Arts and Uncertainty

communication   discovery

designing creative

creativity and design

interventions
in times of crisis

Rana Yazaji

reflection and reconsideration

اتجاهات ثقافة مستقلة
Independent Culture
Ettijahat

BRITISH
COUNCIL

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About Create Syria

The widespread use of culture and arts to engage displaced Syrian communities began in 2013. Since then there has been a growing need for frameworks that support the development and implementation of sustainable models and help emerging artistic initiatives to grow and to enhance the role of arts in social change.

It was clear to Ettijahat – Independent Culture and the British Council that analyzing and understanding the different contexts and dynamics of the "disaster" or "crisis" affecting Syrian communities was a critical first step in the process in designing such a framework. Key to the design process was the need to create spaces that encourage the development of initiatives and artistic models that are capable of responding to the current situation and to the idea of exile. It is this line of thinking that led to the design and launch of Create Syria: A Project to Empower Syrian Art in Exile.

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CREATE SYRIA JOURNEY 2018 | 2019

Create Syria Journey summarizes different stages of the programme, the projects, and introduces the experts involved:
.The training: Workshop on the Role of Artistic Initiative in Times of Crisis
.The Transit Meeting
.The implementation of the 5 supported projects in the second edition:
 Seba Kourani: Dual Presence and Absence of Sound
 Chadi Makrach: My Imagination is Always Bigger
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 Al Caravan Project: Al Caravan's Workshop for Animation
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Create Syria is a programme which seeks to increase the capacity of artists to contribute to the development of stronger, more cohesive communities through the design and delivery of community arts initiatives that focus on experience and artistic quality. Create Syria supports individuals and initiatives to build new skills, grow their experience and network with creative practitioners interested in the relationship between arts and social change. Since the launch of its pilot edition in 2015, Create Syria has engaged more than 1,400 artists, amateurs, audience members, experts and other individuals from Syrian and Lebanese communities in artistic and cultural activities.

Create Syria comprises four basic components, all designed to meet the needs of the key target group of artists and cultural practitioners. These components work within the various social contexts the artists live in and help them to develop their knowledge and techniques, as well as their relationships with and their understanding of the communities in which they are working. Moreover, the components of Create Syria allow these artists to design sustainable projects capable of responding to the needs of different groups in these communities. By working directly with cultural project owners, the project aims to promote socially-engaged artistic work and to increase the impact of art in times of crisis.

CREATE SYRIA COMPONENTS

1. **Capacity-building** support is given to artists to imagine, design and implement their creative interventions through a programme of experimentation and development, consisting of three stages: 1) An intensive workshop for all artists, which provides a space for them to experiment, try out new ideas and exchange knowledge, resulting in the development of a design and an initial plan for the creative initiative; 2) The "transit" stage, which is a meeting held during the implementation of initiatives by artistic project owners within the community; 3) Accompaniment, which lasts throughout the project implementation phase and aims to provide artists with the support and expertise they need to develop their personal initiative.

2. **Financial Support** to develop and implement the project.

3. **Studies and Research** and the presentation of completed works, through the creation of artistic platforms and spaces for dialogue and discussion on community practices and their relation to artistic production.

4. **Advocacy** through which Ettijahat and the British Council target institutions interested in Syria and its future, especially institutions that recognize the important role of arts in the current context.

In the long run, the project aims to establish a support network which can enhance the effectiveness and impact of contemporary artistic practices and new cultural initiatives. Ettijahat and the British Council believe that creating a space for dialogue and interaction between Syrian artists, Syrian artist networks in exile and decision-makers can raise awareness of the important role of art in times of crisis.

Art can play a highly beneficial role in different communities. Therefore, enhancing the quality of cultural work and artistic expression is extremely important and is considered a priority for action. This entire process is an integral part of the Create Syria project, which considers artists and cultural actors to be agents of social change.

Trying to Understand the World

Since the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, and with the start of the revolutionary movement in the Arab region, questions of art and creative practices have been met with fundamental challenges in terms of their relationships with the world. These questions have renewed discussions on the role of art amid the decline of democracy and public freedoms and in the face of political oppression, classism and racism, as well as increases in poverty, displacement and migration which have affected hundreds of thousands of people.

The challenges faced by artists in the Syrian context are not far from those mentioned above, particularly since the beginning of 2011. However, other challenges arose for Syrian artists, such as the need to enhance diversity, to tackle numerous complex subjects, including the deep meaning of artistic value and quality, fairness in artistic production and reception, the role of arts in achieving a sense of triumph and compensation for victims, the attempt to eliminate stereotypes surrounding small communities and the consolidation of the need to dream of a better future.

In light of the previous, it appears that investment in Syrian art is a gateway through which to question the challenges of art on a global level, notably: confronting extreme-right discourse, policies of rejection of the Other, the erection of financial and psychological barriers, the 'border-phobia', environmental threats, arrests, displacement and torture.

This convergence between the challenges faced by Syrian art and those faced by art at the international level encourages us to see investment in the Syrian experience as a valuable opportunity to try and break down some of the dilemmas of the modern world more generally and to address them in innovative ways. It is an opportunity to learn and to suggest solutions in order to enhance the status and role of arts in social change. This means that, as producers of art, we need to challenge limited and narrow-minded thinking in favor of a diverse and inclusive way of thinking, as well as to invest in available artistic resources. Doing so would enhance the importance of including all community groups in creative practices, protect artistic freedoms and encourage risk-taking, experimentation and trying new things. It would also present an opportunity to create a narrative that would address the world's troubling fate.

Since 2013, Ettijahat has been working to promote the integration of art in matters of identity, change, social practices and challenges to artistic work in exile. Since then, Ettijahat has launched discussions with a number of institutions, including the British Council, on what can be done to develop artistic models that can be learned and repeated.

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for culture and educational exchange. Through working with the Syrian arts sector, the British Council seeks to develop strong and vibrant relationships between creative individuals and institutions in both the UK and Syria, working to support our shared aspiration for an inclusive and prosperous future.

In light of this, both institutions came together to design and launch Create Syria: A Project to Empower Syrian Art in Exile with the aim of promoting art and social change. Today, after five years of managing and designing the programme, this toolkit was prepared by the researcher and trainer Rana Yazaji for the purpose of sharing experience and knowledge.

Our work essentially revolves around the belief that artistic production can only play a significant role when it involves a group of artists with diverse backgrounds, experiences, knowledge, learning, and choices. Given that only with diversity is it possible to transcend the dominance of narrow-minded thinking and to include multiple views, ideas and sensitivities, we invite all artists to share this toolkit, so that we can all advocate for a rich community and learn from the richness of local communities.

CLICK TO VIEW VIDEO

INTERVIEW WITH TRAINER HANANE HAJJ ALI

An interview with the trainer Hanane Al Hajj Ali during her participation in the intensive workshop of Create Syria's second edition | 17 September 2018.

This toolkit consists of theoretical and practical content, in addition to a number of case studies, all of which were designed to benefit artists at the level of practical experience first, as well as in their involvement in wider cultural discussions. The content is also designed to promote freedom of expression and enhance community-level creative projects, so that the latter can play their natural roles in influencing decision-makers and enhancing the legitimate presence of art in daily life. In this regard, we would like to affirm that we have kept the contexts described in case studies as they were presented by the individuals who were interviewed for the purposes of creating this toolkit. Therefore, the views of those interviewed do not necessarily reflect those of Ettijahat – Independent Culture, the British Council, its partners or the authors of this toolkit.

Talks and discussions about the role of art in social practices and its effectiveness in social change often shed light on doubts and concerns about starting a project or initiative, as well as on the poor artistic level and the use of art in narrow contexts. Although many of these concerns are legitimate and valid, it is worth noting that the greater challenges at work revolve mainly around the fact that many of these projects address community problems in a superficial manner, without tackling their root causes, especially when dealing with them as temporary and urgent problems. We hope this toolkit will serve as a tool for discussing these challenges and offer a chance to participate and learn.

General Context

The World is Connected
not

Today, more than ever, our world is rapidly evolving in complex and confusing ways. Art is suffering from new burdens and confronting barriers that did not exist before. While emphasizing the basic orientation that identifies art as a global driver, as well as the fact that culture is a solution for many of the world's ongoing problems, it is imperative for us to look towards a brighter future, despite the bleak picture today. We must consider our belief in the power of art as a fate that we should trace in all the details of a diverging, changing and divided world where different theories and views exist. In fact, two major conflicting theories of the world exist:

THE WORLD IS DIVIDED

Our planet today is divided and divisive. As we struggle to respond to shifting global political realities and grapple with new technologies which promise to connect us, people feel increasingly atomized and bordered in their countries, towns and societies.

We are aware of a primal need for spaces where people can come together, rub shoulders, breathe the same air, and thrash out new ways of understanding each other: safe spaces where dangerous conversations can happen. Places of disagreement, discussion and debate, where all our different voices are welcome and counted.

It is time for theatre to rediscover its ancient power: to connect, unite and reclaim our individual and collective narratives[1].

THE WORLD IS CONNECTED

In today's world, communities have become better connected and more interrelated than ever before. Our local experiences intersect politically, culturally, economically and technologically with others at the global level within a changing network of relations.

Living in a connected world may create opportunities, such as new relationships and ideas and cooperation with other cultures. It may also pose challenges.

The network theory[2] stipulates that increasing connections within a system increases opportunities for exchanging information and for creating a system for change and development – which increases flexibility.

At the same time, connections are considered a source of disruption. The more connections there are, the more unstable and uncertain the system becomes[3].

1 —— Why good chance [Electronic Reference], good chance website, Link: http://tiny.cc/2u1kdz, London, published on 2014, visited on 2019/09/28.

2 —— Network Theory: A theory in the study of clear and unclear ties and relationships between a number of different elements and data, used in computer science and informatics and in social and statistical sciences.

3 —— Commonwealth Secretariat and Khalili Foundation, 2017. Faith in the Commonwealth Youth Training of Trainers Toolkit.

ON THE BRINK OF CHANGE

How can we contribute to the development of the Logic behind artistic initiatives that aims at social change? What is the artist's responsibility towards what he/she are witnessing from disasters? How can we define the disaster? What are the unlearned lessons by society and decision-makers and how can creative practices overcome stereotypes and can be liberated from them with working with different communities?
In the aim of destabilizing the current knowledge and creating a space to question, Ettijahat constantly asks these questions through the video On the Brink of Change which is based on talks and discussions that took place in the On the Brink of Change forum. The forum was held on the 12th and 13th of February 2019, as the closing event of the second edition of Create Syria in Partnership with the British Council.

"The World is Divided" and "The World is Connected" are two theories upon which several approaches and methods of social change have been established[4]. Create Syria adopts the first theory, which considers that the world is more divided than connected. It bases this position on four variables that it finds fundamental in relation to art in the context of social change:

1. TECHNOLOGY

From a technological point of view, it may appear at first glance that the world is more connected today than it was before. This is essentially true, considering that arts, economics, decision-making, mobilization, promotion, learning and several other areas are not what they used to be now that the Internet exists. However, we should also account for the large number of people who do not use the Internet. According to the most recent UN report issued in 2019, 3.6 billion people use the Internet. Given that the number of people on Earth is estimated to be around 7.5 billion, the percentage of Internet users is only around 48% of the Earth's total population, and this rate fluctuates considerably between different geographical regions. In fact, Internet users are distributed according to geographical regions as follows: 50.7% of all the world's Internet users reside in Asia, with 16% in Europe, 11.5% in

Africa, 10% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 7.2% in North America, 3.9% in the Middle East and 0.6% in Australia[5]. Technology today is an important variable that cannot be ignored in discussions about art and its changing context. However, the absence of technology and Internet access cannot be forgotten either, as it aggravates inequity at different levels, such as access to information, learning, job opportunities and freedom of expression.

2. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DISPARITY

One fifth of the world's population lives in poor neighbourhoods, refugee camps and other forms of unofficial settlement that lack all or most basic services, such as water, sanitation, shelter from harsh weather conditions, access to health services and schools. This portion of the world's population is mainly located in developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

The economic and social disparities between rich and poor countries are also striking. According to a report issued by Oxfam in January 2014, the richest 85 individuals in the world collectively own as much wealth as 50% of the world's population[6]. As such, unequal livelihoods constitute an undeniable essential variable.

3. WARS AND TOTALITARIAN POLITICAL REGIMES

These are still some of the most important factors dividing our world, wherein regions become international conflict zones, and the tendency to build more walls around such regions increases in an attempt to maintain the illusory sense of security experienced by the other portion of the world. If we were to focus our talks and discussions in this regard on artists, particularly Syrian artists who left their country (voluntarily or involuntarily) to Europe, and despite the lack of clear statistics and studies on the matter, we can conclude, through careful monitoring, that a small percentage of these people were able to transform their presence in Europe into an opportunity to open up and communicate with different artists and a different audience, while most of them lost their connections with their original environments and original audiences.

4. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

This freedom is restricted for people who hold certain nationalities. Day by day, the situation is becoming even worse, sometimes even reaching inhumane levels, where entire communities in some parts of the world are becoming prisoners of one very small geographic region. This can even affect particular groups inside a single country. In both cases, it leads to the aggravation of human, social and economic violence towards these groups trapped within closed borders and with no escape.

Amid this utter lack of certainty, we embarked on a quest for social change through art.

4 —— Social change: Based on the definition given by Kevin T. Leicht in his article published in Oxford Bibliographies, social change is the significant alteration of social structure and cultural patterns through time. Social structure refers to persistent networks of social relationships where interaction between people or groups has become routine and repetitive. Culture refers to shared ways of living and thinking that include symbols and language (verbal and nonverbal); knowledge, beliefs, and values (what is "good" and "bad"); norms (how people are expected to behave); and techniques, ranging from common folk recipes to sophisticated technologies and material objects.

5 —— THE STATE OF BROADBAND 2018: BROADBAND CATALYZING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT [Electronic Reference], The Electronic itu website,
Link: http://tiny.cc/d57tdz, published on 2018/09, visited on 2019/09/28

6 —— El Husseiny, Basma - Cultural Rights for All - International Award UCLG, third Edition- Mexico City - Culture 21

How can art achieve social change?

Art is always trying to give a new and changing perception of reality, while being rooted therein. Art seeps through all of life's details and addresses all its dimensions. It is connected to all social, political and economic structures, as much as it is private, individual and current. These contradicting features allow it to be a basic component of any thought that promotes change, hence playing a role in integrated social change. This is surely what Scottish artist Jane Frere meant, now that we observe the way history is easily changed by victors, knowing that artists are the ones able to contribute to finding truth and writing the real history[7].

This toolkit is based on ten basic convictions. Hundreds of examples and stories are provided to prove and document these convictions. We believe that they demonstrate the power of art in social change. These ten roles of art, and of cultural action in general, intersect and overlap. It is impossible to separate one from the others, and an example of one will also apply to a few of the others. However, for technical reasons only, we will separate them into different points, while emphasizing that they are not isolated:

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RANA YAZAJI ON HOW CAN ART ACHEIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

An interview with Researcher and Cultural Activist Rana yazaji in which she shares with us the main questions that concerned her while developing the Create Syria training programme and the Arts and Uncertainty Toolkit.

7 ——Jane Frere is a Scottish artist who addresses humanitarian issues through the arts. One of her projects, "Return of the Soul" is studied in this training manual.

1. CONSTRUCTING A NEW OR DIFFERENT NARRATIVE

Let us consider that art can create narratives which are personal, subjective and biased. Does this mean that they are not real? Researcher Rama Najma confirms in her research entitled "The Role of Arts and Culture in Reconciliation and Civil Peace in Post-Conflict Countries" that "by relating their own experiences, victims are able to challenge both the accounts of offenders (which are usually the official versions of events) and the attempts of offenders to shift the spotlight away from the aggressions practiced against them." As a matter of fact, "when the accounts of victims are turned into simple rumors and whispers, they become part of a punitive system that confirms that mental fear looms over the heads". These accounts aim to change the label applied to the people narrating them; they are no longer merely an "audience". Silence is a form of oppression and lying is a form of moral violence, while sharing prohibitions is considered an attempt to exercise authority over the symbolic world, which is often controlled by ruling powers, typically either a state authority or elites. Despite their great importance, personal narratives cannot pave the way for truth on their own. They often become memories linked to a specific past, and sometimes they become politicized. Admittedly, politicization of the truth is a manifestation of ongoing tyranny and it can never be viewed as the core of personal truth-telling[8].

8 —— Elias, Marie, Najma, Rama, On Syrian Cultural Work During the Years of Embers. The Role of Arts and Culture in Reconciliation and Civil Peace in Post-Conflict Countries – Rama Najma, Ettijahat – Independent Culture with Mamdouh Adwan Publishing House – 2016, p. 107

9 —— Ibid. – p. 141

2. DOCUMENTATION AND MEMORY

This is one of the clearest roles of artistic intervention, and it contributes significantly to the construction of new narratives. There are several individual and institutional examples in this regard, such as 'The Creative Memory of the Syrian Revolution' project, which aimed to document arts that accompanied the revolution in Syria. In many experiences, referring back to the artistic materials and products that were made in a particular period is one of the strongest and most effective ways to understand "what really happened" in a particular place and time.

3. BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING THE POWER TO IMAGINE

The power to imagine is undoubtedly one of the pillars of art as a practice, a frame of mind and a global institution. In fact, "instead of proposing solutions, artistic works often offer new lenses to encourage the multiplicity of perspectives, which is itself a foundation for stepping out of cycles of conflict."[9]

"Communities that suffer from war, poverty, violence and social marginalization can easily fall into despair. They feel that no one notices their agony, and that the only relationship they can have with others is that of waiting to receive help. The ability of these communities, and the individuals in them, to create and enjoy art, puts them on the giving end of the equation. They can create something that other fellow humans might need and enjoy. They will continue to be victims of wars or economic

exploitation, but they now have the power that art gives, the power to imagine a different reality than the one they live in; the power of hope." [10]

4. CONVEYING MESSAGES AND MOBILIZATION

Alternative narratives, questioning assumptions, imagination and creative aesthetics: these are all essential tools used by art to mobilize opinions on the issues with which it deals, particularly in a world that was able to develop, to a certain extent, alternatives to the traditional means of conveying messages (traditional media), such as cyberspace and networking mechanisms with the aim of establishing alliances and partnerships at different levels (regional or international) that use different strategies for mobilization, changing views and questioning assumptions about a particular issue.

5. PROVIDING IMMEDIATE RELIEF

This is a concept based on the idea that artistic interventions are a part of the broader relief process which includes: "food, shelter, healthcare…" and all that is considered a basic need according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. [11]

This type of relief occurs through direct intervention during or immediately after a disaster. It is based on the belief that art and creative practice are not merely complementary factors that can wait until after the disaster or until the immediate steps to address it are taken.

Two important models of cultural relief experiences include "Action for Hope", which works with Syrian refugees, and "Clowns Without Borders", which operates in many areas of the world.

