IMPROVING HUMAN SECURITY THOUGH NEIGHBORHOOD UPGRADING AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF VULNERABLE REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES

SHANKAL Project Documentation – C4D Lens

Good practices and stories / Insights, Reflections and Challenges
A way forward

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Introduction

Process Documentation is a systematic way of capturing what happens in a process of change and how it happens, to reflect and analyze why it happens and to organize and disseminate the findings. It helps to reflect, analyze and discover patterns that enable or hinder change. The purpose of process documentation for “Shankal”/ Human Security Integrated Project, is to improve the quality and impact of the project. Process documentation allows internal project learning and joint learning with direct stakeholders. It looks beyond the project – into the context and may help interventions to break through their sharp boundaries in time and space. It also enables ‘pull together’ issues of general interest among multi-sectoral and area-based interventions, raise and stimulate reflection and debate in wider society.

Why the Documentation? Goal of “Shankal” project documentation

Documenting change for the “Shankal” project enables partners to strengthen initiatives that are working well based on lessons learned. The Documentation of Shankal project aims to act as a knowledge systemization process to strengthen a collective understanding of effective integrated programming for the human security approach. It intends to provide partners and stakeholders with access to tools and good practices and to foster greater connectivity between individuals and organization working in the field of HS integrated programming.

Methodology of the documentation

“Shankal” Project documentation used qualitative research methods to capture information from various sources through: observation and analysis; 4 field visits to Tabbaneh, Qobbeh and Jabal Mohsen (Abjad center, RMF center, Likka Nissai center, Water pipeline sites implemented by LebRelief); Focused Group Discussions with 4 partners and 19 community members; comprehensive desk review (project documents and reports); 5 team meetings and discussions. Data collection methods have also included interviews with 4 individuals (IPs); collection of 4 partners photography, 3 published stories of project activities and 2 videos about the project.

Background

Tripoli, Lebanon’s second largest city, has witnessed significant fighting in its recent history, impacting the local population’s enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms, especially those of women, girls and children. Tripoli has been greatly affected by Syrian crisis and local sectarian and political tensions have been severely exacerbated especially in Tabbaneh, Qobbeh and Jabal Mohsen1. In this context, the three UN agencies (UN-Habitat, UN Women, and UNICEF) have joined efforts to enhance the Human Security Approach within the hosting communities in Tripoli not only to respond to the complex nature of the security situation but also to address the probable future escalation of tensions2.

What is Human Security Approach?

The human security approach emphasizes the triangular relationship between security, development and human rights and creating the conditions on which humanity can flourish. The multi-dimensional approach addresses the root causes of vulnerabilities related to several issues, including: economic empowerment, food and nutrition, health, the environment across the personal, community and political spheres. With its focus on managing and minimizing risks, the approach provides a framework for promoting coherent, inclusive and integrated solutions for more effective and tangible improvements in the daily lives of people and their communities.

What is “Shankal” and how its built?

To address the issues, conditions, behaviors and structures that contribute to unsafe environments, UN Women, UNICEF and UN-Habitat jointly launched the project of Improving Human Security through Neighborhood Upgrading and Economic Empowerment of Vulnerable Refugees and Host Communities, also known as “Shankal” Project in 2017 for the duration of two years. Although Shankal project is facilitated by the trust fund, its partnerships, collaborative relations and service delivery go beyond the trust funding. Shankal project benefited from the value of leveraging resources, complementarity and division of work that all agencies partnered with. UN Joint programming and leveraging on other organizations’ comparative advantage is key to holding more efficient, non-duplicated, community-based interventions. This is also key when referring beneficiaries from one program to the other. Shankal, which means ‘hook’ in Arabic, underscores the close relationship among Tripoli’s various communities despite previous hostilities. It engages with and ensures the participation of communities that have experienced increased tensions in identifying priorities and addressing insecurities. Its multi-sectoral and area-based interventions in the neighborhoods of Tabbaneh, Qobbeh and Jabal Mohsen target the most vulnerable Lebanese and refugee

1 Details of mapped and statistical data and analysis of the 3 neighborhoods are available in the profiles: https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/reports/neighbourhood-profiles

