DIALOGUE AND LOCAL RESPONSE MECHANISMS TO CONFLICT

FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION

SOUTH LEBANON AND TRIPOLI

AUGUST・OCTOBER 2015
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The objective of the project “Dialogue and local response mechanisms to conflict” is to create safe space for dialogue and strengthen community stakeholders’ capacities to collaborate with one another in addressing tensions arising from the Syrian refugee crisis. The overarching idea behind the project departs from the fact that tensions between host and refugees need to be mitigated through social cohesion and social stability actions, by providing the opportunity for capacity building and the joint design and implementation of initiatives at the community level. The project is a pilot conducted in Tripoli and in South Lebanon, in 11 communities; 5 in Tripoli and 6 in the South.

By the beginning of 2014, the project identified participants in the 11 locations and kick-started regular roundtable sessions and trainings that provided a space for socialization of the two groups. Following the roundtables, community members identified the most pressing needs and collaborated on the design (and implementation in the South) of joint initiatives benefitting both communities. Furthermore, the created Joint Committees (JCs) were assigned with the task of sustaining the collaboration between the two communities. As the project ends, 10 joint committees (JCs) composed of an average of 5 Lebanese and 5 Syrians have been established and have initiated joint community activities (JCAs). They are expected to play a sustainable role in addressing common needs for their communities.

The present final evaluation aims at providing guidance, accountability, and lessons learned for SFCG and the funders. As it is a pilot project, lessons learned and best practices are particularly important in view of replicating the project in other communities in Lebanon. More generally, this evaluation aims at contributing to the improvement of peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives in Lebanon.

The project’s final evaluation assessed the following criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Furthermore, the available data were collected through an in-depth study of project documents as well as field visits to each of the ten locations. Focus Group Discussions, key informant interviews and surveys have been carried out in cooperation with the regional project coordinator and the location focal points.

RESULTS

1. RELEVANCE

Relevance of the project in the local context

The project is in line with SFCG’s principles of conflict transformation and aligned with the new Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) that seeks to focus on the protection and assistance of the most vulnerable populations among both Lebanese and Syrian communities. The project is also coherent with broader civil society programmes of social cohesion that work on bridging divides between adversary groups with the aim of attitudinal and behavioural change.

Furthermore, the project has proven to be able to adapt to the changing context, whereby it has adjusted its objectives according to the realities on the ground and customised its approach when engaging with local activists and community representatives.

In general, when tackling the issue of relationships between communities before the project, field research points out that rather than open tensions, both communities were mentioning misunderstandings and lack of trust based on prejudices and negative stereotypes. The majority of JC members confirmed that it was the low level of communication and interaction between both communities that constituted a fertile ground to fuel future conflicts to escalate.

Relevance of the roundtables (RTs)

In general, the RTs answered the need for getting to know each other, as well as identifying common needs within the community. They have without any doubt helped increase collaboration between communities and knowledge of each other. Most of the respondents in the locations praised the effect of the RTs on breaking the ice, but also expressed a difficulty in retaining their participation due to the long hours and number of RTs. Additionally, owing to the high vulnerability of certain groups, the RTs might have raised certain expectations and resulted in frustrations among participants when they realized that the JCA was not able to address their most pressing needs. This led to a decrease in the perceived relevance of the RTs in assessing common needs.

ABBREVIATIONS

| AM       | AL MINA                  |
| AS       | ABOU SAMRA              |
| BC       | BURJ EL CHEMALY         |
| BR       | BAB EL RAMEL            |
| BT       | BAB EL TEBBENEH         |
| CA       | CONFLICT ASSESSMENT      |
| CD       | COUNTRY DIRECTOR        |
| CISP     | INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEOPLE |
| DM&E    | DESIGN, MONITORING & EVALUATION |
| DRC     | DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL  |
| EU       | EUROPEAN UNION          |
| FP       | FOCAL POINT             |
| GOL      | GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON   |
| GS       | GENERAL SECURITY        |
| GZ       | GHAZIYYEH               |
| JC       | JOINT COMMITTEE         |
| JCA      | JOINT COMMITTEE ACTIVITY |
| JZ       | JEZZINE                 |
| LCRP     | LEBANON CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN |
| MM       | MIYI MIYIE              |
| NVC      | NON VIOLENT COMMUNICATION |
| OTI      | OFFICE OF TRANSITION INITIATIVES |
| PC       | PROJECT COORDINATOR     |
| PD       | PROGRAM DIRECTOR        |
| PM       | PROJECTS MANAGER        |
| QB       | QOBBEH                  |
| RE       | RAYS OF THE ENVIRONMENT |
| ROV      | REFUGEE OUTREACH VOLUNTEER |
| RT       | ROUNDTABLE              |
| SF       | SARAFAND                |
| SFCG     | SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND |
| TR       | TRAINING                |
| TY       | TYR                     |
| UN       | UNITED NATIONS          |
| UNHCR    | UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES |
| WASH     | WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE |

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South Lebanon and Tripoli August - October 2015

4
Relevance of the JCAs

Although beneficiaries of JCAs all point to a general satisfaction in the relevance of the JCA, each JC has expressed some frustration to the fact that their most pressing needs were far from those answered by the JCA. Additionally, it has been observed that apart from a few exceptions, the primary needs of the Syrians and the Lebanese were so different that no JCA could have reconciled both. In most cases, the JCAs adapted to the context according to the three main criteria of choice: funding, feasibility, and joint implementation by Lebanese and Syrian participants.

Relevance of the trainings

The conflict assessment and the underlying project logic are in line with the hypothesis that the tensions identified in these specific locations can be mitigated through non-violence communication (NVC) trainings, which can build capacities to communicate on one’s needs, to be able to recognize situations of dispute and contribute to resolving them in a constructive way. The majority of participants stressed the benefits of having participated in trainings and praised their positive effects. The effects have been much more individual than communal. However, complementarily with the rest of the project would have been strengthened had they also acquired hard skills directly related to carrying out the JCAs.

Assessing outcome 2: A group of Lebanese and Syrian community representatives becomes a reference for joint collaboration in 10 locations

The JCAs formed at the outset of the project are diverse in their representativeness. In the locations where the JC is composed of a majority of Syrian members, the latter are becoming a reference for Syrian affairs in their community. However, in locations where the JC did not meet for the final evaluation, individual JC members expressed that their relations have not been effectively strengthened following the implementation of the JC and JCA. In other locations where the JC is built on a pre-existing structure, the capacity to become a reference for joint collaboration is increased manifold, as the ownership of the already-existing committee aids in the integration of Syrian members and thereby the strengthening of relationships.

The extent of the effectiveness of these outcomes can also be linked with the existence of a partner organization in the project. Their presence has positively affected the propriety of the communities to form a committee, improve intergroup relations, and become a reference for joint collaboration between both communities.

2. EFFECTIVENESS

Assessing outcome 1: Syrian refugees and Lebanese have improved intergroup relations in 10 locations

In general, the intergroup relations among host and refugee community, depend upon the perception that the Syrian refugees have on the behaviour of the Lebanese refugees and their positive engagement in the local affairs to the extent that it is not perceived as intrusive by the host communities. It has been noted that when the Syrians integrate an already-formed Lebanese committee, trustful relations and the propensity to collaborate on a common project increases. However, it has also been noted that when the JC had been newly formed by the project, the resulting relations were not as strong and the rate of participation and retention of the Lebanese participants were low. Of course, other factors entered into play such as the extent of vulnerability of the communities. What emerged from the final evaluation is that the higher the levels of vulnerability are the lower the propensity of constructive collaboration from both sides, notably in the locations of the North.

Assessing the main result: Syrian refugees and Lebanese are equipped with and ready to apply collaborative, conflict-sensitive and non-violent responses to tensions

The results vary from one location to the other and sometimes between the Lebanese and the Syrian participants. Here is an overview of the main result achieved in the different location: The Tyr JC has been benefiting the Syrians more than the Lebanese participants, as shown first-hand by the level of participation and motivation of the Syrian participants, who make up 86% of the JC. The same has been noted for the Jezzine JC, where Syrian presence is also on the higher end comprising 87% of the JC members. Nonetheless, both those JCAs are committed to work towards an effective collaboration between the Lebanese and the Syrian communities and coordination of Syrian affairs in their community. In Miye Miye, this result has not been achieved as neither the Syrian participants nor the Lebanese have expressed empowerment of their potential role and equipment in such skills. In Ghaziyyeh, the JC is strong and willing to continue applying its influence on both communities. With a positive boost from the external environment, it can effectively apply collaborative conflict-sensitive responses to tensions. In Burj el Chemaly, where the JC has lost its municipal “cover”, the project might need another institutional boost to be able to be sustained through a constructive meeting with the municipality and SFCG. In Sarafand, where the project has partnered with RE and revived their environmental project, the JC is positively perceived among the larger community but does not engage in responding directly to tensions except at the JC level. This is reflected in the responses of larger community surveys where 67% of respondents note that their relationships have remained the same, and none refer to the JC as a reference in cases of tensions.
In some locations, the participants expressed a need to be more strongly equipped with knowledge and tools to be ready to apply collaborative, conflict-sensitive and non-violent responses to tensions when and if they arise.

Additionally, the final evaluation highlighted how gender has played a significant role in the capacity and willingness of participants to play a constructive and active role in addressing potential sources of conflict. Women participants have shown to be less sceptical of the outcomes and results of the project and more inclined to understand its use.

Furthermore, the role of municipalities and local institutions has had a different impact in the South and in the North, where dynamics and strength of institutions greatly differ. In general, the project in the South was closely supervised by the municipality, which had an overall positive impact. In a few cases, the municipality interfered with the project’s implementation, by constantly trying to turn the project for its own interests. The situation is very different in the North, where the municipality is often absent and where political forces are diverse. This resulted in a more relaxed situation where organizations can carry out projects with less monitoring but also with less institutional support to ensure sustainability.

Effectiveness of the trainings

The trainings have been successful and very positively perceived by Lebanese and Syrian participants alike. The participants are equipped with communication skills and meditation skills to express their needs. However, the majority of JC members point to the fact that they would like to acquire more hard skills to be able to address their community needs in a broader way.

Effectiveness of the JCs

The JCs are all composed of a Syrian and a Lebanese focal point. The composition of Lebanese/Syrians and men/women vary from one location to another. While in some locations, Lebanese participation rate is low, in other communities participation rate was balanced. Currently, come the end of the project, the JCs are drafting the ToRs of their future collaboration, and most of them have decided on a structure for meetings and continued work. However, they are not yet fully capable of serving as a reference of collaboration. For that they would need outreach, more training, and coordination.

3. Sustainability

Although the final evaluation was conducted prior to the end of the project while the exit strategy was still to be implemented in most of the locations, the majority of JCs showed willingness and readiness to keep working together but were not all yet fully able to do so. While some are strong enough to be able to continue to operate after the end of the project, others would still need additional support; structure, funding, and institutional support. Not all the JCs are equipped with enough skills for the responsibilities ahead: fundraising, sustaining contact with the local institutions, and outreach to more participants. These JCs would need legitimization from SFCG in the form of a sponsorship to continue being recognized among larger communities. Furthermore, all JCs would benefit from more support for coordination with other organizations and service providers.

Regarding the willingness of the local institutions to continue the work started by the project, it is noted that the municipalities in the South seem open to collaborate, although this may entail that the JCs will become dependent upon the political cover of the municipality. In the North, where the municipality has very low capacity and willingness to be engaged, the project focused on linking the JCs with international organizations and service providers on the ground, and on sustaining the local partner’s support while extending it to other communities.

Recommendations

The evaluation recommends continuing with such projects in line with the LCRP and SFCG’s philosophy of work, building on the following lessons learned, best practices and recommendations.

1. Lessons learned

First, in order to increase the impact plausibility of such projects, it is recommended that systematic coordination and cooperation with other organizations is performed from the inception of the project to reduce overlapping of committee formation and initiatives. More resources shall be invested on communication, outreach, and awareness on the project within larger populations.

Furthermore, social cohesion projects that focus primarily on relationships building should be designed with an enriched vision of contribution to social stability through mixed and comprehensive approaches (i.e. dialogue facilitation, service delivery, and protection mechanisms) that combined the different needs identified.

With regards to project activities, it is generally recommended to shorten the number of roundtables and committee meetings, and invest more time on trainings and joint initiatives.

It is equally important to continue implementing JCs with a sustainable and long term vision and to invest more resources on their success.

3. Best Practices

To ensure effectiveness and sustainability, similar future projects can build on the best practices emerging from the implementation of the project. This pilot project succeeded in closely coordinate and cooperating with local institutions in most of the places. Further involvement of local institutions allowed to further empower and legitimise the JCs.

Partnerships with local organizations were established and adapted according to the specificities on the ground which strengthened community support and context specificity.

This type of committees representative of the local community are particularly relevant in the actual context and should continue to be formed while customising the approach to the specificities of each targeted community. For example, as demonstrated through the project, being flexible on their composition depending on each context is crucial.

The project also highlighted the importance to consolidate the dialogue and the collaboration process through long-term impactful JCs and ad-hoc capacity building in order to ensure sustainability.

2. Exit strategy

As the evaluation took place before the end of the project, the exit strategy still had to be partially implemented. Nonetheless, in certain communities, an extension of the project “Dialogue and local response mechanisms to conflict” is recommended with the sole purpose of consolidating the achievements and ensuring their sustainability.

In these communities, the JCs shall be consolidated and, when relevant, link with other international organizations before SFCG retracts from the project, to ensure that they are willing and capable of continuing without SFCG facilitation.

Furthermore, the relevant JCs should benefit from more support to ensure their sustainability in the relevant locations. For this purpose, it is recommended to continue communicating upon the achievements of the JCs and provide further capacity building to the JCs specifically related to the implementation of the JCs. Further mechanisms (i.e. MoU with local organisations) to ensure sustainability of the JCs must be developed in order to offer the needed support to currently running JCs.

