



**BRANDING GUIDELINES FOR QUDWA SOAP  
OPERA BAKIR**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES	5
TARGET GROUP: WHO ARE THESE GUIDELINES FOR	5
"BAKIR" SERIES OBJECTIVES"	6
AN EDUTAINMENT APPROACH	7
TARGET AUDIENCE	9
QUDWA AND ITS KEY MESSAGES	9
<b>EPISODE GUIDELINES</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FACILITATION</b>	<b>10</b>
WHAT IS A FACILITATED DISCUSSION AND WHY IS IT VALUABLE?	11
HOW TO FOSTER A PRODUCTIVE SESSION	14
ASKING FOR HELP	16
<b>FAQS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>EPISODES</b>	<b>21</b>
HOW TO USE	22
EPISODES 1-5	22
SUMMARY OF EPISODES	23
KEY MESSAGES	24
FACILITATION THE DISCUSSION	24
EPISODES 6-10	25
SUMMARY OF EPISODES	25
KEY MESSAGES	26
FACILITATION THE DISCUSSION	27
EPISODES 11-15	28
SUMMARY OF EPISODES	29
KEY MESSAGES	30
FACILITATION THE DISCUSSION	32
EPISODES 16-20	33
SUMMARY OF EPISODES	33
KEY MESSAGES	33
FACILITATION THE DISCUSSION	33
<b>ANNEX</b>	<b>34</b>
ANNEX 1: KEY MESSAGES	34
ANNEX 2: SERIES SYNOPSIS	37
ANNEX 2: TV SERIES SYNOPSIS	41



## INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF DEVELOPING GUIDELINES FOR THIS TV SERIES IS TO BE USED BY FACILITATORS, WHETHER THEY ARE FRONT LINERS IN THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR, CSO FACILITATORS/ FRONT LINERS OR MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY; THESE GUIDELINES AIM TO SERVE THOSE WHO WILL USE THEM THROUGH THE FOLLOWING:

- PROVIDING BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT, ITS OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE.
- PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE FACILITATOR ON THE DISCUSSION APPROACH.
- PROVIDING GUIDANCE ON HOW TO USE THE EPISODE'S GUIDELINES AS WELL AS RECOMMENDATIONS ON SCREENING THE TV SERIES.
- ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TV SERIES AND FACILITATING DISCUSSIONS AROUND IT.
- BUILDING A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE, USING THE TV SERIES, ON THE TOPICS OF CHILD MARRIAGE, CHILD LABOUR, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN, IN ADDITION TO CHANGING SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND HARMFUL PRACTICES.

## TARGET GROUP: WHO ARE THESE GUIDELINES FOR?

THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO BE USED BY FACILITATORS AND OTHER TRAINED STAFF WORKING IN THE CHILD PROTECTION SECTOR AND ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN LEBANON. THE FACILITATORS SHOULD POSSESS THE FOLLOWING SKILLS:

- DIRECT WORK EXPERIENCE WITH CAREGIVERS.
- BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN, ITS TYPES.
- KNOWLEDGE OF COPING MECHANISMS WITH VIOLENT PERPETRATORS (THE AGGRESSOR).
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE ACCESSIBLE REPORTING/REFERRAL MECHANISMS TO WOMEN, GIRLS OR BOYS ONCE A VIOLENT EVENT HAS OCCURRED.

## “BAKIR” SERIES OBJECTIVES

BAKIR IS DESIGNED TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN, CHILD LABOUR AND CHILD MARRIAGE IN LEBANON, WHERE IT SEEKS TO CHANGE THE BEHAVIOUR OF CAREGIVERS AND PREVENT VIOLENCE. THIS WORK IS CLASSIFIED AS PART OF THE QUDWA STRATEGY, A COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND WOMEN, CHILD MARRIAGE AND CHILD LABOUR. THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE SERIES ARE:

