

“Peace Building in Lebanon” project’s newsletter

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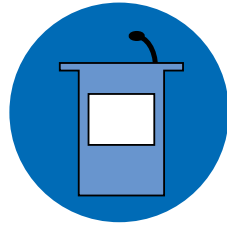
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Implementation of Mechanisms for Social Stability (MSS)

The UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project is in the process of implementing the established Mechanisms for Social Stability (MSS) in Akkar, Minieh-Donnieh, Bekaa, South and Nabatieh.

- The joint committee in **Sahl Akkar** filmed and produced a short video about its region and its unique features. The video received its first public screening on December 9, 2016.

- In **Minieh-Donnieh**, the English and computer courses launched by its local committee have started, to end in early January 2017. The Sir Committee’s tourism plan for the village, which aims to promote tourism and development locally, was presented and discussed on December 16, 2016. **Deir Ammar** and **Assoun** will be holding their local community public events and the public space cleaning campaigns early next year.

- In **Bekaa**, the local MSS committees organized a number of activities to introduce themselves to their communities. The implemented activities aimed at enabling the committees to play a major role in preventing or reducing tensions and different types of conflicts between the different local communities.

Baalbek implemented many activities in the framework of its Sports Peace Month, which included various sports games to demonstrate the importance of cooperation among the various segments of Baalbek’s population.

Hawsh Barada will be organizing a traditional villager’s breakfast early next year in an aim to enhance social interaction among the village’s various local groups.

Talia’s committee is currently holding music courses to promote positive social interaction between Lebanese and Syrian children.

Kfar Zabad organized an environment day aimed at raising awareness about environmental issues. In addition, it organized a number of other cultural activities aiming at empowering the local population, in particular its youth,

in order to enhance their active involvement and become agents of change in their respective communities.

Riyah organized a marathon aimed at bringing all the communities together and reducing the social burdens that affect the Lebanese and Syrian communities alike.

Makseh is currently holding music courses to reduce the social gap between Lebanese and Syrian children and youth of both genders.

Kab Elias will be organizing a cultural and entertainment days for Lebanese and Syrian youth aiming at promoting peaceful coexistence and non-violence. Finally, **Ali Al Nahri** successfully implemented leisure, sports and cultural activities, which were open to people of all ages, to reduce tensions within the community.

Also in **West Bekaa**, the Darb El Salam NGO staged a play titled Together We Stay (Maa’an Nabka), which was performed by talented young Lebanese and Syrian actors and aimed at creating a state of stability and a space of real and meaningful dialogue between the communities.

- In **South Lebanon**, **Kfar Jarra** and **Lebaa** carried out their youth and community activities aimed at bringing together the residents in a positive environment. The **Seddiqin** committee implemented its green village day advocating recycling and cleanliness.

- As for the **Nabatieh** area, its five villages implemented the established MSS by organizing social activities. The **Choukine** youth committee organized a traditional dinner to enhance social cohesion among various local groups living in the village. **Kfarchouba** and **Ibl al-Saqi** worked separately on enhancing social interaction by organizing a hiking trip and a traditional dinner. In **Kfarouman**, the established committee designed an awareness campaign about the dangers of drug use. The campaign included sessions on drug use prevention delivered by a specialist, a marathon and a puppet show promoting alternatives to prevent youth from slipping into addiction. **Marjeyoun**’s environmental committee implemented awareness sessions on sorting waste at the source that targeted all of its stakeholders.



“Together We Stay”: Lebanese and Syrians in West Bekaa Send a Message Through Theater



After months of training and rehearsals, Lebanese and Syrian youth performed the Together We Stay (Maa'an Nabka) social play for the first time on November 12, 2016, to officially announce the vision and mission of the newly established West Bekaa NGO “Darb El Salam” (Pathway to Peace).