In this context, Naomi Shafer, the Executive Director of Clowns Without Borders/United States, says: "Our work targets the children who have only just come to us in wet clothes. What is surprising is that even though they have gone through a horrible experience, they are still ready to play. During our work on the coast of Lesbos Island in Greece, we heard one of the audience members saying, I deserve to laugh. I wasn't sure I wanted to come, but it is a chance to talk about something other than what we have lost and what we are missing. It is a chance to gain a shared experience other than waiting for food or for a shower." [12]

6. PUBLIC POLICY-MAKING

Cultural policies are public policies developed and implemented by every country and adopted by international institutions in accordance with international agreements and conventions. They are also a main area that requires the intervention of creators, actors and cultural institutions to ensure advocacy for people's cultural rights and their ability to express themselves freely, whether creatively or otherwise. Karima Bennoune, the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, declared in her speech at the "Safe Havens" conference held in Malmo, Sweden in 2018:

"I will call for the creation of a Civil Society Coalition for Cultural Rights at the United Nations, modeled after similar coalitions around, inter alia, the issue of freedom of religion or belief. This structure could more systematically aid me and future Special Rapporteurs in pushing for the implementation of Article 27 and other universal norms. It could work on the dissemination of reports, their translation into other languages, the development of implementation toolkits, could organize more participation in interactive dialogues, could lobby states in support of the work of the mandate and on relevant resolutions, and hold them accountable for violations, and could train artists and activists in working at the UN. It is time for actors in the cultural sphere to recognize the importance and relevance of the United Nations human rights system for their work, and for the United Nations human rights system overall to pay greater attention to culture and cultural rights." [13]

10 —— El Husseiny, Basma - Cultural Rights for All - International Award UCLG, third Edition- Mexico City - Culture 21

11 —— Maslow's pyramid: a theory suggested by Abraham Maslow in 1943 in his study "A Theory of Human Motivation". The pyramid classified human needs into 5 categories. At the base are the essential "physiological" needs necessary for survival such as food and water, followed by safety needs, social needs, esteem and at the top of the pyramid, self-actualization. When he put forward the theory, Maslow considered that these needs should be fulfilled from bottom to top. A person can only feel actualized as an individual after he has fulfilled all previous needs. Social sciences today have adapted this concept, and there is a clear trend towards considering the needs as being interrelated and achieved in parallel.

12 —— Daniel Gorman, Rana Yazaji, authors, from an interview conducted with Naomi Shafer, the Executive Director of Clowns Without Borders/United States (in the context of preparing a report for IETM – International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts entitled Everybody wants a Refugee on Stage – which was written by Daniel Gorman and Rana Yazaji), [D.N], conducted in 2019.

13 —— Karima Bennoune, the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights. From her speech at the "Safe Havens 2018" conference, Malmo, Sweden.

7. RECONCILIATION

The processes of reconciliation, healing and reparation are difficult to summarize in a few lines, as they are part of the social fabric reconstruction process following military and civil wars. Nevertheless, the essence of it is that "areas plagued by war must often deal with harmful issues that are not only related to the country's infrastructure, but also to the damage caused to social and moral fabrics."[14] Reconciliation is defined as "a process that aims to prevent renewed conflict, consolidate peace, break the cycle of violence, strengthen democratic institutions and bring about the personal healing of survivors, the reparation of past injustices and the acceptance by the former parties to a conflict of a common vision and understanding of the past."[15]

8. CHALLENGING ASSUMPTIONS, STEREOTYPES AND PRESUMPTIONS

Skepticism is one of the most important characteristics of cultural work, along with the rejection of assumptions, stereotypes, presumptions and completed ideologies. The concept of stereotyping is not only applied at the level of community practices, but also encompasses creative practices in certain cases, when those practices lose their caution and freedom during attempts and trials.

CLICK TO VIEW VIDEO

THE CHANGE COLLECTIVE: "THE CONCEPT OF CREATIVE INTERVENTION"

An interview with The Change Collective team, Dan Boyden, Chloe Osborne, and Daniel Smith who have contributed in the facilitation of the training curriculum in the second edition of Create Syria | 20 July 2018

9. CREATING A SAFE SPACE TO EXPLORE DANGEROUS TOPICS

A safe space is one of the key concepts of collective creative work. It refers to an actual physical space, but also includes an emotional and relational space in the creative process and in dealing with the surrounding violence from a wider perspective in terms of time and space. This was confirmed by writer Mohammad Abou Laban, who stated that "recognizing a moment of violence and being able to break it down is in my opinion what poetry and art does in a moment of violence. An attempt to capture or create meaning is an attempt to preserve the value of life in the face of absurdity. The following is a quote from an uncommon research of Bertrand Russell that helped me overcome a moment of violence: 'All people start their life at birth and end it with death. Sometimes they are happy, sometimes they are sad. At times they are generous, and at times they are frugal and ridiculous. Sometimes they are heroes, other times they are cowards. And a person who is watching the whole parade may notice a few remarkable things. In fact, some people found inspiration in the love of humanity, and some used their superior minds to help us understand the world we live in, and others used their incredible sensitivity to create beauty for us. These people have created enough positive good to tip the scales against the long history of cruelty and injustice. They were able to do their best to make human life something better than the brief instability and disruption caused by monsters."[16]

10. TESTING AND EXPLORING WAYS TO BRING ABOUT THE CHANGE WE IMAGINE

This exercise consists of testing free practice methods through art in a political and humanitarian environment that lacks the basics thereof. This turns art into a compelling alternative to break away from the narrow surrounding environment. Clarinet player Kinan Azmeh explains this in his statement about his personal experience, saying: "There are two main schools of thought when it comes to art and the artist's role. The first considers it the artist's obligation to reflect the world around him, while the second considers it the artist's role to recreate the world in a perfect light.

I have never felt like I belong to either of these two schools. My personal philosophy has always been that we create art to experience feelings we do not get to experience in real life.

When the Syrian war began in 2011, I found myself experiencing feelings much more complex than I was able to express through music. Art was not enough, and I experienced its limitations. It cannot feed the hungry or stop a bullet, nor can it bring democracy and freedom. However, these past few years have also taught me what art can do: it can inspire people to do something. I was lucky to have been able to express my thoughts and myself through my musical instrument. This is a privilege many Syrians were deprived of. Making music is ultimately a free act in itself." [17]

14 —— Elias, Marie, Najma, Rama, On Syrian Cultural Work During the Years of Embers. The Role of Arts and Culture in Reconciliation and Civil Peace in Post-Conflict Countries – Rama Najma, Ettijahat – Independent Culture with Mamdouh Adwan Publishing House – 2016, p. 107, p. 93

15 —— Bloomfield.D, Barnes.T and Huyse.L, Reconciliation After Violent Conflict, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Stockholm 2003, 19.

16 —— Now Then: Testimonials on Independent Syrian Cultural Work – Wael Kadour – Ettijahat - Independent Culture in cooperation with Mamdouh Adwan Publishing House – Mohammad Abou Laban, Syrian Palestinian Poet - 2017

17—— Now Then: Testimonials on Independent Syrian Cultural Work – Wael Kadour – Ettijahat - Independent Culture in cooperation with Mamdouh Adwan Publishing House – Kinan Azmeh, Syrian Musician - 2017

The Purpose of this Toolkit

This toolkit targets artists, both individuals and groups who are directly involved in contributing to social change. It does not impose an "appropriate" size for initiatives or creative interventions. In fact, there are small initiatives (in terms of resources) with a limited scope (geographically) that create great impact within their social and cultural contexts; similarly, there are international interventions that maintain their effectiveness on wider geographical scales and for longer periods of time. The point is, growth and expansion do not necessarily reflect capacity. There are many initiatives that take the clear-cut decision to remain working at a local level and which work to establish themselves as part of a cultural context that they actually care about – by focusing in this way, they are able to grow within their specific contexts through direct interaction with them. In general, the toolkit primarily targets artistic interventions that require direct physical engagement with communities or which are based on training, rather than exclusively digital interventions.

It is important to clarify that the first objective of this toolkit is not to enhance strategic planning or long-term planning skills.[18] Instead, it aims to support artists and art project owners in their work within different communities and conditions through the following:

18 —— There are many references available in English, and some in Arabic, on strategic planning models of cultural institutions.

19 —— El Husseiny, Basma - Cultural Rights for All - International Award UCLG, third Edition- Mexico City - Culture 21.

SUGGESTING A "COURSE OF ACTION" to divide the various work stages; suggestions are based on the accumulation and analysis of several creative experiences within complicated social and cultural contexts. This is a key area of interest for the Create Syria programme.

SUGGESTING A NUMBER OF TOOLS AND MECHANISMS to help in this course and to allow the artist to test different approaches to designing and implementing their creative initiatives.

STUDYING A NUMBER OF CREATIVE EXPERIENCES (through case studies) and highlighting other experiences through the use of examples and quotes.

PROVIDING DEFINITIONS FOR MAIN CONCEPTS RELATED TO SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH ARTS.

PROVIDING DEFINITIONS FOR MAIN CONCEPTS RELATED TO DESIGNING CREATIVE INTERVENTIONS, with several examples that explain testing and implementation of the adopted methodology.

CORE PRINCIPLES

This toolkit was founded on three core principles that are part of the main concepts of the Create Syria programme and are considered key to the way this toolkit should be received and used:

1. The toolkit does not try to prove the role of art in social change, but considers it a key starting point where "making the case for culture as the cornerstone of social change has become a Sisyphean effort in a way. Despite the many arguments made by artists and cultural activists, often supported by real stories and evidence, it seems that the logic that poor and distraught people need art is totally incomprehensible to policymakers, politicians, economists and, above all, the media. There is a deeply rooted conviction among leaders, even the most progressive ones, that the ability of creative expression and the desire to enjoy art are exclusive to the ruling classes, and are not necessities for poor countries and communities."[19] Therefore, we consider the ongoing debate over the role of art in social change important only in terms of exchanging views and learning about approaches adopted by those involved. As such, this toolkit focuses on idea development more than attempts to prove or persuade.

2. The toolkit does not aim to institutionalize the creative process in the context of community work, but rather to explore the concept of "regulation". One of the most feasible forms of regulation is institutionalization. We believe in the role of institutionalization in ensuring the continuity of the creative experience within environments that lack national transparent and democratic cultural policies and institutions. In the context of this toolkit, 'regulation' is defined as a bottom-up approach which only occurs through an organic relationship with the environment that is affecting the creative process and is being affected by it.

"Cultural action requires the reformulation of the rules of life, by expressing the present and portraying the ways of life as they currently exist on the one hand, and as we imagine them to be on the other hand. Cultural action is the recreation of the human being, with their thoughts, logic and imagination. It is a redefinition of the role of humanity at the

PHASE

CONNECT   O1

EXPLORE   O2

CREATE   O3

REFLECT   O4

REFINE   O5
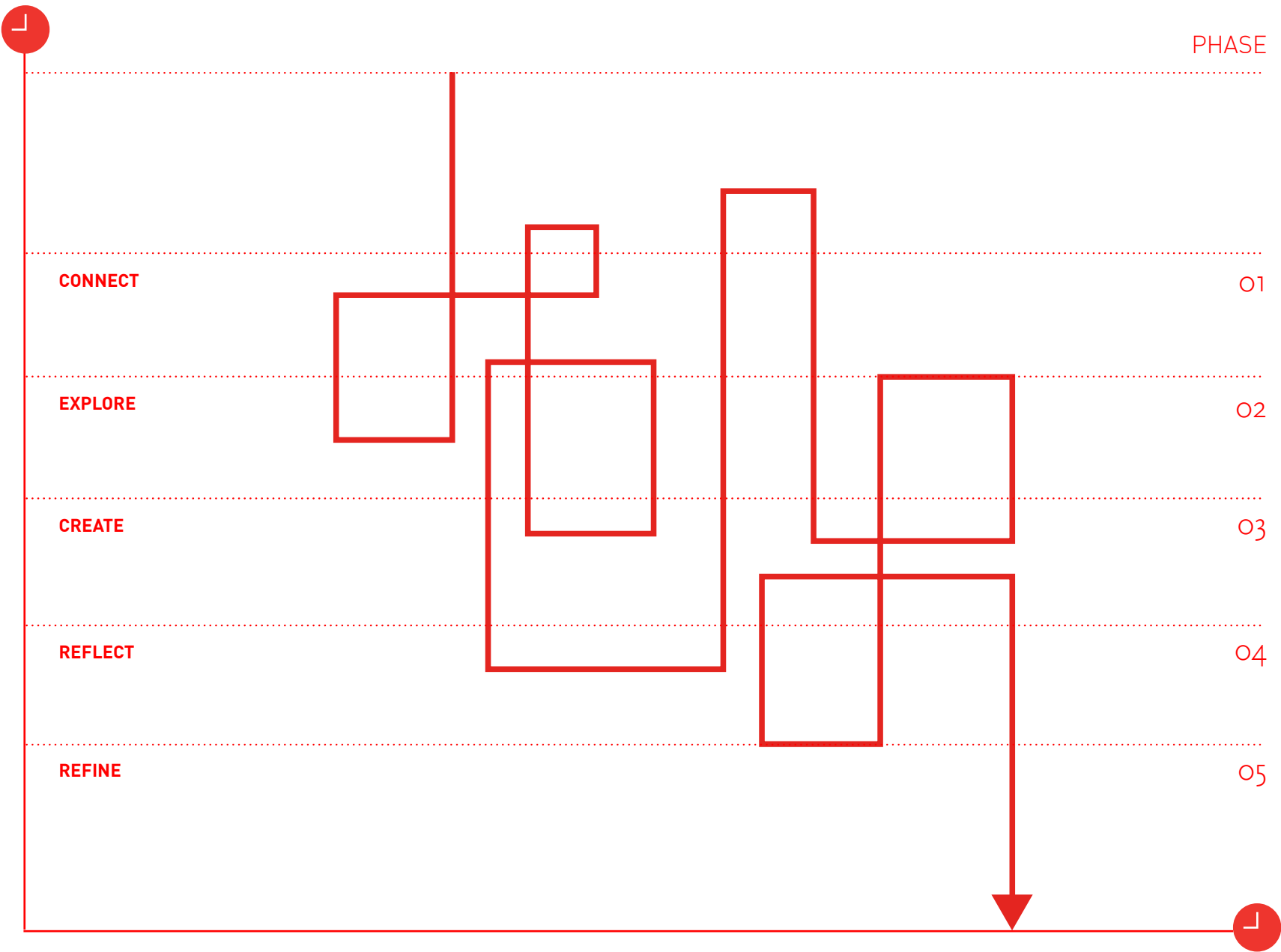
political, philosophical and creative levels through practice. If cultural action does not have this level of power and responsibility, it becomes futile and is better classified as a form of mourning what was lost or as an identity-based folklore rhyme. Therefore, cultural action should be the ultimate incarnation of a particular cultural system, without falling into the trap of representing or expressing an existing culture. Instead, it should create a culture for the present and the future. It is the creation of humanity as a valuable energy.[20] Through this approach to the nature of cultural action, we can deal with what we call "creative initiative."

3. The toolkit aims to question "the stereotype of peripheries". Normally, peripheries are seen as free, creative and ever-changing. This is essentially true. However, it does not mean that there are no patterns within peripheries capable of transforming them, with time, into centers that would give rise to new peripheries. This stereotype can be explored on an artistic level and a linguistic level:

> **Stereotyping artforms:** The example of "interactive theatre": Let us imagine for a moment that the theory and mechanisms of the Theatre of the Oppressed have not spread across the world and remained limited to Brazil within local social/creative practices. What would we have done without it? What other creative tools and methods would have emerged? This may be a rhetorical question, but what is the harm

in posing it? Would we have created tools from our local contexts (revolving around the role of the storyteller, perhaps)? Of course, this could have happened, but to what extent? Is it not valid to question why the majority of artistic interventions in Syria (for example) are based on the methods of the Theatre of the Oppressed?

Stereotyping language: Even the independent sector uses terms without asking where they came from. Where did the term "beneficiaries" come from? It is a term we see in most civil institutions, peace-making initiatives and psychosocial support literature. This is not to derogate from these areas, but to suggest that it might be worthwhile to question common patterns in the trends and policies of private and international institutions.

Learning how to realize change is an ongoing process for many reasons, the most important being that the communities in which we work are not machines. They are not mechanical and cannot be predicted. To bring out this change, there are certain useful skills which can be employed, bits of knowledge and practices that could help artists work effectively within, with and for their communities. The image on the left provides a visualization that helps us to explore and develop these skills and practices. It should not be considered as a map, but rather as a compass. There is no "right way" in the suggested course, and we can move freely within and around it. It allows us to move both ways, while maintaining a sense of direction.

20 —— Now Then: Testimonials on Independent Syrian Cultural Work – Wael Kadour – Ettijahat - Independent Culture in cooperation with Mamdouh Adwan Publishing House – Juneid Sarieddeen, Lebanese theatrical performer - 2017

The Concept of Creative Intervention

Create Syria adopts the term 'creative intervention' as a basic concept to define the nature of artistic work in times of crisis, as it is part of an artistic and social dynamic at the same time.

Here, we borrow a set of basic art concepts related to communities, as observed by Alexis Frasz and Holly Sidford of Helicon Collaborative, who have indicated that this art "is based on belief in the agency and responsibility of art and artists to affect social change or influence the world in some way. It is not art created for its purely formal qualities or primarily for an art world audience. It uses 'forms' and 'materials' beyond those used in studio art. The creation process often involves artists working in collaboration with community members, other sectors or other artists. The artwork, therefore, is usually not an expression of one person's singular creative vision but the result of a relational, collaborative process. The work may include subject-matter that addresses social, political or economic issues, but it doesn't have to."[21]

The toolkit seeks to support artists to help them design creative interventions, which are a type of cultural project. In that sense, their planning only differs from project planning in terms of the specific environment suggested by the toolkit, as it relates to creative interventions in the context of crises. The table below discusses the concept of creative intervention as a type of cultural project, as adopted by this toolkit. It is worth noting that definitions in this field are deeply misleading and their limits are always blurred. Therefore, we emphasize that the purpose of these definitions is simply educational:

21 —— Alexis Frasz & Holly Sidford Helicon Collaborative 1Mapping the Landscape of Socially Engaged Artistic Practice [Electronic Reference], art making change website, Link: http://tiny.cc/ef2kdz, published on 2017, visited on 28/09/2019.

