



ENDLINE STUDY

Fostering Social Stability through Strategic Communications

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Abbreviations

3RP	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
COVID-19	Coronavirus-19
CSSF	Conflict, Stability and Security Fund
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBP	British Pound Sterling
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Directorate/ Development Assistance Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
Search	Search for Common Ground
SSI	Semi-Structured Interview
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
USD	United States Dollars
Zinc	Zinc Network

Executive Summary

Search for Common Ground (Search) commissioned Trias Consult Ltd., to undertake a final evaluation of the “*Fostering Social Stability Through Strategic communications*” project (June 1, 2019 – March 31, 2021) in March 2021. The following report provides the findings from this external evaluation process. This evaluation was designed to assess the extent to which the project has progressed against its objective and expected results based on the OECD/DAC criteria and across its three pillars of: (1) A Journey to Understanding, (2) Campaign to amplify the Champions’ journey, and (3) Behaviour change communication (BCC) with powerful influencers in media and government.

The evaluation extended over a period of two weeks commencing on the 15th of March 2021 and combining both primary and secondary data collection and analysis. This evaluation is laid out with the following structure: Introduction; Methodology; Limitations; Findings and Recommendations. The subsequent annexes include; data collection tools, list of key information, interview respondents, evaluation questions, timeline, field schedule, key documents list, evaluations biography and the evaluations ToR.

Methodology

The purpose of this evaluation was: to support Search in understanding how this project impacted tensions between host communities and refugees, alongside understanding the perceptions of both groups of the project’s aims. It assessed the overall success and effectiveness of the project in order to inform Search’s future programme design. The evaluation’s objectives are as follows:

1. Assessing both the unintended/intended outcomes and determine Search's contribution to identified changes (according to the logical framework);
2. Updating the Project’s logframe and indicators with End-line values;
3. Assessing the project's Relevant, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Impact, and Sustainability as per the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation criteria;
4. Assessing the changes in knowledge and perceptions of the "Other";
5. Identifying good practices, compiling lessons learned throughout the project and drawing recommendations to inform future programme design;
6. Assessing the effectiveness of local grassroots activities in local communities

The project was assessed on the basis of standardized evaluation criteria and questions. This was based on the OECD/DAC criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. The evaluation determined the merit, worth or significance of the intervention alongside, providing a comprehensive picture of the intervention's process, implementation and results. Evaluation dimensions and analytical questions were derived from the framework, taking into account cross-cutting issues, such as gender. The views expressed in this report are the independent and candid professional opinion of the evaluators.

The evaluation was guided by the following ethical considerations:

1. **Openness:** of information given, to the highest possible degree to all involved parties;
2. **Public access:** to the results when there are not special considerations against this;
3. **Broad participation:** the interested parties should be involved where relevant and possible;

4. **Reliability and independence:** the evaluation should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy;
5. **Confidentiality and privacy;**
6. **Conflict sensitivity.**

Constraints

Context: The evaluation of the impact of this project was heavily affected by the deteriorating context in Lebanon across the programming period. A series of crises affected intra- and inter-communal relations from beginning to end of the project (2019-2021). This made it challenging to draw conclusions isolating the impact of the project, particularly on the national level. Due to the magnitude of the crisis in Lebanon and the dramatically changing context, which, given the constraints on time as described below rendered it extremely challenging to assess the impact of the project independently. Although these crises were occurring before the project began, to some extent their impacts are: a) likely to have changed over the cycle of the project, and b) are extremely difficult to quantify.

Baseline: Although there was a baseline study conducted by Exigo at the beginning of the project and several monitoring reports by Zinc, these only focused on developing a conflict analysis at the wider community level. There was no baseline data related directly to the beneficiaries who participated in the project activities, such as the Champions and the Dialogue Team members. This was mitigated by the design of the evaluation's methodology: by including relevant questions in the focus group discussions (FGDs) and survey as part of the data collection tools relating to the changes observed before and after participating in the project.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): During the evaluation's inception phase, four FGDs were planned with groups of six Champions each who participated in the project's activities. All Champions were individually invited to participate in the group discussions, however, eight failed to attend due to different reasons. It was decided, after consultations with Search's project team, to conduct an extra FGD with community members who took part in the initiatives.

Survey: The original number of dialogue sessions' participants shared by Search was 231. On this basis the sample for the survey was determined. However, only 141 names were shared by the team of which 15 were duplicates (attended dialogue sessions with more than one facilitator). Despite this, the evaluation was able to reach the intended target of 93.

Semi Structured Interviews (SSIs): In some cases, the focal points the evaluation team were directed to by Search were not the individuals that were in direct contact with the Champions throughout the implementation phase of the initiatives. Therefore, the team conducted SSIs with the members in these municipalities who were in direct contact with the Champions. This ensured the information gathered facilitated robust data collection.

Coaches: The Coaches' perspectives were not taken into account in this evaluation due to the limited timeframe and the prioritisation of other stakeholders as the Coaches' component was removed in Year 2.

Subnational Representativeness: It was not possible to stratify the results based on geographical area due to sample size limitations. The sample selected was limited by a sub-national representativeness whereby

most of the areas had 10 to 15 participants surveyed in total, which is not a large enough sample to draw significant conclusions from, per area.

Evaluation Schedule: The timeframe allocated for this evaluation was compressed to four weeks from initiation to submission of the report. Given the short period provided, methodological decisions were necessarily taken to limit the scope of this study. Despite these limitations on scope, the methods used in this evaluation permit robust findings.

Key Findings

Findings on Relevance: The project was in line with the relevant global, regional and national strategic frameworks. It directly fed into the global goals of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and bringing communities together to work on reducing inter- and intra-communal tensions. Additionally, it contributed to the main Regional Crisis Response Plan (3RP) strategic regional direction and was aligned with the strategic priority of the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and the Social Stability sector outcomes. As per the perception of all stakeholders involved in the project evaluation the project was relevant to the needs of the targeted communities. Having said that, the Champions did mention that their communities would still prioritise meeting basic needs above all else. Though, given the context, this project was still deemed relevant.

The trainings that the Champions received was perceived as useful in general. The Champions were positive about the skills these trainings equipped them with, such as: the ability to deal with tension and conflict by using appropriate communication skills. Although the overall satisfaction from the trainings was high, the Champions could have benefitted from a more targeted preparation and regular follow ups throughout the project. This is particularly important due to the rapidly changing context.

Regarding the dialogue sessions and initiatives, and although some of these activities included people with disability and other minorities, inclusiveness was done on an ad hoc basis and was not based on a pre-set selection criterion.

Findings on Effectiveness and Impact: Overall, the project was able to achieve its objectives and reached its outcomes at different levels. The project built a network of peacebuilders (the Champions) in six governorates across the county. While positive impacts were observed at the level of the Dialogue Teams and Champions, the impact on the wider and national community is more uncertain, especially in a fragile context like Lebanon. The dialogue sessions helped to change the perspectives and erode stereotypes of participating members as well as having a positive impact on the participants immediate network (friends, family).

During the evaluation, no indications of project-related negative results at the impact level have been observed beyond the ones related to the OneAct (which was perceived as a platform serving one group or agenda i.e., the Syrians or the Beirut blast, which was not its aim).

Findings on Efficiency: The evaluation team reported that there was good value for money throughout this project, despite challenges in staffing and the budget requirements which reflected in some delays in launching the project. Though some partnerships have demonstrated good value for money, other, international partnerships, were more challenging to justify.

The evaluation team found that the implementer was attentive and able to identify underspending at an early stage and re-allocated funds accordingly and efficiently.

Findings on Sustainability: The evaluation demonstrated that the skills and experience gained by the Champions and Dialogue Teams is sustainable. Although, these skills and experience will be utilised differently. It is evident that the relationships created within the Dialogue Teams have continued beyond the project itself, which is an indicator of the wider impact and sustainability of these sessions. It is challenging to predict how these factors affect a change in the perception of the ‘Other’ in a context such as Lebanon. Subsequently, making it difficult to draw conclusions on the sustainability of the project on the wider community.

A number of initiatives can be seen as sustainable due to the type of the project (e.g. the hiking trail initiative in Bekfayya). These initiatives brought together people with different identities and demonstrated how they can work together and collectively benefit the community. However, not all of the initiatives proved to be as entrenched within the community and therefore may not be seen in the long-run or beyond the project itself.

Recommendations

Recommendations related to design:

1. Ensure the project's method and approach is **inclusive to all marginalized and vulnerable groups**, including LGBTQ+ by developing a clear set of selection criteria to ensure representation of these groups.
2. **Increase the initial target of the Dialogue Teams** to account for potential dropouts throughout the project.
3. During the project's inception phase: **introduce the community stakeholders** (leaders, activists and municipalities) to the project goals and outcomes and inform the wider community thoroughly about the dialogue sessions and initiatives and the aim behind such interventions through an outreach campaign.
4. Project **impact level indicators should be realistic**, especially when aiming to reach the wider community. Include a holistic approach by partnering with local and national authorities (ministries and municipalities) and networking with grassroots organizations that are in direct contact with the targeted populations.

Recommendations related to implementation:

1. **Conduct a baseline assessment with relevant indicators, targets, and means of verification** with target populations (Champions and Dialogue Teams).
2. **Conduct refresher trainings for the Champions** on specific topics related to enhancing their peacebuilding and facilitation skills. In addition, conduct monthly field observations of dialogue sessions.
3. Develop a more robust **platform, and guidance on its use, to build a safe space for Champions to discuss** ideas, challenges, lessons learned and achievements. Although the evaluation team acknowledges there was a WhatsApp group created with this purpose in mind, this was not sufficient in collecting and addressing all grievances.

4. **Maintain and make more regular coaching support for the Champions:** Either until the end of the project or until the champions feel comfortable enough to work independently.
5. Develop **observation tools for the Dialogue Teams and monitor the session regularly:** as such activities will allow the identification of future champions and peacebuilding advocates.
6. **Pilot the social media** content for OneAct campaign with a small group of diverse people.
7. **Consider the use of additional social media platforms in the communication/campaign component:** Platforms such as Twitter, alongside Facebook and Instagram.

Recommendations related to efficiency:

1. **Explore different and simpler processes and ways of payment for field workers (the Champions)** and allow flexibility or waivers in exceptional circumstances, such as: developing SoPs on field financial management.
2. **Consider adjusting internal financial reporting processes and improved mechanisms for quality assurance. This includes adjusting processes for processing sub-contracts, timesheets and invoices.** This will improve the overall management and efficient delivery of the project.

Recommendations related to sustainability:

1. **Sustain a link between the Champions, Coaches, and Search beyond the end of the project to allow for sustainability of impact.**
2. **Put in place at the design stage plans targeting increased retention of Dialogue Teams.**
3. **Scope of the project stakeholders should be widened** to include local and national authorities (municipalities and ministries): as part of the holistic approach to reach a wider community.
4. **Increase working with local organizations as partners, including civil societies and choose local partners opposed to external/international partners.**
5. Develop **observation tools for the social media campaigns:** in order to better understand and identify reasons behind the negative reaction and comments.
6. **Maintain the diversity in the OneAct campaign as much as possible even in times of crises.**
7. **Identify community initiatives in advance and ensure they all strive toward the shared goal of tension reduction.**
8. **Conduct community initiatives in the same area where the dialogue sessions are being implemented** and encourage more the dialogues members to be part of it. Interviews suggested that these community initiatives did take place, but they did not include the same people each time.

1. Background Information

Introduction

During 2019-2020, Lebanon endured multiple crises, including a massive explosion in Beirut's port, an economic collapse, rising political instability, a series of ongoing civil demonstrations, and the COVID-19 pandemic, all of which endangered residents' basic rights and access to basic services.

The protests that began on October 17th, 2019 were an ongoing series of civil demonstrations in Lebanon, initially triggered by planned taxes on gasoline, tobacco, and online phone calls (such as through WhatsApp). However, they quickly expanded into a country-wide condemnation of the sectarian rule, the stagnant economy, unemployment, endemic corruption in the public sector and legislation¹. The aforementioned developments in this period were coupled with an increase in inter-communal tensions. As per Quarter 3 Social Stability Sector Dashboard, inter and intra-communal relations deteriorated across the country. In July 2020 18% of Lebanese people were reporting positive relations among themselves as opposed to 41% last year². In parallel, 17% of the population (host and displaced) reported positive relations between Syrian refugees and Lebanese (with 23% reported last year)³.

Lebanon's political class has still failed to form a government, seven months after the resignation of the Prime Minister amid outrage over the port blast and despite the country grappling with an economic crisis (that has seen the Lebanese pound lose 80% of its value since 2019)⁴. With the state and the economy in shreds, Lebanon has seen a trend in political violence, heightening anxieties about a return to the bloody days of the civil war.⁵ The deadlock in the formation of a government has contributed to greater uncertainty around the country's economic prospects.

The immediate social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside the deterioration in Lebanon's social and economic situation since August 2019, have risen to the top of the public's agenda⁶. The likelihood of the removal of financial assistance on imports has further exacerbated these anxieties. Thus, how the government will manage the response to the pandemic and economic crisis in the coming months is likely to have downstream effects on social stability.

These successive crises in the country, including effects from the Syrian civil war, have diminished livelihoods and coping abilities and increased vulnerability within refugee and host communities. An estimated 23% of Lebanese people face extreme poverty and 91% of displaced Syrian people live on <USD 2.90 a day⁷. Competition over scarce resources, including jobs and services, has created further tension. Average household debt for Syrian refugees has increased by USD 100 per year since 2017⁸. Underlying frustrations are growing with the protracted nature of the crisis, inter-communal relations between displaced persons from Syria and Lebanese communities are deteriorating and positive inter-communal relations are at the lowest point since the beginning of the tensions monitoring in 2017, particularly in vulnerable

¹ Healing Lebanon A Study of Human Rights Violations, Corruption, Inequality

² LCRP 2020 Updates

³ ARK-UNDP Regular Perception Surveys on Social Tensions throughout Lebanon Wave IX Narrative Report

⁴ <https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20210318-lebanon-s-political-class-squabbling-over-a-field-of-ruins-as-economic-crisis-rages>

⁵ <https://globalriskinsights.com/2021/03/lebanon-state-paralysis-is-fomenting-political-violence/>

⁶ ARK-UNDP Regular Perception Surveys on Social Tensions throughout Lebanon Wave IX Narrative Report

⁷ LCRP 2021 Updates

⁸ Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR) 2019

localities⁹. According to the latest statistics from the LCRP 2021, the percentage of negative relationships¹⁰ doubled from 2017 (21%) to 2020 reaching 43%. Noting that almost half of this increase was observed between July and August 2021 following the devastating blast.

The tensions between the communities exist in a complex landscape of sectarian and political differences within the Lebanese communities themselves, in addition to the overarching economic and health anxieties. The rising frustrations within the host communities translate into increasingly hostile living environments, especially for the refugees, as 17.1% of the displaced Syrians report having experienced verbal harassment, compared to 3.8% of the Lebanese¹¹. In addition to increased inter-communal violence in 2020 (several incidents led to evictions, physical assault and confrontations) studies highlight a loss of social fabric in areas with large refugee populations. Whereby different demographic groups feel somewhat powerless to enact change in their communities and are displaying competitive attitudes in interpersonal relations¹².

A response to these problems was needed to address the conflict dynamics and tensions narrative at the local level. By engaging the general public and working with powerful influencers (including the government and media), Search aimed to shift towards more positive norms around social stability, by using behaviour change to achieve a measurable change in perceptions, attitudes and relationships between Syrian and Lebanese constituents as well as intra-Lebanese tensions. Therefore, Search aimed to reduce tensions amongst and between host communities and refugees by shifting narratives and perceptions away from blaming out-groups and towards the humanisation of the “Other” and a sense of individual agency.

Project Overview

Project: At a Glance

Project Title	Fostering Social Stability through Strategic Communications
Commissioning Party	Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF)
Lead Executing Agency	Search for Common Ground (Search)
Implementing Partners	Zinc Network (Zinc), Seenaryo and CodeBrave
Project Duration	21 months
Project Start Date	June 1, 2019
Project End Date	March 31, 2021
Project Locations	Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Akkar, North, West and Central Bekaa, and Baalbek-El Hermel
Target Group	24 Local Champions 240 Dialogue Teams
Project Objectives	To increase collaboration and positive interaction through dialogue and joint activities between refugees and host communities, and;

⁹ LCRP 2021 Updates

¹⁰ Language used in the survey where respondents are asked how they would characterize their relations with refugees, on a positive to negative scale.

¹¹ LCRP 2021 Updates

¹² LCRP 2021 Updates

	To shift their public perceptions towards greater trust and respect in targeted communities across Lebanon.
Project Impact	Reduced tensions at a local level amongst and between host communities and refugees in Lebanon
Funding Amount	2,099,806 GBP

Project Summary

The ‘*Fostering Social Stability through Strategic Communications*’ project brings into consortium Search, Zinc¹³ as an associate member, Seenaryo¹⁴ and CodeBrave¹⁵, in addition to 4Production¹⁶ (4Production later dropped out of the project in Year 2). All organizations have existing staff capacity in Lebanon and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, significant technical expertise in peacebuilding and communications and experience implementing programs to promote social stability. The project worked towards an overall impact of: reducing tensions at a local level amongst and between host communities and refugees in Lebanon.

This goal was supported by two major objectives:

- (1) To increase collaboration and positive interaction through dialogue and joint activities between refugees and host communities, and;
- (2) Shift the public perceptions towards greater trust and respect in targeted communities across Lebanon.

In order to achieve these objectives, the project revolved around the following Theory of Change (ToC):

“If we (Search) cultivate local-level dialogues and narratives that foster increased trust and respect amongst and between host communities and refugees in Lebanon and amplify and elevate these voices and narratives through relevant and diverse channels, then we (Search) can reduce tensions amongst and between host communities and refugees because we will have shifted perceptions and narratives away from blaming out-groups and towards the humanisation of the ‘Other’ and a sense of individual agency”.

