



# Women's Caravan for Peace

**FINAL EVALUATION**

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## Executive Summary

In 2016, Search for Common Ground (Search) in partnership with the Rabita Mohammadia of Ulemas (Rabita) implemented the “Women’s Caravan for Peace” project, which intended to create a space for dialogue led by civil society and members of disadvantaged populations in the north of Morocco, including the cities of Nador, Al Hoceima, Tétouan, and Tangier. The activities of “Women’s Caravan for Peace” were based on the fundamental values of tolerance, freedom of thought, non-violent conflict resolution, and women’s rights. The initiative recognized that in order to counter the destructive nature of violent extremist messaging, it is necessary to adopt a preventive approach that targets the underlying causes of radicalization and recruitment into violent extremist groups.

The key objective set for this project was to sensitize at-risk and marginalized populations through principles and mechanisms of tolerance, peaceful co-existence, and constructive conflict resolution in order to reinforce community integration and strengthen the resistance of vulnerable youth to violent extremist messaging.

Under the framework of “Women’s Caravan for Peace” (the Caravan), Search and the Rabita organized training and awareness-raising workshops for the benefit of at-risk populations, with the aim of equipping them with alternative communication tools and capacities based on tolerance and inclusion.

Below is a summary of results of our evaluation and recommendations based on the results:

Table 1: Summary of the set of results, recommendations, and challenges

Results	Recommendations	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>► Adoption of values of tolerance and peaceful conflict resolution skills.</li> <li>► Willingness to replicate the activities of the project implementing their new skills.</li> <li>► Self esteem of participants boosted.</li> <li>► The initiation of community-level dialogue on sensitive topics that would not otherwise have a space for engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>► Put in place appropriate mechanisms to target at-risk youth.</li> <li>► Increase the involvement of religious leaders in the training.</li> <li>► Ensure follow-up and regularity of similar initiatives that spark debate and positively affect perceptions of women and youth.</li> <li>► Build mechanisms for sustainability by delegating follow-up to local structures that can act in the long term.</li> <li>► Create a network of partners on the subject of the Caravan in order to improve discourse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>► Initiating a real exchange with religious leaders on the status of women by engaging them and equipping them with soft discourse skills.</li> <li>► Ensuring the sustainability of such a training and awareness-raising program.</li> <li>► Strengthening the mastery of new technologies among young public.</li> <li>► Encouraging youth in the creation of virtual content.</li> <li>► Expanding the targeting of beneficiaries to reach more at-risk youth.</li> <li>► Expanding opportunities for exchange between at-risk youth and religious leaders.</li> </ul>

## Project Description

Messages of religious, cultural, and social intolerance that are spread by violent extremist groups promote and perpetuate conflict, often with catastrophic consequences. It is essential to strengthen efforts to counter violent extremist messaging, particularly with regards to youth and women who may be more vulnerable to these messages. It is within this framework that the “Women’s Caravan for Peace” project has evolved. The main objective of the project is to sensitize marginalized and at-risk populations based on the principles and mechanisms of tolerance, peaceful co-existence, and constructive conflict resolution in an effort to strengthen societal integration, and reinforce youth resistance to violent extremist messaging.

### Specific Objectives and Anticipated Results

The overall goal of this project was that messages of violent extremism have less resonance for at-risk youth and women in northern Morocco. This was met through the following specific objectives:

**Specific Objective 1:** To foster community-level discussions about tolerance, diversity of thought, morality, violence, and women’s rights within 8 marginalized neighborhoods in Tangier, Tetouan, Al Hoceima, and Nador.

#### *Expected results:*

- *Increased discussions at the targeted communities on issues related to tolerance, social coexistence and peace in relation to women and youth.*

**Specific Objective 2:** To increase awareness and the cooperation of key targeted community stakeholders in calls for supporting tolerance and preventing violent extremism of women and youth. This project will contribute to constructive networking and cooperation among women’s associations, CSOs, youth, and community representatives and will increase better visibility in the media of constructive messages of peace, social coexistence and tolerance.