	CULTURAL/ARTISTIC PROJECT	CREATIVE INTERVENTION
FIELD	A broader concept that includes several types of cultural work. For example, establishing a library, documenting artists' work in a certain historical period, research projects in the cultural field, etc.	A more specific concept that includes creative or artistic projects in the context of "intervention", namely contributing to resolving a particular crisis or bringing about a particular cultural change in a specific community and at a specific time.
SIZE	The size of creative interventions is not different by definition from cultural projects. It requires specific resources and planning to bring about the desired change.	
DURATION	The lifespan of the cultural project may be short or long, but it has a beginning and an end.	A creative intervention is often planned for a short period of time, because it requires, by nature, quick interaction with an urgent crisis. It has a longer-term vision that consists of interacting with a particular community. Many creative interventions have evolved into long-term projects.
MAIN ACTORS	Cultural institutions or groups are often the initiators. This initiative comes as a response to an external need or problem detected by those involved.	The general case is for creative interventions to be designed and implemented by artists from the concerned community itself or from different communities where artists find personal motivation to intervene in another community's crisis.
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ENVIRONMENT	The cultural project may be designed and built on an interactive relationship with the environment concerned. The project aims to realize change which builds on community analysis tools and techniques.	Creative intervention is essentially part of the interaction between the creative process and the community. It does not start, according to this manual, from community analysis, but from a phase of actual communication and interaction with the target community.

Course of Action

The 'Course of Action' is a suggestion by Create Syria for artists and artistic groups in relation to their work in local communities, particularly communities that are experiencing situations of crisis, unrest or instability, or complicated situations which are the result of overlapping crises and their implications. The 2011 Syrian revolution turned into war, and the war led to countless human tragedies, such as displacement. Displacement, in turn, resulted in human tragedies that seemingly differed from those that led directly to war. Death by bombs was replaced by drowning, sieges were replaced by homelessness, and instead of the extreme cold within besieged areas in the absence of all the basic necessities of life, the cold took over inside tents while all the basic necessities of life remained absent.

Introduction

The long-term implications of these overlapping crises are not less dangerous than the individual crisis of war. An entire generation of uneducated people is not less painful than a generation of people whose lives were cut short in their prime, just when they were about to begin their careers. Increased intolerance and partisanship have proven a favorable foundation for an endless cycle of violence.

Based on the above, we have come to the following assumption: we as artists cannot change even the simplest of issues that surround us and shape us if we do not mobilize our personal histories, academic knowledge and personal experiences in service of change. We must study and analyze the communities in which we work. We will not be able to bring about sustainable change unless that change is in the hearts, minds and collective conscience of the people with whom we are working.

Thus, there are two types of skills, knowledge and experience that we need in our work with troubled communities: artistic knowledge and experience, since we are stage performers, film stars, painters, musicians, clowns, dancers and writers, and technical knowledge and experience, as we possess the knowledge to help us design projects while envisioning their results in advance. We know enough to link our activities to clear objectives. We can show other groups and institutions the importance of our work, and convince them to help us and provide us with resources.

Where do we start? From all of this and more.

We have our histories, values and understandings of what is going on and the implications thereof, as well as our fears that these crises will persist and our fears of futility and helplessness. We begin from our desire to participate – no matter the extent of this participation – in imagining a better life. Thus, what we also need is ourselves.

Create Syria does not suggest an approach that stems from project planning and management skills, but rather one that stems from us as individuals. Its four steps constitute a solid course of action: communication, discovery, creativity and innovation and, finally, reflection and reconsideration.

Before we begin, there are a few general notes relating to the four stages of the course:

1. THE COURSE IS NOT PERFECT As long as there are millions of people around the world who are working in different communities, facing different challenges, working under different conditions and with different tools, there will be countless variations of this course. And so we ask, why does Create Syria suggest this course, then? First, because it is the result of a study conducted on several experiences from the Arab region and other parts of the world; second, because this toolkit tries to summarize these experiences, initiatives and projects; and third, because Create Syria sees the individual, who is an artist, and not a social factor, as the starting point for positive change. Thus, the artist is the focus of the programme.

2. THE COURSE IS NOT LINEAR If we reach the phase of creativity and innovation, it does not mean that we have completed the phase of discovery, and that we have achieved all our goals from the phase of communication, whether with ourselves, our creative practices or the places and people we work with. Each phase creates a basis for the next phase and builds on the previous phase, which requires going back to the phase before and reconsidering things.

3. THE COURSE IS NOT ALWAYS SAFE We will question many things during the phases of the methodology (at least while reading the toolkit or trying to use it in practice for the first time). It is okay to have doubts and to feel that we are not in our common safe spaces; however, these spaces do not usually offer beneficial surprises and opportunities for learning.

4. THE COURSE IS SIMULTANEOUSLY VERY INDIVIDUAL AND VERY COLLECTIVE This is what we think is of great value in this approach. It is a methodology, but it leaves room for the individual. It is collective, but it does not impose a group identity or value that is greater than the identity and value of the individual. Instead, it believes that group impact enhances individual impact.

One: Communication

Many of us pass through this phase naturally and without planning it or thinking about it beforehand, and without necessarily being aware of its impact on everything that comes later in our social/creative journey or experience.

The meaning of "communication" in this phase entails connecting with ourselves first, with our changing multiple identities, and connecting with our creative capacities and values which ultimately shape what we do. All this constitutes the foundation for building our connection with others, as well as with places and creative practices.

OBJECTIVE OF THE COMMUNICATION PHASE

The purpose of this phase is not to start the design or even imagine the creative intervention itself, but to build strong ties between all its basic components, including the individual artist themself, other individuals and the places and creative practices on which we depend. The suggestion provided in this method does not depend on an institutional approach to cultural work in troubled communities, which often begins with an analysis of the community and its needs and an analysis of the problems encountered therein, resulting in the design of creative projects to address these problems; instead, the approach adopted in this method depends on the individual both as a creator and as a member of the community in a particular social context.

Below are some of the main questions that we aim to answer in this phase:

- On what do we base our creative experience? What are our personal, social and artistic motives?

- How do our identities and cultures change with time?

- Does the artist have the right to tell other people's stories?

- What are the ethics for entering into a community to carry out an artistic project?

During the Create Syria intensive training workshop in 2018, we worked on an exercise which we called "Origins". During this exercise, participating artists were required to list three events or people in their lives which/who, in their opinion, left a significant impact on the values and thoughts they carry with them today - that is, events and people which have led them to become artists and to believe in the social role that they play. This was the story of Lebanese stage performer Chrystel Khodr: "The war had just ended. My mother took me and her brothers and sisters by car to West Beirut because she said that the vegetables were cheaper there. I don't know exactly where we were, but everything was in ruins. We lived in the northern suburbs, and it was my first time in Beirut. I remember my mom saying that this was the Italian embassy, and I remember that she left me to wait in the car and they locked the doors. There was so much debris around me and large ponds, which were probably just holes filled with water. I remember being afraid of all the rubble and ruins. Back when I was just a kid, I used to get bored easily. I didn't have anyone to play with. My brothers and sisters were all much older than I was, and I wasn't as smart as they were at school. I was also fat. I weighed 85 kilos when I was just 11 years old. Everyone around me kept trying to make me understand – and they were convinced – that I was never going to make anything of myself. Then my sister went into theatre and she started to take me along with her to watch plays. She once took me to watch a play called "رزق الله يا بيروت" *Beirut on My Mind*. I don't remember much of it, except that they were wearing fezzes. She also took me to a play called "جوليا دومنا" *Julia Domna*, where there were two actresses, one of whom did not speak the entire show and was wearing a clear white wedding dress. There was also a play called "جنينة الصنايع" *Sanayeh Garden*, which had a black actress who said people called her "cockroach" and a veiled actress who tells the story of a drop of water that drips into her ear while the hairdresser is washing her hair. I also saw a Tunisian play call "المجنون" *The Madman*. After I saw this play, I decided to enter into theatre. When I first went to the institute, Farah – who was enrolled at USJ – took me to act in her graduation project. I used to go out with her brother, which is how she knew me. In her play, I met Maya. We used to go watch the Shams Festival with Tarek. At Beirut Theatre, I met Juneid and Omar. And this is how I found my people and my place. Today, every time the hairdresser washes my hair, I remember the character played by the veiled actress. And every time I teach children, I hope that when they grow up they do not shy away from the memories of their childhood the way I do with mine. Sometimes, when I walk in the streets of Beirut, I recall the image of a city in ruins and me, a child who was afraid of it and hid behind the windows of the car waiting for my mother to come back with cheap mulukhiyah (jute mallow)…"

WHY DO WE START WITH THE COMMUNICATION PHASE?

If we, as artists, wish to work within vulnerable communities in unclear and uncertain conditions, the starting point in the Create Syria programme's suggested course of action should be the individual. In the context of creative work within communities living in these harsh conditions, reconnecting with oneself and with one's personal history and recognizing the relationship between this history and what we are doing today will allow us to draw a clear image of our role and how to carry it out properly.

Consider the experience of the Lebanese organization Fighters for Peace: the nine founding members of the organization believe that if they had met for any reason during the war, they would have surely considered each other enemies and killed one another, and they would never have met today. Indeed, during the civil war, each of them used to think that they were right; anyone who held a different political or intellectual view would not be considered as an opposing party, but an enemy that they would need to eliminate. The organization today consists of around 50 members, of whom 35 are ex-combatants who belonged to different political and religious parties. Among them are 12 female combatants as well. Each of them looked within themselves and thought about all the things they did as individuals during the war. They did not join the Fighters of Peace Organization as political or sectarian representatives, but as representatives of their own selves.

Who among us remembers the first time they worked within a community living in harsh conditions? We may feel like we belong to this community, not because we are an integral part of it (maybe we are, maybe we aren't) but because we believe deeply in any community's right to be exposed to the arts through creative practices, self-expression and having platforms and microphones with which to broadcast their ideas. Despite this feeling of belonging and despite our firm conviction in what we are doing, we may also feel a little uneasy (to say the least) and different, regardless of our will and our attempts to belong. We ask ourselves: how do others view us?

We even question our basic values, for what gives us the right to believe that we actually have something to offer in these difficult conditions? Often, our reaction is to try to avoid these questions, as they lead us nowhere. What we are suggesting is not to try to overcome them, but to work through them.

Here, we are outside the safe spaces that we recognize and know how to control. We simply have more accurate assumptions about them. The process of building connections with oneself and with other people and places allows us to deepen our experiences; this in turn increases the possibility of us achieving deeper and more effective creative experiences.

During Joe Robertson and Joe Murphy's search for components of a theatrical work that addressed the question of migrants in southern Europe, they discovered Calais Jungle by chance at the border of the United Kingdom. After this discovery, British playwright Joe Murphy told The Guardian: "There are many unaccompanied youths and young adults there, as well as young boys who are going through the greatest struggle of their lives. As a result, they end up suffering psychological and physical breakdowns and lose their minds... it is a tragedy in itself to witness this." —————

Change happens at every moment and it always has implications. In our context, most of these changes and their implications are disastrous. What can we do so that we and the people participating in this experience are able to deal with difficult conditions? What values, knowledge, skills, places, thoughts and people can we develop to make it possible to work in these conditions and mitigate their negative effects?

In recalling his experience with Good Chance Theatre in Calais Jungle, Sudanese artist Mohammed Sarrar notes: "I thought about involving other young people in this little piece of happiness that was achieved by standing on stage. I thought about helping other young people get a dose of that happiness I got when I went on stage. I assembled a small group of Sudanese youths that I had met at the camp. Playing instruments and singing under the dome, as well as in our own worn-out tents, provided us all with a warmth that made it seem as if we were home. It made us forget for a few moments our daily problems with the police and dissipated our fear of the unknown that awaited us. This tent was responsible for a great deal of communication, not just between artists participating in its activities, but also between camp residents, whose times were no longer only set on providing their daily needs, but included the starting hours of artistic performances under the dome. These periods were welcomed by all camp residents, unlike other times of the day." —————

MY IMAGINATION IS ALWAYS BIGGER

My Imagination is Always Bigger Journey by Chadi Makrach is a theatre training project that uses the techniques and mechanisms interactive theatre. The project was implemented by a group of trainers and actors who have experience in working with children and in performing arts. The project resulted with an interactive play that waspresented to 100 children from a number of Syrian camps and Lebanese areas from Bekaa to Beirut.

This phase needs time. We need to deepen our connections and get to know the people we work with and the places in which we work as much as we can. Places not only mean the physical spaces in which we work, but also the social realities, life patterns, prevailing systems and cultures that surround us.

The National Independent Cultural Council for Democratic Change in Algeria began planning to hold a National Cultural Symposium within six months of its establishment. This symposium will include all cultural activists in Algeria, who will come together to put forward a number of recommendations for the Council to adopt during the transitional period. This would be the first cultural symposium of its kind since the nation's independence, given that the gathering of cultural activists and the organization of several symposiums were not possible before the current movement within Algerian society. The first step in this regard will be to create a website where every cultural activist can list the existing problems in the artistic field in which they work and suggest measures that they consider important for enhancing this sector, in addition to providing suggestions for what the Council can do to address the matter. This will eventually result in a roadmap for every cultural field or artform which will be presented during the National Cultural Symposium. This symposium will be held in a vast space that will allow several sessions to be held for every type of art or literature, in order that stakeholders can develop specific, targeted policies emanating from the true needs of every sector. The outcomes of the symposium will be addressed, as will the outcomes of the Group on Cultural Policies, which has been working to submit a stronger, more effective and comprehensive cultural policy project in Algeria for the past six years.

During this phase, talking about our artistic practices with others helps us to think about them and how they can help us in this particular time and place. It also helps us think about how to carry out our creative work. Inspiration and imagination may come from our surroundings, but they may also come from our ability to understand the constant changes in our cultures and in the assumptions we carry and the values we defend.

The organization Fighters for Peace places particular emphasis on certain forms of communication that it uses, such as the living testimonies of ex-combatants in front of an audience, based on the principle that talking about what has been suppressed in front of an audience is one of the most important tools for change at a personal level. The organization also considers theatre to be one of its most effective methods. As a result, it not only cooperates with theatrical institutions and groups, but also works to establish its own projects in this field.

<div style="background:red;color:white">**TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES**</div>

There are a number of techniques and exercises that could help during the communication phase, including:

INTRODUCTIONS

OBJECTIVE: Communicating about personal identities and the various ways through which a person could introduce themself.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: Groups of 5-20.
SUGGESTED DURATION: Depending on the number of participants, between 15 and 60 minutes.
DESCRIPTION: Participants will sit in a circle, and the moderator will ask them to take a few minutes to choose 3 words with which to introduce themselves. These words may reflect their nationality (Egyptian, Syrian...), their marital status (husband, divorced, mother, father, ...), their gender (male, female...), their sexuality (transgender, homosexual), their profession (writer, painter, sculptor...) or their legal and life status (immigrant, refugee, newcomer...) or any word that they find would describe their identity as they see it.

Participants will then share the words they've chosen. The moderator will open a discussion about identities and how each person introduces themselves.

LIST | POEM

OBJECTIVE Communicating about personal identities and the various ways through which a person could introduce themself.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS Groups of 5-12 people.[22]
SUGGESTED DURATION 1 hour.
DESCRIPTION The moderator will ask participants: who are the people who left an impact on you? What memories, things, places, recipes, songs, stories, experiences and games made you who you are today? The moderator will ask participants to write a poem/list that starts with ¨I am from...¨ to tell others where they came from. After 10 minutes, the participants will share their poems and the moderator will start a discussion about identities, how they are shaped and how they change.

BUILDING A RHYTHM TOGETHER

OBJECTIVE: Communicating with oneself and with others through collective action.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: Groups of 8-16.
SUGGESTED DURATION: 45 minutes.
DESCRIPTION: An exercise of moving with the beat or music, where one participant starts repeating one move and moving all around the room. The others will join gradually with their own repetitive moves. The moderator will guide the participants into forming pairs, where two people will unite and combine their two moves to make a new one. The pair will move together around the room in harmony with the beat.
The moderator will now invite every pair to find another pair, unite and combine their moves to create a new sequence of moves. All of this will happen without stopping to talk about it. Partici-

pants should simply communicate and perform. Then, every group of 4 will find another group of 4, and finally the entire room will unite with moves that are in harmony with the beat.

THE ORIGINS

OBJECTIVE: Discovering the influencing and inspiring factors that resulted in us coming to this place today.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 5-20.
SUGGESTED DURATION: 2 hours.
DESCRIPTION: Every person is welcome to participate in their own Origins journey as a creative practitioner with their explorer peers.

STAGES OF THE EXERCISE:

Using a paper (for visual learners):
Large A2 papers are distributed, which ensures all access needs are met using floor and table spaces. The group is given access to coloured pencils and its members are asked to:

1. Draw a zigzag line on the page to represent a river or path.
2. Each participant shall fill the river with influencing or inspiring factors that helped motivate them to carry out the social/creative practice (which led them here). These influences and factors may be distinguished using symbols, words, short descriptions or drawings. The journey starts from the point that every participant feels that they started from.
3. Each participant identifies three things in their journey which they would like to share with others in the training hall.

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22 —— If the group is too big, this technique would take a very long time, in which case it would be better to resort to another technique.

4. We listen to what everyone else chose without asking questions or giving answers – just listening. Afterwards, everyone is invited to "display" their roots on the wall, which may remain displayed throughout the workshop if there is enough space. Participants are encouraged to look at them again to see what inspired their peers and discover similarities and differences in their influencing factors.

The same approach can be adapted through the use of different methods, such as objects or with movement and dance.

Replace the papers and pencils with the following:

A series of objects that participants are asked to bring with them: These objects may be enhanced with drawn symbols, written words or borrowed or found items. Participants are asked to present these objects by moving across the training hall and sharing them with the rest of the group, as a tour of all influencing factors. Participants invite their peers to move with them across the space during the presentation of each object.

A series of moves: Artists are given the space and time to create a move or sign that represents each influencing or inspiring factor they chose. They shall then show these moves or signs inside the space, using spatial limitations to move and map their journeys. The series of moves/signs shall be connected in order to create a dance that expresses inspiration and influence. Participants are invited to share their entire sequences with the group. After completing it, they can "translate" as much as they wish to share.

UNDERSTANDING YOU AND YOUR CREATIVE SIDE: A LETTER TO THE PART OF YOU THAT CREATES

OBJECTIVE Communicating and thinking about our own creative practices and understanding the current situation.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 5-20.
SUGGESTED DURATION: 2 hours.
DESCRIPTION: Our lives often consist of many different aspects, such as those that manifest themselves during our work in teaching or training, when we are with friends and family, when we work in a café, write reports, and carry out our creative processes. Write a letter to the part of you that creates, or perhaps to the part that wants to be a creator. But before that, think about the answers to these questions about the creative part of you:

¬ How does this part feel now?
¬ Is it being nurtured?
¬ Is it active?
¬ Is it demanding?
¬ Is it depressed?
¬ Is it tired?
¬ Does it struggle with the other parts to get its own space?
¬ What do you want to say to it?
¬ If your creative part sent you an answer, what would it say?

BUT WHY?

OBJECTIVE: Determining why we do what we do.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 5-20.
SUGGESTED DURATION: 1.5 hours.
DESCRIPTION: Our emotions, beliefs and passions often push us to work. For this reason, let us reflect on the factors that move and motivate us.
The following questions start with the word "why?" and end with the previous answer. There is an initial question "why do you do what you do?" followed by at least five other questions which aim to deepen our understanding of ourselves and what moves us, which is likely what motivates us to work every day. By reaching the deepest possible answer to the question of "why?", the answer becomes a guide for us during decision-making. It is preferable to do this exercise in pairs.

