

Establishing conflict resilient communities in the North of Lebanon



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CAPACITY BUILDING How to manage conflicts

in the districts of Akkar and Tripoli

A project by:



LEBANON

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Lebanon is by far a post-conflict country, too many internal conflicts are destabilising the country. Beside that, the regional instabilities are having a negative impact on Lebanon's development. The facilitation of dialogues, in order to reduce the mistrust and local disputes, is an important step towards a peaceful future. Strengthening local communities and empower mediation skills will help to make people less susceptible to outside influences.

That fore, the project aims at providing training and workshops to enhance institutional and operational capacity of non-state actors working on conflict-resolution on the local level. A continuous mentoring and coaching program is included to ensure that the training will result in sincere and sustainable conflict resolution initiatives. Secondly, the project provides regular opportunities to forge and consolidate links between local and national-level initiatives for the promotion of a common agenda for building civil peace and reconciliation in Lebanon.

TARGET GROUP

The project targets local community leaders, mukthars, local councils and community based organizations in the Tripoli and the Akkar area in northern Lebanon.

MISSION

To facilitate peace building skills in the Tripoli and Akkar regions in order to prevent conflicts and build a peaceful society. Four key areas will form the base of the project:

Strategy-building through wide consultation—in all stages of the project we engage with various actors.

Capacity building— different training and workshop settings will equip local participants with peace building skills.

Funding for targeted conflict mediators - small funds for local actions will be transmitted to support initial activities.

Establishing credible local conflict mediation mechanism—local peace building efforts will be monitored over a long term and assure sustainability.

THE PROJECT



ACTIVITIES

1. Needs Assessments

The first step has two purposes: to build relationships and trust with the target municipalities/villages and to gather specific data to be used for project design and evaluation. This activity will also allow to carefully recruit local conflict Conciliators (LCC).

2. Capacity-building Workshops for local CSOs

30 identified LCC will receive a set of two capacity building trainings to strengthen their analytical conflict-resolution and peace building skills along with their operational capacities.

3. Community outreach

LCC will return to their communities and engage with their members. The acquired skills will help them to get in contact with local stakeholders and identify conflict issues. We will provide small funding to exceptional peace building/dialogue initiatives and champion these actors to success by building their public credibility.

4. Mentoring

Mentoring is an effective way of helping people to progress in their development and realising their potential, that fore, a continuous mentoring scheme for the LCCs takes place.

5. Working group

To strengthen the voice of peace building actors in the region, we will facilitate working groups. 15 key change agents of each target area that are actively working on conflict prevention and mitigation in the North of Lebanon will meet regularly with the LCC. Those meetings will enable the project, to coordinate activities and ensure efficiency.

8. Knowledge-Sharing Conference

A conference is organized with 150 CSO leaders, LCC, working group members, beneficiaries, representatives of the Lebanese government and the media to exchange experiences and share success stories.

Participatory Needs Assessment for more Ownership and Sustainability

METHODOLOGY

Participatory assessments provides essential information about existing local capacities, resources and strategies to address the issues which are the subject of an intervention, and allow projects to build on these resources, strategies and capacities, rather than impose external solutions.

Participatory assessments also highlight existing needs, concerns and challenges. By jointly identifying and describing these needs and challenges, implementing partners and local populations create a **shared understanding of the issues/problems at stake and can move forward in developing joint responses** using local resources and capacities.

Again, this process of participatory assessments **strengthens community ownership** and builds the foundation for **sustainable results** in line with community expectations.

The results of all participatory assessments are used to revise and strengthen the programming of implementing partners.

ESTIMATED RESULTS:

1. Non-state actors' institutional and operational capacities to understand, address and prevent conflict have improved.
2. Sustainable mechanisms are in place in at least one neighbourhood of the city of Tripoli and in at least one locality in the Akkar district and they are equipped to address conflict through collaboration, communication and constructive negotiation activities.
3. Non-state actors in Lebanon increase cooperation with peers and state actors and build partnerships to promote short and long-term peace-building.
4. Local non-state actors conduct campaigns on promoting alternative methods for addressing conflicts.



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Capacity-building Workshops: develop conflict resolution skills

As a core part of the project Peacelabz will facilitate a 8-day Capacity-building Workshop in each of the two region with the aim of empowering local conflict conciliators. In total, 30 participants will develop the following skills:

- ◆ Enhance knowledge on peace building, conflict prevention and conflict sensitive project planning.
- ◆ Acquire the knowledge about relevant project management tools needed to develop successful project proposals to address the needs in their community, concerning women in particular.
- ◆ Community outreach and monitoring skills to build CSO's capacities on engaging constructively in political and civic processes at all levels.



Where we are working:

- ◆ Northern Lebanon: Akkar and Tripoli districts

The tension in the region, influenced by religious disputes, communal fragmentation and regional conflicts, remain high. In addition, the arrival of thousands of Syrian refugees augment existing tensions.

Social problems increase and especially the young generation, 60% of the population is below 25 years of age, is faced with limited perspectives. In combination with political and religious disputes these conditions are often undermining any efforts for reform and inflame civil discord, potentially leading towards the eruption of more violence.

The complex political situation hinders the government to fully fill its duties. That's why local communal leaders enjoy important positions among the Lebanese society. Nevertheless, they have not been able to organise themselves to substantially influence policies or reforms, and peacebuilding remains a sensitive issue.

Building upon previous peace building initiatives

Thanks to recent activities in the region PeaceLabz established a credible reputation and the project Establishing Conflict Resilient Communities in the North of Lebanon benefits from past experiences: In January 2011 the Tripoli Initiative was launched and aimed to establish and re-activate sustainable mechanisms for dialogue among community members. A group of committed and respected citizens was elected to lead the process. This key-persons played an important role in widening the space for dialogue and future cooperation on peace building in Tripoli. Additionally the project will connect its activities with the current Lebanese National Dialogue and other non-state actors in the field of peace building.

PDCI has a long record of establishing local conflict resolution mechanisms in fragile regions. Experiences shaped a unique approach to development and peace building. PDCI's members incorporate a conflict sensitive approach during all stages of the programming cycle: from analysis during a program design, to implementation and evaluation. A special focus is given to a careful selection and a continuous monitoring of trainers, this lesson learnt will be an essential part of the project Establishing Conflict Resilient Communities in the North of Lebanon.



Partners for Democratic Change International is an international non-governmental association, based in Belgium. It is a global partnership of nineteen independent, local organisations in Europe, the Americas and the Middle East that work to advance civil society, good governance and a culture of change and conflict management worldwide.

The Partners



PeaceLabz is a non-governmental organization, whose vision is to transform conflicts non-violently. The NGO is based in Lebanon and in order to empower Lebanese communities to address conflicts and to prevent violence,

they work closely with local leaders, community based organizations and international donors.

