

A cultural relations contribution to peace, justice and strong institutions

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



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Executive summary

The British Council is interested in understanding how its work contributes to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2016 the British Council held an exhibition on the SDG framework at its London headquarters and commissioned Collingwood Environmental Planning (CEP) to carry out a study to provide a baseline assessment of how the British Council is contributing to the achievement of a sub-set of ten SDGs. The research demonstrated that the British Council's programmes and projects were contributing towards many of the goals. It proposed that the British Council should take the lead in outlining appropriate indicators for UK international development contributions.

This new report by CEP updates the previous research in relation to one goal: SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. This is a strategic goal which is fundamental to the achievement of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.¹

SDG 16 aligns with many aspects of the British Council's work. The SDG 16 targets to 'Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels' (Target 16.6) and 'Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels' (Target 16.7) imply a foundation of 'friendly knowledge and understanding' which is core to the British Council's work. On a more practical level, the UK government is due to report in 2019 on its progress in implementing the SDGs; this is also the year when SDG 16 will be one of goals reviewed by the High Level Political Forum, under the theme: *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*. This context is the reason for focusing on SDG 16 in this study.

The research drew on international literature about the SDGs, reports on British Council projects and programmes, including inception reports, progress reports and internal and external evaluation; the research team also conducted interviews with selected project managers, stakeholders and/or participants. The assessment was carried out in three steps:

1. Review of the focus and components of SDG 16, including an assessment of learning from its implementation.
2. Selection and review of a set of 12 British Council programmes and projects that span the breadth of the organisation's work areas and its geographical spread, to identify and analyse to what extent and how these are contributing to SDG 16.
3. Production of three case studies on programmes or projects which are contributing to SDG 16.

1. United Nations (2015) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Preamble.

The research findings reveal that:

- Overall, the British Council's projects are making a greater contribution to creating capacities for participation and stronger and more responsive and accountable institutions (Targets 16.6 and 16.7) than directly preventing violence (Targets 16.1 and 16.2). Ten of the 12 programmes reviewed were contributing to Target 16.6 (Development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels) and nine out of ten were contributing to Target 16.7 (Responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels).
- The two projects which were considered to have contributed directly to the reduction of violence were the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme, a five-year programme which devoted considerable effort to creating institutions, including 36 multi-stakeholder platforms at the state level and Peace Partnerships at the local community level; and the Take a Child to School programme in Pakistan, which focused on getting out-of-school children into education.
- Six of the 12 projects and programmes specifically targeted children and young people. Working with young people, especially in regions affected by conflict such as the Middle East and North Africa, is a priority for the British Council.

Further analysis of the initial findings indicated that while contributions were being made across the British Council's different work areas, the strongest contributions were being made by programmes and projects in higher education, education and society, and justice, security and stability. In these areas, tools and approaches have been developed which have supported work on SDG 16, including:

- Active Citizens develops participants' capacities to understand their community and local context, identify local issues and to design social action projects to address them and to partner with government to find solutions to the issues which are driving or exacerbating conflict.
- Connecting Classrooms includes a core curriculum on the SDGs, with a specific unit on SDG 16.
- Strengthening Resilience project's Resilience Measurement survey was used to assess the individual resilience of participants before and after their involvement in the project.

These results indicate that the British Council is implementing programmes which are contributing effectively to SDG 16. It is suggested that further work should be done to encourage programmes and projects across the British Council to seek to contribute to targets aimed at strengthening institutions, building on existing good practice. Finally, the report proposes that this could be supported by developing appropriate indicators to measure the British Council's contribution to these SDG 16 targets.

1. Introduction

Collingwood Environmental Planning (CEP) was commissioned to carry out a study to determine how the British Council is contributing to the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) pertaining to peace, justice and strong institutions, through its global activities and to make recommendations for future programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The UK government played an important role, with other actors around the world, in developing and promoting the SDGs and is committed to supporting the achievement of the goals. The British Council, as the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities, has a major part to play in this effort.

The aims of this project were to:

- Identify and map SDG 16 targets and indicators that are most closely aligned to the core areas of the British Council's work against the objectives and outcomes of a selection of current or recent British Council programmes.
- Describe any common models and/or approaches identified within the selected programmes (e.g. social action, empowerment of local organisations, working in partnership, cultural relations approach, work with poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups etc.) that effectively support the aims of SDG 16.
- Reflect upon any consistent themes and examples of strengths and good practice in the British Council's delivery and summarise any potential gaps.
- Make recommendations for future programming and implementation.
- Make recommendations for how to incorporate the SDGs into the British Council's monitoring and evaluation processes and measure our contributions.

This report helps to show how the organisation is contributing to the achievement of SDG 16 through its global portfolio of activity and to consider how this can be continued up to 2030.

Structure of the report

- **Chapter 2:** Understanding of SDG 16
- **Chapter 3:** Methodology
- **Chapter 4:** Analysis of the projects' contribution to SDG 16
- **Chapter 5:** Discussion
- **Chapter 6:** Conclusions
- **Appendices**
- **Case studies**

2. Understanding of Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

This section reviews the focus and components of the goal.

What the goal covers

The Secretary General has reported on SDG 16 in a short factual account of the current state of play using existing statistics.²

The baseline data for the goal is partial with the missing data heavily concentrated in low income countries. Of the 22 SDG 16 indicators, eight have data for fewer than 50 per cent of countries and only seven indicators have data for more than 90 per cent of countries. And, where data is available, it records the scale of the challenge of achieving the SDG 16 targets:

- There are high levels of psychological aggression and corporal punishment against children in many countries. In 53 of 64 countries with data, over 60 per cent of households recorded some level of violence against children.
- In the majority of African countries, fewer than 40 per cent of violent incidents are reported to the police.
- There is a lack of data on sexual violence committed against young people. Only 38 countries have comparable data on sexual violence prevalence against girls, and only four have the equivalent data for boys.
- There are only four countries where over 90 per cent of the population feels safe walking alone at night in their local neighbourhood.
- Only four countries have values for the Public Access to Information indicator that are rated as 'good' by IEP.³

The information available from British Council websites on the programmes and projects to be reviewed indicates that a wide range of projects are being undertaken in the most conflict-affected countries, including:

- Building community cohesion through arts.
- Engaging and empowering young artists to effect positive change in their communities through arts and culture.
- Increasing the number of social, political and economic pathways which will help build the resilience of young people and divert them from the offer of extremist organisations.

- Empowering young people from Syria (refugees in neighbouring countries) to build their own career paths by directly addressing their education needs.
- Developing the capacity of youth through practical learning and providing them with opportunities to be heard on national and international levels about pressing topics such as conflict transformation and community resilience.

In less conflict-affected but still fragile states, programmes aim to have a more direct impact on social and economic issues by:

- Increasing the contribution of community leaders towards achieving sustainable development both locally and globally.
- Equipping young people with knowledge, confidence and opportunities so that they can resolve conflicts fairly, equitably and justly.
- Providing support to stakeholders to better manage conflict resulting in wealth creation, service delivery and poverty reduction.
- Providing technical assistance, management support and flexible funds to support partners to implement reforms, enhance policy dialogue and improve the evidence base in education.
- Providing teachers with new and core skills and improve teaching techniques.
- Using research evidence to have a positive impact on the causes of violence.

The common thread running through most of these programmes is the goal of increasing the strength of social fabric than enables people to contribute to resolving or, at least, begin to address conflicts and difficulties in their own society.

2. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2017/secretary-general-sdg-report-2017--EN.pdf>

3. Institute for Economics and Peace (2017) SDG 16 Progress Report – A Comprehensive Global Audit on Available SDG16 Indicators. Available at: <http://visionofhumanity.org/app/uploads/2017/09/SDG16-Progress-Report-2017.pdf>

The academic and policy research that addresses these sorts of challenges emphasises:

- The importance of building legitimacy of local actors, and sometimes recognising and extending the reach and legitimacy of state actors.⁴
- Effective leadership for change requires technical and managerial skills but these alone are not enough.⁵ Governments also need the capacity to include communities at risk of being drawn into conflict – and these communities need to have the capacity to engage positively with government.
- The importance of coalition building – it is not enough to identify and motivate strategic individuals with the incentives, values, interests and opportunity to push for change, they have also to find ways of working together.⁶
- The importance of elite behaviour. The main challenges in promoting growth and more inclusive development are often not technical or even financial, but political. Unresolved processes of contestation and (failed) collaboration are some of the biggest constraints to improving development practice at all levels, from bottom to top. Thus, how the politics of coalition-building plays out has important implications for the prospects for inclusive development.
- Although bottom-up work with local people and organisations is important and a good starting point, it is essential also to recognise the global drivers.⁷
‘The concept of “inclusion” needs to be unpacked. It cannot be assumed that promoting greater participation in decision-making, such as through peace negotiations, elections, or processes to revise or rewrite constitutions, will automatically lead to an inclusive outcome.’⁸
- As regards programmes targeting violence towards particular groups in society, one major study highlights the positive impact on gender violence of social programmes (as opposed to programmes specifically targeting women or girls or men or boys).⁹ The involvement of women in the British Council’s programmes and, importantly, their share of leadership roles will be an important indicator of their ability to contribute to successful peacebuilding¹⁰ and reduce gender violence.

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4. Jackson, P, Houston Shearon, E and Kassaye, D (2018) *‘I fought the law and the law won’: Community Policing in Dire Dawa, Ethiopia*. DLP (Developmental Leadership Programme, Ugonzi Institute. Research Paper 53). Available at: <http://publications.dlprog.org/RP53.pdf>
 5. Perera, S, Houston Shearon, E, Jackson, P and Lyne de Ver, H (2018) *What Enables or Disables Leadership for Transformational Change in Africa?* DLP (Developmental Leadership Programme, Ugonzi Institute. Research Paper 55). Available at: <http://publications.dlprog.org/RP55.pdf>
 6. Australian Aid (2018) *Inside the black box of political will: ten years of findings from the Developmental Leadership Program*. Available at: <http://publications.dlprog.org/DLPsynthesis.pdf>
 7. Luckham, R (2017) Whose violence, whose security? Can violence reduction and security work for poor, excluded and vulnerable people?, *Peacebuilding* 5/2: 99–117. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/21647259.2016.1277009>
 8. Rocha Menocal, A (2015) *Executive Summary State of the Art Paper: Political settlements and the politics of inclusion*. Development Leadership Programme, October 2015. Available at: <http://publications.dlprog.org/PoliticalSettlementsSOTA.pdf>
 9. Ellsberg, M, Arango, DJ, Morton, M, Gennari, F, Kiplesund, S, Contreras, M and Watts, C (2014) Prevention of violence against women and girls: what does the evidence say? *The Lancet* 385/9977: 1555–1566. www.thelancet.com. Available at: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(14\)61703-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(14)61703-7/fulltext)
 10. Lindborg, N (2017) *The Essential Role of Women in Peacebuilding* (United States Institute of Peace). Available at: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/11/essential-role-women-peacebuilding>.

A 2017 study by the Stockholm Environment Institute¹¹ identifies Goal 16 as establishing key interactions with other goals and thus the wider SDG agenda, in terms of governance and decision-making:

This paper has only been able to examine governance related to the interactions to a limited degree, mainly due to space constraints and the complexity that this entails. This is, however, a rich area of research and it can also be viewed as an interaction emanating from efforts at addressing several of the targets under Goal 16, such as 16.6 on effective and transparent institutions, 16.7 on inclusive decision-making, and 16.10 on access to information and fundamental freedoms. What is beyond debate is that a multilevel (rather than purely international) institutional response is appropriate to govern interactions. In principle, governance must always be targeted at the appropriate scale of management.

Further unpublished research on interactions between the SDGs suggests that a small number of these, and Goal 16 in particular, have positive synergies, supporting progress towards achievement of the wider 2030 agenda. This contrasts with other situations where progress on one goal – for example poverty reduction or economic growth and employment – may have perverse outcomes for other goals such as sustainable consumption and production patterns or combatting climate change and its impacts.

For the British Council, Goal 16 works in familiar territory. Targets to ‘Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels’ (Target 16.6) and ‘Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels’ (Target 16.7) imply a foundation of ‘friendly knowledge and understanding’ which is core to the British Council’s work.

The following section explores how and the extent to which a selection of British Council projects and programmes are contributing to SDG 16 and to its specific targets.

11. Nilsson, M (2017) Important interactions among the Sustainable Development Goals under review at the High-Level Political Forum 2017. SEI.

3. Methodology

Overview of the proposed methodological approach

The key elements of the approach are:

- **Selection of programmes and projects to review.** The British Council made an initial selection of programmes and projects to be included in the study, ensuring that these cover the broad scope of the British Council's work including:
 - ❖ Programmes addressing all the British Council's policy objectives (security and stability; prosperity and development; influence and attraction).
 - ❖ Programmes across the areas of arts, education and society.
 - ❖ Programmes covering a spread of geographic areas and including global and country-specific programmes.
 - ❖ Long-standing programmes and one-off projects.

The list of programmes for review is shown in Appendix 1.

- **Recognise and explore main synergies with other SDGs.** SDG 16 has strong links with other SDGs such as SDG 5 Gender equality, SDG 10 Reduced inequalities and SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals. SDG 5 has similar targets on ending violence, trafficking, inclusive participation and equal opportunities. These links are examined

in the review, as well as synergies with other SDGs, where relevant.

- **Consider programme processes as well as outcomes.** Achieving peace and justice are likely to involve extended processes of culture change, institution building and forging new relationships. The study looks at the ways in which programmes are being developed and aspects such as building trust, bridging divisions within society and the creation of opportunities for discussion and debate as well as at determined outcomes such as enacting legislation or numbers of people trained.
- **Triangulation of evidence sources:** the main source of evidence has come from desk reviews of British Council documents and reports, provided by project managers. In about half of the programmes, this evidence has been supplemented and checked by means of interviews with key staff, either staff on the ground and UK-based programme managers and policy staff.

Review of selected programmes

A total of 12 programmes or projects were selected for review. The selected programmes and projects are shown in Appendix 1. These programmes are representative of the different geographic areas in which the British Council works, as reflected in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Summary of programmes and projects reviewed

NAME OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT	SHORT SUMMARY	AREA OF BRITISH COUNCIL WORK	PERIOD	GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE
Artivism	Artivism combines the use of arts as an enabler for change and the Active Citizens methodology, which builds the capacities and confidence of change makers. It was designed specifically to address social change and promote activism through the arts with the goal of social cohesion and development. The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the promotion of peace and development in the Horn of Africa and specifically to build the capacity of young artists to engage with their communities and bring about positive change through the arts and to develop a network of young artists and activists in the Horn of Africa with international connections for a global outlook.	Arts	Ended May 2018	Regional: Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia

NAME OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT	SHORT SUMMARY	AREA OF BRITISH COUNCIL WORK	PERIOD	GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE
Aswat Faeela/ Active Voices	Aswat Faeela/Active Voices aimed to develop young Syrians' social leadership skills and capacity through practical action both inside Syria, as well as in countries affected by the Syrian crisis (Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey) and in the diaspora in Europe. The project was intended to give them a voice in national and international discussions about peace-building and community resilience as an antidote to the dominant negative and destabilising narratives around the impact of conflict. The overall objective was to build the capacity of young Syrian social leaders to contribute to positive social actions that benefit Syrian communities in the short-term and help them to prepare for the longer-term transition to a peaceful and democratic Syria.	Civil society	January 2016 – June 2018 (30 months)	Regional: MENA (Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan,) and Europe
Connecting Classrooms	The aim of Connecting Classrooms is to strengthen teaching practices to support teachers in implementing effective techniques that develop students' core skills and to support them to integrate these core skills into the curriculum. The Connecting Classrooms programme includes in-depth training courses for teachers, which can be completed online or face-to-face and also an in-depth Leading Core Skills course aimed at school leaders (head teachers). A smaller component of the programme is facilitating international school partnerships and exchanges. SDG issues are one element in the programme. The training includes eight templates, each one linked to at least two of the core skills, based around the SDGs. Two of the Core Skills correspond to targets in SDG 16: citizenship and leadership.	Schools	2015–18 (current phase)	Global

NAME OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT	SHORT SUMMARY	AREA OF BRITISH COUNCIL WORK	PERIOD	GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE
Create Syria	Create Syria was intended to empower Syrian art in exile by supporting Syrian artists in Lebanon to develop and deliver impactful artistic initiatives in communities. Syrian artists acquired new skills and new networks, which helped them directly and prepared them for future leadership roles in the arts and society. By providing opportunities and the means (through micro-grants) for project participants to work with different groups of young Syrians in Lebanon, Create Syria was part of the huge effort that must be made to prepare Syrian citizens for the task of rebuilding their country as a peaceful and inclusive society, when that becomes possible.	Arts	September 2015 – September 2016	National: Lebanon (Syrian refugees)
HOPES	The HOPES project (Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians) is being implemented by a consortium of European institutions, including the British Council and seeks to improve perspectives for young Syrians and contribute to prepare for the post-crisis reconstruction of Syria. The aim of the project is to increase participation and provide better access to quality further and higher education opportunities in the neighbouring region for vulnerable Syrian youth as well as host communities. The British Council's role is to work with ministries of higher education and universities in the project countries to develop and deliver university-based English and study skills courses for Syrians that enable them to enter higher education institutions in the countries they are in.	Higher education	April 2016 – November 2019	Regional: Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt

NAME OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT	SHORT SUMMARY	AREA OF BRITISH COUNCIL WORK	PERIOD	GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE
ILMPossible – Take a Child to School	Started by 30 Pakistanis who went through Active Citizens training, ILMPossible was launched in response to the government's declaration of an 'education emergency', when it became clear that Pakistan would fail to meet its 2015 Millennium Development Goals. The project addresses the issue of the high number of children who do not attend school or who leave school before completing their primary education. The primary focus as to work with volunteers and institutions to get out-of-school children into school. The programme also addresses the need to strengthen provincial education services by giving a voice to organised communities to ensure accountability.	Civil society	January 2014 – April 2017	National: Pakistan
MyJustice	MyJustice aims to improve access to justice and legal aid for the poor and vulnerable communities in Myanmar, to develop the capacity of justice sector professionals and strengthen selected rule of law institutions to better fulfil their mandates. There are four programme pillars: awareness raising activities; strengthening justice services; strengthening community-based dispute resolution mechanisms (CBDR); and engaging with justice sector policy. Through focus group discussions in communities and with different stakeholders, the project has identified a wide range of issues for which legal aid and access to justice are needed: lack of access to justice with a focus on gender-based violence, children/youth, lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT), housing/land, workers/labour, human rights, debt, drugs, civil documentation.	Justice, security and stability	August 2015 – 31 July 2019	National: Burma (Myanmar)

NAME OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT	SHORT SUMMARY	AREA OF BRITISH COUNCIL WORK	PERIOD	GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE
Newton Fund – Drugs production, rural development and the search for peace in Colombia	The Newton Fund Institutional Link supported collaboration between the London School of Economics (LSE) IDEAS department and CESED in Colombia. This award expanded an existing research project based at the London School of Economics, looking at international drug control and drug policies. The award enabled events and activities to take place in Colombia at the Universidad de los Andes to disseminate the findings of the research and enabling contacts with high level academics in Colombia and with a policy-orientated partner organisation that provided good political links. The exchange also increased the number of Colombian scholars in the LSE's research network and policy activities to design rural development policies for long term sustainable growth, public health and human rights in Colombia.	Science / higher education	1 April 2015 to 31 March 2017	National: Colombia
Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme	The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP), funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), was an experimental five-year programme which supported Nigerian-led initiatives to manage conflict non-violently and sought to reduce the negative impacts of violence on the most vulnerable. The project aimed to strengthen the performance of, and public trust in, the way Nigeria manages violent conflict, by supporting security and peacebuilding institutions to become more co-ordinated, participatory, inclusive and accountable. It also sought to reduce grievances and conflict around economic issues and natural resources and to reduce the impact of violence against women and girls, increasing their participation and influence in peacebuilding.	Justice, security and stability	2012–18	National: Nigeria

NAME OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT	SHORT SUMMARY	AREA OF BRITISH COUNCIL WORK	PERIOD	GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE
Quality Education and Strategic Support	The programme aims to provide technical assistance, management and financial support to the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia to improve the capacity of institutions in the education system to implement reforms to improve access, quality and equity in education and to enable policy dialogue in the sector and improve the evidence base in education. As part of the teacher education and school leadership reform work, the programme is establishing four Centres of Excellence based in four universities across the country. These Centres are mandated to lead the reform process through research, piloting new initiatives and producing policy and strategic options for consideration.	Schools	December 2014 – November 2018	National: Ethiopia
Strengthening Resilience in MENA – 1	The overall objective of the Strengthening Resilience in MENA project was to get governments and civil society working together to target, design and deliver projects and campaigns that provide youth vulnerable to violent extremism with more positive pathways. The approach was to use cultural relations – engaging young people in education, sports and cultural activities, as a means to build their ability to survive and thrive. A key component of the programme was enabling positive citizen-state connections so that young people are able to ignore calls to violence and choose and create – with the state – positive alternatives for themselves and their communities. Both state agents and citizens involved experience a working partnership and gain understanding that it is positive and preferable to co-create solutions to conflict-related problems.	Justice, security and stability	November 2015 – August 2017	Regional: Lebanon, Morocco

NAME OF PROGRAMME/ PROJECT	SHORT SUMMARY	AREA OF BRITISH COUNCIL WORK	PERIOD	GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE
Tahdir	Tahdir (the Arabic word for 'prepare') is a project designed to build capacity within members of the Syrian civil service and civil society living as refugees inside and outside Syria for rebuilding institutions in Syria when peace finally returns. The programme was designed to reach up to 240 Syrian civil servants and civil society actors over three cohorts, with participants based in Jordan, Lebanon, and inside Syria itself. The project is designed to build capacity in three fields widely considered as fundamental to post-conflict reconstruction: security sector reform, local administration and urban development. The British Council's support consisted of providing English language proficiency training.	English	Start date 2016	National: Syria

All the projects except Connecting Classrooms were carried out in locations where violent conflict was ongoing (e.g. MENA, Burma (Myanmar), Nigeria) or where there is localised violence (Pakistan). Four of the projects were focused on the situation in Syria.

Table 3.2: Review programmes/projects by region

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA	NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES OF PROJECTS REVIEWED
Global	1
Americas	1
East Asia	1
Middle East and North Africa	6
South Asia	1
Sub-Saharan Africa	2

Data was collected on each of the programmes or projects and used to populate a spreadsheet of key data for each programme or project, including:

- Context for the programme/project.
- Aims and objectives.
- SDG 16 targets to which the programme/project contributes.
- Quantitative measure(s) of contribution (where available).
- Qualitative measure(s) of contribution.
- Synergies with other SDGs (contributions).

The template was also used to reveal information about the way in which the programmes and projects were developed and implemented and how this has contributed to SDG 16, if at all.

The data was reviewed to draw out relevant learning, including unexpected challenges or outcomes.

4. Analysis of the projects' contribution to SDG 16

Overview of programmes and SDG 16 targets to which they contribute

An overview of the contribution to SDG 16 of the projects and programmes reviewed is presented in Table 4.1.

Overall, the British Council's projects are making a greater contribution to creating capacities for participation and stronger and more responsive and accountable institutions (Targets 16.6 and 16.7) than directly preventing violence (especially Targets 16.1 and 16.2). The two projects that are considered to have contributed directly to the reduction of violence were Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme, a longer programme (five years) which devoted considerable effort to creating institutions (36 multi-stakeholder platforms at the state level and Peace Partnerships at the local community level); and the ILMPossible – Take a Child to School programme, which focused on getting out-of-school children into education.

Other programmes are considered to have contributed indirectly to violence being avoided: for example, Connecting Classrooms by raising the issues of violence against children which might potentially affect the children in the class and enable them to recognise and avoid situations which could lead to violence.

Six of the 12 projects and programmes specifically targeted children and young people. Working with young people, especially in regions affected by conflict such as the Middle East and North Africa, is a priority for the British Council.

Table 4.1: Selected British Council programmes/projects and the nature of their contribution to specific SDG 16 targets

PROGRAMME/ PROJECT NAME	BRITISH COUNCIL WORK AREA	16.1 Significant reduction in all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere	16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children	16.3 Promotion of the rule of law at the national and international levels and e equal access to justice for all	16.5 Substantially reduced corruption and bribery in all their forms	16.6 Development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	16.7 Responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	16.10 Public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms	16.a Strengthened national institutions for building capacity to prevent violence, combat terrorism and crime	16.b Promotion/enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development
Artivism	Arts					PI	D			
Active Voices	Civil society		PI			ID	D	D		
Connecting Classrooms	Schools	ID				ID	D			
Create Syria	Arts					ID				
HOPES	Higher education					D	ID			
ILMPossible	Civil society		D			D	D			
MyJustice	Justice, security and stability		P	D		D	ID		D	ID
Newton Fund – Colombia	Higher education	P							D	ID
Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme	Justice, security and stability	D		D		D	D	ID		
Quality Education and Strategic Support	Schools		ID			ID	D			
Strengthening Resilience in MENA – 1	Justice, security and stability	ID	ID				ID			ID
Tahdir	English					P				
TOTAL NUMBER OF PROJECTS CONTRIBUTING TO TARGET		4	5	2	0	10	9	2	2	3

Key: D = Direct; ID = Indirect; PI= Participant Initiated; P = Potential

Types of contributions to SDG 16

In a previous study on the contribution of British Council projects and programmes to a wider range of SDGs,¹² different levels of contribution were identified:

- Direct.
- Indirect.
- Participant initiated.
- Potential.

This typology acknowledges that in many cases it is not possible to demonstrate a direct causal link between project activities and documented outcomes. This may be for several reasons, for example the project or programme does not act or intervene directly to prevent violence, promote justice or strengthen institutions but instead encourages project or programme participants to act or influence others who can take positive action or stop negative action. This is the case, for example for the contributions of the Connecting Classrooms programme.

Indirect contributions refer to results of the project that do not directly prevent violence, increase justice or strengthen institutions, but that create the conditions for this to happen. For example, several projects that have worked with Syrian refugees to create the conditions for stronger institutions in the future are considered to have made indirect contributions.

Participant initiated contributions are results produced by project participants with support from the project, rather than directly by the project itself. The contributions to SDG 3 and SDG 11 by work developed by the participants in the Artivism project are considered participant initiated contributions.

The category of 'potential' contributions may indicate that the project has developed a new resource or line of work whose roll out was not reported in the documentation available or it may draw attention to the potential for the project or programme's existing methods and approaches to develop a stronger focus on the SDG 16 targets.

Given the diversity of projects and programmes, in terms of their focus as well as their scale and geographical location, it is useful to detail each of the contributions and their type, as shown below.

Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence

- Raising awareness is the first step toward changing behaviour to prevent violence. **Connecting Classrooms'** Impact Monitoring Report provides examples from schools in five countries where learning from the core training on SDG 16 has been used. In Bangladesh, lessons have been organised to discuss the issue of domestic violence, including how to combat and prevent it, and the issue of child marriage. (Indirect)
- The **Drugs production, rural development and the search for peace in Colombia** project which was supported by the Newton Fund had collaborative discussions with the newly established LSE Centre on Women, Peace and Security (CWPS). The CWPS researchers have extensive experience in working on gender issues in (post-)conflict situations. They worked together to develop a large-scale funding proposal to focus specifically on the gender aspects of the post-war on drugs era. (Potential)
- A total of 623 conflict issues or potential conflict issues were discussed at the **36 Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme** supported platforms. As a result of the actions taken, a total of 84 emerging or actual violent conflicts were prevented, managed or resolved. Community Peace Partnerships, operating at a local level were particularly successful, discussing 361 issues and achieving 53 positive results, thus directly contributing to achieving the programme impact of reducing the effects of violent conflict on the most vulnerable. (Direct)
- **Strengthening Resilience in MENA (Phase 1)** has developed and shared knowledge and understanding of the recruitment of young people to violent extremism. This is an essential foundation for action. Knowledge and understanding of recruitment to violent extremism has been increased through desk-based literature reviews as well as original primary research on community-level research on recruitment to violent extremism. The project designed and used a tool for measuring young people's resilience in the areas of confidence, purpose, adaptability and social support. The tool was used to assess change in individual resilience at the beginning and end of the project. (British Council, 2017a: 4–5). Through this enhancement of their knowledge, governments and civil society

12. Collingwood Environmental Planning (2016) *Sustainable Development Goals – Baseline Study*. British Council, December 2016.

organisations (CSOs) are better informed of factors which make young people vulnerable to violent extremist narratives: this increases capacity to take action to reduce the risks of recruitment to violent extremism. (Indirect)

Target 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

- An **Active Voices** social action project in Turkey worked with out-of-school children. The project worked with Turkish institutions and got buy-in from the Ministry of Education. It looked at child protection issues and helped with the integration and social cohesion of the Syrian refugee community. The incorporation of Syrian children into Turkish schools is a significant issue which can create tension between communities. (Participant initiated)
- **ILMPossible – Take a child to school** advocates children's right to safety and quality education. The programme shone a light on the issue of modern-day slavery in the case of young children who are forced to work, either on their own or as part of their family group. These children have no documents, no rights and do not receive pay for their work. They are prevented from going to school because this would stop them working. Take a child to school ILMbassadors confront this issue in their conversations with parents and local stakeholders. They create awareness that the situation is unacceptable. Working within the context of a campaign by the Pakistan government to get children into school, the programme was successful in getting over 189,986 out-of-school children into school. (Direct)
- Violence against women and children is widespread in Burma (Myanmar), with domestic violence particularly common. The **MyJustice** programme offered legal services for low income individuals to get legal support in addressing these issues. Rape of minors was also spoken about in a large number of communities. Human trafficking was talked about in Mon State and mostly affected girls. However, these types of crimes, along with others such as rape of minors and human trafficking, are still only being partially addressed as many of those affected do not report them. (Potential)

- The **Quality Education and Strategic Support** programme advocates children's right to safety and quality education. The programme worked with families to explain the importance of education and encourage them to send or keep their children in school. (Indirect)
- The **Strengthening Resilience in MENA (Phase 1)** project's objective of providing young people with tools and alternative pathways away from violence is an essential element in reducing violence towards children and young people. The programme's success in this sphere is reflected in the results of a survey of participants carried out at the end of the project which demonstrated an increase in participants' confidence and sense of purpose; a change in their perception of external factors contributing to resilience, including the sense that their communities treat them with justice; and the development of skills and behaviours that increase capacity to be critical of extremist attitudes.¹³ These changes increase individual resilience and are likely to reduce young people's vulnerability to recruitment into extremist or violent organisations. (Indirect)

Target 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all

- The core of the **MyJustice** programme is about strengthening community institutions, to help raise people's understanding of their legal rights and obligations, including through collaborations and links with community-based paralegals; to provide individualised advice and representation to those most in need; and to facilitate pathways to resolving their problems through formal or informal justice mechanisms. (Direct)
- The **Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme** security and governance component directly contributed to supporting conflict reduction at grass-roots level by stimulating institutional change with regard to security governance, and by influencing bottom-up policy development at state and central government levels. (Direct)

13. All-Party Parliamentary Group on the British Council (APPG) (2017). *Building Young People's Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Middle East and North Africa*. p41.