2 https://unhabitat.org/tripoli-city-profile-2016
communities, especially the children, youth and women. These areas were specifically chosen based on evidence from a neighborhood profiling exercise and a high multi-dimensional socioeconomic deprivation and vulnerability. 3

What is the objective of “Shankal” project?
The overall goal of the project is to improve the human security and resilience of vulnerable children, youth and women living in the urban neighborhoods of Tripoli and most affected by the Syrian crisis through economic empowerment, enhanced protection and quality basic services. It targets vulnerable refugees and host communities through an integrated approach to addressing the socio-economic and protection challenges faced by both communities, while enhancing urban and public services in the region. These efforts aim to contribute to greater social harmony between refugees and their host communities.

What is the first step to understand and document the process and practices of Shankal project?
Although ‘Shankal’ is still in the beginning phase, short-term change is important to manifest, where documentation process can serve highlighting that short-term change. Capturing and analyzing short-term change requires observing (watching and listening), asking questions (especially by interviewing stakeholders about their perceptions) and learning (about the local context and the effects of that context on the intervention and its outcomes).
The Theory of Change – an expression of the expected and apparent relationships between actions and hoped-for results – acts as the starting point for this analysis. For provision of direction and focus for process documentation, the Theory of Change (TOC) is being utilized from a Communication for Development (C4D) lens. More specifically, it informs decisions on what should be documented and how.

What is the theory of change of the Shankal project?
The ‘Shankal’ project theory of change provides a clearer picture of what the initiative aims to achieve and how this is expected to happen. Reflecting on the theory will reveal who key stakeholders are, which processes are expected to lead to which changes. Each agency and stakeholder will have their own sub -TOC (Theory of Change), reflecting their intended results through the holistic integrated programming of Shankal.

Figure 1: Designed by author

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3 https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/reports/neighbourhood-profiles

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>UN Agency</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Shankal Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al Fayhaa Association</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Lebanese NGO, located in Tripoli and aims to develop and rehabilitate the community through educational programs, and cultural/social activities.</td>
<td>Basic Literacy &amp; Numeracy (BLN) in Abjad center and Referrals. <em>(not funded by TF)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABAAD</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
<td>Protection/GBV Women empowerment</td>
<td>A Resource Center for Gender Equality is a UN ECOSOC accredited organization that aims to achieve gender equality as an essential condition to sustainable social and economic development in the MENA region and Lebanon.</td>
<td>GBV Awareness and Case management then referral to SDC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rene Moawad Foundation (RMF)</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>Child Protection &amp; Youth</td>
<td>Lebanese NGO aims develop and enhance Lebanese society through improving education, economic empowerment, provision of social and health care, and the promotion of democratic values to the most marginalized and needy communities throughout Lebanon.</td>
<td>Protecting and Empowering Children and their Families. *(Referral cases/Child labor/Women empowerment/Youth employment/Education-BLN). <em>(not funded by TF)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safadi Foundation</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
<td>Women economic empowerment</td>
<td>An NGO that aims is to empower vulnerable communities in Lebanon, with a specific focus on women and youth to reduce socio-economic regional disparities, decrease the gender-gap, and narrow the vacuum between citizens and their governing institutions. Through developing innovative strategies to reduce poverty, increase access to labor markets and educate local communities to play an enhanced role in civic engagement.</td>
<td>VT / Sub-grants /Replacement-Market Linkages/ referrals to SDC and private sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese Relief Council /LebRelief</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>LebRelief is an NGO that aims to respond to the needs of the refugees and the host communities through projects that revolve around economic development, shelter, WASH, Health Care, and Information and Legal Assistance activities. LRC mission is to secure protection for most vulnerable individuals by responding to their needs mainly WASH services.</td>
<td>WASH projects / water pipeline, community employment, referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTOPIA</td>
<td>UN-Habitat</td>
<td>Community – Abjad Center</td>
<td>An NGO dedicated to abolishing all types of social discrepancies through specialized projects and programs that rely on voluntary work, in hopes of acquiring social justice among people within the same society regardless of their political or religious beliefs.</td>
<td>Running Abjad Center activities/ Mobilization with local NGOs and Shankal partners /Referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likaa Nisaai Charitable Organization</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>Child Protection</td>
<td>An NGO working in Tripoli with long presence in Tabbaneh that aims to promote child rights, create safe environment and empower youth and women. They provide support to children to prevent school dropouts. Support and protect children and youth from any kind of neglect, exploitation, and other forms of violence.</td>
<td>Child labor/Youth VT/Education Referrals/ Case management “child at risk”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair Tarde Lebanon (FTL)</td>
<td>UN Women</td>
<td>Women Economic empowerment</td>
<td>An NGO created in 2006 to support Lebanese farmers in remote areas. Working with farmers, local civic organizations and other NGOs to establish networks of support and production. They support local Lebanese producers &amp; food-processing cooperatives through training, quality control and product marketing.</td>
<td>VT agribusiness and food processing. Referrals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The local governance component is strongly manifested through the coordination with main stakeholders in Tripoli; MoSA/SDCs, Municipality/ and Water Establishment (WE). There are also indirect NGOs, CSOs, committees and community leaders who are linked to the multisectoral activities and referrals. Those actors are part of a monthly coordination meeting in the North and well known to all stakeholders where they serve certain services pathways.
UN multisectoral linkages, coordination and integration modality

