



PROGRESS IN 2017-18

TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS:

- Our report “Women nowadays do anything”: women’s role in conflict, peace and security in Yemen’ was downloaded over a thousand times. The report highlighted the role and potential of women in peacebuilding, and it contributed to an increased donor commitment to supporting women activists and women’s peacebuilding in Yemen.
- A report and briefing on research findings from Lebanon was presented at policy events and meetings in Lebanon, Europe and the United States. Those discussions provided a chance to speak with policymakers and practitioners on the report’s findings and recommendations, and to discuss ways to improve conditions.
- 314 young activists benefited from training, mentoring and capacity building.
- 43 small peacebuilding projects and activities were conducted with mentoring and micro-grants.
- 33 awareness-raising and advocacy activities were conducted by young people.
- At least 995 community members participated in awareness-raising activities.
- An estimated 156,120 people were reached through peace promotion online and on the radio.

IN ADDITION:

- Our photo series on refugees and host communities in Lebanon was featured on Al Jazeera, reaching over four million people.

HIGHLIGHTS Middle East and North Africa

YEMEN

In Yemen in 2017-18, we began new projects, expanding the scope of our programme to work with both new and long-standing partners. Our work aims to strengthen the resilience of conflict-affected communities by working with essential institutions including local government and NGOs as well as directly with youth and community activists. In partnership with local organisations we supported women, youth and community groups in their efforts to build peace, and we formed women’s groups in Aden and Ibb governorates. We also trained activists on how to analyse gender and conflict dynamics. We published a report “Women nowadays do anything”: women’s role in conflict, peace and security in Yemen’ which brings to the fore voices of women in the two governorates of Ibb and Aden to better understand their experiences of the conflict. We ran a second round of our WhatsApp peacebuilding course for young activists to help them do peacebuilding work and connect them with other activists across Yemen. Overall, they reported that the course increased their confidence in their individual and collective potential to make a difference and become effective peacebuilders.

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A young man in Sana'a, the capital of Yemen.

TUNISIA

In Tunisia, which has become a key battleground in the internationally-backed ‘war on terror’, we researched how ‘counter-terror’ and ‘countering violent extremism’ policies are affecting communities, and how international support could better support peace.

EGYPT

In Egypt, where authoritarian and repressive tactics have been justified by counter-terror efforts, we researched the dangers of military and diplomatic support to the government – support that reinforces the government’s repressive tactics to target dissent and ultimately inflame conflict.

LEBANON

In Lebanon, political and media narratives on refugees are becoming more hostile, with increasing calls for the return of refugees to Syria. These divisive narratives – on reinforcing national borders and restricting the movement of those fleeing war and conflict – are also being echoed internationally, as anti-immigrant sentiments become troublingly mainstream. In this context, with our partner Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies we studied the ways in which various developments and initiatives can affect tensions between Syrian refugees and host communities. Based on our conversations with both refugees and hosts, we made recommendations on peace and stability for organisations working in the area to inform ways to sustain peace in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis.

CASE STUDY

Solidarity and exile in Lebanon

As part of our research, photographer **Diego Ibarra Sanchez** and Syrian journalist **Ali Alsheikh Khedr** went to North Lebanon and the Bekaa valley to capture the experiences of Syrian refugees and their Lebanese hosts - exploring issues of exile, separation, solidarity and support - and bringing humanity back to the centre of the Syrian refugee crisis.

© Diego Ibarra Sanchez/Saferworld



Rana, a mother of seven, left Idlib, Syria, with her family seven years ago when shelling began. She now lives in Kherbet Dawood in North Lebanon on a chicken farm-turned-refugee residence.

Rana, mother of seven

“Five of my children were born in Syria. Two were born here in Lebanon with no birth documentation – and now I’m pregnant with my eighth child.

“My husband used to be a construction worker in Syria. After developing a neurological disease and back pain, he became very stressed and ill. Now we rarely see him more than once every ten days, and then he only stays for one night. He gets angry quickly.

“Our situation here is miserable. I can’t afford to buy gas for cooking so I have to burn wood and other materials to cook our meals. We don’t even have sugar to put in our tea.

“I am so thankful to the local chicken farm owner, Mr Fawaz. I often borrow food supplies from his shop, and he waits until I can afford to pay him back when I receive my monthly food voucher.”