Target 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

- **Artivism** participants have set up small-scale projects and developed skills which will in the future help them to participate in and potentially lead larger-scale programmes and institutions. (Participant initiated)
- **Active Voices** gave young people practical experience of gathering evidence of what helps to strengthen communities living with conflict, mapping stakeholders, engaging locally with influencers and advocating on behalf of communities through national and international platforms. The project created safe spaces for young people to design their own solutions to problems within their communities and equipped them with skills and knowledge about community mobilisation, peace building, economic recovery, resilience, inclusion and equal opportunities, valuing diversity and social cohesion in complex environments and in a conflict sensitive manner. These skills and experiences are the basis for the development of effective and accountable institutions in the future. (Indirect)
- As a result of the **Connecting Classrooms'** core training on SDG 16, students in participating schools showed evidence of leadership characteristics, citizenship values, and collaborative and communication abilities, demonstrating that students are becoming better prepared to contribute to society locally and globally. Additionally, a workshop on Core Skills for a More Stable World was held in Sri Lanka, bringing together 90 policymakers and senior educationalists from over 20 countries to discuss integrating these core skills in to the curriculum. (Indirect)
- The Syrian artists who were the primary beneficiaries of **Create Syria** acquired new skills and networks. The project helped them directly, prepared them for future leadership roles in the arts and society and provided them with the opportunities and the means (the micro-grants) to work with different groups of young Syrians in Lebanon. (Indirect)
- The **HOPES** project promotes and supports improvements in the capacity of tertiary education institutions and better co-ordination of higher and further education institutions in response to the Syrian conflict. (Direct)
- **ILMPossible – Take a child to school** has supported engagement between the community and the state education services to enable the community to hold the state services to account. The creation of local Mohalla Committees which oversee the Take a child to school programme, support volunteers and put pressure on district institutions to provide adequate school facilities, contributes to increasing accountability and transparency at all levels. (Direct)
- The **MyJustice** programme aims to directly support existing justice services to become more responsive to the community, by making them more accountable and fair and by delivering better quality services that respond to the needs of the people. The programme is also identifying and delivering new services, for example, community-based paralegals, new justice centres and the development of skills for legal professionals. (Direct)
- The **Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme** established Women, Peace and Security Networks in all eight project states and at federal level. The networks promoted awareness, networking, information sharing and collaboration between organisations with a stake in these issues and provided smaller lower capacity organisations the opportunity to learn from their larger counterparts. Programme support included leadership, training and capacity building through a convening civil society organisation in each state. The project also designed and piloted a Peace Club model at the community level for young women and men to understand and act on the dynamics of conflict, violence and peacebuilding. Over the life of the programme, a total of 37 peace clubs were piloted in target communities in five states. (Direct)
- **Quality Education and Strategic Support** activities are focused on strengthening the education sector at all levels through capacity building and training, for example, in monitoring and evaluation for senior staff at the Ministry of Education as well as teacher training. The project has made progress in: teacher education, school leadership, improving equity and efficiency in education, curriculum and education systems. A critical part of the teacher education and school leadership reform work is the establishment of four centres of excellence, which have been mandated to lead the reform process through research, piloting new initiatives and producing policy and strategic options for the Ministry of Education to consider.

The focus of these activities is on strengthening the education institutions rather than directly on strengthening institutions to address violence and conflict. (Indirect)

- **Tahdir** provided English language teaching to Syrian civil servants and civil society activists, to increase the capacity to build strong, effective and accountable institutions when there is a return to democracy in Syria. (Potential)

Target 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

- **Activism** has provided training and experience in participation and dialogue which are essential skills for the success of the participants' social action projects. (Direct)
- **Active Voices** focused on youth-led participation. The project worked directly with young master facilitators who cascaded the training to a wider pool of young people, called Community Builders. These young people decided which projects to focus on and carried out the projects. They were provided with approaches and tools to carry out their projects. (Direct)
- Across all countries that used the **Connecting Classrooms'** core training on SDG 16, there was evidence of teachers giving students more ownership and leadership over their own learning, by giving students more opportunity to take a leadership role in class. In Nigeria, one English teacher changed the structure of debates to be student-led. Students now acted as the debate panel, adjudicating and facilitating the discussions of their classmates, which prior to the training was undertaken by the teacher. Teachers in Bangladesh reported allowing leaders of groups in class to be elected rather than teacher-appointed. In Ethiopia, teachers encouraged increased participation among all students, including those with lower ability. One teacher in Ethiopia identified a gender issue in the school as girls were often less confident and shy during the activities and chose to focus her project on encouraging girls in her class to participate more. (Direct)
- The **HOPES** project has involved young people and wider stakeholders in dialogue and networks about higher and further education responses to the Syrian conflict. (Indirect)
- Working in collaboration with civil society partners, **ILMPossible Take a child to school** has mobilised, trained and organised 3,000 community members into Mohalla Committees. The committees are formed by the programme's Community Mobilisers in each district. Selection of the committee is entirely democratic: the Community Mobiliser identifies local and community activists and with their help convenes a broad-based community meeting with around 45–50 participants. (Direct)
- **MyJustice** is working primarily at 'grassroots' level, but also engages with state actors and institutions to explore the space for links between the formal and informal sectors, to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the change of Myanmar's legal system and institutions. (Indirect)
- The involvement of local people, including women, in Community Peace Partnerships and other institutions established by the **Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme** ensured their ability to participate and be represented in the decisions taken by these institutions. (Direct)
- **Quality Education and Strategic Support** organised five community conversation events bringing together 6,000 indigenous people (246 female) to raise awareness of the importance of education. 461 trainers (4.1 per cent female) were trained in community conversation facilitation skills; these trainers were drawn from Kebele administrators, Kebele chair persons, school principals, key teachers and cluster supervisors. The trainers in turn successfully facilitated the community conversations in all 100 target schools. The community conversation participants have so far identified and agreed on their key problems in relation to education and are discussing how to address these. (Direct)
- **Strengthening Resilience in MENA (Phase 1)** employed an approach based on the British Council's Active Citizens methodology. Active Citizens trains facilitators who in turn cascade training to others. Participants are empowered to engage peacefully and effectively with others in sustainable development. Graduates develop and deliver social action projects in their communities, supporting engagement with people with different perspectives. The approach fosters participation, inclusivity and peaceful interaction. (Indirect)

Target 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements

- There is a lot of mistrust between different Syrian communities, for historic and cultural reasons as well as their current situation. **Active Voices** brought together young Syrians living in different parts of Syria with others living in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey or Europe, and helped them to access information about the situation in Syria and in the places outside Syria where refugees are living, helping them to challenge the information they receive through official media channels and social media. (Indirect)
- **Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme** worked with 15 media organisations (broadcast and print) across eight states providing online and face-to-face training for conflict sensitive reporting and media management; aimed at reducing hate speech and inflammatory content. (Indirect)

Target 16a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

- The **MyJustice** programme has an advisory role on the Rule of Law Centres and Justice Sector Co-ordination Body (JSCB). The project is also working with the Union Attorney General's Office (UAGO) to provide English language teaching for UAGO lawyers whose responsibilities include the development of new legislation and the prosecution of all offences throughout Burma (Myanmar). English language is used for international law, model legislation and Commonwealth case law and it is essential for lawyers to be proficient in English in order to draw upon these resources in developing new legislation and understanding the obligations of international conventions. (Direct)
- The funding from the **Newton Fund** enabled a team of researchers and research assistants in London and Colombia to foster academic, governmental, civil society and local actor participation in evidence-based discussions on drug policy and sustainable development aimed at regional peacebuilding. (Direct)

Target 16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

- The **MyJustice** programme was expected to engage directly, and through partners, with selected State and Regional Justice Sector Co-ordination Bodies and to act as a thought leader in the justice sector, to convene networking and stakeholder engagement events to identify areas of potential policy reform opportunities for collaboration and learning from policy engagement processes from other fields such as the gender sector, entrepreneurs and others. (Indirect)
- The **Newton Fund** award facilitated the dissemination by the Drugs Production, Rural Development and the Search for Peace in Colombia project of research findings and a new policy framework on sustainable development presented in the 2016 Report *After the Drug Wars*. This report was written by researchers in the Institutional Links project. (Indirect)
- The Strengthening Resilience in **MENA (Phase 1)** project has been successful in getting governments to consider more positive messaging and less discriminatory approaches to working with young people in areas with high levels of recruitment to violent movements and organisations. (Indirect)

Areas of British Council activity

Looking at the types of contribution made by different kinds of projects and programme, we find:

- The one **English teaching project** (Tahdir) resulted in some **potential** contributions to strengthening institutions, because of the position of participants (Syrian civil servants and civil society activists who were living outside the country as refugees). The ability of these participants to realise their contribution to strengthening institutions in Syria depends on the effectiveness of the training received (the information available was insufficient to assess effectiveness) but also on whether they are able to return to Syria and resume their roles in public or civil society institutions.
- Two **arts projects** (Artivism and Create Syria) both worked with artists in societies characterised by endemic and pervasive violence and low levels of trust in authorities. Both of the projects were relatively short. Artivism was successful in making the projects visible at both the community level (which gave them legitimacy) and at the level of municipal and institutional authorities, which has meant that the outcomes have been taken forward and are being continued (for example, within the health services) or in other places (projects in the urban environment). In the case of Create Syria, the objectives appear to have been less clear and the changes achieved remained at the individual level: while many of the artists involved commented that they had gained a clearer sense of purpose, there is limited evidence of greater resilience within the refugee communities where the project was carried out.
- Two **higher education projects** (the HOPES project and the Newton Fund's support for an institutional learning project on drugs production, rural development and peace in Colombia) both contributed to strengthening institutions and institutional relations but in other aspects they had quite different impacts. The project in Colombia involved raising the profile and visibility of academic contributions to exploring the factors contributing to violence and the options for building peace, within a context of democratic political change. Through the HOPES project, the British Council worked with European partner institutions to provide a means for Syrians who had seen their education interrupted as a consequence of the civil war to continue to higher education or complete their studies.
- Three projects in the area of **justice, stability and security** (MyJustice, Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme and Strengthening Resilience in MENA Phase 1) were implemented in countries where institutions are fragile, there is a lack of opportunities and access to basic rights (access to justice, civil rights and economic opportunities) and violent alternatives can appear as attractive to sectors of the population. The projects were developing alternative pathways or opportunities that avoided violence. This is a long-term process in which the gradual development of trust between individual participants and community members and between the communities and organised groups and institutions can easily be undermined by external factors.
- Four civil society and education projects (Active Voices, Connecting Classrooms, ILMPossible Take a child to school and Quality Education and Strategic Support) were focused principally on building the capacities of the participants to play a role in their communities and in wider decision-making and on education, with an emphasis on approaches that encouraged respect for diversity.

Areas of British Council activity

Some of the projects reviewed were also making contributions to other SDGs, as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Selected British Council programmes/projects and the SDGs to which they contribute, in addition to SDG 16

PROGRAMME/ PROJECT NAME	BRITISH COUNCIL WORK AREA	3 Healthy lives and wellbeing	4 Quality education for all	5 Gender equality	8 Sustainable economic growth	9 Resilient infrastructure	10 Reduce inequality	11 Inclusive and resilient cities	12 Sustainable production and consumption	17 Partnerships for sustainable development
Artivism	Arts	X	X	X			X	X		
Active Voices	Civil society						X			
Connecting Classrooms	Schools		X						X	
Create Syria	Arts									
HOPES	Higher Education		X				X			
ILMPossible	Civil Society		X	X			X			
MyJustice	Justice, security and stability						X			
Newton Fund – Drugs production, rural development and the search for peace in Colombia	Higher Education		X	X			X			
Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme	Justice, security and stability			X			X			
Quality Education and Strategic Support	Schools		X				X			X
Strengthening Resilience in MENA – 1	Justice, security and stability						X			
Tahdir	English		X							
TOTAL		1	7	3	0	0	9	1	1	1

Key: X means that the project is contributing generally to the SDG rather than to a specific target.

The most frequent overlaps were between projects contributing to education goals (SDG 4) and reducing inequality (SDG 10).

Education is an important part of the British Council's activities, which include activities in higher education, schools and English language teaching. Developing knowledge about the causes and drivers of conflict and violence and about ways in which conflict can be reduced and resolved are very important ways of contributing to SDG 16, as well as to other Sustainable Development Goals.

Reducing inequality is core to programmes focusing on justice (such as MyJustice or Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme) or capacity building, most of which were in communities facing inequality in terms of age, income, nationality or gender (such as Active Voices, Strengthening Resilience, HOPES and Newton Fund).

Some examples of contributions to and synergies with other SDGs, from the Artivism project, are:

SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- One of the Artivism projects was in a hospital in Sudan. The project reduced tensions between the staff and patients and contributed to improving health outcomes.

SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

- Artivism contributes to SDG 4 (Target 4.7) by developing an approach to education that promotes a culture of peace and non-violence, tolerance and intercultural understanding and an appreciation of cultural diversity. Improvements in children's confidence and ability to express themselves were noted by teachers at the Ethiopian schools involved in the project.

SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- The Zeraf – Active Youth project in Ethiopia used art to directly challenge gender constructs among high school students.

SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

- The project evaluation found that Artivism increased a sense of compassion and understanding in participants. Through the project there was an opportunity to explore the potential of participation through the social action projects, which empowered and promoted inclusion irrespective of age, sex, disability, ethnicity, religion or social status.

SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

- The community focus of Artivism's social action projects, which are based in Addis Ababa or Khartoum have a general aim of promoting social cohesion and contribute to making cities more sustainable and liveable for local communities.

Scale and extent of contributions

It has not been possible to find a credible means of quantifying project contributions to SDG 16. The indicators for the SDG 16 targets are rarely appropriate for measuring the impact of localised projects which generally focus on changing relationships between individuals or social/cultural groups.

For example, the indicators for Target 16.2 (End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children) are:

- Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month.
- Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation.
- Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18.

These indicators are not relevant to the contributions being made by the British Council programmes and projects reviewed to this target, which focus on getting children into school (three out of five programmes contributing to this target) as a basic step to securing their rights and preventing them from exploitation and harm. Another project is providing alternative pathways for young people at risk of recruitment by extremist organisations.

The MyJustice programme which does address issues such as child trafficking, has recognised that it is difficult to monitor these kinds of issues because they tend not to be reported.

5. Discussion

The Sustainable Development Goals Baseline Study¹⁴ identified a link between the British Council's security and stability objective and SDGs 5 (Gender equality), 10 (Reduced inequalities) and 16, suggesting that these goals could be furthered through training and engagement activities.

The security and stability objective states that, *'we make a lasting difference to the security of the UK and to stability worldwide by building long-term, peaceful and respectful relationships between the people of the UK and people worldwide and by creating opportunities, strengthening young people's resilience and improving governance in fragile and conflict-affected states.'*¹⁵

This reflects the first objective of the UK Aid strategy, which is to strengthen global peace, security and governance.¹⁶ It is also in tune with the peacebuilding element of SDG 16 and the emphasis on strong institutions and governance. For the British Council, it reflects corporate values of cross-cultural understanding, respect for diversity, tolerance, participation and a civic culture characterised by a belief in participation in civic responsibilities. One interviewee described these values as part of the British Council's DNA, intrinsic to the activities that the organisation engages in and to the way it does its work.

British Council's cultural relations approach and SDG 16

New research commissioned by the British Council in partnership with the Goethe-Institut looks in more depth at the value of cultural relations:

*'The term cultural relations refers to interventions in foreign cultural arenas with the aim of enhancing intercultural dialogue and bringing about mutual benefits connected to security, stability and prosperity.'*¹⁷

Building cultural relations is the opposite of trying to dominate other countries, whether by the force of arms or through the market or diplomatic channels:

*'The overall outcomes of cultural relations are greater connectivity, better mutual understanding, more and deeper relationships, mutually beneficial transactions and enhanced sustainable dialogue between people and cultures, shaped through engagement and attraction rather than coercion.'*¹⁸

More than half of the projects and programmes reviewed make use of the attraction of 'things British', from learning English (Tahdir, HOPES) to networking with British artists (Artivism) and learning from British institutions like the legal system (MyJustice, Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme) or the education system (Connecting Classrooms, Quality Education and Strategic Support).

On the other hand, most of the projects and programmes examined are not essentially about the relationship between project participants or stakeholders and the UK. The focus is generally on relations between people in a region, country or even at the local level. Clearly there is a benefit for the UK in investing in these relationships, because of the knock-on positive effects for those living in the UK of security, stability and prosperity abroad. However, while the impact of the programmes, may be linked to the 'attraction' of the link with British culture and institutions, there are other elements of the programmes which are likely to be more important in building peace and justice and strengthening institutions and governance. The next sections will look at some different approaches to building peace, justice and strong institutions, to try to identify the factors that contribute most successfully to achieving SDG 16 or its targets.

14. Collingwood Environmental Planning, *op. cit.*, page 42.

15. British Council (2018) *Annual Report and Accounts 2017–18*, page 10.

16. Department for International Development (2017) *Agenda 2030. The UK Government's approach to delivering the Global Goals for Sustainable Development – at home and around the world*, page 39.

17. British Council and Goethe-Institut (2018) *Cultural Value. Cultural Relations in Societies in Transition: A Literature Review*, page 5

18. *Op. cit.*, page 7.

Active Citizens ‘cascade’ approach

Four of the projects draw on the approach developed by the Active Citizens programme which has been implemented by the British Council for more than a decade. The key characteristics of the programme are the sharing or cascading of knowledge from higher-level facilitators or activists to community-level activists and members of local communities. The local activists apply the learning they have received to carry out a diagnosis of the issues in their community or local area and to identify and implement a social action project to address those issues.

The ‘cascade’ approach has been so successful in creating new skills and capacities that many Active Citizen programme community activists go on to become partners in projects with the British Council. Four of the programmes and projects reviewed acknowledged that their approach draws on Active Citizens (ILMPossible – Take a child to school, Active Voices, Artivism and Strengthening Resilience). Each new project is developed by people who will lead it. Taking ownership is so important that the Active Voices project spent eight months before starting delivery in agreeing the core values with the master facilitators who would be developing the project on the ground.

The further relevance of the Active Citizens model to SDG 16 is the focus on citizenship and enabling local people to take responsibility for issues in their area, even if those issues don’t directly affect them.

Arts-focused approach

Artivism combined two approaches: Active Citizens and an arts-focused approach. The arts are an important element of the British Council’s cultural relations approach. Supporting artists in other countries and helping them to network regionally and internationally contributes to the artists’ individual resilience and personal development, but can also create safe spaces for other people to express themselves and join with others in reflecting on their situation. Having these safe spaces is essential in conflict situations, to enable people to recognise and respect each other’s different perspectives and find the common values that bring them together.

This was achieved in Artivism, where the artists’ projects opened up space within the often hostile environment of large institutions (hospitals, schools) or the urban streetscape (in Addis Ababa), attracting and motivating others to join the action and test the boundaries of what is possible.

Create Syria was a second arts-focused project which was less successful in creating safe spaces, although some of the young people interviewed as part of the evaluation said that they had been able to find in the project a space where they could open up and do new things. Create Syria was implemented in the harsh environment of Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon and this is likely to have been one of the factors contributing to its difficulties.

Sports-focused approach

Similar to the arts-focused approach, some of the projects used sports as a means of motivating participation and overcoming conflict and mistrust between people. Sport was used in Strengthening Resilience and in some of the schools in the ILMPossible – Take a child to school project. While sports was successful in motivating involvement and in developing relations between groups and individuals who previously had not engaged with each other, neither programme was fully successful. In Take a child to school there was criticism that the equipment was not well-maintained or made available for the activities where it was required, suggesting that more time may be needed to work with facilitators to help them to learn how to maintain and manage the resources effectively. In Strengthening Resilience, the project team felt that the sports activity had been pitched at too young an age group (17 year olds). These young people are keen to be involved but they are too young to be able to take the learning from the programme back into their communities to increase the impact of the initiatives to build peace and strengthen institutions.

Partnerships approach

Most of the projects and programmes reviewed were being implemented by the British Council in partnership with other international agencies (HOPES) or with delivery partners (Active Voices, Create Syria). The practical advantage of working in partnership is that it mobilises and can tap into a wider range of knowledge and experience. Working in partnership recognises that no one organisation holds the vision and leadership of the project and that there is a value in working with others and bringing in a wider range of perspectives.

Factors enhancing contribution to SDG 16

Increasing collaboration and understanding between diverse groups

The reduction of conflict and success in building peaceful relations and strengthening institutions that are representative of and accountable to everyone in the community, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social status is more likely to be achieved when programmes and projects incorporate a collaborative approach that respects diversity in their own working methods.

The projects reviewed have employed a variety of mechanisms and tools for achieving collaboration and understanding:

- ILMPossible – Take a child to school used the DOSTI educational programme to enhance education in sports and life skills and to bring together children and communities, thereby facilitating conflict resolution and recognising the value of diversity.
- Connecting Classrooms has developed its own core curriculum for the SDGs which emphasises critical thinking and problem-solving, collaboration and communication, creativity and imagination, digital literacy, global citizenship and student leadership and personal development. Citizenship and leadership are key to SDG 16 while communication and collaboration are at the heart of a process which is inclusive and respects diversity.
- Active Voices and Strengthening Resilience used an evidence-based approach which involved training young participants to research issues in their own communities so that they can understand what the issue is and come up with approaches for social or community action to address those issues. This method increases the capacity and effectiveness of the young community activists but keeps the community at the heart of the process, by making their voices and experience heard within the research.

Routes out of violence

SDG 16 emphasises reducing or ending violence. In many situations of conflict or where conflict is endemic, it can appear that there is no way of avoiding being involved in activities associated with the use of violence, for example in work, in relations with families and the local community. In these situations, people, and especially young people, can feel that the values of peaceful relations and respect for others have little relevance or are too hard to preserve.

Many of the programmes and projects were targeted at young people and offered pathways out of violence:

- Strengthening Resilience: the project developed a tool for measuring resilience based on four characteristics: confidence in one's own skills and abilities; belief that life has meaning; ability to reach out to others (family, community) for support; purposefulness. The project then worked to enhance these capacities in parallel with developing initiatives with the state that offer young people alternatives to violence or activities associated with violence. The initiatives with the state also create the capacity within the state to include unreached populations and the capacity and skills citizens need to be included.
- The HOPES programme is giving young people a route out of violence and opportunities to build a peaceful future both for themselves (through having a profession and/or skills for employment) and for their communities (through having skills which they can use to contribute to the rebuilding of Syria when the war ends). Having capacities for reconstruction and development will be essential to help the country get back to a more stable and conflict-free state.

Conflict sensitivity

Conflict has multiple sources and drivers and in situations where conflict is an active or recent phenomenon, it is common for small issues to escalate and violent methods to be used to deal with them. Several of the projects, such as Active Voices, built awareness of the potential for conflict into all their work and the training cascaded down from lead facilitators to local activists and volunteers. Conflict sensitivity combined with values such as 'do no harm' were used to anticipate where tensions and conflict could arise and to deal with the issues involved before harm occurred.

One example was the recognition that the programme might become a source of tension between the young Syrian participants and young people in their host communities in Lebanon and Jordan, who face similar challenging conditions but were not being offered pathways out of the situation of violence. As a result, it was agreed that Lebanese and Jordanian young people should be included in the programme in these countries.

Monitoring and evaluation

Several challenges for collecting and using data to measure the British Council's contribution to the SDGs were identified in the Sustainable Development Goals Baseline Study¹⁹ and they are still pertinent in looking at the British Council's contribution to SDG 16 two years later.

- By their nature, the internationally-agreed indicators (see Appendix 1) are high-level and generally impossible to match up with the measures taken and achievements of British Council programmes.
- The British Council has monitoring and evaluation systems in place and collects data on all its activities to track how far the organisation is meeting its corporate objectives. So far there does not appear to be any mechanisms within these systems to identify or track contributions to the SDGs in general or to SDG 16 in particular.
- Individual programmes and projects have their own monitoring and evaluation processes in place, often because they need to meet the requirements of funders. Connecting Classrooms has made its core curriculum on the SDGs a main part of its work and a recent evaluation looked at this core curriculum and at the work on SDG 16 in particular, providing very useful qualitative data on teachers' experience of using the curriculum and materials and the outcomes for the students and the schools more widely. Only a few other programmes and projects made any reference to the SDGs in their reporting and these references were to small elements of the projects (e.g. Strengthening Resilience's sports activities).
- It is not clear how any data collected on the contribution made by individual programmes and projects to specific SDGs or targets could be collated across the British Council to give a robust picture of the overall contribution at a country, regional or global level.

19. Collingwood Environmental Planning, *op. cit.*, page 45.

6. Conclusions

Importance of SDG 16 for UN Agenda 2030 and for the British Council

Goal 16 is one of the most important goals for the achievement of the United Nations Agenda 2030. Desk-based studies have identified that it has synergies with most other goals and targets, which means that making progress towards achieving SDG 16 is likely to support the achievement of other goals.

This positive impact of SDG 16 has been borne out by this research. Challenging narratives of violence, exclusion, discrimination and lack of voice in society has led to individuals of all kinds and in very different societies becoming empowered to make changes in themselves and also in their communities and beyond. Describing the British Council's Active Citizen's programme which facilitates this kind of empowerment, a British Council partner noted:

'It's a ripple effect that leads people to become change agents – and challenge themselves and others to think and behave in a different way.' (Jill Mann, *Together for Peace*)

While the focus of this study has been mainly on British Council activities in countries and societies where conflict and violence are a constant presence, promoting peace, justice and strong institutions in a way that encourages civic responsibility and action has relevance across the global reach of the British Council's work.

The focus of SDG 16 is closely aligned with the British Council's core purpose

The British Council describes its work in the following way, *'We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries'*. Friendly knowledge and understanding is the basis of peaceful and respectful relations, which was important globally when the British Council was set up and continues to be an aspiration at global level and within many regions.

Reports and evaluations of many of the projects and programmes reviewed (e.g. Strengthening Resilience, ILMPossible – Take a child to school) mentioned that the British Council was well-placed to play a role in bringing different groups and interests together and building relations: it is seen as a trusted organisation that can mobilise authoritative inputs that give weight to project outputs.

Most of the projects and programmes reviewed had affinities with SDG 16. One Active Voices project manager commented on a project workshop, *'At that meeting the young people shared stories and it was very touching – but it was alarming that those connections don't exist outside the project. That is the British Council's main mission – we build the trust and understanding – it's in the British Council's DNA.'* This means that there is great potential for further work to deepen the links, without diverging from the British Council's own agenda.

SDG 16's three areas of focus – peace, justice and strong institutions – are all themes that the British Council has been working on for many years. This is reflected in the names of two of the British Council's work areas: justice, security and stability; and civil society. The review of contributions to SDG 16 targets revealed an emphasis on targets related to strong institutions, specifically Targets 16.6 and 16.7.

Given the alignment between the British Council's objectives and the SDGs and SDG 16 in particular, it was surprising to find one or two projects and programmes where little had been done to connect activities with approaches to promote peace, justice and strong institutions. This should be addressed at all stages of the project/programme cycle: design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

Tools and approaches are available to support work on SDG 16

The British Council has developed recognised approaches to building capacities for local civic action in different contexts. These provide a valuable resource for other British Council teams who are starting work in this area.

Some examples of the tools and approaches used by programmes reviewed for this research include:

- Active Citizens approach. Several of the programmes and projects reviewed drew on this approach (e.g. Active Voices, Artivism), adapting it to their own contexts and themes (for example enabling artists to become facilitators of community initiatives). The approach takes participants on a learning journey, which enables them to develop tools to understand their community and local context, to identify issues and to develop social action projects to address them. Learning is cascaded through different levels of facilitators and activists to volunteers in the community.

- Connecting Classrooms' core curriculum on the SDGs, with a specific unit on SDG 16. This includes material for discussion sessions and prompts for activities, which could potentially be adapted for use in other education contexts.
- The Resilience Measure. Individual resilience enables people in conflict situations to maintain their sense of identity and personal values in the face of pressure to adopt more violent and extreme positions and actions. The Strengthening Resilience project applied a questionnaire to get a sense of the level of personal resilience of participants joining the programme and to compare this with their level of resilience at the end. The survey looks at four key aspects of personal resilience: confidence, social support, purposefulness and adaptability.

Effective approaches to implementing SDG 16

The range of projects reviewed demonstrated that there is no blueprint for working on peace, justice and strong institutions: context matters, timescale matters and situations are dynamic and changing.

Successful projects tended to be ones where there was time to clarify objectives with all those delivering the activities and to build in opportunities to re-programme activities or redirect resources in response to external or internal developments.

Building trust and understanding, bringing people together and creating networks is core to reducing violence but requires a tremendous change in people and communities, especially where violence has become part of daily life. This is often overlooked in international projects. Effective programmes and projects are those that had developed a strong foundation of agreed values and understandings of the project context, as described by a project manager:

'When we started the project we realised that we needed to make changes to ensure that the project was Syrian – and youth-led. Spending time at this first stage and using facilitation allowed us to bring out and clarify hidden agendas and develop a values-based approach. As a result, participants were able to have very different conversations and really to understand the diversity of perceptions and points of view.'
(Active Voices Project Manager)

Putting the emphasis on processes that build capacities to develop relations based on respect for diversity, understanding of local contexts and participation of all those affected was seen to be an important factor in success. Projects that took time to establish what was needed in the local context, like Active Voices, were more successful than those that had little time for early reflection on the context and building shared understandings within the team.

Monitoring and reporting

There is a need to find ways of recognising and reporting indirect contributions to wider goals, such as the elements of peace, justice and strong institutions that make up SDG 16. British Council programmes and approaches like Active Citizens create capacity to pursue positive social goals which are in harmony with SDG 16 and other SDGs, even if they do not fit neatly in one of its targets.

Given the pre-eminence of the two SDG 16 targets related to *'effective, accountable and transparent institutions'* (16.6) and *'responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making'* (16.7) it would make sense for the British Council to explore appropriate indicators for measuring the British Council's contribution to these two targets in a more systematic way.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: SDG 16 targets and indicators

TARGETS	INDICATORS	INDICATOR TIER
16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere	16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	Tier I
	16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause	Tier II/III
	16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months	Tier II
	16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live	Tier II
16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children	16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month	Tier I
	16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation	Tier I
	16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18	Tier II
16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all	16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimisation to competent authorities or other officially recognised conflict resolution mechanisms	Tier II
	16.3.2 Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population	Tier I
16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms	16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months	Tier II
	16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months	Tier I
16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	16.6.1 Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)	Tier I
	16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services	Tier III
16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions	Tier III
	16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group	Tier III
16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements	16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months	Tier III
	16.10.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information	Tier II

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime	16.a.1 Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles	Tier I
16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development	16.b.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law	Tier III

The three indicator tiers were defined by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDG) at its fifth meeting in March 2017. The definitions of the tiers are as follows:

- **Tier 1:** Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, and data is regularly produced by countries for at least 50 per cent of countries and of the population in every region where the indicator is relevant.
- **Tier 2:** Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data is not regularly produced by countries.
- **Tier 3:** No internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested.

Appendix 2: List of programmes selected for review

NAME OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME	COUNTRY(IES)
Name of project/programme	Country(ies)
Artivism	Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia
Aswat Faeela/Active Voices	Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Europe (Syrian refugees and some local beneficiaries in Lebanon and Jordan)
Connecting Classrooms	Global
Create Syria	Lebanon (Syrian refugees)
HOPES	Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt (Syrian refugees and some local beneficiaries in Lebanon and Jordan)
ILMPossible	Pakistan
MyJustice	Burma (Myanmar)
Newton Fund – Drugs production, rural development and the search for peace in Colombia	Colombia
Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme	Nigeria
Quality Education and Strategic Support	Ethiopia
Strengthening Resilience in MENA – 1	Lebanon, Morocco
Tahdir	Syria

Appendix 3: Programme review templates

1 ARTIVISM
PROJECT SUMMARY
<p>Project Name: Artivism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duration: Ended May 2018. • Geographical area(s) covered: nominally, Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan. In practice there was only one participant from South Sudan, who is resident in Khartoum. The participation of South Sudan was provided by Southern Sudanese resident in Sudan. The participants were all young people. • Total number of people participating: There were more than 60 Artivist participants from three countries, who affected more than 420 direct beneficiaries through their projects and approximately 1,500 indirect beneficiaries.²⁰ • Area of British Council work: Arts.
OVERVIEW
<p>Context</p> <p>South Sudan has endured five years of civil war and there is currently no end in sight. Both Ethiopia and South Sudan have very young populations. The 0–14 years age group in Ethiopia accounts for 41 per cent of the total population and the 10–24 years cohort another 34 per cent. For South Sudan the figures are 42 per cent and 33 per cent, and for Sudan, 42 per cent and 33 per cent respectively.²¹ Youth unemployment in Ethiopia is 7.4 per cent, 17.6 per cent in South Sudan and 27.3 per cent in Sudan.²² With regard to gender, Ethiopia currently ranks 115 out of 144 countries in the 2017 Global Gender Gap Index. Neither South Sudan or Sudan are included but women do not fare well. According to the British Council, in South Sudan, ‘Women are more likely to die in childbirth than complete primary school. Out of a population of eight million, there are no more than a couple of thousand girls completing secondary education. Around 90 per cent of South Sudan’s women are illiterate, compared with 75 per cent of men.’²³ According to the OECD’s Social Institutions and Gender Index, ‘Women in Sudan have been subject to extremely high levels of violence from state and non-state actors. Women also continue to shoulder the burden of the displacement and poverty associated with conflict, and in rural areas, less than a third of women have had access to any form of education.’²⁴</p> <p>The evaluation mentions gender in its introduction but the project itself does not have an explicit gender objective. The evaluator, quoting evidence from Youth Policy Labs, says that many Sudanese youth feel that there are severe limitations both on their influence in their families and communities and on their future possibilities. This appears to be a trend across many African countries.²⁵</p> <p>Artivism is a core project, designed and managed by the British Council. Though separate, it draws heavily on Active Citizens, the British Council’s global social leadership programme. The Artivism project grew out of two previous programmes: Active Citizens Programme and the Shakespeare Lives project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Citizens is a global programme with a proven methodology. The Active Citizens approach focuses on enabling community-led social development and motivates community members to take responsibility for their social needs while giving them the knowledge, skills, experience and networks to address them. The EU-funded HOLLA (Horn of Africa Leadership and Learning for Action – 2014–16) project, which supported youth to become engaged in national and local development in three pilot countries (Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan), was inspired by Active Citizens. • Shakespeare Lives, a global initiative to mark the 500th centenary of Shakespeare’s death (implemented in 2015), engaged young artists from Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan, connecting them to well-known artists and art professionals.