Shankal Coordination and Integration

Figure 2: Designed by author
Key approaches, good practices and results

ABIAD center

The only multi-use hub of its kind in Tabbaneh ... for all women, men, youth and children

Findings of the Tabbaneh Neighborhood Profile revealed the dire need for a hub that acts as a socio-cultural space for youth, children and women. Consequently, under the umbrella of “Shankal” project, and in the context of the joint Human Security project, three UN agencies (UN Women, UNICEF and UN-Habitat) supported in the establishment of Abjad center in 2018, with the generous support of the Government of Japan - through a fund granted to the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Tripoli Municipality and UTOPIA for Social Justice. Hand in hand, participating agencies and communities are conducting activities to support women’s empowerment, improve the community living conditions through life skills, vocational and food processing training, as well as income-generating opportunities based on a human security approach. The Abjad center has been set up in a restored movie theater previously known as “Cinema Al Andalos” in Syria Street, which was once the frontline of fighting between Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen neighborhoods. The Abjad center location was chosen to revive the isolated areas in Tripoli by creating cultural projects and activities that interest youth from all over the city. This sociocultural center offers training sessions and public awareness campaigns on women’s rights and provides essential support to survivors of gender-based violence at the Women’s Referral Center, located within the Abjad center. Abjad Centre has become the one sought-after place for all local NGOs to meet, conduct vocational training, and engage in cultural and prevention programs based on Human Security principles in the Shankal Project. The center availed as a safe space for women, youth and children and participating NGOs to provide Psychosocial Support and awareness sessions on multiple prevention and protection aspects, None-formal Education (NFE/BLN), learning support and recreational forms of empowerment interventions. The Center’s ability to accommodate many individuals, and the presence of a cinema/ theater, a public library and a computer lab makes it the ideal place for carrying out any cultural, artistic or social activities. Therefore, any local organization can benefit from the open space offered by “ABIAD” center.

Integration and holistic approach:
The concept of an integrated approach refers not only to its multi-sectoral nature but also to the broad range of actors involved. The comparative advantage of the three UN agencies multisectoral interventions and the vast local field experience of their partner NGOs, in addition to municipality and private sector contributions in this project, served prominently in enhancing livelihood and empowerment of participating communities holistically.

For instance, RMF, Abaad and Likka Nissaai noted that GBV, violence against children, child labor/out of school children and discrimination are prevalent in the targeted areas. A holistic approach was adopted to enable change at the household and employer levels for an environment that is more conducive to protecting children’s rights. Through GBV sensitization and raising awareness sessions by partners, it was noted that violence against children is being practiced by some participating mothers to discipline their children. It was not perceived as wrong and harmful to kids but rather a way to bring up a child. More sessions were introduced on positive parenting and providing alternative nonviolent solutions to discipline their children. A more holistic approach was adopted where, positive parenting and GBV prevention interventions were implemented in a logical and complimentary manner with an aim to address the entire violence cycle at household level.