#### *Expected results:*

- *Increased people’s awareness on the benefit for preventing violence and the value of diversity and social bonding for community development;*
- *Increased constructive messages of peace and tolerance as alternative to messages of violent extremism;*
- *Increased cooperation of key targeted community stakeholders to provide alternative narratives of peace and tolerance.*

## Evaluation Criteria

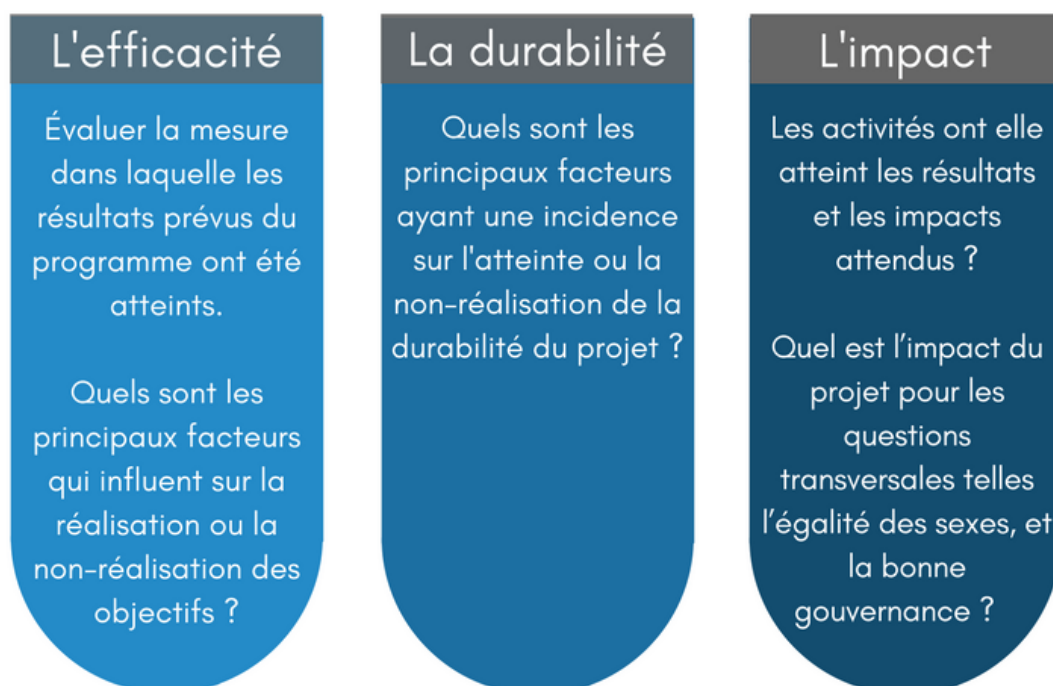


Figure 2: Project evaluation criteria

1. **Effectiveness:** Evaluate the measure by which the expected results of the program have been attained. What are the principal factors that influence the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
2. **Sustainability:** Which are the main factors that affect the success or failure of the project's sustainability?
3. **Impact:** Did the activities attain the expected results and impact? What is project impact on the cross-sectional questions related to gender equality and those related to good governance?

## Evaluation Methodology

### Data Collection for the Evaluation

The evaluation framework used to assess this project relied principally on qualitative approach. After researching on the most appropriate methodologies to develop the evaluation tools, field work was undertaken to provide the report with grounded information about the project context, its effectiveness, its relevance, its impact, and its sustainability. The collected data was triangulated in order to validate the different sets of assumptions. Ethical considerations were duly noted when it came to the use of data and interacting with respondents.

#### 1.1 Primary Research

The primary research methodologies employed in this evaluation include statistical analysis, focus group discussions (FGDs), and individual interviews.

- Statistical Analysis - Throughout the project, regular and thorough monitoring of indicators generated information that was used to make decisions while the project was ongoing and to capture results for the end of the project. Within the framework of the evaluation report, this data was analyzed using a statistical analysis in order to identify key trends. Unlike the other approaches used in this evaluation, the statistical analysis only focused on project performance and thus only utilized performance indicators.
- Focus Group Discussions and Interviews - Three FGDs were conducted, bringing together CSOs and beneficiaries for collective conversations. Field trips were conducted to gather first-hand information from the FGDs and interviews. These meetings were conducted with association officials, facilitators, and staff of different partner institutions, including local associations, Youth Leadership Councils (YLCs), and other project beneficiaries. The FGDs and interview discussions provided relevant information to evaluate the following questions:
  - In which activities have the expected results of the program have been attained? Did the activities attain expected results and impact?
  - What are the principal factors that positively or negatively impacted the achievement of the project objectives?
  - What are the factors that favor opportunities of the viability of project success and that hinder project sustainability?