¬ Why do we do what we do? (community activist/artist/politician/mother/active member of the community). Example: Because I want to change things…
¬ Why is it important for you to change things? Example: Because I want my children to grow up in peace.
¬ Why is it important to you that … your children grow up in peace? Example: Because I want them to live freely.
¬ Why is it important to you that … your children live freely? Example: Because then I would know that they can choose the life they want.
¬ Why is it important to you… that your children are able to choose the life they want? Example: Because it is a basic human right.
¬ Why is it important to you that … basic human rights are protected? Example: Because I believe in justice.

DUAL PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF SOUND

Dual Presence and Absence of Sound is a project by Seba Kourani where she developed with Hamza Hamada and implemented a workshop through which 12 young participants from Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Congo, and Philippine went through the experience of searching for their original voice through learning theatre tools and methods. The workshop results were presented to a live audience in Beirut 2019.

Once you feel that you are able to identify what motivates you in life, take your time to write it down and think about where this meaning or motivation came from in your life. Take 5 or 10 minutes to write these roots and draw or colour them, and take your time to think about this knowledge.

THE CHAIR OF EMPATHY

OBJECTIVE: Communicating with others.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 2-15.
SUGGESTED DURATION: 2 hours.
DESCRIPTION: Write three conversations or relationships where you feel tense/that you struggle with at the moment. For example: with a coworker, classmate or neighbour.

STAGES OF THE EXERCISE

1. Work in pairs or individually by taking turns.
2. In every pair: "A" shares their stand with "B", who plays the role of the other party.
3. Choose a moment to recreate, whether through a recent conversation that involves this tension/struggle, or a future conversation with this person.
4. Start role playing. A is themselves and B is the "other" person.
5. When the level of tension is medium to high, switch places physically.
6. Now A will continue the conversation, but this time they will take the place of B and defend their position.
7. The role playing will continue until A feels like they really played the other role, then the pair will switch places again and continue the conversation, where A is now back to their original position but with new information.
8. Find a way to end the conversation and take a minute to reflect with your partner on what you learned from putting yourself in the other person's shoes.
9. Now B shares their issue and the exercise continues.

The toolkit includes an appendix with case studies explaining in an applied manner each phase of the project. Further information is provided in the detailed case study on the National Independent Cultural Council for Democratic Change in Algeria and Good Chance Theatre in Calais Camp as an example of the communication phase.

Two: Discovery

In this phase, we explore our artistic and creative practices and the different approaches to our work with a specific community, and we reflect on the balance between the course itself and its importance as an artistic and humanitarian experience, as well as its artistic products. In this phase, we also think about the language and terminology that fit our artistic and social narratives, and we envision how to explain the experience(s) we are about to go through.

In this phase, and before we imagine what we are actually going to do, we ask the most critical questions; what is the role of art? What are the changes that art can bring about in the community?

When we ask these questions, the questions that follow will come to us instinctively. Thus, we will explore obstacles and ways that we can overcome them or use them to achieve what we want.

What is essential in this phase is to be open to exploring and discovering different methods, trends and strategies, and to try to imagine the impact of adopting any one of them. It is a testing phase which could be carried out in several different ways. In this phase, we start to build the features of the creative process we are going through. For this purpose, we explore and discover the balance between the experience and process itself and the final artistic product(s) that will result from this process.

Below are some basic questions that we aim to answer in this phase:

- What should change in the community in which we are working?

- How could this change occur? And more specifically, how will this change occur through use of the arts?

- What is the power of art? And why is art capable of causing social change?

- What should we do: build for change or stimulate others to bring about change?

- How do we narrate or explain the creative process we are carrying out?

- How do we word our language and what is the basic terminology we should use (or should not use)?

Change is an ongoing process that is constantly happening around us. It occurs in complex contexts and for very complicated reasons. Change cannot be linear and cannot proceed according to a fixed, inflexible plan. However, the main question that we should focus on in this phase is how art can be effective in guiding and adapting this change. This can be observed clearly in artist Fares al-Zahaby's testimony in the book Now Then, in which he describes his own situation of change: "Cultural acts appear after the Syrian revolution as a futile, wasted act of luxury. What is the true meaning of creating a theatrical performance? Or a beautiful art exhibition? Or even a film or a book? All of this is futile. The artistic equation is all jumbled up. There is no sender and no receiver. The artistic scene is destroyed, all aspects have been terminated, and everything is back to square one of the human endeavor: seeking survival and continuity only. However, despite all the intellectual and spiritual destruction that the artistic, cultural, intellectual and literary landscape is experiencing, artistic work is still building a complete parallel life for all people who are lost, who are searching for a livelihood in the four corners of the Earth. Thus, artistic work, in this exceptional situation, is creating a parallel world, a virtual world, where all verbal and written heritage exists: songs and stories, novels and tales, etc.; and it is carried in a backpack to travel around the world. In this case, art beats as a country inside the pocket, and the creator of this work holds on to it with everything they have."[23]

Discovery is the phase in which we become aware of existing challenges and our capacities to imagine the current situation within the characteristics of the artistic trend, as well as our initial plan that encompasses our vision. Milena Bogavac, an interactive theatre director in Belgrade, tries to explain her view in this regard by saying: "The crisis and transitional stages have become the persisting situation in Serbia. After more than ten years in theatrical work with communities in endless crises in Serbia, particularly the youth, I come back today to mainstream theatre to try and transform community theatre into Main Stream. Working in depth with communities leads in a moment to shutting down and a serious lack of knowledge about what is going on in the surrounding world."[24]

In the end, the essential area within the Create Syria programme, and particularly in the discovery phase, is the concept of crisis,[25] in addition to trying to clarify the differences between unrest, crisis, conflict and struggle and the ability to analyze them, even if only in a preliminary way. It is important in this context to think about the place of creative work between the concepts of social change and crisis. For this purpose, we think visually about four positions of cultural acts during crises:

23 —— Now Then: Testimonials on Independent Syrian Cultural Work – Wael Kadour – Ettijahat – Independent Culture in cooperation with Mamdouh Adwan Publishing House – Fares al-Zahaby - 2017

24 —— From the session Disaster as an Inspiration for Creativity | On the Brink of Change Forum 2019 | Create Syria

25 —— Crisis: The manual adopted the definition of Cambridge Dictionary for the term "crisis": a time of great disagreement, confusion, or suffering; or an extremely difficult or dangerous point in a situation.

01 CULTURE AND CREATIVITY ARE COMPLETELY ISO-LATED FROM SOCIAL CHANGE AND THE CONFLICT PROCESS, AND THEREFORE FROM THE CRISIS. THE CRISIS HERE DRIVES SOCIAL CHANGE AND CULTURE HAS NO EFFECT.
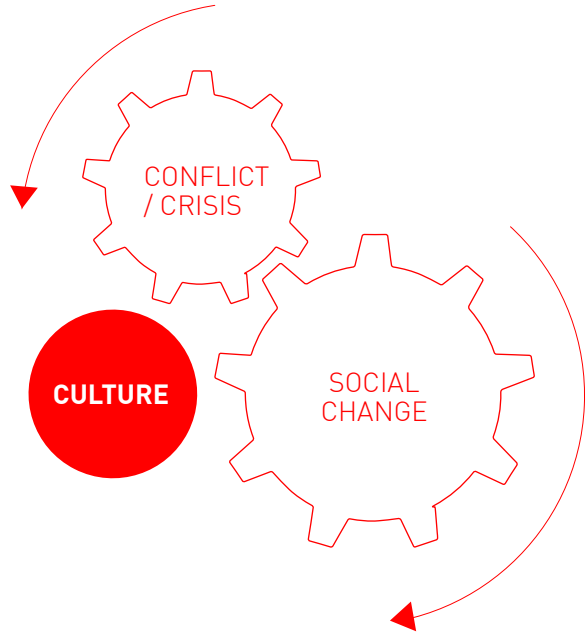
An example from the field of fine arts in South Africa[26]

Arno Breker, known for being 'Hitler's favourite sculptor', once said that art "has nothing to do with politics, for good art is above politics." Many German artists thought that their art was devoid of the violence going on around them. There is no doubt that these claims were hypocritical and that this arrogance was abhorrent. The reality was, in fact, the opposite, as many of these artists were Nazi-oriented. The situation, in other cases, was more complicated, when artists failed to reflect social reality, as they were simply living in isolation from it. The experience of white visual artists in South Africa in the 1950s and 1960s provides a striking example of how this separation and disassociation from reality can occur, leading to the inability to effect any social change.

White people in South Africa were a minority, but the race was dominant in hierarchical power structures. With the introduction Apartheid, which became officially institutionalised in 1948, the art scene was dominated by the white race, notably in education, art facilities and participation in national and international exhibitions. Under the Bantu Education Act in 1955, black Africans were prohibited from receiving any official artistic training during the apartheid years. Unofficial art centres, funded by European countries, were one of the few means by which black people in South Africa were able to access some form of art education, albeit based on Western definitions of art. African-rooted art, principally sculpting and painting, was known for the long duration of this period as a 'craft'.

As a result, during the peak of the apartheid regime (from the 1950s until the 1970s), the primary producers of art and cultural work were the white 'elites' who measured the importance of creative work by the extent to which it conformed to European artistic tastes. In this context, there were also black artists who used modernism in a near-desperate attempt to belong to the 'superior' culture of the colonist. In both cases, fine arts in South Africa were completely disconnected from the social situation which ultimately imploded, leading the country into violent conflict.

Thereafter, during the final stages of the apartheid regime (1976-1994), there arose a wave of art production that became known as 'Art of Resistance', and during this period African art began to be viewed differently. Visual artists tried to ride this wave, especially after international decisions to enforce economic and cultural boycotts of South

Africa. While musicians, writers and theatre performers joined the resistance movement, the visual movement was slow and late to understand the social change that was underway.

An example of this comes from quite late in the apartheid period, when white visual artists sought to issue special permissions for their black peers to enter their neighbourhoods. Aside from never crossing in the opposite direction into the black neighbourhoods and villages, an ethical review of the role of white visual artists during this period requires that one questions why it was that they did not radically reject the apartheid policies, opting instead to cope with the laws, albeit with the caveat of the possibility to issue special permissions for black artists.

Another example comes from Angola. The Search for Common Ground Centre, established in 1996, uses theatre to help Angolan people find ways to end cyclical violence. This practice was previously developed in countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand as a form of psychotherapy for traumatised individuals. A person from the group would perform their story to their theatre group, and they would discuss the scene afterwards. This practice was not successful for several reasons, principally the fact that the culture of the community was isolated from the process of planning to bring about change. This technique originates from the Western concept of psycho-social healing that encourages the victim to release whatever they have repressed by talking about the experience and externalising it. However, it was not rooted in that particular African society's understanding of how a group can deal with a terrible personal experience.

26 —— Researcher Rama Najma identified case studies for all four scenarios in the research paper 'The Role of Arts and Culture in Reconciliation and Civil Peace in Post-Conflict Countries,' in Syrian Cultural Work During the Years of Embers, published by Ettijahat - Independent Culture in cooperation with Mamdouh Adwan Publishing House, 2016.

02 CULTURE IS A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE CONFLICT AND ONE OF THE COMPONENTS OF THE CRISIS, OR PERHAPS EVEN ONE OF ITS CAUSES. CULTURE THEREFORE PLAYS A ROLE IN STEERING SOCIAL CHANGE TOWARDS THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS.

CULTURE
CONFLICT
SOCIAL CHANGE
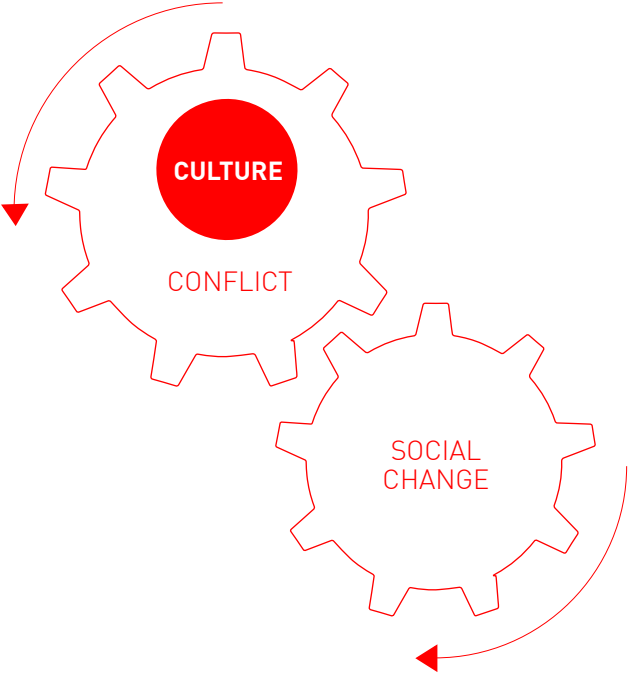
Art has historically been used to promote wars, monarchies and tyrants and to celebrate victories. Artists have worked in official capacities for governments for the purposes of promoting and generating public support for wars and to document the conflict through art. This was evident in World War I and World War II, and can be seen in the countless anti-communism posters of the Cold War era. Similarly, the role of Hollywood films in painting Red Indians as 'barbaric' is well-known. Art has always been an easy medium for driving conflict. It has been used as a space in which to glorify power and justify violence, to falsify history and validate one party's side of a story. The Spanish Civil War is a horrifying example of the extent to which art has been involved in fuelling violence. This was not because important artists and writers were divided between the two parties to the conflict (George Orwell, Ernest Hemingway, Salvador Dali and Lorca,

among others), but because of art was produced continuously during the civil war and existed on its fronts. The best example of this is art that was used in torture cells. Spanish artists designed cells in such a way as to prevent prisoners from sleeping or even moving. They were the size of a packed closet, with drawings, shapes and colours designed to cause psychological torture.

Another example comes from Ireland, where artists and writers have historically been considered key drivers of the conflict, motivated by nationalist ideologies and their desire to free their cultural identities. This example is very complicated because the violent conflict was set in motion by real and deep cultural roots and may have the legitimacy to decide the fate of the group and its culture.

03 CULTURE ACTS AS AN EXTERNAL FACTOR WHICH INFLUENCES SOCIAL CHANGE WITHOUT INTERACTING WITH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE CONFLICT. IT DISTANCES ITSELF FROM THE CONFLICT AND TRIES TO LEAVE AN IMPACT AT THE SOCIAL LEVEL, WHILE THE CRISIS MOVES IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, WHICH WEAKENS THE CAPACITY OF CULTURE TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE.

CONFLICT / CRISIS
SOCIAL CHANGE
CULTURE
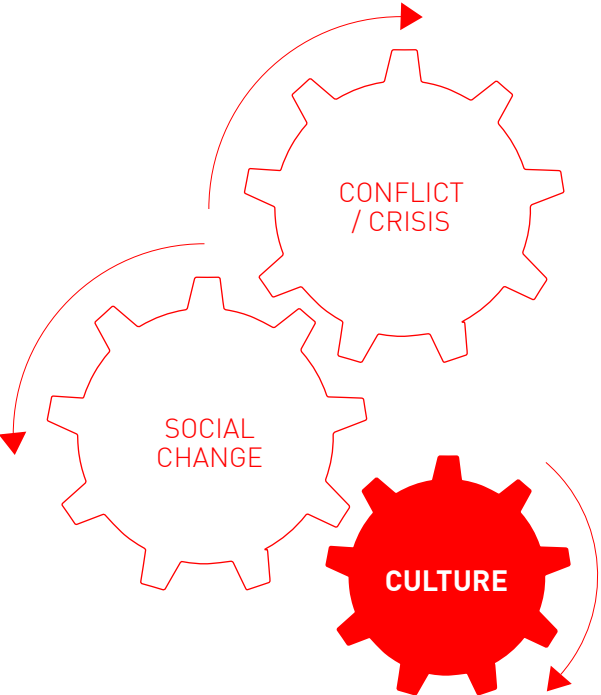
Art does not have an isolated power of its own. Ultimately, it is the fruit of social heritage and an economic situation, inevitably interacting with the creativity of individuals. Therefore, its potential may be limited, either because of individual weaknesses or because of other influences on the conflict, especially violent influences. There are several historical examples about the decrease of artistic impact on social change with the increase of violence. This does not mean that the role of art has ceased or regressed, but rather it emphasises the need for cultural actors to know the limits of their roles and the reality of external influences on art. Under such circumstances, art may transform violence into an enticing melodrama or a consuming drama. It may turn victims into models that cater to general tastes and preferences and even celebrate cleansing as a 'resistance activity' that lasts for hours. Artistic experiences are shared with smaller groups of beneficiaries in a sort of imaginary collective utopia.

Consider the following example from Sarajevo: Bosnia and Herzegovina hosted countless artistic initiatives. For one whole decade, support from surrounding European countries targeted artists of this ethnically-divided region. However, the results of the cultural work produced by activists in Sarajevo remained limited. The truth is that the institutional ethnic ideology of Sarajevo, which was reinforced by the Dayton Agreement of 1995, maintained ethnic division twenty years after the war through cultural policies and laws.