As part of Shankal project, Likaa Nisaai and RMF jointly developed activities for children engaged in child labor. Awareness campaigns, community based psychosocial-support activities, focused psychosocial support activities and a mapping to identify the different services available in the area led to the identification of the most vulnerable families with children engaged in child labor. It also pointed out the need for educational opportunities, vocational and skill-based training and livelihood opportunities for caregivers and/or older siblings of the identified children. In parallel, an in-depth analysis of the neighborhoods conducted by UN-Habitat and UNICEF pointed out the needs for basic urban services, especially water. Based on those results, 42 youth from the most vulnerable families followed a training to build a water pipeline from Qobbbeh to Tabbaneh. As a result of this intervention, the new income replaced or alleviated the economic burden on children who were

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4 Refer to Annex for more info
5 For more information: https://youtu.be/UISjZWDjZEM4
involved in child labor. The project puts the children and their caregivers in the heart of the program. At the same time, one hundred children benefited from individual case management services and another twenty children were removed from labor. The neighborhood approach in collaboration with multiple stakeholders (municipalities, local associations, families, children) brings integrated responses to address multi-deprivation facing vulnerable communities. By empowering the community, the approach is strengthening self-reliance among affected communities and sustainability to the project.

Tensions between communities are minimized as they acknowledge a common interest in getting job opportunities for and improving water provisions. All partners are of the view that the integrated approach Shankal is implementing will lead to a sustainable development of the community. Partners perceived Shankal project to assist in stakeholders mapping and engagement collectively for societal change.

**Integrated holistic approach ... bringing hope, empowerment and unity**

Rabib, a disabled single young man, Ali, an old man with family and grandchildren and Abu Kader, a middle age man who is married with 8 children. Three men we met in Jabal Mohsen at the waterpipe infrastructure site where they are working. They are all from Jabal Mohsen and working for the first time since years. Rabib (mobility challenged) had never been employed. He was so relieved to be given the opportunity to develop his skills that he clings to the street cutting machine as his haven. Community members praise him and say that that no one can take this job from him now.

Ali explained: "our economic situation before getting that chance was extremely bad. We couldn’t afford feeding our children or supporting our families. No one cared for us... poverty is the dominant factor in all our lives". He continued: "With this skill and job opportunity we hope that we shall be recognized as skilled workers by the contractors since we are currently gaining experience from one of the most complicated WASH infrastructure in the area. We are now able to sustain our families". Abu Kader leaped with excitement to complement his colleague’s statements, "We were the most marginalized financially exhausted communities in Tripoli ... Now, we have hope! We can feed our children some bites. We have a skill, a vocation that will let us beat poverty" Abu Kader told us that he has a child that were out of school because of sever poverty conditions. He told us he shall now send him back to learning. LebRelief confirmed that the child was referred to UNICEF education team who referred him in return to their Shankal Education partner — Al Fayhaa to start with BLN informal education. Abu Kader concluded, "The impact of this project is so positive on us both economically and psychologically. We feel worthy and capable to provide for our families. We also feel that we are all brothers, we are contributing to our Tabbaneh neighborhood development by working on a water pipeline that shall serve their water network instead of conflicting with them, which only increased our vulnerabilities, suffering and backwardness on both sides for years. Now, my Tabbaneh or Qobbeh neighbor is my brother and we both need to work on our development and progress. That what will make us live".

**Social inclusion and cohesion**

The close interaction between Syrian and Lebanese population, facilitated by the project, helped break down invisible barriers that had caused significant social tensions between refugee and host communities. The Lebanese and Syrian refugee communities of Tabbaneh, Jabal Mohsen and Qobbeh benefitted and were equally targeted to participate in Shankal project activities by all partners. Bringing together children and youth from Jabal Mohsen to Tabbaneh was very difficult at first. Because of the historical conflicts and community tensions, encouraging children of Jabal Mohsen to take a bus to safe space at Tabbaneh was challenging. Previously, the children from the two neighborhoods used different entrances to Abjad center. They gradually came together during the activities at the center. The tensions were also evident between the adults of the two communities. For women, it was hard to mingle with the other community members, but ultimately, they came together. Women attended a theatre play by their children at Abjad center and were both happy and clapping. Joint football teams were created by other partners, and many partners’ activities included all communities and marginalized participants.