This NGO is the result of the joint efforts of active local actors from Al Marj, Ghazze, Al Qaraoun, Hawsh El Harimi, Machghara and Joub Jannine and the Mechanisms for Social Stability (MSS) process implemented by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project and funded by KfW. The organization was created when nine members decided to institutionalize their mediation and reconciliation skills acquired during the training sessions to be able to work on the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts through peaceful means and to promote a culture of dialogue and communication among the various communities in West Bekaa.

Using this play, Darb El Salam hoped to send a social and cultural message and reflect the actual situation of the host communities and Syrian displaced through arts and theater. It emphasized the importance of peaceful coexistence and cooperation between the residents of West Bekaa's villages.

For the first time, more than 700 persons gathered in Ghazze Touristic Theater to attend the play. Ali Bitar, director of the play, said that this theatre play was a reflection of the reality in the villages of West Bekaa. He added, “We are trying to promote peaceful coexistence despite of the crisis. We will live together, accept each other, and share the good and the bad.”

The play aimed at creating a state of stability in the targeted villages and a space for real and meaningful dialogue between the Lebanese and Syrians residents, in order to overcome the differences between the two communities. “This play that I am part of has many goals; to elicit empathy form the viewers with ‘the other’ and to display the situation of the Syrian displaced and the Lebanese host communities. During the rehearsals, we learned a lot from and about each other. All the misconceptions were gone, and our behavior has become more positive towards each other,” said Ola, a Syrian participant in the play.

The Darb El Salam NGO has managed to coordinate with other villages to hold additional performances around Bekaa. The NGO took “Together We Stay” to Bar Elias on December 29, 2016. The audience was looking forward to seeing the famous Bekaa play and the actors shared this excitement, as they were thrilled to be performing for a new audience.



Community-Based Analysis and Conflict Prevention

“Social Development Centers affiliated to the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) play a leading role in strengthening social stability and local development in addition to fostering communication between the municipalities and local groups,” explained Mrs. Suheir El Ghali, National Coordinator of the Lebanon Host Communities Support Project (LHSP) at MoSA, during the launching session of a capacity-building program for MoSA personnel.

This session is part of a series of capacity-building sessions organized by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project within the framework of the LHSP in partnership with MoSA, and designed to enable the MoSA Social Development Centers (SDCs) to play a more central role in the development of the Mechanisms for Social Stability (MSS). This activity is funded by UK DFID.

The MSS process is designed and implemented by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project to preserve social stability and enhance relations within communities, particularly in light of the Syrian crisis, and provide host communities safe and common spaces to discuss their fears in public and to suggest strategies to resolve those concerns. With the participation of a group of community leaders (mayors, members of municipal councils and mukhtars) and actors from different local sectors, an analysis of the underlying causes behind the conflicts in the selected region was undertaken. Based on the data obtained, the group developed the Mechanisms for Social Stability (MSS) through a conflict-specific mechanism of action. These MSS are currently implemented in more than 70 municipalities in the different Lebanese governorates.

“We are building on these sessions to empower the Ministry team in adopting a peace-building and conflict-resolution approach,” said Naziha Dakroub, Mount Lebanon Coordinator of the LHSP and Head of the SDC in Chyah, Beirut Southern Suburbs.

During October 2016, 85 participants representing the SDCs in Bekaa, North, South and Mount Lebanon attended



the capacity-building workshops. Social workers, coordinators and heads of centers took active part in the assessment phase of the process and shared personal stories and achievements as ice-breaking activities before getting familiarized with the MSS methodology. The same participants will be trained in upcoming sessions on the development of the Mechanisms for Social Stability.

Hassan Sabra, a social worker from Tebnine, believes that these trainings are a good example for showing the important role of MoSA's intervention in the affected communities.

The workshops were divided into two parts. The first part focused on exercises for transmitting inclusive messages and identifying intolerant behaviors. The second part was dedicated to participants filling out long assessment questionnaires. The consultant relied on these questionnaires to develop needs-based capacity-building sessions. Coordinators and heads of centers from the North Lebanon, Bekaa, Baalbek, Mount Lebanon and South governorates have been taking part in trainings on the MSS process since December 2016. This program will be conducted over the course of three months.