¹³ Zinc Network is a communications agency based in the UK that helps communities, brands, and governments drive positive social change. Its work is developed through a collaborative and iterative design process based around the principles of understanding, empowering, and connecting people.

¹⁴ Seenaryo is a leading specialist in theatre and play-based learning with marginalised communities in Lebanon and Jordan. Having reached 67,000 children, youth and women to date, they use theatre and play to transform education and equip people with the tools to collaborate, think critically and build transferable skills. Seenaryo is one of Expo 2020 Dubai’s 120 Global Innovators, has lectured for New York University on their Teacher Fellowship, and has been featured in Al Jazeera and Prospect Magazine.

¹⁵ CodeBrave mission is to support the self-empowerment of young people through tech education. Education is a fundamental right. In the 21st century, we believe tech education should be, too. For centuries, literacy has empowered individuals to improve their lives and get better jobs. Digital literacy is now the passport to participating and thriving in the modern world.

¹⁶ 4Productions is a production company that handles the development and physical production of performing arts, films, radio ads and programs, video clips, theatre shows, and television programs. Services provided by 4Productions include corporate identity consultations, content development, production and post production services, grading, colour correction and media training.

The project targeted a broad range of stakeholders including refugees, members of the host communities and municipalities. The project team recruited and selected 24 Local Champions to facilitate dialogue sessions and activities at the community level. The recruitment process aimed at targeting the local community members (Dialogue Teams) and demonstrating demographic and geographic diversity. Each group of Champions was based in a different municipality (four in each of the targeted localities: Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Tripoli, Akkar, Zahle Baalbeck). The project aimed to engage 240 community members, selected by the Champions, who would participate in dialogue sessions and initiatives at community level.

Since the start of the project, Lebanon has faced remarkable economic, health and socio-political challenges leading to a dramatic change in the context of the country and culminated in delays and challenges for this project:

- **October 17 2019 Events:** Lebanon has seen mass anti-government demonstrations since October 17th, 2019, when the government announced a slew of new taxes. The countrywide protests evolved into expressions of anger against the entire political establishment, whom protesters blame for the country's dire economic crisis.
- **Economic Crisis:** The Lebanese Pound has lost 80% of its value since October 2019¹⁷, eroding people's ability to access basic goods, including food, shelter, and healthcare. Vulnerable groups, including refugees and migrant workers, have been hit particularly hard by the economic crisis.
- **COVID-19 Outbreak:** On February 21, 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was identified in Lebanon. Given the significant resource challenges in the country, the Government of Lebanon's approach was centred around early aggressive containment to allow for building capacity to respond to COVID-19 cases.
- **Beirut Port Blast:** On August 4, 2020, a massive blast in Beirut's seaport devastated the city killing almost 200 people, injuring more than 6,000, and leaving 300,000 people without shelter.

This shifting context required the Search project team to re-visit the activities in Year Two, with the aim that the suggested changes in the methodology and approach in implementing specific activities, mainly falling under Objective II, will lead to the overall impact and intended goal of the project.

Thus, with the aim to achieve the first objective of the project, the activities included: mapping of the media and communications practices to understand dynamics of discourse, key influencers of messages and local tension points. Based on the latter, identify target audiences, vulnerable groups, and supportive media outlets and government officials to target. The project also conducted an analysis to understand the triggers that cause tension for rapid response.

Under its second objective, the project launched a public call for applications for Local Champions in five identified locations, as well as Beirut/national level, and trained the 24 selected Local Champions on dialogue and strategic communications. Each Champion had to create a 10-person Community Action Team holding with them dialogue sessions on core issues and identifying community actions to promote collaboration (funding provided by project up to \$2,000). Collaborative activities between communities were documented (through film, print, etc.). An engagement plan for media and government authorities, including a calendar of press events and regular consultations with municipal authorities was also planned as part of this objective. Additionally, they planned to conduct a media engagement and perception analysis for gender dynamics, communications practices, and trends, etc., alongside the creation of an editorial

¹⁷ The lights go out on Lebanon's economy as financial collapse accelerates
https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/the-lights-go-out-on-lebanons-economy-as-financial-collapse-accelerates/2020/07/19/3acfc33e-bb97-11ea-97c1-6cf116ffe26c_story.html

newsroom team made up of the Champions to lead the campaign. A media monitoring for attitude and perception changes resulting from activities also fell under this objective. A dissemination campaign (videos, online media, social media messages, WhatsApp broadcasts, etc.) drawn from dialogue sessions and stories identified by Champions, as well as additional content produced by consortium was planned. A national event, with ministerial buy-in, at the end of first year for mainstream media to present results of the campaign and the work of the Champions, some lessons learned and best practices were intended to be hosted. Part of the activities included: conducting regular local analysis intended to inform rapid response to negative incidents or rumours involving refugees; creation of a rapid response team comprising Local Champions, municipal authorities, other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and; conducting training on rapid response and rumour management.



Figure 1 Project's outputs adaptations over the project timeline (Years 1 and 2)

2. Methodology

This evaluation was guided by the Terms of Reference (ToR) (Appendix 9) and the minutes from the kick-off meeting with Search. It was based on internationally agreed evaluation principles and good practices, such as the OECD/DAC. The evaluation adopted a mixed-method design, evidence-based approach, combining qualitative and quantitative components, coupled with a desk and a literature review (Appendix 7: Documents Consulted).

According to the ToR, the evaluation's objectives were:

1. Assessing both the unintended/intended outcomes and determine Search's contribution to identified changes (according to the logical framework);
2. Updating the Project's logframe and indicators with End-line values;
3. Assessing the project's Relevant, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Impact, and Sustainability as per the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) evaluation criteria;
4. Assessing the changes in knowledge and perceptions of the "Other";
5. Identifying good practices, compiling lessons learned throughout the project and drawing recommendations to inform future programme design;
6. Assessing the effectiveness of local grassroots activities in local communities

On the 1st of March 2021, the evaluation team reached out to stakeholders across all the project locations including: Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Akkar, North Lebanon, West and Central Bekaa, and Baalbeck-El Hermel - North Bekaa.

To meet the objectives of the evaluation, an Evaluation Framework was developed. This Framework was made in consultation with Search and is described in the Inception Report. The framework adopted five domains for the evaluation, including Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability. Within each of these evaluation criteria, the framework detailed key issues to be addressed: what to look for; data and information sources; and data collection methods. In looking at the issues to address, a series of questions were developed which guided the work during the assessment process (Appendix 4).

Key Evaluation Questions

Relevance Primary Questions

- To what extent did the intervention's objectives and design respond to the targeted communities needs and priorities related to reducing tensions amongst and between Syrian and Lebanese communities?
- Have experiences from previous interventions been used successfully to improve the quality of the project?
- To what extent is the project concept in line with Search's and the donor's country strategy?
- To what extent is the chosen project concept geared to the core problems and needs of the target group(s)?
- What changes have occurred during project implementation? How were the changes dealt with regarding the project concept?

Effectiveness and Impact Primary Questions

- To what extent has intervention been effective in achieving its results and planned outcomes?
- What unintended outcomes (positive and negative) emerged from project implementation?
- What factors (positive and negative) have had the greatest influence on the achievement of results?
- To what extent has the intervention been able to contribute to longer-term effects (impact?) To what extent is the intervention likely to produce impact prospects?
- Was the level of partnership(s) appropriate to support the effective achievement of the intervention's objectives?
- Did the project manage to reach its planned targets? What were the enabling factors and the hindering factors? (i.e., enablers and spoilers).
- Was the project able to adapt to the challenges created by the: (1) Lebanon financial and economic crisis; (2) political instability; (3) the COVID-19 pandemic; (4) the Beirut Port Blast?
- To what extent have the agreed project outputs been achieved, measured against the output indicators? Are additional indicators needed to reflect the outputs adequately?

Efficiency and Value of Money Primary Questions

- To what extent have resources been allocated and utilized in an efficient manner to achieve value for money?
- To what extent could the outputs have been maximized with the same number of resources and under the same framework conditions and with the same or better quality (maximum principle)?

Sustainability Primary Questions

- To what extent are the benefits of the program likely to sustain in the long term? What are the main factors behind this?
- What has the project done to ensure that the results can be sustained in the medium to long term by the partners themselves?
- If no follow-on measure exists: What is the project's exit strategy? How are lessons learnt for Search and partners prepared and documented?

Cross Cutting Issues Primary Questions

- How and to what degree did the project adapt in response to monitoring data and contextual factors? To what extent have adaptations resulting from reflections and learning activities been effective?
- To what extent have gender issues, accessibility and inclusiveness of persons with disabilities and people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds been taken into consideration in design and implementation and what are the effects?

Data Collection

The evaluation followed a mixed-method design targeting the main stakeholders in the project, comprising of:

1. **A desk review of key project documents, and a literature review of relevant documents:** Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020 (2021 Updates), Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR) 2020, and Lebanon:

Social Stability Dashboards, in addition Search and their partners' country strategies and Zink reports. (Appendix 7: Documents Consulted)

2. A quantitative research element entailed of:

- a) A survey based on a pre-structured questionnaire (Appendix 1.1) to participating dialogue teams. A total of 93 participants (56 females and 37 males) responded to the questionnaires out of 126 provided by Search (74%),
- b) Quantitative questionnaire (Appendix 1.4), conducted prior to the FGDs, with 14 out of the total sample of 24 Champions, and;
- c) Capitalization Tool (Appendix 1.3) that was completed by the participants and collected after the SSIs with key stakeholders, allowing them to share anything they might have missed during the main interview.

All quantitative data was collected through phone interviews and encoded in a pre-drafted excel sheet specifically set for this evaluation.

3. A qualitative element comprised of:

- a) FGDs with 16 champions and six community members who participated in the community initiatives. A total of four FGDs were conducted via Zoom and telephone reaching in total 10 females and 12 male participants. The FGDs followed a pre-set questionnaire guide (Appendix 1.4), and;
- b) 16 SSIs with Search key project staff, donor focal point, partners' staff members and municipalities (Appendix 1.5 and Appendix 2).

All data tools used were approved by Search. Verbal consent for participation in the evaluation was obtained from all the participants, and data was collected only on those who consented. The FGDs and SSIs were recorded when approved by participants. Only one FGD was not recorded as one member did not consent. The data was then transcribed and translated into English and used for analysis. In this case, key notes were taken by a designated note taker.

As mentioned above, the evaluation team conducted a review of project documents, reports and other relevant literature. A list of documents that were consulted during the evaluation is available at the end of this report (Appendix 7).

Desk Review:

During the evaluation's inception phase, project documentation and contextual literature were reviewed, and existing quantitative and qualitative monitoring data analysed. The OECD/DAC criteria and questions applied in the analysis focus on purpose, credibility, accuracy and validity of the documents, including interests (bias) of the authors. The evaluators recorded which documents have already been reviewed and which new data needed to be collected (Appendix 7). At the same time, the team examined whether and to what extent the documents could be used for triangulation.

Quantitative Component:

The quantitative survey (Appendix 1): The selection of the 93 Dialogue Teams to take part in the quantitative survey was done randomly and proportionally to the initial geographical distribution targeted and covered by the project, as well as ensuring a proportionate gender and nationality distribution as per the initial

sample. This was done from the initial full list of the dialogue teams shared by Search. The surveys were conducted over the phone. The participants who did not answer were called up to four times at varying times and on different days. Those who did not answer after these attempts were replaced by the next person on the initial pre-selected random list. Survey data was entered into an excel sheet. The survey used a pre-drafted questionnaire by the evaluation team, piloted and adapted accordingly before the start of the actual data collection.

The questionnaire: the questionnaire was completed by 14 of the total 24 Champions. The evaluators had initially planned to target the totality of the Champions in order to have representative results, however due to the number of Champions who dropped out of the program or others who were not able to take part of the survey (work or education related reasons), the team were only able to reach out to 14. All data was collected through phone interviews the day before their FGD took place, using a pre-drafted questionnaire. The data was encoded in an excel database.

Qualitative Component:

SSIs and FGDs: 16 SSIs and four FGDs were conducted using questionnaire guides pre-drafted by the evaluation team. The FGD questionnaire was translated and conducted in Arabic, whereby the SSIs were conducted in English. The data collected through the interviews was transcribed and translated where relevant. The researcher used the qualitative content analysis approach whereby concise contents derived from the collected qualitative data with typical and common aspects were worked out along the lines of the main evaluation questions.

The capitalization tool: The capitalization tool was a self-completed questionnaire; this was shared by email with key project stakeholders and completed by all six of them. All were completed following the SSIs. This gave another opportunity for key project staff to share any information they might have forgotten to share with the evaluation team at the time of the interview.

In order to ensure high quality data collection, seven data collection team members supported the process. Each of them was experienced in their respective domain. Nonetheless, they were all briefed before the data collection on the aim of the project, the objectives of the data collection in question, confidentiality and the respective questionnaires. The quantitative survey questionnaire was piloted and adjusted accordingly before the start of the actual data collection. The data was collected in the native language of the interviewee (English or Arabic). Therefore, all the guided and pre-drafted questionnaires used with the participants (Champions and Dialogue Teams) were drafted in English and translated in Arabic. Translation was provided by a qualified translator specialized in social cohesion and peacebuilding. All the data collection process was supervised by the Evaluation Manager.

All raw data as well as recordings were shared with Search as part of the evaluation process and agreement.

Data Quality Control

To maximize the quality of data and mitigate the risks and constraints inherent in each individual data collection tool, the evaluation team used several processes to check and clean the data:

- Data deriving from stakeholder interviews was coded using the questions in the evaluation matrix and stored using a tailored Excel template dedicated to interview data. This allowed for the retrieval and analysis of interview data by question and by group of stakeholders;
- The excel database where the quantitative data was encoded was set including validation lists and conditional formatting to reduce human error;
- Document review data relied, as much as possible, on the respective sources to ensure accuracy.

Data analysis

Different aspects were used in the data analysis process:

Quantitative data: Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics and stratified where relevant and feasible. Whenever relevant and applicable, comparison between “before the project” and “after the project”, as reported by the participants for some of the questions in this evaluation to assess change, were done using appropriate statistical tests. A p-value of <0.05 was considered significant. Where relevant, and for the questions with coded answers categories of: ‘Completely Agree’, ‘Agree Somehow’, ‘Don’t Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Disagree Somewhat’, ‘Completely Disagree’, positive categories were considered (‘Completely Agree’ and ‘Agree Somehow’) and grouped together under ‘Agree’; while negative responses (‘Disagree Somewhat’ and ‘Completely Disagree’) were grouped together under ‘Disagree’. Unless all categories were shown or indicated otherwise, this is how the results should read when presenting “agree” versus “disagree” findings. Quantitative analysis was done using EpiInfo 7.

Qualitative data: The collected data from the interviews and various other sources were analyzed, processed and represented demonstrating the key themes of the evaluation matrix. Qualitative content analysis was used. Categories and contents, following the evaluation themes, were cross checked in order to triangulate between different data sources.

Observations: Observations supplemented the interviews and FGDs. They allowed additional assessments of group dynamics. These observations were validated by a modified qualitative content analysis which included: a description of the observation thematic arrangement, assessment and comparison with other observations. All qualitative analysis was done manually.

To draw reliable conclusions, the findings of the qualitative data collection and existing quantitative and qualitative data from Search’s monitoring system was combined and reciprocally verified. The team also triangulated to the extent possible the findings captured by Zinc’s Social Media Analysis Reports throughout the project and their final report that was shared mid-March 2021 (Wave 4).

Key Stakeholders

As part of this study, the evaluators were interested in learning stakeholders’ perceptions and collaborations around the project activities. This included what did/did not work well in order to increase collaboration and positive interaction through dialogue, initiatives and joint activities between refugees and host communities. Therefore, the team reached out to the following stakeholders:



Figure 2 List of different stakeholders interviewed as part of the project evaluation

Constraints

The evaluation faced some restraints and the findings in this report should therefore be viewed in the light of these restraints.

Data Collection Constraints

Baseline: Although there was a baseline study conducted at the beginning of the project by Exigo and several other monitoring reports throughout the project by Zinc¹⁸, these only reflected on the conflict analysis and the power dynamics at the wider community level in the areas where the project was anticipated to be implemented and not the project direct participants. The gaps in the baseline were: outcomes-related indicators that were collected prior to implementation (e.g., type of dynamics, level of tensions and interaction between the Dialogue Teams before implementation, the level of knowledge of the Champions in terms of peacebuilding and conflict resolution before the start of the project). The baseline data collected by Exigo did not allow for a comparison of these various components between the beginning and end of the project, as baseline data related directly to the beneficiaries who participated in the project activities, such as the Champions and the Dialogue Team members were not available. . This was mitigated by the evaluation team during the design of the methodology, whereby the team included, when relevant, questions relating the changes observed between beginning and end of the project.

FGDs: During the inception phase of the evaluation, four FGDs were planned to be conducted with groups of six champions each who participated in the project’s activities (trainings, initiatives, and dialogue sessions), with the aim to collect qualitative data on the impact of the project, as well as their feedback on the trainings content, implementation and Search’s support to them. All Champions were individually invited to participate in the group discussions, however, three of them were dropouts from the project (as shared by Search), one unable to make it to the discussion, and another four partially confirmed their

¹⁸ For example, data was collected on the following indicators: % Increase in awareness of and support for local initiatives between refugees and host communities within 1 year of implementation
% increase of community members who see the ‘other’ as a partner in responding to local issues and willingness to collaborate, disaggregated by segment.

participation but ended up not joining due to their work or university schedule. It was decided, after consultations with Search's project team, to conduct an extra FGD with community members who took part in the initiatives. However, the team faced some difficulties in inviting them to Zoom, Skype, MS teams or Google meetings, as they were all unfamiliar with the platforms. The team decided to split the FGD into two and conduct these over the phone. The FGDs were split into male and female participant groups for gender sensitivity reasons. This was to ensure a do no harm approach was taken with every participant.