Finally, it is recommended to invest in trainings, coordination, and legitimization. In communities with strong potential, it is recommended to foster the link with local institutions, service providers and international organizations. Further trainings should be performed on fundraising, basic project management and humanitarian system, in order to strengthen the capacities of the JCs to ensure their own sustainability.
I. INTRODUCTION

Lebanon has been hosting Syrian refugees since the beginning of the Syrian uprising in March 2011. Owing to the geographical, historical, political, and security relations between the two countries, the number of refugees hosted in Lebanon hit a record high. As of June 2015, UNHCR estimations put the number of Syrian refugees to 1,172,753, while in reality numbers are much higher as a large portion of refugees choose not to register with the UNHCR for security purposes (Berti, 2015). Estimates of unofficial numbers of refugees go as high as 2 million persons. This puts Lebanon in first place for the country with the most refugees per capita in the world. To this day, refugees keep entering the country – albeit in a more regulated manner. It should be noted that Syrians entering Lebanon today cannot register with UNHCR anymore, which complicates their eligibility status to protection and/or support.

The impact of the crisis encompasses all sectors, from the economic and infrastructure to the social, political and religious spheres. In the past four years, the massive increase in refugee numbers, coupled with the uncertainty of their return, the weakness of some state institutions in dealing with the crisis and the scarcity of local national resources have led to growing tensions between refugees and Lebanese host communities. Restoring and maintaining social stability between Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities has been, and still is, a critical task.

In this context, the project “Dialogue and Local Response Mechanisms to Conflict” started in October 2013. It is a Search for Common Ground (SFCG) project funded by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)/European Union. UNHCR and SFCG designed this project with the objective of preventing, and when needed responding to, any potential conflicts between Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees. SFCG selected 11 communities in collaboration with UNHCR, according to the vulnerability mapping conducted by UNHCR and the inputs on dynamics between refugees and host population provided by SFcg partners and UNHCR field offices.

II. PROJECT RATIONALE

The objective of the project is to create safe spaces for dialogue and strengthen community stakeholders’ capacities to collaborate with one another in addressing tensions arising from the Syrian refugee crisis. The overarching idea behind the project stems from the fact that tensions between host communities and refugees need to be mitigated through social cohesion and social stability actions, which can be done by providing the opportunity for capacity building and the joint design and implementation of initiatives at the community level. The project is a pilot conducted in Tripoli and in South Lebanon in 11 communities; 5 in Tripoli (Bab el Rammel, Qobbeh, Abou Samra, Tebbenah and Al Mina), and 6 in the South (Jezzine, Miyf, Miie, Tyre, Sarafand, Buj el Chemaly, and Ghaziyeh). As the project ended, 10 joint committees (JCs) composed of an average of 5 Lebanese and 5 Syrians were created and have initiated community activities. They are expected to play a sustainable role in addressing common needs for their communities.

BACKGROUND

The project was initiated in October 2013 through a grant from UNHCR/EU. Its baseline documents are a project proposal that was followed by a conflict assessment (CA) carried out between November 2013 and January 2014.

The main finding of the CA revolved around the fact that the greatest risk of tensions between refugees and host communities is found in, both experienced and perceived, economic hardship and lack of employment opportunities for both Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees. The CA concluded that the main needs to address through a project seeking to mitigate tensions between the two groups were: a) Economic empowerment and poverty reduction; b) Strengthening of local institutions and municipalities to increase their role in conflict mitigation; c) Support for Syrian engagement in local affairs, as well as their collaboration in the affairs of host communities; d) Awareness campaigns to alter negative perceptions of refugees.

Geographically, the CA found a notable difference between the North and the South with regards to the tensions between the two groups. In the North, the perceptions of security as well as economic issues did not have the same echo in both regions. In addition, the factors of confessionalism, proximity to Syria, and historical relations with the country coupled with the involvement of some political groups in the ongoing conflict in Syria significantly altered the perceptions of each group towards the other in the North and in the South. Moreover, with regards to local institutions, despite the generalized perception of inefficiency and corruption of public institutions across the country, the Southern context looked more efficient in preventing open conflict than its counterpart in the North.

PROJECT TRAJECTORY

The project has been going on for 24 months, from October 2013 to September 2015. The implementation team is composed of two SFCG project coordinators (one in the North and one in the South), one partner organization in the North and one Assistant to Project Coordinator in the South. The management and support team in Beirut is composed of the Country Director, the Programme Officer, the Projects Manager and the DME Coordinator. Local partners were identified for both regions (Utopia in Tripoli and Caritas then DPNA in the South). Funding cuts in mid-2014 kept only Utopia active on the project for the remainder of the year. However, in 2015, in the South (after having had to terminate the contract with DPNA), SFCG partnered with Salam organisation for the few months allowed by the budget until the end of June 2015 (in three out of six communities) and then had to keep operating on its own for the remainder of implementation.

By the beginning of 2014, based on the outcomes of the CA and with the help of local partners, the project identified participants and kick-started regular roundtable sessions and trainings that provided a space for socialization of the two groups. The roundtables provided a space for the participants to get to know each other, share their needs and agree and design Joint Community Activities (JCAs) to benefit both communities.

3 By the end of the project’s implementation, SFCG had withdrawn from Bab el Rammel for reasons explained later in this report.

Handover Ceremony of an Envelope to the Municipalities of Ghaziyeh
Ghaziyeh JCA, South of Lebanon
After having identified the most pressing and important needs and collaborated on the design (and implementation in the South) of joint initiatives, the roundtables resulted in the formation of Joint Committees (JC) that were assigned with the task of overseeing the collaboration between the two communities, mainly through a new round of JCAs to the benefit of the larger community. In the South, the first round of JCAs was implemented with additional UNHCR funding between August and December 2014. In Tripoli, due to the funding restrictions within UNHCR, the JCAs could not be funded and had to be halted. SFCG collaborated with international service providers to jointly implement some of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) projects identified by the communities in Tripoli.

In January 2015, a mid-term evaluation of the project was conducted. It confirmed the relevance of the project, and noticed that the results varied considerably from one location to another. It confirmed the positive impact that the project was having at the individual level, but questioned it at the community level. Furthermore, it reviewed the logic of creating “conflict response mechanisms” to creating joint committees representing the needs of both Lebanese and Syrians and addressing these needs through joint initiatives and by acting as credible interlocutors to service providers.

Shortly before the mid-term evaluation, the project had received an extension and additional funding from UNHCR. This reinvigorated the project in the North: JCAs were effectively formed and trained and JCAs were successfully organized and implemented in 4 out of the 5 locations. In the South, the project continued moving forward and a second round of roundtables, trainings and JCAs were implemented in each location.

III. EVALUATION RATIONALE

The project “Dialogue and local response mechanisms to conflict” is, at the time of the data collection, at its last month in the North and will be continued until the end of the year in the South. The final evaluation aims at providing guidance, best practices, and lessons learned for SFCG and the funders. As it is a pilot project, lessons learned and best practices are particularly important in view of replicating the project in other communities in Lebanon. More generally, the final evaluation aims at contributing to the improvement of peacebuilding and conflict transformation initiatives in Lebanon as a response to the Syrian refugee crisis. It has specifically looked at:

1. The relevance, efficacy, and efficiency of the project;
2. How to deal with internal and external challenges such as ownership and retention of participants and the role of external institutions;
3. Identification of whether or not the project is on a sustainable path.

Finally, it offers specific recommendations for use by SFCG and other actors interested in replicating projects of this sort, as well as more general ones for use by practitioners of humanitarian aid and peacebuilding in Lebanon and elsewhere.

The project has evolved since its inception in 2013. Over the course of the project, the objectives and their outcomes and indicators have varied to a certain degree (partially due to UNHCR funding mechanism of 3/6 months sub-agreements). The evaluation has considered the initial internal log frame, project proposal, and conflict assessment as the baseline documents of the project. Furthermore, the mid-term evaluation served as a reference point not only to understand the evolution of the project but also the changes in outcomes and possible alteration of objectives. The evaluation has considered the dimension of activities as a key source of data collection and a key set of outcomes. These include the roundtables, trainings, joint committees’ creation, and joint committee activities.

PROJECT STATUS

Information on each location since the mid-term evaluation

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<tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCA details</td>
<td>Recreational activities for children / folkore activities</td>
<td>Recreational activities for children / folkore activities</td>
<td>Three-day Football tournament / lunch and folkore activities</td>
<td>Planting of trees</td>
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<td>Launching and operational running of &quot;Trash Delivery&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>JCA details</td>
<td>Cleaning campaign on two main streets and distribution of edible plants</td>
<td>Refurbishing a rooftop and turning it into a flying garden</td>
<td>Set up of a clothes donation box in a main street of Tripoli and monthly redistribution of clothes in the neighborhood</td>
<td>No JCA implemented</td>
</tr>
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METHODOLOGY

According to the TORs, the project logical framework, the OECD/DAC criteria for evaluating project performance, and the rapid tension assessment tool developed by the Social Stability sector in Lebanon, while keeping in mind theoretical knowledge on the role of civil society in peacebuilding, the evaluation has looked at:

- **Relevance**, defined as the extent to which the project answers a real need, is based on an analysis comparing the activities of the project with the needs of the context in general and communities in particular.
- **Effectiveness**, defined as the extent to which the objectives have been achieved and the extent to which achievements have affected the lives of those who lived them, is based on a reconstruction of the theory of change of the project and the way these are translated into outcomes and results. The evaluation looked at the kind of changes that have occurred and compared them with the initial objective set for the changes.
- Finally, the evaluation assessed the **sustainability** of the project according to the probability that the activities will continue after SFCG ends the project. The data was collected through an in-depth study of project documents as well as field visits to each of the 10 locations. Data collection tools were developed and translated into Arabic, and adapted to each category of interlocutors to be used in the field research. In each location, in accordance with the availability of data and size of project trajectory, and in cooperation with the regional project coordinator and the location focal point, a mix of focus groups, key informant interviews (with local authorities, NGOs representatives, etc.), and surveys have been carried out as well as a visit to the JCA where applicable and an observation of results on the ground.

In Tyr, visited on August 14th, the evaluator met with two Syrian and one Lebanese JC members for interviews, and surveyed nine JCA beneficiaries. A focus group was held with 15 members of the JC at SFCG offices. In Sarafand, visited on August 18th, the evaluator met with two Lebanese and one Syrian JC members as well as a member of the municipality for interviews, and surveyed five beneficiaries of the JCA. A focus group was held with seven members of the JC at the municipality. The evaluator also visited the recycling collection site and saw the team at work. In Miye Miye, visited on August 19th, the evaluator met with six Syrian participants, three of whom were JC members, for interviews, at their respective homes. Two Lebanese JC members were interviewed over the phone and two JCA beneficiaries were surveyed.
The evaluation process is comprised of the following elements:

- Preparation of the inception report (August 10th)
- Field visits (August 17th to September 15th)
- Draft report (September 20th)
- Round of feedback from SFCG and UNHCR (September 27)
- Final report (September 30)

**Constraints**

The main obstacles faced by the evaluator were the timeframe of the evaluation and the availability of data. The evaluation took place at a time when the project had not ended, which put pressure on PCs who had to accommodate the evaluator in her field visits and simultaneously coordinate JCs, roundtables, and training sessions. In some locations, the final training sessions and the JCA had not yet taken place when the evaluation started, which either postponed the field visits or gave partial results before the end of the project. In some locations, the evaluator held the focus group after the last roundtable session to evaluate the project with the PC. This turned out to be an interesting moment rich in information and the evaluator silently observed the discussions. In addition, the evaluation had to be carried out in the timeframe of the project, which imposed strict deadlines and limited the field research to one visit per location.

As for the availability of data, the data collection process was highly dependent on the quality and cooperation of the JC focal point(s) (FP), on the cooperation of the project coordinator, and on the presence and cooperation of a partner organization. In the South, the evaluator was put in contact with a focal point of the JC who would help during the day in the identification of key informants for interviews, and who would be organizing the focus group. In the North, the data was more easily available due to the geographical proximity of locations and the presence of Utopia, the local partner on the ground, which facilitated the organization of focus groups and the identification of informants and beneficiaries for surveys. In both locations, it turned out to be challenging for the FPs to find beneficiaries to carry out surveys, which explains their low number. Furthermore, in some locations, the beneficiaries were too distant from the project to be able to be surveyed (such as the case of Ghaziyyeh or Burj el Chemali).

At times, the FP had only one Lebanese contact at best, so data was limited to information from Syrian participants and beneficiaries (this was the case in Jezzine, Miye Miye, and Tyr). In some locations, the FP was not able to gather the JC for a focus group for reasons pertaining to the dynamics within the JC and thus the data collection was held without a focus group. These were the cases of Miye Miye and Abou Samra. Other times, the JCA had not taken place yet or was not finished so it was impossible to find indirect beneficiaries to hold surveys (this was the case in Ghaziyyeh, Burj el Chemali, and Gobbeh).

**THEORY OF CHANGE AND PROJECT LOGIC**

**INITIAL THEORY OF CHANGE AND PROJECT LOGIC**

- Lebanese and Syrians collaborate
- Lebanese and Syrians are provided with tools and skills
- Lebanese and Syrians are able to play an active role in mitigating tensions
- Syrian refugees and Lebanese have improved intergroup relations in 10 locations
- Local leaders in community conflict resolution is strengthened in 10 locations
- Syrian refugees and Lebanese will consistently apply collaborative, conflict sensitive and non-violent responses to tensions

**REVISED THEORY OF CHANGE AND PROJECT LOGIC**

- Lebanese and Syrians collaborate
- Lebanese and Syrians are provided with tools and skills
- Lebanese and Syrians are able to play an active role in addressing potential sources of tensions
- Syrian refugees and Lebanese have improved intergroup relations in 10 locations
- A group of Lebanese and Syrian community representatives becomes a reference for joint collaboration in 10 locations
- Syrian refugees and Lebanese are equipped with and ready to apply collaborative, conflict sensitive and non-violent responses to tensions
IV. EVALUATION RESULTS

1. RELEVANCE

1.1 Relevance of the project in the local context

1.1.1. Is the project in line with SFCG’s principles, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, and the broader role of civil society in peacebuilding?

The logic of the project “Dialogue and Local Response Mechanisms to Conflict” is based on SFCG’s principles and approaches to conflict transformation. The project aims to create a safe space for dialogue around conflict issues and common needs, and build Lebanese and Syrian community members’ capacities for the joint identification, design and implementation of initiatives that answer common needs.

The project is aligned with the new Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP). The LCRP focuses on the protection and assistance of the most vulnerable populations among both Lebanese and Syrian communities, strengthening the capacity of national local authorities, and reinforcing the country’s economic, social and institutional stability. The LCRP seeks to reinforce Lebanon’s stability (Strategic Priority III) by expanding participatory community initiatives, creating forums for dialogue (Objective iii-iii) to strengthen the community development initiatives providing forums for dialogue and local response mechanisms to conflict.