Sports Events Against Violence

Aiming to empower and build the capacities of the local social and cultural committees in Lebanon, and to support local host communities and key actors in North Lebanon, Bekaa and South Lebanon, the Mechanisms of Social Stability (MSS) were implemented with the support of the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project.

The MSS were implemented in Central and North Bekaa to better manage the crisis, on the one hand, and, on the other, to enable local communities to respond to future challenges as a result of the ramifications of the Syrian crisis.

This process was made possible with the technical support of Nabad for Development Association and funds from UK DFID.

Following three months of meetings, workshops and continuous work with the local actors and municipality members, and as part of the Mechanisms for Social Stability (MSS) supported by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project, the Youth and Sports Committee in Baalbek, in cooperation with the municipality, organized a press

conference on November 17, 2016 to launch its sports and peace month.

The first activity took place on December 2, 2016. A football match gathered a group of 48 young Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian residents of Baalbek. This activity aimed at breaking the ice between youth and enhancing team spirit.

A few days later, on December 9, 11 and 16, 2016, more than 100 persons participated in a race, sports games and hiking. These activities aimed at encouraging solidarity and fair competition among the young generation. It was an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful nature of Baalbek and let off negative energy together as one group.

On December 22, the committee announced the end of the activities in a closing ceremony titled “December is Better Together”, in the presence of all the participants of the activities and key actors from Baalbek.

The ceremony was a chance to appreciate and highlight the importance of such activities in bringing the community closer together.

Riyaq Runs for Peace



The Peace and Development Committee in Riyaq organized the first time Marathon, “We Run for Peace”, on Sunday November 20, 2016, in coordination with the municipality.

More than 850 people from Riyaq and surrounding villages ran in the marathon that aimed to bring all the communities closer together and reduce the social burdens that impact the Lebanese and Syrian communities alike, as well as promoting peaceful coexistence between all the religions in the area.

This activity was supported by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project and Nabad for Development Association, and funded by UK DFID.



The Violence-Free Schools (VFS) initiative has been carrying out its activities in **Bekaa** and **Mount Lebanon**. In Mount Lebanon, the 15 participating schools have resumed their activities relating to the launch of the Codes of Conduct with the start of the new academic year. The schools have implemented their community activities involving the educators, parents and students in launching the school's commitment for non-violence. The activities took the form of open days, sports days, drawing competitions and plays

with the participation of students and parents of different nationalities. A closing event of the VFS initiative in Mount Lebanon took place on December 3 at the UNESCO Palace and brought together the 15 schools to exchange their experience. In Bekaa, the 14 participating schools started their activities to disseminate the values of non-violence in schools. The schools have also announced their commitment to the implementation of their Codes of Conduct for peace in the presence of educators, parents and students.

Mount Lebanon public schools fight against violence

More than 100 students, teachers, parents and school directors from 15 public schools in Mount Lebanon shared stories, experiences, and lessons learned during the closing ceremony of the Violence Free Schools initiative which took place on the 3rd of December 2016 in UNESCO palace, organized by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project, implemented in partnership with KDC – Knowledge Development Company and funded by Norway.

The Violence Free Schools initiative is established through training and raising awareness of school principals, students, teachers and parents on the concept of peace building and dealing in a non-violent and non-discriminatory way with conflicts. It aims at integrating peace building concepts into

formal and non-formal education channels in public schools. During this event, each participating school had the opportunity to present the work that done on non-violence through sketches, songs, interventions and speeches in addition to a joint exhibition.

They also had the chance to display the code of conduct related to every school. The codes are documents that set the peaceful values of the school and the rights and duties of each member of the school community.

It was a great opportunity for the students to enjoy an extracurricular activity together with their teachers and parents in a context that promoted respect and nonviolence.

The Ghobeiry Second Mixed Intermediate Public School, a ray of light in a violent world



“He who opens a school door, closes a prison” once said French poet Victor Hugo.