The FGDs focused primarily on obtaining information about impact indicators and also validated the previously-gathered data examined through statistical analysis. The analysis of these FGDs relied on Boyatzis' approach of thematic analysis and sought to identify patterns based on participants' responses.

#### 1.2 Surveys

A survey was distributed to beneficiaries of the project that focused on evaluating the project along the three fundamental axes of sustainability, impact, and effectiveness. This tool was used to measure the quality of impact that the project activities had on the beneficiaries' personal development. This analysis sought to understand any change in behavior, attitude, adherence to teachings, values, and the integration of learned skills into the participants' private and communal lives.



Figure 3 – Gender representation of respondents

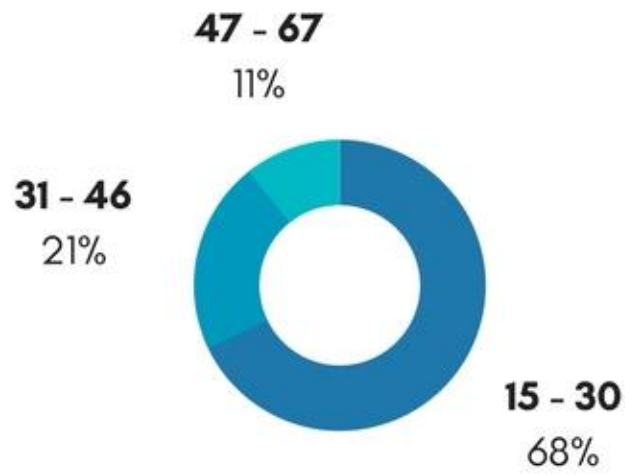


Figure 4 – Age representation of respondents

## Evaluation Results

### Impact

The first conclusion that arises from the survey and the focus group discussions with beneficiaries of the Caravan was a clear evolution in their views of the concepts of tolerance, diversity, violence, freedom of thought, and women's rights. In focus group discussions, women and youth expressed their desire for opportunities and spaces to spread the Caravan's impact at the community level, as they saw the goals and values of the Caravan as being important to their personal and communal lives.



Figure 5 - Has the Caravan changed your view on tolerance?

It is also important to emphasize the great shift in beneficiaries' willingness to discuss and interest in the subjects raised during the Caravan, including the status of women in their communities, the dangers of violent behavior, and the necessity for inclusion and tolerance. During the evaluation, the majority explained that Da'esh is no longer a taboo word for them. Previously, the same beneficiaries had feared to talk about Da'esh and violent extremism. The Caravan empowered them to discuss the subject among each other and their families in order to strengthen dialogue and raise awareness in their communities.

The beneficiaries were not entirely satisfied by the limited role played by religious leaders in the Caravan initiative. **Beneficiaries reported their wish to engage in religious-based discourse on the status of women and to further include religious leaders in the dissemination of an alternative discourse on women's rights.** Religious leaders' rhetoric on the status of women and women's rights is viewed as being largely obsolete today. Many stated their opinion that religious discourse in mosques must be more coherent and adapted to new developments on the status of women in Morocco. They believe that the role of Imams in this regard should be strengthened.

The instigation of dialogue on the status of women was well received by the beneficiaries. This could have been further optimized through the participation of young religious leaders active in at-risk neighborhoods, which would have helped to address a perceived structural barrier to improvements in women's status.





Figure 6 - Do you think that certain stereotypes surrounding women were defeated after the caravan?



Figure 7 – Do you think peer-to-peer education is effective in mitigating stereotypes?