1.1.2 Is the project able to adapt to the changing context?

In the past two years, the project has been able to adapt to the changing context. The project has experienced instability in funding and continuity due to UNHCR’s institutional change. Due to funding restrictions, the project has had to cope with an annulment of partnership in the South in 2014 and resumed with another partner in 2015.

Furthermore, the project has adapted to its objectives according to the realities on the ground, as along the process it has proven challenging to identify local leaders and local points of entry through whom they were able to integrate the community. They worked together to form a group of participants from both the Lebanese and Syrian communities in each location. Sometimes, focal points were so empowered that they became a resistance to the project, such as the case of Bab el Rame, where the identified JCA – a result of the strong influence of the Lebanese focal point – was a woman-held catering enterprise to suit Lebanese and Syrian livelihood needs. When the idea was refuted by SFCG because livelihood for Syrians was not possible and the JCA would have benefitted the Lebanese only, the Lebanese focal point exhibited strong resistance. Nonetheless, SFCG succeeded in maintaining the group engagement even after the cancellation of the first year CSPs. However, when the JC started to discuss which JCA to implement during the second year, it became clear that the Lebanese focal point was hijacking the project and jeopardizing the participatory moments. She used her power to negatively influence the JC participants. This led to tensions between the participants and SFCG, and the project was discontinued in that location.

1.1.3 How does SFCG select its partners? How are participants chosen? Along what division lines?

At the outset of the project, the selection of the 11 locations was done according to their vulnerability and to the presence of proven tensions according to SFCG partners and UNHCR offices.

In the selection of the partners, SFCG has tried to work within the community’s achievement of an effective impact on the ground and a strong network among both communities. The partner organizations cooperated in the selection of participants chosen among the Lebanese and Syrian communities. Participants were chosen according to their ability to represent their communities, their capacity to have an influence on their direct surroundings and their activism, and commit to a social cohesion project.

In the North, SFCG has partnered with Utopia, a Lebanese NGO based in Tripoli. Utopia has extensive experience working with local populations and has over the years built a strong network among vulnerable Lebanese populations and more recently among the Syrian community. In its selection of partners, SFCG relied on Utopia’s support for 2 out of 5 locations and on its own networks and UNHCR’s for its three others. Simultaneously, SFCG’s Project Coordinators (Pcs) were active in identifying local points of entry through whom they were able to integrate the community. They worked together to form a group of participants from both the Lebanese and Syrian communities in each location. Sometimes, focal points were so empowered that they became a resistance to the project, such as the case of Bab el Rame where the focal point played a strong influence in the suggestion of a JCA that would fit her financial needs rather than joint community needs.

In the South, SFCG started the project with a partnership with Caritas that was changed to a partnership with Development and People’s Nature Association (DPNA), and then with Salam. In 2014, the joint implementation was revised, and partnerships terminated due to funding reasons and SFCG has had to carry out the project by itself through its PC (and, in 2015, a partnership with Salam was resumed for 3 out of 6 communities). This has had no effect on the selection and retention of participants from both the Lebanese and Syrian communities, who had been chosen prior to the termination of the partnerships and were able to continue working. In Sarafand, SFCG has partnered with a local environmental organization, “Rays of the environment” (ChuHa3 el bi’a), for the JCA.

In most of the communities, the project found it too challenging to work with actual public leaders who might have jeopardized the project’s achievements. Moreover, identifying “leaders” from the refugee community proved to be challenging. Consequently, SFCG decided to engage with activists, representatives persons from the neighbourhood, and committed and motivated regular participants.

In Sarafand, SFCG’s project had to change its approach when the selected participants refused to cooperate; a decision was taken to work with other vulnerable lebanese populations. In other cases, the focal points were so empowered that they became a resistance to the project, such as the case of Bab el Rame where the focal point played a strong influence in the suggestion of a JCA that would fit her financial needs rather than joint community needs.

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were less educated and find themselves in more precarious conditions due to their situation. A few of them were Outreach Volunteers (ROVs) and have personal links with other organizations. Most of them had never taken part in such projects.

1.1.4 How were the relationships between Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities – as stated by the project conflict assessment carried out in November 2013. 1 While the necessary humanitarian response and sympathy of host communities has played a crucial role in providing sustenance and livelihoods to Syrian refugees, over time deteriorating economic and security conditions have given rise to bitter sentiments and, in some cases, outright hostility. 2 In 2014, the Government of Lebanon (GoL) and the United Nations (UN)-designed LCRP adopted conflict mitigation programmes to strengthen the capacity of communities and institutions in facing the crisis and preserve social stability.

In general, tensions – or low levels of interaction between both communities – are more found in the South rather than in the North. This trend correlates with the larger national political situation, the active role of Hezbollah in the conflict in Syria, and the rise of the Islamic State. It is also concurrent with the fact that the North has always maintained closer relationships with Syria than the South, owing to geographical, tribal, and confessional links between the two populations. But in general, rather than actual tensions, field research points to misunderstandings between both communities and a lack of trust from the side of the Lebanese towards the Syrian refugees based on prejudices and negative stereotypes. Participants pointed to a lack of communication and lack of knowledge of each other’s needs, anxieties, and fears. In fact, in the North all the JCs refuted the idea that there were “conflicts” while in the South, only two JCs negatively perceived the relationships between Lebanese and Syrian communities; those of Miye Miye and Ty. If a majority of the JC members refuted the hypothesis that there were actual conflicts, they insisted on low levels of understanding and an absence of communication channels leading to low levels of communication between both communities which constitute a fertile ground to fuel future conflicts to escalate.

1.2 Relevance of the roundtables (RTs)

1.2.1 How are roundtables formed?

The Syrian and Lebanese focal points help the PC and partner organizations gather participants to roundtables (RTs). The latter are invited on a voluntary basis. Once contact is formed with PCs, individuals establish direct contact with the project and are invited for follow-up RT sessions. A transportation fee is reimbursed after every session. The willingness to participate solely rests on the individual.

1.2.2 How representative are the participants of the RTs? What are the gender considerations?

Until January 2015, a total of 309 participants, 132 Lebanese and 177 Syrians, had attended roundtables. Since January 2015, a total of 146 participants (54 Lebanon and 92 Syrians) have regularly attended roundtables (39% are women and 61% are men). In most of the locations in the South, participation and retention rates have been on the low among Lebanese.

1.2.3 What needs are RTs answering?

In general, the RTs answer the need for getting to know each other and breaking the ice, as well as identifying common needs together. Most of the respondents in the locations praised the effect of the RTs on breaking the ice, but also expressed a difficulty in retaining their participation due to the long hours and number of RTs. The RTs mainly served to identify common needs to both communities. They helped participants in the identification of problems affecting both the Lebanese and the Syrians equally in their community, and what could be collaboratively done to address these problems through a JCA that would be chosen according to certain criteria. In addition, owing to the high vulnerability of certain groups, the RTs might have raised certain expectations that resulted in participants when they realized that the JCA was not able to address their most pressing needs. This led to a decrease in the perceived relevance of the RTs in assessing common needs, as was noted in Bab el Tebbeneh, Abou Samra, Jezzine, and Ty.

In Ty, for instance, the needs of the Syrian community revolve around security, hygiene and food. Aid has been cut and families are in dire need for such aid. Participants assert that it was assumed that by bringing the Lebanese and Syrians together, the Lebanese would increase their awareness on the situation of the Syrians and thereby cooperate. In lieu of this, the RTs focused on bringing communities closer through working with children. In Miye Miye, Syrian participants stated that RTs gave them the opportunity to express themselves and communicate about their needs, whereas beforehand they did not see a way to put forward their concerns. The fact that the RTs broke the ice between the two communities. During the RTs, one of the needs called to set up a Syrian/Lebanese bureau of affairs to solve the disputes and distribute aid if needed. Another need expressed was medical aid. In Jezzine, the RTs served to break the ice between both communities in a location where the Syrians were strongly restrained, especially during Year 1 of the project. They had curfew times and were not allowed free access everywhere. In Ghaziyyeh, the RTs were mostly conducted at the municipality and under the municipality’s “wing”, which kept a very close eye on the project. The same can be said about Jurj el Chemaly, where the Lebanese focal point is a member of the municipality. The RTs mainly served to increase the understanding of each community’s position vis-à-vis the other. For instance, JC members assert that the Syrians needed to understand how their presence was pressuring the Lebanese, and the latter needed to understand the difficult situation that the Syrians were in. In Sarafand, the RTs served to encourage the Syrians to socialize among the already-active Lebanese in the town. They mainly facilitated ice breaking between both communities, and increased personal awareness of the other. Participants pointed to the fact that they were able to get to know each other, and find common ground on the needs that eventually turned into their JCA.

In Abou Samra, the RTs served to strengthen relationships among the residents of a farm, even though the farm is sitting on a small surface area and people knew each other from the start. The farm houses 15 Syrian families and 5 Lebanese ones. Respondents all asserted that there was no need to work on tensions as there were none to begin with. In the RTs, involved residents of Hay el Tanak, a very poor and marginalized neighbourhood. The RTs gave a voice to a group of women who seldom were given the opportunity to express their needs. In the process, the RTs broke the ice and increased collaboration between Lebanese and Syrian women. In Bab el Tebbeneh, the RTs were useful in linking together the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI)/Utopia Tebbeneh Youth Council with Syrian participants. After the challenging first year of the project, it turned out to make more sense to integrate Syrians in an already-formed group. The same can be said about Gobbeh, where the RTs were very useful in bringing together and integrating Syrian women in the Utopia Gobbeh Women Council.

1.2.4 Would communities have collaborated there been no formation of RTs?

The RTs without a doubt helped increase collaboration between communities and knowledge of each other. There is no control variable to be sure that there would have been no cooperation had there been no RTs. It is worthwhile to note that other organizations (such as the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the OTI and Mercy Corps in the North) are also creating ad-hoc committees based on their organisations’ mandate and mission in other locations of Tripoli.

In Ty, participants insist that the RTs were beneficial because they brought the Syrian community closer together and increased networking among them. This has also been noted in Jezzine, where the JC members noted that the work of the committee has been made legitimate and possible thanks to the networking among the members in the RTs. Additionally, external factors, namely the role of the newly-elected mayor, have positively affected collaboration. The Syrian Jezzine JC members also pointed to the fact that they were aligned with the project logic from the beginning but the RTs strengthened the coordinating and mediating role
that a few Syrian individuals had already started doing with other members of their community. In Miye Miye, data collected pointed to a serious lack of communication between the two communities. Syrian participants expressed that they felt that the Lebanese did not want to strengthen relations, let alone have any relations with them in the first place. The few Lebanese participants who answered the calls for evaluation eluded the questions about the quality of relationships with the Syrians, while simultaneously concuring with the fact that relations were not close enough in the region. Nevertheless, the assumption of the lack of motivation from the Lebanese needs further research to be clarified. In Ghaziyeh, the RTs were built upon a Lebanese committee that had already been closely cooperating with the municipality. Participants pointed out that 80% of the resulting JC knew each other before coming together, as the municipality had already formed a committee of advisors to Syrian affairs comprising of Lebanese only. JC members mentioned that collaboration and good relations already existed before the project, and that there were no notable tensions between Lebanese and Syrians, and there still are not. However, they pointed to a need to manage and resolve the few Syrian-Syrian disputes that arose. In Burj el Chemaly, there was no sufficient data to answer this question. In Sarafand, the recycling dynamic was already ongoing and the RTs came to build on it. This means that the communities could have collaborated had there been no RT formation, but there is insufficient data to corroborate this fact.

In Abou Samra, the farm is such a small space that collaboration would have been inevitable between neighbours. The same can be said about Al Mina, where the project took place in a very small neighbourhood, Hay el Tanak. In Tebbeneh and Gobbeh, communities were already collaborating before the project. However, Syrians would probably not have been integrated into the existing Lebanese committees had they not gone through the project because their relationships would not have been strong enough. This assumption needs further research to be verified.

1.3 Relevance of the JCAs

1.3.1 Do activities answer a specific need? How has it been identified?

The RTs identified two to three themes for actions on needs during discussions (and, in Tripoli, through surveys carried out by the JCs in the community). JC members engaged in joint activities, under the guidance of the PC, that identified themes, and elaborated on one activity to implement according to funding, feasibility, and common benefit to both communities. Final selection was thus done in a funding-related manner and according to the preliminary criteria, which would benefit both Lebanese and Syrians equally. Although beneficiaries of JCAs all point to a general satisfaction in the relevance of the JCA, each JC has expressed some frustration towards the fact that their most pressing needs were not addressed by the JCA. Additionally, it has been observed that apart from a few exceptions, the primary needs of the Syrians and the Lebanese (especially in the South) were so different that no JCA could have reconciled both. In fact, the needs of the Syrian and the Lebanese communities were in some cases so distant and disconnected with each other that it might have led to decreased perception of relevance of the JCA by one or both communities. Syrian JC members of Burj el Chemali, Tyr and Miye Miye expressed a frustration of having spent high amounts of the JCA funds on a common lunch when the funding could have been put to better use by spending it on their immediate common needs.

For instance, according to a member of the Jezzine JC, the JCA appears to have been “imposed” by the Lebanese focal point. In effect, three ideas for JCAs had been initially identified: a) organizing a marathon; b) holding English classes for the community; c) organizing a camp. The marathon had been selected as the JCA until a football tournament, same JCA as the first year, appeared as the final decision. The Syrian JC members attest that the football tournament was the idea of the only active Lebanese JC member whose association, Chellal Jezzine, engaged in such activities and as such interested on this idea. In all cases, the JC agreed that the football tournament would answer a common need for physical training and team play, especially because the Syrians had been barred access from the football field for the past two years. In Ghaziyeh, the principal needs revolved around water and health. This had already been identified by the initial Lebanese committee that the Syrians had joined, and then reiterated through RTs. However, due to funding and programme restrictions, the forestation and embellishment of the neighbourhood was consensually chosen as a common need around which to build the JCA. In Burj el Chemaly, planting trees was identified by the RTs as one interesting need to embellish the region, and the idea received very positive support from the mayor as it carries a positive and collaborative message. In Sarafand, the initial need identified by the Lebanese was for a waste management machine. The Syrians identified a need to acquire a land to build a cemetery for the region. Both of these ideas were too costly thus the need to implement the recycling JCA was consensually identified as an ecological need, a health need, and an economic need already existing in the town but exacerbated by the pressure put by the Syrian presence. Furthermore, the Syrians noted that the fact that they were involved in an on-going Lebanese project increased their sense of integration in the town. In Tyr and Miye Miye, working on a JCA strengthening the relations of children has been chosen as the need of the locations due to the challenge in agreeing on a common need to work together at the adult level.