Champions who dropped-out of the project: Those were overlooked as the evaluation team was not made aware, during the inception phase, that some of the Champions had dropped-out. Therefore, the results of this evaluation did not take these Champions' insights into account. If included, this could have brought in a different perspective related to reasons for dropouts that were here missing.

Survey: The original number of dialogue sessions participants shared by Search was 240 which was used to determine the total number of samples in the survey. However, only 141 names were shared by the team out of which 15 were duplicates (attended dialogue sessions with more than one facilitator). The plan was to reach 40% of the 240, however the team was able to reach 74%, keeping the original target of 93 surveys. While this is rather a strength than a limitation (higher sample size was surveyed and therefore better representatively of results), it would have been insightful to survey a sub-sample of dropouts of dialogue members, the views of whom were not accounted for in this evaluation. Moreover, some participants were already out of the country and the team could not reach them, and others had changed their phone numbers. Although this might mean a more representative sample in terms of results of the evaluation, logistically it was challenging to reach 74% of the members whereby the team had to conduct an extra day for data collection to be able to reach out to those who did not answer the calls for more than four times.

SSIs: Although Search shared the list of focal points at the municipalities, some of these were not those in direct contact with the Champions during the implementation phase of the initiatives. Therefore, the team conducted SSIs with other members of these municipalities that were in close contact with the Champions. For Tripoli municipality, both names shared referred us to the same focal point, thus one SSI for two initiatives was conducted. As one more spot for another SSI was available, in order to reach the 16-pre-set target in the evaluation's inception phase, the team in consultation with Search, decided to reach out to CodeBrave for an extra SSI with partners.

Evaluation Schedule: The timeframe allocated for this evaluation was compressed to four weeks from initiation to submission of the report. Given the short period provided, methodological decisions were necessarily taken to limit the scope of this study. Despite these limitations on scope, the methods used in this evaluation permit robust findings.

Other Constraints

- The evaluation of the impact of the programme is heavily affected by the rapidly and significantly deteriorating context differences affecting the intra- and inter-communal dynamics and relations between the beginning and end of the project. This made it challenging to draw conclusions isolating the impact of the project, mostly on the wider/national community.
- The perspective of the Coaches was not taken into account in this evaluation: no Coaches were interviewed, as they were removed from the project in year two. This was based on the fact that

due to the limited timeframe of the data collection; Search prioritized the stakeholders who were involved in the process.

- It was not possible to stratify the results based on geographical area for instance due to sample size limitations. Although the dialogue sessions survey targeted almost 74% of the total sample and had the geographical areas represented proportionally to the actual representation of the totality of the sample, most of the areas had 10 to 15 surveyed in total, which is not an enough sample to draw significant comparative conclusions per area.

3. Findings

Findings on Relevance

The analysis of relevance focuses on the extent to which the design of the project, its objectives and the ToC address the problems, needs and priorities of the targeted populations, as well as being in alignment with the global, regional and national frameworks. The analysis of relevance also assesses the extent to which the design of the project adequately analyzed the fragile context as well as its adaptation to a changing environment.

Dimension 1: The project concept is in line with the relevant global, regional and national strategic reference frameworks

At the Global Level

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find long-lasting solutions for conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights are essential aspects contributing to the success of this process. The same can be said about reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.

Promoting peace and justice feature among the 17 Global Goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This aspect is most specifically highlighted under Goal 16:

“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”¹⁹

As Search aims to bring about positive elements contributing to peace, the *Fostering Social Stability through Strategic Communications* project falls directly under the strategic priorities of Goal 16. In fact, the aim of Search’s project was to promote peace and social cohesion within the different societies in Lebanon which is aligned with the global goal 16 aimed at promoting peace within societies in order to achieve a sustainable development. One of the Outcomes target under this role is to ‘reduce all types of violence’ which was by itself the main impact the project tried to achieve. Search has contributed to this through bringing different communities together in the aim of reducing inter- and intra-communal tensions. However, it did not target the national institutions but rather had a bottom-up approach targeting the communities themselves.

At the Regional Level

The situation in Syria continues to drive the largest refugee crisis in the world. Globally, Syria remains the main country of origin for refugees, making up a quarter of all refugees in the world. Syrians have found asylum in 127 countries, but the vast majority fled to the neighbouring countries, including Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt.²⁰ In support of host countries in the region, the Regional Refugee and

¹⁹ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

²⁰ <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/regional-refugee-and-resilience-plan-3rp-response-syria-crisis-regional-strategic-0>

Resilience Plan (3RP)²¹ partners seek to contribute to the achievement of four regional strategic directions, for the benefit of both refugees and host communities. Through all efforts, 3RP partners seek to promote resilience for all, guided by the principle that ‘no one is left behind’. These strategic priorities are:

1. Protecting People;
2. Supporting Durable Solutions;
3. Contributing to Dignified Lives;
4. Enhancing Local and National Capacities.

The project is aligned with the 3rd strategic priority stated above: “Contributing to Dignified Lives”. This is especially true since fostering social cohesion between refugees and host communities remains an integral part of the 3RP response, and a key tenet of the resilient approach that is critical in the context of COVID-19.

Additionally, the project is aligned with the 4th strategic priority: “Enhancing Local and National Capacities”, through a variety of community-based interventions, especially considering the political, economic and social challenges in Lebanon that continue to undermine cohesion and fuel tension. Search has contributed to this objective by collaborating with different local partners. Search has worked on bringing together different communities with the purpose of building or improving their soft skills.

Supported by a context analysis and the monitoring of conflict-sensitivity indicators, the project aimed to promote peaceful relationships between and within communities. Such relationships were achieved by: conducting dialogue sessions and supporting community initiatives that effectively engage and benefit both the host community and refugee populations, with a particular focus on youth led initiatives (through a Champions-based approach). Beyond community-based and community-led interventions, the project also supported municipal and other local service providers and institutions which play a key role in community cohesion.

At the National Level

The design of the project is also aligned with the most recent LCRP 2017-2020 (Updates 2021)²². The Strategic Objectives of the LCRP are set out below:

1. Ensure protection of vulnerable populations;
2. Provide immediate assistance to vulnerable populations;
3. Support service provision through national systems;
4. Reinforce Lebanon’s economic, social and environmental stability.

The project falls under Strategic Priority 4: ‘Reinforce Lebanon’s economic, social and environmental stability’. The overall Social Stability Sector Objective, which perfectly fits the goal of the project, is to mitigate inter-communal tensions, to have stability prevail throughout 2019-2020 and to ensure that mechanisms are in place as means for violent conflict prevention. Other objectives include contributing to resilience building within the host community and displaced persons from Syria, bolstering accountable

²¹ <http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/>

²² <https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/lebanon-crisis-response-plan-2017-2021-2021-update>

governance and building social contracts between communities and authorities to support longer-term development. These objectives were reflected in the project by establishing and supporting local mechanisms with municipalities and mitigating prevailing or emerging drivers of tensions.

The project activities are in line with the Social Stability Sector Outcome 2: ‘Strengthen municipal and local community capacity to foster dialogue and address sources of tensions’. It specifically falls under outputs 2.1., 2.2. and 2.3. of this outcome of the social stability sector. The project’s ToC also aligns with the Ssector Strategy’s ToC:

“If local communities and national institutions have the capacities to address sources of tensions through dialogue and to promote positive interactions, then connections can likely be strengthened, and divisions reduced. Ultimately, those developments will serve of assistance in finding common solutions to grievances and will reduce propensities for violence, particularly amongst the most vulnerable.”

At the Sub-National Level

The project is highly relevant at the sub-national level, as some activities targeted tensions between communities (refugees and Lebanese) while others tackled intra-communal tensions.

Search was able to achieve such a result at the macro-level through its conflict analysis and Exigo’s²³ and Zinc’s reports. Zinc’s reports provided guidance, analysis and monitoring of qualitative and quantitative changes in social stability dynamics and inter-communal tensions, through which recommendations addressed to the management team were tailored to adapt the activities accordingly throughout the project cycle. Exigo’s reports also supported the understanding of the triggers leading to tensions within the host communities as well as between the host communities and the refugees. It also identified key connectors and sources of resilience at community level. Despite the information from these reports, some partners stated that they would have preferred to have some additional time on their hands to properly assess the needs of their respective communities, before actually defining the implemented activities and initiatives. In fact, it remains that each area targeted by the project is prone to specific factors shaping the dynamics within the host communities and between the host communities and refugees, which was reported by Exigo.

Dimension 2: The project concept is in line with the relevant Search regional and country, CSSF strategy and the partners’ strategies.

Search: Based on the 2017-2021 Lebanon strategy²⁴, the goal of Search is to promote a sustainable culture of peace, dialogue and inclusion across communities in Lebanon.

The project is in line with Search’s vision in Lebanon, through its work with the Local Champions and community members bringing people from different backgrounds together, which aims at increasing collaboration, awareness, and positive interactions through dialogue and joint activities. The approach of working at the individual and the community levels, coupled with a cross-cutting media component, is aligned with Search’s way of working.

²³ Search for Common Ground’s “Conflict Analysis and Power Dynamics – Lebanon” Study, Research Report, July 2020

²⁴ <https://www.sfcg.org/lebanon-strategy-2017-2021/>

Donor: The Community Stability Programme at the CSSF seeks to address key drivers of grievances and conflict at the community level, including the lack of economic opportunities, low and unequal access to services, and weak or stressed capacities for managing conflict and preventing violence. The programme is delivered through three complementary projects, including: “Support to Peacebuilding Champions” that aims to cultivate positive narratives, dialogue and interactions between conflicting communities, to address tensions and highlight peacebuilding initiatives, particularly intended to target negative attitudes towards refugees and to reduce tensions between host communities and refugees. It also provides support to local peacebuilding Champions in organizing peacebuilding events and highlighting good news stories within their communities. These contribute to the overall outcome of the CSSF in Lebanon: Reduced tensions between Lebanese and refugees, including resilience of volatile communities, by addressing causes of tensions and potential conflict.

“This project fits in really well with our internal strategies, so the national security council strategy for Lebanon sets out how to build stability for Lebanon and a big part of that is social cohesions, stability and conflict prevention across different levels.”
Inter_D_1

Partners: The project was also in line with the partner’s strategies:

- *Zinc*²⁵ Strategy: Zinc aims to help partners/clients deliver meaningful and measurable change around some of the most complex social issues facing the world. Their contribution to the project fits their objectives and the seven key stages they follow: (1) mapping the problem, (2) understanding the audience, (3) diagnosing, (4) designing, (5) ideating the plans, (6) co-creating by engaging partners and (7) delivering with maximum value of money.
- *Seenaryo*²⁶ Strategy: The project fits their third strategic objective: ‘*Fostering social cohesion within and between refugee communities and host groups*’, whereby they worked on achieving this by bringing together people from different communities, between whom tensions often exist, to collaborate in a creative process – e.g., refugees and host communities, or people of different religious beliefs.
- *CodeBrave*²⁷ Strategy: CodeBrave aim to train underprivileged youth in coding and robotics, supporting the self-empowerment of young people through tech education. Thus, their contribution, although only over 3 weeks period, fits their objectives and mission.

Dimension 3: The project concept matches the needs of the target groups.

In this dimension, the suitability of the project concept’s alignment with core problems and needs of the target groups were analyzed. Following the evaluation ToRs, the evaluators analysed the target groups and beneficiaries of the project (Champions and community members).

The majority (81.7%) of the Champions who completed the questionnaire stated that the program was highly relevant to the needs of their respective communities. Having said this, the Champions did point out

²⁵ <https://zincnetwork.com/>

²⁶ <https://www.seenaryo.org/>

²⁷ <https://www.codebrave.org/>

that the most significant priority in their communities was meeting basic needs. Though, in the current context, the Dialogue Sessions were still perceived as useful.

According to the project concept note, a powerful narrative is prominent in Lebanon: ‘Refugees are a substantial economic burden and pose a major risk to social stability in the country’. It also mentions that during the course of the Syrian crisis, widespread narratives denigrating Syrians have accompanied the escalation of tensions in Lebanese communities, especially in areas such as Akkar, Arsal, Central and West Bekaa, Mount Lebanon and the North. Thus, the project targeted locations which focus on five key tension hotspots, due to the high number of refugees and/or intra-communal tension. The exact locations were validated based on further analysis in the inception phase of the project and the selection criteria included: overall population, size of refugee population, level of tension, and the impact of reduced tensions in the community on the national discourse.

The majority of the Dialogue Teams surveyed also stated that the project was highly relevant to the needs of their respective communities.

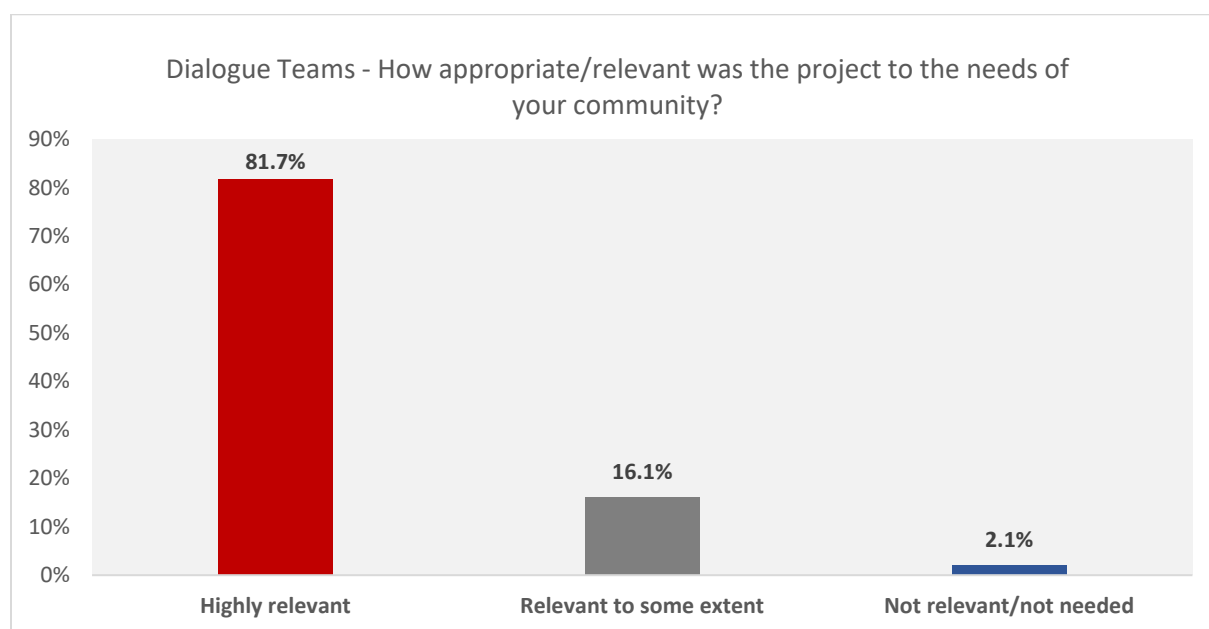


Figure 3 Perception on the relevance of the project to community needs, dialogue teams

In addition, all municipalities stated that the initiatives conducted in their areas met the needs of their constituents. In El Bireh, for example, women from different nationalities were brought together to be trained in knitting, coupled with awareness sessions on women rights, early marriage, and violence. The municipality focal point said:

“Our area is full of early marriage cases and violence is prevalent; it was very effective and beneficial for those women to take part in the initiative. In addition, most of them stated that there were no similar ongoing projects in their areas at the same time, which is an indicator of an accurate targeting in terms of geographical areas covered under the project.”

In the one FGD that was held with the community members who participated in the community initiatives, the participants mentioned that the initiatives were relevant to the needs of the community - even the general

initiatives, such as the first aid initiative. In fact, this example shows how it targeted the general wellbeing and equipped the people with skills they will be able to use anywhere, anytime.

As per the evaluators' understanding, the selection of the dialogue members was not based on specific criteria shared by Search. The Champions tried, as part of their recruitment of the Dialogue Teams, to diversify the groups as much as possible in terms of nationality, gender and ethnic disparities. However, based on the questionnaire with the Champions, nine teams out of all surveyed (64.3%) had only one nationality represented in their respective teams (teams that are either all Syrian or all Lebanese) or only one person from a different nationality compared to the rest of the group. For two of those groups this might have been done purposefully as the area was Mount-Lebanon can be characterized by inter-communal tensions. One example is the Champion who said in one FGD that he intended to choose a full Lebanese dialogue team, half of it from Bikfaya and the other half from Beit Chabeb, to work on the inter-communal tensions in these two communities. However, for the majority, more refugee-Lebanese diversity would have been expected in areas where density of refugees and tensions between Lebanese and Syrians is reported to be high (Akkar, the North and the Bekaa). Though the evaluation team found that efforts by Search to diversify the Champions and Dialogue Teams was successful in some areas, in others this was not as fruitful. It would have been more beneficial to the project if in some teams, refugees were more represented. For example, in Tripoli the Champion mentioned that he wanted to recruit members in the community with a certain level of baseline knowledge in peacebuilding and, subsequently, did not find Syrians with this criterion.

The finding reflects that the project in some areas did not achieve reduction in inter-communal tensions through the dialogue sessions, as the representations in these sessions were not diversified on a nationality level. It seemed that the Champions selected their groups based on specific criteria that might have been related to their area or the sessions' topics they had in mind. In fact, 21.5% of the surveyed dialogue members mentioned that they were part of other similar projects in parallel. This could explain some of the high indicators shown for the dialogue sessions where the baseline might not have been low in terms of peacebuilding skills and acceptance of others. In addition to this, the majority of the dialogue members (>70%) - based on the survey - had more than three friends from a different nationality or from the same one but with a different background, before beginning the project.