20. The evaluator notes that the number of beneficiaries is calculated as a total for all the eight social action projects in Sudan and Ethiopia and have been taken from the final social action project reports. The volunteers participating in the social action projects have been included in the calculation of direct beneficiaries. The indirect beneficiaries cannot be calculated with accuracy as they are participants in events, users of media platforms developed by the participants, and community members of areas that have benefited from the social action projects.

21. UNFPA (2017) *State of the World’s Population 2017*.

22. World Bank, based on ILO data. Available online: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS>

23. Tony Calderbank (2013) *The Women of South Sudan*. Available online: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/empowering-women-south-sudan>

24. <https://www.genderindex.org/country/sudan/>

25. UNDP (2015) *A sidelined youth: The soft underbelly of ‘Africa rising’*, 16 July 2015 by Mohamed Yahya, Regional Programme Coordinator, UNDP Africa. Available online: www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/blog/2015/7/16/A-marginalized-youth-The-soft-underbelly-of-Africa-rising-.html

1 ARTIVISM

According to the evaluation, the project gave a rare platform to the unheard voice of youth from the Horn of Africa. It proved to be a voice that was both willing to be heard and have much to say. This led to the creation of the African Voices collective, a group established by the participants.

Project description

Artivism combines the use of arts as an enabler for change and the Active Citizens methodology, which builds the capacities and confidence of change makers. It was designed specifically to address social change and promote activism through the arts with the ultimate goal of social cohesion and development. The project relied on inputs from three groups: Active Citizens, a core group of participants from the Shakespeare Lives and HOLLA projects, and a core group of facilitators who had been part of the earlier Horn of Africa projects.

Relevance of SDG 16 to the project

The SDG 16 targets to which Artivism contributes are:

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

Artivism participants are themselves setting up small scale projects and developing skills which will in the future help them participate in and potentially lead larger-scale programmes and institutions.

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Participation and dialogue between participants, and the skills needed to nurture and develop them are key elements of Artivism and are essential to the success of the participants' social action projects.

The project also contributes to other SDGs:

- SDG 3 Health and well-being
- SDG 4 Education

The tolerance and intercultural understanding promoted throughout the project are in line with Target 4.7 (SDG 4), which calls for education to promote a culture of peace and non-violence, an appreciation of cultural diversity, and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of the project

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the promotion of peace and development in the Horn of Africa. Its specific objectives are to:

- Explore the link between arts and active citizenship.
- Build the capacity of young artists to engage with their communities and bring about positive change through the arts.
- Develop a network of young artists and activists in the Horn of Africa and create international connections for a global outlook.

These objectives are supplemented by desired learning outcomes:

Overall learning outcome:

- Increased engagement and empowerment of young people in creating positive change in their communities through arts and culture initiatives.

Specific learning outcomes:

- Increased ability to facilitate dialogue and networking across cultures, and work in collaboration with others.
- Increased ability to adapt to different environments and people.
- Increased understanding of the role of arts in effecting change in communities.
- Increased skills for cascading training.
- Increased levels of confidence, sense of purposefulness and motivation to take action on social issues.
- Increased skills in leadership, facilitation and project management.

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PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities

There were more than 60 Artist participants from three countries, who affected more than 420 direct beneficiaries through their projects and approximately 1,500 indirect beneficiaries.²⁶ In contrast to Active Citizens which works with organisations and institutions, for Artivism in the Horn of Africa the key stakeholders were individual Artists themselves. Participants were selected through an application process. A majority (more than 65 per cent) of the participants from Sudan had participated in other British Council projects or training or were part of similar networks. A smaller proportion of Ethiopian participants (25 per cent) had been involved in previous British Council initiatives. The participants included doctors, teachers and an engineer. They are described as emerging young artists from Sudan and Ethiopia who are interested in using their artistic practice as a tool for development in their communities – they practise as a hobby and not professionally. A common denominator seems to be a general awareness around social issues and a keen personal interest in enabling change in their communities.

The project deliberately started ‘wide’, in the sense that, while it was designed to train young emerging artists to become more socially engaged and active, it was not intended that all of them would go on to take forward a social action project. For this reason, of the 70 Active Citizens trained for the Artivism project (35 Sudanese, ten South Sudanese and 25 Ethiopians), 51 went on to participate in facilitator training (25 from Sudan and 26 from Ethiopia). Participant numbers reduced again during the implementation of the social action projects, so that 37 per cent of participants completed the entire cycle from recruitment to organisation and delivery of a social action project. The evaluation attributes this to ‘... *conflicting commitments, lack of time, lack of incentives and support*,’²⁷ but it also indicates that to embark on and carry through an SAP requires determination, significant time and effort and ability to galvanise and inspire others to join in and help.

The other main participants were volunteers actively involved in the projects some of whom had received cascaded Active Citizen training from the primary project participants. This group included teachers, artists, active community members, and members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local authorities and other local groups.

The beneficiaries of the social action projects included:

- Vulnerable children, high school pupils (focusing on gender issues), children with special needs, and users of public spaces (in Ethiopia).
- Female artisans (enhancing income earning capacity); healthcare workers who used art to develop resilience and re-energise colleagues and themselves; children (using theatre to boost confidence); and people benefiting from improved waste management (in Sudan).

26. The evaluator notes that the number of beneficiaries is calculated as a total for all the eight social action projects in Sudan and Ethiopia and the data has been taken from the final SAP reports. The volunteers participating in the SAPs have been included in the calculation of direct beneficiaries. The indirect beneficiaries cannot be calculated with accuracy as they are participants in events, users of media platforms developed by the participants, and community members of areas that have benefited from the SAPs.

27. Evaluation. Page 43.

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OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

Project activities and outcomes relevant to strengthening institutions

- *SDG Target 16.7 Participatory decision-making.*

The first outcomes from the social action projects were naturally experienced at the local level – the level from which the Artivists themselves start. While the Step Up project clearly had an impact on decisions made by local authorities in Addis Ababa about urban renovation, from the evidence available it appears that in adopting the methodology pioneered by the social action projects, they were moving towards ‘responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making’. In a different way, after seeing the Artivists working with ‘needy children at risk’, Ethiopian school teachers saw that both teachers and the children gained confidence and became more expressive. As a result, they adopted less authoritarian, more participatory and interactive teaching methods, even moving their classes outdoors.

In her conclusion, the evaluator notes that *‘on a community level the social action projects implemented by the participants have introduced new practices, changed perceptions and influenced behaviours. While there is evidence of this impact being long term, for the project to be able to make a more impactful difference a longer implementation phase is needed, or a second phase of interventions. As the project is implemented now, the outcomes take the form of small islands of success.’* For a pilot project, this is useful learning and can inform the next phase of the project in terms of how to further support those who have taken part and ensure sustainability.

Networking and the formation of and participation in networks is a key component of the project, recognising that social change can come about only when activists are able to form links with each other, locally, nationally and internationally, for mutual support and encouragement and ultimately to build movements for change. Twelve Artivists travelled to the UK as part of international workshops and visits, meeting British social activists. Three of the 12 attended an International Facilitator Workshop held in August 2017, and four attended an international study visit in February 2018 as part of the Active Citizens global programme. There were also opportunities to visit and attend events in each others’ countries. The Artivists did create local networks and strengthened some national networks and participation in the Active Citizens events in the UK were a starting point for international networking in the future, as Khadiga’s story of change illustrates,

‘I participated in the international Active Citizen study visit in London along with 35 participants from 15 different countries. Connecting with inspirational people from all around the globe, listening to their stories and the way they perceived their cultural identities left me with a treasure of invaluable human experiences and an unquenchable thirst for more. Since the study visit I have been working on advancing my project while keeping an eye out for further collaborations with active citizens around the globe.’²⁸

The study visit to the UK helped to cement relationships with Active Citizens around the world. A WhatsApp group has been set up which they use to maintain contact and discuss projects and work – a first step towards possible more solid collaboration.²⁹

28. Evaluation, page 56.

29. Interview with Dan Boyden, 24 August 2018.

1 ARTIVISM

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

Description of programme/project governance and implementation processes relevant to SDG 16

The approach to the projects helped these achieve their outcomes in terms of increasing respect and acceptance of diversity. Khadiga, a physician and a poet in Sudan, set up a theatre project with children. The impact of her project was to make the children more attentive and respectful of each other, an important step towards building social cohesion. She said:

'After the training we started a theatre initiative that empowers school children to artistically explore, create and communicate solutions to their subjectively identified problems. Working on addressing these issues using theatrical performance, creative writing and role playing helped build self-confidence, a sense of responsibility, compassion and correct dysfunctional behavioural patterns among the children.

*After a few weeks the group of children participating showed remarkably improved discipline, receptivity and acceptance of one another; they stopped interrupting, listened more attentively and showed respect to other participant's viewpoints. They are now able to think and create solutions as a team.'*³⁰

Evidence gathered by the evaluator points to positive outcomes, in the sense that the Artists themselves gained in confidence; were able, despite initial doubts, to organise successful social action projects, some of which mobilised large numbers of volunteers. The evaluator comments, 'The project instilled the participants with confidence, a sense of purpose and motivation to be active in their communities. This is an essential first step of any change. However, what makes this exceptional is that this impact was transferred from the participant level to volunteers and beneficiaries. In addition, the skills developed and ability to link social change with the arts transformed the participants into true Artists who were equipped to become change makers.'³¹

According to the evaluator, '... the Active Citizens methodology had not before been implemented with a focus on the arts in this extended form which included a series of workshops, mentoring element and final reflection workshop. The intention with the Artivism project was to pilot this new approach and discover how a strengthened art component would affect social impact. It had already been noticed that the Horn of Africa youth had linked the arts to social issues, what was now of interest was how this link could be utilised to affect change.'³²

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The British Council contributes to the SDGs through its Active Citizens programme and other programmes. 'It's a ripple effect that leads people to become change agents – and challenge themselves and others to think and behave in a different way.'³³

With Artivism, as a pilot project, the British Council used the Active Citizens methodology to encourage and support individuals in working for positive change but chose to use art as the entry point. The individuals selected to take part in the Artivism programme were keen amateur artists, not professionals. By focusing on skills, confidence and motivation of participants, the British Council is building the capacity of individuals and the groups which they form, to work for wider societal change, and to make a contribution to the SDGs.

Support for the SDGs is not direct but will come about, first, through individuals who are encouraged and trained to become Active Citizens who then find ways of working together to bring about change, and second, through the beneficiaries who are positively affected by the Artists, such as the children who became more respectful of each other in Khadiga's project in Sudan.

Artivism does not address the SDGs or SDG 16 directly. It diverges from the established Active Citizen methodology in seeking out talented non-professional artists to encourage them towards and provide guidance on social action, using their artistic talents as a starting point. This project was a pilot to enable the British Council to see whether artistic endeavour can be successfully combined with social action. It is similar to other education projects in that it is creating capacity to pursue positive social goals which are certainly in harmony with the SDGs – and SDG 16 – even if they do not fit neatly in one of its targets.

30. Evaluation, page 56.

31. Evaluation, page 46.

32. Evaluation, page 12.

33. British Council <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sustainable-development-goals/our-support>. Quote from Jill Mann, Together for Peace, UK Active Citizens Delivery Partner Organisation.

2 ASWAT FAEELA (ACTIVE VOICES)

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Name: Aswat Faeela (Active Voices)

- Duration: January 2016 – June 2018 (30 months)
- Geographical area(s) covered: Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan as well as Europe – Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands.
- Total number of people participating: 38 regional and local master facilitators; 512 young people (community builders) across 15 communities in Syria, Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon; 4,000 young Syrians engaged in community-based research and case studies; 40 young Syrians in the diaspora living in European countries.
- Total budget: €3,326,774.98
- Funder: European Commission
- Delivery partners: British Council (lead partner), International Alert, Search for Common Ground, Syrian partner
- Area of British Council work: Education and Society

OVERVIEW

Context

Young people are a very important constituency for the British Council and important stakeholders in peace processes. UN Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security urges countries ‘to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace process and dispute resolution.’

The ongoing conflict in Syria has impacted the lives of young people, interrupting their education, breaking their links with family members and friends and in many cases, making them refugees either within Syria or outside. The conflict, which began with anti-government protests demanding democratic reforms, is estimated to have claimed over 400,000 lives by 2016;³⁴ more than 5.6 million people have fled Syria and there are 6.6 million internally displaced persons.³⁵

Most current international efforts are focusing on humanitarian initiatives, not on young people. The project was intended to give legitimacy to the work of young Syrian activists both inside and outside Syria. Young Syrians outside Syria have their own issues and they have also shared issues with young people in host countries like Lebanon and Jordan.

The Syrian conflict is seen by many as a fault line in the politics of the Middle East. Talking about the Middle East Dialogue process that has been going on behind the Geneva peace process on Syria, Randa Slim of the Middle East Institute noted that:

‘...the future of the Levant now clearly depends on how the conflict in Syria and Iraq unfolds and is eventually settled. So we have kept a dual focus in the Middle East Dialogue: working on the Syrian conflict, but always also taking a step back for a larger look at how the whole region is evolving – the counter-revolutions, the fate of the Islamic movements, trends in youth politics, and intra-regional rivalries.’³⁶

As the conflict has evolved and continued, it becomes very important to think not just about how to end the war but to further in the future, to the kind of society that people aspire to. Including young people’s voices in thinking about the future is essential for several reasons: to give them the opportunity to describe the positive future they would like to see, to gain their active involvement in developing peace-based options and to enable them to develop the knowledge, networks and skills to make peace-based options a reality. The Civil Society Support Room, established by the Office of the UN Special Envoy for Syria in 2016 provides a space for this kind of discussion.³⁷

34. UN Special Envoy for Syria, informal estimate.

35. UNHCR website – statistics updated April 2018. Available at: www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html. Accessed 23/07/18.

36. Carnegie Corporation: <https://www.carnegie.org/news/articles/q-other-track-toward-syrian-peace/>

37. Hellmüller, S and Zahar, MJ (2018) *Against the Odds*. International Peace Institute.

2 ASWAT FAEELA (ACTIVE VOICES)

Project description

Aswat Faeela (Active Voices) is a 30-month standalone project that finished in June 2018. The project included an eight-month inception phase and a 22-month implementation phase.

During the inception phase the project carried out detailed context and conflict mapping in communities in the four main project countries: Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. The purpose was to: *'understand the dynamics, and identify indicators of conflict, marginalisation and political economy, assess risks, and to identify local stakeholders and partners, social leaders and the nature of relationships within communities and between Syrians and the host community.'*³⁸

Part of this mapping involved focus groups with young people to understand their needs and expectations of the project. Focus groups were conducted in Syria, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan:

- In Lebanon and Jordan with young social leaders from host communities, to contribute their perspectives to the context and conflict mapping.
- With young Syrians in the diaspora in Europe to understand their needs and expectations of the project and to explore perceptions, opportunities and challenges in terms of engaging Syrian networks and the existing capacities and needs for engagement within the project's advocacy work.

As well as developing the learning outcomes, tools and resources to be used, the preparatory work in the inception phase involved establishing the set of values to be emphasised as part of the learning journey for young participants as the foundation for peaceful, inclusive societies. It was very important to also work with the master facilitators to develop their core skills, values and behaviours before the project started in earnest, because of the sensitive nature of the project.

The main project activities were:

- Training for 300 community builders in core learning (project objectives, values and community group formation) and in priority skills to facilitate community development and community action i.e. mapping stakeholders and community priority issues, action research and evidence-based advocacy, designing and implementing social action projects.
- Community action initiatives in each of the 15 communities.
- Advocacy and communications.
- Policy dialogues and workshops with Syrian diaspora and policymakers.
- Publication of policy briefs on project themes.
- Evaluation and recommendations of legacy work.

Relevance of SDG 16 to the project

The SDGs are not explicitly described in the project documents, but the project's core focus aligns to two of the Goal's three main themes: building peace and conflict resolution on the one hand and strengthening institutions on the other. The particular perspectives brought by the project are its work in and around a country experiencing violent conflict and war and its focus on young people.

OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of the project

The aim of the project is to develop young Syrians' social leadership skills and capacity through practical action both inside Syria, as well as in countries affected by the Syrian crisis (Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey) and to give them a voice in national and international discussions about peacebuilding and community resilience as an antidote to the dominant negative and destabilising narratives around the impact of conflict.

The overall objective is to build the capacity of young Syrian social leaders to contribute to positive social actions that benefit Syrian communities in the short term and help them to prepare for the longer-term transition to a peaceful and democratic Syria.

The project has three specific objectives:

1. Increase the ability of young Syrian social leaders to analyse their (Syrian) context and to understand and recognise how they each experience the effect of this context and can contribute to change.
2. Develop young Syrian social leaders' capacity to initiate collective social actions to strengthen peacebuilding, community cohesion, inclusion and economic recovery.
3. Better equip young Syrian social leaders and diaspora to use research and share evidence, to advocate and influence opinion leaders and decision-makers.

38. British Council (2016) *Aswat Faeela Inception Report*. December 2016, page 4.

2 ASWAT FAEELA (ACTIVE VOICES)

PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities

The project targeted three groups of young Syrian participants:

- those living inside Syria (Damascus, Homs, Aleppo and Tartous)
- those living in host communities outside Syria (Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan)
- young people in the Syrian diaspora in Europe (Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands).

Thirty-eight master facilitators in four countries (Syria, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan) were recruited and trained. The model was that the project trained the master facilitators who in turn cascaded learning to community builders. Project activities were carried out by community groups (consisting of master facilitators and community builders) with involvement of, and outreach to, the wider community. A total of 512 young community builders across the four countries were directly involved in the project. More than 4,000 Syrian young people participated in community-based research and the development of practical experiences of working with community stakeholders such as mayors, local authorities, researchers and socio-economic development experts. The work with young people outside Syria included some citizens of the host countries because of the perceived need for young Syrians to build relationships with peers in their host countries in the short term.

The breadth of the project, the number of countries and communities involved meant that a great variety of participants were involved. This gave the participants the experience of engaging with people who were very different and using learning approaches based on mutual respect and understanding.

Stakeholders

- **National and local authorities** – young people's research into issues facing their communities and possible solutions is translated into advocacy messages for mayors and local authorities. Youth group members learn how to take account of local sensitivities in their relationships with local authorities. Within Syria, there has been some success in getting the issues identified taken up at the national level.
- **International organisations and networks**, especially organisations and institutions involved in the peace process for Syria. An important focus of work has been the 'track 2' civil society process and the Civil Society Support Room set up as part of the Geneva peace process by the UN Special Envoy for Syria. There have also been other opportunities for the diaspora network, such as participating in high-level meetings in Brussels with the High Commissioner and in a roundtable discussion on proposals for the Asylum and Migration Fund and the European Social Fund, which covered the implications of the consolidation of EU external funding instruments with a proposed focus on migration. The second meeting was a platform to showcase key results from the action research findings and extend the networks of young people in the diaspora.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

Project activities and outcomes relevant to reducing violence and conflict resolution

The Project has built a network of 21 self-sustained Syrian youth community groups in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands. These groups share a common set of values emphasising rights-based and 'do no harm' approaches, as well as embracing ownership, diversity, inclusiveness and valuing differences.³⁹

The young activists have organised community-based research, advocacy and social action projects to address the challenges of economic recovery, social cohesion and peacebuilding at grassroots level in their communities.

As a result of this activity, participants have gained agency, a voice and new skills to be active in their communities. They recognise positive examples of activism in mentors and role models. They report feeling empowered and able to transform challenges into opportunities and find their own solutions. They have formed networks with other young Syrians and with their wider communities.

- **SDG Target 16.2 Violence against children.** The social action project in Turkey worked with out-of-school children. The project worked with Turkish institutions and got buy-in from the Ministry of Education. It looked at child protection issues and helped with the integration and social cohesion of the Syrian refugee community. This increased respect for the Syrian community within the local community. The incorporation of Syrian children into Turkish schools is a significant issue which can create tension between communities.

39. British Council (n.d.) Aswat Faeela Impact Brief, page 3.

2 ASWAT FAEELA (ACTIVE VOICES)

- *SDG Target 16.2 Sexual violence against children.*

The conflict and context analysis that is carried out by young people as part of the Aswat Faeela (Active Voices) programme has revealed the existence of domestic violence. No systematic initiatives have been developed to address this issue. Work on this issue would require sensitivity and specialist training. Some young social leaders have organised interactive arts-based activities that have brought out the issue of sexual violence.

Additionally, the project's emphasis on learning and evidence has brought out a number of underlying situations that contribute to the risk of violent responses:

- Legal status and the rights of Syrians displaced as a result of the conflict: the majority of Syrians do not hold identity papers that would enable them to leave Turkey; Syrians in Jordan are not allowed to leave the country; in Lebanon, not all Syrians have adequate residency permits.
- Suspicion of and hostility towards international intervention in the Syrian conflict, including both armed intervention as well as dialogue processes. This is combined with a growing lack of confidence in the media and concerns about misinformation and partisan reporting.
- Growing tensions between Syrian and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Europe.
- Growing tensions over access to services or humanitarian assistance and the availability of services. Young people feel there is no form of recourse. There is a war economy inside Syria with a growing black market and increasing corruption in relation to the control and supply of basic services.

Project activities and outcomes relevant to strengthening institutions

- *SDG Target 16.7 Participatory decision-making.*

The project focused on youth-led participation. The project worked directly with master facilitators who cascaded the training to a wider pool of young people who are the main participants in the project. The young people decided which projects to focus on and carried out the projects. They were provided with approaches and tools to carry out their projects.

Inside Syria, young people have moved from a focus on socio-economic issues to influencing policymaking: some young people are working with policymakers in Damascus.

- *SDG Target 16.10 Ensure public information.*

There is a lot of mistrust between different Syrian communities, for historic and cultural reasons as well as their current situation. Bringing together young Syrians living in different parts of Syria or abroad and others from Jordan, Lebanon or Europe, exposes them to different realities and helps them to question the information they receive through official media channels and social media. This is as much an issue for young people outside Syria as for those living in the country.

- ❖ Participants have been able to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping and to hold sensitive and difficult conversations with values-based approaches.
- ❖ Moving away from stereotypical images has additional benefits in terms of reconnecting young people living outside Syria with their homeland and making young people living in Syria more aware of the problems facing those living abroad, so that they don't just see refugees as people who are against the government but recognise that there is a complex mix of situations.

- *SDG Target 16.a Strengthen national institutions, including through international co-operation.*

The project has encouraged Syrian youth organisations to put forward their views in international forums. This has been supported through specially-designed sessions with project participants about the messages they are keen to elevate to the Geneva peace process and the mechanisms they can use. This has led to more young Syrians' voices being heard in these discussions.

The project's Syrian partner is active in the 'track 2' Syria peace process and many of the participants are now members of track 2's Civil Society Support Room (CSSR). This has been an unintended outcome of the project. It also addresses the CSSR objectives of 'rendering the peace process more inclusive and seeking to strengthen the participation and contribution of Syrian civil society actors to the official talks.'

The consortium has helped to develop links between 'track 3/grassroots' work and the 'track 2' and 'track 1' processes by using the current research and stakeholder mapping to further explore these links.

2 ASWAT FAEELA (ACTIVE VOICES)

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

Description of programme/project governance and implementation processes relevant to SDG 16

The project approach is about understanding the local community and the people within local networks who can bring about change. This is evidence-based advocacy.

One element of the project process that was brought out by the project manager was the initial planning stage and the decision to take time to ensure that the project was Syrian-led and youth-led:

- The inception phase involved facilitated discussions within the core team to bring out and clarify hidden agendas and to develop a values-based approach.
- Participants were able to have different kinds of conversations and to really understand the diversity of perceptions and points of view within the project.

The project has four key components:

1. *A core learning journey* for master facilitators which is then cascaded to community builders; the learning journey is based on the principles of peacebuilding and active citizenship.
2. *Tailored further learning* on the topics of peacebuilding and reconciliation, social cohesion, economic recovery, inclusion and vulnerable groups.
3. *Community action* through seed-funded pilot initiatives which are scaled up, where possible, in participating communities.
4. *Advocacy and communications* through networking and a range of interventions targeted at policymakers and the Syrian diaspora in individual countries and at the European level.

The project's Impact Brief describes techniques used in the project which in themselves contribute to outcomes relevant to SDG 16:

- Giving young people practical experience of gathering evidence of what helps to strengthen communities living with conflict, mapping stakeholders, engaging locally with influencers and advocating on behalf of communities through national and international platforms.
- Creation of safe spaces for young people to design their own solutions to problems within their communities.
- Providing young people with increased skills and knowledge about community mobilisation, peacebuilding, economic recovery, resilience, inclusion and equal opportunities, valuing diversity and social cohesion in complex environments and in a conflict sensitive manner.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The project approach has resulted in the achievement of its own goals and its contribution to the SDG 16 themes of:

- building peace and conflict resolution
- strengthening institutions.

The project has supported the development of a network of young Syrians and host community social leaders who have enhanced their capacity to understand the needs of their communities, conduct conflict analysis, explore the dynamics of peacebuilding and active citizenship, use action research approaches and lead participative community action projects. This has increased social cohesion and the capacity to find alternatives to violent responses in the communities involved.

In terms of its contribution to strengthening institutions, the project has supported the creation of a body of evidence for advocacy based on community mapping, action research and community action projects. This evidence is being promoted through an interconnected international network of young Syrians, including in the diaspora, who can engage in advocacy at the international level elevating Syrian voices through different fora.

*'[Project participants] have described themselves as being "empowered", "peace enablers", "the only alternative to violence" and "the remedy for shared community concerns." Their newly acquired values, skills and knowledge will allow them to shape the future of their country.'*⁴⁰

'I intend to share the experience and technical knowledge I gained from Aswat Faeela through healthcare networks to improve the public health sector – advocating for the provision of high-quality prosthetic limbs and the re-integration of people with disabilities in society and raising awareness on mental health disorders – both results of the war.' (Manal 24-year old, female participant, Aleppo, Syria.)⁴¹

40. British Council (n.d.) Aswat Faeela Impact Brief, page 3.

41. British Council (2017) Aswat Faeela Progress Report. February 2017.

3 CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Name: Connecting Classrooms

- Start and finish dates/Duration: Current phase 2015–18
- Geographical area(s) covered: 39 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, UK, Middle East and North Africa, East Asia
- Total number of people participating: The programme aims to build the capacity of 45,000 teachers and 12,000 school leaders. The latest monitoring report (2017) shows that:
 - ❖ 31,481 teachers had completed online or face-to-face core skills training
 - ❖ 13,431 school leaders had been trained
- Total budget: not available
- Funder: Department for International Development (DFID)
- Delivery partners (international and national): British Council offices, ministries of education and 12,541 unique schools (defined as schools where head teacher and two teachers received the introduction and in-depth core skills training)
- Area of British Council work: Schools

OVERVIEW

Context

The programme draws on international evidence that the majority of school systems are failing to develop certain core competencies of their students.

Detailed information on schools and the education system in general in some of the participating countries is available for five countries in Annex A of the Impact Monitoring Report (Nigeria, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Bangladesh and Lebanon).

Connecting Classrooms is a global education programme that aims to 'help young people develop the knowledge, skills, and values to live and work in a globalised economy, by building the capacity of teachers and school leaders to integrate a range of core skills into the curriculum'.

These core skills are: critical thinking and problem-solving, collaboration and communication, creativity and imagination, digital literacy, global citizenship and student leadership and personal development.

According to the Impact Monitoring Report progress survey data: 67 per cent of teachers trained and school leaders who are participating in the programme agree that core skills activities are better preparing their students to live and work in a global economy (Impact 1). Students (in participating schools) showed evidence of leadership characteristics, citizenship values, and collaborative and communication abilities in the focus group activity. This helps to corroborate progress survey evidence that students are becoming better prepared to contribute to society locally and globally (Impact 2).

SDG issues are one element in the Connecting Classrooms programme. The training includes eight templates, each one linked to at least two of the core skills and these are based around the United Nations SDGs. Two of the Core Skills correspond to targets in SDG 16: citizenship and leadership.

This programme builds upon the previous phase of Connecting Classrooms, which ran from June 2012 to June 2015 and focused on building global awareness and cross-cultural learning amongst young people.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of the programme is to strengthen teaching practices to support teachers in implementing effective techniques that develop students' core skills and to support them to integrate these core skills into the curriculum.

The Connecting Classrooms programme includes in-depth training courses for teachers, which can be completed online or face-to-face and also an in-depth Leading Core Skills course aimed at school leaders (head teachers).

A smaller component of the programme is facilitating international school partnerships and exchanges.

Objectives relevant to SDG 16

The online training template for Goal 16 states that: *'The focus of this unit is helping pupils to understand what they can contribute to their community through taking a lead and organising a project. Your pupils will gain a better understanding of Sustainable Development Goal 16 and its focus on 'peace, justice and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'.*

Two of the Core Skills relate to SDG 16: *Citizenship and Leadership*

3 CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

PARTICIPANTS

The project involves teachers, school children and school leaders in 39 countries. Detailed information on the target participants and demographics were not available in the monitoring and evaluation reports. There appears to be a variety of schools participating: private and public; urban and rural.

Stakeholders

- Ministries of education were involved in selecting participating schools.
- Schools, parents, other teachers in the school and other schools not in the programme (who need to be influenced in the future to change practices).

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

The teacher teaching programme on core skills is based on the SDGs; two of these skills are identified as relating to SDG 16 targets: 'peace, justice and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'. These are Citizenship and Leadership.

There is an additional e-learning package covering all the SDGs and another one on inclusion, which have relevance to SDG 16 as well as to other SDGs.

Citizenship: this involves developing active, globally aware citizens who have the skills, knowledge and motivation to address issues of human and environmental sustainability and work towards a fairer world in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue; developing an understanding of what it means to be a citizen of their own country and their own country's values.

Student leadership: recognising the importance of honesty and empathy; recognising others' needs and safety; fostering perseverance, resilience and self-confidence; exploring leadership, self-regulation and responsibility.

The training package on Inclusive Pedagogies was rolled out from the beginning of 2017. It has some bearing on the SDG 16 targets on access to justice as well as on strengthening institutions. This course aims to support teachers and school leaders to develop a greater awareness of inclusion issues, to gain an understanding of theoretical frameworks underpinning discussions on inclusion and identify strategic and practical opportunities to improve the inclusive ethos in school communities and the classroom. The course includes a focus on gender, special education needs and marginalised children, and supports participants to explore challenges to inclusion relevant to their own local contexts.

Another target of the programme is to influence policymakers and thus strengthen institutions. To this end a key activity was a workshop on Core Skills for a More Stable World, which was held in Sri Lanka, bringing together 90 policymakers and senior educationalists from over 20 countries to discuss integrating these core skills in to the curriculum. Discussions covered three key themes: curriculum development, teacher development and learner development and there were debates on future-focused learning, the importance of core skills for learning, work and society, and nurturing creative thinking to prepare young people for the future and uncertain times. Different experiences were presented on education systems that are experiencing particularly challenging environments and how they are creating the space to learn and develop globally competent citizens. One example of this highlighted in the workshop report, was the work of UNWRA⁴² who shared how they deliver education in emergencies and provide for learners affected by conflict, integrating human rights, conflict resolution and tolerance in its schools across several nations.

- Reducing violence and conflict resolution

Target 16.1. Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

Raising awareness is the first step toward changing behaviour to prevent violence. The impact monitoring report provides examples from schools in five countries incorporating learning from the core training. Examples are given, such as in Bangladesh, where one lesson involved discussion of issues surrounding domestic violence, how to combat and prevent it, and another focused on the issue of child marriage.

- Strengthening institutions

Target 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

42. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees.

3 CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

The Impact Monitoring report indicates that across all countries there was evidence of teachers giving students more ownership and leadership over their own learning. This was observed in several teaching approaches such as teachers giving students more opportunity to take a leadership role in class and students were often asked to come up with their own examples or definitions of topics. In Nigeria, one English teacher changed the structure of debates to be student-led. Students now acted as the debate panel, adjudicating and facilitating the discussions of their classmates, which prior to the training was undertaken by the teacher. Teachers in Bangladesh reported allowing leaders of groups in class to be elected rather than teacher-appointed. In Ethiopia, there was evidence of teachers encouraging increased participation among all students, including those with lower ability.