It was assumed that through strengthening the relations between children and during folklore events, the relationships between parents would get milder.

In Abou Samra, electricity was identified as the most pressing need of the families, as some houses had burnt because of the excessive and unsafe use of candles. Regardless of that, a JCA on water was implemented, as a JCA on electricity in a private land was not feasible for SFCG. In Al Mina, the needs identified through the surveys mainly revolved around sanitation, lighting, hygiene, and sewage. The JCA was centred on a cleaning campaign of two streets in Hay el Tanak. JC members stressed the fact that the streets were very dirty before the JCA and attracted rats. Currently, with the winter approaching, the urgent needs revolve around sewage as the rain destroys the streets and the sewage systems flow into the houses. In Bab el Tebbeneh, the needs identified by the Lebanese and the Syrians were difficult to reconcile; while the Lebanese had economic and empowerment-related needs, the Syrians had food, hygiene, and security needs. Thus the JC had to find a common need and they expressed how challenging that was. The final decision for the JCA was to refurbish the roof of a building into a “flying garden” to palliate the lack of public spaces and help the youth and children move away from the streets. Furthermore, the RTs and the project increased the feeling of inclusion of Syrian participants, as stated by a Syrian JC member; “participating with Lebanese brothers on a common project is enough for me, it fulfils my need of feeling included”. In Gobbeh, the surveys helped identify the primary need as schooling material and after-school education for children. Other needs included the construction of a handicapped-friendly or an elderly-friendly stairs, a health centre, and the distribution of clothing to persons in need. This last need was chosen as the most relevant for the JCA and a clothing donation box was implemented.
1.3.2 Do JCAs adapt to the context?

The JCAs adapt to the context in most cases according to the three main criteria of choices; funding, feasibility, and joint implementation by Lebanese and Syrian participants. However, in two locations they could have been implemented more effectively by a stronger ability to adapt to the specificities of the context and the political forces at play. The case of Ghaziyeh is illustrative of these issues. The municipality is very powerful and from the inception of the project, showed resistance to the formation of Lebanese-Syrian JCAs. The municipality member linked to the project insisted on giving the municipality a major role and thereby funded 40% of the JCA in Year 1, and took charge of planting the trees in the JCA of Year 2. The municipality planted the trees without consulting the JC, and the JCA inauguration is pending as the municipality is not willing to communicate about it. Likewise, the example of Burj el Chemaly is illustrative of a case where the international donors financial rules and procedures clashed with the specificities of the context and hampered the JCA. While the trees to be planted for the JCA were to be bought at a local BC shop, SFCG insisted that the provider be officially registered at VAT in line with official UNHCR procurement policies. This non-negotiable point led to a deterioration of the relations between the JC and the municipality, as the mayor had planned to acquire the trees from a close personal contact. The municipality dismissed the trees bought from a third party, saying they were irrespective of the requirements agreed upon, and took them and planted them at their convenience. The JCA is still pending inauguration and the placing of an informative plaque.

1.3.3 What would have happened if this activity had not been implemented? What is the control variable?

There is no control variable available to assess what would have happened had this activity not been implemented. Some activities were already ongoing and the JCA complemented them. These JCAs can be seen as the ones that have the most impact because they are inscribed in continuity. Such is the case in Sarafand where recycling initiatives had started over 10 years ago, so the JCA is building on local culture while reinforcing local capacities and engaging Syrians to contribute to community efforts. Others JCAs were done in the context of an established partnership and building on existing Lebanese committees, such as the cases of Gobbeh and Tebbeneh.

Other JCAs were ad-hoc and temporary, such as the cases of Miye Miye, Jezzine, and Tyr where lunches, folklore and sports events, and recreational events for children were held. Others were inscribed in WASH and Shelter programmes such as About Samra and Al Mina. Regarding funding and institutions engagement, there is a high probability that the activity would not have taken place were it not for the JCA. The same can be stated for the ones that worked on embellishing the environment, namely Burj el Chemaly and Ghaziyeh.

1.4 Relevance of the trainings

1.4.1 Are the NVC trainings answering a specific need? How has the need been identified?

The conflict assessment and the underlying project logic are in line with the hypothesis that the tensions identified in these specific locations can be mitigated through non-violence communication (NVC) trainings, which can build capacities to communicate about one’s needs and be able to recognize situations and display one’s willingness to resolve them. Trainings were also identified as an entry point through which to gain the buy-in of Lebanese participants hesitant to actively engage in the project, and also connect participants across communities. In Sarafand, a few Lebanese participants stated that the trainings were like “spreading butter on butter”, in the sense that they had already been trained on NVC. Nevertheless, they praised the indirect effects of the trainings that served to bring together the participants. One location where the trainings were qualified as irrelevant was in Bab el Tebbeneh, where a JC member discounted the need for NVC trainings; “We need work, not training”. In Jezzine, participants pointed to the fact that they had also identified Red Cross trainings as a pressing community need.

1.4.2 How are training participants chosen? Are they representative of their communities?

The modality of choice of the participants to the trainings follow that of the RTs identified above. The trainer pointed out that the fact that the groups in the South and the North were at very different levels; this could be explained by the fact that participants in the South are more educated than in the North. Both the Lebanese and the Syrian participants were poorer and less educated in the North, which made the adaptation of the trainings more challenging. Furthermore, another difference was noted among Lebanese and Syrians, whereby the Lebanese participants had already participated in such trainings or been familiarized with such projects, the Syrians had not. This added another layer of inequality to the mix. This could be one of the reasons why there were low participation and retention rates among the Lebanese. Until January 2015, 158 persons had participated in training activities (41 Lebanese and 112 Syrians). Since then, 92 persons (31 Lebanese and 61 Syrians) have been involved in the training activities.

1.4.3 Are participants behaving differently after the trainings?

The majority of participants stressed the benefits of having participated in trainings and praised its positive side. In field research and in the evaluations of trainees, participants pointed to the idea that the trainings were a game-changer. In general, it was noted that Syrians benefited much more than the Lebanese at the individual level. The effects of the trainings have been much more individual than communal. Nevertheless, there is no control variable to assess such a factor. In Tyr, Syrian participants of the training expressed a global satisfaction. They now know how to react to certain situations that they encounter in their daily lives with Lebanese, and how to be patient and forgiving when someone does not treat them well. In Miye Miye, a few Syrian male participants expressed disappointment in the trainings as they felt there was a waste of time and did not think that the trainings were a game-changer. In general, it was noted that Syrians benefited much more than the Lebanese at the individual level. The effects of the trainings have been much more individual than communal. Nevertheless, there is no control variable to assess such a factor. In Tyr, Syrian participants of the training expressed a global satisfaction. They now know how to react to certain situations that they encounter in their daily lives with Lebanese, and how to be patient and forgiving when someone does not treat them well. In Miye Miye, a few Syrian male participants expressed disappointment in the trainings as they felt there was a waste of time and did not think that the trainings were a game-changer. In general, it was noted that Syrians benefited much more than the Lebanese at the individual level. The effects of the trainings have been much more individual than communal. Nevertheless, there is no control variable to assess such a factor.

In Jezzine, participants of the trainings praised the role of training in empowering them and increasing their knowledge, in addition to connecting them and strengthening the links among them.

1.4.4 To what extent were the trainings complementary to the other activities? Did they empower the participants to allow them to play an active role as JC participants and to design and implement joint activities?

The overwhelming majority of participants praised the trainings and stressed that they changed the way they perceived their daily activities. They now feel empowered and more capable of expressing themselves as JC participants. The complementarity with other activities is directly relevant to the JCAs that are currently working on resolving disputes within communities, such as the case of Jezzine and Tyr. The complementarity with the design and implementation of the JCAs has been indirectly noted as their feeling of empowerment and improvement in communication has enabled them to constructively implement trainings. However, complementarity would have been strengthened had they also acquired hard skills directly related to carrying out the JCAs.
2. EFFECTIVENESS

2.1 Effectiveness of the community building

2.1.1 Are outcomes and results of the project achieved? Which ones?

To varying degrees, the outcomes of the theory of change have been achieved. The achievements greatly differ in levels and from one location to another.

Assessing outcome 1: Syrian refugees and Lebanese have improved intergroup relations in 12 locations.

This outcome is key to the effectiveness of the project and presents nuanced results from one location to another. This outcome also questions to which extent the project has changed the attitudes and perceptions of participants and to which extent it has helped in building trustful relations between participants.

In Tyr, where the rate of participation and retention of the Lebanese was very low, the JC members – currently composed of 14 Syrians and one Lebanese – feel that the project has not improved relations between the two communities. They refer to host issues, a worsening perception of the Lebanese against them, and to frequent disputes and stereotyping of the children at school or on the streets. According to them, from the beginning, the few Lebanese who chose to participate in the project and who were present during the JCA were resistant to the idea of collaborating with the Syrians as shown by their behaviour (leaving early, sitting by themselves, and minimizing communication). This might be explained by a disconnect in quality and rhythm of life between the Lebanese and Syrian communities in Tyr, which is difficult to reconcile.

In Miye Miye, where the rate of participation and retention of the Lebanese was also very low, the Syrian JC members felt frustrated and not welcome in the community. They feel the rate of participation of Lebanese shows that they don’t want to cooperate, and thus don’t want to work on improving relations. Lebanese participants have a different view of the relations. From their perspective, the project has been a success and has shown that there is a will to cooperate. They stated that the JC members have established personal contact outside of the project and justify the low rate of participation by the conflicting work schedules and by the bad timing of the JCA during exam and summer vacation time. Nonetheless, all project participants asserted that the Syrian and Lebanese children have without a doubt improved intergroup relations through the JCA. However, this result was not reflected in Miye Miye. In addition, family and other socialisation institutions were not positively affecting the intergroup relations of children of both communities. In Jezzine, where the Syrian community’s movement has been restricted, few interactions and socialisation between the two communities in the past couple of years, the JC noted that due to a change in mayor, the external environment has recently positively contributed in breaking the ice and increasing collaboration between both communities. In effect, the newly elected mayor has relaxed policies regarding Syrians in the town and this has contributed in bettering the relations between residents and refugees. For instance, this summer the Syrians were allowed access to the three-day Jezzine festival while they were prohibited from participating in the same event in 2014.

In Ghaibiyeh, the members insisted that there were no tensions between the two communities and that the relations have always maintained a healthy state. They refuted the basic idea behind the project but praised collaborative action encouraged by the project. The JC formed is cooperative and collaborative, and builds on an existing Lebanese committee. In Burj el Chemal, JC members pointed out that relations have been positively evolving overall. The relationships are good, and a measure of trust between communities is present at funerals, weddings, and other occasions.

In Sarafand, JC members point to a very healthy state of relations between Syrians and Lebanese communities. In general, members stated that Sarafand had no tensions to begin with, as the town has had a tradition of welcoming refugees for a long time. A member stated that the fact that the Syrians are collaborating in an on-going project with the Lebanese is very respectful. One measure for indicating such an improvement is the facility with which the Syrian participants of the project have found Lebanese sponsors to regularize their stay in the country. The JC members point to the fact that the JCA has increased their collaboration, their cooperation, and has built trustful relations. Members have established personal contact and home visits. All in all, in the locations in the South, more in-depth research methods such as participant observation and in-depth successive interviews are needed to reveal whether the claims to healthy relations are indeed true, or if they are an indicator of a resistance to talk frankly and freely about Lebanese-Syrian relations, which would most probably be a result of the higher political pressures to preserve the status quo.

In Abou Samra, participants insisted on the fact that relations on the farm have always been healthy, and that they perceived it important to work on easing tensions that were inconsistent from the beginning. In Al Mina, JC members point to the fact that Hay el Tanak in a small neighborhood where people coexist due to the proximity of houses from one another, and that there were no tensions to begin with. However, the project having initiated collaboration between the two communities. For the JC, the new collaboration can only have positively benefited relations and the perception that Syrian members were as committed to the improvement of the neighbourhood conditions as their Lebanese counterparts. In Bab el Tebenebeh, JC members insist on the fact that tensions do not exist on a Lebanese/Syrian level but rather on a Tebenebeh/Jabil Mohsen or Sunni/Alawite level. There have never been tensions between Lebanese and Syrians, but there is an underlying economic problem related to labour costs and competition between both. The project has neither tackled nor alleviated this issue. In Gobbeh, the JC is extremely satisfied with the results of the project at all levels; members insist that it has increased intergroup collaboration and improved intergroup relations even if there were no tensions to begin with.

In general, the trustful and long-lasting relation building and the opportunities for socialization of the Syrians depends on the local perception of the behaviour of the core Syrian population in the community and on their positive engagement and collaboration in local affairs to the extent that it is not perceived as intrusive by the host community. It has been noted that when the Syrians integrate into an already-formed Lebanese committee, trustful relations and the propensity to collaborate on a common project increases. This can be noted in Sarafand, Ghaibiyeh, Bab el Tebenebeh, and Gobbeh. On the other hand, it has been noted that when the JC had been newly formed by the project, the resulting relations were not as strong and the rate of participation and retention of the Lebanese participants were low. This was noted in Miye Miye, Jezzine, and Tyr, and to a lesser extent in Burj el Chemal. Of course other factors enter into play, such as the extent of vulnerability of the communities. It has been noted that levels of vulnerability were at par with the propensity of constructive collaboration from both sides, such as the cases of Abou Samra and Al Mina.

While it can be pointed out that a certain behavioural change has been noted at an individual level among the JC members, larger community members and beneficiaries of the JCAs pointed to a lack of mixing between groups to be able to assess the quality of their relations. At the community level, the quantity and frequency of contact has not increased or improved as noted by the respondents in most of the localities. Indeed, 22% and 24% of respondents respectively note an increase in relations and an improvement in their quality over the year, while 22% and 36% respectively refuse that affirmation. On the other hand, 45% of larger community respondents note that the frequency of their relations has remained the same, and 36% note that the quality remained the same in the past year. A small proportion of 4% of respondents noted that their relations have worsened over the year.