The Caravan also allowed for greater self-expression among women and youth in marginalized communities through the creation of youth-led films and safe spaces for dialogue. **As a result, women and youth stated that they have developed a new status of themselves in their community and reported feeling increased self-esteem** due to their feelings of being valued during the “Women’s Caravan for Peace” initiative. This increase in self-esteem has positively impacted the sustainability of the project, as it will contribute to the emergence of capable and credible leaders within the group.



Figure 8 - Are men more important than women as a building block of society?



**Figure 9 - Do you think that co-existence between men and women is possible?**

Women beneficiaries confirmed that they have shared the messages and lessons learned from the Caravan's activities. The women of YLCs reported a strong desire among young women in their communities to benefit from the next edition of the Caravan.

Beneficiaries emphasized the impact of the films projected by the Caravan. **They explained that they were touched by the positive outlooks in the films and expressed compassion for the people who were led to violent extremism.** They saw the goal of the Caravan as transmitting positive messages and attempting to impact individuals who have been impacted by violent extremism. Many respondents noted that awareness-raising activities should seek to reach more at-risk people in order to have a greater impact. These targets may have been manipulated by violent extremism, but they remain part of the community and should not be abandoned or stigmatized.

*“When the Caravan arrived, I was already in the grip of violent extremism. Worse even. I was on the brink of joining D’aesh. Today, I have tools to judge and defend myself against this group and its destructive actions. I know that many young people like my-self have fallen and are still falling victim to their narrative. I hope they will also be affected by this alternative discourse, and that they will be saved as I was.” (Respondent from Tangier).*

Beneficiaries also suggested that the films of the Caravan could be more valuable if they were made available online. They expressed the desire to write and produce similar films on tolerance and peace and share these with their communities.



Figure 10 - If you were to produce a film, what subject would you choose?

### Sustainability

Many interviewees expressed their intention to continue to transmit the values and lessons of the Caravan to their families and their communities, including associations, colleagues, neighbors, classmates, and contacts on social networks. Some follow up artistic activities were conducted and organized to spread these messages; however, the lack of mechanisms to sufficiently implement these activities weakened their impact. Social media tools, such as Whatsapp, proved to be a good medium for communication among beneficiaries and was used by women in the “Women’s Caravan for Peace” initiative to express their viewpoints on equality, violence, tolerance, and the status of women. This is a new use of this social media tool for these beneficiaries, who had previously used social media primarily for casual exchanges and maintaining relationships with friends and family. Social media can thus contribute to the sustainability of the initiative by providing sustained platforms for communication among beneficiaries.

Caravan partners explained that they were now convinced of the importance of inclusive approaches to prevent violent extremism, and saw these approaches as being crucial to the sustainability of PVE initiatives. **They expressed that given that there is little to no cooperation between the different parties that are affected by the issue, the network established by the Caravan should be strengthened in order to synchronize efforts and build on the outcomes of the Caravan.**

### Effectiveness

Search-Morocco was successfully able to reach four cities in northern Morocco that are particularly vulnerable to violent extremism, including Nador, Al Hoceima, Tetouan and Tangier. Civil society actors in these four cities were dynamic partners in carrying out of the actions, training, workshops, and programmatic activities of the Caravan. Search-Morocco was able to target associations and organizations that are well established in the social fabric of disadvantaged populations who are vulnerable to violent extremist discourse. The programs, workshops, and trainings conducted within the framework of the Caravan were thus able to address the needs of these populations as a result of these partnerships with local CSOs. These partnerships were important to the effectiveness of implementation and should be maintained for future initiatives.

The youth-led films, which focused on transmitting messages of tolerance, diversity, and peace in order to prevent and counter violent extremism, were received with great interest by the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries emphasized that the film production and dissemination had a double impact:

1. The films raised awareness among youth and families related to the risks of violent extremism and D'aesh's radicalization strategies.
2. There was a notable resonance of the content and narratives of the films with the audience, which demonstrates the impact of the films on a personal level.

The beneficiaries who were involved in the filmmaking activities of the Caravan expressed their strong desire to continue future opportunities related to filmmaking and creative media. They also expressed that additional training and more time for completion would strengthen the impact of the films.