The institution Mozart's Symphony aimed to bring together musicians from all over the city to represent all religions, notably the Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic and Jewish communities. However, at the time of the performances, the halls were almost

#8 YEARS CHALLENGE PLAY
NABAD ENSEMBLE
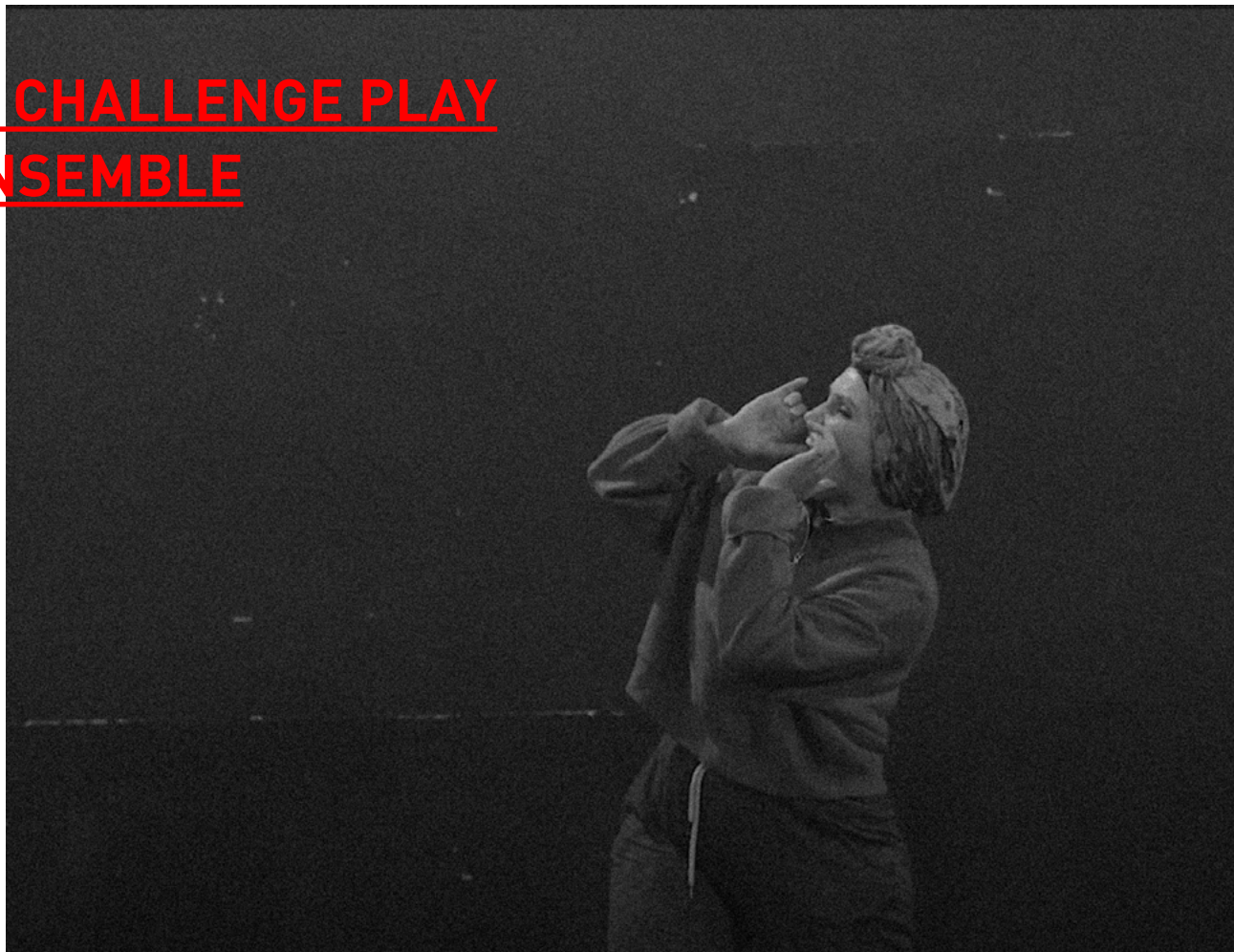
The *Nabad Ensemble* is a project by Seenaryo Organization which resulted with the #8_years_Challenge play and was presented to more than 200 participants in a tour of three locations in Beirut and Western Bekaa. Each play performance was followed by workshops where the trained participants worked with 50 children as part of the projects aim to train them to be facilitators and trainers themselves.

empty. Similarly, the opening of the war museum in Sarajevo was a failure, despite activists managing to raise funds from several global artists, due to a lack of agreement on how the multi-ethnic society should be represented.

04 THE HEALTHIEST AND MOST FEASIBLE CASE: CULTURE INTERACTS WITH THE CRISIS, RESULTING IN SOCIAL CHANGE, WHICH IS ALSO HELPED BY OTHER FACTORS. CULTURE ALSO HELPS TO SUPPRESS OR REDUCE THE INTENSITY OF THE CRISIS OR CONFLICT AND IMPACTS SOCIAL CHANGE.
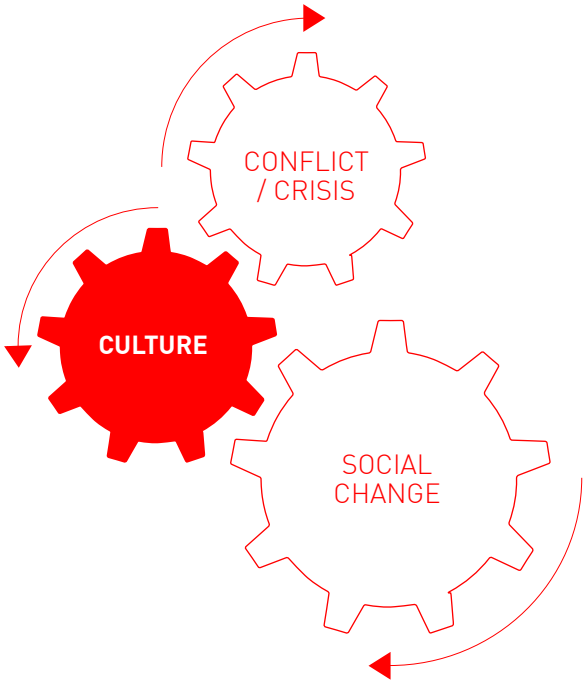
If art is expected to contribute to conflict resolution or to bring about social change, it should combine creative action and other forms of political and social activities.

We can see how artists in Peru have been very sensitive towards local culture, and at the same time, have been part of popular resistance efforts against violence and injustice. It has been demonstrated that artistic activity during the internal conflict has not generally been addressed to or planned for the recipient population, but was rather part of a wider

societal movement. Secret musical movements criticised the violence used by state authorities and condemned human rights violations committed by the state. During the height of violence near Lima, the Vichama Theatre was a positive force for change. however, the theatre director was killed in a deliberate effort to silence him.

Later in the conflict, the members of Yuyachkani Theatre headed to remote communities to help gather testimonials and report the findings of investigation committees in post-conflict settings. Many painters created paintings and artistic projects in an effort to give voice to victims and advance the cause of justice.

"The question of what culture is and how artists are related to "social change", in addition to their ability to bring about that change, should be part of the broader discussion on art and freedom. It should first be recognised that, historically, there isn't a close correlation between them. What is clear in existing literature is that for a long time, artists have painted themselves (and been painted by others) as individuals who are driven by legitimate ethics to create a fairer and more equitable world. This is not impossible, but it is an unrealistic simplification. Assumptions around what art is remain part of the Western aesthetic regime. Even the concept of 'art' as being detached from rituals and politics is a relatively recent development. Therefore, art that is separate from conflict does not always require moral condemnation. At the same time, we should not be drawn into what is 'politically correct' and classify every action with liberal tendencies as art.

TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES

There are a number of helpful techniques and exercises for the Discovery Phase:

WORLD CAFÉ

OBJECTIVE: The World Café technique seeks to build accurate and clear perceptions regarding specific thoughts or questions. In our case, this technique focuses on two key axes: 1) the roles of art interventions during crises and 2) the strategies of art interventions during crises.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 20-60.

SUGGESTED DURATION: 3 hours.

DESCRIPTION: The room is set up in a café layout. Participants are seated at different tables. Each table is assigned a different purpose and a different set of questions. A host is seated at each table to facilitate the discussion. The host shall remain seated for the duration of the exercise and take notes as participants move freely between the tables to partake in discussions on the various proposed topics. The host may pose questions such as: "what artwork strategies are effective during crises, especially during violent conflicts?" or "how do artists view their role during crises given the experiences they have accumulated since 2011?" or "does art have a role to play during violent conflicts?"

VISION LANDSCAPE [27]

OBJECTIVE: Discovering and deepening our understanding of our programmes or initiatives, our visions and our expected courses of action, as well as discussing challenges, opportunities and the needs that make our work a necessity.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 10-20.

SUGGESTED DURATION: 2 hours.

DESCRIPTION: The moderator explains that this technique will be used to discuss the programme's vision and the meaning of that vision for each of us. This vision is the horizon that helps give us a sense of destination, despite our awareness of our inability to reach it.

The participants are divided into groups of 5 to 7. Each group is given a flip-chart of paper with a question about the programme's vision or greater objective written on it.

During the discussion, the groups write or draw on their paper, note terms, questions, sentences or comments they find suitable. Once each group finishes its internal discussion, it is asked to share its findings with the rest of the participants in a presentation or as an art form allowing for discussion and sharing.

The exercise concludes with a group discussion on three questions: 1) What are the trends and stark problems in our working environments?; 2) Is our understanding of opportunities and challenges consistent?; and 3) What are the currents or forces impacting our future vision and what is the nature of this impact?

One must note that the Vision Landscape offers an opportunity for an initial discussion to be continued at a later stage. It comes at the early stages of discovering and understanding the community, our role and our long-term vision.

THE MINCER

OBJECTIVE: The Mincer is an explorative design tool aimed at supporting artists and innovators to develop art-led social action projects or initiatives. It is useful before delving into planning the initiative. It will assist you in:

- ‑ Examining challenges from different perspectives.
- ‑ Thinking beyond our known processes and methodologies.
- ‑ Taking time to think about various potential starting points.
- ‑ Discovering our interests and what ex-cites us (if you do not feel connected to or excited about the idea, there is little chance that you will be able to inspire others to engage with them).

27 —— During the explanation of the technique, one notices the use of the term "programme" or "programme vision", etc. These refer to the action programme based on which participants gathered at the workshop (in the case of this toolkit, it is the Create Syria programme) and which constitutes the backdrop for the discussion and gathering of the artists. In other cases, the programme could be the drama gathering inviting the artists to contribute to imagining and designing creative interventions.
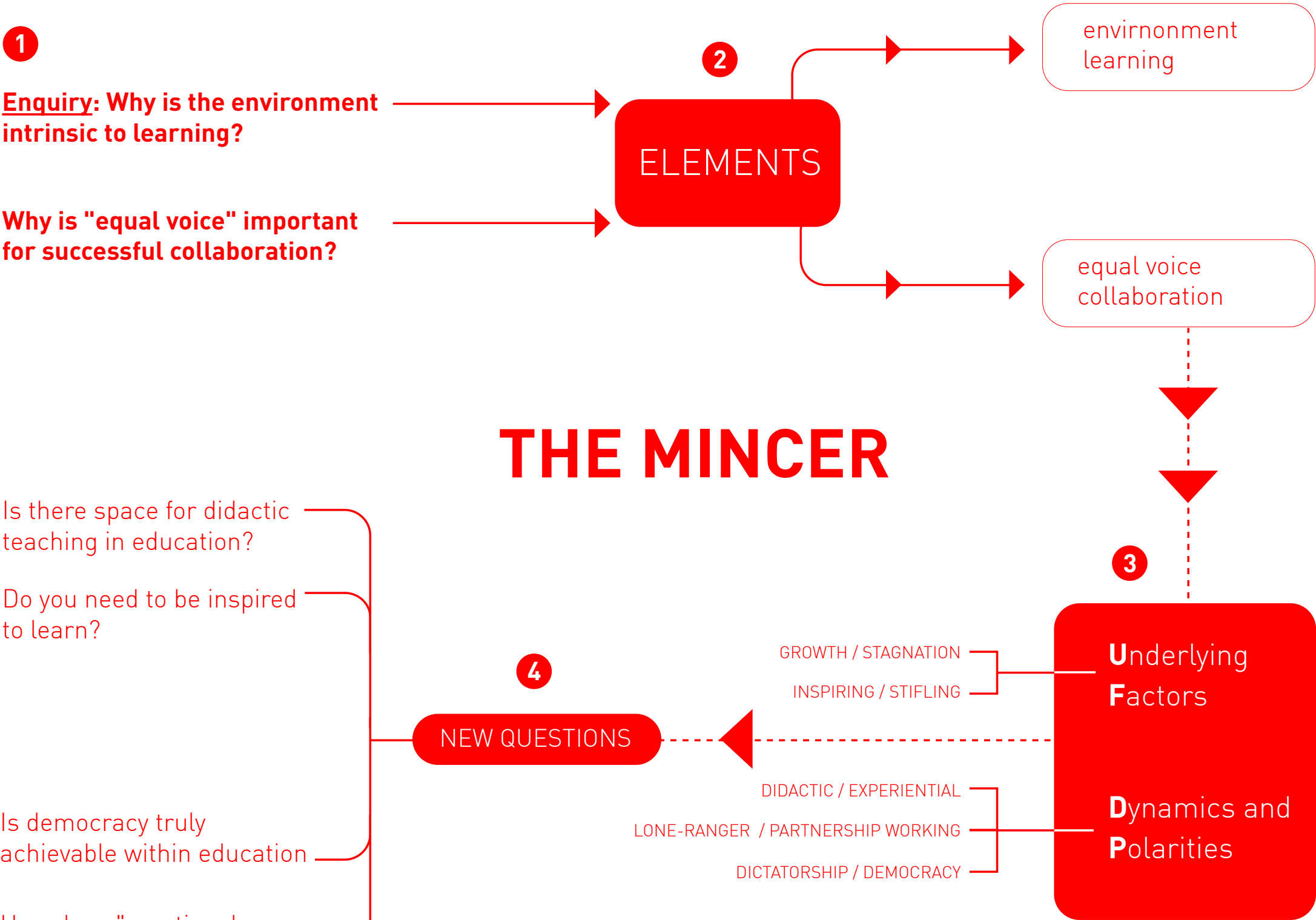
(1)

Enquiry: Why is the environment intrinsic to learning?

Why is "equal voice" important for successful collaboration?

(2)

ELEMENTS

environnment learning

equal voice collaboration

THE MINCER

Is there space for didactic teaching in education?

Do you need to be inspired to learn?

(4)

NEW QUESTIONS

Is democracy truly achievable within education

How does "emotional literacy" enhance learning?

(3)

GROWTH / STAGNATION
INSPIRING / STIFLING

Underlying **F**actors

DIDACTIC / EXPERIENTIAL
LONE-RANGER / PARTNERSHIP WORKING
DICTATORSHIP / DEMOCRACY

Dynamics and **P**olarities
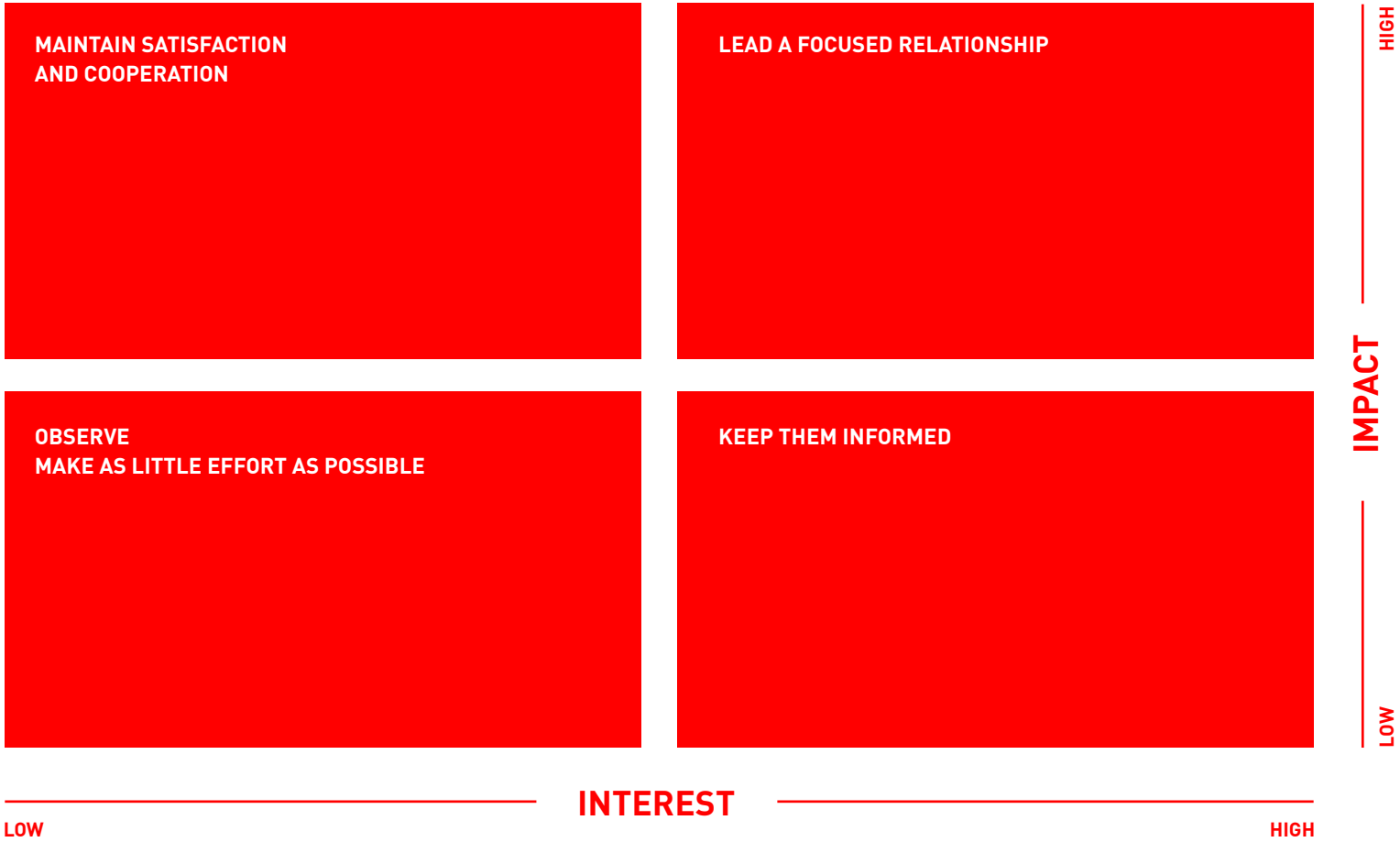
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 5-20.
SUGGESTED DURATION: 4 hours.
DESCRIPTION: At its core, The Mincer is a brainstorming tool to tackle the project from different aspects and perspectives and to explore how it could evolve when we are given the space, time and courage to work outside of our comfort zones.
Some questions that could be raised:

¬ What is the main driving force behind your project? (Why do you want to implement it? What is its purpose?)
¬ What do you want to discover?
¬ What are the key components of your project?
¬ What are the notable challenges in this discovery? (Key factors: surrounding environment, dynamics, polarities, resources, capacities, etc.)
¬ Discover and note down as many open questions as possible on how to discover, develop and test ideas to drive the project towards its essence.
¬ What questions inspire you? Why?
¬ Based on the above, what is the main idea behind the project? What is the courageous/resonating idea you want to pursue?
¬ What are the potential starting points of your project?

MAINTAIN SATISFACTION AND COOPERATION	**LEAD A FOCUSED RELATIONSHIP**
OBSERVE MAKE AS LITTLE EFFORT AS POSSIBLE	**KEEP THEM INFORMED**

IMPACT — HIGH / LOW

INTEREST — LOW / HIGH

28 —— Examples of stakeholders in an art intervention: other artists in the same community, working in a similar genre, civil institutions and collective active in the same social context as the one we are targeting, the local neighbourhood council, the community or subgroups within the community, the municipality, shop owners in a certain street whose shops will be positively or negatively affected by our work, the press, the Ministry of Culture, etc.

STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE: Stakeholder Analysis is a technique used to think about all stakeholders in the creative process we are launching. What we mean by stakeholders are, primarily, the key parties positively or negatively affected by the artistic experiment.[28]
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 2-20.
Suggested duration: 2 hours.
DESCRIPTION: This technique has complex and simple applications, but they all revolve around analyzing the "expected" attitudes of these stakeholders from the artistic experiment and thinking about steps and strategies backing positive attitudes, mobilizing them in favor of the initiative and changing the negative attitudes.