Only in a couple of areas, this factor seemed to have been more challenging such as in the case of Tripoli, whereas per one Champion, “inviting sometimes people from a certain nationality to participate in the sessions with people from other nationalities was not successful” Therefore, this group ended up with a minority of Syrian representation (2%). In a couple of instances, it was mentioned that this was due to sensitivity towards the nationality of the Champion himself. In addition, in Tripoli, it was harder to engage men than women. Few reasons given by the Champions were related to a higher availability of women compared to men, an increased belief in peace and a higher motivation in general. Therefore, the group had an over-representation of women. In Bekaa for instance, and as mentioned by the Champion in the FGD, it was challenging to have Lebanese people participate due to the fact that a Syrian national was leading the sessions. Also, people with disabilities and those belonging to the LGBTQ+ community were underrepresented in the sessions. In fact, only one person from each of those aforementioned minorities were recruited into two separate Dialogue Teams. These recruitments were not planned or targeted but rather happened randomly.

Relevance of the trainings

Trainings that the Champions received were perceived as useful in general. Trainings, as mentioned by one of the Champions:

“[...] helped us better understand the dimensions of conflict and the ways to solve it. We tried our best to convey these ideas to the community in general and to specific groups within the community in particular.”

The Champions’ capacity and peacebuilding skills can be considered the first layer of impact in this project. Through their involvement in the project and what they learned; the Champions gained skills that impacted them personally. In fact, nine Champions (64.3%) who completed the questionnaire, strongly agreed that they have gained more understanding of their own and other people’s identity, and eight (57.1%) strongly agreed that they have gained confidence in collaborating with people who carry a different identity compared to them. To add to this, one female in an FGD said:

“I have two young girls (16 – 17 years old). If they come and tell me they want to get engaged, I will not accept this now after what I learned related to [early marriage].”

Champions were positive about how those trainings equipped them with skills that aimed at helping them get to know how to deal with tensions, challenge preconceived beliefs and stereotypes and deal with conflicts (by applying the right communication skills, an understanding conflicts, enhancing their soft skills in resolving disputes, and an ability to express opinions without concerns and fears, all of which they were able to put in practice through the dialogue sessions). However, what was considered limiting, as mentioned by some of the Champions, is the lack of diversity in topics and the limited material made available.

While all the Champions who completed the questionnaire agreed that they feel, at the time of the questionnaire, confident dealing with conflicts, only four of them (28.5%), ‘strongly’ agreed to that fact. Also, while all agreed that they have the skills for peacebuilding, only 50% ‘strongly’ agreed to that. These are findings from the end of the project, following all the practical experience gained from the Champions. Although there was no baseline to directly compare to, this would imply that the Champions were possibly, at the start of the project, less ready for their first dialogue session. In fact, only eight of those surveyed (57.1%) stated that they felt ‘extremely’ ready for their first dialogue session before the start of the implementation of project activities. Half were people who had previously participated in such projects.

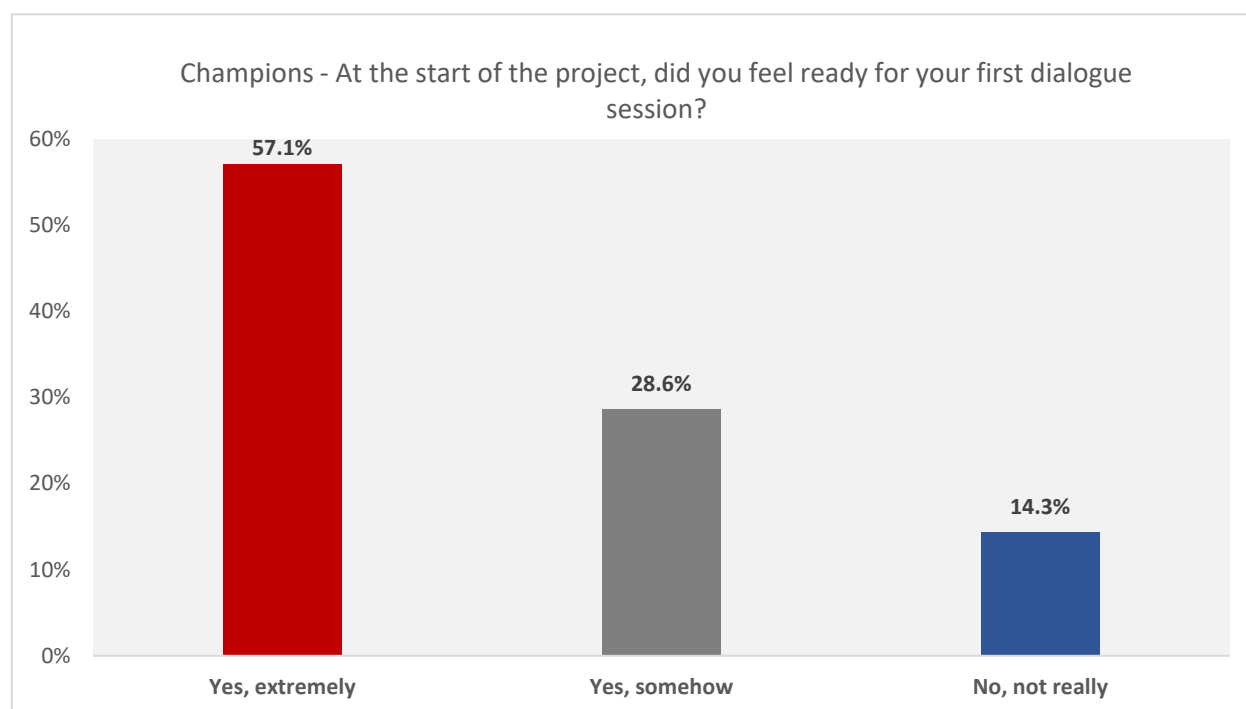


Figure 4 Level of Preparedness for the first dialogue session, Champions

In terms of preparation for the project, eight of 14 Champions (57.1%) that were questioned before the FGD, said that the project activities were very clear to them at the start of the project. The remaining (42.8%) considered that the projects' activities were clear to some extent or not really clear. This was echoed during the FGDs. As an example, one of the Champions said: *"I knew I was about to recruit people, but I did not know what to say to them, what we will do exactly. We did not have details."* Another Champion said: *"At one point, there was a lack in training. We were promised to have more trainings to clarify some aspects. The trainings were postponed due to the COVID outbreak. We were offered options to continue the trainings, but we did not."* This was also stated by one of partners in the SSI *"I think, I personally I'm not familiar of the activities that the other two organizations have implemented"*. Moreover, several municipalities focal points stated they were unaware of the project activities and the initiatives that were implemented in their areas, and that is why the data collection team had to select other members from these municipalities or even people from entities that collaborated with them to get the information needed regarding the implementation. It is crucial for every stakeholder with a key role in the project to be clear on the project goal, objectives and activities prior to the implementation phase. This would allow for a smoother understanding by the core project team of the common objectives, roles and responsibilities within the wider project framework.

Aside from the trainings, there was a controversy in the perceptions of the role of the coaches in the project. For some Champions, the coaches' role was unclear and their guidance insufficient, while others felt that the coaches were a great backbone for them and became uncomfortable when they were removed.

Dimension 4: The context of the project was adequately analysed and considered for its concept and ToC

According to the concept note that was submitted in 2019 and based on Search's decade of continuous experience in conducting strategic communications activities in Lebanon, the team identified several issues that directly contributed to tensions between and amongst host communities and Syrian refugees²⁸:

The project's ToC has been elaborated by the Search programme team based on the results matrix and the CSSF guidelines.

Further adaptations were made to the results matrix by changing some of the indicators in the second year of the project to fit the new approach and methodology agreed upon with the donor. However, the overall impact and the cause-effect relationship of the ToC did not change.

Looking at the chains of results in the results model and the ToC, including the interconnected outputs within each outcome and their actual contribution to the outcomes and objectives, these were set out in a plausible way, offering proof to central hypotheses based on activities and instruments, in relation to intended outputs and outcomes.

The core problem, which reads as "*tensions amongst and between host communities and refugees*" remained unchanged or even increased in intensity due to political and social changes and the multiple crises throughout the planning and implementation processes of the project. The main change applied related to the shift to virtual activities, a stronger focus on rapid response, and an earlier start of the community initiatives. Some of the topics discussed during the dialogue sessions were about topics relevant to the contextual changes such as the COVID-19 and the economic crisis. However, it was not clear from the project documents, reports, nor from the discussions with the different stakeholders, how the changes in the intra- and inter-communal dynamics on the country level and after the several crises over the past two years, have been tackled throughout the project in the amended activities (e.g., changing the content of some trainings or topics provided). The main response to the changing context was the adaptation from in-person to online activities.

Based on two specific objectives, the project has developed instructions and approaches to directly contribute to strengthening trust and respect amongst and between host communities and refugees in Lebanon, and to amplify these voices/narratives through relevant and diverse channels. The aim is to shift perceptions and narratives away from blaming marginalised groups and towards humanising them, while maintaining a sense of individual agency.

²⁸ (1) The lack of constructive citizen-state relations, economic challenges and insufficient service delivery amplifying grievances within local communities, often targeting 'the other';
(2) The widespread prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination resulting from a long history of fear and mistrust between different groups; and
(3) The negative communication practices by media actors and politicians seeking to instrumentalize tensions in order to captivate their audiences and constituents, and by community members spreading dangerous and damaging rumours in a culture of gossip and hearsay. This combination of issues results in localized dynamics where refugees and host communities interact less frequently, thus the need to address narratives around conflict dynamics at the local level, engage a localized general public to shift toward more positive norms around social stability, and work closely with powerful influencers (such as government authorities and the media) on behaviour change. The project's approach is, then, adequately analysed to tackle the needs reflected in the context.

Dimension 5: The project concept note was adapted to changes in line with requirements and re-adapted where applicable.

The project activities were adapted based on the change in the context from year one to year two, as per the rationale shared by Search. Since the start of this project there has been a number of external events – on top of internal challenges with one of the contracted partners (4Production) - that have culminated in delays and challenges for this project, most significantly the major protests that started on October 17th, 2019, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis. Therefore, there was a need to ensure that Search’s interventions limited tension and prevented conflicts escalating. Moreover, Search based their adaptation on the conflict analysis document that demonstrated the low percentage of people who were able to name anyone in their community who adopted a mediation role. Therefore, the development of community Champions, or influencers of peace was seen as increasingly important. Search also made sure throughout the project to adapt its approach based on the monitoring results obtained from Zinc research, which identified the scale and severity of the community dynamics in terms of tensions changing with the context. In this context, the project was perceived as pivotal. However, some key adaptations were needed in order to better achieve the initially set outcomes.

The adaptation was built around the already recruited and trained Champions. They have received training in the Common Ground Approach (Search’s flagship training in peacebuilding), facilitating dialogue and social media skills. In addition, Search also conducted a conflict analysis which supported the decisions of geographical targeting and the types of interventions needed. This informed the media campaign component of the project and the Champion-led community initiatives.

How were these changes perceived by the target groups? As mentioned by some of the Champions, adapted sessions on information related to COVID-19 and prevention measures, as well as discussions around the economic crisis were delivered. While those might have drifted from topics under the peacebuilding umbrella, they still served as a platform of exchange, and that was perceived to have been positive and necessary.

Adaptation to the contextual changes were perceived to have been done at a fast pace. However, it seemed that more time should have been given to determine how those changes would still help reach the objectives and the **overarching goal of the project** that is promoting social cohesion leading to conflict resolution. As a matter of example, after the Beirut blast, there was a shift in the focus of the OneAct campaign to highlight the response to the blast and attempt to create a feeling of wellbeing, by showing kind gestures between people. Although this was a thoughtful step and aligned with the emergent needs, it might not have been the best way to reach the ultimate goal of the project, which revolves around reducing tension and promoting social cohesion. However, it was a solidarity act with the community directly affected by the blast that could have potentially been perceived as driven by a “*follow the flow*” mind-set rather than a well-thought gesture.

Interviewees reported that, as per the mostly positive interactions reported through social media, that this has somehow led to a mutual feeling of respect towards the ‘Other’ despite perceived differences. However, in order for this to lead to a shift in the public perception, as per project objectives, resulting in social cohesion, longer periods of time and a deeper awareness around the issue including a higher system level approach to change are required.

Dimension 6: Collaboration with other interventions and experiences from previous initiatives have been successfully used to improve the quality of the project

The project was designed around Search’s approach to **media for social change** and **behaviour change communication (BCC)**. Search brought to this project decades of global experience using locally produced dynamic media content to foster changes in attitudes and perceptions, targeting audiences of millions.

Search based this project on its extensive experience in BCC programming in Lebanon, to engage the media industry and government authorities in dialogues, one-on-one meetings, and public campaigning and to address their willingness to change or tone down inflammatory or divisive messaging. The approach was also based on previous experience in research, analysis, and monitoring and evaluation to understand the impacts of the previously undertaken efforts, and to adjust them in real-time for the improvement of results. Despite accounting for previous relevant lessons learnt and experiences at the design stage, Search wanted to experience a different approach with the dialogue sessions. Although previous experiences have proven successful in accounting for a preparation phase for the Dialogue Teams, before starting off with the actual sessions, this approach was not followed in this project. As per one of the team members, it was meant to be a pilot and to be experienced differently by starting off directly with the dialogue sessions; but this new approach was perceived as unsuccessful by one SSI respondent.

Search designed the project’s methodology based on the “Best Peacebuilding Practices”²⁹ paper based on the lessons learned and recommendations from other programs they have implemented (globally, regionally, and locally): These recommendations are:

- Centre programming on the transformation of people
- Be rooted in the local context.
- Adapt to unfolding circumstances and insights.

As stated earlier, the project goal was aligned with the vision of the implementing partner which is centred on the concept of peacebuilding within the communities. It was useful to gain insights from those who have been with the organization and experienced previous similar projects to include their lessons learned in the design of this new one, in addition to the views of the senior team members.

As for the experience in the selected locations, Search have implemented projects in all the identified municipalities and have existing relationships on the ground with civil society organizations (CSOs), the municipalities, and other subnational authorities.

For the targeted groups, some of the Champions already took part in other programmes implemented by Search, such as Aswat Faela, thus building on the experience and skills they have developed in these projects.

Findings on Effectiveness and Impact

Dimension 1: The project achieved the objectives (outcomes) on time and in accordance with the project framework

²⁹ <https://www.sfcg.org/lebanon-strategy-2017-2021/>

The results of this evaluation showed that, overall, the project was able to achieve its objectives and reach its outcomes at different levels. This was more obvious in the first phase/year of the project rather than its second phase/year. This was largely due to the second year's activities being shifted online, which likely hampered progress on the outcomes of interest.

Nonetheless, successful results were achieved despite the adaptations brought to the activities and changes in the approach to meet the changing dynamics of the context. This was the general perception as per all the parties interviewed or surveyed including the Champions, the Dialogue Teams, the implementing organization, as well as the donor and municipalities (*the latter specifically having in mind the community initiatives*). The most challenging period seemed to be, as per the Champions, the COVID-19 lockdown, where there was a need to shift from physical to virtual sessions and even reconsider changes in initially planned community initiatives. **Despite all the challenges and limitations that the project has faced amidst many ongoing** crises happening at the national level, it was effective in achieving desired results, outcomes and main objectives.

In fact, the dialogue sessions led by the Champions were able to create a safe space where people from different nationalities and backgrounds freely exchanged in front of each other and developed positive relationships with people within their groups, be it from different nationalities or different political affiliations or cultural backgrounds: *“We were happy with the project because it succeeded in bringing people together”* as mentioned by a representative from Aidamoun municipality.

This success was perceived at the micro-level of the Dialogue Teams rather than at the wider community level.

It was witnessed in the results of the wave 4 research indicating that the proportion of the respondents who believed that *‘greater interaction between refugees and Lebanese people would improve relations between them’*, did not change compared to wave 1 (43%). This means that, in order to change perceptions towards the ‘Other’ and break stereotypes, people need to be open to and practically experience the positive outcome of interaction through dialogue or other activities. Relying on general means or brief activities such as those targeted by OneAct Campaign might not be able to shift the public’s perception as expected.

The relationships that were created through the dialogue sessions are an indicator of trust and change from the negative perceptions held towards the ‘Other’, which might have been embedded in the minds of the Dialogue Teams members through history, including the grudge holding within the context in which the project was running.