## Recommendations

- Ensure sustainability of the initiative by equipping local organizations and institutions with the tools to conduct follow-on initiatives in the long term.
- Create a network of partners on the subjects of the Caravan to improve discourse on tolerance, violence, and women's rights.
- Reproduce film production workshops for beneficiaries and expand upon them to include trainings on script writing, filming, and post-production in order to further improve the skills of beneficiaries and deepen the impact of trainings.
- Target at-risk populations in order to widen the scope of the trainings of the Caravan for those who face the threat of radicalization today, specifically marginalized youth.
- Produced films should be compiled and widely disseminated on social media platforms.

## Conclusions

- Opportunities to address relationships between men and women, the rights and status of women, Diversity, and tolerance are rare.
- The paralysis experienced by certain beneficiaries when asked to fill out the written questionnaire and in the focus group discussions could be evidence of their difficulty absorbing and spreading messages of alternative discourse, even among those who are well-educated but less accustomed to expressing their feelings, sharing their experiences, and more importantly, transmitting messages.

## Annex 1 - Identification of Interviewed Individuals

### Tetouan:

Respondent	Age	Profession	Man	Woman
WC4P 1	40	Educator		O
WC4P 2	47	Housewife		O
WC4P 3	23	Dressmaker		O
WC4P 4	49	Housewife		O
WC4P 5	37	Housewife		O
WC4P 6	67	Construction worker	O	
WC4P 7	24	**		O
WC4P 8	21	University Student		O
WC4P 9	27	Housewife		O
WC4P 10	42	President of an association		O
WC4P 11	**	**		O
WC4P 12	42	Housewife		O

### Al Hoceima:

Respondent	Age	Profession	Man	Woman
WC4P 13	50	President of an association		O
WC4P 14	35	**		O
WC4P 15	30	Intern		O

**Tangier**

First Name	Age	Profession	Man	Woman
WC4P 16	22	Beneficiaries of services offered by the association Karama		O
WC4P 17	17			O
WC4P 18	17			O
WC4P 19	18			O
WC4P 20	16			O
WC4P 21	15			O
WC4P 22	18			O
WC4P 23	17			O
WC4P 24	18			O
WC4P 25	20			O

WC4P 26	19			O
WC4P 27	14	Beneficiaries of services offered by the association Kafal		O
WC4P 28	22	University Student		O
WC4P 29	23	University Student	O	

## Annex 2 - Questionnaire – Women’s Caravan for Peace

The questionnaire must insist on the “Sustainability”, “Efficiency”, and “Impact” of the project.

Last Name:

First Name:

Age:

Profession:

City:

Woman

Man

1. How would you define yourself today:

- Religious extremism
- Tolerance
- Peaceful coexistence
- Peaceful resolution of conflict

1. Is the man as a building block of society more important than the woman?
2. Do you think a co-existence between man and woman is possible?
3. Did the Caravan change your view on tolerance?
4. How are you going to spread the lessons learned during the Caravan to your immediate environment?
5. How are you making use of multimedia to increase your tolerance?
6. How are you making use of multimedia to prevent violent extremism?
7. What are the messages that you captured after having seen the films produced by SFCG?
8. Did these films have a positive impact on you?
9. If you were to create a new film, what subject would you choose?
  - Women
  - Violent extremism
  - Tolerance
  - Diversity
  - Other :
10. What activities allow you today to have a dialogue with different beneficiaries of the project?
11. How could religious leaders help explain to the larger society that women have the right to emancipate themselves?



12. Do you think that certain stereotypes on the subject of the woman were eliminated after the Caravan?
13. Do you think that peer-to-peer education is an efficient method to confront stereotypes?
14. Has the Caravan provided you with tools for an alternative discourse? If yes, which ones?

### Annex 3 – Associations

<b>Nador</b>	<b>Al Hoceima</b>	<b>Tétouan</b>	<b>Tanger</b>
Dar Al Oum CECODEL	Listening center Association A.E.O	Youth center for youngleaders	Karama

### Annex 4 – Focus Group Participants

<b>Nador</b>	<b>Al Hoceima</b>	<b>Tétouan</b>	<b>Tanger</b>
Youth Association Dar Al Oum	Youth in listening centers	Members of youth leadership centers	Beneficiaries of activities organized by the association, Karama