Quoting him, director of the Ghobeiry Second Mixed Intermediate Public School, Fatme Salameh, welcomed happy and active students, involved teachers and parents and municipality representatives in the school to launch the “Code of Conduct” for nonviolence. This code was



distributed after a year of preparation and collaboration between educators, parents and students.

This activity is part of the “Violence Free school” initiative of the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project implemented by KDC - Knowledge Development Company with the generous support of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Beirut.

Through its Violence Free Schools Initiative, the “Peace Building in Lebanon” project targets school principals, teachers, students, school staff members, and parents. These are first sensitized on peace building and nonviolent means of dealing with conflicts. Then they establish a working group at the school level which develops “Codes of Conduct for Non Violence”, based on which a set of soft and physical activities are implemented.

In this playground, many activities and game stands reflecting nonviolence and peaceful coexistence in school were taking place while young girls and boys welcome the participants on the food stands of man’ouche, labneh, foul and other delicacies. “I took part in painting and Mandala drawing activities”, explained Mohamad Ayoub, student and participant in the task force adding that these activities helped him become less violent and more respectful towards his teachers and friends.

Ester Assaad, a Syrian mother and a member of the taskforce, thought that by taking part of the Violence Free School initiative, she contributed in making the school a less violent environment.

The school has also published its yearly newsletter around the theme of nonviolence. In addition to a printed leaflet of the code of conduct. This newsletter was distributed to all parents, students and inhabitants of Ghobeiry, Beirut.

Talents from Aramoun School Fight Violence Through the Arts



To announce their Code of Conduct for peace building, the Rafik Hariri-Aramoun Public School committee held its non-physical activity on November 5, 2016.

The school organized a fair engaging 240 middle-school students, parents and all teaching staff in entertainment activities. The day included an acrobat show, followed up by an exhibition of drawings and paintings about the students’ perception of peace and non-violence. The students and parents also participated in contests. In addition, the day was an opportunity for the students and teachers to mingle and socialize, as well as sing and play together!

Some of the students wrote and performed rap songs on the new theme of violence-free schools.



Barja Al Dimas School and West Aley Public Schools Hold Peace-Themed Activities

Barja Al Dimas Public School held its activities day on November 6, 2016.

Incredible mobilization for their Code of Conduct for non-violence brought together 250 teachers, parents and students playing and participating in a recreational day. Activities were suitable for everyone. They included cultural competitions, games, an acrobat show and a choir performance.

The following week, West Aley Public School held a themed activity day around non-violence on November 10, 2016 with the participation of 230 students, parents and teachers.

Celebrating non-violence in the school reminded the students about their CODE OF CONDUCT and the importance of relaunching it towards a violence-free school environment. The day included an acrobat show, followed by games and races, and ended with trophies and medals given out.

Revisiting the Codes of Conduct for Non-Violence in Bekaa



Each school celebrated non-violence in its own way. Some did it with artworks, sports and awareness-raising sessions, while others used music and singing. VFS days were fun and beneficial at the same time!

“Talking again with our sons and daughters about non-violence helped us highlight the importance of the Violence-Free Schools initiative,” said a parent at the non-violence activity day in **Saadnayel** Public School.

In Bekaa, 13 schools benefited from these activities, which were different and unique in content and method. School staff, students and parents collaborated together and showed enthusiasm towards rejecting violence through music and fun!

Revisiting the Bekaa schools and reviving their Codes of Conduct was achieved with the technical support of the Center for Active Citizenship (CAC) and for Development, and funded by the Netherlands.

Over the last quarter of 2016, the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project aimed at reinforcing the Codes of Conduct that were produced by the schools of Bekaa the year before as part of the Violence Free Schools (VFS) initiative.

The Codes of Conduct, which were set according to the specificity of the conflicts faced by each school, were implemented through engaging activities during the past three months.



For **El-Sawiri** Intermediate Public School, this was their first in-school celebration of all time. The event that took place on November 29, 2016 was an opportunity to discover the hidden talents of the students, parents and teachers. The violence-free day ended with all attendees taking part in signing the Code of Conduct, which was subsequently put up on a wall in the playground by the students and their teachers.