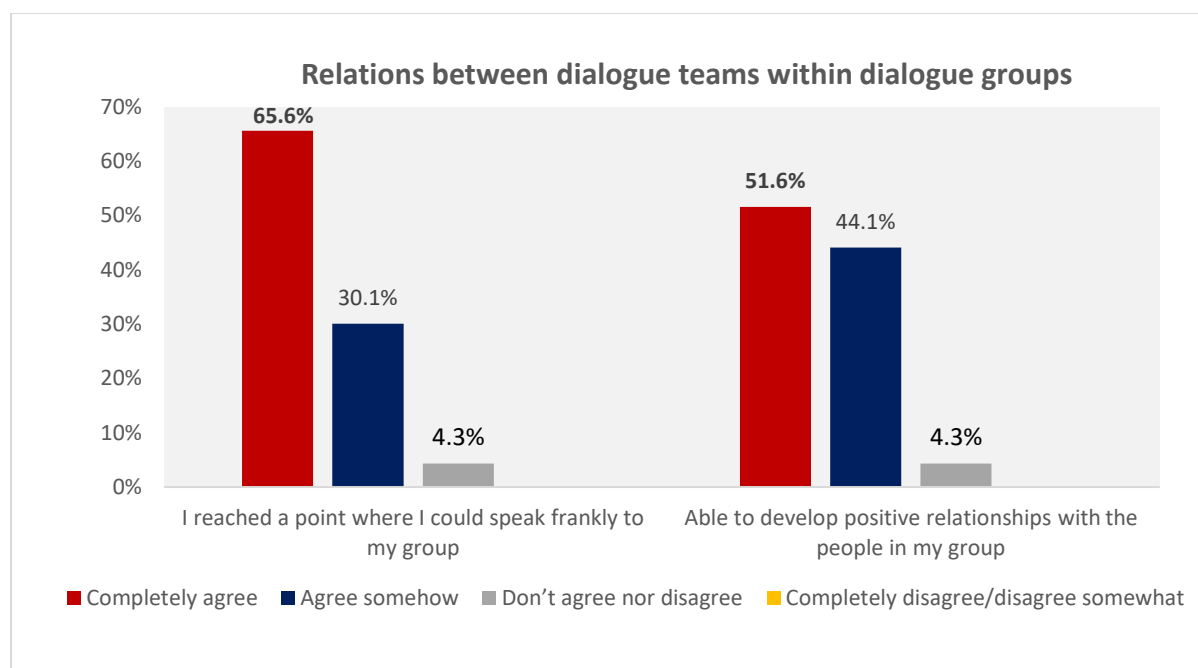


Figure 5 Level of the relations between dialogue teams within their groups

These relations went as far as developing friendships during the project with people from other nationalities or from the same nationality but with a different background. In fact, the majority of the surveyed Dialogue Teams (88%, n=78) stated that they have built friendships with at least one person from a different nationality through the project's lifespan. As for the seven surveyed Dialogue Team who said they did not have any friends from a different nationality before the start of the project, they have now all developed at least one friendship during the project period. As per one of the champions:

“We, [Champions], were able to eliminate some barriers between the communities and to adjust some points of view and create an environment of renewed friendship. Some of the participants we held the discussions with became friends”.

This is an indicator of the trust that the Dialogue Team members were able to develop with each other during the dialogue sessions, as well as the level of awareness in terms of perception of the ‘Other’ that they acquired. Dialogue Teams “started listening more and more to the other person's opinions” as mentioned by one of the Champions during the FGDs indicating how dialogue, active listening and interaction can have a positive impact on relationships. This was mirrored in the survey. In fact, out of the Dialogue Teams who were surveyed and disagreed, before the project, that greater dialogue and interaction can improve relations between people from different nationalities (notably Syrians and Lebanese), 96.3% (n=52) agreed that the project helped them change this belief (p-value <0.001)³⁰. Similar results were obtained for Lebanese people toward Lebanese from different political or religious backgrounds (32/34 Lebanese, 94.1%). Again, similar results were also witnessed for those who did not believe, before the project, that people with differences could get along better if they made an effort to understand each other. In fact, 96.4% of them (56/58) agreed that the project helped them change this belief (p-value <0.001). In addition, and at a larger scale, the final research analysis by Zinc showed that respondents who moderately interacted a lot with Syrian refugees were significantly more in favour of their presence compared to those who did not interact or had fewer interactions with them (14% versus 5%, respectively). The results also

³⁰ A p-value <0.05 is considered statistically significant. This means that the difference in the proportion seen before and after the project is, at 95%, an actual change and not one that is due to the hazard

showed that as contact and knowledge about the ‘Other’ increased, more empathy toward refugees was felt (as per the wave 4 report. For example, 42% of respondents were empathetic towards Syrian refugees compared to 35% in wave 1). In addition, those respondents with higher levels of interaction with refugees reported higher levels of empathy: 59% of those respondents who had interacted a lot or moderately with Syrian refugees showed a great deal/fair amount of empathy toward them, compared to 34% out of those who interacted very little or not at all with them.

Experiencing the possibility of reacting positively to the level of becoming friends with the ‘Other’ caused the participants to constantly challenge their prejudices and stereotypes, thus creating a sense of doubt and critical thinking over what they might come across socially and culturally in the future. As per the Champions, the dialogue sessions were able to provoke a change in the perspectives of the Dialogue Teams and break stereotypes, such as the following example: *“Regarding violence against refugees; some people thought that violence was acceptable, but afterwards they changed their perspective.”*

“We [the Champions] corrected many erroneous concepts people had for they had adopted a stereotype without ever hearing that person out. This contributed to converging viewpoints and clearing the mystery on some topics that we discussed openly.”

Another Champion shared: *“At the end of the day, we all became friends. We started discussing ideas without embarrassment. Everyone started sharing their opinions and breaking the barrier of fear. Someone would say: ‘you perceive me from a racist point of view.’ The other concerned person would reply with a ‘yes.’ Then, they would both laugh. At some point, we did break this barrier, and we did actually manage to change the perspectives of some people.”*

This would, in a way, lead to a potential decrease of tensions in their respective circles.

“We, [the Champions], made people who do not usually interact, sit together, overcoming the divides that society created. We made them sit together, talk and innovate.”

It was also perceived that the language used in the dialogue sessions by the participants changed as noted by one of the Champions in the FGDs: *“[Participants] were engaged, they switched from using negative and violent terms to using terms special to peacebuilding, diversity and inclusion.”*

One Champion, who himself was a participant in one of the dialogue sessions, recalled that the topic was about violence and incidents occurring in the lives of the Syrian refugees and expressed that *“[the Champion] raised points that I honestly was not aware of, and I started adopting some lessons for life and altered my way of thinking.”* The latter is an indicator of the potential impact that a Champion could experience when taking the role of a dialogue member.

Those results showed that, overall, outcomes were reached despite the perception of the implementing organization that the move to the virtual sessions affected the reach of the outcomes and objectives, as stated in the respective SSIs. This was also mentioned during the FGDs by the Champions themselves, who stated that changing to virtual sessions have been very challenging, in some areas more than others, which also did affect the turnout of the groups to their respective sessions. For example, in Northern Bekaa, where most of the dialogue team members were Syrians, the attendance in the dialogue sessions went from more than 10 to less than five after it switched online. Another example is the Dialogue Team in Tripoli. Although this might have slightly affected the reach of the objectives, it did not translate within the Dialogue Teams

as shown by the results of the survey. This can be explained by a potential solid foundation that was already in place and established through the physical sessions and interaction that took place before the context pushed towards virtual sessions. It could also be due to the fact that the Dialogue Teams that were retained until the end of the project and interviewed, consisted of a selective sample that were more interested and believed in the project benefits more than those who dropped out. Therefore, it can be said that the results reached here were more positive than the reality. Additionally, the shift from physical to virtual meetings affected the “*sense of solidarity and warmth and this physical safe space in which people used to talk and express themselves,*” far from their community or homes, which was lost, as stated by one of the interviewed team members. This change in the delivery of sessions may not have changed the impact but might have prevented reaching better results, such as: a lower drop-out and more retention in the Dialogue Teams, or a higher trust due to a closer interaction over time between the dialogue members leading to more people feeling comfortable enough with each other to talk about sensitive issues together. The implementer mentioned that the Dialogue Teams did express at some point their wish to go back to physical sessions as it was more beneficial for them as it created an environment that allowed for a greater interaction.

The challenge of the online sessions was expressed clearly by the Champions during the FGDs who articulated a feeling of insecurity towards conducting the sessions, as well as a delay in the activities in general. It created a pressure that “*reduced [the Champions] motivation, especially when [they] were asked to do things in a different way at different stages*”. The same was also mentioned by the Champions regarding their own trainings: once they started taking place online, they lost some efficiency and the quality dropped.

Dimension 2: The activities and outputs of the project contributed substantially to the project objectives achievement of longer-term effects

The overall intended outcomes were reached despite the perception of the implementing organization that not all Champions reached the level of capabilities expected, which might have affected the results perceived at the Dialogue Teams or the initiative levels. However, the project could have achieved better outcomes if, as mentioned by the implementing partner, the turnout was observed in the Dialogue Teams throughout the project. As per the Champions’ feedback, the drop-out rate was significant at times, resulting from people leaving and/or traveling back to Syria, alongside the dropouts observed after the shift from physical to online sessions, as mentioned earlier. Sustaining the same group over the entire project lifespan was considered an important aspect, as understanding, acceptance and change of perceptions and behaviours toward the ‘Other’ follows an increasing trend that can only be built over time.

Losing members of the Dialogue Teams during the project affects the likelihood of building solid and well-prepared peacebuilding advocates and, hence, a longer-term and sustainable impact. Looking at the relationships created between the Dialogue Teams within their respective groups, only 20 (21.5%) of those dialogue members surveyed agreed with the fact that, before the project, they never thought that they would be able to positively interact with people who are from a different nationality or who carry a different cultural, ethnic or political background. However, throughout the project 89 (95.7%) dialogue members were able to develop positive relationships within their group. All of the 20 individuals mentioned above, experienced change that allowed them to create positive relationships throughout the project. At a wider community level, over half of the respondents (52%) to the wave 4 research believed that Lebanese and Syrians can work together to solve problems, which was unchanged from the wave 1 results.

This shows, once again, that change starts at a small scale and within a small community by practically experiencing what can come out of such joint efforts, before expecting an achievement at a wider scale.

Although the level of comfort of the Dialogue Teams between themselves did not reach a place where personal and sensitive information could be shared as shown in the quantitative component, it was expected to actually happen in smaller groups. In fact, the majority of the Dialogue Teams were able to create links with other people in their groups beyond the dialogue sessions. For instance, 46% of the surveyed teams stated that they got to socialize with people from different nationalities or backgrounds outside of the dialogue sessions *very often*, while 58% got on calls or texted others for matters that were not related to the dialogue sessions, also *very often*.

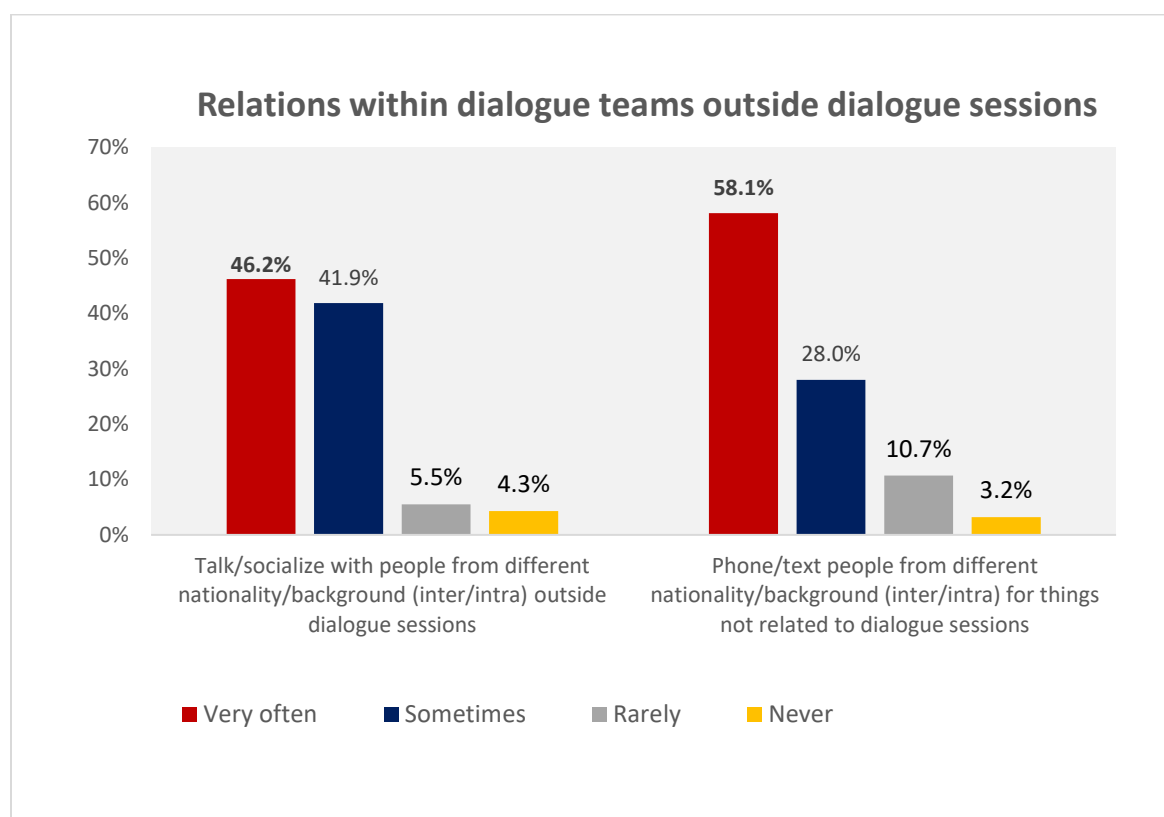


Figure 6 Relations within the dialogue teams outside the dialogue sessions

Before the project, most of the Dialogue Teams already had a friend from a different nationality (76.3% with more than three) or from the same nationality but with a different political, ethnic or cultural background (83.6% with more than three friends). One might think that this implies that the group of the Dialogue Teams targeted already had a positive perception towards the ‘Other’ in such a way that allowed them to create friendships beyond a group that is perceived as similar to them. However, although the majority had a good number of friends from different backgrounds, before the project, they did have some judgment toward the ‘Other’. The survey showed that 50-60% of the Syrians and/or Lebanese who had more than three friends in general from another nationality or community before the project, disagreed on many of the positive perceptions and beliefs they had toward the ‘Other’. For example, they disagreed on the possibility to work together for the benefit of the community, or that with dialogue and interactions, relationships between people of different nationalities or backgrounds can improve, or even the fact that

they can be positively perceived by the ‘Other’. The change in the perception of all those judgments throughout the project could have resulted from observations of the interactions and positive relationships between the group teams that took place through the dialogue sessions. This showed, once again, how bringing communities together allow them to experience by themselves, through guided dialogues, how people, no matter their differences, are similar. Such a finding demonstrates how stereotypes were challenged by experiencing the ‘Other’ and empathising with them. In addition, the type of the relationships that the project allowed seemed to have surpassed ‘acquaintance’ as almost 41% of the surveyed dialogue teams said that they had people from their respective teams visiting their homes. This is an indicator of an openness to the ‘Other’ and a high level of acceptance and trust which challenged them to introduce them to family or close relatives, despite any potential prejudices at home.

The implementing organization held the perception that most of the Champions were happy with the achievements they reached throughout the project and were proud with the activities and impact they have achieved. This was echoed by the Champions themselves. As a matter of fact, one of them actually said: “*When we talk about our initiative, we feel very proud. It gave us a chance to make a change in our society.*”

However, as per the implementer, some Champions felt that they were “*overburdened by the context and the needs of the project and activities*” which affected the implementation of their respective activities/initiatives. This was also echoed by the Champions who were unable to implement their initiatives due to the contextual challenges specifically those resulting from COVID-19. It was not always easy for the Champions to continue their work amidst the difficulties and changes in the context. As per the implementer, it was challenging to keep the network of the Champions motivated and functioning well. This took a lot of support from the implementer, with regular discussions with the Champions to understand their challenges and mitigate them, more so when the coaches’ component was removed from the project. Although support was provided by the implementer during that period, it was perceived as insufficient by the Champions themselves. In fact, over half of the Champions who mentioned the coaches, did express, during the FGDs, that they felt more comfortable and better supported when they were coached at the beginning of the project. Indicating that the Champions were unprepared to implement the dialogue sessions and/or initiatives without direct support. This was shown, as stated earlier, through the Champions who completed the questionnaire, where only 57.1% felt *extremely* ready for their first dialogue session at the start of the activity’s implementation.

All of the above findings proved that positive interactions existed, and that an increased dialogue and a change of perception towards the ‘Other’ are tools that support social cohesion. They reduce tensions by challenging the stereotype and discovering that everyone, despite perceived differences, have things in common. This was the perception of the implementer, the partners, and the Champions themselves who considered, in their majority, that they were able to create a communicative environment allowing people from different nationalities and affiliations to speak freely and exchange their views and ideas. This was perceived as one of the main achievements of the project. This was also evident through the survey with the Dialogue Teams whereby 92.5% agreed that the ‘Others’ even if different, and have similar feelings and go through similar situations. While, 78.5% were positively surprised by how much they have in common with the ‘Others’ in their group.

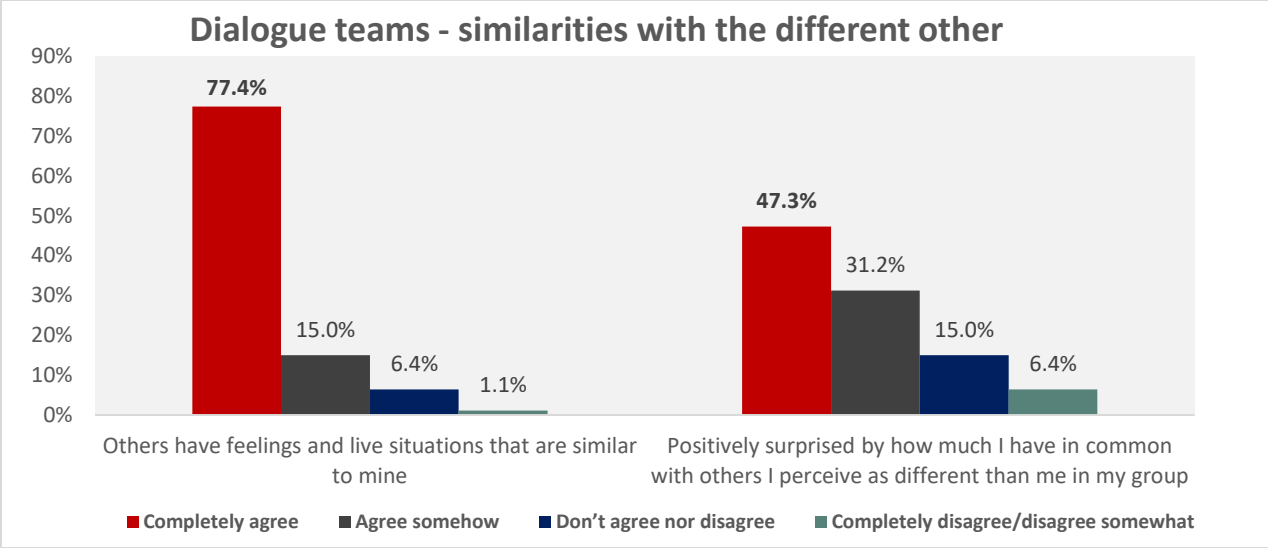


Figure 7 Perception on similarities with the different other, dialogue teams

Also, as per the Dialogue Teams surveyed, out of those who, before the project, disagreed that ‘people who are different from them have more in common with them than they think’, 93.1% agreed that the project had actually helped them change this belief (p-value <0.001).²⁶ In addition, 90 of the Dialogue Teams (97%) who were surveyed stated that the project changed their perception towards the ‘Other’ in a positive way.