The chart on the left explains our role as an art group in building ties with stakeholders. There are four main cases which dictate our level of interest in the stakeholder:

CASE 1 THE STAKEHOLDER HAS A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE CREATIVE INTERVENTION, BUT LITTLE INTEREST IN OUR EXPERIMENT. This case is recurrent in Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon: a few people control the destiny and lives of the camp residents, and therefore they can prevent the entire creative intervention from taking place. They often have little interest in the arts and in creative interventions. However, when they do show interest, it is often negative and based on their own interests, which differ from those of camp residents (i.e. press interest). In this case, the stakeholder should be contacted to reach the minimum cooperation needed to carry out the experiment without major obstacles.

CASE 2 THE STAKEHOLDER HAS A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE CREATIVE INTERVENTION AND MAJOR INTEREST IN THE EXPERIMENT. This case is recurrent in the community where we are active. Of course, we may also start out in environments which do not show any interest in our work.
In this case, we need to manage the relationship with the community in a focused and continuous manner. We should also make it a priority to build positive communication with the community as a vital part of the creative process.
This case is also encountered with donors or partners. They have a massive impact on the creative experiment through their support, and they demonstrate their interest when they agree to be part of the process.

CASE 3 THE STAKEHOLDER HAS LITTLE IMPACT BUT MAJOR INTEREST IN THE CREATIVE INTERVENTION. Despite the little direct impact that these stakeholders have on the experiment, we must keep them informed and ensure that they feel involved and important to us. This is the case of groups surrounding the small community where we work or our own small community, such as the other artists who are developing creative interventions in other fields or other communities.

CASE 4 THE STAKEHOLDER HAS LITTLE IMPACT AND LITTLE TO NO INTEREST IN THE CREATIVE INTERVENTION. In this case, we should only monitor the relationship with these stakeholders to ensure that their attitude does not turn hostile and they do not seek to influence the work. Therefore, we should spend as little energy as possible in developing a relationship with them.

MODEL 1 FOR THE ANALYSIS TOOL

STAKEHOLDER	IMPACT LEVEL (MAJOR, MODERATE, MINOR)	INTEREST LEVEL (HIGH,MODERATE, LOW)	WHAT DO THEY EXPECT FROM THE PROJECT?	WHAT ARE THE APPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING STRATEGIES?

MODEL 2 FOR THE ANALYSIS TOOL

STAKEHOLDER	IMPACT	CURRENT ROLE	EXPECTED ROLE	ROLE OF THE COLLECTIVE/ORGANIZATION TOWARDS THE STAKEHOLDER
MAJOR	SUPPORTER			
MODERATE	NEUTRAL			
MINOR	OBSTACLE			

One must note that the relationships are intertwined: stakeholders are not separated, but interconnected. Therefore, we must be aware that the strategies we use with some will influence others and impact our choices in building relations with them. When it proves difficult to influence a certain stakeholder (person or organization), our strategy should be to identify a person or an organization with sway over them. It is natural to include in the analysis other stakeholders at different stages.

THE ACTUAL TO THE IDEAL THROUGH IMAGE THEATRE

OBJECTIVE: This technique allows the group to discover a problem and face the different eventualities which might arise from it. The group will attempt to reconsider, rediscover and re-imagine the world not as it is but 'as it should be', and contemplate new pathways towards change.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 7-30.

SUGGESTED DURATION: 2 hours.

DESCRIPTION: This exercise uses the 'image theatre' as presented by Augusto Boal. It looks at what is happening now and what the world/the community will ultimately look like. This encourages groups to discover what has to happen to move from the (actual) current situation to the ideal situation. If the change is agreed to be possible, the following questions should be answered: how can we achieve this? Who is responsible for making it happen?

STAGES OF THE EXERCISE

1. In small groups, summarize some issues in the community (power, conflict, dialogue, etc.)
2. Choose a story/issue that the whole group considers important or think about the issues that pose the greatest obstacle to the community.
3. Ask a group to use their bodies to create an image/Tableau of the problem. If possible, the image should portray the individual or group facing the problem. It should also include an embodiment of the individual, organization or system which is the main contributor to the problem, as well as a witness, person or other party observing the problem.
4. Show the images again to each of the group members. Upon displaying each image, ask: who is in the image? Ask each of them who they are. What do they want? What do they need? What are they thinking about? How are they feeling? And so on.
5. As a group, discover the nature of obstacles/challenges. What do these images say about us? After identifying the challenges, ask group members if they feel that there is a possible solution to this problem. Will things remain this way forever? Do we agree that change is possible?
6. After identifying the problem and the community in the actual situation, ask groups to draw an image of the ideal situation. What will the community look like without this problem?
7. Once the image is completed, ask each group to display both images: the actual and the ideal. Look at both images once, then observe the ideal image closely. Again, ask the characters about what they want now, and what they need. What are they thinking about now? How do they feel now?
8. After concluding that change is possible and seeing what the ideal situation would look like, there may be a need to explore what should happen to achieve this change. Who is responsible for affecting this change? What are the systems of which we are aware? How can we start using all the tools and techniques we have developed during the workshop to achieve this change? How will we achieve this change? Who do we need on our side?

We may need additional support to imagine the world without the problem and to see the exercise as more than wishful thinking. The turning point is the move from the abstract image to tangible realizations of change.

We should be creative in the manner in which we act out these scenes. We can use our bodies to act out values, convictions, regular people or places in society.

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

OBJECTIVE: Discover assumptions and prejudices and our ability to deal with them.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 5-30.

SUGGESTED DURATION: 1-1.5 hours.

DESCRIPTION: Every participant takes a coloured post-it note on which they will write and one lie. Distinguishing the lie should not be easy. Before asking participants to think about what to write, the moderator should practice the technique themselves in front of everyone and ask them to guess the truths and the lie.

Ask participants to stand up in front of everyone and read a sentence. Each time, the group should guess if the sentence is true or not.

The moderator shall ask the following question:

- Who felt that most of the participants did not distinguish their truths from their lie? Ask one or two of the participants who said yes to re-read what they said and to explain why they think the rest of the participants could not guess the answer.
- We use the term "assumption": what are some similar terms in this context? Guess stereotype, prejudice, presumptions, etc.

The moderator should stress the fact that assumptions are natural. We make assumptions all the time.

ROLE PLAY

OBJECTIVE: Explore the mistakes we could make in forging our relationship with the community; show participants how to deal with them in a creative way, based on our knowledge of the community and encourage them to steer clear of unfounded assumptions.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 10-30.

SUGGESTED DURATION: 3 hours.

DESCRIPTION: the participants are divided into small groups. Every group prepares a scene portraying a failure that may occur during the project in terms of the project operator's relationship with the community, before presenting it to the rest of the participants. Afterwards, the groups improvise ways to deal with emerging problems and to build dynamic interactive relationships with the community. The other participants and moderators are from the community where the project is being developed.

This toolkit includes an appendix with case studies explaining each phase of the project as they were applied in real life. Further information is provided in the detailed "Return of the Soul – the Nakba Project" case study on the Discovery Phase.

#8_Years_Challange: A Play by Nabad Ensemble Directed by Chrystel Khodor as part of the Seenaryo Organization project| Performance at the "On the Brink of Change" Forum in the context of the second edition of Create Syria | February 2019 at Zoukak Studio | Beirut, Lebanon.

Three: Creativity and Design

This is the design phase of our creative social experiment. In it, we define our major goals, the results we want to achieve, the change that we consider a success and how we can get there. We identify the creative project cycle,[29] its stages and our progression, remaining well-aware that they are subject to change at every stage. We know where we are going, as well as what can come our way. However, most importantly, we have the confidence and tools to face unexpected obstacles.

At this phase, we begin the clear conceptualization of the creative intervention, based on all the outcomes of the Communication and Discovery Phases. We launch the actual planning process and answer a major set of detailed questions: Who? What? Why? When? Where? How? How many?
Some key questions we will seek to answer in this phase:

- What is the art and social change eco system in my work context and where do I stand in it?

- What can we learn from the work of other artists? How did they build their projects and organize themselves?

- What are the conditions that we must meet in order for community members who are supposed to benefit from the project to play leading roles and not to be stripped of their ability to make decisions during the creative experience?

- How can we use everything we have acquired so far to build influential and resilient creative interventions?

Questioning our convictions and judgments about different forms and types of art and artistic approaches is a useful way to break away from traditional frameworks. This helps to create a real space for experimentation and prevents us from falling back into repeating old models. It would not mean that we do not utilize the various experiences and accomplishments of others. However, it is essential to research the different dimensions and contexts of each project and to make decisions based on research and constant questioning.

Getting out of one's comfort zone is an important challenge which may lead to creative results; we must also remember not to dive into experimentation to the point of being lost. This dialectical relationship with experimentation is a complex one. Its boundaries may seem blurry at times, but it is an essential part of the creative and design process.

We can consider the phase of creativity and innovation a miniature journey within the broader path proposed in this toolkit. It goes from analyzing and understanding reality to designing and planning. There is an endless set of techniques and tools that help us work through the various steps of this phase.

ANALYZING AND UNDERSTANDING REALITY

The focus here is on understanding and analyzing the environment where we work and the true motivations of our intervention before starting the planning process. Therefore, we need to detect and understand the cumulative factors impacting our decisions in terms of guiding, managing and carrying out our work. In this context, we will focus on two of the most common techniques: the Problem Tree and SWOT Analysis.

PROBLEM TREE

OBJECTIVE: Accurately analyzing and understanding the problem that the project is attempting to solve by identifying its causes and the results of its continuity.
SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 2-10 persons.
SUGGESTED DURATION: 3 hours.
DESCRIPTION: the Problem Tree is an analytical technique. During the project design phase, it helps in identifying the problem(s) tackled by the creative intervention, especially in communities experiencing extreme crises with complex problems and complicated causes, where causes are confused with symptoms and symptoms with results.
The inability of social change projects to mitigate the problem they identify is often due to the fact that these projects are designed to tackle the symptoms or results of the problem, rather than the problem itself or its causes.
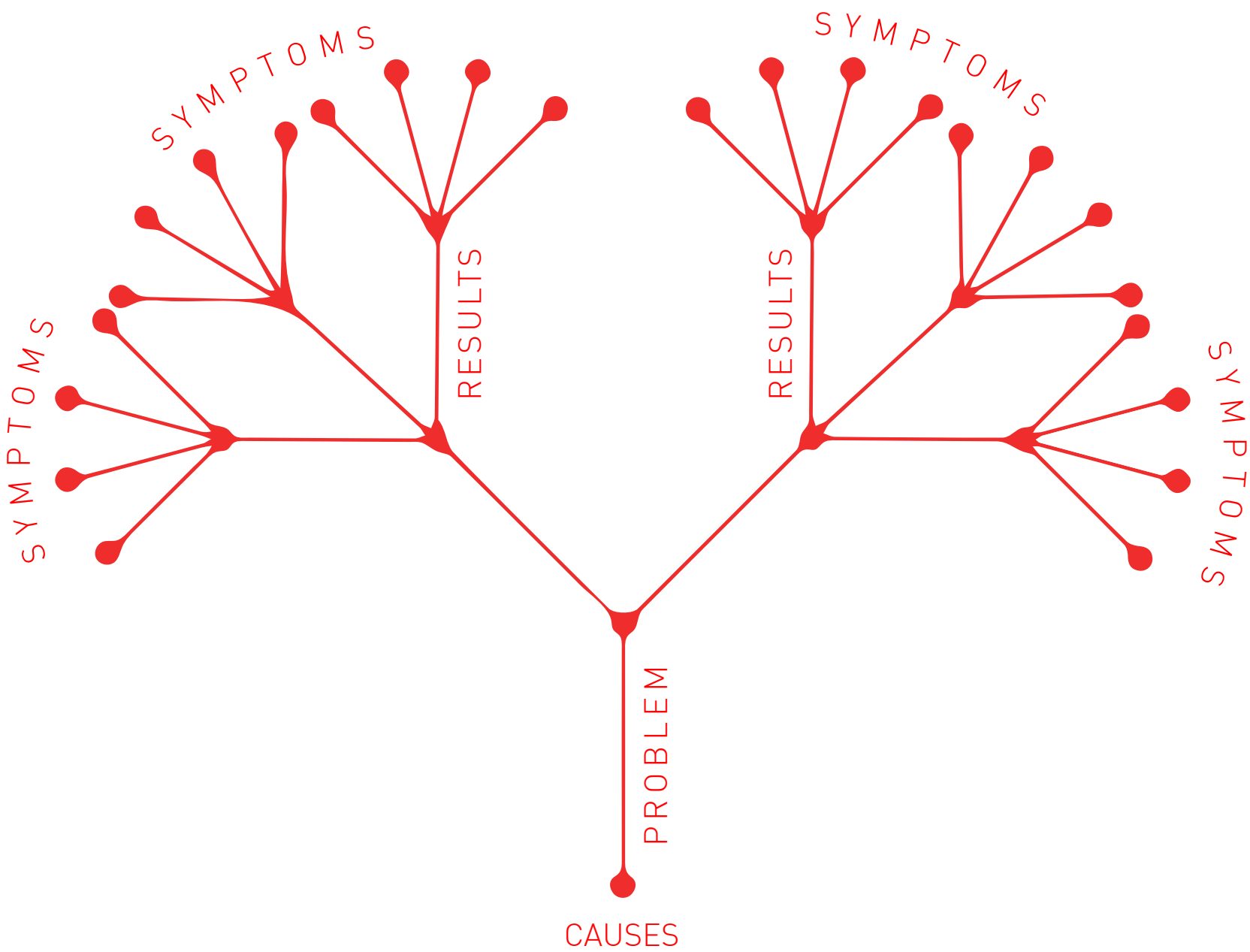
When applying this technique, one must manage one's expectations. Solving one cause of the problem does not guarantee solving the problem itself. Therefore, the analysis should rely strongly on in-depth knowledge of the community, its problems and their manifestations. It requires an accurate understanding of each of the tree's components.

THE ROOTS: these are the causes of the problem. They are hidden underground and require effort to detect and identify.

THE TRUNK: this represents the problem itself. Stating the problem itself is extremely important. Accuracy is paramount when identifying the problem at hand.

THE BRANCHES: these are the results of the problem, should it remain unsolved. There are fast, short-term consequences with long-term ramifications.

THE LEAVES: these are the symptoms of the problem. They are the visible and measurable manifestations indicating the presence of the problem.

EXAMPLE: A DISEASE

THE ROOTS (CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM): the virus or bacteria which causes the disease.

THE TRUNK (THE PROBLEM): the disease itself.

THE BRANCHES (THE RESULTS OF THE PROBLEMS): the consequences of the disease's persistence, according to its cause.

THE LEAVES (THE SYMPTOMS): fever, fatigue, etc.

Through our planned artistic intervention, we will tackle the causes of the problem. At this stage, we ask the following questions: what are the causes that we can realistically address? What are the causes that we have the passion, tools, knowledge and connections to resolve?

Not all causes are the same. Some are direct, while some are deep-rooted and lead to the direct causes. For instance, a certain type of law revoking refugees' right to work in a certain country is a direct cause of the poor living conditions of refugees in that country. However, the deeper cause which led to the law in the first place is the anti-refugee community culture.

During the analysis process, we might change the level (depth) of the causes several times. This is an important step in the thinking process. If we attempt to link all of these causes, we would reach a very complicated network-like web rather than an organized series of connections. Nonetheless, our understanding of the problem's causes, their interconnection and their results is the starting point for imagining and creating the positive situation we hope to realize through our work and creative intervention in the community.

SYMPTOMS
SYMPTOMS
SYMPTOMS
SYMPTOMS
RESULTS
RESULTS
PROBLEM
CAUSES

30 —— This model was developed as a learning exercise in this toolkit; it does not necessarily reflect the future development of the Create Syria programme.

#8_Years_Challange: A Play by Nabad Ensemble Directed by Chrystel Khodor as part of the Seenaryo Organization project | Performance at the "On the Brink of Change" Forum in the context of the second edition of Create Syria | February 2019 at Zoukak Studio | Beirut, Lebanon.

APPLICATION MODEL OF THE PROBLEM TREE 30

PROBLEM

Members of the displaced Syrian community who grew up in neighbouring countries are suffering from inhumane living conditions as well as the continuing and worsening abuse and removal of their rights, tools and capacities to make decisions and manage their lives freely.

CAUSES

1. The political events that led to their displacement and the continued reasons for their long-term displacement.
2. The policies in neighbouring countries and the lack of transparency in refugee affair management processes.
3. The unjust laws and procedures on refugees which violate international agreements.
4. Depriving these communities of their freedom of movement and their rights to work and education.
5. Lack of support networks and mechanisms between people in these communities and Syrian and non-Syrian supporters from outside the communities.
6. Increased isolation of "agents of change" from cultural, artistic, rights and civil society activists from their communities, which continues following migration.

SYMPTOMS

1. Drop in education level of children and youths in these communities.
2. The vast majority of people in these communities work in low-skill professions.
3. Demonstrable lack of social, cultural and support initiatives within the communities.
4. Priority is given to providing material needs such as food, water and shelter over other basic needs.
5. Lack of interest among the communities, especially the youth, in imagining decent futures for themselves.

RESULTS

1. Poor understanding of the concept of citizenship, which is replaced with lesser affiliations.
2. Sharp decline of social values and rise in negative values.
3. Heightened tensions between emerging communities and host communities, which may develop in uncontrollable ways.

SWOT ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE: Analyzing and understanding the internal and external environments of the creative intervention, thereby identifying the negative or positive factors impacting it.

SUGGESTED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 2-10.

SUGGESTED DURATION: 3 hours.

DESCRIPTION: The SWOT analysis is an analytical tool which allows the organization, initiative or group in charge of the project to analyze and understand the factors or internal and external environments of its creative intervention.

INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: important factors linked to the initiative/organization itself, principally including the strengths and weaknesses of the initiative/organization.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: important factors linked to the environment surrounding the initiative/organization, principally including the available opportunities available to the organization and any potential threats to the initiative/organization during the various phases of project implementation.

| INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT	EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT
STRENGTHS The strengths that the organization/initiative actually possesses and can control.	**OPPORTUNITIES** The opportunities are external factors which, if well utilized, will propel the initiative forward.
WEAKNESSES The weaknesses of the organization/initiative based on an objective analysis within the scope of the organization's action.	**THREATS** The threats are factors impeding or negatively impacting the implementation of the initiative's goals if they are not addressed and considered during the planning and design phase.

When considering the strengths and weaknesses, we always ask ourselves: do these factors truly fall within our control and are we capable of changing them? For example, the artists contributing to the project have extensive experience in creative action in communities; this is a strength as it comes from the project team itself.