Other schools that took part of this process were: **Saadnayel** Intermediate School, **Zahle** Berdawni Intermediate School, **Zahle** 1 Intermediate School, **Al-Manara** 2 Intermediate School, **laat** Intermediate School, **Tamnine** Al-Fawqa Intermediate School, **Taraya** Intermediate School, Kamed **El-Lawz** Intermediate School, **Haouch Al-Harimeh** Intermediate School, **Niha** Intermediate School, Bednayel Intermediate School and **Haouch El-Nabi** Intermediate School.

Salma, a parent from the **Neha** Public School peace-building committee, said during its non-violence event on December 9, 2016, “I have not missed a single meeting! Violence is something that we are all fighting and this was a great opportunity to mobilize it concretely.”

On the other side of Bekaa, **Haouch El-Nabi** Public School celebrated non-violence on December 15, 2016 through a 20-square-meter mural about children’s rights, painted by students and their parents.

“The drawings that we are coloring on the wall are about the rights of children. They express that we are all equal even if we are from different nationalities and places,” said Rami, a student at Haouch El-Nabi Public School.

The activities successfully remobilized the school and were a chance for the school committees to re-announce their commitment to rejecting and fighting violence through peace building.

“Peace” Takes Over Walls of Jbeil and Chyah Schools



After months of preparations and conflict-resolution trainings, the students of **Jbeil** and **Chyah** schools were among 15 other schools in Mount Lebanon who finally celebrated non-violence through “Peace” graffiti on school walls.

Aiming at introducing peace building into formal and non-formal education, the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon”

project targets school principals, teachers, students, school staff members and parents through its Violence Free Schools (VFS) initiative.

They are first sensitized on peace building and non-violent means of dealing with conflicts. Then they establish a working group at the school level which develops “Codes of Conduct for Non-Violence”, based on which a set of soft and hard activities are implemented.

Those sessions were organized by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project in partnership with KDC (Knowledge Development Company), and funded by Norway.

Aiming at easing tensions among Lebanese and Syrian residents of the targeted areas, the Chyah and Jbeil taskforces chose to implement the VFS initiative through peace-building artworks.



After finalizing their Codes of Conduct, and in order to encourage a culture of non-violence, the peace-building task forces of Chyah Second Public School and Jbeil Fourth Public School organized arts and graffiti days on November 8 and 9, 2016 respectively.

The schools’ task forces selected graffiti as their non-physical activity to disseminate their own Code of Conduct for dealing with violent conflicts in their schools. In addition, the day was an opportunity to announce the completion of the VFS initiative in both areas.

At Chyah Second Intermediate Public School, around 50 Lebanese and Syrian students along with their teachers and parents celebrated peace through a graffiti work that guided by artist Nour Abou Ismail.

“This graffiti is so important to us. It will stay on the wall for the coming years and it makes me proud to see that I painted

‘PEACE’ on my school’s wall,” said Mahmoud Ayach, a 14-year-old student at Chyah Public School, as he flagged proudly his “Order and Cleanliness” delegate badge.

The non-violence day was a great opportunity for the students to enjoy an extracurricular event together with their parents and teachers in a positive context that promoted respect and non-violence and initiated healthy relationships inside and outside the school.

In Jbeil Fourth Intermediate Public School, the vibes were quite similar. The energy was positive, the music was energizing and all students of the seventh, eighth and ninth grades were eager to take part in painting the graffiti.

Eighth grader and task force participant George El Ghobri said that this activity was so much fun to everyone. He added, “It makes me happy to see colors on the walls of my school and take part in painting them. It makes us want to come to school with eagerness.”



The Fighters for Peace (FFP) organization has been benefiting from coaching sessions to build the capacity of its members to better serve their mission of preventing violence in Lebanon. The coaching sessions and workshops that the FFP members attended helped them build their storytelling, interpersonal and presentation skills.