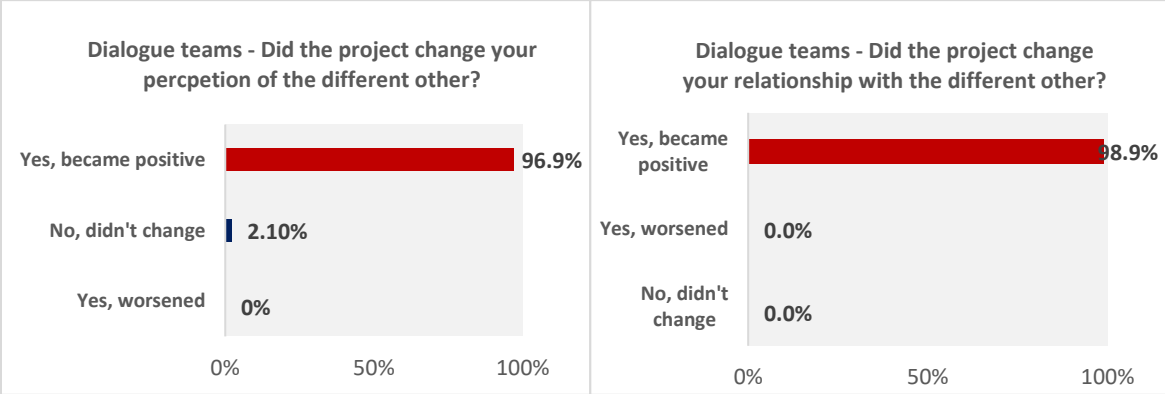
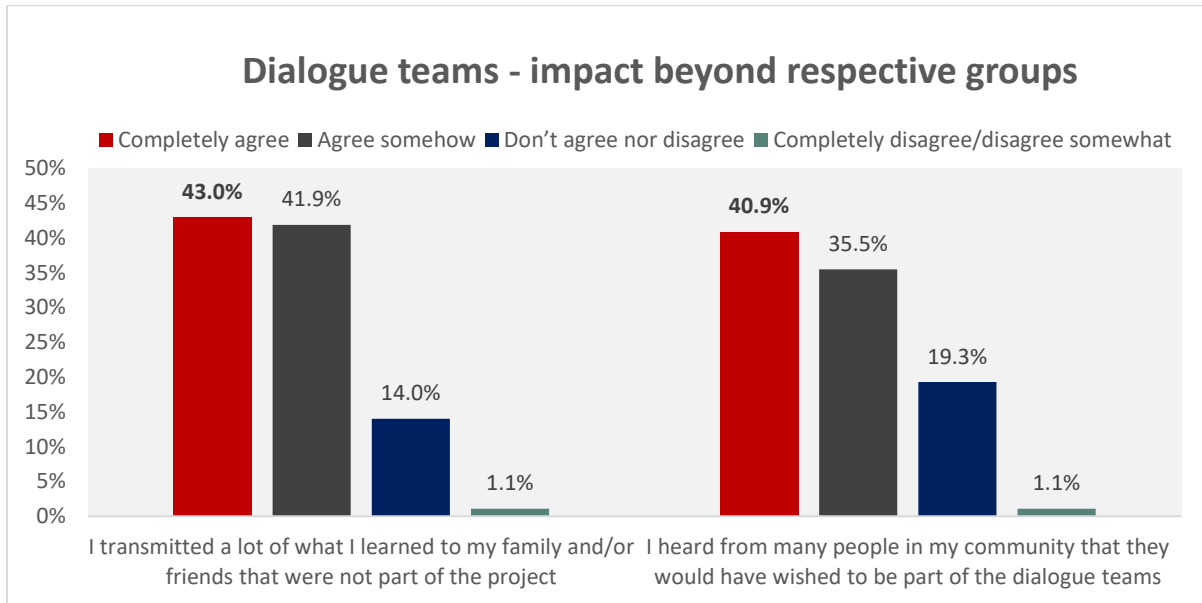


Figure 8. Change of perception and relationship to the other, dialogue teams

As per the partners, the impact of the project in reducing tensions could be seen at the level of small-scale communities. However, it is harder to recognize how this change might lead to a perceived impact at a wider national level. The context dynamics have not helped due to continuous, sometimes volatile, changes, therefore it is evident that the project has impacted the local community around the Dialogue Teams. Its impact on the wider community, however, is less apparent. In fact, 79 of the surveyed Dialogue Teams (85%) have agreed that they have transferred a lot of what they learned during the sessions to their family and/or close friends that were not a part of the project. This was repeated by some of the Champions who mentioned in the FGDs that their dialogue members were able to spread what they had learned to others: “[Dialogue members] are capable now, even on a small scale, to raise awareness among their daughters or friends about how to protect and educate themselves about their rights.” A story that was shared with one of the Champions also showed that the spread of the impact might have reached, at times, horizons beyond the circle of close family and friends:

“We had a young woman participating with us, and she was raising awareness inside the classroom, and the school. She dedicated one course to introducing students and children to conflict and similar topics, and to the appropriate ways to deal with other people while understanding their point of view.”

In addition to this, 81 (76.3%) agreed that they have heard from many people in their respective communities that they wished to be a part of the Dialogue Teams.



Concerning the community initiatives, a total of 18 initiatives were done in the different geographical areas targeted by the project compared to 22 initially planned. They were led by the Champions and reached a total of 376 people who participated from the wider communities. The ratio of Lebanese to Syrian participants in the community initiatives was 1:1, while women were over-represented compared to men (Women: Men ratio was 2.2).

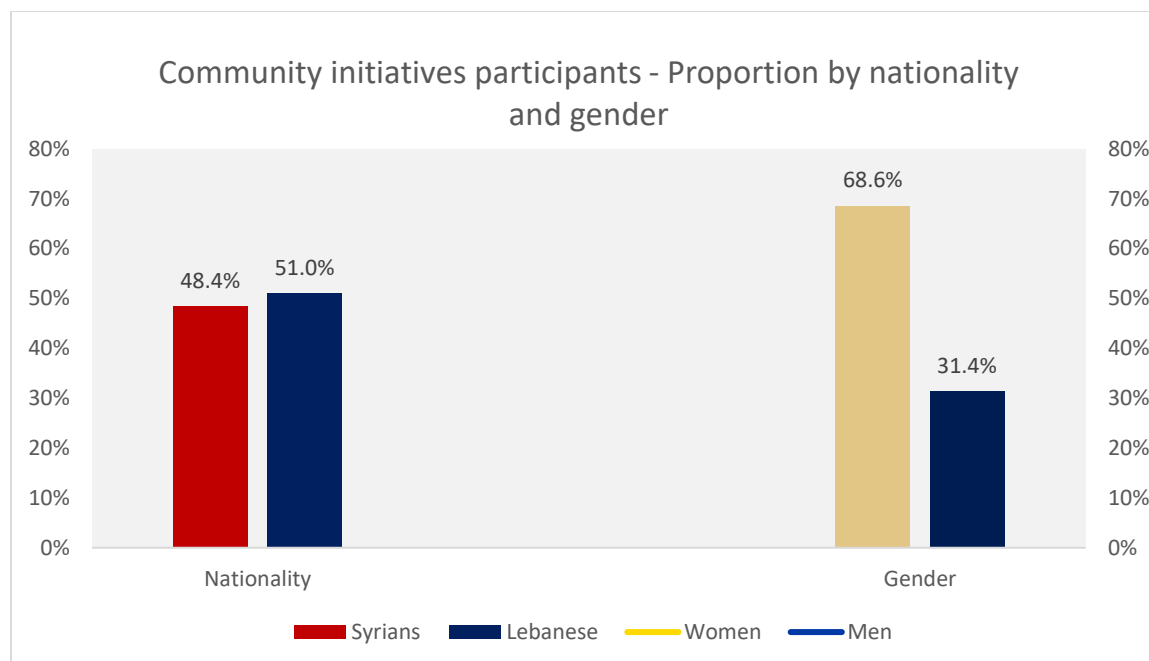


Figure 9. Proportion of the community initiative participants by nationality and gender

Some of the community initiatives were highlighted through videos and interviews posted on social media, as part of the OneAct campaign. Overall, they received positive interactions from the wider community. Some of the videos posted went viral such as the contribution done by one of the Champions at a Chess training centre in Baalbeck. Also, some comments were received from the general community inquiring how they can themselves join such initiatives. It was unclear to the evaluators if those positive interactions were biased towards the nationality of the Champion (or the influencer, when this was the case), whereby Syrians interacted positively to content featuring Syrians and Lebanese to content featuring Lebanese. However, it seemed, as per the implementer, that the positive interactions to social content, were observed in all cases. As expected, not all interactions were positive. In two occurrences where online content featuring Champions' initiatives posted online created unexpected negative interactions, the latter came mostly from Syrians toward Lebanese individuals or vice-versa.

It only occurred once for a video posted - promoting an initiative that featured a Syrian Champion participating in the First Aid training - to be removed from social media, after it created extremely negative reaction from the wider community online.³¹ Another video posted online as part of the OneAct campaign that had created negative unexpected comments was one of a Lebanese woman who received help from a Syrian man at her home. It seemed that this content created a lot of negative reactions as per one of the partners. These were unintended effects, probably rooted in a judgmental image that the implementer was

³¹ This video featured a Syrian Champion who conducted as initiative a first aid training and awareness on COVID-19 prevention. The Champion mentioned in his video that he wanted to help, through this initiative, a community who is suffering because he comes from such a community. The comments posted on this video were very negative with a high level of abuse, accusing him of being a liar, of doing what he is doing to gain money, etc. This went viral and heavily affected the Champion himself. It was hard to understand why the reaction of the public was as such, especially as most of the negative comments came from his own community (Syrian).

unable to identify. The implementer had to regularly scan messages and comments posted on social media and delete those which were negative.

The choice of the community initiatives was made by the Champions. This allowed the Champions to take into account the needs of the community. A number of initiatives were sustainable due to the type of initiative implemented, for example: the renovation of a hiking trail in Mount Lebanon, plantation seeds' distribution in North Bekaa, food distribution in Beirut. In contrast, some other initiatives worked on transferring knowledge that could continuously be used by the people who were part of it, such as the Red Cross first aid training or the wool knitting sessions. They brought people with different identities together and were able to convey the following message: *'even if we are different and hold dissimilar beliefs and affiliations, we can still work together and benefit the community we live in'*. **Though some of these initiatives will continue after the end of this project e.g., hiking trail in Mount Lebanon, other initiatives might not be as sustainable, such as: those that rely on continuous engagement to reduce tensions.**

The initiatives have led to the achievement of the projects goal's by cultivating a spirit of collaboration, respect and trust towards the 'Other'. Having said that, not all were driven towards the final goal of conflict resolution. A great initiative that illustrates a good fit to the larger vision was the 'Stray Bullet' initiative. As per the implementing organization, the Champions, and the respective municipality, this initiative resulted in a decreased number of injuries from stray bullets in a certain period of time in the Tripoli region.³² Though this reduction in the stray bullets injuries might not solely be due to the impact of the initiative, it is believed that the latter might have played a role as it received a significant number of positive reactions at different levels.

Overall, there was unanimity among the Champions around the impact of the community initiatives on the ground. Most, if not all, chose the initiatives based on the needs of their community, together with their dialogue members. They tried to work, as mentioned previously, on initiatives that would benefit the community beyond the project timeline. The initiatives were perceived as a practical way to show the communities that Syrians and Lebanese, and intra-Lebanese communities, can collectively benefit their communities. However, the implications of the contextual factors, notably COVID-19, delayed the implementation of the initiatives, pushed some Champions to change initiatives they had already approved, and caused for some of them not to have been implemented at all, even at the time of the evaluation.

A positive comment brought up by one of the Champions in one of the FGDs is the flexibility in decision making and implementation of the community initiatives, which motivated them: *"The idea is that with the initiatives we were executing, we were the ones leading them, we were the ones setting the budget, and we were the ones implementing them. So, it turned us into decision-makers as well [...] We were the ones being creative, we were the ones on the ground, we were addressing the problems and offering solutions, in every minimal detail. We were involved and this truly turned us into creative and resourceful people."*

The OneAct³³ campaign aimed to highlight acts of kindness and humanity towards each other. This campaign was perceived by the implementing organization as being successful in amplifying how different

³² This is not the result of the evaluators' evaluation but is rather secondary information reported by the implementer, the champions and the municipality but it could not be verified.

³³ https://www.instagram.com/oneact_lb/?hl=en

communities could come together and work together on mutually beneficial initiatives. It is worth noting that it took the OneAct campaign some time before it began highlighting initiatives by the project Champions themselves. Rather, it began by identifying influencers, guiding them into creating social content, and posting those contents online, thus aiming at amplifying their act of kindness, spreading well-being, and leading to a positive perception of the ‘Other’. **Positive interactions were perceived from the wider community throughout the campaign.**

It is worth noting that measuring the impact of social media content on the wider community is not a straight-forward task. As mentioned by the implementer, it is challenging to identify the impact on a specific group (e.g., Syrian and Lebanese populations) and it cannot be confirmed if the audience reaches is truly diverse (in terms of gender, age, location, minority groups). The content posted under the OneAct campaign has been diverse and covered topics that should have reached selective communities such as the LGBTQ+ or elderly people in nursing homes. As per the implementer, *“a high number of messages and interactions were received, thanking [them] on the work done, and many people have asked how they could actually volunteer with us,”* which is an indicator of success. The campaign has reached around 1.5 million people which represents around 25% of the total population in Lebanon. However, how far it became embedded in the minds of those that saw the content is still in question. In fact, as per the wave 4 report of Zinc, only 9% of the people surveyed recalled seeing the OneAct campaign logo. In addition, around 25% of them had the misperception that the campaign actually had as its purpose to support Syrian refugees, while 59% understood its purpose as ‘highlighting everyday efforts to help those affected by the Beirut explosion’.

The OneAct campaign was perceived by the implementer as a success leading to the decision to keep it as a regular platform beyond the lifetime of the project. However, it could benefit from increased clarification of its aims. One positive outcome of the OneAct campaign was its ability to showcase a community that had come together, in its diversity (nationality and backgrounds), to serve common needs e.g. during the Beirut Blast. This is understood to have counterbalanced the hate speech and narrative toward the ‘Other’ during the previous two years. However, it remains challenging to isolate or link any perception of decreased intra- or inter-communal tensions at the national level, to the impact of the project itself, notably the dialogue sessions, the initiatives or the OneAct campaign. In summary, the project has proven to have had a positive impact and achieved its objectives. This was most obvious through the dialogue sessions and the community initiatives. Overall, in some ways the OneAct campaign was successful enough for the implementer to continue its activities beyond the project’s timeline. However, in other ways this the OneAct campaign did not have the desired impact on the overall goals of the project.

Despite all the positive impact that the project was able to achieve, one has to mention that the initial planned target of the Dialogue Teams was 240, and was only reached by around 60% (141 in total). Therefore, this might have impacted the actual benefits and scope of the project.

Dimension 3: No project-related negative results at impact level have occurred – and if any negative results did occur the project responded adequately.

Overall, no indications of project-related negative results at the impact level have been observed. The context-sensitive risk monitoring system identified, discussed and followed-up relevant risks by assessing the changing in the context and its impact on the national dynamics through research. As per the perception of the project teams, they have worked extensively on adequate conflict assessments, risk analysis and mitigation measures to address any negative occurring results. Taking the fragile context into account, the project was able to ensure that escalating factors were not strengthened and have not indirectly supported

violent or dividing factors. Risks have been monitored in a systematic way in the context of conflict and fragility, considering the tensions between refugees and host community members, the inter-communal tensions in some areas and the unexpected events in the country on health, the economy and security. In sum, the aforementioned relevant contributions to cross-cutting issues, risk monitoring and the response to/absence of project-related negative results on the impact level was positively achieved.

However, there were still some unexpected results related to the OneAct campaign. It was perceived in the general community as a platform serving one end (the Syrians or the Beirut blast), which was not its aim. Another unexpected result were the extremely negative comments/interactions on the social media posts, as mentioned above.

Findings on Efficiency and Value of Money

The assessment of efficiency looked at the extent to which the various activities of the project transformed the available resources into the intended results: in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. It looked at the efficiency of project management and the extent to which regular monitoring of project activities and results were present as a tool to improve efficiency. Efficiency was also assessed through the diversity of the teams roles and the uniqueness of the services provided.

Dimension 1: The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to achieving its objectives.