Ethiopia and Lebanon showed evidence of strategies to promote inclusive education. These strategies tied into other core skills techniques, such as group work and students taking more ownership over their learning. In Nigeria in a social studies lesson, the teacher asked students to think through their own gender stereotypes. In Ethiopia, one lesson focused on the elderly and the related challenges faced by this group, another lesson included discussion about how students can support other students in areas of flooding.

Following the training one trained teacher in Ethiopia (Kiros Alemayehu School) chose to focus her project on encouraging girls in her class to participate more. During the interview the teacher explained how there was a gender issue in the school, and that she had identified that girls were often less confident and shy during the activities. The purpose of her project was to try to understand why, based upon undertaking observations and a survey with the girls, and then implementing specific strategies to raise awareness and encourage them more in class. The teacher reflected that this was an important part of the school system, as girls often faced additional challenges in attending school, and sometimes felt inferior, and therefore that this was an important issue to investigate.

The Impact Monitoring Report indicates that in participating schools across Bangladesh, Nigeria, and Lebanon there was evidence of greater incorporation of citizenship into lessons, teaching issues on being more responsible citizens and the values related to positive citizenship. Across these countries teachers incorporated principles of being a responsible citizen into their lessons. For example, in an English class in Nigeria, a teacher taught vocabulary that had associated ideas of moral principles and responsibilities, another science teacher ended the lesson on 'matter' by talking about rubbish and littering as examples of where matter can have detrimental consequences. In a religious studies lesson, a significant focus was on values of peace and tolerance. In Bangladesh, one lesson included discussion of renewable energy.

Across all five countries, there was evidence of teachers giving students more ownership and leadership over their own learning. This was observed in several teaching approaches, such as giving students more opportunity to take a leadership role in class and students were often asked to come up with their own examples or definitions of topics, rather than being supplied these by teachers. In Ethiopia, there was evidence of teachers giving all students, including lower-ability, increased participation in the classroom.

A case study presented in the Year 2 Evaluation Report on the methodology of Citizenship Education

Teaching good citizenship is more necessary than ever in today's world. Prejudice is a universal issue that affects all people and we all need to be more critically and consciously aware of our attitudes and behaviours towards others. We wanted our pupils to use their critical thinking and problem-solving skills to develop a critical awareness of the different types of prejudice evident in their communities, in South Africa, and around the world.

First, the girls worked to identify, describe, and discuss different types of prejudice that they perceived in their communities, South Africa and the world. They used mind maps as an analytical tool and collaborated in groups to consider why it is important to resolve conflict and prejudice, and to identify ways in which this might be done, finally bringing their ideas back to the class for further discussion. Each group then created a poster designed to develop awareness and change perspectives about different prejudices based on race, gender, refugees, sexual orientation, class or disability. These posters were then peer-assessed to determine their effectiveness. The girls encouraged each other and provided constructive feedback.

The pupils then identified and critically analysed prejudice in Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, their literature study. Pupils identified examples of prejudice and conflict, including discriminatory language, and their impact. They analysed the behaviour and attitudes of prejudiced characters in the novel as examples of poor citizenship.

3 CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

There was a clear buy-in from the pupils, who described the learning as fun and relevant. They became more conscious of how learning and ideas extend beyond the classroom to real life. They learned about being good citizens and how to treat others with respect. The girls recognised the importance of sharing ideas and listening to others to find effective solutions. They shared their ideas confidently and enthusiastically, as they had created a safe environment founded on mutual trust and teamwork.

Our teaching became more facilitative and learner-centred, as the girls were encouraged to contribute constructively to their own learning process. Lesson planning required careful thought to ensure that problem solving skills such as considering different perspectives and evaluating evidence would be practised effectively – and that the tasks would be relevant to contemporary life.

Similar methods will be applied to understanding the experiences and historical significance of Nelson Mandela, and his policy of forgiveness and reconciliation. We also plan to build a project around the theme of South African sport, both as a route to nation-building and inclusion, as well as the issues that might arise. School Case Study, South Africa (From Year 2 Evaluation Report)

Connecting Classrooms is directly related to Goal 4 targets:

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. Indicator: 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment.

The programme also has synergies with Goal 12 targets:

12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature. Indicator: 12.8.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

The impact monitoring report points out that the teachers interviewed consistently agreed that they needed better support and follow-up to fully incorporate core skills into their lessons and to embed core skills within their current curriculum. This view linked to their feedback that the initial training was short, and often lacked sufficient depth or curriculum-specific guidance.

Some teachers also highlighted that they felt somewhat overwhelmed with the amount of additional preparation and planning required to adapt the curriculum and develop appropriate classroom activities. Other teachers mentioned that they did not yet feel completely confident in the new practices and reported that they needed further support and training in certain areas.

3 CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

Through the progress survey, school leaders and teachers reported their key successes following implementation of the core skills training. The report highlights the successes in these broad emerging themes: students' learning and students' confidence; encouraging students to be critical learners; increased student interest and enjoyment in learning; improvements in problem solving and taking responsibility for their own learning.

The interim Impact Evaluation Report of Connecting Classrooms highlights that teachers and school leaders were positive about the core skills courses, praising the practical and interactive nature of the training. Teachers also recognised the value of core skills development in their students (beyond a narrow focus on academic performance) and understood how to apply core skills across the curriculum. These findings support the monitoring data evidence that knowledge and understanding of effective core skills teaching among the trained teachers has increased by 29 per cent globally (Output 1.2)

Following the core skills training, teachers showed increased motivation to change teaching practices and to work within their limited resources to ensure deeper learning by their students. The progress survey found that 94 per cent of trained teachers globally report a commitment to using core skills in their teaching in the future, while 83 per cent of school leaders are committed to developing core skills in their schools.

Relating the impact of activities to progress in meeting the SDG targets is not easy in this programme. Changing teaching practices and curriculum content is a process and therefore not easy to measure in a short timeframe. It would therefore be helpful if future evaluation and impact assessments include a question on levels of knowledge of the teachers and students on the issues addressed by the SDGs, to ascertain how successful the online training course has been in promoting the SDGs among the school population and changing their knowledge and behaviour.

4 CREATE SYRIA
PROJECT SUMMARY
<p>Project Name: Create Syria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duration: September 2015 – August 2016 • Geographical area(s) covered: Lebanon • Delivery partners: British Council (lead partner), International Alert, Ettijahat (cultural organisation) • Area of British Council work: Arts
OVERVIEW
<p>Context</p> <p>There are over one million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, making up 25 per cent of the resident population. This figure is an underestimate since UNHCR provides statistics only of registered refugees. After an initial open-door policy Lebanon closed its borders to displaced Syrians in 2014. Now, according to UNHCR, it has become ‘increasingly challenging to preserve a dignified protection space for refugees in Lebanon, as host community fatigue grew and calls on the refugees to return began being voiced in the political and public debate. Perception and stabilisation surveys revealed that the main source of inter-community tensions was the perceived competition over jobs. Several municipalities issued decisions to close shops and other businesses run by Syrians, and imposed restrictions like curfews, confiscation of IDs, restriction on residency in the municipality, and evictions justified with reference to pressures on local infrastructure, on economic, security, law and order, or on no particular grounds.</p> <p><i>‘Refugees’ vulnerabilities continued to deteriorate with livelihood opportunities remaining limited; an estimated 58 per cent refugees are living in extreme poverty (below \$3 per day), although the decline would have been much steeper without the assistance provided to those most in need.’⁴³</i></p> <p>Easily available documents and reports mention tension between Lebanese and Syrian refugees. Reports tend not to differentiate between Syrian refugees but in fact, as one would expect, there are significant differences in class, wealth, education and places of origin, not to mention political allegiance with some refugees being pro-regime.</p> <p>Project description</p> <p>Create Syria began as ‘a project to empower Syrian art in exile – a pilot project that supported 15 Syrian artists in Lebanon to develop and deliver impactful artistic initiatives in communities.’⁴⁴ In the event 11 projects were supported with micro-grants (€6,500–11,000).⁴⁵ Create Syria’s activities began in September 2015 and were initially designed to come to an end by March 2016. The project was extended by a six-month period and most activities were implemented by August 2016. A final showcase event was held in Beirut on September 16 and 17 2016.</p> <p>The evaluation found that while the impact on the artists themselves was clear, there was little evidence of impact delivered to the wider community. A consultation organised by the British Council between January and May 2017 showed that the majority of Syrian artists and arts institutions are seeking to deliver social impact through their artistic work. The artists, however, said that they lacked the confidence and skills to deliver projects with social impact in communities and complained about a lack of opportunity to collaborate with peers in host-community arts sectors – programmes that target only Syrians are contributing to isolation and division.⁴⁶</p> <p>For International Alert Create Syria is one of a number of arts-based peace-building projects which harness ‘... the arts, such as theatre, photography, music and film, along with a broad range of other peacebuilding methods to build capacity and resilience, challenge and renegotiate power, and facilitate and catalyse dialogue between opposing groups and across generations.’⁴⁷</p> <p>Ettijahat sees the project as creating ‘... a long-term support network for Syrian artistic production which will strengthen contemporary art practices and target refugees and communities in crisis. The project will also address local audiences in the host communities into which artists and new cultural initiatives have moved.’⁴⁸</p>

43. UNHCR website (13 July 2018). Available at: <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2520>

44. British Council. *Create Syria – Concept Note* (last updated November 2017).

45. Size of grant provided by Emmanuel Haddad, ‘Contemporary performing arts in Lebanon: an overview’, IETM, March 2017. <https://www.ietm.org/en/publications>

46. *Ibid.*, page 1.

47. International Alert (26 November 2015). *Create Syria*. Available at: <https://www.international-alert.org/news/create-syria>

48. Ettijahat (n.d.) *Create Syria: a project to empower Syrian art in exile*. Available at: <https://www.ettijahat.org/page/194>

4 CREATE SYRIA

Relevance of SDG 16 to the project

Peacebuilding, building resilience and reducing inter-communal tension align with first phrase of the SDG 16 headline 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development' but do not fit neatly with any of its targets. Insofar as the Syrian artists who were the primary beneficiaries acquired new skills and new networks, the project helped them directly and prepared them for future leadership roles in the arts and society. By providing opportunities and the means (the micro-grants) for project participants to work with different groups of young Syrians in Lebanon, Create Syria was part of the huge effort that must be made to prepare Syrian citizens for the task of rebuilding their country as a peaceful and inclusive society – when that becomes possible.

Conflict sensitivity is one of the project's guiding principles, mitigating for

*'... the unintended consequences of action which could further polarise refugees and their host communities. All actions are undertaken with the aim to support development, stability and mutual cooperation in the region.'*⁴⁹

OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of the project

For the British Council, International Alert and Ettijahat, the objectives of Create Syria are to support and encourage selected Syrian artists and to foster resilience among Syrian refugee communities in Lebanon and, through the arts, to build bridges with their host communities.

The programme was intended to have the following outputs:

- Greater local and international exchange and peer-to-peer learning in the field of community arts is supported through a series of networking events and master-classes.
- Training curriculum and practical resources to support the development of arts and community arts activity in times of crisis in Lebanon, Syria and other host countries in the region is developed and disseminated.
- Five community arts initiatives participate in a structured professional development programme and receive seed financing to enable them to develop new models and approaches.
- A piece of research/evaluation is produced to enable more effective evidence-based advocacy on the role of arts in culture in community development.⁵⁰

PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities

The project worked with Syrian artists and community-based arts initiatives in Lebanon. It aimed to involve both Syrian artists living in Lebanon as refugees and Lebanese artists.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

Project activities and outcomes relevant to reducing violence and conflict resolution

Two of the projects were successful in bringing together Syrian and Lebanese artists. The first was a film animation project which Lebanese university level students were keen to join because it was providing techniques and materials to which they would not otherwise have had access and led to changed perceptions among the Lebanese participants. It shows that positive outcomes are possible when project design appeals to both sides. These comments came from Lebanese participants:

'I came to know Syrian artists. It was important for me. I met many people. And they introduced me to others. It was very important. I came to know how much Syrians used to work in animation. I came to know about the arts in Syria.'

'I have a personal view. In Lebanon, they follow everything Western. The artists that come from Syria and the culture from Syria, it is very "genuine", "real", it has another flavour... Honestly, I feel like Syrian artists are more down-to-earth... Here the European culture is widespread... Lebanese drawings are nice, but they are déjà vu and influenced by pre-existing styles. Syrians work on the concepts directly. This creative, artistic aspect is not found in our artists – we follow what is pre-existing.' (Lebanese female participant)

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*

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The second project was Enabling Peace through Dialogue and Art (EPDA), a multimedia art project which aimed to encourage communication between the Syrian and Lebanese communities in the Saadnayel region of the Bekaa valley. However, Wissam Al-Ghati, joint co-ordinator of EPDA, reported,

*'We suffered a lot to attract participants of various backgrounds, especially Lebanese participants. When we launched the call for participation, 20 Lebanese people contacted us... but when they learned we are Syrian, they no longer came. Syrians continued to come.'*⁵¹

The evaluators interviewed young people who had participated in the micro-projects and gathered almost uniformly positive opinions:

'Before the project, we always thought about what was happening in Syria. Now, we no longer think about the past, we think about the future. The exercises enabled us to forget and to think of tomorrow. We used to think 'I am a refugee in Lebanon'. Raghad let us think that we need to make the most of opportunities offered to us here in Lebanon. We learned that a person has no limits, he is the reason for his own success and he is the reason for his own failure.' (Aspiring 16 year old actor, EPDA project).

'All the collaborators and teachers commented on how the students were transformed, from the way they comport themselves to their awareness of their world around them and their belief in theatre... As for the adults, we were overwhelmed by how much we grew as artists. A young person transforms much more over one day than an adult... but the rate of change of an adult working with adolescents increases... we found a sense of belief in the artistic urgency of working with young people... side-by-side. Professionals and amateurs, adults and adolescents, were collaborating and working side-by-side.' (Eyad Houssami, leader of the Family Ti-Jean project)⁵²

'We were able to make a message to reach others. Before, we were unable to express ourselves. Now we can express ourselves through writing or filmmaking. When I made the film, and people came and watched me, I felt like yes, people are listening to me.' (School child participating in film project, Shatila camp, Beirut)

A synthesis report written for the British Council observed that Syrian artists found Lebanon enriching because it was 'an independent cultural society' but that restrictions placed on them by the Lebanese government engendered feelings of isolation and were an obstacle to possibilities of working with the local community. As a consequence, they wanted to work with projects connecting them with fellow Syrians 'as a way of collecting their experiences in diaspora, healing and empower themselves collectively in their new harsh surrounding'.⁵³ This statement seems to support the evaluation observation that Syrian artists in Lebanon were willing and keen to work with refugee communities.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

The project evaluation revealed that while the implementing partners (Ettijahad, International Alert and the British Council) agreed that art plays an important role in transforming individuals and societies, this view was not shared by the majority of the Syrian artists chosen to implement projects. Some felt that art should not be instrumentalised in order to 'actively promote resilience or challenge conflict narratives'.⁵⁴ Evaluators observed that there was a confusion and conflict between the two streams of the project 'Arts and Culture' and 'Peacebuilding and Art' and recommended that any future project should separate these two streams and negotiate an agreed middle area where the two would overlap and work together.

The tension around the project content was felt so keenly in the design phase that, according to Charlotte Onslow, the project manager for International Alert, the peace-building partner, the words 'peace' and 'peacebuilding' had to be avoided altogether.⁵⁵ Resilience, a word used liberally in the project literature, came to define project objectives – with the ultimate outcome being about increasing the resilience of Syrian artists, networks of artists as well as refugee and host communities now and in the longer term.

There was real resentment among the project grantees at being told, as they saw it, how they might address conflicts in their area or reduce the likelihood of young people being radicalised. They felt that the session on conflict sensitivity which they were asked to attend was condescending in the extreme since they all had experience of working in refugee communities. They were aware of the drivers of conflicts, and saw that divisions and conflict were structural and had been created and were being used by political leaders and did not accept that it was not their role to attempt to resolve them. They saw their role as providing opportunities for young people to act, make films etc. against a background of conflict and deprivation, and so to build confidence gained through self-expression in a safe space.⁵⁶

51. *Ibid.*, page 21.

52. *Ibid.*

53. Mizher, C (2017) *Synthesis Report: the main findings of the consultations around Create Syria*. This report also hints at the tensions between the three partners in Create Syria and urges them to work together, page 11.

54. Sawaf, Z and Mouawad, J (2016) *Create Syria – End Term Evaluation*. October 31 2016.

55. *Ibid.*, page 12.

56. Interview with British Council manager, 24 July 2018.

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Create Syria, as carried out, ‘... achieved the expected results and has contributed greatly to the resilience of the Syrian artists/grantees and to the short-term, emotional resilience of the participants within their micro-grant projects. A clear indication of the project’s impact on the level of the wider community and especially among Syrian-Lebanese relations is not yet visible.’ The short timescale of the project, six months extended to a year, meant that it was impossible for project participants to have any lasting impact on community relations.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The objectives of Create Syria are to support and encourage selected Syrian artists and to foster resilience among Syrian refugee communities in Lebanon and, through the arts, to build bridges with their host communities, not to deepen divisions. Conflict sensitivity is a guiding principle and the project seeks to foster collaboration with Lebanese artists and communities, but the primary targets appear to be the artists themselves and the Syrian refugee community.

The evaluation and reflections from project partners make clear that:

- Create Syria was effective in boosting the morale of participating Syrian artists (the project organisers) living as refugees in Lebanon; in providing appropriate management training; and in connecting them with international networks which could be a source of further support.
- Participation in the micro-projects organised by the grantees was a positive experience for the young people and school children who took part in them. For some it was a refreshing break from the boredom of refugee existence.
- The increased confidence and resilience gained by micro-project participants was an individual experience and did not extend to communities. Given the short timescale of the project it is difficult to say how enduring this increased confidence will be.

5 HOPES
PROJECT SUMMARY
<p>Project name: Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians (HOPES)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funders: European Union (EU MADAD Fund). • Delivery partners (international and national): German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD); Campus France; NUFFIC (Netherlands) and the British Council. • Start and finish dates/Duration: April 2016 – November 2019 (three years, seven months). • Geographical area(s) covered: Egypt, Iraq (KRI), Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. Initially intended to include Syria but this has not been possible. • Total budget: €12 million. • Total number of people participating: British Council aims to help 4,000 young Syrians to enter and complete university over four years. The counselling and scholarship work package is intended to reach 42,000 people and the provision of short-term training courses and capacity building is intended to reach 11,650 people. • Area of British Council work: Higher education.
OVERVIEW
<p>Context</p> <p>Due to the war in Syria, 4.7 million Syrians have fled to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. Many of these vulnerable people are university aged, but only around one third of the number that would have studied at university in Syria are enrolled in university programmes in host countries. Barriers to entering education include a lack of English and other language skills, a lack of recognised documentation of previous learning and high tuition fees. Failure to complete formal education will hold back the personal and career development of these people and the development of Syria itself post-conflict. (British Council project brief)</p> <p>The British Council seeks to empower young Syrians living as refugees in neighbouring countries to build their career paths by directly addressing their education needs.</p> <p>Project description</p> <p>The project is being implemented by a consortium of international agencies, led by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) that includes the British Council, Campus France and NUFFIC (Netherlands). These institutions have been successfully co-operating for years in major EU-funded initiatives.⁵⁷</p> <p>The project has four work packages:</p> <p><i>Scholarships and counselling.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this is to facilitate further study opportunities by providing scholarships to cover enrolment fees, since the vast majority of young Syrian refugees do not have sufficient financial resources to cover this cost. <p><i>Higher Education English Access Programme (HEEAP)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This work package is intended to provide English language teaching for 4,000 students with the aim of enabling them to access and/or complete further education courses in institutions where proficiency in English is a requirement. The HEEAP programme is running in four countries: Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Turkey. <p><i>Call for proposals</i></p> <p>This work package provides funding awards for innovative education projects. Educational institutions in the participating countries can put forward project proposals. It is intended that 3,550 people will participate in and benefit directly from the funded projects thereby contributing to an increased number of Syrian students enrolled and trained.</p> <p>In Year 2 applicants have been asked to include information about how their project will contribute to improving relations between Syrian students and their host communities. The aim is that projects help to encourage dialogue, understanding, tolerance and acceptance between the young Syrians and host communities.</p>

57. HOPES Project (n.d.) Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians (HOPES). Project Brief.

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Stakeholder dialogue, networks and information tools

This work package covers national and regional stakeholder dialogue events as well as communications activities and tools.

The British Council's role is to work with ministries of higher education and universities in all the project countries to develop and deliver HEEAP. This involves university-based English and study skills courses for Syrians that enable them to enter higher education institutions in the countries they are in. This work package aims to help 4,000 individual students into university over the four years.

The British Council is directly responsible for HEEAP but also contributes to the wider programme.

The project is on target to surpass the target number of scholarships intended (310). Women are fairly well represented in the grantees: of the 235 scholarships granted in the second year for BA, MA and diploma studies across the region, 124 were for men and 111 were for women. On the other hand, the project is well below target in terms of providing counselling. The reasons given for this are the distance of the help centres from the places where most refugees live and the barriers that prevent young Syrians seeking advice through personal contact with an unfamiliar organisation/institution.

The Higher Education English Access Programme has been successful in getting students to enrol for courses and positive progress has been made by learners, but has had a much lower rate of students completing the programme than intended (1,231 students had successfully completed the programme by the end of year 2, while the programme target is for 4,000 students to complete successfully). Significant drop-out rates are attributed to the nature of student lives, which mean that they often have to change their timetables and can't participate in the classes they are signed up for.

The calls for proposals in the first two years of the programme have led to financing being agreed for 36 proposals.

Relevance of SDG 16 to the project

The project's main relevance to the SDGs is to Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

It is relevant and contributes to SDG 16 in several ways:

- Developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels (Target 16.6). This is mainly through promoting and supporting improvements in the capacity of tertiary education institutions and better co-ordination of higher and further education institutions in response to the Syrian conflict. The project is making a direct contribution.
- Ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels (Target 16.7) by involving young people and wider stakeholders in dialogue and networks about higher and further education responses to the Syrian conflict. The project is making a direct contribution.
- Giving young people a route out of violence and opportunities to build a peaceful future both for themselves (through having a profession and/or skills for employment) and for their communities (through having skills which they can contribute for the rebuilding of Syria when the war ends). Having capacities for reconstruction and development will be essential to help the country get back to a more stable and conflict-free state. The project's contribution is indirect.

OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of the project

To improve perspectives for young Syrians and to contribute to the preparation for post-crisis reconstruction of Syria.

Specific aims

To increase participation and provide better access to quality further and higher education opportunities in the neighbouring region for vulnerable Syrian youth as well as host communities.

Intended outcomes

1. Increased numbers of Syrian students are enrolled and trained in certified and recognised higher education programmes and training courses, including innovative further education options.
2. The capacity of tertiary education institutions and the capacity of young Syrians and other vulnerable groups to access further and higher education opportunities has improved significantly.
3. A counselling mechanism providing information and support to young Syrians about existing opportunities for further and higher education is established.
4. Interventions in the higher and further education sector related to the Syrian crisis are better co-ordinated through stakeholder dialogue, networks and information tools.

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PARTICIPANTS

Syrian refugees unfamiliar with the host country's education system

- A lack of information impedes students' chances of finding appropriate education opportunities.
- Limited recognition of qualifications and incomplete documentation of former learning achievements.
- Many Syrian refugees do not have the appropriate language skills to attend and complete higher education courses. Arabic was the language of higher education in Syria, but in host countries Syrian refugees frequently encounter language barriers that effectively exclude them from the system. This is due to many courses being offered in English in host countries (or Turkish in Turkey).
- High tuition fees and living expenses for students in host countries. Many Syrian refugees cannot afford these costs and have limited time to study because they are obliged to seek employment to support their families.

Students in host countries

- High competition at many local universities due to limited availability of study places. Syrian refugees put additional pressure on the higher education system and cause greater competition.

Local higher education providers

- Further and higher education providers in host communities receive financial support to provide innovative educational offers and thereby improve their own capacity.
- Staff build capacity in providing refugees and other vulnerable groups with academic study and other learning opportunities.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

Project activities and outcomes relevant to reducing violence and conflict resolution

The need to address problems associated with the context of conflict and violence has emerged in different elements of the project. Work package 1 which provides scholarships for young Syrians, including refugees and displaced people, to continue their studies, has incorporated a 'social factor' in the assessment of young people to participate in the programme:

*'Important secondary criteria will be humanitarian aspects such as social needs and vulnerability, conflict-sensitiveness as well as intercultural and social engagement of candidates. For this reason, a "social factor" index will be calculated based on a number of standardised items (place of residence in Syria, current residence, family size and situation, duration of stay in the host country; identification as vulnerable group/household by UNHCR and UNRWA etc.). The identification of the most vulnerable candidates may be supported by including social workers in the selection committees.'*⁵⁸

While all scholarship candidates have to meet the basic requirements for academic qualifications to ensure they will be able to make the most of their university studies, vulnerability is a crucial variable in the selection process. The programme's vulnerability criteria are based on UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) criteria. As well as Syrian refugees, students from Jordan and Lebanon who meet the vulnerability criteria have also been able to apply for scholarships.

One of the key components of the call for proposals work package is to improve the capacity of local institutions to provide quality higher education opportunities to young Syrians and disadvantaged youth from the host communities. There was a high level of interest in this funding, with 2,327 applications received in the first two years. A total of 36 projects have been funded. The institutions that implemented projects in the first year were encouraged to provide advice to those applying in Year 2. This was very successful and created a multiplier effect by not only improving the quality of education and organisational capacity but also creating additional local expertise in the higher education sector.⁵⁹

Meetings with stakeholders also identified the need for the CfP work package to address the problem of conflict between the target group (Syrian refugees) and host communities. To address this need, in round 2 applicants were required to include a social cohesion component. The aim is that this component will enhance dialogue, understanding, tolerance and acceptance between the Syrian youth and the host communities.

More broadly, the project is addressing the issue of refugees and options for peace in the future. This is the focus of the fourth work package on Stakeholder Dialogue, Networks and Information Tools. Regular National Stakeholder gatherings are organised in each of the five project countries to provide a platform to discuss ways of facilitating the development of joint strategies and co-ordinating interventions in the higher and further education sector related to the Syrian crisis.

58. HOPES (2016) Annex 1 Description of the action, page 12.

59. HOPES (2018) Interim Narrative Report 26-04-2017 to 25-04-2018.

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During the first year of the project three National Stakeholder Dialogues took place in Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt gathering players from governmental institutions active in the arena of higher education (HE), universities, donors and projects to discuss key themes related to refugees and higher education. (HOPES, 2017). In the second year a regional conference was held in Beirut in co-operation with the EU.

There is an element of the project which is about creating future pathways for young Syrian refugees who are living in refugee camps and temporary shelter and have seen their education and their chances of developing the skills and capacities interrupted. This has an indirect impact on reducing violent conflict in the region as helping these young people to start or continue their higher education and get qualifications helps to reduce the possibility that they could be recruited to violent pathways, for example by extremist organisations. This intended outcome of the programme was identified in the description: *'providing full scholarships, which enable the most vulnerable young refugees to access quality education, thereby reducing the risks of negative coping behaviours and strengthening their employability.'*⁶⁰ This aspect is not discussed in the first two interim reports.⁶¹

Project activities and outcomes relevant to strengthening institutions

The capacity of tertiary education institutions in the region to provide young Syrians and other vulnerable groups with opportunities to access further and higher education has improved significantly. Work packages 1 (counselling and scholarships), 2 (HEEAP) and 3 (call for proposals) are all now providing support for local education institutions in the project countries to improve their programmes and methodologies and thereby strengthen their institutions.

The British Council's HEEAP programme includes the creation of a network of trusted partner institutions committed to the project, the HEEAP programme and other project activities. These institutions are receiving teacher training, syllabuses and materials for English language teaching; as a result the capacity of further education institutions in the region to provide young Syrians and other vulnerable groups with opportunities to access further and higher education has improved significantly.

*'It is an integrated approach that helps teachers and teacher educators improve their performance and achieve better results from their learners and is part of the British Council's response to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.'*⁶²

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

The main components contributing to the development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions (Target 16.6) are work packages 3 (call for proposals) and 4 (stakeholder engagement and dialogue). Work package 2 on English language teaching has also developed the capacity of national education institutions to provide English teaching by training 170 English teachers and providing support with curriculums and materials. These work packages have led to improvements in the capacity of tertiary education institutions and better co-ordination of higher and further education institutions in response to the Syrian crises.

Involving young people and wider stakeholders in dialogue and networks about higher and further education responses to the Syrian crises contributes partially to Target 16.7: ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

The following elements of the design and implementation of the programme have the potential to contribute to SDG 16:

- Education desks in each of the five countries provide information related to higher education study opportunities which are open to refugees from Syria in the region, including online programmes, language courses and training and funding opportunities. This counselling service is intended to enable potential students to find high-quality training and higher education courses and innovative programmes that meet their needs. This activity means that programme staff are in direct contact with the target population and can get a good understanding of the challenges they face to continue their further education and training. However, it was noted that the location of the education desks may make them less accessible for some potential users.⁶³
- The close involvement of UNHCR in the assessment and selection of scholarship candidates ensure that the specific conditions and needs of refugees are understood and prioritised.⁶⁴

60. HOPES (2016) *op. cit.*, page 32.

61. HOPES (2017) Interim Narrative Report 26-04-2016 to 25-04-2017; HOPES (2018) *op. cit.*

62. HOPES (2018) *op. cit.*, page 20.

63. HOPES (2017) *op. cit.*, page 2.

64. HOPES (2018) *op. cit.*

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- Stakeholder engagement facilitates discussion about multiple issues affecting the way that Syrian refugees can be helped to continue their training or further education and how this will contribute to the preparation for post-crisis reconstruction of Syria. Inaugural events have been held in three countries as well as one regional event.

CONCLUSIONS

The programme is still in progress. This, combined with the reality that many of the outcomes of an education programme of this kind are unlikely to be seen in the short term, means that the HOPES programme is considered to have the potential to contribute to achieving SDG 16 rather than having actually contributed.

Overall, the programme is intended to contribute to the reconstruction of Syria after the conflict ends, which could help to reduce conflict: *'Many Syrians will return to Syria eventually. The improved skills of the beneficiaries will not only help them and their families but also increase the potential to rebuild Syria after the crisis. Since these returnees will have a multiplier effect, the action will have a strong and long lasting positive impact on the reconstruction of the country.'*⁶⁵ In the present situation it is impossible to say how far this is being achieved, so this is considered a potential contribution.

The programme is also intended to *'benefit the host institutions and host populations to sustain local support and avoid a backlash against the refugee beneficiaries'*.⁶⁶ There are multiple factors outside the influence of the programme, including international events and processes, that influence relations between refugees and host communities and it will be challenging to assess the extent to which the programme has contributed to sustaining support for refugees in host communities but this is certainly an area of impact which should be considered in the final evaluation.

By facilitating stakeholder dialogue, the programme is seeking to create a network of institutional stakeholders which gives increased capacity to address the educational challenges created by violent conflict in the region. This work is still at an early stage and the project is considered to have the potential to make a contribution to strengthening institutions in this field.

65. HOPES (2016) page 40.

66. HOPES (2016) page 18.

6 ILMPOSSIBLE – TAKE A CHILD TO SCHOOL

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Name: ILMPossible – Take a child to school

- Duration: January 2014 – April 2017 (includes a four-month extension). A second phase on the programme began in 2018.
- *Geographical area(s) covered:* 70 districts in the four states of Pakistan: Balochistan, Khyber Pashtunkwa, Sindh and Punjab.
- *Total number of people participating:* 189,986 children, 15,000 ILMbassadors, 3,000 members of Mohalla Committees, 700 DOSTI teachers.
- *Total budget:* Not known.
- *Funder:* Jointly funded by Educate a Child (EAC) Qatar and the British Council in a 50 per cent matched funding agreement.
- Delivery partners (international and national): ILMPossible – Take a child to school has three strategic partners (Children's Global Network Pakistan, School of Leadership Foundation and Free and Fair Election Network) and 27 implementation partners that provide technical and on-the-ground support for the programme.
- *Area of British Council work:* Education and Society (Civil Society)

OVERVIEW

Context

In 2014, a report by the Pakistani education advocacy organisation Alif Ailaan⁶⁷ identified over 25 million out-of-school children in Pakistan.⁶⁸ A year later, Pakistan missed the Millennium Development Goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015. 'The country continues to struggle with low enrolment, and even more problematic retention figures.'⁶⁹

A significant reason why many children in Pakistan do not attend school is because they are working. Child labour is gradually being eliminated from industries such as carpet making and garment-making but children still work in small-scale production and agriculture, as part of family production units or to bring in income for the family. The idea of children working is still accepted in many parts of society.