In general, in the South, relations have been maintained at a status quo of amicable coexistence mainly through a tight control of social and political life by political forces in place (Amal and Hezbollah in four out of six locations). In the North, no project participant has admitted having witnessed intergroup tensions. There were no Lebanese/Syrian tensions to note but rather notable economic issues in the four locations where the project is taking place. The four of them are very vulnerable and economically disadvantaged regions of Tripoli – which was the factor of choice since these communities suffered from the pressures of the refugee crisis more than other locations. The problems are also very high in the political spheres, and respondents are aware that only the high spheres are capable of easing any possible problems that arise, such as the long-lasting latent conflict between Bab el Tebenebeh and Jabil Mohsen.
Assessing outcome 2: A group of Lebanese and Syrian community representatives becomes a reference for joint collaboration in 10 locations

The Tyr JC, mainly composed of Syrians, is slowly becoming a reference for Syrian affairs in Tyr. A strong contact has been established between members and service providers through the involvement of members in other organizations at the personal level; for instance, 3 out of the 15 members of the JC are ROVs with Interson, Aabaa, and other organizations. However, at the time of the evaluation, the JC still suffered from a lack of awareness of its existence in larger circles of the community, which it justified by the lack of funding that limited them in their work throughout the project. In turn, the lack of awareness is seen as a reason for the low Lebanese participation in the project. In Miey Miye, the JC did not meet for the final evaluation and individual members did not express the satisfaction of having become a reference for joint collaboration since they felt that neither had their relations effectively strengthened nor had their JCA participated in strengthening them and letting them emerge as a reference in the community. In Jezzine, the rate of participation of Lebanese members in the JC is very low. Nevertheless the JC, currently composed of a majority of Syrians, has become a reference among the Syrian community and a link between the local authorities and the community of refugees. The JC is often called in for dispute resolution and for communication purposes with the municipality and the General Security. An example of how the JC serves as a reference among the community is the use of membership in the committee as a legitimation technique by many Syrians during the Jezzine Festivals this summer. In Ghaziyyeh, the JC is a reference because it is building on a pre-existing structure. It is also closely cooperating with the municipality, so its reference is institutional and political. However, putting aside the apparent promises of the JC to serve as a reference in the community and municipality to collaborate with the JC, only the future developments of the JC and the durability of the JCA will indicate whether the close link with the municipality has benefitted or hampered the project. In Burj el Chemaly, the JC tries to serve as a reference for mutual collaboration within the community, but to varying degrees and according to their capacity to navigate in the confines of a strong municipality. For instance, they are aware of their limitations and cannot work on security issues even if that is the most pressing need for the Syrians. They also point to the fact that the municipality would not let them become too influential, as that would be perceived as a threat to the municipality. In effect, working in a location with a strong municipality imposes certain power relations whereby the municipality would constantly try to adjust the project according to its own interest. Furthermore, the JC pointed to the fact that no one in the larger community was aware of their existence, which hampers their capacity to serve as a reference for joint collaboration in the community. Following municipality unwillingness to communicate about it, neither last year’s JCA nor this year’s has properly communicated on the project and the existence of Syrian/Lebanese JC, and that weakened their impact on society and their ability to be a reference for joint collaboration. In addition, the fact that the JC just lost its municipality cover is a strong obstacle to its future work. In Sarafand, the JC has become a strong reference for collaboration for two main reasons; firstly because it benefits, to a certain extent, from municipal acceptance, and secondly because it is partnering with a local partner organization, Rays of the Environment, which benefits from legitimacy and respect among the local population. However, there is a grey area between the work of the JCA and that of Rays of the Environment (RE), as the larger community does not know how to differentiate both and has been used to RE’s presence in the town for the past decade. This also illustrates the challenge to build on local capacities while avoiding hijacking of the project for personal interests.

In Abou Samra, the JC has not been meeting and members expressed disappointment in the end result of the project. They feel like the project took too long to deliver too little and that they could have naturally acted as a reference in a farm where 20 families live without the project. In Al Mina, the JC has become a reference for joint collaboration with international organizations. The Danish Refugee Council, through a contact with UNHCR, has started a WASH initiative in the neighbourhood with the help of the JC. At the level of the neighbourhood, women point to the fact that only women consider them a reference and a link with other organizations, whereas men doubt their role and do not consider it. In Bab el Tebbeneh, the JC has quickly become a reference through its integration to the Tebbeneh Youth Council, a legitimate and respected committee dating back a few years. However, the JC is frustrated with the low impact level of the JCA implemented, and noted that the larger community is not aware of the JCA or the presence of Syrians in the newly formed JC. In Qobbeh, the main positive outcome of the project is the empowerment felt by the women JC members who proudly declared that “We were nothing, and we became everything”. The JC has quickly become a reference through its integration to the Qobbeh Women Council formed five years ago by Utopia. The extent of the effectiveness of these outcomes can also be linked with the existence of a partner organization in the project. Indeed, partner organizations such as Utopia in Qobbeh and Bab el Tebbeneh and Rays of the Environment in Sarafand have a track record and a historical trajectory in the neighbourhood. Their presence has positively affected the propensity of the communities to form a committee, improve intergroup relations, and become a reference for joint collaboration between both communities in the three locations. This is especially true in the South, where committees are struggling in one location (Miey Miye), are challenged in their relationship with the municipality in two locations (Ghaziyyeh and Burj el Chemaly), or in the presence of Lebanese participants (Tyr and Jezzine). It is reasonable to affirm that had there been a well-connected local partner organization, the project would have faced fewer challenges over its two-year course. However, a negative aspect of this collaboration is that owing to the partners’ presence in the region, there is a blur between their work and the work of the JC at the level of the larger community, who can seldom see the nuance between the work of SFCG and that of the partner organization. This is compounded by the fact that there is little communication and awareness on the project at the level of the larger community.

Assessing the main result: Syrian refugees and Lebanese are equipped with and ready to apply collaborative, conflict-sensitive and non-violent responses to tensions

In general, the results vary from one location to the other and are not always yet sustainable for an immediate end of the project. The participants expressed a need to be more strongly equipped with knowledge and tools to be ready to apply collaborative, conflict-sensitive and non-violent responses to tensions when and if they arise. In addition, the results are nuanced within groups of participants, where in some cases Lebanese participants are absent or constitute a minority compared to Syrian participants and in some cases, the opposite applies. In other groups of participants, the difference in levels between Lebanese and Syrians are such that one group needs more training than the other to match the level of the other. This is the case for JCs where the Lebanese participants have already been exposed to such projects in the past. The Tyr JC has been benefiting the Syrians more than the Lebanese participants, as shown first hand by the
level of participation and motivation of the Syrian participants, who only make up 85% of the JC. The JC has had an impact for the Jezzine JC, where Syrian presence is also on the higher end comprising 87% of the JC members. Nonetheless, both those JCs have tried to work towards an effective collaboration between the Lebanese and the Syrian communities and coordination of Syrian affairs in their community. In Miey Miye, this result has not been achieved as neither the Syrian participants nor the Lebanese have expressed empowerment of their potential role and equipment in such skills. In Ghaziyyeh, the JC is strong and willing to continue applying its influence on both communities. With a positive boost from the external environment, it can effectively apply collaborative conflict-sensitive responses to tensions. In Burj el Chemaly, where the JC has lost its municipal “cover”, the project might need another institutional boost to be able to sustainably activate, most probably through a constructive meeting with the municipality and SFCG. In Sarafand, where the project has partnered with RE and revived their environmental project, the JC is positively perceived among the larger community but does not engage in responding directly to tensions except at the JC level. This is reflected in the responses of larger community surveys where 67% of respondents note that their relationships have remained the same, and none refer to the JC as a reference in cases of tension.

In Abou Samra, this result has not been achieved as shown first-hand by the loss of motivation and commitment of the participants to continue working together. The few participants who met the evaluator recognize the positive aspects of the project, but neither do they see its impact on the local population nor do they feel capable of becoming collaborative and conflict-sensitive responders to tensions. In Al Mina, this result was partially achieved as they are still discussing the project. As a result, the JC from being fully effective in addressing tensions. Women of the JC expressed a frustration in the strong limitation imposed by the fact that they are not positively affected by the JC. In addition, they pointed out to the fact that the parents’ relations were not positively affected by the JCA. In Tahrir, the JC members emphasized the strengthening of relations at the level of the children through the JCA. However, they also all pointed out to the fact that the parents’ relations were not positively affected by the JCA. In addition, they pointed to the low participation of Lebanese children at the JCA, who made up around 10% of the participants. Thus, the assertion can be questioned at the Lebanese-Syrian level. In Miey Miye, JC members emphasized the strengthening of relations at the level of the children through the JCA. However, they also all pointed out to the fact that the parents’ relations were not positively affected by the JCA. In addition, they pointed to the low participation of Lebanese children at the JCA, who made up around 10% of the participants. Thus, the assertion can be questioned at the Lebanese-Syrian level. In Jezzine, the appointment of an interim mayor, after the resignation of the municipality, has given a new push to the project, as the situation of the Syrian community has been a little relaxed and the JC has been recognized by the local institutions – municipality and General Security alike.

The situation is very different in the North, where the municipality is often absent and where political forces are so numerous and diverse that the municipality has appropriated the JCA at the local level. In Jezzine, the appointment of an interim mayor, after the resignation of the municipality, has given a new push to the project, as the situation of the Syrian community has been a little relaxed and the JC has been recognized by the local institutions – municipality and General Security alike.

2.2 Effectiveness of the JCAs

2.2.1 Have the JCAs succeeded in strengthening relationships between participants?

The JCAs have indeed strengthened the relationships among the JC members who have jointly designed them and have participated in their implementation, but not necessarily among the ones who have benefited from them. In Tahrir, where the direct beneficiaries of the JCA were children, the JCA has certainly benefited them and probably strengthened their relations. However, this needs more research, as children are prone to direct influence from a variety of institutions of schooling, but also less institutional support to ensure their own benefits (as is the case of Ghaziyyeh and Sarafand). In other cases, the JCJCS have had a key role in the course of the project, but also less institutional support to ensure their potential role and equipment in such skills. In Ghaziyyeh, the JC is strong and willing to continue applying its influence on both communities. With a positive boost from the external environment, it can effectively apply collaborative conflict-sensitive responses to tensions. In Burj el Chemaly, where the JC has lost its municipal “cover”, the project might need another institutional boost to be able to sustainably activate, most probably through a constructive meeting with the municipality and SFCG. In Sarafand, where the project has partnered with RE and revived their environmental project, the JC is positively perceived among the larger community but does not engage in responding directly to tensions except at the JC level. This is reflected in the responses of larger community surveys where 67% of respondents note that their relationships have remained the same, and none refer to the JC as a reference in cases of tension.

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To the idea of the project because according to the municipality, the participants needed to be in Ghaziyyeh to start such a project, and thus no need for meetings and forming committees. Although the JC asserts that the municipality has had a positive role in the JCA, as the JCA has been completely appropriated by them. In Burj el Chemaly, the municipality has recently been playing a hindering role on the project due to the negative decisions of the municipality who were applying the procurement policies of UNHCR – at the inception of the second JCA. As a result, the JC has lost its political cover and future works, as well as the finalization of the JCA, are threatened. The PC being on leave at the time of the incident, the JC points to the fact that SFCG did not offer any institutional support when the issue with the municipality arose, which worsened the relations with the latter. As the Mayor is currently being hospitalised, SFCG PC is planning to meet with him to solve the issue as soon as the Mayor will be available. In Sarafand, the municipality has positively impacted the project. The JC is aware that they have no choice but to work with them and hopes for as much collaboration from them as they are trying to maintain their relations with them. In Al Mina and Ghaziyyeh, the municipality has had different impacts in the South and in the north, where dynamics and strength of institutions greatly differ. In the South, where municipalities are strong and politically backed, some municipalities “closed an eye” on the work of JCJCS (as was the case of Miey Miye and Tahrir), and others collaborated to a point that they almost “hijacked” the project for their own benefits (as is the case of Ghaziyyeh and Burj el Chemaly). Others have had a positive impact recently (as is the case of Jezzine), and some have been positively collaborating (as is the case of Sarafand). In general, the project in the South was closely supervised by the municipality, which either included one of its members in the JC or put the meeting room at the disposal of the JC to get closer to the project. In all six cases, the municipalities have had a key role in the course of the project, and in most cases the role was positive.

In Ghaziyyeh, the municipality has been quite resistant to the project from its inception. A member of the municipality frankly expressed his resistance to the idea of the JCA, although his meetings with UNHCR seem to attest to the opposite. The municipality expressed some resistance towards visiting Hây el Tanak. The municipality’s collaboration was very limited at the JCA in May 2015 (they were invited but did not attend) and the same happened when the JCA was repeated in September 2015.
its totality has had positive effect on strengthening the relations between the participants than the JCA itself. The same can be asserted for Burj el Chemaly, where the municipality has appropriated the implementation of the JCA. In Sarafand, the JCA has successfully delivered on its objectives of recycling and thereby increased the feeling of ownership of the JC vis-à-vis the JCA and strengthened their relations. From an activity that started in two streets of Sarafand, the JCA has grown around 200 families recycle. However, participants to the JCA (namely the persons who call the delivery van to send their recycling) did not express any strengthening of relations through the JCA.

In Abou Samra, the JCA has been implemented quickly and gave a certain feeling of ownership to the JC members who decided its implementation. They point to a strengthening of their relations. However, the water point has not been properly taken care of and a week after its construction, it was neglected and now only children use it. There is a low rate of benefit from the rest of the farm by the JC members who decided its implementation. The members highlighted that they had not planned for children to play outside in the sun at noon, but rather in a covered area inside the main playground – but that was changed at the last minute. They also pointed to the fact that the animators chosen were not efficient enough and could have been replaced by parents themselves, thus working on parent–child relationship building simultaneously. Finally, they also added that the funding did not permit the JC members to have a full budget for every participating child at the end of the JCA, which would have insured a positive outlook and retention for future events.