**Empowerment and positive change**

**Women Economic Empowerment / Addressing Child Labor**

In response to the economic, social and protection challenges faced by Lebanese and Syrian population, with special focus on women and youth, this project adopted a holistic and inclusive programme to provide quick support to the most vulnerable women and youth, including female-headed households, within host communities. This approach aimed at introducing transformational changes in the lives of target participants to help them become skilled and productive members with capacity to participate in socio-economic activities. It also aimed at enhancing their role within their communities to participate in

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6 Refer to Annex for more info
7 Refer to Annex for more info
decision-making processes at the local level after acquiring necessary soft skills including management, communication, leadership, and community participation. Shankal project was able to address the preventive and protection mechanisms for the communities of Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen through the provision of referral services, psycho-social support, GBV awareness sessions, basic services etc. This was done through ABIAD center and other local centers by engaging local communities on issues related to human security, trafficking and extreme violence, while involving community leaders, municipalities, women, youth, men and boys.8

Participation and ownership: Community and municipal engagement
Most partners go through a consultative process adopting participatory approach with their participating communities who are benefiting from the interventions. Although participatory approach was not mainstreamed at the very start of the Shankal project; Shankal partners’ strategies included dialogue settings with targeted groups to see their needs and concerns, take their suggestions and receive their feedbacks on activities. Partners have regular awareness sessions to promote activities and hear back from families and their children. Complaint mechanism (boxes and lines) is also established for some partners like ABAAD where they indicated they usually receive positive feedback rather than complaints. The participatory approach introduced activities that partners haven’t originally planned for, like Zumba classes for girls and curriculum design with children (RMF), rapper’s song (Abaad), choosing to learn a new vocation for women “carpentry” (Utopia). Partners indicated that engaging stakeholders and decision makers, at various levels is highly important, to ensure successful implementation and larger impact, however they recommended to engage stakeholders and decision makers at initial stages of program design and not only after training ends to ensure ownership. Also, partners noted that sub national and local governance engagement in areas of implementation, including social development centers (SDCs) and municipalities, is of high importance to ensure national ownership and sustainability of interventions. Participation of community members and youth in the upgrade of basic urban services and GBV/positive parenting women sessions has contributed to facilitate access to the neighborhood by the contractor, access to their households being hosted by a community member, increased acceptance of the community and their sense of attribution and

8 Refer to Annex for more info
Ownership. The engagement of youth and women and men from the communities in Shankal activities and public services work is effective. It is being replicated in other projects and has been considered in new funding proposals as best practice.9

Advocacy, communication and social mobilization
Shankal partners diversely involved the three distinct sets of advocacy, communication and social mobilization activities, all of which have the shared goal of bringing about behavioral change. One of the major distinctions between them is the target audience. Advocacy worked primarily to change the behavior of public leaders or decision-makers. Communication generally targeted individuals and small groups. Social mobilization aimed to secure community-based support. Shankal project interventions under one area influenced and facilitate processes in the other areas. All partners agreed that advocacy and social mobilization efforts were an important components in Shankal implementation and should be an integral, funded element in any human security integrated program. During Shankal implementation, community mobilization engaged a broad range of actors, that became involved in driving change, by raising awareness and by creating the demand for better policies, services and accountability. This was done through role plays, meetings, sensitization sessions, committees and community outreach engagements.

The Turning Point ... When real change started to manifest
LebRelief did a play on water reservation - (Stop Wasting Water) play, where children of Tabbaneh, Qobbeh and Jabal Mohsen took part and the parents from all communities attended. When the children gathered for the theatre lessons and rehearsals, the boys used to carry knives as it is common in their neighborhoods. They were instructed to leave their knives in a shoebox before entering. They were reluctant at first, but by the end of rehearsal period, they did not want to take their knives back as they had become friendly. The first two months included classes on acting and drama, communication psychosocial support and conflict management. The rehearsal started only on the third month. Initially they sat separately, unwilling to interact, until gradually the ice was broken, and they became friendly. They exchanged contacts, and even started working together to develop activities they wish to do together. The performance was staged twice, with remarkable success. During the play, kids represented themselves as a committee having requests for LebRelief and WE. The kids added community related issues and improvised requests in the play. Qobbeh child was playing “husband” to Jabal Mohsen child who was playing “wife”. Similar roles that implies togetherness and cooperation were performed. The kids from both communities became closer as friends. When families came to attend the play Qobbeh parents sat separately from Jabal Mohsen parents. The play rehearsals and staging were remarkably influential in impacting the behaviors and attitudes gradually. After the play, families of both communities saw their children’s closeness and sense of togetherness. After a long-lasting objection and declines to allow the maintenance work, community members from Qobbeh approached LebRelief stating that it was a shame that waste water continues to affect other neighborhoods they no longer oppose the intervention. In an instant, a children’s play managed to mobilize an entire community!