Violence and conflict are endemic in many parts of Pakistan and this is another factor causing children to miss school. The violence is of different kinds: in Khyber Pushtunkwa province violence is associated with corruption; Peshawar is prone to terrorism; in Karachi there is a problem of violent crime. Alif Ailaan's recent reports on the state of education in different provinces describe some of the consequences:

- There have been attacks on targets associated with education in Khyber Pushtunkwa:
*'Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's schools have suffered both from neglect and from the concerted attacks on schools across various parts of the province. Education at large has been a domain for severe political contestation between ordinary Pakistanis and violent extremists – perhaps best symbolised by the attempt to assassinate young education activist Malala Yousafzai in 2012, and the savage attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar in 2014. Yet the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have consistently sought schools that offer a quality education to their children.'*⁷⁰
- High levels of immigration, especially of people displaced by fighting in Afghanistan: a total of three million people since the 1980s.⁷¹

Project description

Started by 30 Pakistanis who went through Active Citizens training, ILMPossible was launched in response to the government's declaration of an 'education emergency', when it became clear that Pakistan would fail to meet its 2015 Millennium Development Goals. The project addresses the issue of the high number of children who do not attend school or who leave school before completing their primary education. The programme also addresses the need to strengthen provincial education services by giving a voice to organised communities to ensure accountability.

67. www.alifailaan.pk

68. Alif Ailaan (2014) *25 million broken promises: the crisis of Pakistan's out-of-school children*. Islamabad: Alif Ailaan.

69. Siddiqi, S, Zafar, A, Noor, J, Sattar, M, Ijaz, H and Ahson, U (2017) *Take a Child to School Evaluation Report*.

70. Alif Ailaan (2018) 2013–2018 Five Years of Education Reforms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Wins, Losses and Challenges for 2013–2023. Islamabad: Alif Ailaan. page 7.

71. Alif Ailaan (2018) *op cit*.

6 IMPOSSIBLE – TAKE A CHILD TO SCHOOL

The principal focus of the programme activities were:

- **Reducing violence and conflict resolution, including for specific groups in the population (for example, women, children, older people, disabled, ethnic groups.)**

The programme advocates children's right to safety and quality education. Take a child to school has shone a light on the issue of modern day slavery in the case of young children who are forced to work, either on their own or as part of their family group. These children have no documents, no rights and do not receive pay for their work. They are prevented from going to school because this would stop them working. Take a child to school ILMbassadors confront this issue in their conversations with parents and local stakeholders. They create awareness that this situation is unacceptable.

'In my community poverty is extremely high and people prefer that their child earns rather than that he/she studies. This has led to the rise of illiteracy. I am worried (about the future of the children/community) and want to create awareness about the importance of education.' (Shakir Ali, Battagram, ILMPossible, 2018)

- **Strengthening institutions**

Two of the three strategic elements of the programme relate to the strengthening of institutions:

1. The creation of Mohalla Committees which are local committees that don't seek to replace existing authorities but to act as a mechanism for local people to hold local authorities to account (see case study)
2. Working through ILMbassadors: ILMbassadors receive a four-day Active Citizen's training in debate, dialogue, advocacy and community mobilisation and development. Volunteers learn how to mobilise support, leverage networks and engage in effective conflict resolution. In essence, the training imparts life-long skills of leadership. Volunteering as an ILMbassador offers young people a chance to do something useful which gives them a profile and work experience in provinces with a very high level of unemployment.

Relevance of SDG 16 to the project

SDG 16 issues are not explicitly addressed in the programme but are implicit in two aspects of it:

- Target 16.2: Addressing abuse of children in the form of child labour. Preventing children from going to school because they have to work is a form of modern-day slavery, which often occurs as domestic labour or work within the family unit, but can sometimes take the form of trafficked children, child prostitution or children working as bonded labour. The programme aims to raise awareness of the government's constitutional obligation to provide free education for five to 16-year-olds, as well as to promote enrolment.
- Targets 16.6 and 16.7: Strengthening institutions. The programme's approach is to support engagement between the community and the state education services and to hold the state services to account. This will make the state institutions more transparent and stronger.

SDG 16 is also addressed indirectly by the DOSTI element of the programme, which uses sports to bring children and communities together, thereby facilitating conflict resolution and recognising diversity.

The programme's hypotheses were that better information for parents would make them more committed to enrolling their children in school; that community organisations' and leaders' sense of ownership of the enrolment programme would mobilise resources and increase accountability on the part of state education institutions; and that a positive learning environment created by a life skills and sports component (the DOSTI component) would encourage children to stay at school with the support of their parents.

6 ILMPOSSIBLE – TAKE A CHILD TO SCHOOL

Case study: Mohalla Committees (ILMpossible, 2018)

The Mohalla Committees are civil society organisations that work alongside communities, district education offices, parents and children to enrol and retain out-of-school children in schools. Mohalla Committees are a powerful tool and have a long tradition of bringing positive socio-economic changes in communities through collective action and advocacy. Instituting Mohalla Committees in societies ensures sustainable community action that has the potential to outlive the programme tenure and goals.

Mohalla Committees are set up in union councils and should be made up of 11–15 members from the following stakeholder sectors:

- Three parent members.
- Two school representatives (head teacher or teacher from two different schools).
- One civil society partner.
- One local government representative.
- Local influencers/decision-maker (at least three in each committee: these could be educationalists, community activists, businessmen, Masjid imam).
- Three youth volunteers (ILMbassadors).
- Two female activists.

Each Mohalla Committee works on average with four to five schools over three years. The role of the Mohalla Committee is to:

- Facilitate access to communities and provide support for enrolment campaigns.
- Engage in wider advocacy for enrolment and retention within communities and other influencers.
- Liaise with supply-side (schools and government line departments) institutions to resolve identified retention and enrolment issues.
- Increase transparency and visibility of the project to encourage community buy-in.

Where cultural sensitivities prevent the formation of mixed committees or women's participation in the Mohalla Committee is challenged, a parallel female group made up of seven to eight women should be formed to oversee and support the interventions in government girl's schools. However, the evaluation of the Take a child to school programme found that in many places there were no women on Mohalla Committees.⁷²

OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of the project

The project's overall goals were to successfully enrol 135,000 out-of-school children in Pakistani state (or semi-state) schools and to retain at least 80 per cent of the original (135,000) enrolments in the same schools. During the programme the target for the number of children enrolled was raised to 185,000.

The project's objectives were to:

1. Increase the number of better informed parents committed to enrolling their children in school.
2. Develop strong co-ordination ownership amongst community influencers and partners to facilitate access to schools and enrolment.
3. Contribute to a positive learning environment through life skills and sports curriculum (DOSTI component) to encourage children to stay at school.

PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities

The main target of the programme is **out-of-school children**. These are children aged five to 11 who have either never been to primary school or have dropped out of primary school. Primary school covers all grades up to grade five.

In order to get the children into school, the programme works with their **parents and guardians**, to make them aware that children's right to education is enshrined in law, and to improve their knowledge of the importance of primary education, enhance their commitment to sending children to primary school, address negative beliefs about primary education and support them in completing the enrolment process.

The work with parents and guardians is carried out by 15,000 **ILMbassadors**. These are male and female volunteers aged 18–32 who have achieved their Secondary School Certificate. Each ILMbassador is trained in his/her responsibilities, in communication and influencing skills and to understand the state of primary education at the local and national levels.

72. Siddiqi, S. et al. (2017) *op cit*.

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The Ilmbassadors are supported by **Mohalla Committees** (see case study) which are male, female or mixed community-based organisations that operate at the Union Council level in order to achieve the project's objectives. About 3,000 people have become involved in Mohalla Committees during the project. Committees may include influencers such as local Imams, Nazims, district education officers, retired teachers, businessmen and social activists. Mohalla Committee members also receive training for their role.

Stakeholders

The programme aims to engage key stakeholders such as **government officials, elected representatives, and community members** (including community leaders) in addressing issues related to primary school enrolment and student retention. This engagement process is expected to be led by Mohalla Committees.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

Project activities and outcomes relevant to reducing violence and conflict resolution

Take a child to school was run in parallel with the states' own efforts to get children into school. The success of Take a child to school in a context where many states made little progress in enrolling and retaining children in education suggests that the advocacy approach used was successful.

• Reducing violence towards children (Target 16.2)

189,986 children were enrolled in school over the project period. 120,237 were still attending the same school in December 2016 (64 per cent). The children who were still attending at the end of the project period are likely not to be being subjected to trafficking or child labour, including prostitution.

Child labour is still widely accepted in Pakistan but represents an example of modern day slavery. The 2016 Global Slavery Index estimated the number of modern slavery victims in Pakistan as 2.134 million (1.13 per cent of the total population). Pakistan ranked sixth out of 167 countries in terms of the proportion of the population slavery.⁷³ Given this situation, the requirement that all children should attend school is an important move towards child protection.

The programme evaluators found that 80 per cent of the parents interviewed expressed a desire to educate children enough to lead towards some gainful employment. However, there is a concern that few parents recognised their children's right to education and that this might mean that when labour is in high demand, they might take children out of school to work.

This was echoed in an interview with one of the Ilmbassadors:

'Normally, parents agree to send their children to school after we have explained the importance of education to them. But when it is time for harvest, they just take them with them into the fields. Now, there are many times we have told parents, these are really young children. Just do their work over one or two additional days, but let them stay in school and keep learning. Parents' response has been positive. Actually, they never thought about these things before. They never thought it was possible to just ask somebody else to do their children's work in the fields. (Muzaffargarh)

A survey of parents involved in the programme found that the increase in awareness of the importance of education varied between states, from 28 per cent in Sindh to 43 per cent in Balochistan. The increase was highest in the two most deprived provinces (Balochistan and Khyber Paktunkwa).

• Increasing understanding between different groups and reducing conflict (the DOSTI programme)

The project also aimed to create a friendlier and more engaging environment for primary school children. It used the DOSTI educational programme to enhance education in sports and life skills. Younger students (grades one to three) receive life skills and physical education once a week. This was intended to increase retention of all students. Schools were provided with sports kits, life skills educational material and their teachers received training.

Project activities and outcomes relevant to strengthening institutions

The programme has been implemented across 65 districts in Khyber Pashtunkwa, Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan and delivered through a network of 26 local NGOs, focusing on developing community level advocacy and support systems.

Working in collaboration with civil society partners, the Take a child to school programme has mobilised, trained and organised 3,000 community members into Mohalla Committees. The committees are formed by the programme's Community Mobiliser in each district. The process of formation of the committees seeks to be democratic: the Community Mobiliser identifies local and community activists and with their help convenes a broad-based community meeting with around 45–50 participants.

73. The Global Slavery Index (2016) *The Walk Free Foundation (an initiative of The Mindereroo Foundation Pty Ltd ATF The Mindereroo Foundation Trust)* www.globalslaveryindex.org

6 ILMPOSSIBLE – TAKE A CHILD TO SCHOOL

These committees collaborate with local administration to address barriers to school enrolment and retention through advocacy and self-help initiatives. They are supported by the network of 15,000 young ILMbassadors trained by local civil society organisations to run door-to-door campaigns and work with parents for enrolment of out-of-school children.

Project activities and outcomes relevant to other SDGs

- *SDG 5 Gender equality*

Educational disadvantage has a strong gender bias, starting from enrolment: the percentage of out-of-school girls (55 per cent) in Pakistan is greater than out-of-school boys (45 per cent) (Alif Ailaan Report).

Despite this awareness and the commitment to encourage female participation in Mohalla Committees as a means of reaching out to and motivating mothers to encourage their daughters' education, the numbers of women participating in Mohalla Committees is very low: the rate of female participation was below 20 per cent across the four provinces, with Balochistan reporting no involvement of women in Mohalla Committees.⁷⁴

ILmbassador volunteers also highlighted the need to increase the participation of female volunteers:

*'Parallel system of female and male ILmbassadors should be made as women sometimes cannot work with men under some circumstances and there are some situations that women are better suited to deal with e.g. visiting a girls' school.'*⁷⁵

The evaluation team also found that DOSTI physical education sessions were not designed to consider local sensitivities about girls' activity.⁷⁶

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

Description of programme/project governance and implementation processes relevant to SDG 16

- *Participation in design and delivery by stakeholders and communities*

The project was started by 30 participants on the British Council's Active Citizens programme, in response to the failure of Pakistan to meet its Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015. The programme aims to raise awareness around the government's constitutional obligation to provide free education for five to 16 year olds, as well as promote enrolment. From tackling corporal punishment and lobbying for funding for teachers and equipment, to reopening schools, the projects designed so far by ILMPOSSIBLE's 1,500 active volunteers have already brought significant benefits.

One teacher, Muhammad Bahadur Zafar harnessed his Active Citizens training to open two schools that bring together the religious teachings of the madrassahs and modern education.⁷⁷

- Identification of the Mohalla Committees as a mechanism for giving local people a voice and enabling them to hold district committees to account for implementing agreed policies. There has been a devolution of power to the district level in Pakistan. The Mohalla Committees bring together people who would not otherwise have been represented. The training gives them information about what they can influence and how.
- Bringing people together to build trust and capacity for peaceful relations. The process of building institutions as a basis for peace takes time: it involves creating the conditions for people to work together and develop mutual trust. These are long-term processes which are hard to measure. More information would be needed about what happens in committee meetings, what subjects are discussed and who takes decisions.
- One concern of the programme evaluation was that not enough had been done to develop ownership of parts of the project on the part of official bodies. That means that the programme's sustainability cannot be assured. This is particularly the case where the DOSTI programme is being used to develop life skills and help children to find non-violent ways of dealing with conflict. DOSTI's sports activities require equipment and facilities where children can play games and do sports. Public bodies could use some of their budget to cover these needs but will not do so if they don't see the schools as being part of their responsibility.

74. Siddiqi, S. et al. (2017) *op cit.*, page 30.

75. Quoted in Siddiqi, S. et al. (2017) *op cit.*, page 32.

76. Siddiqi, S. et al. (2017) *op cit.*, page 36.

77. 'There was a lack of understanding between modern and religious education. The concept of how madrassah education spreads terrorist activities and hatred against the West has to be subtly eradicated. Opening these schools is a very small step to changing the way people think.' (<https://www.britishcouncil.org/active-citizens/global-locations/south-asia/pakistan-drive-to-engage-next-generation>)

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CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

Take a child to school came out of a British Council Active Citizens project and demonstrates the British Council's contribution to the SDGs, including SDG 4: Education and SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions.

The final evaluation report⁷⁸ identified a great strength of the British Council's continued cultural diplomacy efforts: its ability to work through partners established through previous projects and assemble motivated individuals who can engage with wide sectors of the population. The British Council has a legitimacy which enables it to encourage people at different levels to work together and produce clear results.

The way that the different roles of ILMbassadors, parents and Mohalla Committee members linked up and supported each other is something that can be reproduced in future programmes and could be made more sustainable if public institutions could be encouraged to take greater responsibility for the schools.

78. Siddiqi, S. et al. (2017) *op cit.*, page 44.

7 MYJUSTICE

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project name: MyJustice

- Start and finish dates: August 2015 – 31 July 2019
- Geographical area(s) covered: three states, three regions and 64 townships in Burma (Myanmar)
- Funders: European Union
- Delivery partners (international): 34 participating partners including: Action Aid Myanmar, AFXB Equality, Myanmar Genuine People's Servants, Kings and Queens, Legal Clinic, Myanmar Legal Resource Centre, Norwegian Refugee Council, Ratana Metta, Terre des Hommes, Yaung Chi Oo Workers', Yangon Film School Association.
- Delivery partners (national): partnerships with local civil society organisations
- Total budget: €20 million
- Total number of people participating: (data below from mid-term review report, 2017): 29,077 people reached by legal awareness raising activities in communities; 4,042 beneficiaries provided with legal representation; 2,619 people provided with legal advice; 547 paralegals trained (60 per cent women); 44 Attorney General's Office officials completed English language training through MyJustice support (53 per cent women); 164 lawyers trained; 1,185 General Administration officials trained (39 per cent women); 278 village/ward administrators trained (32 per cent women); 78,000 followers on MyJustice Facebook page.
- Area of British Council work: justice, security, stability

OVERVIEW

Context

Burma (Myanmar) has had over 50 years of military rule which, in order to enforce law and order, spread fear rather than the rule of law. The level of corruption within the justice system prevented most ordinary people in Myanmar from being able to access justice. Some groups of citizens are even less able to claim their rights, including women, ethnic and religious minorities and the poor in general. The control of many areas of the economy by the elite, including through control of the land and resources, disadvantages these groups even further.

According to a briefing report, the reality of local experiences of justice in (Burma) Myanmar is that disputes or injustices are often not reported, are downplayed or resolved at the lowest level possible. Notions of localised justice were encouraged during the decades of authoritarian rule and conflict that prevented the building of trust in state institutions, including the justice sector. This combines with socio-religious norms that encourage people to deal with problems within themselves to pay off past life debts and ensure good karma. Consequently, many people do not report matters and prefer to internalise the problem and make peace with it. This lack of reporting results in an emphasis on maintaining peace and order over social disruption. This briefing stressed that fair and non-discriminatory justice is needed but often not demanded and this particularly affects groups commonly discriminated against, including the poor, women, ethnic and religious minorities and non-conforming genders, who face particular challenges in accessing justice.⁷⁹

The British Council nine-month inception phase of the MyJustice project took place during a period of change in Burma (Myanmar) that culminated in the establishment of an elected NLD-majority government on 1 April 2016, led by the first civilian elected president to hold office in over 50 years. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has assumed a wide-ranging brief within government, including as State Counsellor of the new ministry which will oversee rule of law reforms.

The Yangon Justice Centre and Mawlamyaing Justice Centre were established in April 2013 with the support of the DFID Pyoe Pin programme. To facilitate the continued development of the two existing centres, MyJustice provided funding beginning 1 September 2015, to support these justice centres to conduct core activities providing free legal representation, advice, and assistance to poor and marginalised people in need of legal services, as well as to deliver and expand legal awareness activities to law students and faculty, and to the community at large.

This is the **Rule of Law and Access to Justice** component of the Strengthening Governance in Myanmar/ Burma programme of the European Union. SDG 16 issues are central to the project.

79. Policy Briefing 1, November 2016 Understandings of Justice in Myanmar. British Council, ODI and Safer World.

7 MYJUSTICE

OBJECTIVES

The MyJustice project has identified a wide range of issues through focus group discussions in communities and with different stakeholders: lack of access to justice with a focus on gender-based violence, children/youth, LGBT, housing/land, workers/labour, human rights, debt, drugs, civil documentation.

MyJustice aims to improve access to justice and legal aid for the poor and vulnerable communities, develop the capacity of justice sector professionals and strengthen selected rule of law institutions to better fulfil their mandates. There are four programme pillars: awareness raising activities; strengthening justice services; strengthening community-based dispute resolution mechanisms (CBDR); and engaging with justice sector policy.

The theory of change for the project is stated as: *'People have the knowledge, confidence and opportunities to have their disputes fairly and equitably resolved.'* The following results were expected:

1. Increased capacity within communities to use and apply knowledge and understanding about their rights.
2. Justice services are more widely available and of higher standard and increasingly meet the needs of communities and their residents.
3. Community-based dispute resolution mechanisms increasingly utilise inclusive and accountable approaches and methods within the communities that they serve.
4. Increased evidence and knowledge sharing to inform justice policy development and implementation.

PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities

MyJustice is working primarily at 'grassroots' level, but also engages with state actors and institutions exploring the space for links between the formal and informal sectors, to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the change of Burma's (Myanmar) legal system and institutions.

Since September 2015 two Justice Centres have provided legal advice and assistance to 169 clients in Yangon and 106 clients in Mon State. Record keeping of clients served by these Justice Centres has been limited and poorly organised, however the data available provides insight into the impact in the communities of the Justice Centres.

Analysis of the clients of the Yangon Justice Centre from September 2015 reveals the typical client is very young, with a median age of 24 years. Clients served by the Yangon Justice Centre also reported very limited incomes: the median income reported was €75 per month. More than one fifth of clients (21 per cent) reported having zero monthly income. Eighty-four per cent of clients are ethnic Bamar, while the next most-represented groups are Muslims (5.2 per cent) and Rakhine (2.4 per cent).

Most clients report living with families who would be affected by the arrest and outcome of the legal case, with clients in Yangon reporting a median of four family members who will be impacted. Women clients only made up 17.7 per cent and 19.3 per cent in the two centres.

Both Justice Centres provided legal advice and assistance to indigent people seeking advice in a wide variety of criminal and civil matters. The level of engagement required of Justice Centres varies from providing quick advice to people who call the Justice Centres by phone, to participating in negotiations between an employee and employer in a dispute over unpaid wages.

The Yangon Centre primarily sees clients facing charges of theft and gambling, relatively minor offences typical to urban populations. While in Mawlamyine, narcotics possession and use dominate the caseload of the Justice Centre lawyers, underscoring concerns civil society organisations have raised of the growing social threat of the increasing availability and use of narcotics in Mon State.

The main legal representation provided by Justice Centres was criminal defence. The centres also provided representation to 20 complainants, including 13 women, pursuing prosecutions for rape, kidnapping, assault, and acts which constitute sexual harassment.

Stakeholders

The project works directly with Union Attorney General's Office providing training for lawyers, law officers and administrative staff.

Paralegals, village administrators, community legal centres are supported to provide legal representation and advice for members of the community.

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OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

The main SDG target this programme addresses is: 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

Other SDG targets that are addressed to some extent are:

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

The policy work component is the most relevant to address both these targets. For example, the current work plan states that: A key platform for this engagement will be MyJustice's advisory role on the Rule of Law Centres and Justice Sector Co-ordination Body (JSCB) at the Union level. The programme will engage directly, and through partners, with selected State and Regional Justice Sector Co-ordination Bodies. MyJustice will continue to act as a thought leader in the justice sector, to convene networking and stakeholder engagement events to identify areas of potential policy reform opportunities for collaboration and learn from policy engagement processes from other fields such as the gender sector, entrepreneurs and others.

- Reducing violence and conflict resolution

Many issues have been identified relating to Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

Violence against women and children is widespread, with domestic violence particularly common. Rape of minors was also spoken about in a large number of communities. Human trafficking was talked about in Mon State and mostly affected girls. A range of crimes and disputes related to public insecurity were identified, including murder, theft and robbery, youth fighting, motorcycle accidents and violations by the security sector. However, these types of crimes are still only being partially addressed as many of those affected do not report for the reasons given above.

- Access to justice

Another key target is 16.b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

The core of the MyJustice programme is to strengthen community institutions, to help raise people's understanding of their legal rights and obligations, including through collaborations and links with community-based paralegals; to provide individualised advice and representation to those most in need; and to facilitate pathways to resolving their problems through formal or informal justice mechanisms.

Land disputes relating to historic land grabs by the military and government, illegal sale of land by authorities or tenants, squatting by unregistered migrants, inheritance disputes and disputes amongst neighbours about land boundaries are very common. In Yangon Region labour disputes were a growing concern in industrial communities, where the majority young female workforce complained of poor conditions and pay in the city's factories. Labour unions are attempting to play a stronger role but remain poorly understood. The use and sale of drugs were seen as crimes, as well as a trigger for disputes within communities, but the perception was that only drug users are punished while drug sellers are not penalised.

- Strengthening institutions

The British Council and partner organisations carried out research and analysis with rule of law organisations and community initiatives. They found a diverse range of community initiatives successfully applying para legalism, dispute resolution and problem-driven approaches to resolve the justice issues of particular groups (for example women, victims of land-grabs, and the LGBT community).

In contrast, the analysis of some of the rule of law institutions indicated that these are not open to recognising the deep flaws in the formal system. Members of the Judiciary interviewed denied there were any problems within the courts, despite over 12,000 complaints being raised by the public in three years. The political economy analysis concluded that there was significant space for MyJustice engagement at the local level, together with the desire for change as seen by the General Election in 2015.

7 MYJUSTICE

The programme aims to directly support existing justice services to become more responsive to the community making them more accountable, fair, and delivering better quality services that respond to the needs of the people; it also aims to identify and deliver new services, for example, community-based paralegals, and the roll-out of new justice centres, and professional skills development for legal professionals.

The Union Attorney General's Office has a number of key responsibilities, including the development of new legislation and the prosecution of all offences throughout Burma (Myanmar). English language is used for international law, model legislation and Commonwealth case law and it is essential for lawyers in the Union Attorney General's Office to be proficient in English to draw upon these resources in developing new legislation and understanding the obligations of international conventions. A component of MyJustice is therefore English language training, including a dedicated intensive course for up to 20 law officers who intend to apply for further study abroad and part-time classes for key staff, who need general English and legal English to help them to better fulfil their professional duties. By January 2016, 46 individuals had been selected from across Burma (Myanmar) to attend English language testing, the results of which were used to inform class groupings and course design.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

The gender and social inclusion review conducted in April 2018 is critical of the way the programme has addressed these issues. It points to the MyJustice 'Political Economy Analysis on Access to Justice in Myanmar' (PEA) prepared in May 2016 which identified important points regarding gender, ethnicity and religion in the country context. While the report itself does not contain any crosscutting gender and social inclusion analysis, it does discuss the challenges associated with prevailing cultural social values and norms that entrench gender disparities and limit the opportunities of women in political power within the justice system. This indicates that the programme was aware of gender and social inclusion concerns from the onset.

According to MyJustice management, the programme at the time had intended to conduct a gender and social inclusion analysis parallel to the PEA. One weakness pointed out by a respondent was that there has since been a lack of attention paid to how CSO partners could use the PEA to inform entry points at community-level, particularly in relation to assessing local power dynamics. (Taken from DRFT gender and social inclusion assessment 2018).

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The programme design and activities address a number of the targets of SDG 16 but there are components that need strengthening to meet these targets. The mid-term review report (March 2018) found that the theory of change remains relevant but that 'the expected degree of change might not be possible within the programme timeframe, there are indications that the programme can contribute to longer-term change with further consolidation and application of lesson learning'. The report also identifies other constraints, especially relating to the learning approach taken by MyJustice, '... there is limited evidence that this approach has been adopted by local partners, who are constrained by limited technical capacity and knowledge regarding strategic adaptive approaches.' The mid-term review report also highlights that gender is not mainstreamed in the programme although a key aim is to support the most vulnerable and also that 'limited attention is given to ensuring ethnic and religious minority justice needs are addressed.'

Therefore a separate gender and social inclusion assessment review was carried out in April 2018. There is a report but still in draft form. This assessment was very comprehensive covering the project design, partners and staffing issues, governance and implementation of the programme, barriers to participation and existing legislation. The report concludes with a number of recommendations in all these areas but acknowledges that some of these will need longer than the lifespan of the project to come into effect. However, the authors conclude that gender and social inclusion-focused changes 'will forge a path toward positive mind-set change and increased access to justice'.

The current human rights abuses and the conflict affecting the ethnic minority Rohingya is not referred to in the mid-term review report. The handling of this conflict/refugee situation does throw into question the government's meeting of the SDG 16 target and also the openness of the Attorney General's office to implementing international human rights legislation. It also raises the question on whether it has or could be sensitively addressed by MyJustice with the appropriate policymakers.

8 NEWTON FUND – DRUGS PRODUCTION, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN COLOMBIA

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project name: Drugs production, rural development and the search for peace in Colombia

- Funders: Newton Fund.
- Delivery partners (international and national): London School of Economics and the Universidad de los Andes in Bogota, Colombia.
- Start and finish dates: 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2017.
The grant was for two years; they applied for another award when this one ended but were unsuccessful.
- Geographical area(s) covered: Americas (Colombia) and UK.
- Total budget/British Council budget: £109,598.
- Area of the British Council's work: Science/higher education.

OVERVIEW

The Newton Fund Institutional Link supported collaboration between the London School of Economics IDEAS department and CESED in Colombia, enabling events and activities to take place in Colombia at the *Universidad de los Andes* and increasing the integration of Colombian scholars in the LSE's research network and policy-shaping activities.

The Colombian peace process (the accord was signed in November 2016) provided an opportunity to redesign a national drug strategy based on rural socio-economic development in regions affected by coca cultivation. The academics involved in this project argue that new policies on drugs, which focus on ensuring sustainable rural socio-economic development, enabled by the peace process and regional security, will have an immediate and lasting impact on the lives of low income regions of Colombia.

The 'War on Drugs' in Colombia has led to aggressive drug prohibitionist policies that have contributed to rural instability, economic weakness, environmental degradation and detrimental outcomes to socio-economic development. Over 65,000 Colombian households (around 300,000 people) rely upon the illicit trade in coca to make a living.

Project focus

The research and policy framework proposed seven key thematic focuses, specific to rural Colombia:

1. Interaction between drug policies and population security (health, violence and access to basic services).
2. Environmental sustainability: crop safety; minimisation of harmful herbicides.
3. Minimising rural degradation from illicit crops and cocaine manufacturing processes.
4. Minimising insecurity through employment and development policies.
5. Mitigating internally displaced populations through security and development initiatives.
6. Examining the lessons for peacebuilding in other regions and for multilateral policy processes.
7. Maximising the peace dividend.

Consideration of SDG 16 issues

The project is related to peace and security at a policy level but project reports do not specifically state connections to SDG 16. By developing policy for sustainable development, in the context of the illicit drug trade and the economy in Colombia, the academics propose that they will make a significant contribution towards the peace process in Colombia and also to wider regional security if and when LSE's policies are put into practice by the government.

Through research on the ground the project has built an understanding of the reality and needs of the local communities engaged in the coca trade. One of the academic partners in Colombia documented the costs of sustainable development policies and the broader war on drugs in Colombia.

The academics working on the project suggest that the implementation of these policies will have an immediate impact on low income communities of Colombia and the establishment of a process of long-term socio-economic development in these areas.

8 NEWTON FUND – DRUGS PRODUCTION, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN COLOMBIA

This award for Institutional Link collaboration expanded an existing research project based at the London School of Economics. In 2014 LSE IDEAS produced *Ending the Drug Wars: The Report of the LSE Expert Group on the Economics of Drug Policy*, an independent economic evaluation of global drug control. LSE IDEAS produced a second Expert Group report, examining the reform of international drug policies.

The Newton Fund supported the LSE IDEAS – CESED link-up by enabling events and activities to take place in Colombia at the Universidad de los Andes, in order to disseminate the findings of their research and enabling contacts with high-level academics in Colombia and with a policy-orientated partner organisation that provided good political links. The exchange also increased the number of Colombian scholars in the LSE's research network and policy activities to design rural development policies for long-term sustainable growth, public health and human rights in Colombia.

OBJECTIVES

The funding from the Newton Fund enabled a team of researchers and research assistants in London and Bogotá to foster academic, governmental, civil society and local actor participation in evidence-based discussions on drug policy and sustainable development aimed at regional peacebuilding.

The award facilitated dissemination of research findings and a new policy framework on sustainable development presented in the 2016 Report *After the Drug Wars*, which was written by researchers in the Institutional Links project and published by the International Drug Policy Project (IDPP) – which has since changed its name to the International Drug Policy Unit (IDPU) at the LSE IDEAS.

Objectives relevant to the main themes of SDG 16

The research report sets out a framework for the future of international drug policy based on the SDGs, with contributions from academics who are members of the LSE expert group on the Economics of Drug Policy. The project sought to catalyse this 'development first' approach at high-level policy meetings with government officials, civil society, and academic actors in Colombia. This had positive results and Colombian government administration engaged in the work of the IDPP at LSE and they obtained endorsement for the recommendations from the then Colombian President, Juan Manuel Santos (the President subsequently won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2016).

- Reducing violence and conflict resolution, including for specific groups in the population (e.g. women, children, older people, disabled, ethnic groups.)

The project team had collaborative discussions with the newly established LSE Centre on Women, Peace and Security (CWPS). The CWPS researchers have extensive experience in working on gender issues in (post-) conflict situations. They worked together to develop a large-scale funding proposal to focus specifically on the gender aspects of the post war on drugs era.

The IDEAS team also co-ordinated with the CWPS to organise a joint event (in May 2016) with a speaker from Colombia, an expert on youth, development and women that addressed some of these issues.

- Access to justice

The *After the Drug Wars* report highlights that less punitive laws for minor and non-violent drug infractions are the best single means of reducing incarceration of women and thus incarceration-related abuse. They suggest new policies, targets, metrics and indicators to reverse or at least mitigate these impacts.

- Strengthening institutions

LSE co-hosted an event held at the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá in January 2016 with the Fundación Buen Gobierno and the Research Centre on Drugs and Security at the Universidad de los Andes (CESED at UNIANDES).