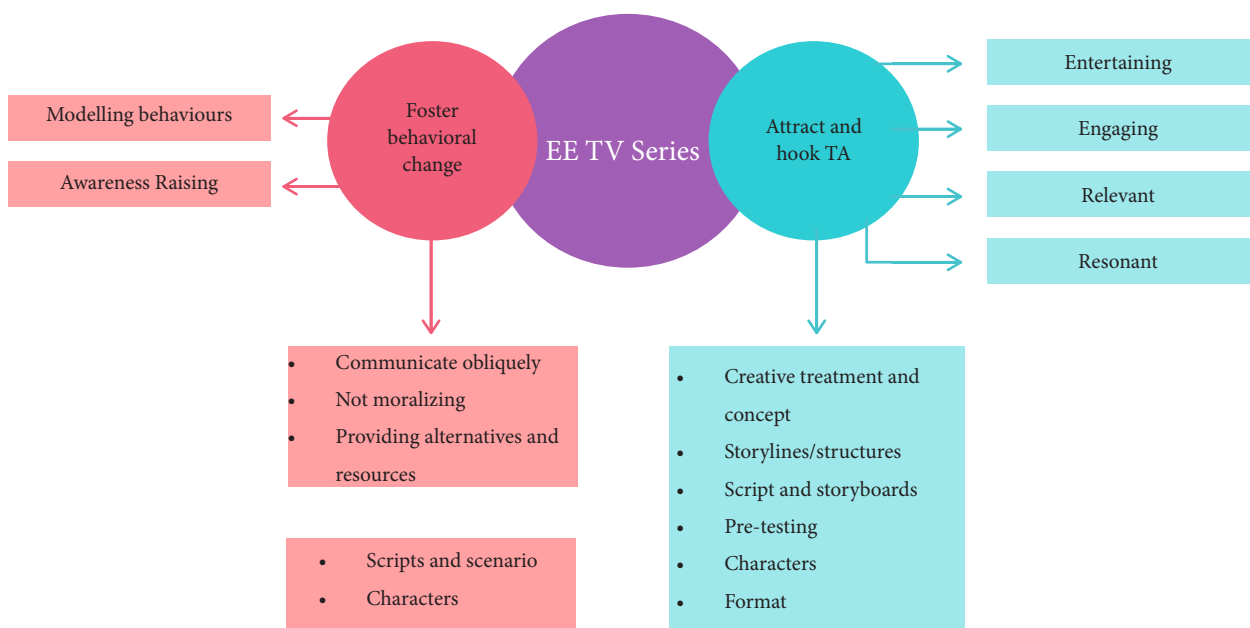
- POSITIVE INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS CAREGIVING, NON-VIOLENT BEHAVIOURS AND EMPOWERMENT OF GIRLS AND WOMEN ARE PROMOTED
- MASCULINITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS SUCH AS BEING NURTURING AND CARING, BEING SUPPORTIVE AND RESPECTFUL OF WOMEN AS EQUALS.
- MEN AND ADOLESCENT BOYS VALUE GIRLS WHO STAY IN SCHOOL AND RESPECT WOMEN WHO WORK
- STEREOTYPES OF WHAT A GIRL CAN OR CANNOT DO AND BE ARE TRANSFORMED
- CONDUCIVE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE ADOPTION OF PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOURS IS DEVELOPED
- POSITIVE PUBLIC DISCOURSE AND NARRATIVE IN THE MEDIA FOR PROMOTED PRACTICES
- ROLE MODELS AND ALTERNATIVES ARE SHOWCASED AT BOTH THE COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL LEVEL
- INCREASED SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS FOR POSITIVE PROMOTED BEHAVIOURS
- TARGETED COMMUNITIES ARE EMPOWERED TO ACT AND LEAD THE CHANGE
- INCREASED CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUES AT COMMUNITY LEVEL EXPLORING THE ADOPTION OF PROMOTED BEHAVIORS
- COLLECTIVE INTEREST TO REDUCE VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITY
- INCREASED JOINT OWNERSHIP / SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

SPECIFICALLY, THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS SOAP OPERA ARE FOR BEHAVIOURS THAT PROMOTE THE WELLBEING, DIGNITY, AND EQUALITY OF WOMEN, GIRLS AND BOYS ARE PRACTICED AND BECOME THE NORM IN LEBANON.

## AN EDUTAINMENT APPROACH

Due to the popularity of television series and short videos, UNICEF selected an edutainment approach to address violent behaviour against women and children, child marriage and child labour. These series, designed in a dramatic, entertainment format, are circulated to tackle thorny and complex social issues, such as violence against girls, boys, women, child marriage and child labour.

In addition to their ability to attract and engage the audience and build a fanbase through this content, which achieves the goals of the TV series.



**Figure 1**  
Edutainment approach

The plot of the drama series, Bakir, revolves around a Lebanese family, like other families, facing common challenges such as lack of job opportunities, lack of financial resources, and sociocultural pressures. We will highlight the human drivers for endorsing violence against children and women, child marriage and child labour by telling the stories of the main characters: father, mother, teenage son, teenage daughter, child and aunt, supported by secondary characters of the extended family, friends, and neighbours. It is worth noting that these characters have been carefully designed to reflect Lebanon's diverse population.

This series will be at the heart of the storytelling approach across TV channels and various digital platforms in an effort to attract the targeted audiences through a variety of means including community outreach events and social media platforms.



## TARGET , AUDIENCE, QUDWA AND ITS KEY MESSAGE

## TARGET AUDIENCE

These episodes are intended to assist frontliners and facilitators to reach community members in general and/or to caregivers in particular. It should be noted that the episodes contain some scenes of violence, and therefore are not appropriate for those under 13.

## QUDWA AND ITS KEY MESSAGES

Qudwa is Lebanon's first national social and behavioural (SBC) strategy to prevent violence against girls, boys, women, child labour, and child marriage. Its focus is on prevention and initiating social change in Lebanon to ensure a decent life for girls, boys and women in Lebanon, especially those who are vulnerable, promote equality in a safe environment, and increase their well-being. To achieve this goal, the plan success criteria was defined by adopting and implementing behaviours that promote the well-being, dignity and equality for women, girls and boys, and make them prevail in Lebanon. Qudwa Key Messages are listed in Annex 1.

## EPISODE GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to serve as a tool for facilitators in their discussions with caregivers on the topic of violence, work, marriage, and the content of the TV series. A brief guide is provided for each of the series' 20 episodes. These guidelines aim to provide the facilitators with an overview of the episode's content, key messages, expected behavioural outcomes, as well as specific questions to start the discussion. It is highly recommended that facilitators watch the episodes themselves before viewing them with the caregivers and read the episodic guidelines for each episode ahead of time.



## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FACILITATION

## WHAT IS A FACILITATED DISCUSSION AND WHY IS IT VALUABLE?

Facilitated discussions are moderated discussions, whereby the facilitator prompts other participants to reflect more deeply on an issue or piece of content. This allows for the entire group to benefit from the observations, thoughts and opinions of others in response to an issue. Engaging assistance in the form of a facilitated discussion empowers participants to tackle difficult issues through participants interaction and engagement in a respectful way.

### A FACILITATED DISCUSSION ASSISTS IN:

- Exploring: It explores participants own views and helps them realize the views of others on the topic at hand.
- Raising Awareness: It is designed to share specific information and to hear about the views and perspectives of others.
- Deciding: It assists in leading to a decision on the issue being discussed.

### HOW CAN A FACILITATED DISCUSSION SUPPORT PARTICIPANTS?

- Give everyone involved a voice. Whether the discussion is meant to form a basis for action, or just to play with ideas, it gives all members of the group a chance to speak their opinions, to agree or disagree with others, and to have their thoughts heard. In many community-building situations, the members of the group might be chosen specifically because they represent a cross-section of the community, or a diversity of points of view.
- Allows for a variety of ideas to be expressed and discussed. A group is much more likely to come to a good conclusion if a mix of ideas is on the table, and if all members have the opportunity to think about and respond to them.
- Is generally a democratic, egalitarian process. It reflects the ideals of most grassroots and community groups and encourages a diversity of views.
- Leads to group ownership of whatever conclusions, plans, or action the group decides upon. Because everyone has a chance to contribute to the discussion and to be heard, the final result feels like it was arrived at by and belongs to everyone.
- Encourages those who might normally be reluctant to speak their minds.

- Often, quiet people have important things to contribute with, but aren't assertive enough to make themselves heard. A good group discussion will encourage them to speak up.
- Can often open communication channels among people who might not communicate in any other way. This can include instigating discussion among people from very different backgrounds, and cultures or who are usually reluctant to engage in discussions around the topic matter with others. A good discussion should help individuals with such behaviour patterns to realize the worth of engaging in such discussions.



HOW TO FOSTER A  
PRODUCTIVE DISCUSSION

- **UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR**

The facilitator's role is to create the process and conditions that enable a group to discuss, plan, decide or learn. While a facilitator should aim to stay neutral, the ideal role of the facilitator is to guide caregivers and push them to think about negative effects caused by violence, child labour and early marriage, and help them find a safe and non-violent solutions.

- **LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR DISCUSSION**

Facilitators should have sufficient time to prepare in advance to be able to foster a good discussion with caregivers. This can be achieved through the following:

- Developing a schedule for the episodes' screening, and the proposed dates for discussing each episode.
- Watching each episode before facilitating any discussion.
- Identifying the episode's objectives and the key messages by reading the episode's guide to be discussed.
- Learning about violence, as much as possible. The facilitators are not intended to become experts, but discussions around the episodes will lead to different questions raised by caregivers around the topic matter. Understanding the different notions of violence and basic information around it will help facilitate the discussion and lead to experience sharing by caregivers. This as such is extremely important to open up the discussion around behavioural implications of violence and thus steer caregivers minds on the right track.
- Ensuring that caregivers who are involved in the group discussion had seen the episode beforehand.

The facilitator will use the guide as a reference to help facilitate the discussion. This tool helps to guide and clarify the discussion's input and output.

## DURING THE SESSION, KEEP THESE IDEAS IN MIND:

- Am I following the provided episodes guidelines?
- Is the group repeating itself without any added value about the behaviours and effects of violence?
- Do all caregivers involved in the discussion express past experiences, whether they have had it themselves, a family member or a friend in their circle, or do they participate only by expressing their thoughts and opinions?
- Is the discussion going on track and on time?
- Am I summarizing or clarifying important points, arguments, or ideas arises that contributes to understanding the overall goal the series tackles?
- Ensuring a productive collective behaviour
- The facilitator should assist caregivers on ground rules at the beginning of each session. These rules will be known as the bases of discussion, including for example the following:
  - Treating others with respect.
  - No arguments directed at others – only at ideas and opinions. Disagreement should be respectful – no ridicule.
  - Listening without interrupting.
  - Respecting group time and allowing others to participate.
  - Taking all comments seriously and trying to evaluate them fairly. Other people's thoughts and comments may change our opinions or vice versa: it is important to be open to this possibility.
  - Don't be defensive if another participant disagrees with you. Evaluate both positions, and only continue to argue for yours if you continue to believe it's right.
  - Supporting the ground rules during the discussion is all participants' responsibility to follow up.



ASKING FOR HELP

## IF APPROACHED BY A SURVIVOR, WHO SEEKS HELP, YOU SHOULD DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Be aware of the referral pathways and services available in the area of discussion.
- Ensure that discussion with survivors is done in a safe and quiet place.
- Comfort the survivor using healing statements such as: “It’s not your fault”, “I believe you”, “This is not your fault”, “I am very glad you told me”, “I am sorry this happened to you”, “You are very brave for telling me”.
- Listen with a non-judgmental attitude.
- Inform the survivor about specialized services available in the area - either by giving the contact details of case management agencies or other services, or if requested by the survivor by calling them directly (referral).
- Explain that case management agencies have specialized personnel that can best support the survivor and will work with her/him to find solutions to her/his needs
- Explanation of services available: If requested, provide the survivor with information on case management service providers:
  - Briefly explain that these service providers have specialized staff who will assist them in reaching the different types of assistance they need; including psycho-social assistance, medical assistance, legal assistance, and assistance to find safe shelter if needed.
  - Mention that these services are free of charge.
  - Explain that specialized medical assistance is available and can be provided after an incident they might have been subjected to.
  - Explain that service providers assist everyone without any discrimination, information is confidential, and nothing will be done without the expressed consent of the survivor.
- Should your organization’s policy require you to refer prior to your line manager/ supervisor, this has to be explained to the survivor.