Outreach and Social Media power
Outreach activities were conducted by Shankal partners through community engagement, meeting with municipalities and local meetings. Door to door outreach activities took place for certain vulnerabilities and relevant messaging, particularly hard to reach communities (behavioral and geographical barriers). Prevalence of internet and social media usage among communities regardless of vulnerabilities is noteworthy. Communities are aware of partners/NGOs social media pages and follow them occasionally. Partners employed social media power to deliver messages that motivate and empower rather than information sharing and announcements. Communities and participants were actively using social media to advocate for their rights and requests from the municipality or share their own materials on positive messages and the change they aspire to see in their community.10

Advocating for action – Waterpipe line in Tabbaneh
Leb Relief stated that when the Tabbaneh community heard about the projects taking place in Qobbeh and Jabal Mohsen, they started to advocate for a rehabilitation water project in their area (First the ‘Mukhtars’ and active people from the community, which in a later stage formed the committees). That advocacy, supported by UNICEF and UN Resident Coordinator, resulted in the approval of the rehabilitation project of water pipes to reach Tabbaneh after multiple rejections from the government.

Social media as powerful tool for community engagement with the local authorities
LebRelief stated that social media influence on Water Establishment/WE proactiveness and immediate responses was exceptional. The Tabbaneh community and committees used the social media posts as a powerful tool to advocate for their water supply needs. For instance, if they post a picture and a post about contaminated water, the WE responded, sending a team to test water and justify the outcome. It would not have been possible to get the same feedback and proactiveness if the community committees had registered a complaint. Another fascinating dimension on how social media mitigates the lack of communication and openness between the community and decisionmakers is the example shared by LebRelief. Committees were set in Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen by local people who have created WhatsApp group with the participation of MPs, director of WE, LebRelief, UNHCR head, and other decisionmakers. The group was initially created for water related issues with WE, but after adding the MPs and the Tripoli Municipality Mayor, it evolved into an advocacy tool for all community issues. Those included in the group felt committed and were discouraged from exiting as it would show a lack of interest for Tabbaneh community issues. It was a very powerful tool to reach out and establish an effective communication line on all

9 Refer to Annex for more info
10 Refer to Annex for more info
Challenges and lessons learnt

Coordination
Coordination meetings and liaison efforts were carried out regularly, yet all Shankal partners expressed that there was a lack of coordination in terms of referrals. Insufficient cooperative culture to bring all partners together was also mentioned as a challenge. Some partners were seen to be isolated from the integration process and from the collective fiber Shankal project represents.
Key lessons: All partners stressed that coordination mechanisms between all partners need to be strengthened.

Abjad center role
All partners perceived Abjad center as an important hub and physical location that remarkably served Shankal activities and the surrounding community. Partners were keen to see an advanced role for Abjad beyond its administrative and operational function, to progress into a technical developmental function and design an advanced coordination mechanism that can lead all referrals of Shankal sectors and enhance the connectivity and linkages of the human security principles.
Key lessons: The Abjad center has played a significant role in uniting and bringing previously conflicting communities together. It also provides platforms for various advocacy, economic empowerment, protection and BLN activities for Shankal partners, however, the referral coordination mechanism of Abjad center needs to be strengthened.

Mediation and Accountability
Some partners were perceived and considered as sole mediators between the community and the municipality. Because of their interventions; the trust they have gained from the community, they were referred to and asked to mediate with the government. Nevertheless, partners cannot solve everything, and it was challenging to establish direct contact with decisionmakers and municipalities to advocate for the community.
Key lessons: Although partners can play mediation roles, the process may require more time and collaboration as decision making processing (especially with government and municipalities) is often not that easy. Communities need to establish direct rapport with municipalities and build that trust.