The LSE IDEAS has hosted two Innovation Labs in Rome and London (2016–17) together with the German development agency GIZ. These brought together governmental, institutional and academic experts from around the world to address drugs-related development, with a particular focus on the rural impact in Colombia. The IDPP and GIZ are in talks with the Colombian government to hold the next Innovation Lab in Colombia.

Extensive engagement with civil society and policymakers during UNGASS in April 2016, New York, where they presented their recommendations to negotiators, and the UN resolution that was passed showed support for their policy model.

8 NEWTON FUND – DRUGS PRODUCTION, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN COLOMBIA

PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities

The war on drugs has led to high levels of violence and conflict and affected the rights of marginalised communities to access social services, human rights and livelihoods. Drugs dominate the rural economy. Low income communities involved in the illicit drug trade have been ripped apart by conflict. The project aimed to promote policy change which would allow a focus on the development of the low income rural population.

Stakeholders

The Newton Fund award supported the dissemination of the research report and recommendation to the Colombian government. The President of Colombia, six Nobel Economic Prize Laureates and other notable academics and practitioners endorsed the *After the Drug Wars* report, which received high-level media attention when it was published.

Academic collaboration between UK and Colombian universities was facilitated by this award. Research findings were shared and meetings held with government officials and academics in Colombia. Policies to address illicit markets through the 'development first' framework were explored at these high-level meetings with government officials, civil society and academics.

The formal launch of the report took place at a public event at the LSE on 15 February 2016. Over 400 people attended the event, which was filmed and podcasted by the LSE, reaching a wide global audience.

An IDPP panel was held on the 'Economics of Global Drug Policies', also disseminating the *After the Drug Wars* report. The panel was attended by almost 100 delegates from governments, civil society, and academia.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

The research is directly related to sustainable development with a focus on marginalised communities affected by conflict and their access to social services, human rights and livelihoods.

The LSE research report *After the Drug Wars* examines how key development issues intersect with drugs, peace and security policies. One contributor in the report highlights that UNGASS and the SDGs can help make links between security and development issues and thereby help protect development interventions from criminal exploitation and deliver services where they are needed most. He proposes that this approach will curb criminalised violence. Another contributor suggests that 'Alternative Development' achieves limited results and fails on pro-poor development outcomes with the challenges of illicit drug production in the Global South and development organisations tend to ignore the illicit economy altogether. The contributor argues that to succeed in meeting the SDGs as well as drug control objectives, UN entities and Member States must commit to a sustainable development approach to drugs.

High level advocacy and exchanges have been organised to disseminate these policy recommendations. Together with the German development agency GIZ, the IDPP jointly hosted two Innovation Labs on Drug Policy and Human Development in 2016–17, and at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) 04/2016 on the world drug problem. The findings from the report were presented at the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna 14–22 February 2016.

The 'development first' approach proposed by the authors of the research report has been integral to formulating a new framework to tackle illicit drug markets in Colombia. The academics argue that the focus should be on development needs and priorities to achieve socio-economic development and political integration to tackle the root causes of illicit market reliance. The project organised these high-level events, such as hosting Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos in November 2016 at the LSE, where the President gave a public lecture, providing an insight into the peace process and Colombia's environmental policies. However, since then there have been presidential elections (June 2018) and the President-elect is not in favour of the peace accord negotiated with the FARC. The policies promoted in this project therefore might not advance in the new administration in Colombia.

8 NEWTON FUND – DRUGS PRODUCTION, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN COLOMBIA

Target 16.1. Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

The project implicitly addressed these targets through collaborating with the Women, Peace and Security Centre at the LSE and bringing a speaker from Colombia to participate in a joint event with a paper on issues facing women and youth. A contributor to the research report examines the impact of repressive drug policies on women and children and highlights that incarceration of women for drug offences is increasing rapidly in many parts of the world, including Latin America, pointing to the broader societal impacts as punitive drug laws result in children being taken from mothers, reduces access to essential health and treatment services and stigmatises vulnerable populations, placing them at much higher risk of HIV, HCV and other health-related issues.

Initial discussions have been held with GIZ (German development organisation) to take forward a proposal for an international policy innovation lab on the theme of 'After the Drug Wars in Colombia: Youth, Gender and Human Rights'.

Target 16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

The award facilitated dissemination of research findings and a new policy framework on sustainable development presented in the 2016 Report After the Drug Wars, which was written by researchers in the Institutional Links-project.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

From December 2015, all second year undergraduates at the LSE began to study the war on drugs and the work of the IDPP. As part of a module entitled 'Is punishment the answer to crime?' students are asked to research policy issues around the war on drugs and present a case study analysing one of the following dimensions of the war on drugs: addition and health; gender; imprisonment; poverty and inequality; or race/ethnicity and inequality. Academics are also discussing options with the university to expand the programme by introducing postgraduate modules in collaboration with Colombian partners by 2018.

The partners in the Institutional Links award continued discussions to prepare the submission of a follow-up grant, for the continuation of policy dialogues and knowledge exchange between the UK and Colombia on issues related to sustainable development, rural contexts, the environment and illicit drug markets. Based on the success of the Institutional Links grant the project researchers secured a grant from the Global Challenges Research Fund (administered by the ESRC) for over £7 million for a research project that will run over four years, in collaboration with partner institutions in London (SOAS and LSHTM), Afghanistan, Burma (Myanmar), and Colombia. This project will launch a study of the impact of illicit drug markets on rural and borderland communities across the three partner countries and build on the model developed during the earlier phase of the project in Colombia.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

This award has supported the dissemination of policies relating to the SDG 16 targets in a general way although the targets were not an explicit focus of the framework they developed. The award has enabled an alternative and controversial view of sustainable development to reach a high level and influenced decision-makers. However, it is too early to say whether changes will come about as a result of these advocacy and influencing activities that will have a direct impact on the population affected by the illicit drug trade in Colombia, and therefore on the SDG 16 indicators.

Future activities planned will build on the LSE Expert Group policy framework model and will engage with development and humanitarian organisations active in the post-conflict setting with new research carried out in other regions, which could have an important bearing on policy approaches in these countries. Although the British Council is no longer funding this project, a recommendation to them might be to frame the new research project more explicitly in relation to the SDG 16 goals and targets.

9 NIGERIA STABILITY AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project name: Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme

- Funders: DFID.
- Delivery partners (international and national): International Alert and Social Development Direct.
- Start and finish dates: 2012–17.
- Geographical area(s) covered: Nigeria.
- Total budget/British Council budget: £33 million.
- Area of the British Council's work: Justice, security, stability

OVERVIEW

Context

Nigeria has a population of 184 million with 250 different ethnic groups living in 36 autonomous states, with a population split evenly between Christianity and Islam, and three broad socio-cultural areas. High levels of poverty, joblessness, growing numbers of frustrated youth, and the degradation of natural resources and climate stresses all contribute to a high level of violence (80,844 violent deaths were recorded in Nigeria between 2012 and 2017). With an average of 3,000 conflict-related deaths a year from 2006 to 2011, it has long been regarded as one of the most violent countries in Africa. Within Nigeria, the four regions, each with two states, selected by the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme have higher than average levels of violence. They are: the North East (Borno and Yobe States); the Niger Delta region (Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers States); the Middle Belt (Kaduna and Plateau States) and the North West (Kano State).

Conflict does not affect all groups equally. Throughout the country violence against women and girls is widespread and structural, with three out of five women aged between 15 and 24 having been the victim of violence.

Nigeria's security and justice sector has attracted significant support and technical assistance from donors. DFID, USA, European Union, and UNODC, UNICEF, UN Women, UNDP, Switzerland and Germany are providing significant financial contributions and technical contributions to justice sector reform.⁸⁰ DFID has been supporting work in the justice sector since 2001 with the latest programme, the British Council-managed Justice for All, finishing in August 2016. The overall DFID budget for Nigeria for 2018–19 is £235 million, of which £26 million (11 per cent) will be spent on governance and security.⁸¹

Project focus

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme, funded by DFID, is an experimental five-year (2012–17) programme delivered by a consortium headed by the British Council. The programme:

- Supports Nigerian-led initiatives to manage conflict non-violently.
- Seeks to reduce the negative impacts of violence on the most vulnerable.

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme has four component programmes or outputs:

1. Security and governance: strengthening the performance of, and public trust in, the way Nigeria manages violent conflict, by supporting security and peacebuilding institutions to become more co-ordinated, participatory, inclusive and accountable.
2. Economic and natural resources: addressing grievances around employment, economic opportunities and the distribution of resources, especially over land and water use.
3. Women and girls: reducing the impact of violence against women and girls and increasing their participation and influence in peacebuilding.
4. Research, advocacy and media: providing impartial, independent research and analysis to assist Nigerian decision-takers and policymakers in developing and implementing policies to build sustainable peace. This includes working with the media to help report conflict more sensitively.

80. The International Security Sector Advisory Team, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (December 2016) *Mapping of Development Partner Support to Justice and Security Sector Reform in Nigeria*. <https://issat.dcaf.ch/download/114190/2075681/Nigeria%20Donor%20SSR%20Mapping%20Report%202016%20-%20Final.pdf>

81. DFID https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/723246/DFID-Nigeria-Profile-July-2018.pdf

9 NIGERIA STABILITY AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

Consideration of SDG 16 issues

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme specifically addresses the following SDG 16 targets:

- 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.
- 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.
- 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.
- 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.
- 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

In addition, the emphasis on gender, with a separate component programme, and throughout the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme, means that the programme addresses targets in Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), particularly Targets 5.1 (End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere); and 5.2 (Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation).

OBJECTIVES

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme's objectives are set out in four output areas:

- Security and governance (Output 1) – broader societal participation in and oversight of conflict mechanisms at federal state and local levels.
- Economic and natural resources (Output 2) – reduced grievances in target areas around economic opportunities and distribution of resources.
- Women and girls in peacebuilding and conflict management (Output 3) – increased and more influential participation by women and girls in institutions and initiatives relevant to peacebuilding.
- Research and advocacy, media and conflict sensitivity (Output 4) – Research, advocacy and the media having an increasingly positive influence on policy and practice relevant to reconciliation and stability.

The two principal means of achieving the objectives are:

- Targeted influencing and persuasion amongst powerholders, citizens and protagonists of conflict – advocacy, mobilisation sensitisation, awareness-raising and training of conflict sensitive action.
- Convening platforms and bringing people together – bringing together key powerholders into longer-term organisations/platforms, providing a space for mediation, dialogue and collective decision-making.

Objectives relevant to the main themes of SDG 16

The objectives of the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme clearly align with the five SDG 16 targets set out above and with SDG 5 (Targets 1 and 2) and SDG 10. The question for this analysis is to what extent the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme in its five years of existence (2012–17) was able to achieve its objectives and, if so, to what extent were conflicts resolved or reduced in severity and violence. The evaluation completed in November 2017 sought to answer some of these questions.

PARTICIPANTS

Stakeholders

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme is a wide-ranging programme and includes many different stakeholders in its four different output areas. They include government ministries, agencies responsible for responding to conflict and for women, civil society organisations, especially of frequently overlooked groups – women and youth, traditional and religious leaders, media organisations.

9 NIGERIA STABILITY AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

Context

Security governance in Nigeria is poor, relying on a complex and overlapping set of agencies that are poorly co-ordinated, lack strategic direction, are not inclusive or accountable and do not enable co-operation between state and non-state actors. This has prevented early warning and response and often led to heavy-handed, selective action while failing to identify and tackle underlying causes of violence across the country. Nigeria's security forces are often accused of human rights abuses including unlawful killings, arbitrary arrest and detention, extortion, sexual harassment, and disappearances. This leads to mistrust and negatively affects relations between security forces and the civilian population. Furthermore, civilian oversight of security institutions is ineffective and they remain largely unaccountable to civilian line ministries and the general public.

Conflicts and the causes of conflict are different in the four areas where Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme operates. Boko Haram operate in Borno state in the north east. Since 2011 a more radical splinter group, which relocated to Yobe state, has attempted to spread terror throughout the country with mass suicide bombings in bus stations and markets. This group was responsible for the abduction of 276 school girls from Chibok in April 2014.

In the Niger Delta, perceptions of inequalities and injustices primarily around failed economic opportunities and loss of livelihoods due to severe environmental degradation caused by oil exploitation, have fuelled grievances and driven violent conflict in Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers States.

In the Middle Belt, violent conflict is the consequence of clashes over land between Fulani cattle herders and settled farmers. The fact that the cattle herders are Muslims and the farmers Christian complicates matters but is not the cause of the conflicts. Political manipulation of religion and ethnic divides has also exacerbated conflict.

Kano City in the North West, is the second largest city in the country after Lagos. Economic crisis, poverty and climate change have made Kano a magnet for migrants from all of Nigeria and west Africa as a whole. Unemployment and drug use have made Kano in particular more vulnerable to violent conflict. Unscrupulous politicians have manipulated unemployed young people for political and sectarian violence. In November 2014 Boko Haram gunmen killed over 100 people at the Kano central mosque.

What has the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme done?

Within this context the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme was successful in bringing together different groups (women, young people, traditional and religious leaders, government authorities) in platforms to discuss, pre-empt and resolve conflicts. The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme measured the inclusivity of platforms it supported through indicators that monitored the presence of each target group, interventions in debates by groups, and participation of marginalised groups in decision-making at forum level.

The general opinion of participants in these platforms was that they had been able to express their opinions and were listened to. The platforms were able to have positive impact on the conflicts which platform members were party to but were less successful in influencing conflicts more generally. The evaluation also raised the question of sustainability beyond the life of the project and pointed out that a longer-term intervention would have been required to make a more lasting positive impact.

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme's Security and Governance Impact Report states:

'The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme security and governance component (Output 1) has directly contributed to delivering the programme purpose level outcome: "conflict is managed non-violently more often in target states" by supporting conflict reduction at grassroots level; by stimulating institutional change with regard to security governance, and by influencing bottom-up policy development at state and central government levels.

'By the end of June 2017, across the eight states, a total of 623 conflict issues or potential conflict issues had been discussed at the 36 Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme-supported platforms. As a result of the actions taken by the platforms, a total of 84 emerging or actual violent conflicts had been prevented, managed or resolved (see table). Community Peace Partnerships, operating at the local level were particularly successful, discussing 361 issues and achieving 53 positive results, thus directly contributing to achieving the programme impact of reducing the effects of violent conflict on the most vulnerable.'

9 NIGERIA STABILITY AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

The evaluation is broadly positive about Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme's success in bringing state and non-state actors together; when meeting regularly and functioning properly, their ability to reach shared positions; and in enhancing the skills of platform participants. It notes that, *'... the very fact of ongoing and inclusive collaboration and communication between state and non-state actors is an important achievement, and is precisely the kind of broad-based programming that is central to the accountability and alignment of interests that the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme theory of change proposes. Several of the important stakeholders appear to be organisations that prima facie are marginal to society: Community based organisations are systematically identified as key stakeholders for success; women's and youth groups are engaged frequently, and at times are identified as important for success, particularly youth groups. This is evidence that these marginal groups are embedded in the peace architecture.'*

The evaluation found too that, *'Overall, the proportion of the population who think that violence has worsened in the previous year, has reduced in the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme target states over the lifetime of the intervention.'* It notes, however, that *'Platforms are able to bring about change through convening and mediation functions, although results are not guaranteed; political drivers and lack of incentives amongst stakeholders can be insurmountable obstacles.'* The evaluation also expresses some scepticism about the numerical claims of the Security and Governance Impact Report, noting that *'a "conflict" has no obvious temporal or social bounds making it hard to demarcate and count; it is difficult to identify when a conflict has been resolved versus when a conflict has been temporarily halted and might re-emerge.'* There is no counter-factual analysis to indicate what might have happened in the absence of the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme intervention. In response, it can be argued that Nigerian conflicts are not a collection of petri dishes where different outcomes can be scientifically measured against different inputs.

16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme security and governance component directly contributed to supporting conflict reduction at grassroots level by stimulating institutional change with regard to security governance, and by influencing bottom-up policy development at state and central government levels.

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme includes in the economic and natural resources output, employment issues (lack of employment opportunities) and disputes over resources – land in the Middle Belt and, in the Delta region, distribution of wealth and opportunities generated by oil:

'The socio-economic and political marginalisation of youth is a major driver of conflict. An estimated 50 million youth are underemployed and young men are particularly vulnerable to being recruited to groups and gangs that engage in criminal and violent activities. Although successive governments have made substantial investments in employment and economic empowerment programmes, both youth unemployment and levels of insecurity continue to grow in Nigeria, casting doubt on the effectiveness of government policies. The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme research identified key weaknesses in employment schemes, including: inconsistent quality of programme design, delivery and monitoring; flawed beneficiary selection processes which are open to (political) manipulation; and structural gender inequalities. Limited consultation with young people, whose views and priorities are mostly excluded, exacerbates the situation.'

'Struggles over land and water endanger peace and stability in many states in Nigeria, particularly in the North East and North Central Zones, where conflicts between settled farmers and nomadic cattle herders over access to and control of increasingly scarce land and water resources are widespread. These conflicts intersect with ethnicity and indigeneity issues and have the potential to rapidly escalate.'

'Resource conflicts are prevalent in the Niger Delta, where oil exploration and extraction have had devastating impacts on the natural environment. Environmental degradation caused by oil spills and gas flaring has drastically reduced the viability of agriculture and fishing, once the main sources of livelihood for most Delta communities, particularly women. Combined with the lack of other employment opportunities, this has led to a situation where conflicts easily escalate into violence. Men and male youth act mostly as the conflict perpetrators and profiteers, while communities, women and children suffer consequences disproportionately. Oil spills, whether caused by equipment failure, acts of vandalism or theft continue to be a serious problem and spawn grievances between stakeholders. Despite numerous initiatives, there has been little systematic engagement with a wide range of citizen groups to develop co-ordinated prevention and response strategies. The National Oil Spill and Detection Regulatory Agency (NOSDRA) is seen by many to lack capacity to make independent inspections and to track oil spills.'

9 NIGERIA STABILITY AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

What has the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme done?

The overall goal of Output 2 was to reduce grievances in target areas around economic opportunities and the distribution of resources. The theory of change for this output is that *'If citizen groups can be empowered to take non-combative action on a problem that affects them, and make systems and institutions more effective in responding, then it will lessen feelings of disempowerment and reduce some of the grievances that underlie violent conflict.'*

Interventions in this output focused on economic empowerment for young people in Kano, Kaduna and Rivers States. Responding to grievances over land and water use was initially targeted at Kano, Kaduna and Plateau States although these issues were also addressed more widely through platforms under Output 1. Issues relating to oils spills focused initially on Rivers State, later expanding to Delta and Bayelsa.

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme worked with government agencies at all levels to make them more sensitive to issues of youth unemployment and marginalisation and with civil society organisations working with young people to help them advocate and negotiate more effectively. At both state and federal level, the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme support to Ministries, Departments and Agencies resulted in some changes in policy and practices around youth employment and empowerment programmes. The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme capacity strengthening support to over 4,000 young men and women empowered them to advocate more effectively for inclusive, transparent and accountable employment practices, and more than 300 youths have directly acquired employment through the combination of Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme interventions, particularly in Kano, Rivers, Plateau, Delta and Kaduna, where young people adopted innovative measures to access employment opportunities.

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

Context

'Surveys undertaken in 2012 and 2013 indicated that around 30 per cent of women in Nigeria had experienced some form of physical, sexual or emotional domestic violence during their lifetime.⁸² Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is endemic in Nigeria, varying only in type and extent by geographical, cultural and conflict context. This violence takes many forms, from genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) and domestic violence to sexual violence, kidnap and rape and forced early marriage. In the south-east over 50 per cent of women have experienced FGM/C, whilst the figure in the south-west is higher at nearly 61 per cent. Nearly half the women in the north are married by 16 and expected to have a child within a year. Certain groups of women and girls are more likely to experience violence. A study of girl hawkers in Anambra state found that 70 per cent had experienced sexual abuse. Research in Plateau State found women and girls with disabilities more likely to experience violence but less likely to escape, be believed and access services. High levels of VAWG in Nigeria are perpetuated by a lack of legislation – the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Bill (VAPP) was only recently passed after 14 years – and a widespread and deep-rooted culture of silence and acceptance of VAWG.'⁸³

In parallel with Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme, DFID's Voices for Change programme in Nigeria (2013–17), with a budget of £41 million, aimed to strengthen the enabling environment for adolescent girls' and women's empowerment in Nigeria by 2017.

82. Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme Impact Report: Output 2 – Economic and Natural Resources. September 2017, page 3.

83. Output 3 – Women and girls in Peacebuilding and Conflict Management.

9 NIGERIA STABILITY AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAMME

What has the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme done?

The programme provided:

- Financial, technical and capacity building support to the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MWASD) to develop and deliver a first National Action Plan (2013-2016) and second National Action Plan in 2017 (2017-20).
- Financial and technical support to State Level MWASDs resulting in State Action Plans (SAPs) prepared and endorsed by state governments in all eight Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme states (Bayelsa, Borno, Delta, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau, Rivers, Yobe). State budgets were allocated to fund delivery of five SAPs. Four Local Government Action Plans were prepared and endorsed in Kano and Delta States and in September 2017 others were under preparation elsewhere. Notably the eight SAPs that have been developed nationally were in Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme states.
- Women, Peace and Security Networks (WPSNs), established in all eight Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme states and at federal level as Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme's primary delivery mechanism for NAP implementation and monitoring. The WPSNs prime function is to support the National Action Plan from the 'demand side' by driving forward sensitisation, domestication and monitoring. Sensitisation was conducted to promote awareness, networking, information sharing and collaboration between organisations with a stake in WPS, and to provide smaller lower capacity organisations the opportunity to learn from their larger counterparts. Critically, the WPSNs worked closely with the state level MWASDs. Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme support included leadership, training and capacity building through a convening CSO in each state.
- Design and piloting of a peace club model at the community level for young women and men to understand and act on the dynamics of conflict, violence and peacebuilding. Over the life of the programme, a total of 37 peace clubs were piloted in target communities in five states: Borno, Delta, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau and Rivers. The peace clubs were operational from 2014, with Borno coming on stream later in 2015 due to earlier high levels of fragility, instability and inaccessibility. At their peak, over 11,700 participants were registered in peace clubs – 7,400 females and 4,300 males. Training and facilitation of the peace clubs was undertaken through selected CSOs in each state.
- Creation of a group of 'observatories' for VAWG data gathering and analysis managed by Fund for Peace and implemented in five Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme priority states (Borno, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau and Rivers). Each observatory was driven by a multi-stakeholder observatory steering committee (OBSTEC) bringing together government, CSOs and government ministries, departments and agencies with a role to play in tackling violence. The programme identified and supported co-ordinating CSOs in each state to build support for the OBSTEC among key state level actors, convene regular meetings, guide the OBSTEC and monitor achievements and impacts. The primary function of the OBSTECs was to co-ordinate the receipt of reports on VAWG and use the information gathered to advocate for improved policies, practices and services to prevent and respond to VAWG. The OBSTECs also provided support to survivors by linking them to services, helping them through reporting and legal processes and intervening with families and communities where needed.

Outcomes ultimately will have to be measured in terms of reductions in violence against women and greater participation by women. In the meantime, however, the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme argues that it has *'built something of a Women's Peace and Security through the Women's Peace and Security Networks and the relationships built with the Ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development at state and federal level, creating a strong foundation to take the Women's Peace and Security agenda forward in a meaningfully localised way even after the programme's completion.'*

At a more local level, peace clubs have had their own successes in demonstrating a community-level model for building the capacity and resilience of young women and men to manage conflict in an inclusive way, serving as spaces for participants to build their self-confidence and rights awareness, particularly girls. In Rivers, a survey of peace club participants, found 80 per cent 'strongly agreed' with the statement that the training was very important and relevant, and 57 per cent 'agreed or strongly agreed' that meetings helped them build their self-confidence. A CSO in Kano State reported, *'You cannot imagine how the girls gained self-confidence, the strength to speak up, how this grew week by week through attending the peace clubs.'*

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The evaluation found that ‘... some 84 per cent and 71 per cent of state actors report that youth and women’s groups respectively contribute ‘a great deal’ or ‘a lot’ to meetings. A slightly lower percentage of civil society respondents (66 per cent) shared these opinions.

16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements

Context

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme identified the following issues:

- The lack of available research designed to supply practical answers for policy issues in reducing and managing conflict.
- The limited institutional capacity to co-ordinate and communicate conflict responses.
- The role of media in provoking or reducing violence. The Nigerian media, particularly radio in the north of the country lacked the professional skills to undertake conflict sensitive reporting and programme production.
- The need for advocacy. The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme was DFID’s first comprehensive programme working on conflict in Nigeria. As insecurity has deepened in Nigeria in recent years, more programmes raised concerns about the impact of conflict on development results. The potential for programmes operating in volatile contexts to inadvertently have negative consequences on local conflict dynamics – including through decisions about beneficiaries, staff, and locality – was a clear risk for DFID.

What has NSRP done?

The overall goal of Output 4 was to influence a wider cross-section of decision-makers beyond those engaged in immediate programme activities under other outputs through research, advocacy, institutional partnerships, and the media. The theory of change for this output states *‘If the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme is able to improve the supply of quality information and research and to successfully promote its use by decision-makers, then policies and practice will become more effective in reducing conflict and improving its management.’*

Research: The objective of the research component was to increase the quality and quantity of available knowledge through primary research; and apply it to decision-making through policy dialogue and advocacy. The desired outcome was that the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme will have contributed to increasing knowledge and understanding of conflict issues, and that this will be reflected in improved policy, practice and decision-making. The programme produced monthly conflict briefing notes (CBN) and supported a wide range of research organisations and individual researchers to produce material on broad and specific issues from across the conflict and peacebuilding landscape.

Media: The media component was designed to help reduce conflict by greatly extending the reach of the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme activities. The programme aimed to increase the voice of groups not well represented in media reporting such as women, young men and people with disabilities. This was underpinned by support to journalists to report conflict in a more sensitive way. The desired outcome was that providing examples of conflict sensitive media reporting and socially responsible practices would have a positive influence on media practices more widely in Nigerian society.

The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme worked with 15 media organisations (broadcast and print) across eight states providing online and face-to-face training for conflict sensitive reporting and media management; aimed at reducing hate speech and inflammatory content. One outcome of the programme’s media work has been a marked improvement in the level of conflict sensitivity of radio discussion programmes resulting in an average score of 3.8 (out of maximum score of 5) in 2017 on the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme media scorecard compared to a baseline of 1.3 in 2013. Most years have seen an improvement on the previous year with the exception of 2015 which saw a slight dip.

Strategic partnerships: here the aim was to strengthen the ability of key institutions with mandates for conflict and security management to more effectively prevent and manage conflict. This resulted in the endorsement and adoption by the government of Nigeria of a new National Security Strategy, developed in partnership with NIPSS and the National Defence College through inclusive stakeholder participation; a policy framework and national action plan for preventing and countering violent extremism; and the setting up of a Strategic Communication Inter-Agency Policy and Co-ordinating Committee.

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ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS
No observations recorded.
CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS
The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme clearly addressed five SDG 16 targets. Nigeria is a very challenging environment for any organisation wishing to have a positive and lasting impact on security and governance. Given the scale of the challenges, it also seems clear that even major interventions lasting a number of years are unlikely to have sustainable and long-term impact if they are brought to an end without any clear strategy for follow-up.

10 QUALITY EDUCATION AND STRATEGIC SUPPORT PROGRAMME

PROJECT SUMMARY

Programme name: Quality Education and Strategic Support Programme

- Funders: DFID.
- Delivery partners (international and national): British Council and Federal Ministry of Education (MoE), Regional Education Bureaus (REBs) and the Education Strategy Centre (ESC).
- Start and finish dates: 1 December 2014 and 30 November 2018.
- Geographical area(s) covered: All regions of Ethiopia.
- British Council budget: £9,950,099.
- Total number of people participating: no information provided.
- Area of the British Council's work: Schools.

OVERVIEW

Context

Ethiopia is a populous and poor country but in recent years has seen growth and expansion of basic services but still remains at the bottom of the Human Development Index. The education sector has had successive Education Sector Development Plans (ESDP) in place since 1997 and from a baseline of 3.7 million primary pupils enrolled at the start of ESDP I, 18 years later, at the end of ESDP IV, over 23 million pupils were in school. The achievements in terms of access to education have been remarkable but the quality of education has not kept pace with the expansion. This is a key challenge for the government of Ethiopia, which continues to demonstrate its commitment to improve education.

The programme is the continuation of education programmes funded by DFID over a number of years. DFID has played an important role in supporting the government of Ethiopia through three complementary education-focused programmes: Promotion of Basic Services (PBS), the General Education Quality Improvement Programme (GEQIP) and this project, QESSP.

OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of the programme/project

Providing technical assistance, management and financial support to create an enabling environment to maximise the efficiency and impact of other programmes in the sector through:

- Improving capacity of the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other institutions in the education system to implement reforms to improve access, quality and equity in education.
- Enhancing policy dialogue in the sector and improving the evidence base in education.

Objectives relevant to SDG 16:

- The project does not explicitly address the SDGs in the programme documentation. There is a component on inclusive education which is relevant to the goal to build peaceful and inclusive societies. But in terms of the SDG 16 targets, the only one that fits with this project is Target 16a on strengthening institutions.

PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities (if available in project documents)

This is a national programme, so ultimately will benefit children of all ages, income level and ethnicity. There is a specific strand of activities directed at ethnic minorities such as pastoralists.

A State of Emergency was declared recently but according to the recent monitoring report (March 2018) this had not had a direct impact on the programme. Another external impact was the devaluation of the Birr that was affecting the operational budget.

Stakeholders

- National and local authorities:
 - ❖ The project works directly with the Ministry of Education at national and local levels Head teachers and supervisors.
- Other public or private sector stakeholders (including universities and non-governmental organisations):
 - ❖ Four centres of excellence based in four universities are participating in the project and leading the education reform process
 - ❖ Community groups

10 QUALITY EDUCATION AND STRATEGIC SUPPORT PROGRAMME

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

The project documentation provides no information on any SDG targets.

The project is contributing indirectly to Target 16.2: Reducing violence to children.

The programme advocates children's right to safety and quality education. The programme worked with families to explain the importance of education and encourage them to send or keep their children in school.

16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

Activities are focused on strengthening the education sector at all levels through capacity building and training, for example, in monitoring and evaluation for senior staff at the Ministry of Education as well as teacher training. The project's recent quarterly report October 2017 – March 2018 provides information on achievements in the following components of the project: teacher education, school leadership, improving equity and efficiency in education, curriculum and system wide strengthening. A critical part of the teacher education and school leadership reform work is the establishment of four centres of excellence based in four universities across the country. These centres are mandated to lead the reform process through research, piloting new initiatives and producing policy and strategic options for the Ministry of Education to consider.

The focus of these activities is on strengthening the education institutions rather than directly on strengthening institutions to address violence and conflict.

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Five community conversation events brought together 6,000 indigenous people (246 female) to raise awareness of the importance of education. A total of 461 trainers (4.1 per cent female) were trained in community conversation facilitation skills; these trainers were drawn from Kebele administrators, Kebele chair persons, school principals, key teachers and cluster supervisors. The trainers in turn successfully facilitated the community conversations in all 100 target schools. The community conversation participants have so far identified and agreed on their key problems in relation to education and are discussing how to address these.

The objective of this project is to improve learning outcomes and retention rates for all children by building the capacity of education professionals at federal and regional levels; as well as generating evidence on priority areas to inform education policy.

In this respect, the project objectives are also relevant to SDG Goal 4 to: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all and specifically Target 4.1: *By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.*

The project includes capacity building for senior staff and two rounds of training were conducted in the past year involving 10,000 head teachers and supervisors. In addition, training was provided for 262 principals and supervisors of target schools through learn and share events, including study visits to the UK. Following training, 368 primary schools developed their school improvement plans which were approved by the education authorities.

The four centres of excellence are currently developing alternative teacher training modalities in line with the recommendations of one of the studies commissioned by the Quality Education and Strategic Support Programme and in the past year 14,700 school children attended education centres led by the programme's trainer facilitators.

The partnership project aims to move Level 1 schools to the next level within one academic year using school leaders as change agents. For example, the first learn and share event took place in Amhara (October 2017 – March 2018) which brought together 256 participants (only 17 female) drawn from 178 schools and ten zones.

Target 4.5 *By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people and children in vulnerable situations.*

The component of the project on inclusive education and activities have carried out awareness raising in indigenous communities (in Benishangul-Gumuz region) on the value of education, as well as appropriate ways of getting basic education provision to pastoral communities and is addressing equity for ethnic groups.