Ask and receive the survivor’s consent prior to put her/him in touch with a primary focal point, using GBV Referral pathway and facilitating the contact between service provider and survivor (ie. date and time of appointment means of transportation).

- Ask the survivor which would be the preferred option to be contacted by a specialized service provider.
  - Only after having the survivor's consent proceed to referral. Referral can be done:
    - Through the phone: by contacting directly the focal point on the referral
    - Pathway, ensuring confidentiality of information shared (i.e. private setting).
    - Through inter-agency referral form: addressed to the focal point on the referral pathway, password protected.

### IF APPROACHED BY A SURVIVOR, WHO SEEKS HELP, YOU SHOULD DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Encourage the survivor to seek help. Limit your interaction to providing information and not advising the survivor on your preferred option.
- Ask questions about the incident to the survivor. Remember that it is not your role to decide whether the person is saying the truth or not, whether she really needs help or not.
- Asking the survivor to tell his/her story several times would traumatize her/him and is unnecessary since response service will not be provided by you.
- Raise expectations. be honest and accurate (e.g., don't say things like "they will give you money, they will solve all your problems").
- If disclosure takes place in the group, it is recommended to:
  - Thank the person who is sharing for his/her trust and thank the group for their acceptance and containment
  - Try to stop the person from speaking further. For example, you can say: "thank you for trusting this space of expression and for starting to share with us such a painful memory, etc. I would also like to thank the group for listening to your story and supporting you).
  - Ask the group to share some supporting sentences with the person who expressed a painful or traumatic situation without advising.
  - After the session Inform the survivor about specialized services available in the area - either by giving the contact details of case management agencies or other services, or if requested by the survivor by calling them directly (referral).



## FAQS

## THIS SECTION COVERS SOME OF THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TV SERIES AND THE FACILITATED DISCUSSION SESSIONS:

- What should I do if a participant does not watch one of the episodes of the series? Allow the participant the necessary time to watch the episode if possible. If this is not possible, the facilitator or another participant can summarise the episode in front of everyone before the discussion begins.
- What should I do if the participants do not engage or do not show interest in the topic of discussion? An appropriate environment must be created to motivate participants to engage in the discussion, as well as emphasizing the need to respect all ideas and points of view as explained in the ground rules of discussion sessions. It can also be ensured that all participants are involved in the discussion by asking questions related to the discussion to the less active participants or urging them to provide examples related to the topic of discussion at that moment.
- What should I do if a dispute arises between the participants due to differences of opinion? At the beginning of the discussion session, the facilitators should set and clarify the ground rules to guarantee the freedom of all participants to share opinions and ideas while at the same time respecting those of others. Those rules must be specified as obligatory in which all participants should adhere to. Facilitators should also remind caregivers that they have different personalities and experiences and that others can benefit from them.
- What should I do if the course of the discussion deviates to a non-violent topic? In this case, the discussion should be redirected towards the main topic as soon as discussions deviate from it. Furthermore, participants should be reminded of the need to stick to the time frame assigned for the discussion session.
- What should I do if the time allotted for the discussion session expires before the discussion is concluded? If extending the discussion duration is not possible, organize another time as soon as possible to end the discussion properly, or wrap up the thoughts concisely in case another meet up wouldn't be possible.



## EPISODES

## WHAT IS A FACILITATED DISCUSSION AND WHY IS IT VALUABLE?

This guide is designed to facilitate an in-depth discussion about episodes of the Bakir series. These guidelines identify the main objectives and messages of these episodes, as well as include a list of specific questions that facilitators can use to guide discussions and promote constructive interaction using the content of the episodes.

### EPISODES 1-5

#### Summary of episodes

Majdala, who works in agriculture with her friend Noura, learns through a phone call she receives from her neighbour, Umm Maajid, that her husband, Samir, will marry their daughter Abeer, who is still a little girl. Majdala decides to stop this marriage and returns secretly to the village and kidnaps Abeer from the house. In the village, the father, Samir, along with his sister Samira and his two sons, Youssef and Wissam, discover that Abeer has disappeared and are looking for her everywhere, yet with no avail.

Samir accuses his wife of kidnapping the girl, which leads to Samir's anger and fear of what the villagers would say behind his back.

Majdala, Noura, and Abeer live in a house in Beirut, where Majdala meets by chance lawyer Tarek and also gets to know the residents of the building and the neighbours. In the village, Samir sends his young son to work in a stone factory. The problems and disputes between Majdala and her husband start over the phone over the kidnapping of their daughter and Majdala's decision to escape.

A good relationship begins to develop between the joyful neighbour Rock and Noura. At this point, Majdala begins looking for Tarek to inquire about her legal issues and starts working for the disabled neighbour Angela.

Majdala collapses and returns home and tells her daughter Abeer all the details, so she explains to her why she decided to leave the house in the village and left her and her two brothers at home. In the village, Samira incites her brother to quickly file a lawsuit against his wife, to be imprisoned and only then she can take control over the house and the children.