Overall, at the very beginning and independently from any context constraint, the evaluation showed that the project did suffer from challenges in staffing due to the high turnover in the staff as reported by Search and budget requirements which was reflected in some delays in launching the project. It seemed that the project was not always able to account correctly for some of the actual needs related to some activities, such as monitoring the OneAct campaign and social media content, despite Zinc being tasked to monitor this. For example, and as per the SSIs of the implementing partner, one team mentioned how managing rumours as part of the response to social media activity - planned at the start of the project - should have been better accounted for in terms of resources. Managing rumours as part of social media monitoring is meant to identify comments and inputs that can create confusion and mistrust in the audiences. It usually needs a strategy to be put in place to address them and stop their spread. This was not taken into account in terms of ensuring that Search had the technical skills on social media usage within the team, to conduct this monitoring to the requisite standards. Moreover, from a field perspective, the decision to remove the Coaches' positions - who were perceived by most of the Champions as a good support – was unclear. The Champions, noted that the support received from the implementing partner was not always up to their expectations. This was specifically apparent following the move to the online sessions which were reported as rather chaotic. Some of the Champions reported to have felt lost with little unity around the delivery of the project activities. However, this perception was not shared by everyone.

Delays in receiving payments related to their initiatives particularly affected the Champions ability to progress. This can be explained by the delay from the Champions themselves in sharing their initiatives plans with the implementing organization, which created subsequent delays in approving and processing payments. This was also mentioned by the implementing organization, whereby issues related to payments allocated to the field were clearly stated and linked, from a system perspective, to bureaucratic challenges and processes imposed by the organization itself or by the donor. The situation was complicated further by the economic crisis and the continuous and unexpected changes in the currency value, sometimes overnight,

which prevented Champions from providing real-time quotations and receiving approval for their initiatives in a timely manner. This has led to the total cancellation of some of the Champions' initially planned community initiatives or frustrations during the process. Here's an example provided from one Champion: *"I was only given part of the funds [to achieve my initiative of school rehabilitation], and at some point, I was told that I might never receive the second part. This caused a conflict with Search as I had already started with my initiative and made promises to people. The deadline becoming tight at the end did not help. Search forced us to finish the project in one week while they knew that I could not retrieve the money yet. The problem was not with Search, but rather with the bank."*

One method that could have been improved in terms of resources at the beginning of the project is a better structured, organized and well-thought of monitoring and evaluation framework. The project could have benefited from baseline assessments with the targeted populations that participated in the project activities such as Champions and Dialogue Team members, and data collection to determine the starting level of knowledge, perceptions and dynamics at dialogue sessions and champions' level. It would have been an asset to the project to conduct a mid-term evaluation especially due to the changes in Year 2. This would have allowed better isolation of the results of the project. This evaluation has demonstrated that there was more weight given to the research component, led by Zinc, repeated at four instances during the lifetime of the project, than documenting potential changes at wider community and national level and under-resourcing the monitoring of changes at small community level.

Dimension 2: The Project's Value for Money

A majority of the interviewed stakeholders agreed that the results of the project justified the cost of implementation, and that the same results could not have been achieved with a smaller budget. The success of the project lies in the product of Search's project management and the skills and knowledge of the three partner organizations. However, there have been a number of challenges during project implementation that have created barriers to efficiency in management. These include changes to the context, the project's management staff, and, at times, inadequate coordination between Search and the Champions.

In terms of community initiatives, the Champions struggled in getting quotations from suppliers. Although this is a process implemented to ensure value for money, waving this and finding different ways in that matter should have been looked into amidst those exceptional times affecting the economy and services in the whole country. Nevertheless, most of the Champions were happy with the amount of money that was allocated to them to carry out their initiatives. Knowing their budget allocated for the initiatives ahead of time allowed the Champions to plan accordingly. As mentioned by the Champions, if they had a larger budget, they would have been able to increase the reach of the initiatives. Additionally, the impact of community initiatives were perceived as very good compared to the small amounts of money spent per initiative.

Partnerships were another way this project demonstrated good value for money, although not all the work with partners was accounted for at the design stage of the project. Establishing partnerships with other actors with a pre-existing network of highly qualified and trained facilitators or trainers on related topics, served as an efficient way to achieve good value for money. However, some partnerships' value for money, specifically the international ones, were more challenging to justify compared to that of the work with local partners such as Seenaryo. Due to the economic crisis and downturns, the evaluators would argue that sourcing local organisations opposed to international ones would be more appropriate.

As per the implementing organization and from the observations throughout this evaluation, contextual changes, which resulted in delays in the implementation of activities such as the community initiatives, were accompanied by regular re-allocations of the budget. The implementer was attentive and able to identify underspending at an early stage and re-allocated funds accordingly. The lockdown imposed by COVID-19, meant that the funds allocated for venues and transportation fees as part of the dialogue sessions and trainings were reassigned. The adaptation and change from the physical trainings and dialogue sessions to the virtual and online encounters had cost implications. The implementer was able to efficiently re-adjust budget lines accordingly. For instance, the funds allocated for transportation, as per the initial budget, were used to provide credit top ups for cell phone lines to allow Dialogue Teams to access the online sessions.

One Champion mentioned that they would have liked to see the budgets from the unsuccessful initiatives be transferred to those initiatives that were able to go ahead. This injection of funds could have increased the reach of those initiatives. In addition to this, some Champions had to be creative as the COVID-19 lockdown hindered their initiatives. For instance, some were able to implement their activities in two phases (using split payments), though this meant that out-of-pocket money had to be used which would have affected financial validation processes. Overall, there was a general feeling that with all the adaptations, there was good value for money throughout this project. The flexibility and understanding of the donor has been key in making this possible. However, it was also noted that Search could consider adjusting internal financial reporting processes and improving mechanisms for quality assurance. This will improve the overall management and efficient delivery of the project.

Findings on Sustainability

Independently from the level of the sustainability that the project has reached at the level of the Champions, Dialogue Teams or the wider community, it is challenging to identify how the changes in a context as volatile as Lebanon, will affect the wider perceptions people have created of one another. The implementer understands that the Champions are now influencers and leaders within their communities and hence, are expected to continue applying their peacebuilding knowledge. Some of the work that began in the project should be extended through the Dialogue Teams and the wider community following the end of the project. One example includes a woman “*who wants to continue implementing activities with the kids in her neighbourhood and help them in school activities*”. Though some would argue that a lack of funding will impact the continuity of these initiatives, 71.4% of the Champions that completed the questionnaire said that they will definitely carry out dialogue sessions, even if they were on a volunteering basis. For example, one of the Champions mentioned that, together with his Dialogue Team members: “*they proposed a suggestion that [they] should run a session every month to get to meet together, and that [they] should all take part in the session, not just [himself] as the facilitator. [They] agreed to open a different topic each time, even after the end of project and the initiative. This session would be like a monthly meeting where we would discuss our situation, and, every time, a different person would run the session.*”

The above shows that the skills learned, and the experience gained will stay with the Champions and Dialogue Teams, but will be utilised in different ways. As mentioned by one Champion: “*I will not forget [what I learned]. I can use it everywhere.*” This is also true for the Dialogue Teams, as the majority of those surveyed did mention that they were proud taking part in this project, that they would repeat this experience if it had to happen again and that they have learned a lot of new skills by participating.

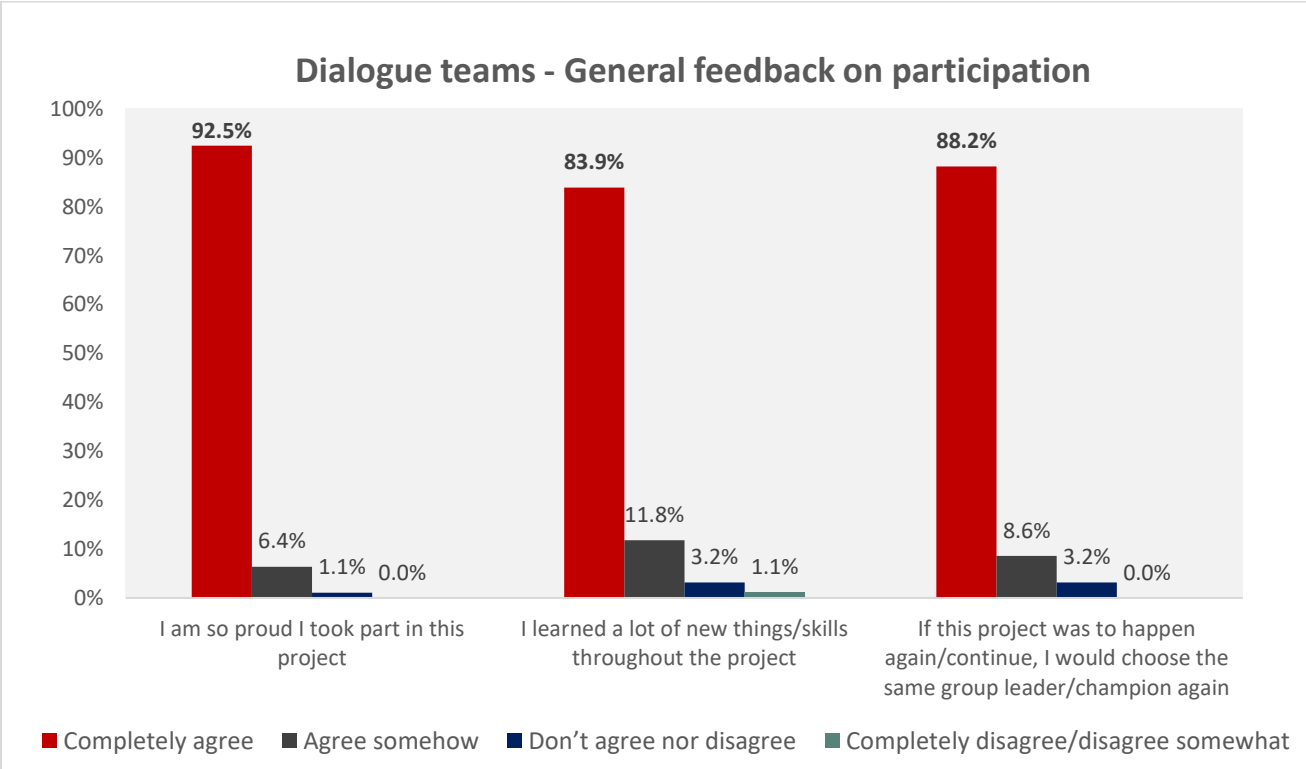


Figure 10. General feedback on participation in the dialogue sessions by dialogue teams

The partners were increasingly confident stating that the small initiatives with respective groups have had an impact beyond the partnership itself. For instance, they have heard of a number of women and youth who started off their own projects. This is mainly when the type of the trainings held by the partners were vocational in nature. Some Champions in the FGDs also shared how the Dialogue Teams they worked with planned for projects and initiatives beyond the life of the project in question. As one of the champions shared: *“The youth club is collaborating with the municipality to create an economic project in the village. The community members who participated in the dialogue sessions also made ties with another village to create a project [...] We managed to create an impact on a small scale that turned into an impact on a larger scale.”* From the donor’s perspective, *“the empowerment of the local champions and support for activities [done through partners], is definitely sustainable because the network is now established, the individuals have been engaged, are now more connected and passionate, and have the skills to run whatever project they go through.”*

Independently of these perceptions, it seemed that the relationship that was created between the Dialogue Teams has been sustained beyond the project itself, which is an indicator of a wider impact of these sessions and the potential sustainability of the project’s results. In fact, more than 67% of the surveyed dialogue members mentioned that they are still ‘very often’ in contact or still talk or socialize with the people they met through the project. This fact was also mentioned by some of the municipalities *“[I believe some of the women who participated in the knitting initiative] are still communicating with each other till now.”* In addition, 88 of those Dialogue Teams surveyed (94.6%) agreed that they tried and will continue trying to influence their respective communities using what they learned in the project.

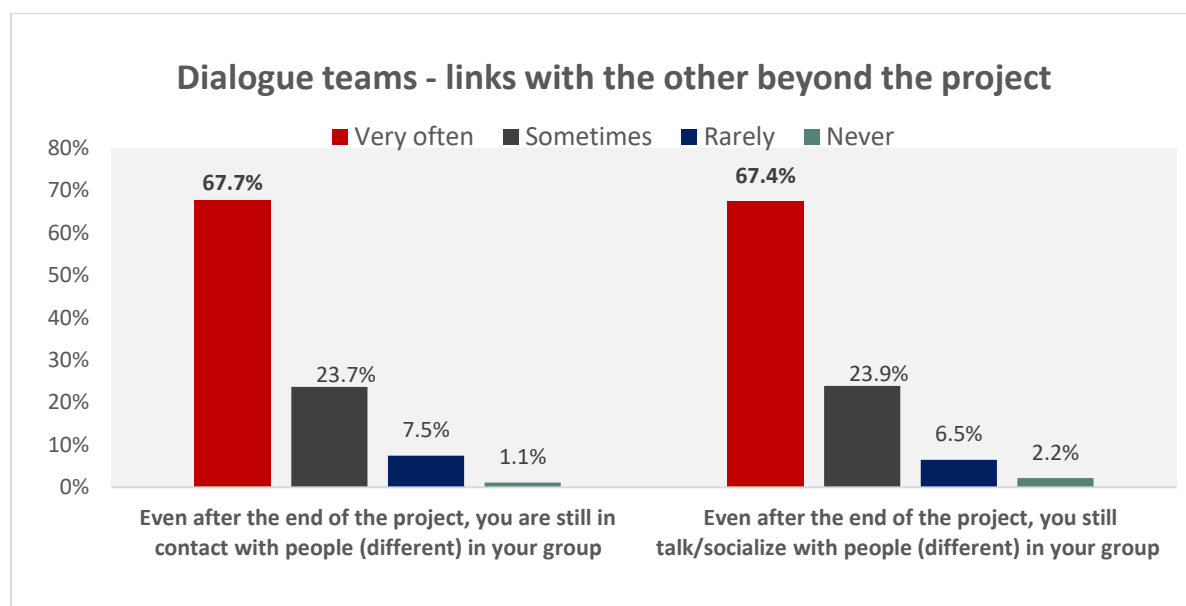


Figure 11. Links with the other beyond the project, dialogue teams

The turnover of the Dialogue Teams mentioned by the implementing organization during the SSIs could have affected the level of longer-term impact or sustainability that was intended to be created by the project at the planning stage. In fact, and as mentioned earlier, once peacebuilding skills are acquired, they could remain with the person for a long period of time. It requires some time to reach such a level of understanding

and expertise to transfer those skills to people. Therefore, it is expected that, the more the sessions attended by the same individuals over time, the higher the likelihood of them attaining a level of positive awareness and understanding of the ‘Other’ therefore, shaping a better level of social cohesion.

Findings on Partnership

The project has developed a diversified partnership that significantly contributed to its achievements. The partnerships created through this project were perceived by all parties as being positive and essential to the achievement of the project’s objectives and outcomes. Although the first selection of partners did not lead to the expected deliverables and to positive outcomes, the contribution of the final list of partners who took part in the implementation process was highly relevant. The partnership with the donor and implementing partners were also perceived as successful. It is relevant to note that the local partners have perceived the partnership with the implementing organization as beneficial in terms of capacity building and enhancing their internal policies and procedures to fit international standards. One of the partners, in fact, mentioned: *“This partnership allowed us to grow both in terms of building new relationships, [and] building our capacity and approach to conflict transformation, thus changing the way we run our projects, which allowed us to really be aware of conflict sensitivity”*.

Another partner stated the following: *“It was a really good partnership. It provided us with a technical level of expertise that we did not have before.”* This evaluation demonstrated that partnering with local organizations was efficient as it transferred knowledge and capacities, helped in ensuring continuity and allowed for a wider impact through potential collaborations with future partners. Specifically, in relation to partnerships with local organizations, the impact of peacebuilding initiatives reached above and beyond the specific groups that were approached and trained: *“It provided a comprehensive programme which builds the professional skills and confidence of Lebanese and Syrian women in the Bekaa, who first participated in a theatre programme, followed by the Common Ground Approach training, and who were, later on, trained as facilitators themselves, and who finally led their own projects. These women first benefitted from the social cohesion of theatre, and then became peacebuilding leaders in their own communities. Many are now delivering their own independent projects or working with us as facilitators.”*

4. Recommendations

Recommendations related to design:

1. **The project outreach methodology and approach should be inclusive to all marginalized and vulnerable groups, including LGBTQ+:** Although the project reached such groups in specific aspects or interventions, there was no set criteria from the project team related to the selection of participants in the dialogue sessions and initiatives. It is recommended to have clear criteria to include women, men, youth, LGBTQ+ and people with special needs or disabilities as part of the activities. It is also recommended to include community leaders, municipalities or other influential figures in targeted areas in the selection of Dialogue Teams. They will support in reaching marginalized and vulnerable groups.
2. **Increasing the initial target of the Dialogue Teams** to be able to account for potential dropouts throughout the project timeline or provide incentives to ensure commitment till the end of the project.
3. **During the inception phase of the project,** introduce the community stakeholders (leaders, activists and municipalities) to the project goals and outcomes, and inform the wider community thoroughly about the dialogue sessions and initiatives and the aim behind such interventions. Alongside this, introduce the project partners (regardless of the size of each partner's input) to the objectives, expected outcomes, design of the project and how their activities will feed into the project overall.
4. **Project impact level indicators should be realistic, especially when aiming to reach the wider community:** Changes in the level of tensions and social cohesion at national level require working at all levels: from the individual at a community level, to the municipalities at the sub-national level and the government entities at national level. Therefore, any change in tension would need to take into account the many factors that might skew the results and prevent from isolating them. It is recommended thus adapt a holistic approach by partnering with local and national authorities (ministries and municipalities) and networking with grassroot organizations that are in direct contact with the targeted populations in order to achieve the level of impact desired.

