

Dealing with THE PAST

“What did you do during the War?”
What and why?

Addressing such questions takes courage: both in asking and in finding answers. We are working on revitalizing the public discourse on memories and identities including all parts of society while at the same time linking it to today’s challenges.

How can we deal today with what happened yesterday? What do we need to understand about ourselves and each other in order to be able to build solid paths today and for the future?

Take a  closer look!

“Memories of the War” A handbook for Schools and NGOs.

Not only family members are struggling to decide what to say and how to explain what happened, also teachers are torn between oversimplifying and gapping the difficult period of history.

In cooperation with our partners Lebanese Center for Civic Education (LCCE) and the NGO A Step Away, we developed a handbook on “Memories of the War” for the use in schools or workshops.

The handbook presents material and exercises on the civil war (1975 – 1990) in twelve thematic chapters. Each chapter is designed to be easily integrated in history lessons at school or to be used as workshop guidelines in NGO-work. The handbook is complemented by a video documentary entitled



“When we grew up during the war” which portrays the personal experiences during the war of six people from very diverse backgrounds. In addition, together with LCCE, we offer trainings for teachers and NGO-staff on how to use the book and the film in their work and to support creative approaches of how to deal with the past. Projects have so far included graffiti and creative writing workshops, drawing a comic strip and making a video clip.



NGO Mapping An Overview on who works with the Past

Recent years have seen an upsurge in activity in the field of Dealing with the Past in Lebanon but activists and NGOs frequently do not know the others' projects and rarely work together. With the support of AUB's Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Media Studies, we are mapping all actors in the field.

The existing educational material will be collected in a catalogue and made accessible to the public. The map and catalogue will serve practitioners, scientists and media researchers to get an overview on the various attempts to deal with the Past in Lebanon.

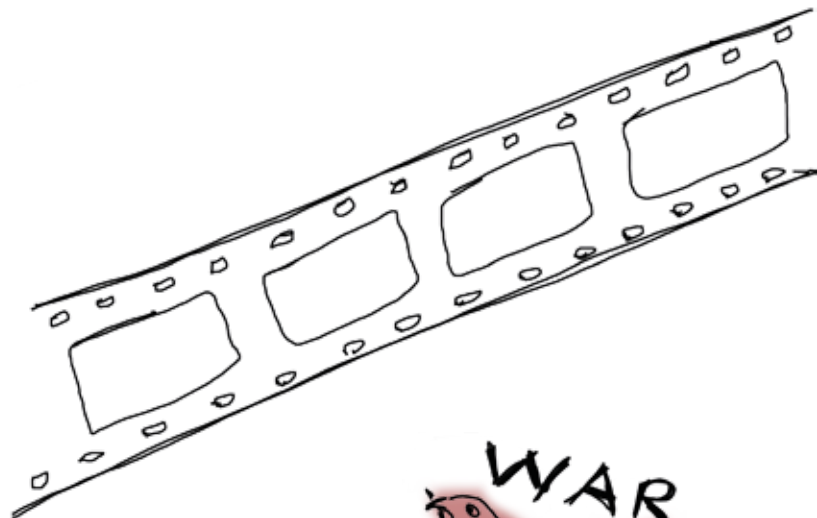


“Experiences of Nonviolent Activism in Lebanon“ Documentation and Education

Recent Lebanese history is overshadowed by the civil war and numerous violent clashes. However, even during the Lebanese civil war some people refused to use violence as a means of carrying out conflict, resorting to nonviolent activism instead.

These experiences build a starting point for historical research. In cooperation with the Permanent Peace Movement, the Imam Sadr Foundation and Umam Documentation and Research, we collected examples of effective nonviolent action. A movie documents the findings and draws attention to this often neglected part of Lebanese history.

In addition to the documentary film, we also developed a handbook for teachers and trainers to show and work on alternative forms of political activism.





Developing Capacities in Conflict Transformation Skills

We believe in local capacities. For this, we support local organisations and schools who tackle the difficult field of working on conflicts. How can we transform conflicts in a constructive way? How do I create a safe space? What do I need to know about a conflict, how can I analyse it?