Aunt Samira reveals all the facts about Abeer's escape to the neighbour Um Maajid. Um Majed tells Samir that Samira has told her the truth, and as a result Samir gets mad and rushes to beat his sister Samira severely and violently and decides to prevent her from talking to anyone after this day, otherwise she will be punished by expulsion from the house.

Samir agrees with Samira to carry out a precise plan to set up Majdala. Wissam asks Um Maajid to video call his mother, and Umm Maajid responds to his request. Majdala sees her young son at his worst, standing in front of her, asking for help.

## KEY MESSAGES

The following are the most important key messages that these episodes aim to convey to the target group:

- Familiarity with children's rights contributes to sparing children from many problems and challenging situations throughout their lives.
- Labour laws exist to protect children from work that is not commensurate with their physical and intellectual abilities which prevents them from enjoying childhood.
- A successful marriage requires emotional and physical maturity.
- Beating only teaches your child to beat or be beaten.
- Violence leaves both seen and unseen marks.
- Involve your spouse and children in making decisions for the family.
- For a girl to have and maintain a healthy relationship with her future partner, she needs to be part of the decision related to marriage and get married only when she's ready to (physically, emotionally, and cognitively).

## FACILITATING THE DISCUSSION

- Familiarity with children's rights contributes to sparing children from many problems  
What do you think of what you watched? Did you like it? why?
- Do you have a favourite character? Why? Who is your least favourite character? Why?
- What surprised you the most in these episodes? why?
- What do you think of Samir's decision to marry Abeer at such a young age?
- How do you feel about the call Majdala received about Abeer's marriage? What would your reaction be if you were in her place?
- In your opinion, why did Majdala stop the marriage of her daughter Abeer?
- Do you think the events are realistic so far?
- Have you heard or experienced similar stories in your community or social environment?
- What are the alternative ways that Samir could act in this situation?
- What do you think of Samir's decision to prevent Wissam from going to school and send him to work in a stone factory?
- What do you think about the relationship between Samir and Majdala? Between Samir and Samira?
- Do you think Majdala has the right to take part in decision making with Samir, when it comes to her children and the family?
- Do you consider Abeer a weak girl in her society?

## EPISODES 6-10

### Summary of episodes

Majdala sees her son Wissam in poor condition, and Wissam asks his mother for help and to come home to be by his side. Majdala promises her young son that she will return quickly to help him. Majdala returns home without Abeer, who refuses to go back.

The relationship also begins to evolve between Rock and Noura, who show love, affection and appreciation to each other. Lawyer Tarek is looking for his lost brother Omar, and finds him in a hospital, and he is severely beaten after being found in a married woman's house.

Majdala arrives in the village and violent confrontations begin between her and Samir, and between her and her eldest son Youssef on the other hand, after she is held responsible for the problems the family is facing. Majdala decides to return to Beirut while Samir follows her, and from here the confrontations begin between Samir and the residents of the building in which Majdala lives in Beirut. Samir wants to be intimate with Majdala but she doesn't. She holds him fully responsible for everything that happens and admits that she has hated him since the beginning of their relationship. This ignites his anger, and after several confrontations, and he throws her out of the house and divorces her.

## KEY MESSAGES

- Labour laws exist to protect children from work that is not commensurate with their physical and intellectual abilities which prevents them from enjoying childhood.
- Fathers and male caregivers' roles are to practice positive caregiving.
- Be proud of being a role model in supporting children and women in practicing their rights.
- A child who is asked his or her opinion and speaks up will be a happier and safer child.
- Affection by both parents and dialogue strengthen a child self-esteem and personality.
- Violence leaves both seen and unseen marks.
- The children of mothers with no education were three times more likely not to complete secondary education.
- Wise men don't use violence.

## FACILITATING THE DISCUSSION

- What are the other options which Samir could have used without resorting to violence?
- How do you view Ziad's family?
- What do you think of the way Ziad and his wife dealt with their son Rayan in this situation?
- Why do you think Youssif got angry with his mother?
- If you think Youssif's reasons are not convincing, what should Majdala do to change his mind?
- Can you share your own or similar experiences from your social environment for what you've seen?
- In your opinion, what was the reason that led Abeer to refuse to go back to the village with her mother?
- In your opinion, what is the motive for Abeer's escape?
- What do you think about the neighbours' stance standing up for Majdala?
- What do you think of Samir's decision when he divorced Majdala?
- How could have Majdala expressed herself better to Samir's request in being intimate with her?

## EPISODES 11-15

### Summary of episodes

Samir leaves Majdala at the bus station, alone in the dark, waiting for the bus to go to Beirut after her divorce. At this time, Rock proposes to Noura. Rock and Noura go to Majdala in a hurry. Majdala resorts to Tarek for legal assistance. Rola learns that she is pregnant and is happy secretly, because she knows that Ziad does not want to have a third child, for purely financial and economic reasons. Rola tells her husband that she is pregnant, and he is shocked and asks her to act because he does not want the child at all due to his circumstances. A fight breaks out between them and the boys witness it. Rola visits the doctor who tells her that she is not pregnant and that the home pregnancy test was inaccurate, so she collapses and distances herself from Ziad and becomes hostile as if he was the reason behind everything happened and is happening, which also affects the children because they think that he is the one who killed the fetus in their mother's womb.