The Ma3mal 961 and Karama Human Rights Film Festival have implemented their outreach sessions with the support

of the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project. The outreach sessions launched a debate on “The Other” by screening short films. These sessions included drama therapy with Syrian refugee and Lebanese host community children in various areas in Lebanon. They also included discussion sessions on the topic of “The Other” at various universities across Lebanon.



The Life Journeys of the Fighters for Peace Now Available Online

At a time when many neighboring countries are experiencing conflicts and wars, the members of the Fighters for Peace NGO, who are former fighters in the Lebanese civil war, are voicing their experiences online. Why online? Because this time they are targeting the public at large: Lebanese inside the country and beyond it, Arabs at war and at peace, youth and the elderly.

The Fighters for Peace website, the new platform created by the ex-fighters, recounts and documents the history of the civil war and the reality it had created. The website, which was launched on November 3, 2016 at Beirut Digital District, tries to shed light on the past, which all Lebanese should learn about and build on, regardless of their political affiliations.

Within the framework of the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project and its support to FFP and the civil society

at large, the website was established with funding from the Norwegian Embassy in Lebanon.

The website (<http://fightersforpeace.org/>) contains documentaries, photos, videos about the former fighters’ personal experiences and testimonies. The aim of the website is to convey that “change is possible and it is on the ruins where we can build bridges of peace in the people’s minds”, according to the FFP founder Ziad Saab’s speech during the launching event.

There is no doubt that the website cannot work unilaterally. That is why FFP plans to turn it into a shared space where all experiences, stories and views will be welcome.

“The Other” Through Artistic Expression and Facilitated Discussions

Ma3mal 961 and the Karama Beirut Human Rights Film Festival in Beirut, with the support of the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project, and funded by the BPRM (Bureau of Population Refugees and Migration) USA, visited youth and university students as part of the festival’s outreach activities. These activities aimed at addressing the issue of “The Other” through the screening of short films and debating it through artistic expression and facilitated discussions. The festival has visited areas across the Lebanese territory to conduct three drama workshops with Lebanese and displaced Syrian youth and three facilitated discussions at different Lebanese universities.

The drama workshops with Syrian and Lebanese youth in

Ghazze in Bekaa, Nabatieh and Wadi Khaled allowed young people in these communities to discuss the other through the screening of a short film. Participants expressed their views through drawing and role playing. “These young people are forced to live their lives as adults. These sessions allow them to be relieved from this burden,” explained the expert leading the workshop.

The university sessions in Tyr, Jounieh and Tariq Al-Jadideh created a space for young people to discuss the other in an academic setting. The facilitated discussions were based on the short films screened, and focused on the creation of the other, the legal aspect of the creation of the other, the capacity of Lebanon in handling the refugee influx, in addition to racism and prejudice.



Discussing the Journeys Behind the Articles of the 13th Issue of the Peace-Building News Supplement



For over three years, the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project has been bringing together Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian journalists, local actors, artists and media professionals in “Peace Building in Lebanon” news supplement.

The 13th issue was published on September 30, 2016 and tackled diverse topics relating to civil peace and the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon with a peace-building approach.

Around 50 Lebanese and Syrian students, teachers, artists, writers, photographers and participants of the supplement attended the discussion session that took place on October 24, 2016 at Beirut Digital District. They addressed issues relating to the importance of history and education, agriculture, and debated the definition of identity. The dialogue was enriched with experts from the field and the contributors to the 13th supplement.

The 13th discussion session presented once again a space for an open exchange of ideas among participants from North to South Lebanon who treasure peace-building opportunities through dialogue.

Media Sources and Access to Information: Reality and Challenges

“Doing investigative reports and elaborating investigative articles is becoming an artisanal job. I do it as a hobby and so do other colleagues, as we consider it self-fulfilling,” said Radwan Mortada, investigative journalist from Al Akhbar newspaper.

Rami Al Amine, investigative journalist for the Al Jadeed TV station, shared a different opinion from Radwan. “I personally gave up doing investigative reports due to the legal issues and complications I was faced with,” said Al Amine.