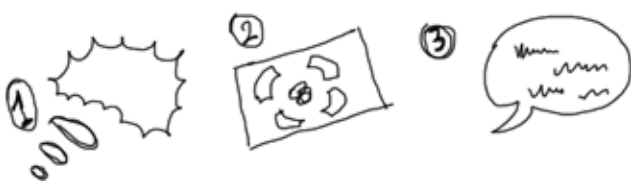


Take a  closer look!

Lets talk – Ta’o Nehke

Starting to talk can be very difficult especially when it comes to conflict and how to handle it. To better address these issues, a board game was invented in Lebanon as one tool to actively engage youth in Peacebuilding and give practical ideas on how to improve field interventions with communities.

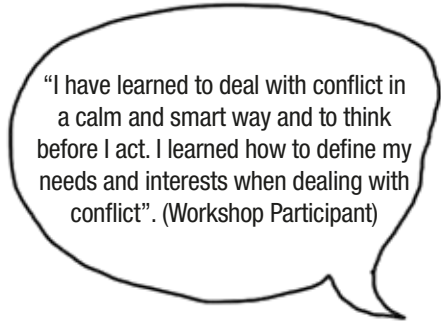
“Let’s talk“ or “Ta’o Nehke”, aims at mobilizing, empowering and providing youth with opportunities to learn about themselves and the other. It is a tool to get youth involved in working with their own communities on interpersonal conflicts. Together with a series of workshops for facilitators, the board game will now be promoted and adapted to new contexts bringing conflict transformation techniques and principles into focus.



“The board game helped me to see my skills in conflict transformation and what skills I still need to develop.”
(Participant and future conflict transformation facilitator)

“I find it really hard to trust people. This is why I prefer to maintain superficial relationships with others. However, this training encouraged me to have more trust in people, especially when using different games like Let’s Ball: no blame, no sorry.”
(Workshop Participant)





“Let’s get trained” Training within civil society organisations

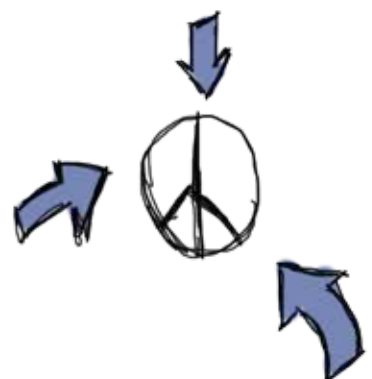
“Let’s get trained” is a long-term training program which has been developed for management staff of small civil society organizations working in Lebanon in the field of conflict transformation. While project planning, monitoring and evaluation are part of the training circle, a special focus is given to tools of conflict transformation like the conflict analysis and the Do-No-Harm concept. At the end of the training program, the participating organizations are supported in implementing a newly designed project.

NOVA Non-Violent Action Training for Teachers

Teachers from 20 public and private schools in Lebanon are taking part in a training on how to teach methods of non-violent conflict transformation to children at the age of eight to fourteen years. A documentary film and a textbook including exercises on positive self-images and the acceptance of different views have been developed to support the teachers’ interaction in class. At the same time, the participating network of schools is advocating to include the topic of non-violent activism in the Lebanese curriculum.

You decide (El hal Bi'idak, الحلّ بايدك) A local Peace Builders Network

The translation for “You Decide” in Arabic language is: “الحلّ بايدك”. It means the solution is in your hands. The name reflects the concept of conflict transformation, where the solution comes from within the local context. A needs-oriented series of trainings on conflict resolution for NGOs and their volunteers who are already active in the field of peacebuilding will strengthen a network of small organisations and foster a country-wide exchange on local expertise in the field.





Dialogue is not only about talking, more importantly, it is about understanding. Safe spaces, round tables, theatre, music or films can give us unique chances to change our perspective and see the “Other” in a new light. Stop debating start understanding and join us in using and creating platforms to develop common ideas for the future.

Take a  closer look!

“Responsible Media” Shaping discourses

“Responsible Media” is a practical and theoretical series of workshops that gather young journalists and social media activists to question their role in violent conflicts.

Within the workshop, the responsibility of journalists as well as the question of objectivity within different media channels and outlets is reflected. How can media representatives play a positive role in building and sustaining peace in societies where conflicts easily erupt to become violent?