After the lawyer Tarek talks with Samir about the divorce request, furious Samir tells his children that their mother has filed for a divorce through the lawyer Tarek, who is her lover. The children get very angry, and blame their mother, who disappointed them. Rock tells Noura his story before they get married. Rock had an affair with a girl 15 years ago and she got pregnant and he abandoned her for 4 months because he was shocked, and upon his return he did not find her and did not know anything about her or the baby until today. Noura, who suffers from infertility, sympathizes with him and decides to look for the mother and the child.

Desperate Abeer decides to marry the young man who proposed to her previously and asks her father to call him again and tell him that she wants to marry him and travel with him. Abeer informs her mother of her decision, and Majdala heads to the village to stop it again.

## EPISODES 11-15

A huge fight between Majdala, Samir and the children, and Majdala's attempt to stop Abeer from marrying ended in failure. The major confrontation will be between her and her children who reject all her opinions and say to her: Go, we want to stay here and live with our father. Majdala returns to her husband's house despite everyone's refusal.

Tarek's mother collapses after her husband's death and blames Omar and Tarek and tells them that they have wronged their father and her as well. She asks them to unite and stand side by side, otherwise they will displease her. This causes stress for Tarek, who feels guilty for his father's death after telling him about Omar's situation.

Wissam is intimidated and threatened at work after seeing a young man and a girl together, which causes him great fear and shock, so he returns home terrified and completely collapses in front of his family and his mother.

## KEY MESSAGES

- Parents' choices made for their adolescent children mark them for life.
- Knowledge on child labour's laws is crucial.
- A successful marriage requires emotional and physical maturity.
- Fathers and male caregivers' roles is to practice positive caregiving.
- A child who is asked his or her opinion and speaks up will be a happier and safer child.
- Beating only teaches your child to beat or be beaten.
- Violence leaves both seen and unseen marks.
- Involve your spouse and children in making decision for the family.
- Child labour doesn't pay off in the long run for children and families.
- Children should fulfil their potential before taking on adults' responsibilities.
- For a girl to have and maintain a healthy relationship with her future partner, she needs to be part of the decision related to marriage and get married only when she's ready to (physically, emotionally, and cognitively).
- Wise men don't use violence.

## FACILITATING THE DISCUSSION

- What do you think of Noura's decision to marry Rock? And what do you think of the discussion they had about marriage?
- What do you think about Ziad's reaction when he found out about his wife's pregnancy? How would you have acted if you were in the same situation?
- In what way could have Roula better involved her family in the decision-making process?
- In your opinion, in what way could Ziad have dealt with the matter to avoid problems?
- Do you think that Abeer is ready for marriage now? And what led her to make this decision?
- What do you think of Noura's reaction when she heard Rock's story?
- In your opinion, what was the cause behind Wassim's collapse at work? Do you think this situation will affect him in the future?
- Can you share your own experiences or similar experiences from your social environment of what you've seen about child labour?
- What do you think of Tarek's family and what happened to them?
- Why did Majdala stay at her husband's house even though nobody wanted her to stay?

## EPISODES 16-20

Rock finds out that his daughter is still alive. Rock and Noura decide to bring the baby to live with them.

Anju suffers a heart attack, and Angela calls an ambulance to take her to the hospital and then calls the professor (Her violent dad), as Anju wishes, to save his sister from death. The professor asks Anju and Angela to return to America and live in his house as one family, but Angela refuses this offer.

Ziad borrows money from an unknown source and returns home happily, promising his children and wife a wonderful life and paying off all his debts. Rola is worried and wants to know the source of the money.

Rola knows that Ziad has borrowed the money from a man who lends high interest loans, so she argues with him, but then comes back and tells him that she will start working and pay off the debts with him.

Ziad and Rola fall victim to a fraudulent man and Ziad loses his share of the land that he inherited with his siblings from their father. Ziad feels the enormity of the mistake he made and feels great regret, but Rola decides to move away with their two children for a while, so she moves to her parents' house.

Youssef decides to take revenge on his little brother, so he goes to the stone factory and fights with the young men, who beat him severely and throw him into a hole. Samir, Majdala and everyone are looking for Youssef but in vain. Samir goes to the young men, but they deny seeing Youssef.

As for Youssef, he returns home covered in blood, which frightens and upsets everyone, especially Majdala.

A huge fight breaks out between the masked men, Yahya and his two friends, and events develop so that one of the masked men stabs Munir, Yahya's friend, with a knife. The young men claim that Majdala was the one who sent them to avenge her children.

The police break into Samir's house and take Majdala to the police station, while Youssef hears his father telling his aunt Samira that he is the one who sent the young men and incited them to engage in this fight to incriminate Majdala, but he was not aware of the knife's existence and did not want to harm anyone.

Majdala asks Tarek for help and accuses Samir of masterminding this. The young men admit that Samir sent them, which angers Samir. Everyone is boycotting Samir; No one visits him and no one buys from his shop, even the landlord gives Samir a warning asking him to vacate the shop quickly.

As for Abu Tarek's house, the family gathers regardless of the hardship. Omar is trying to overcome his addiction, and his mother and Tarek are also trying to help. These tough times are reuniting the family once again .

Abeer's wedding begins, but she decides to run away from her wedding at the last minute after talking to her mother. Majdala takes her children to Beirut to provide them with a decent life, where Youssef works and studies, and Wissam and Abeer go back to school to continue their education.

Samira decides to work in the farm with Abu and Um Maajed, who were the support element throughout the series. In the end, we see Samir has given up and accepted the new reality, and the episode ends with a scene of birds, and Majdala returns home.

