

Save the Children response to AUB research paper: ‘Social cohesion and Intergroup relations: Syrian refugees and Lebanese nationals in the Bekaa and Akkar’

May 2014

Save the Children (SC) Lebanon welcomes the conclusions and recommendations outlined in the research paper conducted by AUB. One of the objectives of this piece of research, as outlined in the ToR was specifically to assess the conflict sensitivity of SC Lebanon’s Community Support Projects (CSPs) through the following research activities:

- Assess the intervention design (Logical Theory of Change) and the assumptions built in to the project design
- Identify the elements of project design that can reinforce community cohesion and reduce conflict
- Identify any elements of programme design and implementation which may have had a negative impact on community cohesion

The AUB researchers met this objective and provided some clear feedback on elements of SC Lebanon’s CSP project design and implementation requiring improvements. The recommendations proposed and SC Lebanon’s actions for addressing these in forthcoming programming are outlined below. These actions will be integrated into SC Lebanon’s CSP guidelines.

Recommendation	Save the Children action
<u>Equal status condition:</u> While we do recognize the difficulties and challenges of applying CLI in the field, we strongly recommend adhering to the recruitment methodologies initially set, namely respecting allocation quotas (e.g. 50%) and equality status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Messaging on allocation quotas between population groups to be strengthened as part of the sensitisation & communications strategy on CSPs
<u>Equal status condition:</u> Relatedly, SC staff need to be cautious when assigning team leaders and supervisors to groups since bias may undermine the equal status condition. To maintain this necessary condition, it is preferable not to have a leader at all - if feasible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- SC proposes that the leader position will be by SC staff in front of team members, or rotated amongst different group members on a weekly
<u>Common goals condition:</u> Regarding the common goals condition, SC may need to refrain from implementing CLI projects in Informal Settlements (IS’), because a) perceptions of unfairness and bias would be significantly reduced and b) non-IS refugees are as vulnerable as IS refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- SC will focus future CSPs on municipality-led interventions rather than site improvements in IS’ (which cannot in their current design contribute to social cohesion objectives)
<u>Institutional support condition:</u> There was evidence that some municipalities did not feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- SC is currently working with UNHCR & UNDP to map out municipality needs for

sufficiently consulted on the projects. Thus, it is important to increase the consultation of municipalities about the types of projects needed and those that would be suitable for a sustained development strategy (participatory governance).	CSPs (with an emphasis on WASH-related projects) and will prioritise projects with a longer-term infrastructural impact
<u>Recruitment of participants:</u> This needs to be clearly and visibly identified as a random process or on a “first come first served” basis to avoid perceptions of favoritism, and to reduce actual nepotistic behavior and cronyism	- Specific communications strategies to be developed for CSPs to increase transparency of self-selection process
<u>Communication:</u> Needs to be strengthened, with clear and detailed information about the project presented during the recruitment and advertisement phases.	- As above
<u>Complaint procedures:</u> Need to respect an individual’s privacy and ensure confidentiality; these procedures need to be created and adequately communicated to participants.	- Accountability recommendations to be integrated into SC Accountability framework
<u>Choice of work:</u> This needs to be carefully selected to ensure that a) participants are positively inclined towards the chosen/selected task and b) intercommunity interactions are protected from potentially negative experiences with members of the public	- Appropriateness of type of work to be systematically agreed upon in collaboration with municipality and Community Development Committees (CDCs) where these exist