“This training widened my horizon and enlightened my knowledge on the importance of responsibility in our future work as Journalists.” (Workshop Participant)

“Towards Peacebuilding in a Lebanese Context”

Interreligious Dialogues

The Lebanese society is very diverse and religious affiliation and sectarianism play a major in its dynamics. To facilitate interreligious understanding, our partner FDCD (Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue) has launched a series of workshops for young religious students from different confessions. Experiencing the religious history of the Maronites in the Qadisha Valley or praying jointly in a mosque in Tripoli can be part of the program. Within the dialogue, questions on the importance of land, faith and education are tackled and might be discussed at the Orthodox convent in Balamand or at a joint Iftar during the holy month of Ramadan.



“We prayed together, Muslims and Christians, in a mosque in Tripoli and in a church in Balamand.”
(Workshop Participant)

“Maintaining Civil Peace in Lebanon”

Young Politicians in the focus

Our partner FDCD brings together young activists and representatives of different political parties to discuss relevant political issues like economic developments and social welfare as well as values in politics. At the same time, the workshops create room for discussion with senior politicians, such as deputies and mayors. The project aims to encourage political dialogue transcending different party lines and allegiances.

“Hayda Lubnan”

How to think and talk about the future?

Imagine, you wake up and a miracle has happened: all problems have disappeared. What do you see? “Hayda Lubnan” is all about the question above. The project aims to support a dialogue on how people in Lebanon would like to live. By asking the “miracle question” we aim to create an imaginative space away from the daily problems. Everybody is invited to think outside of the box, to develop a vision for the country and to exchange the ideas with others. The dialogue will take place on three levels.

First, a web space allows sharing individual visions and to get inspired by other people’s ideas. In a second step, young people living in Lebanon come together for series of ‘future workshops’. The challenge here is to develop a common vision and find an attractive way of presenting it. These presentations or artworks will be collected for the third phase: an exhibition in order to continue the dialogue with a broader public.



“Just after this workshop, we will meet with them at our office”, it could be a common sentence that you can hear after any training workshop, but when the “we” reports to a group of young from the 8 march political side and the “Them” refers to a young man representing the 14 of march Christian party, it gives another sense.





Community Resilience

Change is challenging. Whether economic, demographic or cultural transformations, all societies face the question of how to ensure the well-being of the population. How to deal with altering demands, and needs? How to find tailored solutions for specific contexts? Interaction between communities is key for balancing, negotiating and mediating the demands of people.

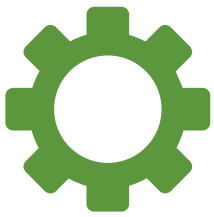
Take a  closer look!

Future Together Now Community Action Project

The Syrian crisis is challenging Lebanon's precarious stability, both externally internally. Lebanon currently hosts more refugees per capita than any other country in the world. The presence of such high numbers of diverse groups of refugees affects the fragile and volatile situation of Lebanon. In the recent past, this has led to escalating tensions and violent conflicts between the refugees and host communities over scarce resources and limited infrastructure. In some cases, armed groups

have carried out violent actions linked to the Syrian Crisis on Lebanese soil, which has increasingly led to scapegoating of refugees from Syria. The CPS Team Lebanon supports the civil society as actors for change to work on the acute impacts of the Syrian crisis in a future oriented way, while keeping the focus for a peaceful and stable Lebanon.

To respond to this need, we have launched the Future Now Together Project. We identified 5 pilot towns in North and Central Beqaa in which we aim to establish inclusive local mechanisms for conflict transformation and joint decision-making processes. These will involve Lebanese



communities and refugees from Syria. Therefore, a team of eight Community Activists will go through a comprehensive training cycle in topics such as conflict analysis, dialogue, conflict transformation tools, community empowerment, active citizenship, training of trainers and project management. In their day to day work, the Community Activists will use their skills to understand local fault lines and the dynamics of political, administrative, social and civil society structures and support the implementation of action plans to address local conflicts and needs. They will play a key role in communicating the needs to local decision-makers and vice versa. If the team of Community Activists is successful in establishing joint decision making and community consulting processes in the pilot areas, it is envisioned to roll out the project to other communities.