Similarly, when identifying the external factors, we need to ensure that they fall beyond the control of the project. For example: laws and practices forbidding art initiatives from accessing a certain community (refugee camp for instance) are a threat to the project, as they are beyond its control. The team cannot simply change the law.

ZOUKAK MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME
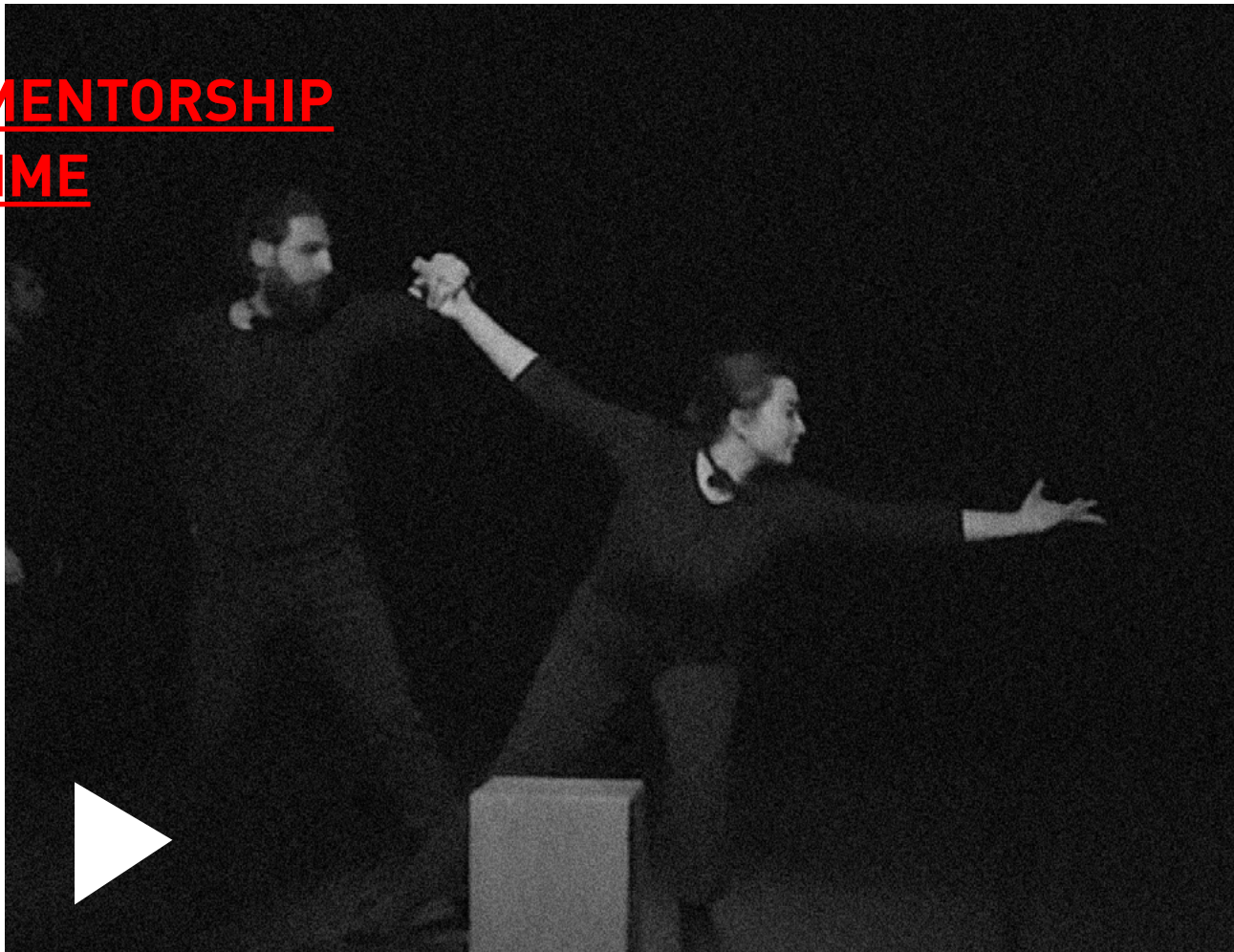
The *Zoukak Mentorship Programme* is a project by the Zoukak company that provided a theatrical mentorship for two groups of Syrian artists residing in Lebanon. The Zoukak team designed the mentorship programme to guide and support artists, and to strengthen and develop their skills in theatre and artistic management. In this context the project supported Anas Younes and helped produce his play The Ho Ha Dance and Hassan AL Malla's text's development which resulted with presenting the play as Readings. Both projects were presented to over 400 spectators in Beirut in 2019.

FRAMEWORK 2
DESIGN AND PLANNING

This is the phase of acquiring the design and management skills for the creative intervention. Participants in the training workshop and readers of the toolkit will notice that, at this stage, we enter a very technical field that relies on management skills. However, the actual focus will be on the intellectual side of the planning process and will rely on the following basic guiding principles:

LOGIC: The logical correlation between the project components is the criterion for this plan to be fit-for-purpose and to enable us to achieve the desired change. Logical correlation is the causality between causes and results. This logical connection should consider the environment and potential threats. Project owners should identify changes clearly and deal with them flexibly.

CONSISTENCY AND FLEXIBILITY: Consistency in the main values and core objectives of the initiative and flexibility in terms of how to reach them and with whom.

PARTICIPATION: Plans lose their essence when developed on a purely theoretical basis and individually without including larger groups of artists, creators and participants in the process. The plan is only a conceptualization of the initiative's progression. It is a document which allows a group of artists or a work group in an organization to agree on the essence of the change they wish to affect through their work.

CREATIVITY: During the design and implementation of the initiative, interest in artistic experiments varies

according to the journey itself, i.e. the experience felt by artists and participants in the creative intervention, and the final artistic product. These are two different progressions which will lead to different successes, but the choice itself is important and it sets a number of strategies for the artist(s) contributing to the creative experience.

One of the fundamental questions in this context revolves around knowing about any real experience that has lasted, was documented, was known by people outside the country in which it took place, and stood the test of time (by itself or by inspiring others). Do you know of an experience that has achieved all of this despite retaining the importance of artistic or human experience?

The difficult balance between achieving the goals of social change and true research on a creative level is not impossible to achieve. There are thousands of examples across the world that prove this.
This section will briefly review the project planning cycle by providing definitions of the plan's components and some key remarks about each of them. Of course, it is possible to rely on the many references available in Arabic and other languages. Among the most important publications in Arabic in this field are the publications of the Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy Foundation, namely the Introduction to Cultural Management, which was published by Dar Sharqiyat in its first edition in 2006 and its second edition in 2009.

It should be noted that this type of planning is not long-term. In fact, it is not a type of strategic planning, as it does not entail developing dedicated long-term visions for organizations.

EVALUATION

OVERALL GOAL

ACTIVITIES

TARGET GROUP

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIES

EXPECTED RESULTS

OVERALL GOAL

The first step in the design process is to refer back to the Problem Tree that we saw in Framework 1, with which we identified the main problem that gives meaning to our intervention. We will take this problem and turn it into an affirmation in order to define our overall goal. Therefore, an example of the problem might be the following: the absence of a participatory culture in the mechanisms of civil society action in light of political partisanship and the prevalence of competitive rationale. In this case, the overall goal of the project will become the following: to promote the ideas and mechanisms of participatory and complementary action among civil society components.

For instance, Create Syria is one of the programmes developed by Ettijahat which serves one of the three general goals of the organization, namely "integrating creative and cultural action with social change through developmental cultural initiatives aimed at improving living conditions, especially among the most marginalized groups affected by political developments."

Based on the two previous examples, it seems clear that the overall goal should be clearly articulated, far-reaching and achievable within one year. It should not be so wide that it becomes impossible to achieve. In other words, the goal should be realistic and actionable within the initiative or project. Important notes to consider regarding the overall goal:

¬ In the context of short-term creative interventions, it is usually necessary to think about the overall goal of the project. One overall goal would be sufficient for the project, as it would constitute the major compass guiding the work. Further details can be presented at a later stage through the various components of the plan.

¬ The wording of the overall goal should not include the activities through which the intervention will achieve the goal. Activities can be changed and amended easily, while the intervention largely maintains its overall goal from start to finish.

¬ The overall goal describes the desired change without going into detail, but it is expressed in clear terms which can be understood by the working group and the larger audience as well.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

In order to identify specific objectives, we look to the causes of the problem. We only select the causes which we can impact the most to transform them into a positive situation. For example, if one of the deep-rooted causes of the problem is that the community is located in a war-torn country, this is not something that we can tackle directly. However, if the cause is a lack of interest in education because of the war, it is a cause we are able to address, even if only partially.

The most important target is achieving the overall goal. Thus, specific objectives are a set of short-term goals that, combined, would achieve the overall goal. A rule to apply when writing specific objectives is that they should be SMART:

Specific: Objectives should identify the stakeholders and the change that will take place during a specific period of time.

Measurable: We, as a working group, can assess the change that we have accomplished through our creative intervention and know whether or not the objective has actually been achieved.

Achievable: The group of artists should be able to achieve the goal within the specified time period and with the allocated human and material resources. The set of analyses that we have carried out (stakeholder analysis, SWOT analysis) should not reveal internal or external conditions that make would it impossible to achieve the objective.

Relevant: Objectives should be linked directly to achieving the overall goal and thus to dealing with the main problem addressed by the creative intervention.

Time-framed: Objectives should follow a clear timeline that defines their start and end, and therefore their time-frame.

If we go back to the aforementioned example of the overall goal of "promoting the ideas and mechanisms of participatory and complementary action among Syrian civil society components" and try to break it down into specific, smaller objectives in the context of a two-year initiative, we may come up with the following specific objectives:

- Enable 15 working groups (civil society corganizations from different disciplines, artistic groups, etc.) to have a real participatory work experience by designing and implementing a joint project within a year.
- Enhance the knowledge and skills of 50-60 civil workers regarding the positive impact of cross-field action on achieving social change by the end of the project.
- Raise the awareness of at least 100 civic gatherings regarding participatory work experiences in the field of social change by the end of the project.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Expected results usually describe the sum of the actual positive changes that, if completed, would lead to the achievement of the set goals. It goes without saying that the results must be measurable; that is, they can be checked and confirmed.

While planning for the results, it is very important to consider only the changes influencing the people affected by the project, rather than changes to the static infrastructure or general environment. For example, a change in a particular law is not a result. The law may be amended positively while social practices continue to promote injustice associated with certain norms. In such a case, no actual change

has been achieved. The result would be a change in the awareness level or practice of a certain class (artists, for example) that leads to a change at a legal level (e.g. laws for licensing cultural institutions).

Let us recall once again the previous example by selecting one specific objective and drawing out its results: "Enable 15 working groups (civil society organizations from different disciplines, artistic groups, etc.) to have real participatory work experience by designing and implementing a joint project within a year." If we achieve the objective, the actual results (i.e. the positive change) would be:

- At least 10 working groups have mastered the skills and strategies of networking, alliance building and cooperation within one year; they are now capable of transferring the experience and adopting cooperation strategies in other projects.

STRATEGIES

A strategy is a method or manner of action adopted by a project (or organization) to achieve its objectives. Strategies are developed only after the goals have been set. They answer the question: How will the goals set by the organization be achieved? The strategies are later reflected in the programmes and activities.

Several strategy models have been tested by creative initiatives and organizations. We will focus on strategies proven to be important through experiences during times of crises or in response to their effects, such as the strategy of mainstream arts spaces chosen by Counterpoints Arts, which works with immigrant artists in the UK. The reason for choos-

ing this strategy was the question of why the artistic production of artists from immigrant backgrounds is limited to alternative places, thereby keeping these artists on the sidelines. With this in mind, the organization, which identifies itself as an art institution, partnered with the Tate Museum, for example.

Another strategy adopted by Theatro dell'Argine in Bologna is topic diversity. Although their shows are produced with companies that include many (new and old-generation) immigrants, they have found that achieving the social change they seek does not mean that their shows must present stories on immigration or racism.

There are other more general strategies, such as specialization (in the artistic field or in the social sphere) or focusing on equality. Furthermore, strategies associated with risk management are considered to be of special importance in the context of creative interventions in difficult times.

ACTIVITIES

Activities are the final link in answering the question: What do we do within the creative initiative plan? They are the most flexible component as they are modifiable at any time based on the data and surrounding changes, but also based on the accumulation of experience and the development of artistic expertise for those involved in the creative initiative. Activities encompass all that we do as an initiative, from workshops, art productions, tours, online platforms, to meetings, research and round tables.

Some important notes to consider when designing our activities:

Activities are related to a wide range of plan components. They turn all creative, administrative and strategic ideas in the plan into realities, otherwise the planning process remains theoretical and detached from our set goals.
For example:

° Activities are related to the SWOT analysis. If one of the challenges facing the group of artists is the community's lack of interest in contributing to creative experiences, then the plan must include activities that stimulate the community's interest to partake in our experience.
If one of the described weaknesses is the group's poor experience in relationship-building mechanisms with societies, then our activities must include either training in this field or expanding the group to include people who have such experience.

° Activities are related to the stakeholder analysis, as in some cases special activities are designed to promote the interest or support of some entities involved in the initiative.

° Activities are necessarily related to goals and results. They embody all the efforts we make to achieve our goals.

Consider levels of creativity, diversity and "risk-taking" in selecting and designing activities: when working with troubled communities in particular, consider that Syrian artists have found themselves facing persistent challenges ever since 2011. These challenges vary immensely, but the focus here is on the nature of the activities chosen. For example, there is a widespread tendency to employ the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed. This is natural due to the accumulated experience of Syrian artists in this field, but the question remains: can't we develop new tools? Couldn't we develop different activities that do not put creative interventions into one single, repetitive mold?

EVALUATION

Evaluation is not simply a step that comes at the end of the implementation of the initiative as it appears in the project cycle. Rather, it is parallel to all of the other stages of the project's actual implementation. It is an integral part of the plan. In fact, an evaluation plan is developed to include the indicators that will be measured, our criteria for checking the indicators, and of course a description of how we obtained the information necessary to complete the evaluation.

Measuring the results of creative action and proving its impact in realizing social change remain a problematic issue worldwide, not only on a regional level. How can one measure the direct results of reading, for example? Or the results of immigrant youth participation in creative activities? This is how Maya Zbib of the Zuqaq al-Masrahiya theatre company approached this question during an interview

31 —— Daniel Gorman, Rana Yaziji (authors), interview with Maya Zbib from the Zuqaq al-Masrahiya Company (in the context of developing the International Network for Contemporary Performing arts IETM report, Everybody wants a Refugee on Stage, by Daniel Gorman and Rana Yaziji), 2019.

which took place as part of the preparation of the report *Everybody wants a Refugee on Stage.*[31]

In theatre, impact is sometimes evident, even physically. It can be witnessed in the changes in a person's voice and their ability to look you straight in the eyes, where previously they were only looking at their feet. Similarly, the person's shoulders could have been slouched, but they are not anymore. These are very small changes, but they do mean that the person is able to communicate and be part of the group. Being in a small group is an exercise for being in a larger group, the social group to which the person belongs. In order for this group to be solid, by listening and giving each other room to improvise, rather than judging one another, we can understand better how to deal with the real world. The concept of evaluation will not be expanded here on the basis that the test progression of the Create Syria programme proposes mechanisms that include evaluation in its last phase, "Reflection and Reconsideration". However, these processes go beyond evaluation alone and move the fundamental question of 'how can we prove that we have achieved our goals?' to 'how can we be better?' Therefore, evaluation is integrated in an extensive and detailed way in the fourth stage of the progression, which we will address below.

The toolkit includes an appendix with case studies explaining each stage of the progression in an applied manner. Further information about Creativity and Design is provided in the case studies "Kafr Nabl Banners" (Syria)" and "The BuSSy Project" (Egypt).

Four: Reflection and Reconsideration

The last phase of the test process is a large and essential part of testing new creative initiatives or developing an initiative that has just been completed. It is the phase usually referred to in cultural management and funding literature as 'Monitoring and Evaluation'.

This section proposes a move away from the traditional concept and purpose of the evaluation process as most of us have experienced; that is, merely proving that we are achieving the desired effect, in favor of reflecting on the goals that we sought to achieve, the values adopted by the artists, the nature of the relationships that we were able to build with the community where we work and the creative vocabulary in the experience and its maturity.

Some key questions that we seek to answer at this stage:

- Do our efforts really achieve the desired goal? And how?
- How can we improve?
- Are the values and concepts upon which the experience is based part of a broader discussion that allows us to share our experience and learn from the experiences of others?
- Does the experience allow us to influence not only the direct participants but also the broader environment?
- Is this model effective? How do we know?
- How can we improve this model, rather than merely our impact?

The Reflection and Reconsideration phase is endless. It continues throughout the course of our work and our planning process. We question what we have done and what we are about to do. In cultural management literature, this phase is reduced to evaluation, which is important but not sufficient. The traditional methodology is based on two basic concepts, hence the name of the process 'Monitoring and Evaluation'. The modern methodology was modified to add another concept, which is learning, and thus, its name became: 'Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning'. We assert that even if the world is chaotic and non-linear, we still need information, measurement and accountability. Developmental evaluation is an approach that emphasizes the importance of monitoring when learning and adapting to complex environments. Traditional evaluation methodologies assume that the work plan will remain the same throughout the project duration. Therefore, traditional evaluation methods are appropriate for simple and complex problems.

In general, we can ask the following questions in relation to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:

- What do you understand by the term Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning? How is it different from traditional methods?
- Can you give examples of when the traditional M&E approach is appropriate and when the developmental evaluation approach is considered better?
- Do you have a clear understanding of the assumptions underpinning your intervention? What are they? How are they linked to the general purpose? What methods do you currently use to explore these assumptions?
- What are the ways in which organizations can support a shift in the way we monitor, starting from reporting, to proving the impact, to discovering how change is occurring? What are the challenges? What opportunities are available to do so?

The experience of The House of Mauritanian Filmmakers describes the situation that most creative initiatives and interventions in the Arab region are going through in terms of their immense needs, compared to the limited resources and experiences available. In this case, artists are under the pressure of 'the need to accomplish': "Reflection and reconsideration were not among the priorities of the House at the beginning of its establishment or during the first years. It had a sense of urgency linked with its desire to do something, even if quickly. However, ten years after the House's establishment and before handing over the reins to a new generation, it was necessary to reflect on and reconsider the period extending from the establishment of the House to date."

It is clear from the example above that working groups and organizations need to question their impact, especially at turning points or amid changes of any kind, whether administrative, technical, or organizational. Consequently, the act of reconsideration lies at the heart of the learning and development process. Therefore, it is useful to consider the following points:

- Focus should be on entire systems, not just components thereof. It is necessary to explore the broad circumstances and contexts in which the problem occurs. What needs to change? What are the assumptions underpinning the intervention? What is the impact of interventions across the system as a whole? What are the unintended consequences?