In Mity Mity, Syrian JC respondents stated having more important needs than organizing recreational activities for their children and holding a common lunch in a restaurant, such as improving their economic and social situation in the region. They pointed to the fact that they could have held a lunch at home and used the funds in a more effective way relevant to the needs of the neighbourhood. Had they answered those needs and worked on a common benefit to both the Lebanese and the Syrians, the role of the JC would have been strengthened and the participation rates increased. In Jezzine, the JCA has had a positive influence on the perception of the JC in the community – especially at the Syrian level. However, the JC points to the final choice of the JCA as a redundancy since it was the same JCA than the year before, and during the focus group, they argued that another JCA could have strengthened their role even more, such as painting houses of Lebanese and Syrians. In Ghaziyeh, the JCA has not achieved this goal mainly because of the municipality taking over the implementation and also because of the lack in visibility of the JC over the course of the project in general and the JCA in particular. The municipality insisted on no participation of the JC in the implementation of the JCA. The same can be said about Burj el Chemaly, where the JCA has lost its “cover” from the municipality, which has appropriated the JCA of planting the trees and designing long-term and sustainable JCAs. Further, there is a lack of awareness among the larger community with regards to the process and the idea behind the JCAs that might have strengthened the role of the JC in the community.

In Tyre, the JC pointed to a few factors that might have decreased the effectiveness of the JCA and thereby the legitimacy of the JC. For instance, the JC members pointed to the fact that the choice for the location of the activity, the schedule, and the children’s animators, were all initially designed differently than how they were implemented. The members highlighted that they had not planned for children to play outside in the sun at noon, but rather in a covered area inside the main playground – but that was changed at the last minute. They also pointed to the fact that the animators chosen were not efficient enough and could have been replaced by parents themselves, thus working on parent–child relationship building simultaneously. Finally, they also added that the funding did not permit them to give a small gift to every participating child at the end of the JCA, which would have insured a positive outlook and retention for future events. In Mity Mity, Syrian JC respondents stated having more important needs than organizing recreational activities for their children and holding a common lunch in a restaurant, such as improving their economic and social situation in the region. They pointed to the fact that they could have held a lunch at home and used the funds in a more effective way relevant to the needs of the neighbourhood. Had they answered those needs and worked on a common benefit to both the Lebanese and the Syrians, the role of the JC would have been strengthened and the participation rates increased. In Jezzine, the JCA has had a positive influence on the perception of the JC in the community – especially at the Syrian level. However, the JC points to the final choice of the JCA as a redundancy since it was the same JCA than the year before, and during the focus group, they argued that another JCA could have strengthened their role even more, such as painting.

2.2.3 How has the funding affected the effectiveness of the JCAs?

In general, the funding has affected the scale and impact of the JCAs because of a continuous decrease in funding over the course of the project. In effect, most of the JCAs in the South faced a disappointment in the yearly decrease in funding from 10’000$ to 5’000$ when they were expecting a rise in funding from Year 1 to Year 2. This change greatly undermined their efforts, which has tremendously limited their effectiveness, as pointed by a JC member of Ghaziyeh: “It is as if you gave me a button and asked me to sew the most beautiful jacket”. It also ruled out the priorities and needs; the funding could have been spent on much more important and pressing issues rather than recreational or ad-hoc events. In spite of the good media coverage, the Sarafand JC pointed to a lack in communication and outreach on the project at the town level, mainly due to shortages in funding.

Some JCs noted a few loopholes in the practice of funding and spending. For instance, despite the fact that the JCAs initially insisted on the need for this kind of activities, many Syrian respondents in locations such as Mity Mity, Tyre, Jezzine, and Burj el Chemaly dismissed the need for a common lunch as an expensive activity whose funds could have benefited their direct needs in a more efficient way. In addition, in Jezzine, the JC noted that there was lack of transparency with regards to the way the JCA funds had been spent. Despite the fact that the JCA budget was discussed and approved by the JC, they pointed to the fact that they had no visibility as to how the 5’,000$ had been spent, and they questioned whether the total amount of the sum had been spent on a lunch, a number of t-shirts, and three days of rental fees for the football field.

In the North, the project had lost credibility and was severely jeopardized when the funding was cut in 2014 and the JCAs were not able to implement the JCAs in Year 1 of the project. Some smaller JCAs were implemented with the help of Oxfam and CISP in Abou Samra and Al Mina, and the partnership with Utopia preserved the JC structure in Bab el Tebbeneh and Qobbeh. Since then, each location has implemented a JCA chosen by them, with a funding of 5’,000$ each. In general, JC members in the North also noted that small amounts of funding limited their impact and their capacity to strengthen the role of the JC in the community.
2.3 Effectiveness of the trainings

2.3.1 Have the trainings been successful?
The trainings have been successful and very positively perceived by Lebanese and Syrian participants alike.

2.3.2 Are the participants to the training equipped with capacities and confidence to address their community needs?
The participants are equipped with communication skills and verbal skills to express their needs. They are not, however, equipped with enough skills to address their community needs and all feel the need for more essential skills training to effectively address them. PCs also confirmed that while the participants had acquired basic knowledge of needs assessment and project design, they needed more training.

Women respondents in several locations pointed to a need to learn more livelihood skills that could help them sustain their families. For instance, in Miye Miye, women respondents expressed the need to receive livelihood trainings such as sewing or nursing to help them sustain their families. In Qobbeh, women felt empowered and acquired a great deal of knowledge through the trainings. According to a Lebanese participant, “The NVC training was very useful, we are now capable of expressing ourselves very calmly and rationally”.

While the NVC trainings were well received, the majority of JC members expressed that they would like to acquire more skills to be able to contribute more efficiently to their community’s needs. They especially want to learn more about the aid distribution system and receive training on fundraising techniques.

2.4 Effectiveness of the JC

2.4.1 Are the JCs capable of being a reference in their community/a link between organizations and the local populations?

Some JCs have shown willingness and a capacity to continue working, and are on a positive direction. Some are strong enough to become a reference to both Lebanese and Syrians in their communities. The others would need outreach, more training, and coordination. They could also become a link with other organizations but they do not have yet the capacity to reach out to them nor the access to them. The Syrian-only JCs could greatly benefit from being linked with organizations as they are in need of information and coordination.

In Tyr, the JC is willing to become a reference in their community and a link between organizations and the local population but only at the Syrian level as the participation of Lebanese persons makes for 7% of the JC. In Jezzine, the Syrian members of the JC – currently composing 87% of the JC – are becoming a reference and a link between the Syrian community and local authorities. In Sarafand, the JC is strong and committed enough to become a reference in their community and a link between organizations and the local population. In Ghaziyyeh, the JC are capable of becoming a reference in their community as it is closely related to the municipality. In Burj el Chemaly, where the municipal “cover” has recently been lost, the future of the JC needs further engagement to be ensured. In Miye Miye, where the JC has not been meeting for some time, the probability that that JC is capable of being a reference in their community is low.

In Abou Samra, where the community is very small (approximately 100 persons), the JC is capable of being a reference in the community and a link between the organizations and the local population, but their motivation and commitment has been decreasing. In Al Minâ, the JC is becoming a reference and a link between the local population and other organizations through UNHCR. In Bab el Tebbeneh, the JC is already a reference and is capable of staying one and of increasing collaboration and cooperation with other organizations. The same can be said about the Qobbeh JC.

2.4.2 How structured and representative are the JCs?
The JCs are all composed of a Syrian focal point and a Lebanese focal point. The composition of Lebanese/Syrian men/women vary from one location to another, and vary greatly in the South and in the North. For instance, the Lebanese participation rates are very low in some communities in the South whereas they are balanced in the North, and the gender mainstreaming is unequal in the North (3 out of 4 JCs are gender-based) while they are balanced in the South. Currently, come the end of the project, the JCs are drafting the ToRs of their future collaboration, and have all decided on a structure for meetings and continued work.

At the day of the evaluation meeting, the FGDs were composed of:

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TY</th>
<th>JZ</th>
<th>GZ</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>SF</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>BT</th>
<th>QB</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syrians</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As for the gender dimension, the JCs were composed of:

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<th>TY</th>
<th>JZ</th>
<th>GZ</th>
<th>BC</th>
<th>SF</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>BT</th>
<th>QB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The JCs of Miye Miye and Abou Samra did not meet for the evaluation meeting.

3. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is assessed according to the probability that the activities will continue after SFCG ends the project.

3.1 How was sustainability planned during the project?

Sustainability was planned at the onset of the project and SFCG is currently trying to secure ways of insuring durability of JCs in each community. This is mainly done through reinforcing the JCs and establishing links between the JCs and local institutions: municipalities, local or international organizations, and service providers.

3.2 Are the activities sustainable? How to insure their durability?

The ad hoc JCs that occurred temporarily and revoked around leisure and sports, such as Jezzine, Tyr and Miye Miye, are not sustainable. The rest of the JCs are sustainable provided a mechanism to insure their durability is put in place. The result of the establishment JCs, namely the forestation in Burj Chemaly and Ghaziyyeh, are sustainable provided a mechanism is put in place to insure their durability. In Sarafand, the project is viable and its concept is sustainable but it is currently not financially sustainable. The JC members point to the fact that they would need to collect recycling from 400 households to attain the breakeven point, for which they do not possess the necessary infrastructure.

SFCG acknowledged the need for more support to this specific JCA to ensure its sustainability and is currently looking for possible sources of support.

While the Abou Samra JCA is sustainable, a mechanism should be put in place to assure its durability as it is currently deteriorating. Bab el Tebbeneh is a sustainable activity and residents of the building are responsible for its maintenance. The Qobbeh JCA is also sustainable if the JC willingly picks up the box every month and equitably distributes it. However, the Al Minâ JCA is not sustainable as there is no mechanism to insure the durability of clean streets.
3.3 Are JCs willing and able to work together without SFCG facilitation?

The majority of JCs are willing to work together but are not all yet able to do so. While some are strong enough to continue to operate after the end of the project, others would need more support: structural, funding, and institutional support. Not all the JCs are equipped with enough skills for the responsibilities ahead: fundraising, sustaining contact with the local institutions, and recruiting more participants. These JCs would need legitimation from SFCG in the form of a sponsorship to continue being recognized among large communities. Furthermore, all JCs need more support for coordination with other organizations and service providers.

In Tyr, the JC clearly expressed the will to continue working together but demanded support on the funding and institutional fronts. They need support from SFCG as a legitimation factor when demanding aid or reaching out to new organizations. They pointed to the fact that they are certain that with a functioning and sustainable JC, they can decrease 50% of the problems of Syrians in Tyr. In Miye Miye, Lebanese residents who work the JC expressed a strong difficulty in continuing cooperation after the project ends for lack of time available and compensation matters. Syrian residents in Miye Miye JC expressed a willingness to continue if they see an economic or a knowledge benefit in it. In Jezzine, the JC is willing to continue working even without funding or facilitation from SFCG. Their work has borne its fruits and the larger Syrian community sees the relevance of the committee. In the likes of the Tyr JC, they pointed to the fact that they would need some form of institutional sponsoring from SFCG to legitimize their work. With that, they would have the ear of the municipality and the General Security for all affairs pertaining to Syrians in Jezzine. The Ghaziyyeh JC is willing and able to work without SFCG facilitation as they enjoy institutional and political support from the municipality and can thus legitimately continue collaboration. However, the difficulties regarding obtaining funding can be an inhibiting issue for future JC work. In Sarafand, the JC expressed the will and the need to continue working for the project, as they see the importance and the benefit that the JCA has had over the past year, albeit expressing the need to be financially supported to be able to continue the project.

Geographical proximity gives the Abou Samra JC the capacity to continue working without SFCG facilitation, however respondents expressed doubts as to the willingness to continue working. The JC of Al Mina expressed the wish to continue working and serve as a reference for its neighbourhood and a link between the local populations and other organizations. They have already been recognized as a legitimate interlocutor by the DRC that used their access to do an intervention in the past month. However, they expressed the need for more structure, for funding, and for access to the pool of knowledge about organizations and the system of aid that they do not understand. The JC of Tobbeneh expressed frustration towards continuing to work after the end of the project. While the JC certainly has the capacity, they stated not having the willingness to continue on this same rhythm. They want to have more impact and less meetings. Nevertheless, the fact that Utopia works with the committee will probably keep them active after the end of the project. In Qobbeh, the JC expressed the willingness, the motivation and the strength to continue working without SFCG facilitation. They expressed the need for more funding to continue working with this motivation and commitment. The fact that Utopia works with the committee will probably keep them active after the end of the project.

3.4 To what extent can the JCA be reproduced and sustained without SFCG support?

It would be very difficult for the JCs to reproduce the JCAs and sustain them without SFCG support as this would need funding and thus fundraising, which the majority of JCAs are not capable of. The members are volunteers with no funding, no institutional support and no intellectual support. All relevant people agreed that it would be impossible for JCAs to be reproduced. Most of the members are committed but very vulnerable people. The Sarafand JC expressed serious worries of not being able to continue the JCA without further funding, as they have not yet broken even and demand for recycling is increasing in the town. They also expressed the worry, without further support, of not being able to meet their increasing needs in human resources (they need another employee or volunteer) and in infrastructure (another car to tour the town).

9 At the time of the evaluation, an extension until December 2015 for Sarafand, Miye w Miye, Jezzine and Burj el Chemaly was signed with UNHCR.

Most of the municipalities in the South seem willing to collaborate, but this is a double-edged sword, as the JC will remain dependent on the political and institutional support of the municipalities after the end of the project. This is especially the case with strong municipalities that have manifested resistance or some degree of hindering during or at the end of the project, namely Ghaziyyeh and Burj el Chemaly. In these locations, both municipalities have taken over the project in a sustainable manner, by vowing to continue supporting the JC and to maintain care of the JCA. Until now, their behaviour vis-à-vis the JC has been to show clear relations of power and to keep a certain control over their meetings and their final objectives. Through their support of the JCA, they have almost appropriated the activity to their interest by taking over the planting activities. It remains to be seen whether the forestation project will be sensibly ended and whether a proper inauguration and set up of an informative plaque indicating that the project was done by a Lebanese-Syrian JC with the funding of SFCG and UNHCR will be done, according to promises made by municipal representatives. All the members of the committee will probably keep them active after the end of the project.

3.5 Are local institutions able/willing to continue the work started by the project?

The strength to continue working without SFCG remains to be seen and depends on their capacity to raise funds. All in all, more time is needed to understand if the municipalities are willing to actively and constructively support the JC’s efforts in being a reference for collaboration between both communities. Besides Rays of the Environment in Sarafand and Amen in Tyr, no other partner organization in the South has been identified yet to ensure the sustainability of the work of the JCs.