## KEY MESSAGES

- Knowledge on child rights is a must.
- Parents' choices made for their adolescent children mark them for life.
- Knowledge on child labour's laws is crucial.
- A successful marriage requires emotional and physical maturity.
- Women/girls empowered and in control of their lives are a resource for their own safety, honor and the success of their family.
- Fathers and male caregivers' roles is to practice positive caregiving.
- Be proud of being a role model in supporting children and women in practicing their rights.
- Affection by both parents and dialogue strengthen a child self-esteem and personality.
- Violence leaves both seen and unseen marks.
- Involve your spouse and children in making decision for the family.
- Child labour doesn't pay off in the long run for children and families.
- Children should fulfil their potential before taking on adults' responsibilities.
- For a girl to have and maintain a healthy relationship with her future partner, she needs to be part of the decision related to marriage and get married only when she's ready to (physically, emotionally, and cognitively).

## FACILITATING THE DISCUSSION

- In your opinion, what is the reason for Ziad to borrow money from this source? What is the best way to deal with such challenges?
- What encouraged Rola to work to help her husband? What do you think of women helping their husbands in similar situations?
- Do you think women should work? If the answer is yes, what do you think are the benefits of women's work?
- Do you think Ziad should involve his family in taking the decisions that concern the family before taking any step?
- What do you think of what Samir did to take revenge on Majdala?
- What do you think of Yousef's revenge over his little brother?
- What was the reason for boycotting Samir?
- In your opinion, what is the most appropriate behaviour that Majdala should have taken to deal with the circumstances she went through? Do you think that running away is the best solution?
- What do you think of the discussion that took place between Majdala and Abeer before her wedding? Do you think constructive discussion with children will yield long-term results?
- Do you think the series' message is clear?
- If you could change anything in the series' plot, what would it be?
- What do you think about the ending of the series? What do you think of Samir's position?
- If you could change the ending, what would you change?



# ANNEX

## ANNEX 1

### KEY MESSAGES

MESSAGES
Knowledge on child rights is a must
Knowledge on child 's skills and brain development contribute to positive parenting
Brain development continues during adolescence
Skills development during adolescence is compatible with work and marriage (if prevalent)
Parents' choices made for their adolescent children mark them for life
Knowledge on sexual and reproductive health is a right and a must
knowledge on child labour's laws is crucial
Healthy, educated and happy adolescent girls are role models in their communities
A successful marriage requires emotional and physical maturity
Women/girls empowered and in control of their lives are a resource for their own safety, honor and the success of their family
Fathers and male caregivers' roles is to practice positive caregiving
Be proud of being a role model in supporting children and women in practicing their rights
A child who is asked his or her opinion and speaks up will be a happier and safer child
Beating only teaches your child to beat or be beaten
Be proud to discipline without resorting to violence
Affection by both parents and dialogue strengthen a child self-esteem and personality
Violence leaves both seen and unseen marks
Practicing positive communication is a healthy approach at home and in communities

Involve your spouse and children in making decision for the family
Be a champion of gender equity in your community
Child labour doesn't pay off in the long run for children and families
Children should fulfil their potential before taking on adults' responsibilities
Skills development for working and married adolescent is feasible and can make a radical difference in an adolescent's life
The children of mothers with no education were three times more likely not to complete secondary education
Educated girls have more opportunities to work and become independent
For a Girl to have and maintain a healthy relationship with her future partner, she needs to be part of the decision related to marriage and get married only when she's ready to (physically, emotionally, and cognitively)
Wise men don't use violence

## ANNEX 2

### TV SERIES SYNOPSIS

Majdala, a Lebanese woman, was born in a small, remote mountainous village in Lebanon, to a farmer and a weak-spirited mother.

Majdala grew up in a simple village house with her parents and four brothers, without education or ease, because she had to meet the family members' demands. This resulted in not enjoying her childhood or feeling happiness. Majdala ended up marrying a 25-year-old man named Samir when she was just a 14-year-old child.

Majdala married Samir and moved to a farm far away from her father's village, and was completely cut off from her family, as if she was a heavy burden and fell from her unjust father's shoulders.

Majdala was tormented a lot during the years she spent in Samir's house, because she was unable to have children quickly. She was a very vulnerable child who knew nothing of this world except bitterness due to the injustice she experienced in her father's house and continued in the marital home she shares with her ossified-minded husband Samir.

Majdala gave birth to her eldest son Youssef after six years of marriage and unsuccessful attempts to get pregnant. After Youssef, she gave birth to Abeer and Wissam.

Majdala prayed a lot to God not to have a girl, so that she would not experience what her mother went through, but God blessed her with Abeer.

Majdala was attached to Abeer and became scared of Samir, so she decided to run away from the house, work and earn money in order to return to take Abeer and run away together. Majdala's plan was to protect her daughter from the dangers and suffering she went through.

Majdala runs away from home on a dark night and takes refuge in a large agricultural plain far away from her marital home and begins to work and strive tirelessly to earn enough money to move to Beirut and live in dignity with her three children.

Our story begins on a sunny spring day that will turn Majdala's life upside down. On that day, Majdala receives a call from her neighbour Umm Maajid, who always calls her and reassures her on her children. On that day, Umm Maajid tells her that tomorrow is Abeer's wedding. Abeer's suitor asked for Samir's permission, and the latter agreed quickly and without hesitation.