Mortada and Al Amine were among 30 prominent media professionals, experts, investigative journalists, and public and security officials who took part in a discussion organized by Maharat Foundation in cooperation with the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project, and funded by UK DFID, on the topic of “Sources of Media Coverage and the Right of Access to Information: Reality and Challenges”.

The session was moderated by Mr. Walid Abboud, MTV news editor-in-chief, at Le Gray Hotel, Downtown Beirut on October 25, 2016.



Participants debated the importance of having access to media sources and shared experiences and lessons learned from several events and cases when they were faced with a lack of accurate and credible information.

Maharat Foundation also presented some primary findings of a soon-to-be published study by the Foundation in cooperation with the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project in November.

This study will be the seventh study to be published in the context of monitoring the implementation of the Journalists’ Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon.

The Pact was formulated in 2013 with the participation, comments and consent of 34 editors-in-chief and media representatives under the patronage of the Ministry of

Information. It aimed at strengthening civil peace in Lebanon and highlighting the role of the media in Lebanon.

The UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project is currently monitoring, in cooperation with Maharat Foundation, the implementation of the Pact by the participating media outlets. Monitoring studies are produced based on the themes elaborated by the Pact.

Ending the smooth discussion, Dr. Georges Sadaka, Dean of the Journalism Faculty at the Lebanese University, announced that the experiences shared during the session can help his students better understand the importance of access to information. He also called upon journalists to apply self- assessment and fact checking. “Let’s not underestimate the fact of dealing with media outlets,” Sadaka said.

Local Reporters from Saida: Towards Implementing the “Journalists’ Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon”



Twenty-eight local reporters and journalists from Saida and South Lebanon eagerly participated in a meeting organized by Maharat Foundation in partnership with the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project, funded by UK DFID, on December 8, 2016 in Saida Rest House.

The meeting was titled “Towards a Responsible Media Working on Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon”. It aimed at introducing the “Journalists’ Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon”, discussing its clauses and debating the main challenges that the local reporters face.



This is the second meeting, after the one organized in Tripoli in July 2016. Several informal meetings will also be taking place in the upcoming months in different areas around Lebanon to introduce the Pact to media professionals and local reporters.

Journalists gathered in this meeting discussed how frustrated they are by the media situation in Lebanon in general and in Saida in particular. The challenges of reporting on and from the Ain al-Hilweh camp received special attention and was an important debate topic.

Youth Residing in Lebanon is at the Center of the “Peace Building in Lebanon” News Supplement

Funded by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development through KfW, the 14th issue of the joint news supplement was published by the UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project on December 22, 2016.

The Arabic version was distributed as a supplement with the Annahar and Assafir newspapers, while the English version was distributed with The Daily Star and the French one with L’Orient-Le Jour.

In this issue, the project decided to give voice to Syrian displaced and Palestinian refugees in order to allow them to talk about their experience in Lebanon and to share their stories of refuge.

Writers, human rights activists, artists, journalists, media professionals and researchers residing in Lebanon discussed civil peace issues in addition to topics relating to displaced Syrians and their host communities. Participants in this issue discussed the emotional, humanitarian and legal dimensions relating to the fallout from the Syrian crisis affecting Lebanon in addition to matters of civil peace.

A special focus was given to the topic of youth. Participants in this supplement discussed both the realities and hopes of Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian youth in Lebanon. The themes addressed in this issue also included delinquency,

statelessness, problems relating to historical narratives and education.

The supplement was uploaded on the UNDP Lebanon website, (www.lb.undp.org/pbsupplement), and shared on all UNDP related social media platforms.



The UNDP “Peace Building in Lebanon” project works since 2007 on enhancing mutual understanding and promoting social cohesion by addressing root causes of conflict in Lebanon. The project has been also lately working on addressing the impact of the Syrian crisis on social stability in Lebanon.

The project supports different groups from local leaders and local actors, to educators, journalists, youth and civil society activists, in developing medium and long-term strategies for peace building, crisis management and conflict prevention.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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