In Abou Samra, a very marginalized and almost forgotten poor neighbourhood of Tripoli, the probability that the local state institutions continue the work started by the project is almost inexistent. The same can be said about Qobbeh and Bab el Tobbeneh, as well as Al Mina. In Bab el Tobbeneh and Qobbeh however, Utopia will certainly continue working with the JCs, but it is unsure at what capacity. In Al Mina, the JC has established contact with the DRC and the latter has already launched a WASH intervention in the area. The hopes in the North are linked to the JCs with international organizations and service providers on the ground, and to sustain Utopia’s support to the JCs of Qobbeh and Tobbeneh, while extending them to Al Mina and Abou Samra.
V. RECOMMENDATIONS

LESSONS LEARNED

The evaluation recommends continuing with such projects in line with the LCPRP and SFCG’s philosophy of work, with a few adjustments:
- Social cohesion projects shall be mixed with service delivery and protection
- Creative ways to merge assistance and social cohesion shall be found, even if they diverge a little from SFCG’s line of work
- Social cohesion projects that focus primarily on relationships building should be designed with an enlarged vision of contribution to social stability through mixed and comprehensive approaches (i.e. dialogue facilitation, service delivery, and protection mechanisms) that combined the different needs identified.

To increase the impact plausibility of such projects, it is recommended that:
- Systematic coordination and cooperation with other organizations shall be done from the inception of the project to reduce overlapping of committee formation and initiatives while building synergies across the 3 sectors, humanitarian, development and peacebuilding
- Systematic linking of committees to organizations shall be done from the inception of the project
- This kind of project shall be able to adapt to unintended outcomes and be flexible in some context-specific aspects. In the case of inflexibility of guidelines, the project shall be ready to face challenges from the local actors
- More resources shall be invested on communication, outreach, and awareness on the project within larger populations
- The project shall not depend on the renewal of short term funding but on a long term engagement of at least two years
- In the case of a larger partnership with local institutions, a Memorandum of Understanding shall be signed between all parties

The evaluation recommends increasing the participation and ownership of the Lebanese community so as to maximize impact plausibility, more specifically:
- Where there are no pre-existing Lebanese committees, a joint committee can be formed but it shall be recognizing of the difference between host and refugee communities as outlined above, and empower the Syrians in their capacity to contribute
- The Syrian community can be integrated in existing project as constructive collaborators so as to increase their feeling of positive contribution and build trust from the side of the Lebanese
- Wherever possible, Syrian participants shall join an already-formed Lebanese committee and hop on board with ongoing projects to increase the feeling of ownership from the Lebanese and constructive engagement from the Syrians

With regards to project activities, it is generally recommended to shorten the number of roundtables and committee meetings, and invest more time on trainings and joint initiatives. More specifically,
- The objective of roundtables shall be toned down to an ice-breaking function, after which interactive trainings shall increase contact within participants
- Trainings shall be more systematically adapted to the level of the audience and relevant to their needs
- Trainings shall be increased to reflect the thirst of the participants to learn new skills but simultaneously balanced to reflect their capacity to give time for trainings
- Trainings shall provide hard skills that can render participants autonomous after the end of the project, such as fundraising, project management, or strategic planning
- Joint initiatives and JCAs shall be given more focus, funding, and outreach

It is highly recommended to continue implementing JCAs and to invest more resources on their success. More specifically,
- The JCA philosophy shall be reviewed: the JCA is not just a mean of collaboration, it should be responding to a need in a sustainable way
- The centrality and importance of JCAs shall be taken into account when designing for projects, the criteria and allocated budget shall be revised to provide longer term joint initiatives
- Keeping in mind funding limitations as a criterion, JCAs shall also be chosen according to their impact, their scale, and the concreteness and visibility of their results
- The JCAs shall be given visibility to promote positive examples of collaboration within the larger community
- JCAs shall be complementary with trainings, so that participants can apply the skills learned and reproduce them later
- Sustainability shall be systematically included from the design stage of the JCA

BEST PRACTICES

To ensure effectiveness and sustainability, future similar projects can build on the following best practices emerging from the implementation of this pilot project by:
- Closely coordinating and aiming to cooperate with local institutions on the ground with careful context specificity, more specifically;
- As the political context does not permit it, municipalities shall not be circumvented in the South, but rather systematically involved in the project as partners, participants, or external observers
- In the case of weak or inexistant municipalities like in Tripoli, their non-involvement in the project shall be accepted, while constantly keeping an open invitation for them to join
- Strong municipalities in the South shall be made allies and carefully engaged to create a sense of ownership while avoiding appropriation for self-interest as seen in the cases of Ghaziyyeh and Buj el Chemal
- In the case of abuse of power by local authorities, the JC needs to be empowered and legitimised

- partnering up with local organizations on the ground, more specifically;
- As with Utopia in Tripoli, partnerships with local organizations with legitimate presence in the communities and a strong network shall be the partners of choice for such a project
- The project shall build on the on going work of a local partner and strengthen it
- The partnership shall be adaptable to specificities on the ground and methods of work of the local partner

- continuing the idea of forming committees representative of their community while taking into account the following:
  - The Lebanese/Syrian component of the committee shall not be exclusive and non-negotiable, a Syrian-only committee can be effective in addressing the objectives of the project
  - Local activists, motivated and committed representatives of their neighbourhood shall be chosen to participate in the project rather than leaders and key actors
  - Gender disparities shall not be systematically discounted, as women-only or men-only committees might be more relevant and impactful in some regions to some extent

- After formation, consolidation and sustainability of the JCAs are a key component of their success, and that shall be ensured through impactful JCAs and trainings

- consolidating the dialogue and the collaboration process through long-term impactful JCAs and ad-hoc capacity building in order to ensure sustainability.

EXIT STRATEGY

As the evaluation took place before the end of the project, the exit strategy still had to be partially implemented in some locations. Moreover, in certain communities, an extension of the project “Dialogue and local response mechanisms to conflict” is planned for the sole purpose of consolidating the achievements and ensuring their sustainability.

The exit strategy comprised the following elements:

Consolidation of the JCAs before SFCG retreats from the project, to ensure that they are willing and capable of continuing without SFCG facilitation, more specifically;
- Syrian-only JCAs (or almost) that have resulted from a disengagement of Lebanese participants such as in Jezzine and Tyr shall be consolidated and strongly linked to local authorities and civil society
- Disengaged JCAs that have lost motivation, such as Miye Miye and Abou Samra shall be given one last chance to meet, or else they shall be discontinued
- In the South, SFCG shall look for a local partner organization to establish contact with the consolidated JCAs and thereby ensure stability and legitimacy, and continued cooperation of participants
- In the North, SFCG shall maintain close contact with Utopia, with whom the partnership was successful, and make sure that Utopia is aligned on the consolidation and sustainability of the four JCAs.
Investing in the unintended outcomes that have positively affected the project, more specifically:

- The Syrian-only JCs are benefiting Syrian affairs in Jezzine and Tyr and indirectly affecting the trust of host populations and local institutions. The project shall legitimise their work by supporting them and linking them with other organizations.
- Invest on coordination and cooperation with other organizations seeing how the DRC WASH intervention strengthened the Al Mina JC and the CISP intervention in Abou Samra palliated for Year 1 funding problems.

Consolidating the JCs before SFCG retracts, namely:

- Mechanisms to insure the durability of the JCs shall be implemented in Al Mina, Abou Samra, Bab el Tebbeneh, Gobbeh, Ghaziyyeh and Burj el Chemaly.
- The Sarafand JCA shall benefit from extra support as the local NGO is not capable yet of sustaining it.
- Communication and outreach on the JCs shall be implemented in Al Mina, Abou Samra, Bab el Tebbeneh, Gobbeh, Ghaziyyeh and Burj el Chemaly.
- The Sarafand JCA shall benefit from extra support as the local NGO is not capable yet of sustaining it.

Finally, the evaluation recommends investing in trainings, coordination and legitimization before SFCG retracts, namely:

- In the North, the Al Mina and Abou Samra JCs shall be linked with at least two service providers; each to strengthen the JCs and increase their willingness to continue working without SFCG support.
- It is recommended to invest on the strong potential of the Gobbeh and Bab el Tebbeneh JCs, as they are more impactful in spite of the gender disparities.
- In all the locations, it is recommended to have at least one training on fundraising and if possible on basic project management.
- In the Syrian-only JCs, it is recommended to have at least one training on the aid and humanitarian system to strengthen the skills of the JC and their capacity to be a link with organizations.
- In all the locations, it is recommended to have one general meeting between the JCs, the local institutions (municipalities and General Security if relevant) and the local service providers and international organizations on the ground to effectively link the JCs to these actors and legitimize their work as an SFCG-created and SFCG-sponsored JCs.

ANNEX A
TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE - FINAL EVALUATION

Dialogue and Local Response Mechanisms to Conflict

Search for Common Ground-Lebanon

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) seeks an experienced consultant to conduct a Final Evaluation for its UNHCR funded project in Lebanon. The study should be completed by the 20th of September 2015.

SFCG Lebanon invites all interested and qualified candidates to submit a resume, a brief proposal (including methodology and a tentative budget) and a letter of interest, clearly explaining how their experience meets desired qualifications by the 24th of July 2015 to the following contact: mortmans@sfcg.org.

1. Background

1.1. Organization Overview

Search for Common Ground (SFCG) is a non-governmental organization working to transform the way societies deal with conflicts. We have acquired over 30 years of experience in peacebuilding and are based in 53 local offices worldwide. SFCG first worked in Lebanon in 1996, and we opened our office in Beirut in 2008. Since then, our activities and capacities have grown significantly. We rely on local staff as well as local partner organisations in order to ensure our work is culturally sensitive, sustainable and well grounded in the Lebanese context.

Our Vision

While conflict is inevitable, violence is not! Therefore we work to achieve social change through transforming the way people deal with conflicts – away from violent and adversarial approaches, towards collaborative problem solving.

1.2. Intervention Summary

With regards to the Syrian refugee crisis, both the Government of Lebanon and the donor community have identified the need to strengthen the capacity of Lebanese host communities as they cope with the ever-growing tensions from the daily influx of refugees in their communities. SFCG-Lebanon has built a sustainable program for conflict transformation and problem solving since actively engaging in Lebanon in 2008. Since November 2013, SFCG intervention addressed current sources of tensions by creating a space where Lebanese and Syrians community stakeholders can safely dialogue around common issues. Moreover, through capacity building and the joint design and implementation of initiatives, the project aimed at strengthening community stakeholders’ capacities to collaborate with one another in addressing potential sources for conflicts within their communities.

This project is a pilot conducted in Tripoli (in partnership with Utopia) and in South Lebanon, in 10 communities: 4 in Tripoli (Gobbeh, Abou Samra, Tebbeneh and Al Mina) and 6 in the South (Jezzine, Miye w Miye, Sour, Sarafand, Bourj El-Chimaly and Ghaziyyeh). As the project ends, 10 joint committees (composed of 5 Lebanese and 5 Syrians) have been created and are expected to play a sustainable role in addressing common needs from their communities.

2. The Final Evaluation

2.1. Evaluation’s Goal and Objectives

At the end of the project implementation, the final evaluation will assess project’s achievements towards its goal and objectives. It will also provide an opportunity for the identification of lessons learned and best practices to be replicated in other communities.

The study will answer to the following questions:

1. What is the change brought by the project on participating Lebanese and Syrian stakeholders?

More specifically:

- To which extent did the project change the perceptions and attitudes of the participating community stakeholders towards “the other”?
- To which extent did the project build trustful and respectful long-lasting relationships between the joint committee members?
- To which extent did the project equip participants with the capacities (skills and knowledge), resources (connections) and confidence to keep engaging on initiatives in their communities after the end of the project?

10 For more information, visit www.sfcg.org and https://www.facebook.com/sfcg.lebanon.
2. What is the change brought by the project in the targeted communities?

More specifically:
• How representative and sustainable are the joint committees (What is the assessed capacity of the established committees to continue with their activities in their communities after the completion of the project)?
• How relevant were the Joint Community Initiatives (JCIs) implemented by the joint committees to the community needs?
• Did the JCIs succeed in strengthening relationships between Lebanese and Syrians?

3. What are the internal and external factors that facilitated or hindered the achievements towards the desired changes/objects? Regarding external factors, the evaluation will look specifically at 1) the latest evolution in terms of tensions between local communities and refugees11 and 2) the discrepancies in terms of achievements in the context of strong versus weak municipal authorities.

4. What are the lessons learned and best practices from the project implementation that should inform similar projects?

5. What is the final measurement of project’s indicators?

2.2. Audience

The primary audience of the Final Evaluation will be SFCG and UNHCR which will use its findings and recommendations to assess project’s achievements and strengthen their social stability approach.

The secondary audience will be peacebuilding practitioners and the larger aid community in Lebanon who will benefit from the lessons learned and good practices emerging from the evaluation.

2.3. Methods

The consultant will be responsible for the data collection through:

• 10 Focus Group Discussions with the joint committees: the FGDs will follow a mixed approach borrowing questions and themes from 1) the Rapid Assessment Tool developed by the Social Stability Working Group and 2) the key evaluation questions presented in this ToR.
• 40 Key Informant Interviews (up to 4 per community) with key local actors (municipality representatives, local and international organizations representatives, etc.)
• 200 Surveys with community members who have been involved in the Joint Community Activities (up to 20 surveys per community)
• Interviews with SFCG staff and partners
• Review of project’s documentation

3. Implementation Information

3.1. Final Evaluation Manager

The consultant will work closely with SFCG Lebanon DM&E Coordinator who will be ensuring that milestones are met.

3.2. Location

For data collection purposes, the consultant will have to travel to the 10 communities in Tripoli and to South Lebanon.

