Banning partying on the streets.
- Imply the installation of acoustic absorption panels.
- Penalize pubs who allow street partying

Design Intervention

- Barriers
- Greenery

III- Intervention
1- Rainwater Harvesting on Rooftops

5 Benefits of Green Roofs

- Clean air
- Produce food
- Support urban wildlife
- Reduce stormwater runoff
- Reduce buildings' energy use

Other Benefits:
- Water retaining
- Air purifier
- Scene Beautification
CS participating in the 17 October Revolution

Photo by Assia