10 QUALITY EDUCATION AND STRATEGIC SUPPORT PROGRAMME

However, the project does not appear to be very strong in meeting the target to eliminate gender disparities in education. Project documents have very little gender disaggregated information, where numbers of female teachers and head teachers or other participants are given they are a small minority. There is no mention of efforts to ensure equitable education for girls and boys in project documents.

Some links with the targets of Goal 17, could be drawn such as in relation to Target 17.9 *Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the SDGs, including through North–South, South–South and triangular co-operation.*

Capacity building activities for leadership and management capacity at federal and regional levels has been enhanced through this project by training 971 (120 female) principals, cluster supervisors and education personnel drawn from the 368 target schools, zonal and regional education offices on evidence-based School Improvement Planning. In addition, 62 educational institutions developed delivery plans, established delivery units, socialised their delivery plan to their staff and started implementing the plan.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

No relevant information provided.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

Insufficient information was provided to get a good overview of this project and the monitoring report that was provided only related to the past year with no information on achievements in the previous two years of the project. From the information provided it was difficult to assess the relevance to SDG 16 as the main objectives are focused on reforming and extending the education sector.

11 STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN MENA

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Name: Strengthening Resilience in MENA (Phase 1)

- Start and finish dates/Duration: November 2015 – September 2017 (24 months).
- Geographical area(s) covered: MENA.
- Total number of people participating: 315+ people from civil society organisations,⁸⁴ 1,020 children and young people,⁸⁵ 141,611 people actively engaging with communications campaigns.⁸⁶
- Total budget: €3 million (€1 million per country).
- Funder: European Union.
- Area of British Council work: justice, security, stability.

OVERVIEW

Context

There is a growing sense of international concern about young people becoming attracted to violent forms of extremist activity. In 2016 the UN launched its Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The 2017 EU Resilience Strategy, *'aims at improving interventions, through better understanding of the factors that lead to violent conflict and identifying the endogenous capacities within a society that can allow some communities to resist a drift towards violence.'*⁸⁷

The causes of violent extremism are complex and often overlap and interact in complex ways. They include economic, civic, and social factors, as well as unresolved conflicts and broader forces.⁸⁸

These drivers of violent extremism take a long time to deal with and require a great deal of money but recruitment to violent extremism happens quickly. Another approach to counter recruitment to violent extremism is to look at what makes people vulnerable to recruitment and to address these issues. Research in MENA countries indicates that young people feel they have limited opportunities and that existing social structures are not listening or responsive to their needs. The 2017 Arab Youth Survey (carried out by ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller) found that many young people in MENA perceive themselves to be marginalised and *'want their countries to do more for them, with many feeling overlooked by policymakers'*.⁸⁹

*'The opportunities that are on offer for young people tend to be illegal, violent or both. ...the sort of economic opportunities that are available – for example working in the drugs trade in Morocco – may operate to normalise violent extremism, or possibly even to make it look attractive. This is because if all of the options involve illegality and/or violence, VEOs, which also offer purpose and belonging, good salaries and the material to be successful, might start to seem to be a constructive option.'*⁹⁰

British Council research also found that the violent extremist organisations offer young people a community to belong to and a cause to fight for which is related to the place where they are and the issues they encounter.

There is a need to both engage with young people to develop their civic skills so that they can respond when the state reaches out to them; and at the same time to improve what is being done by the state about the big issues that they encounter: joblessness, health, education. The project developed *'a suitably contextualised measure of personal resilience resources, supplemented by a short, standardised measure of resilience that has been validated internationally (the International Resilience Project's CYRM). Together these measures constitute the project's personal resilience tool.'*⁹¹

84. British Council (2017) *Strengthening Resilience in MENA*. Final Report November 2015 – August 2017, page 5.

85. *Ibid.*

86. Number of users who actively chose to like the campaign's Facebook Page and therefore 'subscribe' to campaign content. British Council (2017) *op. cit.*, pages 21 and 26.

87. British Council (2017) *op. cit.*, page 8.

88. British Council All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) (2017) *Building Young People's Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Middle East and North Africa*, page 9.

89. APPG (2017) *op cit.*, page 25.

90. British Council (2018) *Building Resistance to Violent Extremism: A Cultural Relations Approach*, page 10. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/discussion_paper_building_resistance_to_violent_extremism_finalv1.pdf

91. British Council (2016) *Strengthening Resilience in MENA. Quarterly Progress Report August 2016 – October 2016*, page 40.

11 STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN MENA

Project description

At the outset, it was believed that positive messaging could be used to strengthen social cohesion and community resilience against violent extremist narratives and recruitment tactics. Growing literature on the drivers of violent extremism at different levels (individual, particular groups, specific communities, or society at large) as well as experience in countering violent extremism, has shown that targeting messages towards young people thought to be at risk of recruitment to violent extremism may be counter-productive because it can exacerbate their perception of being marginalised and/or reinforce grievances.

The project's approach was built around three connected elements:

- Building trust and communication between government and civil society.
- Strengthening civil society organisations and their ability to share and communicate their good work more widely.
- Providing young people facing very difficult lives with the tools to develop trust, understanding, new social networks and critical thinking along with a means of engaging in positive and purposeful activity to develop their personal resilience.

The project engaged with the most vulnerable young people by going to places where there was the highest recruitment to violent extremist organisations:

*'We went to the places where the most recruitment had happened, and we found, there, that those young people had practically, never been reached by any other programme before. It's a critical point. We ended up in the right place, because we followed the recruitment question. The NGOs, the civil society that we engaged with, almost none of the NGOs or civil society that we engaged with had ever had any sort of international funding before, they were new.'*⁹²

The approach was to use cultural relations, i.e. engaging young people in education, sports and cultural activities, which included elements of Active Citizens training, as a means to build their ability to survive and thrive in the face of real pressures and hazards, so that they will be able to ignore calls to violence and choose and create positive alternatives for themselves and their communities.⁹³

Relevance of SDG 16 to the project

Strengthening Resilience in MENA – Phase 1 was not designed to address the UN's SDGs and the SDGs are not mentioned in project reporting, except for during the training for sports coaches which included information on the SDGs and sport.⁹⁴ The training looked at the characteristics of individual resilience and the role of sport in building resilience, but there is no detail about the way that SDGs were linked to sport and the wider project.

This review focuses on unplanned associations between the project objectives and outputs and SDG 16, to see how far the approach to reducing violence, building peace, promoting justice and strengthening institutions is aligned to the SDG approach.

While project reporting makes no explicit link with SDG 16, the aims and activities directly addressed two of the core concerns of the goal: promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

- The premise of the project is that while the root causes of conflict (e.g. high unemployment, inadequate infrastructure and restricted access to public services, weak rule of law and corruption, discrimination against some groups, etc.) take time and considerable resources to overcome, violent responses to these conditions can be prevented in the shorter term by offering those affected alternative pathways which they construct in partnership with the state – usually in the form of the local authority.
- Linked to the approach to preventing violent conflict, inclusive, positive narratives and approaches to working with groups and communities are more successful in countering the appeal of violent extremism than reactive, security-focused approaches and messaging that emphasise threats and risks.
- Government support for the work of civil society organisations in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods where recruitment to violent extremist groups is highest increases the understanding of public institutions of the issues in these areas, enables more effective action and is the basis for enhanced legitimacy and trust.

92. Stewart, S (2018) Contribution to a public event on *Building Resistance to Violent Extremism*. Chatham House, 23 April 2018. Event transcript, page 12.

93. Devane, C (2018) Foreword to Stewart, S *Building Resistance to Violent Extremism: A cultural relations approach*. British Council, 2018.

94. British Council (2016) *Strengthening Resilience in MENA. Quarterly Progress Report*. 1 August 2016 – 31 October 2016.

11 STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN MENA

OBJECTIVES

Aims and objectives of the project

Overall objective:

Government and civil society work together to target, design and deliver projects and campaigns that provide youth vulnerable to violent extremism with alternative pathways, in Morocco and Lebanon, with a view to adapting the project model to other countries in the MENA region and an intention to build on this by preparing the ground for future longer-term development programming.

Specific objectives

1. Government and civil society are better informed of factors which render youth in the target country vulnerable to violent extremist narratives.
2. Government is better able to plan and deliver communications campaigns that advertise services to vulnerable communities.
3. Government enables civil society to deliver messages about alternative pathways to vulnerable youth.
4. Civil society is better able to plan and deliver communications to vulnerable youth.
5. Young people in target communities vulnerable to violent extremism have led and participated in activities which are alternate pathways.
6. By the end of the project, research and evaluation material from this project will: (i) be accessible to relevant researchers, academics and practitioners in the MENA region (ii) form the basis for a new and larger project design.

Objectives relevant to SDG 16

The overall objective of providing young people with tools and alternative pathways away from violence is core to two of the main elements of SDG 16: reducing violence and strengthening institutions. Project objective 5 focuses on the provision of alternative pathways for young people so that they are not attracted by violent options. The focus on young people and particularly on vulnerable young people is relevant to SDG Target 16.2.

Objectives 1 and 6 focus on building and sharing knowledge and understanding of recruitment of young people to violent extremism as an essential basis for achieving the overall project goal. In all countries, knowledge and understanding of recruitment has been increased through desk-based literature reviews as well as community-level research on the problem of recruitment to violent extremism. The project also carried out a survey to support the national campaign on internet safety among young people and children in Lebanon and a study of youth centres in Morocco. The project designed and delivered a tool for measuring young people's resilience. The tool measures resilience in the areas of confidence, purpose, adaptability and social support. The tool was used to assess change in individual resilience at the beginning and end of the project.⁹⁵

Objectives 2 and 3 are relevant to increasing the inclusiveness and effectiveness of national and local government institutions, both directly, through targeted communications campaigns and indirectly through support for the work of CSOs on the ground. In particular, the focus on enabling effective partnerships between vulnerable communities and the relevant local authority increases both the capacity and willingness of the state to include these citizens. At the same time the training attached to sporting or cultural activities increases the capacity of citizens to engage positively with the state.

Objective 4 focuses on strengthening the role of CSOs working with vulnerable young people, based on the recognition that these organisations are often the only ones working in vulnerable and disadvantaged areas. By strengthening the links between CSOs and government (Objective 3) CSOs can play a greater role in encouraging greater accountability and inclusiveness in government.

Objectives 2, 3 and 4 are relevant to the SDG 16 focus of strengthening institutions, especially target 16a: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime, but also Targets 16.6 (Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels) and 16.7 (Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels). The work with government institutions is relevant to 16b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development). The project has been successful in getting the governments to consider more positive messaging and less discriminatory approaches to working with young people in areas with high levels of recruitment to violent movements and organisations.

95. (British Council, 2017a, page 4–5).

11 STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN MENA

PARTICIPANTS

General characteristics of target participants or communities

The project participants were young people aged 15–30 from communities where there are high levels of recruitment to violent extremist organisations. For example, in Morocco, the project worked with a group of young people at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Extremism – CMETE, Tetouan. The young people developed films about their experiences of violent extremism in Jamae Mezwak, Tetouan. The films challenged the labelling of this neighbourhood as a ‘nest of terrorists’. The films were launched online (on Vimeo and Facebook) after a two-week advertising campaign. There were 313,163 hits, 10,299 comments, likes and shares on the posters, trailers and films and media coverage including a television appearance and articles covering the launch of the films on several online platforms.

A baseline survey of young people joining the project validated the initial hypothesis that young people in at risk areas have low levels of resilience.⁹⁶ The young people surveyed tended to have quite high levels of confidence in their skills and abilities and to believe that life has meaning. On the other hand, they had difficulty in dealing with frustrations or reaching out to ask for support from others. Overall, they had relatively low levels of trust in friends, family or the community and tended to feel unfairly treated. Negative feelings of lack of purpose and low trust in friends and community were higher in young men than young women.⁹⁷

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

The project achieved significant outcomes which contribute to SDG 16:

- Government and civil society are better informed of factors which render young people vulnerable to violent extremist narratives: this increases their capacity to take action to reduce the risks of recruitment.
- Governments have delivered more effective communications campaigns supported by this programme that increase resilience to recruitment to violent alternatives. The Lebanese government, for example, used evidence generated by the project on young people and internet safety as the basis for a public information campaign.
- The governments are more willing to facilitate CSO's work with vulnerable young people on alternative non-violent pathways.
- As a result of the training provided by the project, CSOs are better able to plan and deliver communications to vulnerable young people. In Lebanon sports coaches from CSOs were trained to work with young people on personal development and resilience as part of sports development activities.
- Vulnerable young people in target communities led and participated in activities which provide alternative pathways:
 - ❖ In Morocco 12 young people (three women and nine men) received training in filmmaking. The young filmmakers produced 16 short films about their experiences of violent extremism in their neighbourhoods.
 - ❖ In Lebanon 18 coaches from 11 organisations working in six hotspot neighbourhoods in Tripoli were trained in Sports for Development to engage vulnerable youth and children at risk of recruitment and to improve social cohesion across sectarian divides. Over 350 children were coached and 12 cross-neighbourhood visits were organised.
- By the end of the project, a number of key research projects and papers had been published which will be accessible to relevant researchers, academics and practitioners in the MENA region and will form the basis for the design of a new larger programme.⁹⁸
- Thirty representatives of the governments of Lebanon and Morocco along with representatives of the EU and British Council participated in a round table to share results, experience and insights on issues of radicalisation and recruitment.

At the end of the project the application of the Resilience Measurement tool demonstrated:

- An increase in their confidence.
- A changed perception of external factors contributing to resilience, including the sense that their communities treat them with justice.
- The development of skills and behaviours that increase young people's capacity to be critical of extremist attitudes: being unafraid to speak out and take action, standing up to others who try to impose their beliefs and values, seeking and getting support and being able to solve problems in a non-violent way.⁹⁹

These changes increase individual resilience and are likely to reduce young people's vulnerability to recruitment into extremist or violent organisations.

96. APPG (2017) *op cit.* page 40.

97. *Ibid.*

98. IOD Parc (2018) Final Assessment Report: Strengthening Resilience in MENA, page 5.

99. APPG (2017) *op.cit.* page 41.

11 STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN MENA

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

Project governance and implementation process and its relevance to SDG 16

The following elements of the design, implementation and governance of the project facilitated its contribution to SDG 16:

- The project combined research on the factors that make young people vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremist organisations with practical application of the research findings in programmes with governments, CSOs, young community leaders and young people. This demonstrated the value of a robust evidence-base for action, reinforcing project messages about critical thinking and learning.
- The project was seen as credible by different stakeholders including public and civil society institutions.
- The British Council based its approach to creating alternative pathways for young people on its Active Citizens methodology. Active Citizens takes a cascade approach based on the development of facilitators who in turn cascade training to others. Participants are empowered to engage peacefully and effectively with others in sustainable development. Graduates develop and deliver social action projects in their communities, supporting engagement with people with different perspectives. The approach fosters inclusivity, learning and peaceful interaction.
- The Sports for Development strand of work in Lebanon included elements of Active Citizens training and drew on the British Council's experience of using sport as a tool for bringing children together and overcoming differences. The coaches involved became highly committed to the approach and felt that it had made a major impact on their communities:

*'The British Council and this programme have left a print on our communities forever. The council has achieved what the parents and the community figures have not been able to achieve in terms of creating and building understanding and relationships across the various communities.'*¹⁰⁰

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The project made an important contribution to the overall goal of peace, justice and strong institutions. The project's practical impact was seen in the at risk neighbourhoods where participating CSOs ran training and activities with young people as well as in the changing relationship between national and local government institutions and CSOs which facilitated co-operation on national communications campaigns and local citizenship and development initiatives.

The practical contributions of the project were:

- Increased knowledge and understanding of the factors influencing young people's vulnerability to recruitment by violent or extremist organisations and ways of increasing individual and community resilience.
- Improved effectiveness of national public communications campaigns aimed at young people.
- Stimulated closer co-operation between national and local government and CSOs working in high risk neighbourhoods thereby increasing the impact of initiatives to increase resilience to violent extremism.
- Bringing communities and young people together across social divisions such as the divisions between refugee and local communities:

'The most beneficial result of this programme is it has distracted us from the issues that burden us and our communities. We no longer think about war, tensions, weapons, extremism. We now think of ourselves, our future, how we can be better people and how we can bridge social ties between our communities.'
Community Coach, Tripoli, Lebanon (British Council, 2017a)

- Giving young people alternative, non-violent pathways:

*'One of the merits of the Active Citizens programme is to have gradually expanded the range of opportunities for young people to increase their skills; and have minimised the dominance of the environment (economic, social, cultural) in which they live, characterised by chronic issues such as unemployment, informal and precarious work, poor quality of education, dropping out, neighbourhood violence and police brutality.'*¹⁰¹

100. British Council (2017) *Op. cit.*, page 34.

101. British Council (2017) *Op. cit.*, page 46.

11 STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN MENA

As a pilot project, Strengthening Resilience in MENA also contributed to learning about future initiatives:

- It successfully piloted a tool for measuring individual resilience.
- It developed understanding of factors encouraging recruitment to violent extremism in three countries: this provides an evidence base for the work of governments and CSOs.
- It successfully tested the application of the Active Citizens programme in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with high levels of recruitment.
- It tested the use of a sports and development approach to break down barriers and increase the resilience of children and communities in disadvantaged and polarised neighbourhoods in Lebanon.
- It involved the national governments of Lebanon and Morocco in developing and sharing understanding of the risks of recruitment of young people to violent extremism. The credibility of the project delivery partners for the national governments involved gave added weight to the evidence generated by the project and motivated public involvement. The second phase of Strengthening Resilience in MENA has been approved and will build on learning from the pilot phase.

12 TAHDIR

PROJECT SUMMARY

Programme name: Tahdir

- Funders: Arab Reform Initiative.
- Start and finish dates: June 2016 – March 2018.
- Geographical area(s) covered: Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.
- British Council budget: €113.400.
- Total number of people participating: 240 civil servants and civil society actors.
- Area of the British Council's work: English language teaching.

OVERVIEW

Context

The countries neighbouring Syria are currently providing refuge for millions of Syrians fleeing conflict and persecution. According to UNHCR, there are 3,554,072 registered Syrian refugees in Turkey, 976,065 in Lebanon, 666,596 in Jordan, 257,157 in Iraq and 129,737 in Egypt.¹⁰² At the same time, there are 6.5 million people, including 2.5 million children, displaced within Syria.¹⁰³ The World Bank estimates that by the end of 2016, seven per cent of Syria's housing stock had been destroyed and a further 20 per cent partially damaged. Total cumulative economic losses in GDP from 2011 until the end of 2016, are estimated at \$226 billion, about four times the Syrian GDP in 2010.¹⁰⁴ These figures illustrate the scale of disruption and the reconstruction efforts that will have to be put in place once the conflict has ended.

Description of the project

Tahdir (the Arabic word for 'prepare'), launched in June 2016, is described as a contribution to future reconstruction. The Concept Note for Tahdir states that the project '*... is designed to build capacity within the civil service and civil society human resource to prepare them for rebuilding institutions in Syria when peace finally returns. The programme was designed to reach up to 240 Syrian civil servants and civil society actors over three cohorts, with participants based in Jordan, Lebanon, and inside Syria itself.*' The project title for Jordan is English Language Support for Civil Servants and Civil Society Actors. The Arab Reform Initiative website¹⁰⁵ states that the project, '*...aims to provide Syrian professionals with the tools to take an active part in the rebuilding of their country and be the agents of change of their own lives. It is designed to build capacity in three fields widely considered as fundamental to post-conflict reconstruction.*' These fields are security sector reform (SSR), local administration and urban development (UP). SSR, local administration and UP figure alongside pupil's names in Tahdir report sheets.

The Concept Note itself says, '*the Arab Reform Initiative has identified English Language Proficiency as an integral part of a larger programme to prepare Syrians for the transition process to a peaceful and inclusive Syria.*' Beyond these initial assertions there is no substantive theory of change.

The Arab Reform Initiative, 'a consortium of key Arab policy research centres with partners from Europe and the United States', has contracted the British Council to provide the English language training. The original contract states,

'The British Council will provide an online baseline assessment of each cohort for up to 240 participants as selected by the client. Based on proficiency, participants will be streamed into their correct group and be provided with up to 243 hours of trainer-led sessions per cohort. The project consists of three cohorts of up to 14 groups with a total of 240 participants. In addition to the trainer-led sessions, all participants will be provided with access to the British Council's Learn English Pathways or Learn English Select online courses based on proficiency. On completion of the trainer-led and self-study hours allocated to each group, each participant will undertake an endline Aptis exam to measure learning. The British Council will provide scheduled monthly reporting as well as mandatory quarterly reports to the Client.'

Pupils are divided into separate cohorts of 40, depending on English language proficiency. Different cohorts are taught more or less intensively with classes for some semi-intensive cohorts scheduled to begin in April 2017 and to end in March 2018, with other more intensive cohorts beginning later and ending sooner, before the end of 2017. The total budget for providing this service is €113.400.

102. UNHCR (updated 5 July 2018), <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria>, accessed 11 July 2018.

103. UNHCR (updated 7 July 2018), www.unhcr.org/sy/29-internally-displaced-people.html, accessed 11 July 2018.

104. World Bank (2017) *The Toll of War: The Economic and Social Consequences of the Conflict in Syria*. www.worldbank.org/en/country/syria/publication/the-toll-of-war-the-economic-and-social-consequences-of-the-conflict-in-syria

105. <https://www.arab-reform.net/en/node/828>

12 TAHDIR

There is a second contract for U\$20,162.50 for the British Council to provide a pop-up study centre in Amman equipped with 12 laptops and an internet connection to 'enable Tahdir candidates to complete their studies with ease.' From the outset it was envisaged that this would be a distance learning project via Skype. Many pupils, however, complained about poor internet connections which made learning difficult.

The Tahdir project in Jordan appears to be separate from the project in the four countries shown in the figure below. In Jordan pupils are able to visit the British Council office and use the pop up facility as well having some face-to-face contact with tutors and participating online.

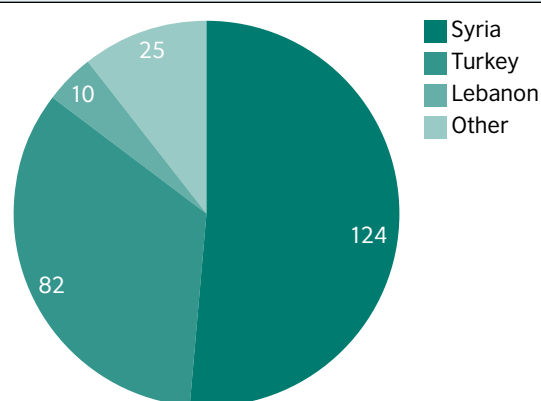
OBJECTIVES

In this project the British Council is acting as a service provider, teaching English, contracted by the Arab Reform Initiative. The (potential) contribution of project participants to reconstruction and peacebuilding is mentioned in the project's concept note, but after that there is no further mention of this contribution in progress reports which focus on different areas of achievement in English language skills. In other words, in Tahdir the British Council is providing a service to build capacity which will be useful when reconstruction can begin. It is not known what obligations, if any, have been undertaken by the pupils in return for being selected for these courses.

PARTICIPANTS

The geographical locations of pupils participating in the project include Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Turkey. There is no indication of their status as civil servants or civil society actors – perhaps because the same person can be both, especially when he or she has become a refugee.

The breakdown of the countries where participants are living shows that over half are participating from within Syria, with – in December 2017 – a good number from rebel held areas, such as Idlib. Fifty-three of the 241 participants are female. The Monitoring Report reflects that this gender imbalance may be a consequence of gender imbalance in the target population of civil servants and civil society activists.¹⁰⁶



OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT RELEVANT TO SDG 16

Attendance by the selected candidates was patchy with some hardly attending at all while others had a good attendance record. Testimonials provided by five pupils were enthusiastic. The British Council delivered over 1,000 hours of self-access and trainer-led English language provision to over 240 civil servants and civil society actors based in eight countries and over 30 cities. In addition, information from the online platform usage and completion demonstrates that Tahdir has much stronger uptake and completion rates than similar projects across the region.

ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME OR PROJECT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO SDG 16 THEMES OR TARGETS

No relevant information provided.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The stated aim of Tahdir, linking English language training in three technical fields to reconstruction and peacebuilding, places the project within the headline of Goal 16 but there is little information in follow-up reports on these aspects of the project. The focus on a target population of refugee and displaced Syrians is clearly an investment in the future, primarily of the individual participants, who may or may not eventually use their skills to contribute towards the reconstruction of their country. The small number of testimonials from participants themselves concentrate on the English learning experience and do not mention any future ambitions, wider contextual factors or concerns.

106. British Council (2017) G4 Equality monitoring of staff and customers – Jordan. Tahdir Equality Monitoring 2017–18.

8. Case studies



Active Voices: (Aswat Faeela)

The lives of young Syrians have been shattered by the country's civil war, whether they are still living in their own homes, have been displaced to another part of the country or have had to flee as refugees to neighbouring countries or overseas. Many have seen their education interrupted and links with family members and friends broken. The conflict, which began with anti-government protests demanding democratic reforms, was estimated to have claimed over 400,000 lives by 2016. The UNHCR estimates that more than 5.6 million people have fled Syria and there are 6.6 million internally displaced persons.

Active Voices (or Aswat Faeela in Arabic) is a project funded through the European Union's Tahdir programme, an initiative to prepare for transition in post-war Syria, which was implemented between January 2016 and June 2018. It is led by the British Council and implemented through a consortium of partners (including International Alert and Search for Common Ground). The aim was to give young Syrians a voice so that they can play an active part in rebuilding their country. Most current international efforts are focusing on humanitarian initiatives and young people's voices are rarely heard.

The project built a network of young Syrian social leaders, enabled them to overcome attitudes of mistrust within the Syrian community and between young Syrians and their local communities through recognising common values based on 'do no harm' and a right-based approach.

The project grew the young leaders' capacity to initiate actions in their communities to strengthen peacebuilding, community cohesion, inclusion and economic recovery. Working as a network, the young Syrian social leaders in Syria and the diaspora have also been able to use research and share evidence, to advocate and influence opinion leaders and decision-makers, both locally and in international forums.

British Council and the SDGs

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

In 2015 all 193 countries of the United Nations agreed a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN member states have committed to mobilise efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

SDG 16 aims to 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.'

The Active Voices (Aswat Faeela) case study is one of the three case studies of the British Council's contribution to SDG 16. The other two case studies are also available from the British Council.



Young people's roles in Active Voices

There were two levels of community activists: the master facilitators who brought together groups of social activists – the community builders – in different places. The master facilitators organised weekly dialogue sessions and supported the groups through their learning journey. At the end of the process, each group designed and carried out a social action project and an advocacy campaign.

Master facilitators were the front line of the project. They were young social leaders who had a voice and the skills to be able to mobilise communities. Project implementation relied heavily on their skills, knowledge, values and experience of working with and supporting young people.

Community builders were recruited in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Europe. They were young people from 18 to 35 years old with good interpersonal skills, an interest in community development and commitment to the Active Voices values. They used the skills they learned to develop the activities at the community level:

- Ability to **analyse their context**, to understand how they are affected by this context and can contribute to change.
- Capacity to **initiate action** to strengthen peace, community cohesion, inclusion and economic recovery.
- Use research evidence to **advocate and influence** opinion leaders and decision-makers.

Volunteers were trained to work at the community level and developed their skills for building peace.

Parallels between the core values of Active Voices and SDG 16

Values are at the heart of the project's approach: finding shared values creates a basis for participants to work together and with their local communities.

'The values are integrated into the learning journey. It's a different way of working with communities and young people. These values didn't come from British Council – they were decided by the master facilitators.'

Programme Manager

Do no harm: this value relates directly to the target of reducing violence (16.1). Participants use context analysis to look at the multiple factors affecting their communities, with a particular focus on the potential for conflict, or a 'conflict lens'. One result of this enhanced conflict sensitivity was the decision to include young people from the host communities in Jordan and Lebanon who worked alongside the young Syrians.

Diversity: this value recognises the differences between young Syrians, because of where they are living (inside or outside Syria) as well as social, cultural, religious and political differences). Appreciating diversity enables young people to empathise with others who are different rather than allowing difference to become a source of conflict. It also links to protection of freedom of information and fundamental freedoms (Target 16.10) and promotes openness to alternative pathways to change.

Ownership and participation: these linked values support the development of strong institutions based on responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels (Target 16.7). The focus on social action encourages young leaders to improve their skills and capacities through working to generate change.

Figure 1: Active Voices: cascading values and training in Syria and Middle Eastern countries

Master facilitators trained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34 master facilitators trained • Master facilitators contribute to develop core programme
Community builder training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 400 young people trained • Community builders design and run social action projects and advocacy campaigns
Volunteer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,000 young people engaged in implementing social action projects and social research

The project manager's perspective

A country project manager described how diversity and participation were integrated into the project's work:

'The learning journey is about linking up people from different backgrounds and letting them participate in designing initiatives in communities – giving them opportunities to learn and take action. The process is not about building "things" but about working together and understanding that there are lots of different perspectives and that you need to work with everyone.'

The project worked with young people who had a range of views and concerns, from those who were traumatised or suffering from depression as a result of their experiences in Syria and in exile and wanted to get a new life in their host communities, to those who were concerned about the future of Syria and the relationship between peace, justice and reconciliation. The project linked up all these young people and encouraged them to recognise and appreciate their diversity of backgrounds, experiences and opinions.

For the project manager, the key learning for conflict resolution and peace was that the community must have ownership of social actions:

'If we want to make change, we need to let people find their solutions as they are the ones who are affected by the problems. If we enable people with different perspectives and experiences to share together, that contributes to peace. But not if this is imposed on communities. You need to ask them what they are ready to do and make them more responsible. Then they will push you to achieve the goals.'

In 2017 we held a peacebuilding workshop with Syrians from Europe, Syria, Turkey and Lebanon.



We talked about identity and violence and about tools and ways to deal with violence and conflict and to build peace.

We knew the workshop wouldn't solve all our problems but it would give us a better understanding of others' perspectives.

Now we are globally connected as a network. We have teams in five European countries and parts of the Middle East. We communicate with young Syrians living in Syria. We have produced reports and campaigns about the gaps facing young Syrians in Europe, in terms of education, work opportunities and other aspects of our lives. One of the reasons for the gap is that host country governments don't give Syrians a chance to demonstrate their experience. I have contacted many organisations about giving us a chance to participate.

Some of us went on to look for a voice in the Syrian peace process in Geneva. As Syrians outside of Syria, we can have a big influence on the peace process. Just because we are outside, it doesn't mean we are not involved there. And we can help Syrians inside through working at the international level – we can reach the international level. I believe we can be the key to the solution.'

'I was attracted to this project because I liked the name. For Syrians it means: we will support you and help you to raise your voice and be heard on all levels.'

There is a gap in communication between young Syrians and their host communities but also between Syrians themselves – they are afraid to talk to each other. We ran focus groups and interviews with young Syrians in Europe. They said we needed to find ways of building peace, using dialogue as a tool, as a way for Syrians in Europe to communicate with each other and to make contact with Syrians in Syria.

We would create peace by first building bridges and channels of communication.'

Testimony of a young Syrian activist in Europe

Building 'conflict sensitivity' into the project approach

Conflicts like the civil war in Syria breed hostility and mistrust, creating conditions in which a range of issues can fuel further tension and violence. A British Council programme manager described these multiple factors in the Syrian context:

'At the micro-level, the displacement of people, for example people living in Southern Syria being displaced to the north, gives rise to many conflicts. Group conflict analysis identified that one of the conflicts in villages in Northern Syria is around aid delivery. A displaced person from the south will get a big box of sugar, rice and so on. A person from the host community gets a smaller box. They get something but less. Sometimes the conflict is around militias. Sometimes it is around schools – about things that teachers or children say at school. And then there are conflicts around employment: when displaced people come into an area and take jobs, if the job market is limited, it is unable to deal with that.'

Tensions and conflict can be magnified when some people are forced to flee but others stay behind:

'The people inside blame those outside and those outside blame those inside. There is a complicated dynamic of mistrust.'

Building trust and understanding between people is a basic foundation for reducing conflict and violence. This is a core purpose of the British Council and a key part of the Active Voices project.