3.3. Deliverables

• A Final Evaluation plan and Inception report detailing a proposed methodology
• A draft Final Evaluation report for review by SFCG staff and to be approved by SFCG Lebanon Country Director and SFCG DM&E Regional Expert
• Raw data/notes from the surveys, FGDs and interviews
• A Final Evaluation report (30 pages in length) based on the following table of contents:
  o List of acronyms
  o Executive summary of no more than five pages
  o Overview of the context
  o Organization and program background
  o Evaluation methodology
  o Evidence-based conclusions: These include the findings and the analysis

3.4. Deadlines

• Consultant recruitment deadline: 31st of July 2015
• Deadline for finalising the data collection tools: 10th of August 2015
• Deadline for finalising data collection: 31st of August 2015
• Deadline for the draft report: 15th of September 2015
• Deadline for the final deliverables: 20th of September 2015

3.5. Logistical Support

SFCG Lebanon will provide the consultant with logistical support through:
• Ensuring that the consultant receives key documents in a timely manner
• Helping to set up the data collection schedule
• Arranging meetings with the project team and key staff
• Providing administrative support such as photocopying, fax machines, and office space

4. The Final Evaluation Consultant

4.1. Role and Responsibilities of the Consultant

The consultant will be responsible for:
• Finalising, translating and testing the data collection tools in collaboration with SFCG team: (1) the survey (2) the interviews guide and (3) the FGDs guide
• Designing an inception report
• Collecting the data through surveys, interviews and FGDs
• Analysing the data
• Reporting

4.2. Consultant’s Qualifications

SFCG Lebanon seeks an experienced consultant with the following qualifications:

• Proficiency in Arabic and English
• More than 5 years of experience in project evaluation or the equivalent in DM&E expertise, including collecting and analysing data from interviews, surveys, FGDs, etc.
• Experience in working with international organisations
• Experience in conducting baseline and evaluation studies
• Strong communication and writing skills
• Understanding of and experience working with social stability programming in Lebanon
• Research and evaluation methods and data collection skills
• Ability to be flexible with time and work schedule
• Attention to detail and ability to meet tight deadlines
• Available for future evaluation contracts with SFCG
• Conflict resolution/peace building experience

5. Contact Details

SFCG Lebanon - DM&E Coordinator
Morgane Ortmans
mortmans@sfcg.org
3. Insights

3.1 Perceptions on the impact of the project
How has the project affected your perceptions of each other?
How has the project affected your ability represent and answer to the needs of your community? Could you give examples?
How has the project increased your skills and built your capacities?
Has the frequency of your social interaction increased with the project? How do you perceive the level of social interaction?
Can you give me more examples as to the evolution since the past year?
The quality of your social interaction improved?
What types of social interaction do you have?

4. Decisions

4.1 Sustainability
Are you ready to continue working together?
Are you sufficiently close to each other to continue working without the facilitation of the project?
What will you do to ensure that your JC stays united and how do you see its role on the long term?

4.2 Lessons learned
What can be done better?
How would you do things differently next time?
If you had one advice to give to the organizers of the project, what would it be?

DATA COLLECTION TOOL II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name:
Location:
Age:
Role in the project:
Organization:

Involvement in the project
Please tell me about your involvement in Jfink with the project (degree of internal or external participation).

Knowledge and opinion on the project
How would you describe the project? Is it needed? Is it useful?
Which types of needs does it answer in your opinion?
What is your opinion on the JCs and the JCAs?
What do you think has impacted the project in the best way? and in the worst?
How has the project dealt with outsider roles?

Conflict and tensions perceptions
What can you tell me about incidents of violence between Lebanese and Syrians?
What is your opinion on the frequency and quality of collaboration between Lebanese and Syrians?
What are the main factors for the improvement of relations/deterioration of relations?
Where do you see the impact of the project on this?

Perception about impact of the project
Do you think the two groups have improved their relationships over the course of the project?
Do you think the participants are equipped in skills for non-violent communication?
Do you think the participants are able to play the role of reference in case of tensions?
Do you think they are capable of advocating for the needs of their community?

Perceptions of sustainability
Do you think the activities and the committees are capable and ready to continue working together without SFCG?

DATA COLLECTION TOOL III: SURVEYS

Name:
Age:
Nationality:
Town:
Notes:

Knowledge of the project
• Are you aware of the existence of this project and this initiative?
• Have you participated in it?
• Do you know people who were involved in it?
• Do you know the process that led to this activity?
• Do you know SFCG?

Opinion on the project
• Do you think the project is responding to needs of the community?
• Do you think you directly benefited from it?

Perception of social cohesion
• Is there a need to work on social cohesion between Syrians and Lebanese in your community?
• Has the frequency of your interaction with Lebanese/Syrians increased over the last year?
Can you give me a figure?
• Do you believe the quality of your interaction has improved over the last year? Can you give me a figure?
• Would you know of a group of Lebanese and Syrians who can serve as a reference for mediation in case of tensions?
• In case of tensions, how do you solve your issues?

INTRODUCTION
Welcome and personal presentation
Ice breaker and presentation of participants: each participant introduces the person to its right.

1. Launching the discussion and observation

1.1 Experience-based discussion
Tell me about your experience in the project
In one word: what is your most valuable opinion on the project?
In one word: Give me one negative aspect of the project?

2. Reflection

2.1 Needs-based discussion
What are the needs that this project is answering?
What other needs would you have liked it to answer?

2.2 Activity-based discussion
What are the main changes that the project has brought about?
What are the project’s strengths? What are its weaknesses?
Do you think the JCAs were a successful example of collaboration between both parties?

2.3 Opinions on the project
What did you most like about the project?
What did you most dislike?
How do you see the role of the municipality in the project?
## ANNEX C
### SCHEDULE OF FIELD VISITS AND DATA COLLECTED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date of visit</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
<th>Key Informant Interviews</th>
<th>Surveys</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tyre              | August 14th   | Focus group held with 15 JC members | 1. Lebanese JC member – Amel Director Monia  
2. Syrian JC member and FP – Ahmad  
3. Syrian JC member – Abou Ayham | 9 surveys conducted |  |
| Sarafand          | August 18th   | Focus group held with 7 JC members | 1. Member of municipality – Mohammad Khalifeh  
2. Syrian JC member and FP – Ghazi  
3. Lebanese JC member – Hussein Gharib  
4. Lebanese JC member – Mustafa Yunsi | 5 surveys conducted |  |
| Miyie Miyie       | August 19th   | No focus group held | 1. Syrian JC member and FP – Abdallah  
2. Syrian JC member – Mustafa  
3. Syrian JC member – Mohammad  
4. Syrian Participant to RTs and training – Batma  
5. Syrian Participant to RTs and training – Imam  
6. Syrian Participant to RTs and training – Ghina  
7. Lebanese JC member – Fannoon Haddad (phone)  
8. Lebanese JC member – Emile Abdallah (phone) | Two surveys conducted – by lack of contact from the focal point | The JC did not meet for the final evaluation for reasons out of the control of the JC focal point. |
| Burj el Chernali   | August 20th   | Focus group held with 11 JC members | 1. Lebanese JC member and FP – Mustafa  
2. Syrian JC member and FP – Abou XX  
3. Lebanese JC member – Sonia | No surveys were conducted | Beneficiaries challenging to identify |
| Ghaziyeh          | August 21st   | Focus group held with 15 JC members | 1. Member of the municipality – Hajji Ali  
2. Lebanese JC member and FP – Sawas | No surveys were conducted | Beneficiaries challenging to identify |
| Abou Samra        | August 26th   | No focus group held | 1. Daughter of land owner – Fair,  
2. Syrian JC member and FP – Hassan  
3. Syrian JC member – Mustafa | 3 surveys were conducted | The JC did not meet for the final evaluation for reasons out of the control of the JC focal point. |
| Al Mina           | August 26th   | Focus group held with 3 JC members | 1. DRC community livelihood manager – Fatma  
2. DRC WASH officer – Awad |  |  |
| Bab el Tabbehen   | September 15th | Focus group held with 6 JC members | 1. Lebanese JC member and FP – Khall  
2. Lebanese JC member – Khall | 5 surveys conducted |  |
| Qobbbeh           | August 24th   | Focus group held with 7 JC members | 1. Utopia protection officer – Soha  
2. Utopia procurement officer – Faizan | No surveys were conducted | Beneficiaries challenging to identify |
| Transversal Kilis | August 10th – September 15th | N/A | 1. SF CG Project Director – Elias  
2. SF CG Design Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator – Morgan  
3. SF CG Project Coordinator – South – Hassan  
4. SF CG Assistant to the Project Coordinator – South – Alan  
5. SF CG Project Coordinator – North – Rama  
6. Utopia Program Manager – Yahya  
7. NVC Trainer – Wassim | N/A |  |

### Annex C: Schedule of Field Visits and Data Collected

**Location:** Haddad Building • Block B • 2nd Floor • Ghazaliye Street • Sioufi • Achrafieh • Beirut • Lebanon  
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**South Lebanon and Tripoli**  
**August • October 2015**  

**Dialogues and Local Response Mechanisms to Conflict**  
**Final Project Evaluation**  

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### Recreational Activities
- Tyre JCA, South of Lebanon
### ANNEX D
PROJECT LOG FRAME AND MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results and activities</th>
<th>Adapted project's indicators</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal: Syrian refugee and Lebanese host communities are equipped with and ready to apply collaborative, conflict sensitive and non-violent responses to rising communal tensions.</td>
<td>Perception of the presence / regularity of violent incidents between Syrian and Lebanese communities reported by respondents</td>
<td>70% of participants report healthy relationships between the two communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported ways of resolving conflict, and description (if mentioned) of collaborative, conflict sensitive, and non-violent methods to address tensions with the other group</td>
<td>20% of participants refer to the JC as an effective way of resolving intra-communal conflict.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obj. 1: “Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities have improved intergroup relations in the 11 targeted communities by the end of the project (GoP).”</td>
<td>% of community members, participants and key actors who believe that Syrian/Lebanese relations have improved over the last year</td>
<td>24% of larger community respondents believe the quality of their relationship has improved, 36% note that they are the same, and 37% note that they have not improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of respondents who can give at least one example of improvement of relations</td>
<td>80% of participants note a general improvement in relations, while 70% insist on the fact that there were no tensions to begin with.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of respondents who can give at least one example of improvement of relations</td>
<td>100% of larger community respondents who believe they have improved refer to neighbourly relations as a measure of improvement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants and key actors who believe they have improved refer the participation to social rites (weddings, funerals) as examples of improvement of relations</td>
<td>% of respondents who can give at least one example of improvement of relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.1: SY and LB have regular roundtable meetings</td>
<td># of roundtables taking place in the target communities</td>
<td>Since January 2015: BC: 5, GZ: 5, LZ: 5, MM: 5, SF: 5, TY: 5, Tebbeneh: 5, Qobbeh: 5, Abou Samra: 5, Al Mina: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.2: Community members actually attend and dialogue about key issues at roundtables</td>
<td># of members from both communities attending the roundtables</td>
<td>Since January 2015: 146 participants (54 Lebanese and 92 Syrians - 39% women and 61% men)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripoli: RT participants have successfully created a joint committee</td>
<td>AM: a women joint committee has been created</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS: a joint committee has been created</td>
<td>QB: a new committee has been created based on the Utopia Qobbeh Women Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT: a new committee has been created based on the Oti-Utopia Tebbeneh Youth Council</td>
<td>27% of community members are aware of the existence of the joint committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.3: SY and LB are aware of the roundtables as an avenue for dialogue in their communities.</td>
<td>% of community members who are aware of the roundtables and know that they are a place for dialogue in their area.</td>
<td>27% of community members are aware of the existence of the joint committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.4: SY and LB believe that there are practical, collaborative ways to address common issues</td>
<td>% of participants who believe that there are practical, collaborative ways to address common issues.</td>
<td>14% of community members refer to the JC as a reference in addressing tensions, while 88% indicate other sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.5: SY and LB have increased amicable interactions</td>
<td>Frequency and perception of interaction between LB and SY individuals</td>
<td>23% of community members note an increase in the frequency of interaction, 21% note a decrease, and 49% note that their relations have remained the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of SY and LB who can give an explanation of the increase in frequency</td>
<td>% of SY and LB who can give an explanation of the increase in frequency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since January 2015: 146 participants (54 Lebanese and 92 Syrians - 39% women and 61% men)</td>
<td>100% of the respondents who believe they have improved refer to neighbourly relations as a measure of improvement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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[Search for Common Ground]

DIALOOGUE AND LOCAL RESPONSE MECHEAMISMS TO CONFLICT
FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION

South Lebanon and Tripoli
August - October 2015

Haddad Building • Block B • 2nd Floor • Ghazaliye Street • Sioufi • Achrafieh • Beirut • Lebanon
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facebook.com/sfcg.lebanon
twitter.com/sfcg_lebanon
Result 1.6: SY and LB roundtable participants collaboratively design and implement JCAs in each community

| # of JCAs commonly designed and implemented since the mid-term evaluation | 10 JCAs have been commonly designed and implemented |
| In Tripoli: number of JCAs that have been implemented collaboratively | One JCA in each location of Tripoli has been successfully implemented in Year 2, Al Mina JCA has been reproduced a second time. |
| % of roundtable participants who believe that the newly-implemented JCAs addressed an important common need of their community | 65% of JC members believe that the JCA addressed an important need of their community |
| # of beneficiaries reached by the newly-implemented JCAs | Tripoli: 379; South: 885 |
| % of beneficiaries who think that the JCA answered to a common need in their community | 100% of indirect beneficiaries think that the JCA answered to a common need in their community |

Obj. 2: “The role of participants in non-adversarial community conflict resolution is strengthened within the 11 target communities by the end of the project (EoP).”

| Perception of Lebanese and Syrian participants to trainings with regards to acquisition/improvement of their skills | 90% of Syrian participants and 80% of Lebanese participants gave a positive appreciation to trainings with regards to acquisition or improvement of skills |
| # of participants at the initial training activities and coaching sessions | Since January 2015: 92 persons (31 Lebanese and 61 Syrians) |
| ISPs are aware of the existence of this group and ready to collaborate with them | All JCAs have been introduced and connected to ISPs. I.e. Tyr JC is collaborating with Amal Association, Al Mina JC is collaborating with DRC and other INGOs, Abou Siama JC has been collaborating with OISP, etc. |

**ANNEX E**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


ANNEX F
CONSULTANT BIOGRAPHY

Lyna Comaty is an academic with extensive field experience with civil society and policy research in the Arab world. In 2014, she received her PhD in Development Studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva working on the transition from conflict to peace in Lebanon, with a case study of the issue of the persons who disappeared during the civil war. She is active in the social, political and cultural spheres in Lebanon. She currently lectures Transitional Justice at the American University of Beirut and consults several local and international organizations on a freelance basis.
“This assessment was implemented by SFCG in partnership with UNHCR with the financial support of the European Union.”

"تم تنفيذ هذا التقييم من قبل منظمة البحث عن أرضية مشتركة (SFCG) بالشراكة مع المفوضية السامية للأمم المتحدة لشؤون اللاجئين (UNHCR) ودعمه مالي من الاتحاد الأوروبي (EU)."