Timeframe and Funding
Funding and budget was not received on time for some partners who are not self-sustained and was a challenge to cover certain costs or mitigate some expenses awaiting the release of funds. The timeframes of implementations were accordingly affected.
Key lessons: Funding processes are usually slow and this needs to be harmonized and prioritized in order to minimize implementation time losses

Referrals and Trust
Some partners stated that administrative procedures of some NGO partners are a bit bureaucratic and some urgent cases cannot wait until procedures are cleared. They stressed that services should be delivered in a timely and efficient manner, but sometimes the referral process tends to take time and gets into loops that affects a smooth referral system. They also explained that referrals to physical and in-kind services are easy, while personal and family services referrals are hard to be referred since those families built their relationship and trust with that designated NGO and worry that they cannot trust the entity they are being referred to. Some partners stated that people feel abandoned by their original service provider/NGO when referred to another and their credibility gets questioned.
Key lessons: An efficient coordinated approach put in place will assist in smooth referral pathways; building trust among agencies is key for referrals.

Demotivation and cultural attitudes/barriers towards change
Some partners stated that the attitudes towards children’s education is a challenge. Some families question why they should invest in education if the child fails to perform. For girls, they do not see the added value of formal education as she will marry and stay at home. While other partners stated that people recognize the importance of education, the war and its effects have affected the motivation towards education drastically because schools closed, there were no job opportunities and a decade of constructive work with families to change their attitudes and behaviors went in vein after the war. At a cognitive level, families understand, but behavior change is a struggle. Partners shared that behavioral change on violence issues is challenging and prolonged. Most GBV cases are not aware and don’t perceive violence against them as a violation for their rights. Social norms barriers are the most difficult to address and tackle in behavioral change interventions in these areas.
Key lessons: The intrinsic challenges and dynamics of the affected population may negatively affect/slow down behavior change on certain aspects (e.g. GBV, violence, social norms). These dynamics always need to be taken care of in the project implementation processes.
**Sustainability and Ownership**

Shankal partners stated that communities tend to get demotivated and less active once the NGOs are out or a project is finished. Even after building the community capacities to maintain the Shankal outcomes, they always need a push. Ownership is another challenge, they added. A sense of ownership within the community determines how the strategic interests and actions of individuals or organizations contribute to community development efforts. In addition, the potential for ownership can be understood in part by examining the capacity for and quality of trust.

**Key lessons:** The sense of ownership and participation needs to be strengthened through focused activities to ensure sustainability.

**Recommendations**

Recommendations are based on the views and submissions of the participating NGOs, and came as following:

**A Child as a Whole - The Family as a Whole**

All Shankal partners recommended that a new modality should be adopted to address the needs of child or family as a whole, by structuring all integrated interventions holistically from identification of the cases through addressing all the vulnerabilities and deprivations needs. A comprehensive model of vulnerability is proposed which includes both liabilities and capabilities from the physical and social environments.

**Documentation as a shared and on-going process**

Some Shankal partners had their own methods of documentation through the implementation by videos and reports where reflections and modifications happened. Its recommended that documentation become an ongoing practice that is strategically included in the project plan and activities.

To be more effective, process documentation must be considered a shared effort across the full spectrum of project participants. An integral element to enriching development interventions, process documentation is not an afterthought, nor a specialist activity merely conducted from the sidelines or at the end of a project cycle.

**Replication of the Shankal Project / Human Security Integrated Programme**

Replication of a program ensures that the documented program effects were not a chance occurrence, the result of unobserved intervening factors, or limited to one place or one-time period. Once a program component is found to have consistent effects in several applications, the strategy may be used confidently with predictable results.

There are obvious linkages between enhanced protection and economic empowerment as one will lead to the other and vice-versa. Better protection of women and youth will enable them to practice their human rights in education, capacity building, economic engagement and participation in community led initiatives. Once economically empowered, they will be able to reject violence and exploitation.

Therefore, the wide exposure, outreach, and diverse experiences of the three UN agencies will help them replicate the proposed “protection and economic empowerment” programme within a comprehensive community-based approach in other vulnerable communities in Lebanon benefitting from their best practices and lessons learned.

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**DISCLAIMER:**

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