Recommendations related to implementation:

1. **Conduct a baseline assessment with relevant indicators, targets, and means of verification with the target populations (Champions and Dialogue Teams):** This will allow a comparison of change in perspectives or behaviour from the beginning to the end of the project at different levels, in addition to identifying the increase in knowledge and skills and any gap in the trainings. It is also recommended to include observations of the dialogue sessions as part of the monitoring and evaluation framework as of the first session until the end of the project. This will allow the identification of weaknesses and progress and adjust accordingly.
2. **Conduct quarterly refresher trainings for the Champions on specific topics related to enhancing their peacebuilding and facilitation skills. In addition to conducting monthly field/virtual observations of dialogue sessions:** This will ensure the application and monitoring of learning. In addition, continually assess how well the Champions have grasped the peacebuilding concepts and whether they act accordingly.
3. **Develop a platform or a safe space for champions to discuss ideas, challenges, lessons learned and achievements:** although a WhatsApp group was created during the early stages of the project, specific standard operating procedures (SoPs) can be developed to set the rules for such a platform.
4. **Continually provide coaching support for the Champions:** Either until the end of the project or until the Champions feel comfortable enough to work independently.

5. **Develop observation tools for the dialogue teams and monitor the sessions regularly:** as such activities will allow the identification of future Champions and peacebuilding advocates in the respective communities, based on specific set of criteria and observations.
6. **Consider the use of additional social media platforms in the communication/campaign component:** Platforms such as Twitter, in addition to Facebook and Instagram, could be considered, as they reach out to a different audience.

Recommendations related to efficiency:

1. **Explore simpler processes and ways of payment for field workers (Champions) as compared to payments for partners** and allow some flexibility or waivers in exceptional times, such as developing SoPs on field financial management.
2. **Consider adjusting internal financial reporting processes and improved mechanisms for quality assurance. This includes adjusting processes for processing sub-contracts, timesheets and invoices.** This will improve the overall management and efficient delivery of the project.

Recommendations related to sustainability:

1. **Sustain a link between the Champions, Coaches, and Search beyond the end of the project to allow for sustainability of impact:** This could be through bi-yearly gatherings organized by Search with the Champions, creation of a Champion alumni network, maintenance of the WhatsApp group where material related to peacebuilding topics or readings or potential trainings can be shared as well as newsletters from Search, etc. Continue to incentivize the Champions to keep the practice going by consistently sharing their success stories in the media and on Search platforms, by selecting “*best national advocate*” on a regular basis or by offering them free learning material/courses related to peacebuilding. Challenge them to continue their community initiatives, or build on the ones done during the project. This increases the likelihood of the Champions retaining what they learned and keep them motivated to apply the skills they acquired in their community.
2. **Put in place at the design stage plans targeting increased retention rate of dialogue teams:** This can be done through various team building activities with these groups or consider adding in-kind or financial incentives. Retention is key to facilitating the growth of champions and leaders in peacebuilding from the Dialogue Teams and increase the likelihood of them impacting through their close circles and wider community by becoming peace advocates themselves.
3. **Widen the scope of the project stakeholders to include local and national authorities (municipalities and ministries):** as part of the holistic approach to reach a wider community level social cohesion.
4. **Increase working with local organizations as partners, including civil societies and choose local partners versus external/international partners:** Although the project in some areas did collaborate and engage with local partners and this was perceived to be successful, however, it is encouraged to widen this approach. This has been shown to be effective in terms of implementation, as well as efficient in terms of value for money. Empowering local actors leads to sustainable impact through potential continuation of a common vision and mission through them.
5. **Develop observation tools for the social media campaigns:** in order to better understand and identify reasons behind the negative reaction and comments to the OneAct campaign.

6. **Keep the content of the OneAct campaign as diverse as possible even in times of crises:** Although this was partly done during the project but less so when there was a shift during the rapid response. It is recommended to keep the diversity of the content in future interventions in order to prevent any campaign from being seen as a platform aiming at promoting one cause or one community.
7. **Identify community initiatives ahead of time and make sure they all drive towards the common goal of tension reduction:** This would ensure sustainability.
8. **Conduct community initiatives in the same area where the dialogue sessions are being implemented and encourage more the dialogues members to be part of it:** Interviews suggested that these community initiatives did take place, although they did not include the same people each time. Dialogue sessions in relevant communities with the dialogue teams impacted the networks around them (e.g. family and friends). Therefore, conducting initiatives with the dialogue teams with the participation of the same community could re-enforce what was built through the sessions and further sustain impact.

Project Indicators

The following table summarizes the project’s outcome indicators that were measured and recorded at specific intervals during the project lifetime:

Table Showing Project Outcomes by Indicator

	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	
Impact	Reduced tensions at a local level amongst and between host communities and refugees in Lebanon.	% of community members and key stakeholders who report a reduction of tensions in targeted geographies	0% (percentage change) (Starting level 26.2%)	5% (baseline figure increased by 5% of the value. Aiming to reach the same improvement across gender and nationality)	26.2% Baseline Number Lebanese Female: 36.0% Male: 39.5% Non-Lebanese Female: 13.6% Male: 16.7%	NA	NA	This data from the UNDP & Ark Regular Perception Surveys on Social Tensions throughout Lebanon - February 2021 After more than a year of rising tensions documented in these regular surveys, in the Wave IX survey, there was some evidence of an easing in intra-group tensions. This improvement was observed within all confessional groups. Nationally, the percentage of Lebanese characterising intra-group relations in their area as 'negative' or 'very negative' declined from a high in Wave

								VIII of 30.4% to 21.0% in Wave IX. The percent of Lebanese agreeing with the statement, 'In this area, Lebanese from different confessions live peacefully among each other' increased from 58.3% in Wave VIII to 71% in Wave IX. However, this improvement in perception of the quality of intra-Lebanese relations was not observed, to the same degree, in the governorates of the Beqaa, Baalbek-Hermel and Nabatiye.
		% decrease in violent incidents reported in the target communities	Baseline: 0% (<i>% of armed Violence 13.3%</i>) (% of <i>physical/verbal confrontation: 25.9%</i>)	3% (baseline figure increased by 3% of the value. Target to reach equal improvement across gender and nationality)	Baseline: 0% (<i>% of armed Violence 13.3%</i>) Lebanese: 12.7% Syrian: 19.10% (% of <i>physical/verbal confrontation: 25.9%</i>) Lebanese: 25.8% Syrian: 26.3%)	NA	NA	This data from the UNDP & Ark Regular Perception Surveys on Social Tensions throughout Lebanon - February 2021 In the Wave VI survey, 13.4% 'personally witnessed armed violence, for example, with a knife, gun or explosives', compared to 13.1% in the Wave V survey. Syrians were somewhat more likely

								<p>to have reported exposure to armed violence than Lebanese, with rates of 16.4% and 12.9%</p> <p>Syrians were also significantly more likely to have witnessed 'verbal confrontations' over the same time period, with rates of exposure at 34.4% and 24.1% for Syrians and Lebanese, respectively.</p>
Objective 1	Cultivate collaborative and positive dialogues and narratives amongst and between host communities and refugees in target communities across Lebanon							
Outcome 1	Refugees and host community members have increased opportunities for and awareness of collaboration and positive interaction through dialogue and joint activities	1.1 % of community members that report having collaborated with the "other" within the implementation (direct intervention)	0% Baseline: 81% (community members participating in dialogues)	70% (baseline figure increased by 70% of the value. Aiming to reach the same improvement across gender and nationality)			Seenaryo: 40% of the participants agreed that "Without this project I would not have collaborated with people in my community"	81% of the participants have collaborated with different members from a different sect/political views in their communities

		1.2 % increase in empathy among targeted local communities (indirect beneficiaries, but specific areas)	0% (Exigo baseline: 47.4% (level of empathy))	8% (baseline figure increased by 8% of the value. Aiming to reach the same improvement across gender and nationality)	Exigo: 47.4% Lebanese: 41.9% Non-Lebanese: 52.6% Zinc's W1 Perception Survey: 4% Lebanese: 100% Male 39% Female 61%	Zinc's W2 Perception Survey: 6% Lebanese: 100% Male 44% Female 56%	Zinc's W3 Perception Survey: END OF OCTOBER 2020 Lebanese: 100% Male 56% Female 44%	Zinc's W4 Perception Survey: 5% Male 50% Female 50%
		1.3 % Increase in awareness of and support for local initiatives between refugees and host communities within 1 year of implementation (indirect beneficiaries but specific areas)	0% (3% level of awareness))	17% (baseline figure increased by 17% of the value. Aiming to reach the same improvement across gender and nationality)	Zinc's W1 Perception Survey: 0% increase (Baseline 3%) Lebanese 100% Male 46% Female 54%		Zinc's W3 Perception Survey: END OF OCTOBER 2020 = 2% Male 50% Female 50%	Zinc's W4 Perception Survey: 1% Male 77% Female 23%
Output 1.1	Research and analysis into linkages between strategic communications and social stability	1.1.1 # of analysis reports produced (quality sufficient reports)	0	6	1	3	3	6
		1.1.2 # of presentations on research and analysis conducted in the target communities	0	5		2	2	5
Output 1.2	Team of champions facilitate dialogue sessions and activities at community level	1.2.1 # of community champions trained to facilitate dialogues at local and subnational level (level of competences / showed	0	24 (12 male, 12 female, 8 Syrian)		24 (12 male, 12 female, 9 Syrian participants)	24 (12 male, 12 female, 9 Syrian participants) champions completed all initiative, peacebuilding	Achieved 24 (12 male, 12 female, 9 Syrian participants) champions completed all initiative, peacebuilding and

		positive improvement in the pre and post test)					and rapid response training	rapid response training 21(11 male, 10 female, 9 Syrian participants) champions completed all initiative proposal templates and launched their initiatives
		1.2.2 # of Community members involved in dialogue or community initiatives	0	240 engaged, 120 maintained engagement (120 female engaged/60 female maintained, 72 Syrian engaged/36 Syrian maintained)		About 15 were recruited but were not fixed or established due to COVID-19 this had to delay)	24 Champions (12 male, 12 female, 9 Syrians) 6 coaches (2 female, 4 male) 21 women through Seenaryo project (7 Lebanese, 14 Syrian) 60 community members engaged in Seenaryo's 5 micro-grant projects (36 Lebanese, 5 Syrians, 18 Palestinian, 1 Yemeni; 33 males and 27 females) ; 8 facilitators (4 Lebanese females and 4 Syrian females) 112 community members engaged by champions (88	Achieved Total = 362, 231 female, 131 male; 131 Syrian, 27 Palestinian, 203 Lebanese, 1 Yemeni. 24 Champions (12 male, 12 female, 9 Syrians) 6 coaches (2 female, 4 male) 21 women through Seenaryo project (7 Lebanese, 14 Syrian) 60 community members engaged in Seenaryo's First Round of 5 micro-grant projects (36 Lebanese, 5 Syrians, 18 Palestinian, 1 Yemeni; 33 males and 27 females) ; 8 facilitators (4 Lebanese females and 4 Syrian females) 127 community members engaged in Seenaryo's Second Round of 8 (4 Beirut

							Lebanese, 24 Syrian; 47 males, 65 females) Total = 231, 135 female, 96 male, 55 Syrian, 18 Palestinian, 147 Lebanese.	and 4 Beqaa) micro-grant projects (41 Lebanese, 63 Syrian, 9 Palestinian; 33 males and 80 females); 14 facilitators (7 Lebanese, 7 Syrian; 2 males and 12 females) 126 community members engaged by champions (97 Lebanese, 29 Syrian; 47 males, 79 females)
		1.2.3 # of community dialogues and Community initiative prep held that encourage positive interpersonal communication	0	144 dialogue sessions 72 community initiative planning sessions		0 (due to COVID-19 this had to delay)	42 conducted dialogue sessions during this quarter Akkar 12, Beirut 1, Mount Lebanon 6, North 10, Central/Western Bekaa 4, North Bekaa 9	A total of 210 community dialogues were done by champions North - 40, Akkar - 40, North Bekaa - 40, Central/Western Bekaa - 30, Beirut - 30, Mount Lebanon - 30.
		1.2.4 # of community initiatives funded to support collaboration and shared positive narratives	0	Initiatives completed in 22 areas			8 Community Initiatives proposed; 5 microgrant initiatives completed by Seenaryo, Preparation of the initiative proposal templates	Total = 37 initiatives implemented 20 Champion initiatives were complete (disaggregate by geography) 16 microgrant initiatives completed by Seenaryo,

								started during first week of October in 22 area/community	Preparation of the initiative proposal templates started during first week of October in 22 area/community. One project with youth collaboration delivered by CodeBrave.
Objective 2	Shift public perceptions towards greater trust and respect amongst and between refugees and host communities								
Outcome 2	Refugee and host community members have increased positive perceptions of the 'other' through access to positive social discourse and joint opportunities	2.1 % increase of community members who see the 'other' as a partner in responding to local issues and willingness to collaborate, disaggregated by segment. (indirect, through campaign)	0% (15% of members)	10% Segment 1: 0% Segment 2: 0% Segment 3: 3% Segment 4: 0% Segment 5: 4% Segment 6: 1% Segment 7: 0% Segment 8: 2% (working towards equal representation of male and female)	Zinc's W1 Perception Survey: 15% Male 47% Female 53%	Zinc's W2 Perception Survey: 14% Male 42% Female 58%	Zinc's W3 Perception Survey END OF OCTOBER 2020 FIGURE: 18% Male 46% Female 54%	Zinc's W4 Perception Survey 19% Male 57% Female 43%	
		2.2 # of changes seen in communities reporting overcoming barriers to social stability/causes of tension	0	12		0	6 (due to the situation the team needs some more time to gather and do a full write up of 10. Currently detailed in the	Achieved - 12 (see case study report. Only one per champion counted)	

							case study report)	
		2.3 Change in the media narratives demonstrating more positivity towards the "other"	0	10		0	Total 11 examples. Campaign presented on two media agencies (Al Harra and Tele Lumiere of two-to-five-minute segments including a champion story, business story and description of the campaign). 5 videos from established influencers with 5-100,000 followers on Instagram have covered the campaign messaging collaborating across communities including refugees. 4 examples of narrative change in the OneAct case study	Overachieved - Total 22 examples. Additional 6 examples 1) 3 Champion initiative videos were shared, to which the audience responded very positively and encouraged similar initiatives. 2) Additionally, 3 influencers videos were released shaping a change in narrative their followers are exposed to.

							document outlined.	
Output 2.1	National multimedia campaign targeting the population at-large and key stakeholders	2.1.1 Engagements per influencer	Benchmark average per influencer	Equal to the benchmark average			Total number of engagements for this period is 2,650	Total number of engagements 54,915 views
		2.1.2 Number of video views from distributed promotional content (defined by a 3 second view)	0	315,000 video views (aiming for equal representation across male and female)			985,052 views (775,308 on Facebook and 209,744 on Instagram)	Facebook: 6,406,388 Instagram: 1,556,565 Total: 7,962,953
		2.1.3 # of likes in media platforms hosting the national campaign # of shares and saves in media platforms hosting the national campaign-	0	We'd actually recommend not setting a figure target for engagements, as it's traditionally very difficult to predict			22,014 likes (15,715 on Facebook and 6,299 on Instagram); 633 Shares (Facebook only) 536 Saves (Instagram only)	# of likes in media platforms hosting the national campaign Facebook: 43,082 Instagram: 28,908 Total: 71,990 # of shares and saves in media platforms hosting the national campaign- Notes: These are number of shares only, as Facebook have

								stopped recording Saves Facebook: 1,822 Instagram: 1,498 Total: 3,320
		2.1.4 # of events, consultations, and/or meetings with media and government actors (including results)	0	50, 20 outcomes on collaboration		0 municipality meetings - this will be linked to Champion initiatives. 1 closed group discussion event was held with media by 4Productions	2 national government meetings through Social Stability network. One on the campaign specifically - this was recommended route by the GCS. The meeting was well received and the campaign welcomed by all stakeholders 4 meetings and discussions with media, 2 followed with news coverage. 6 Influencers engaged Meetings with local municipalities	Under-achieved - These have been based on need. It has been found that meetings with local municipalities are dependent on champion initiatives and necessity. 2 national government meetings through Social Stability network. One on the campaign specifically - this was recommended route by the GCS. The meeting was well received and the campaign welcomed by all stakeholders 4 meetings and discussions with media, 2 followed with news coverage.

							through champions dependent on initiatives and the municipality.	9 Influencers engaged through meetings, 5 had ongoing collaborations with the campaign. Meetings with 5 municipalities with seven champions (some meetings attended by two) for approval and collaboration of initiatives. Meeting with LAF in Tripoli
		2.1.5 # of journalists/influencers engaged in the campaign (through networking)	0	10 (aiming for representation across different sects and gender)			9 Influencers (2 female, 7 male, 6 Christian, 1 Shia, 2 Sunni) 4 (these are journalists who have contacted us directly. The journalists training delayed to October)	Achieved 9 Influencers (2 female, 7 male, 6 Christian, 1 Shia, 2 Sunni) 5 Journalists (2 our of 3 Interviews were published)conducted 2 interviews (Al Hurra did a report and live interview with Nour TV). We were approached by Al Jadeed and Al Akhbar. One of our champions was approached by a media agency but till now the report is not out.

Output 2.2	Rapid Response to address rumours and hearsay	2.2.1 # of likes on each themed content for COVID Rapid Response campaign	0	50 per theme		COVID Rapid Response initiated	50 likes per theme	21,357 likes - the campaign during this quarter was covering the covid-19
		2.2.2 # of incidents responded to by rapid response accompanied with a positive case study	0	Total 6 rapid response (2 National and 4 Local) 70% positive		1 Rapid Response started regarding COVID 19.	9 local rapid response activities identified and delivered by champions (detail outlined in the Case Studies Report under 'peacebuilding in communities')	Achieved: 11 local rapid response activities identified and delivered by champions (see case study) Response to Beirut Blast complete National campaign responded to Beirut Blast