Project approaches and activities

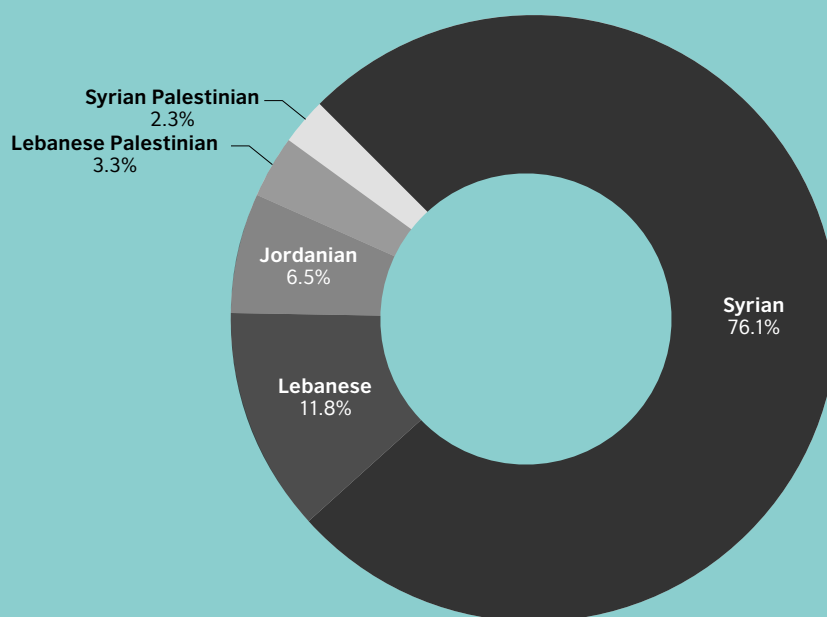
As conflict was integral to the local context in all the countries involved, the project team spent time during the inception phase agreeing what conflict is and thinking through its implications. An understanding of the importance of conflict sensitivity became central to the approach:

- The core learning journey embodied a set of values aimed at countering conflict drivers, overcoming pre-conceived ideas and stereotypes, valuing differences and promoting freedom of speech.
- The project's context analysis methodology involved looking at a wide range of issues that shape a particular context. Active Voices participants developed skills, knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours to look at their context through a specific filter – a conflict lens.

The tension between young Syrians and young people from the host communities in Jordan and Lebanon who experience many similar challenges, was recognised as an issue to be addressed. Young Jordanians and Lebanese were therefore included as master facilitators and community builders, to adopt a 'do no harm' approach in host communities, as reflected in Figure 2 below. They worked alongside the young Syrians to enhance their prospects and address community issues.



Figure 2: Active Voices – nationality of direct project beneficiaries



Active Voices resulted in a large number of activities based on the conflict sensitive approach described:

Action research in the community involving

1,700

young people in 30 projects

27

social action projects

13

social advocacy initiatives

This had a significant impact in reducing division and differences between the young people involved:

‘Social cohesion social action projects and approaches in all countries have broken down the barriers of sectarian and political divides between Aswat Faeela youths, among Aswat Faeela beneficiaries and with host communities. Most initiatives were led by community builder teams representing mixed communities and/or targeted a mix of community groups.’ (Project Evaluation, INTRAC, 2018)

Social action projects in Lebanon

In Lebanon, 11 social action projects were carried out in mainly underserved rural areas and urban pockets of poverty hosting high numbers of Syrian refugees. Many interventions were innovative (youth volunteering, interactive theatre, puppet theatre, gym club, public library). Social cohesion underpinned all the projects either through targeting mixed nationality/sect beneficiaries or through the involvement of both Syrian and Palestinian refugees as community builders, trainers and volunteers.

Table 1: Examples of Active Voices contribution to the SDGs

SDG TARGET	ACTIVE VOICES ACTIVITIES	RELEVANCE TO SDG TARGET
Target 16.1. Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a network of 21 self-sustained Syrian youth community groups across Middle East and Europe which share common values, emphasising rights-based and 'do no harm' approaches and facilitate local action and integration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces likelihood of violence between Syrian young people and host communities (within and outside Syria), for example due to tensions over access to services or humanitarian assistance. • Builds links between young Syrians, helping to overcome barriers of mistrust, developing 'conflict sensitivity' and skills in dialogue and communication. • Strengthens networking and organisation between young Syrians and connects them with other institutions.
Target 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A social action project organised by young Syrians in Turkey worked with out-of-school children. The project looked at child protection issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incorporation of Syrian children into Turkish schools is a significant issue which can create tension between communities. The project worked with Turkish institutions, got buy-in from the Ministry of Education and helped with the integration and social cohesion of the Syrian refugee community.
Target 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project focused on youth-led participation. Young people worked with communities to decide the social action needed. They worked with local institutions to implement the action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This approach builds the legitimacy of actors and organisations that will be able to form or build institutions in a future non-conflict situation. There are a lot of non-state actors who are playing a big role in conflict mitigation and in developing approaches to social justice. The project builds on existing work and initiatives.
Target 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people learned to share views on difficult issues. They designed and ran advocacy projects about some of these issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing together young Syrians from different parts of Syria, from neighbouring countries and from Europe, exposes them to diverse realities, starts to break down barriers of mistrust between young people and leads them to recognise and advocate for the rights of others.
Target 16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a network of young Syrians and host country social leaders with skills in conflict analysis. • Young Syrian helped to develop messages and make their voices heard in international peace forums. • Young leaders developed for the future transition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Syrians are developing messages and learning how to make their voices heard in international peace discussions. • Increased capacity of young Syrians to investigate the needs of communities, conduct conflict analyses, explore the dynamics of peacebuilding and active citizenship, use action research approaches and lead participative community action projects. This has increased social cohesion and the emergence of alternative non-violent pathways. • Peace, justice and strong institutions will be needed for Syria's transition out of civil war. The project has developed future leaders for this transition – these young people are also advocates for peaceful solutions to issues within and between communities.

Learning from Active Voices

- Building trust and understanding, bringing people together and creating networks is core to reducing violence but requires a tremendous change in young people and communities. This is often overlooked in international projects.

'When we started the project we realised that we needed to make changes to ensure that the project was Syrian- and youth-led. Spending time at this first stage and using facilitation allowed us to bring out and clarify hidden agendas and develop a values-based approach. As a result, participants were able to have very different conversations and really to understand the diversity of perceptions and points of view.'

Project Manager

- Projects that seek to encourage responsive, inclusive, participatory processes must use participatory tools themselves and make sure that the community is involved. Active Voices let the people and communities affected by problems find their own solutions.

'We changed the whole project approach to make it based on the community. It changed a lot from the proposal. We learned to base our work on understanding the communities.'

Project Manager

- Giving young people a voice and a say in their future creates confidence, encourages ownership of processes of change and mobilises the capacity of this part of the population.

'The project made it possible to share opinions. I had been trying to communicate with people in Syria but I couldn't. But when Active Voices started, I found that I could really connect with them. When I contacted them, I realised I didn't know a lot about them. So we started by building common values.'

Young Syrian activist

- There is a need for continued support for young people's international advocacy work. The project evaluation report (INTRAC, 2018) points out that young leaders have only just begun to understand the international institutions for peace building in Syria like the UN's Geneva peace process and the Civil Society Room, and to think about how they could participate. Bringing these young voices into the discussions about a future Syria without conflict and keeping them involved will require ongoing support.





Artivism: Promoting social activism through the arts



South Sudan has endured five years of civil war and there is currently no end in sight. Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan all have very young populations. The 0–14 year age group in Ethiopia makes up 41 per cent of the population and those between 10 and 24 years for another 34 per cent. For South Sudan the figures are 42 per cent and 33 per cent and for Sudan, 41 per cent and 33 per cent (UNFPA, 2017). Youth unemployment in Ethiopia is 7.1 per cent, 17.6 per cent in South Sudan and 27.3 per cent in Sudan. Ethiopia currently ranks 115 out of 144 countries in the 2017 Global Gender Gap Index; while in South Sudan: ‘Women are more likely to die in childbirth than complete primary school. Around 90 per cent of South Sudan’s women are illiterate, compared with 75 per cent of men.’ (Calderbank, 2013) In Sudan, ‘women continue to shoulder the burden of the displacement and poverty associated with conflict, and in rural areas, less than a third of women have had access to any form of education.’ (OECD, 2014)

Artivism was a project involving young adults from Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan. Its objective was to combine the use of arts as an enabler for change with a methodology to build the capacities and confidence of change makers. It was designed specifically to address social change and promote activism through the arts with the ultimate goal of social cohesion and development.

The project grew out of a previous Active Citizens programme focused on enabling community-led social development and motivating community members to take responsibility for their social needs while giving them the knowledge, skills, experience and networks to address them.

The work also built on the Shakespeare Lives programme to mark the 500th centenary of Shakespeare’s death which, in Ethiopia, Sudan

and South Sudan, was delivered under the title of Sonnets for Africa. Young local artists were put in contact with contemporary artists like the rappers Akala and Potent Whisper who have used Shakespeare’s sonnets and plays to cast light on contemporary issues. The project gave a rare platform to the unheard voice of youth from the Horn of Africa.

British Council and the SDGs

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SDG 16 aims to ‘Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.’

The Artivism case study is one of three case studies of the British Council’s contribution to SDG 16. The other two case studies are also available from the British Council.

Young artist's roles in Activism

The key role was that of the individual Artists themselves. They were responsible for planning and implementing their social action projects. While many were connected with local organisations and institutions, they retained responsibility for their projects. A grant scheme was set up enabling the Artists to plan and implement initiatives within their social action projects.

There were more than 60 participants who worked with more than 420 direct beneficiaries through their projects and approximately 1,500 indirect beneficiaries. Participants included doctors, teachers, social workers and engineers, described as individual emerging young artists interested in using their artistic practice as a tool for development in their communities.

The project deliberately started 'wide', in the sense that, while it was designed to train young emerging artists to become more socially engaged and active, not all the participants were expected to go on from the training to take forward a social action project. Only 26 (37 per cent) completed the entire cycle from recruitment through training to the organisation and delivery of a social action project.

The participants pointed out that to embark on and carry through a social action project requires determination, significant time and effort and ability to organise, galvanise and inspire others to join in and help.

The other main participants were volunteers actively involved in the projects some of whom had received cascaded Active Citizen training from the primary project participants.

This group included teachers, artists, active community members, and members of NGOs, local authorities and other local groups.

Parallels between the objectives of Activism and SDG 16

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the promotion of peace and development in the Horn of Africa. Its specific objectives are to:

- Explore the link between arts and active citizenship.

This links with SDG 16's focus on building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

- Build the capacity of young artists to engage with their communities and bring about positive change through the arts.

The implementation of social action projects based on locally-defined needs and priorities reflects the way that SDG 16 links peacebuilding and strong institutions to the achievement of fundamental freedoms (Target 16.10) and sustainable development (Target 16b).

- Develop a network of young artists and activists in the Horn of Africa and create international connections for a global outlook.

The Sustainable Development Goals are global in outlook and promote the participation of all nations in global institutions as a means of building capacities at all levels (Target 16a).

Figure 1: Process of development of citizen and facilitation skills for implementing social action projects

Active Citizen training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 70 young people trained• Participants included doctors, teachers, social workers and engineers
Facilitator training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 51 young people trained• Commitment to working with community groups on addressing local issues
Social action project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 26 young people implemented social action projects• Projects implemented in Addis Ababa and Khartoum

'Our social action project is Art for children, I chose to be in this group because I'm in direct contact with children due to my work as a teacher. The facilitation skills that I've learned from the previous workshops added to my teaching skills and experience made it easier for me to interact with the students in more than just teaching but as a group. The experience had created a stronger bond between me and the students, we became more or less like a small family. I got to know lots of their personal stories and a lot about their personal life. And how that affects their academic achievement.'

Noel's experience in Sudan

The Art Clinic, Khartoum

The Art Clinic project was started by two health professionals in Sudan. Gaadoora, an ear, nose and throat resident doctor, rapper and spoken word artist, relates that, as a result of equipment, drugs and staff shortages, tension between staff and patients is so bad that in one hospital a doctor was shot by a relative of a patient.

Gaadoora started his project by providing poetry and painting workshops for health workers within the hospital. After a showcase/workshop performance with art and poetry, attended mostly by medical staff, he discovered that many doctors were amateur artists of different sorts who had found it too difficult to pursue their medical careers and nurture their artistic talents at the same time. Overall 35 people participated directly in project activities and 75 people attended the final event. The video of the final event attracted many favourable comments. The project also created opportunities for dialogue with other groups and built understanding between workers in the same sectors.

This is a good foundation for possible future initiatives. The group (including founder members) are more motivated and eager to work for positive change in the healthcare community, 'to spark positive dialogue through arts and culture and make people in the community more of culture makers than receivers'.



Gaadoora was one of the Activists who took part in the study trip to the UK, his first ever visit, which enabled him to make contact with Active Citizens from other countries. The visit provided good guidance for the Art Clinic project. Planning is now starting for a new project – a live performance of poetry and the spoken work in a large orphanage. The contacts made in the UK have been maintained and Gaadoora is talking to them about undertaking a joint project.

Comments from fellow Activists, volunteers and community members:

'You can make the World more beautiful.'
'Art therapy, The science of Happiness.'
'Medicine in the mind, Art in the Heart.'
'The beauty within art is that it contains millions of remedies.'

Step Up Project, Addis Ababa

'My goal was to find ways to get people excited about how art can change environmental issues within the community. That's why, as an Active Citizen, I wanted to work with different professionals with different experiences. The training on the different modules – identity and culture, dialogues, local and global citizenship, and planning – gave me the confidence and motivation to show how art can make a change.'

Hirut Jifara, Artist

The project

Meto Dereja is a huge part of the everyday life in the community. It is a long set of steps providing access from one area of Addis Ababa to another. Hundreds of people use the stairs every day to get from their homes to work or school. Despite their historical significance they were neglected, crumbling and run down. The community had many complaints. We thought that the best way to demonstrate the power of art to bring about social change was to transform a wasted and mismanaged urban facility into a beautiful public space. Our aim was to improve the quality of daily life by making the stairs attractive, making them a focus for positive change – and to achieve this by instilling in the community a sense of ownership and pride in their neighbourhood and history.

Impact

As a result of our work the project area has been selected by the government for protection as a priority urban public space. Other people, artists and architects, have been inspired to get involved in similar projects. Architecture teachers want to learn from the experience of working with the community.

Participatory decision making at all levels

The key phrase in Target 16.7 for the Activism project is ‘... at all levels’.

Local community level

The first outcomes from the social action projects were naturally experienced at the local level – the level from which the Artists themselves start. The Step Up project clearly had an impact on decisions made by local authorities in Addis Ababa about urban renovation and is evidence that they contributed to *‘responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making.’*

The project evaluator noted that *‘on a community level the SAPs implemented by the participants have introduced new practices, changed perceptions and influenced behaviours. While there is evidence of this impact being long term, for the project to be able to make a more impactful difference a longer implementation phase is needed, or a second phase of interventions. As the project is implemented now, the outcomes take the form of small islands of success.’* For a pilot project, this is useful learning and can inform the next phase of the project in terms of how to further support those who have taken part and to ensure sustainability.

Local voices influencing at the city and national level

Many projects found themselves engaging with decision-makers at higher levels in order to be able to get the work done. This could be a stressful process, as Ifa of the Step Up project relates:

‘It wasn’t easy. We talked to community members, government officials and NGOs; we applied for funding – without success. The only money we had was the British Council grant, which came late, and we had to use our own money to buy bricks and paint. We approached the city authorities but encountered bureaucracy. We found that the community had lost faith in the system and with each other as a community; that people thought that this was a lost cause and the only way that this site could be redeveloped was for a private institution or the government to take it over. But we motivated and mobilised the community and found volunteers to help us.’



When the project was completed, the Step Up team got their reward: their work and its impact have been widely recognised. The local government is now replicating the initiative in other parts of the district and has included them in a World Bank and Ethiopia government funded programme which aims to improve living conditions in marginalised areas of Addis Ababa. There has been such a positive response to the social action project that representatives from five other local authorities have visited the project and want to replicate it in their own districts. They have asked the social action team to be involved in these future actions.

International level

Networking and the formation of and participation in networks is a key component of the project, recognising that social change can come about only when activists are able to form links with each other, locally, nationally and internationally, for mutual support and encouragement and ultimately to build movements for change. 12 Artivists travelled to the UK as part of international workshops and visits, meeting British social activists. Three of the 12 attended an International Facilitator Workshop held in August 2017, and four

attended an international study visit in February 2018 as part of the Active Citizens global programme. There were also opportunities to visit and attend events in each other's countries. The Artivists did create local networks and strengthened some national networks and participation in the Active Citizens events in the UK were a starting point for international networking in the future, as Khadiga's story of change illustrates.

'I participated in the international Active Citizen study visit in London along with 35 participants from 15 different countries. Connecting with inspirational people from all around the globe, listening to their stories and the way they perceived their cultural identities left me with a treasure of invaluable human experiences and an unquenchable thirst for more. Since the study visit I have been working on advancing my project while keeping an eye out for further collaborations with active citizens around the globe.'

Khadiga, Artist, Sudan

The study visit to the UK helped to cement wider relationships with active citizens around the world. A WhatsApp group has been set up which they use to maintain contact and discuss projects and work – a first step towards possible more solid collaboration.

Table 1 Project impact: examples of Artivism's contribution to SDG 16 targets and related goals

SDG TARGET	ACTIVE VOICES ACTIVITIES	RELEVANCE TO SDG TARGET
Target 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artivism participants set up small-scale projects and developed skills which will in the future help them participate in and potentially lead to larger-scale programmes and institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By carrying out projects in public places and institutions, the Artivists created awareness that it is possible to make the changes that people want, even in the face of bureaucracy and obstacles. As a result, decision-makers in institutions such as a city authority and a public hospital have recognised the value of the new approaches.
Target 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project focused on youth-led participation. Young people worked with communities to decide the social action needed. In Addis Ababa and Khartoum the projects focused on promoting social cohesion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and dialogue between participants, and the skills needed to nurture and develop them, are key elements of Artivism and are essential to the success of the participants' social action projects. The project aimed to create a cadre of young people who will have 'increased ability to facilitate dialogue and networking across cultures, and work in collaboration with others.'

Building respect through theatre

Khadiga, a physician and a poet in Sudan, set up a theatre project with children. The impact of her project was to make the children more attentive and respectful of each other, an important step towards building social cohesion.

After the training we started a theatre initiative that empowers school children to artistically explore, create and communicate solutions to their subjectively identified problems. Working on addressing these issues using theatrical performance, creative writing and role playing helped build self-confidence, a sense of responsibility, compassion and correct dysfunctional behavioral patterns among the children.

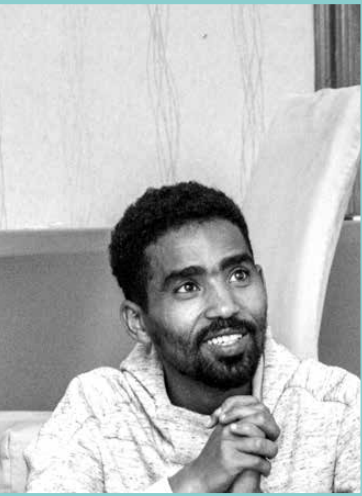
After a few weeks the group of children participating showed remarkably improved discipline, receptivity and acceptance of one another; they stopped interrupting, listened more attentively and showed respect to other participant's viewpoints. They are now able to think and create solutions as a team.

The project instilled the participants with confidence, a sense of purpose and motivation to be active in their communities. This is an essential first step of any change. However, what makes this exceptional is that this impact was transferred from the participant level to volunteers and beneficiaries. In addition, the skills developed and ability to link social change with the arts transformed the participants into true Activists who were equipped to become change makers.

Learning from Activism

- The British Council contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals through, among others, its Active Citizens programme. 'It's a ripple effect that leads people to become change agents – and challenge themselves and others to think and behave in a different way.' (Jill Mann, Together for Peace)
- Support for the SDGs is not direct but will come about, first, through individuals who are encouraged and trained to become Active Citizens who then find ways of working together to bring about change, and second, through the beneficiaries who are positively affected by the Activists, such as the children who became more respectful of each other in Khadiga's project in Sudan.
- With Activism the British Council used the Active Citizens methodology to encourage and support individuals in working for positive change but chose to use art as the entry point. By focusing on skills, confidence and motivation of participants, the British Council is building the capacity of individuals and the groups which they form, to work for wider societal change, and to make a contribution to the SDGs.
- Activism was a pilot to enable the British Council to see whether artistic endeavour can be successfully combined with social action. It is similar to other education projects in that it is creating capacity to pursue positive social goals which are certainly in harmony with the SDGs – and SDG 16 – even if they do not fit neatly in one of its targets.







Connecting Classrooms in Scotland, India and Tanzania

Connecting Classrooms is a global education programme building the capacity of teachers and school leaders in a range of core skills to help young people develop knowledge, skills and values to live and work in a globalised economy. These core skills are: critical thinking and problem-solving; collaboration and communication; creativity and imagination; digital literacy; global citizenship; student leadership; and personal development. The programme also facilitates international school partnerships and exchanges.

The current Connecting Classrooms programme has a specific focus on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including online and face-to-face training courses for teachers, an in-depth Leading Core Skills course aimed at school leaders and the provision of classroom resources. The skills corresponding to targets in SDG 16 are citizenship and leadership.

In Scotland, there are 37 schools signed up for Learning for Sustainability and among these there are two schools working on the Peace, Justice and Stability collaborative projects template: Royal High Primary School in Edinburgh, which is partnered with Maua Primary School in Tanzania; and Williamston Primary School in West Lothian, partnered with Universal School Ghatkopar (USG) in Mumbai, India. The partnership between these primary schools is well established and they have had strong links for a number of years.

This case study illustrates how pupils from the two schools were motivated by materials on SDG 16 to find out more about each other, explore moral and ethical issues in their own

lives and take ownership of their own learning programme, to make it relevant for themselves and others in their communities. The teachers involved describe their experience of visiting their partners in India and Tanzania and how this inspired their teaching and influenced the content of the curriculum in international education when they returned to the UK.

British Council and the SDGs

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

In 2015 all 193 countries of the United Nations agreed a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN member states have committed to mobilise efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

SDG 16 aims to 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.'

Connecting Classrooms is one of the three case studies of the British Council's contribution to SDG 16. The other two case studies are also available from the British Council.

Royal High Primary in Edinburgh and Maua School, Tanzania

Katie Campbell is a teacher in Primary 1, at the Royal High Primary School and had the opportunity to visit Tanzania as part of this project. The children were involved in the lead up to the visit, fundraising and bringing in things for the teachers to take to the school. There was a lot of excitement.

Katie was very impressed by her time with teachers at Maua Primary school: *'I saw lots of differences between our schools, we have so much and they had no windows in the classroom, there was dirt everywhere, it was very basic and the children had to bring their own notebook and pencil – the school had very little, but the teachers are very resourceful with what they have.'*

She was also inspired by the enthusiasm and determination of the children in Tanzania and learned a lot from the experience, especially how imaginative teachers are: *'they use things they have around in nature, they take the children outside for activities and they taught us how to be more creative in their own way, such as children learning through songs.'*

When she returned she had lots of photos which she showed in an assembly with the whole school: *'It makes it more real for the children when someone has been there. They listened very intently and asked a lot of questions about the children in Tanzania. It brought the school community together.'*

Williamston School in Livingston and Universal School Ghatkopar, Mumbai

There are 408 children in Williamston Primary School, 56 pupils in Primary 7, aged 11–12 years, participated in the SDG 16 Partnership, Peace and Justice project, together with 40 children in the same primary school class in the USG in India. The project benefited teachers and pupils and fits in with their school values: respect, peace and inclusion. The project is relevant to Williamston's core values and peace is also a highly valued quality at USG.

Stephanie Brown is one of the teachers who got involved in Connecting Classrooms when she joined the school; she visited USG in India in 2014. She explained that Williamston pupils chose the project because the peace and justice theme continued learning from a previous school project on the Second World War.

Williamston staff discussed the SDG topic with the head teacher at USG who also decided to work on the topic. Stephanie explained that looking at peace and conflict had helped student bodies at both schools develop school values (Williamston) and guiding principles (USG).

At Williamston, teachers spoke to the children about these concepts and what they mean within the school and they discussed how to make the school a more peaceful and just place. Gaining knowledge of peace and mechanisms to deal with conflict helped pupils and teachers develop their outlook; collaborating with USG to achieve these global goals contributed to their understanding of global citizenship: *'It helps give students a sense that they can take positive action in our community and be role models to make a more peaceful school environment for younger students.'*

The focus of the project is on taking action; children are empowered and feel that their views and values are taken into account in the school. The pupils' take on peace and justice in their school is about having a positive reward system and the school being a peaceful and happy place. They have ideas on how they could make it a fairer system. Teacher Stephanie Brown explained that pupils have learned about their place in the world and how their actions can cause positive changes. So far they have worked on the overall SDG 16 goal, but as the project is continuing, they are planning to work on some of the issues identified in the targets.

'The children love it, the project brought learning to life and developed a passion for international education.'

Contributing to increased interest in the SDGs

The aim of the Connecting Classrooms programme is to strengthen teaching practices to support teachers in implementing effective techniques that develop students' core skills and to support them to integrate these core skills into the curriculum.

The Connecting Classrooms programme includes in-depth training courses for teachers, which can be completed online or face-to-face as well as classroom resources for teachers to use with pupils.

Figure 1: Development of interest in SDG 16 through Connecting Classrooms

Connecting Classrooms Phase 1 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global : Connecting Classrooms starts • Building global awareness and cross-cultural learning
Connecting Classrooms Phase 2 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global: Core Skills Programme launched • Year 1 over 5,000 schools participated : 589 in India, 201 in Tanzania, 128 in UK
Connecting Classrooms Phase 3 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global: SDG 16 module used in 465 schools • Scotland: Peace Project using SDG 16

Connecting Classrooms: SDG 16: Template project

The classroom resources on Goal 16 aims to enable teachers to help pupils understand what they can contribute to their community through taking a lead and organising a project.

‘Pupils will gain a better understanding of Sustainable Development Goal 16 and its focus on ‘peace, justice and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.’

This focuses on two main themes:

- **Citizenship:** developing active, globally aware citizens who have the skills, knowledge and motivation to address issues of human and environmental sustainability and work towards a fairer world in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue; developing an understanding of what it means to be a citizen of their own country and their own country’s values.
- **Student leadership:** recognising the importance of honesty and empathy; recognising others’ needs and safety; fostering perseverance, resilience and self-confidence; exploring leadership, self-regulation and responsibility.

There is a related training package on **Inclusion and Non-Discrimination** which aims to develop a greater awareness of inclusion issues, to gain an understanding of theoretical frameworks underpinning discussions on inclusion and identify strategic and practical opportunities to improve the inclusive ethos in school communities and the classroom. The course includes a focus on gender, special education needs and marginalised children, and supports participants to explore challenges to inclusion relevant to their own local contexts.

The impact of working on SDG 16 through Connecting Classrooms

In Scotland the project has helped pupils to think about peace and justice and what it looks like in their school, home and community. When they go home they talk to their parents and neighbours about what they have learned, so it has a wider reach in the community.

What works

In terms of the immediate lessons learned, teachers participating considered that the collaborative nature of the peace project helped them become aware of different forms of conflict and resolution in their own and in other cultures. Looking at peace as a concept at the local level of each school helped them understand the different challenges they face in each of their communities and to craft new solutions to conflict through reforming behaviour codes and expectations. When Williamston teachers visited India, there was a school Skype session and video call with the USG: the pupils in Scotland could see their teachers in India and ask questions.

Pupils gained an appreciation of other cultures, developing a global mind-set. In the inclusion workshop pupils learned about not taking advantage of other people and had a chance to talk about difference and discrimination.

A report by one of the teachers on the project at the Royal High found many positive changes as a result of participating in the project and said that both their school and the school in Maua have become more connected to the issues that surround the Global Goals for sustainable development. They now have a greater commitment to change. Global citizenship has become fully embedded within the school ethos in both countries because of the partnership. The partnership gave children in both countries opportunities to experience digital literacy, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and imagination, student leadership, collaboration, communication and citizenship.

Upon returning from Tanzania, teachers have met and shared lessons for good quality learning and teaching across the cluster. Twende Pamoja is a group of 30 primary and secondary schools across Scotland and Tanzania committed to developing partnerships. This has ensured that the global vision and goals are shared and embedded across many schools, as one teacher explained: *'Since returning from Tanzania, I have met with other Learning for Sustainability co-ordinators, and ensured that the core skills are implemented across the school. This I have done by supporting teachers, leading assemblies and staff meetings and creating displays.'*

The teachers also shared their experience in Tanzania with the wider school community and with parents and carers. The partnership has enabled them to take part in team teaching with teachers from an East African country, and they were able to learn from each other and about each other and develop a professional relationship.

Connecting Classrooms outcomes

- Teachers and school leaders were positive about the core skills courses, praising the practical and interactive nature of the training.
- Teachers recognised the value of core skills development in their students (beyond a narrow focus on academic performance) and understood how to apply core skills across the curriculum.
- Monitoring data provided evidence that knowledge and understanding of effective core skills teaching approaches among the trained teachers increased by 29 per cent globally.

(Connecting Classrooms Interim Impact Evaluation Report, 2018)



Table 1: Global impact: examples of Connecting Classroom's contribution to SDG 16 targets and related goals

SDG TARGET	CONNECTING CLASSROOMS ACTIVITIES	RELEVANCE TO SDG TARGET
Target 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global teacher training in developing core skills: critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and communication, creativity and imagination, digital literacy, global citizenship and student leadership and personal development. The teaching materials include a module on inclusion which has raised awareness about diversity and discrimination. 	<p>Raising awareness is the first step towards changing behaviour to prevent violence.</p> <p>Examples of how the programme has been used for raising awareness are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion of issues surrounding domestic violence – how to combat and prevent it. Discussion of child marriage. <p>Teachers are using strategies to promote inclusive education, based on techniques such as group work and students taking more ownership over their learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Nigeria in a social studies lesson, the teacher asked students to think through their own gender stereotypes. In Ethiopia, one lesson focused on the elderly and the challenges they face.
Target 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are encouraged to give students more ownership over their own learning and leadership in classroom activities. 	<p>Across all countries there was evidence of teachers giving students more ownership and leadership over their own learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Nigeria, one English teacher changed the structure of debates to be student-led. Students now act as the debate panel, adjudicating and facilitating the discussions of their classmates. Bangladesh reported allowing leaders of groups in class to be elected rather than teacher-appointed. In Ethiopia, there was evidence that teachers encouraged increased participation among all students, including those of lower ability.
RELATED GOALS	CONNECTING CLASSROOMS ACTIVITIES	RELEVANCE TO SDG TARGET
Goal 4 Education Target 4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a curriculum focusing on values such as human rights, gender equality, peace and non-violence, global citizenship and an appreciation of cultural diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The schools in Scotland have incorporated Connecting Classrooms material and approaches into health and well-being, the third broad curriculum area after literacy and numeracy which includes physical, emotional and mental well-being, school values and community activities. Children involved in the programme have participated in discussions and decisions about the values and principles of their schools. Children have a greater understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.
Goal 5 Gender equality and Goal 10 Reduce inequality within and between countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training package on Inclusive Pedagogies (from early 2017). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher training sparked projects to understand why girls participate less confidently and to encourage them more in class (Ethiopia) and to use critical thinking and problem solving skills to develop an awareness of different types of prejudice.

Learning from Connecting Classrooms

- Global connections between teachers and learners are a powerful motivation for appreciation of and action on diversity and inclusion and for fostering non-violent approaches to conflict resolution.
- The Connecting Classrooms programme has built on the many common interests which schools, teachers and pupils in different countries share.
- The teachers benefit professionally from visiting schools in other countries. They also share their experience with the wider school community, parents and carers. In Scotland the Twende Pamoja partnership has made it possible to organise team teaching with teachers from an East African country: all the teachers learned from each other and about each other and developed professional relationships.
- It is too early to say conclusively that Connecting Classrooms is contributing to SDG 16 targets as the impact will be seen in the longer term but many positive results are apparent. Changing teaching practices and curriculum content is a process and therefore not easy to measure in a short timeframe. Evaluation and impact reports have identified positive change and show that pupils around the world are benefiting from learning these core skills. Schools are being strengthened by teacher training which will influence the values and behaviour of future generations as they become adults and active citizens in society.

What could improve work on SDG 16?

The impact monitoring report points out that the teachers interviewed consistently agreed that they needed better support and follow-up to fully incorporate core skills into their lessons and to embed core skills within their current curriculum. This view linked to their feedback that the initial training should be supplemented with advice to give greater depth and curriculum-specific guidance.

Some teachers also highlighted that they felt somewhat overwhelmed with the amount of additional preparation and planning required to adapt the curriculum and develop appropriate classroom activities. The process of learning and adopting new skills and approaches takes time and in the early stages teachers often do not feel completely confident in the new practices and seek further support and training in certain areas.



