

PILOTING YOUTH PLATFORMS IN LEBANON & JORDAN

2-day Training: Capacity Building

Following the enthusiasm generated by the Piloting Youth Platforms' four-day training on The Common Ground Approach and Collaborative Design Workshop, Search for Common Ground (Search) facilitated an interactive two-day capacity building workshop for youth leaders across Lebanon. In total four topics, identified by youth as particularly important, were covered over a series of sessions, including: an introduction to mental health awareness, monitoring and evaluation, media and communications, and finance and budgeting.

Workshop participants said they felt safe and had the freedom to express their thoughts and feelings honestly with one another during the mental health awareness session. Youth stated this experience contrasted their daily lives, and openness about mental health concerns was rarely an option. Deep discussions about participants' personal stories were shared, and youth effectively utilized the active listening skills they had acquired in previous training sessions. In reflection, all participants said they were grateful for the opportunity to listen and be listened to, and believed the facilitator presented compelling information professionally and sincerely.



During the monitoring and evaluation session, participants drafted a developmental framework for their youth-centered online platform Aaber (Express). Participants first defined the overall objectives for the platform: 1) **activating youths' roles in their home communities**, and 2) **breaking down existing stereotypes through the creation of safe spaces that bring youth from across diverse backgrounds together to discuss common social issues**. Guided by these foundational goals, participants moved on to develop monitoring and evaluation practices for podcasts and social media content that would address social issues faced by youth in Lebanon. Practical steps for the creation and management of these online tools were further reinforced during the media and communications session, where youth engaged with one another and Search staff and learned about the technical realities of running an online platform. From the moment of inspirational vision to the point of publishing, youth learned about the many steps required for creating compelling, meaningful content.



The mental health awareness session was very helpful. It helped me gain new knowledge and provided a space to interact and to listen to others.

- 22-year-old Syrian Female, Qaa Resident



Through the monitoring and evaluation session we were able to unify our views and identify the main objective the platform needed to move forward in harmony.

- 22-year-old Lebanese Male, Baalbek Resident



Lastly, participants were trained on basic and advanced financial literacy and budgeting skills. The session exposed youth to critical questions they would need to answer in order to develop a sustainable and realistic online platform backed by an equally realistic budget. Practical and theoretical components regarding finance were discussed in order to equip youth with an understanding of both the 'why' and 'how' of financial management.

Over the course of the two-day training, youth regularly expressed how applicable and useful the workshop sessions were. As mentioned above, participants themselves were involved in the selection of training topics, which helped Search staff tailor the trainings' content to participants' particular needs. In a survey conducted at the end of the sessions 90 percent of participants said they had gained new information from all four of the topics covered.



Search is the world's largest dedicated peacebuilding organization and supports programming in 32 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, The Middle East, and the United States. Search's mission is to transform the way the world deals with conflict from adversarial means to shared solutions.

In Jordan, Search has worked since 2015 on leading programs to mitigate tensions between refugees and host communities, advance responsive and inclusive governance, and transform violent extremism.

In Lebanon, Search has worked since 1996 through a diverse array of programming, including social cohesion, peace education, and media production.