Majdala loses her mind and decides to stop this marriage by all possible means, as she knows the reality of early marriage and the devastating consequences for a girl's life.

Majdala stays up all night with her friend Noura, a light-hearted woman who always laughs to hide her tears. Noura was divorced because she cannot have children. Then, she worked in the agricultural plain to earn a living. After that, she becomes Majdala's loyal and best friend.

In the early morning, Majdala flees with Noura in a truck heading towards the village, hoping to reach home in time before Abeer is married to that unknown man. Majdala and Noura arrive at the village junction and continue the house.

The wedding preparations begin at home, where the women start to help Abeer and get ready and dressed for the big day. Majdala arrives home with Noura shortly before the wedding ceremony begins, and she is able to kidnap Abeer with the help of Um Majed, without anyone noticing, and she flees with Noura towards the city. A long journey ends in the evening with Majdala, Noura, and Abeer arriving at an old Beirut street that will be their shelter for a long-time.

Majdala finds a job as a janitor in a three-storey building and lives in the janitor's house with Abeer and Noura. Her house is to the left of the entrance. That street is busy with people and shops, and a life that Majdala had never known before.

In the village, people were shocked when they knew that Abeer ran away. Samir accuses his wife of kidnapping the little girl. Of course, he will start his search journey after he had despaired of finding Majdala, who ran away more than eight months ago.

## IN THAT BUILDING IN THE CITY, MAJDALA GETS ACQUAINTED WITH THE RESIDENTS, WHO ARE:

**On the first floor:** lives a wonderful girl named Angela with her aunt Angelique. Angelique is Angela's aunt. She is an educated woman who refused immigration, while all her children immigrated to America, she stayed in this old house. Angela grew up and returned to live in Lebanon because she could no longer stand life with her violent father, Dr. Robert, who is Angelique's brother. Although he is a surgeon, he is violent with his wife and children, just like his father.

Angela is looking for someone to take care of her aunt because she suffers from rheumatism which affects her ability to walk. Majdala will be this person where a great relationship will develop between them. Angela's aunt will teach Majdala a lot about life because she has not learned anything from anyone else.

**On the second floor:** lives a family consisting of a father, mother and two sons. The father works and earns only a modest salary and his wife tries to help with the living expenses. He is a loving and supportive family man. A poor and needy family that sometimes may deviate due to poverty and destitution. The children may be subjected to various types of bullying and verbal and physical aggression in school and society due to their conditions.

**On the third floor:** lives an eccentric man called Rock. Rock claims that he is a magician who flies and knows the unseen. In fact, he is nothing but a charlatan and a con artist. Rock will be in harmony with Noura, who will become a humorous sorceress.

One day, a quarrel breaks out in front of Majdala's house, skirmishes and beating begin. A young man (Tarek) quickly enters and hides in Majdala's house. The man suffers from wounds and nosebleeds.

At first, Majdala is afraid of sheltering the young man, but later she helps him. Then she learns his story, listens to his ideas, admires his wonderful personality and realises he is an open minded person.

Tarek spends some time hiding in Majdala's house and she tells him about her story. Tarek is shocked by what he hears and decides to help her. Tarek is a lawyer and knows all the civil society institutions that deal with people, such as Majdala and Abeer.

A good relationship develops between Majdala and Tarek. This relationship quickly turns into a stormy love and strong feelings which make Majdala realize that she never knew the true meaning of love to this day, even though she got married and had children a long time ago.

Majdala gets very attached to Tarek who is a successful lawyer, born and raised in a poor family, but his ambition and perseverance made him become who he is. On the contrary his brother Omar could not achieve anything of what his brother achieved. Basically, Omar is a loafer, unemployed young man.

Despite Majdala's emotional attachment to Tarek, she knows very well that this relationship has no future. She is a married woman and a mother. Majdala tries to stay away from Tarek, but she always finds herself weak in front of him, his smile alone is enough to make her forget all the anger and the decisions she made before meeting him. Tarek teaches her everything she needs to know to become a free woman, who knows her rights and her duties perfectly.

Abeer begins to improve herself and live the stolen childhood she never lived. In the village, Yussef, Majdala's eldest son, hates his mother and blames her for everything. As for the nine years old Wissam, he begins to work in the stone factory in order to help his father with the financial expenses. This is what prompted Um Maajid to call Majdala again and tell her what is happening. Majdala decides to save her young son as well and begins to think and plan.

Majdala's journey of torment begins as she is exposed to the worst forms of revenge from her husband. Um Maajid with some of the villagers, who are revolting against this situation and stopping Samir, tries to help Majdala.

Tarek tries to protect Majdala and her children, and he will try to find a way to guide Majdala's eldest son to the right path and to think straight.

## BAKIR SERIES

We will shed light on many events and details throughout this TV drama series. Bakir aims at tackling harmful behaviours against boys, girls and women that are rooted in societal cultures and need to be addressed.

The series was developed in an attempt to raise awareness around debatable issues that many believe are intractable and impossible to solve by any means, and to send a message to everyone that we can work on the roots of the problem, only if human communication is proper, humane and clean.

Bakir... will be a cry against our primitive societies. We will shout and say:

- Early to Marriage... The girl is still a child
- Early to work.... The body is still vulnerable
- Early to give up...Hope is high
- Early to surrender.....Social justice is still possible
- And Last but not least:

It is not too early for joy, humanity and a decent life. Life is short, and time is running out! Never miss a chance to be happy!