The mechanisms of reflection and reconsideration have led to a change in the basic

structure of the Fighters for Peace organization in Lebanon. In 2016/2017, the organization had a committee of "female ex-combatants". At the time, the establishment of this committee was a necessity to motivate female fighters to join the association, since women's engagement was limited when the association was first established. Upon reconsideration, this separation was viewed as a type of discrimination that did not conform to the principles of the association. Therefore, this committee was dissolved and the female ex-combatants became an integral part of the association, participating in all activities and playing a role in all tasks. ⎯⎯⎯

▪ Monitoring should support innovation to achieve transformational change. Data needs to be collected to improve the quality of theory of change hypotheses. Changes that appear to be the result of new innovations should be identified, along with ways to conduct further tests.

⎯⎯⎯ The House of Mauritanian Filmmakers is very ambitious in terms of its cinematographic projects. However, the resources at its disposal do not allow for a much achievement. In order for the House not to remain the only initiative championing cinema in Mauritania, and in hopes that others will have the opportunity to establish similar organizations and cinematographic programmes and projects, the House has sought to transfer its experience. At the institutional level, the House contributed to the establishment of the "Mauritanian Film Federation" in an attempt to unite all groups interested in working in the field of cinema to create a wider space for action. ⎯⎯⎯

▪ Quick feedback should be provided to allow for the research to be replicated periodically. The limitations of short-term feedback and the likelihood of long-term change should be recognized what is the likelihood of a slow curve of change? What can we learn from failure? Quick feedback is vital to adjusting the strategy based on emerging trends.

⎯⎯⎯ In The BuSSy Project (Egypt) for example, the working group learned from past experiences. The most important outcome of the evaluation and reconsideration process was the need to examine the location of shows. They started doing shows in closed spaces, while considering all potential risks and contingency plans, should they arise. Based on this outcome, the project stopped carrying out their shows in open spaces, such as "BuSSy at the Metro" and BuSSy in the Street." ⎯⎯⎯

▪ Different levels of change must be measured on individual, group, institutional and societal levels. It is necessary to research how change at one level affects change at other levels, which often occurs in non-linear ways. For example, changes in behavior at home can lead to changes in the workplace, policy change and focus on the Most Significant Change: the collection and collation of stories from a variety of stakeholders about "the Most Significant Change" encountered as a result of the intervention is a good way to obtain unplanned visions of the impact of the intervention.

▪ The existence of different visions must be recognized and valued. In fact, less direct or less

obvious working patterns, beliefs and mechanisms influence change in ways that outsiders often fail to understand. Some of the most effective tools of change may be difficult to measure, such as shifts in thinking processes and the implicit norms assumed about the world, and that what we do is often based on a 'feeling'. Testing whether real change has occurred by randomly monitoring changes in communities (or individuals) compared to the communities (or individuals) in which the initiative of change occurs might be useful for revealing the possibility of linking change to the creative intervention. This can be observed in the intervention of artist Ziad Adwan in the On the Brink of Change forum: "Due to their work, artists are dependent on sponsors and donors. They have no independence, neither economically nor in terms of their ability to express their beliefs in an environment that preserves their freedom. Where do we stand among the forces that really change the world? As a playwright, what matters to me more than thinking about affecting change is thinking about the causes of disasters. Theatre allows me to examine the causes, rather than to give my opinion or dole out accusations against certain parties. Words are the tools that allow us to change mindsets."

▪ Various methods should be used to collect data and track changes to understand the causes of change more fully, to verify the systems for managing and collecting the information gathered and analyzed by different stakeholders (or concerned parties) and team members and to ensure the diversity and multiplicity of information sources being studied.

▪ Monitoring should be embedded across the team and the community - isolated monitoring teams should be avoided, along with the rigid use of planning tools and methodologies. Change theory should be reconsidered and more focus should be placed on the discovery process, not only on indicators and metrics.

Based on all of the above, there are specific tools that we must plan from the early planning stages of creative intervention. Here we focus on indicators and verification methods.

FIRST: INDICATORS

CONCEPT

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I: But when the
trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

THE WIND, CHRISTINA ROSSETTI 1830-1894

Indicators are determinants that we monitor to test whether we are moving towards achieving the project's objectives. The indicators chosen for measurement will influence the development and implementation of the project.

Good indicators help to:
▪ Measure progress
▪ Increase accountability
▪ Ensure that project objectives and results are interrelated and measurable

Let us simply consider indicators for:
° Someone who was sunburned
° A clean river
° Better food quality in a restaurant
° A better relationship between two partners

INDICATOR LEVELS

Although there are indicators on many other levels, we will limit ourselves to the following:

1. Overall Goal Indicators: These help in considering whether we are achieving the goals and thinking in a strategic way. Thus, they are long-term indicators that are directly related to change at the strategic level and may require going back to the project sometime after its completion.

For example: "At least one social initiative that seeks change is launched by project participants within one year of the project."

2. Result Indicators: These help to measure the achievement of results, for example:

Result: 10 dramatists with the skills to conduct training workshops with children in troubled communities.
Indicator: 8 of the dramatists participating in the project are fully trained.

GOOD INDICATOR	POOR INDICATOR
An action plan for the consultation of artists and cultural activists is developed and carried out before and during the adoption of a national cultural policy; at least 100 artists and cultural actors representing each of the governorates of Lebanon are involved in the process.	Decision-makers in government institutions consult with artists and cultural actors before drafting a cultural policy.
The target group is trained in the skills of interactive theatre.	At least 10 artists have experienced the progression of at least one workshop on the skills of interactive theatre.

RELECTIONS ON THE ARTISTIC PRACTICES TRANSIT MEETING
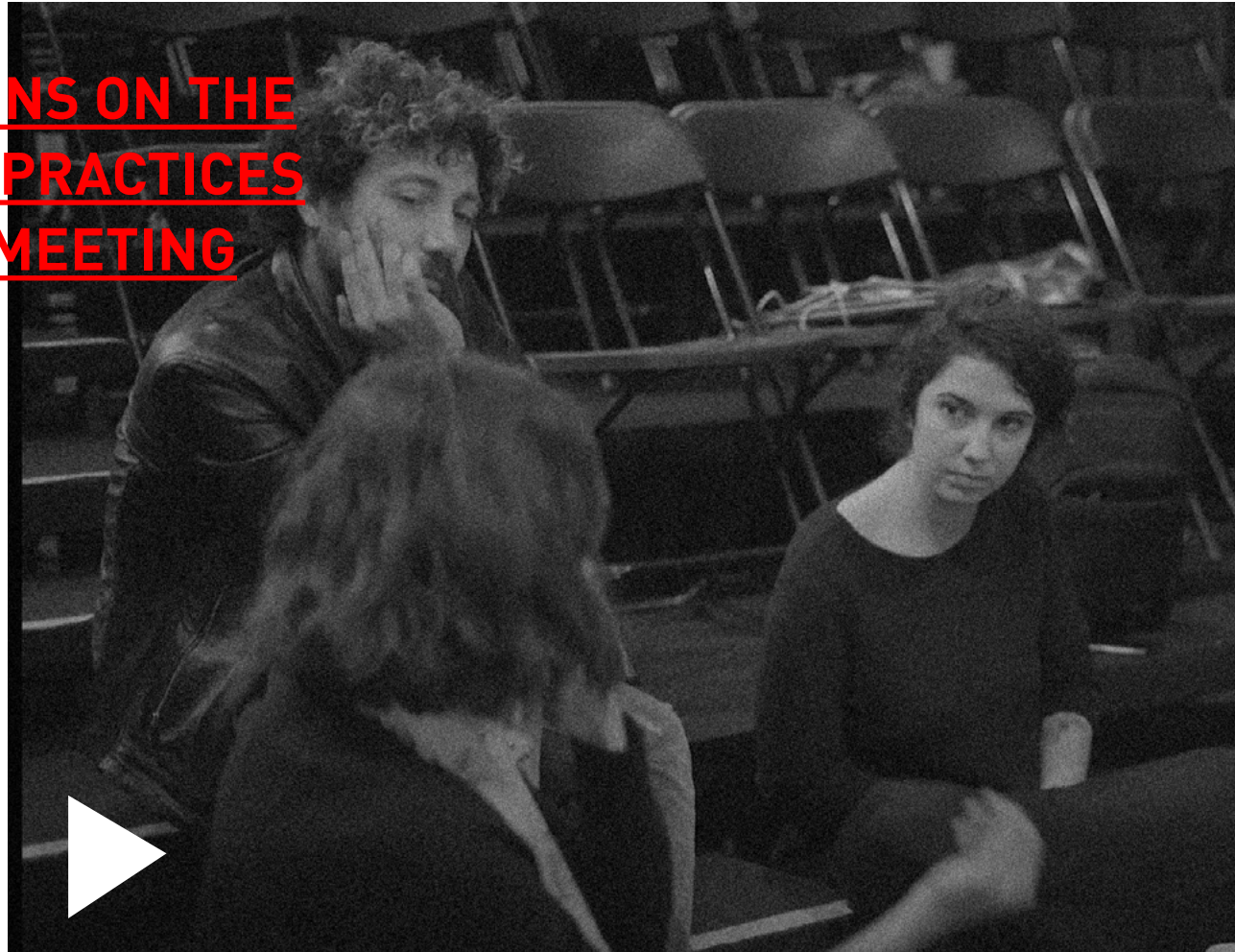
On the 29th and 30th of November, Ettijahat invited participants of Create Syria's 2018 edition to meet, talk, think, share and reflect on their artistic practices.

SECOND: VERIFICATION METHODS

First, we need to know what the current situation is and what change is required (at the end of the intervention, but also at certain stages of it). Only then will we be able to measure this change based on the indicators that were planned in advance. Verification methods are procedures aimed at ensuring that the indicator is checked.

For example, what methods do we use to verify the aforementioned indicator: "An action plan for the consultation of artists and cultural activists is developed and carried out before and during the adoption of a national cultural policy; at least 100 artists and cultural actors representing each of the governorates of Lebanon are involved in the process,"

FIRST, verify the existence of the consultative plan per se and read it: by requesting a copy of this plan from the concerned authority (for example, the Ministry of Culture or any other body concerned with managing the consultative process).
SECOND, verify the level of participation during the process (at the quantitative level) by investigating the number of artists and cultural actors who have shared their views and observations on the cultural policy. This can be achieved by requesting the lists from the concerned authority.
THIRD, check the level of participation in the process (at the qualitative level) by surveying the opinions of artists and cultural actors who shared their views on the extent of the stakeholders' openness to their observations and the extent to which they are taken into consideration. This is done by directly interviewing those involved.

The toolkit includes an appendix with case studies explaining each phase of the progression in an applied manner. Further information about the Reflection and Reconsideration phase is provided in the case study of the "House of Mauritanian Filmmakers".

Case Studies

Case studies are considered an integral part of this toolkit. By sharing them, we aim to analyze and share best practices, both at an artistic level and at the level of designing and implementing creative interventions within communities living in difficult circumstances.

Case studies are also used within this toolkit as a model for transforming written theoretical proposals into something practical and easier to imagine. Several factors were considered in the selection of case studies, including: 1. Geographic diversity which ensures a variety of contexts and challenges; 2. Diversity in the size and duration of initiatives, some of which have run for more than fifteen years within an institutional context, while others have remained part of temporary, short-termed interventions to address or deal with a specific need; 3. Diversity in the artistic fields applied in the initiatives, from cinema to theatre and storytelling, and so on; and 4. Diversity in the nature of the crisis situations in which the initiatives work, whereby some initiatives work within the context of war or extremely difficult humanitarian situations, while others work within a context which appears to be free of crises, but is in fact suffering from a deeper long-term crisis. Some of these interventions try to prevent the recurrence of such crises while others try to deal with their impacts.

FRANCE/UNITED KINGDOM

Good Chance Theatre in Calais Jungle [33]

COMMUNICATION PHASE

The British organization "Good Chance" was founded by two playwrights, Joe Murphy and Joe Robertson, in 2015. In 2017, they were joined by Executive Director Naomi Webb.

33 —— This case study was prepared in cooperation with artist Mohammed Sarrar and with the approval of Executive Director Naomi Webb.

34 —— WHAT WE DO [Electronic Reference], good chance website, Link: http://tiny.cc/qv1kdz, London, published on 2014, visited on 28/09/2019.

35 —— CALAIS 2015 [Electronic Reference], good chance website, Link: http://tiny.cc/1w1kdz, London, published on 2014, visited on 28/09/2019.

36 —— THE JUNGLE [Electronic Reference], good chance website, Link: http://tiny.cc/ny1kdz, London, published on 2014, visited on 28/09/2019.

GOOD CHANCE

During Joe Robertson and Joe Murphy's search for components of a theatrical work that would address the question of migrants in southern Europe, they happened by chance to discover Calais Jungle at the border of the United Kingdom. After making this discovery, British playwright Joe Murphy told The Guardian: "There are many unaccompanied youths and young adults there, as well as young boys who are going through the greatest struggle of their lives. As a result, they end up suffering psychological and physical breakdowns and lose their minds... it is a tragedy in itself to witness this." From here, the idea for Good Chance[34] was conceived in 2015, and it became an official charitable organization in April 2016. Naomi Webb, Executive Director of the organization, stated that: "We are called Good Chance because every person in this camp talks every night about their chance to cross the border to the United Kingdom; if the border police were present, they'd have no chance, but if they succeeded in crossing the border, then they'd have a good chance. We wanted to offer them all a different kind of good chance." Driven by the conviction that, in a world that is becoming increasingly divided, the time has come for theatre and art to regain their former powers of communication and connection to consolidate and recapture individual and collective humanitarian stories, Good Chance offers three main programmes:

Good Chance Productions – Writing, creating and producing groundbreaking work with artists from across the world, providing a professional platform and context for previously untold stories of global and national relevance.

Good Chance Ensemble – Working with a collective of artists across the world, supporting them to develop professionally and artistically through participation in theatre events, productions and other collaborative projects.

Good Chance Theatres – Building temporary theatres of hope in the form of large geodesic domes in areas with high refugee populations to create meaningful opportunities for immigrant and local communities to interact through the arts.

CALAIS JUNGLE

Calais Jungle is a temporary encampment near the French city of Calais. It gained significance during the refugee crisis in Europe in 2015. Tens of thousands of people from Arab, Asian and African countries used to live in this camp, including intellectuals, professionals and a number of artists. The geographic location of Calais is close to the borders of the United Kingdom, which is the intended destination of many migrants. This made Calais a major hotspot for these people, despite tight security measures, bad treatment and rights violations. In October 2016, French authorities cleared the camp, and its residents were transferred to shelters across France. This action crushed thousands of people's dreams of reaching the United Kingdom. However, the situation did not last, as the region witnessed a return of migrants in 2017, despite the fact that even the most basic means of livelihood were unavailable in the area.

In September 2015, a theatre tent was set up to provide a meeting space for immigrants who had left their countries and fled war and persecution; it was also a space to share news, experiences, stories, music, drama, poetry and debate, six days a week.[35] Good Chance ran crowdfunding campaigns to fund the day-to-day running of the theatre and became one of the most successful arts crowdfunding campaigns in UK history. The play "The Jungle"[36] was produced in the tent in Calais Jungle in 2017, mainly addressing the idea of hope, as well as several other topics related to the surrounding community. "The Jungle" was performed subsequently in several countries and cities across the world.

COMMUNICATION

Given that the starting point of the journey that was proposed through the Create Syria programme is the individual, we can touch upon the impact that the artistic intervention of Good Chance in Calais Jungle left on an artist who was originally a migrant like all others. The theatre provided this migrant with a space to connect with himself and his history, and gave him the chance to reconsider and create a clear image of his role as an artist, which underwent significant changes after his experience in the camp and with Good Chance Theatre.

Mohammed Sarrar is a singer and drummer from Sudan who was born in 1990. He comes from the family of the famous Sudanese singer and composer Sayed Khalifa. Mohammed's family practices Sufism. Before leaving his country, he used to partake in their traditions by singing prophetic praises and performing in religious ceremonies, as well as in special occasions such as wedding ceremonies. In late 2015, he left Sudan for the United Kingdom, which he arrived to in the same year, after passing through several countries and undergoing many

"We are called Good Chance because that every person in this camp talks every night about their chance to cross the border to the United Kingdom; if the border police were present, they'd have no chance, but if they succeeded in crossing the border, then they'd have a good chance. We wanted to offer them all a different kind of good chance." www.goodchance.org.uk

experiences in his journey. However, he says that the most important experience for him, not only at the level of his journey but also at the level of his character, was that of staying for several months in Calais Jungle and participating in Good Chance Theatre.

THE STORY

Mohammed Sarrar believes that the presence of Good Chance Theatre within Calais Jungle provides people with a certain amount of space and time, not only as refugees or migrants, but as human beings who have artistic passion and goals, which can teleport them from their difficult realities and give them hope for better lives. The individual's life in Calais Jungle revolves primarily around their continuous attempts to cross to the other side of the Channel Tunnel, in addition to their other attempts to obtain food, shower and seek warmth inside worn-out tents. "Although the Good Chance Theatre tent was already there when I first arrived at the Camp and was being frequented by many migrants at specific times, it did not mean anything to me at all. All my thoughts were centered on my almost daily attempts to achieve my goal and cross in any way to the United Kingdom.

"After several failed attempts to cross the border, curiosity started building up in me to find out what was going on inside that dome; a moment of curiosity that led me and my friend one day to head to that tent to find out what was going on inside. It was a defining moment in my life, where we entered a completely different world than the one we were living in, a world where there was happiness, warmth and harmony. The first thing I saw in that tent were the drums, which I hadn't heard the sound of in

months. I felt them calling me as I called them. I asked if I could play them and take part in singing, not for others, but for myself, so that I could retrieve some of the passion that had been slipping away from me over the past few months. My friend and I got up on stage, each with a drum, and we started singing. It was a magical moment that made me forget everything going on outside the tent.

"After my life had revolved around trying to cross to the other side of the border, my days at the camp suddenly became split between going to the train station or the highway to try to cross once again, and, when my attempts failed (frequently), I would go back to the theatre tent and sing or play the drums, in order to get a dose of happiness in hopes of forgetting the frustration and desperation that had resulted from repetitive failure. The tent provided me with a sense excitement and ambition for a better life and gave me the will to try again until I got a good chance and made it.

"Under this dome, my friend and I played Sudanese music and songs, and it seemed that they were well-received, as we were given two separate drums to practice. It was then that I thought about helping other young people get a dose of that happiness I got when I went on stage. I assembled a small group of Sudanese youths that I had met at the camp. Playing instruments and singing under the dome, as well as in our own worn-out tents, provided us all with a warmth that made it seem as if we were home. It made us forget for a few moments our daily problems with the police and dissipated our fear of the unknown that awaited us. This tent was responsible for a great deal of communication, not just between artists participating in its

Good Chance Theatre in Calais Jungle: Through theatre and art, Good Chance creates new kinds of communities to empower artists from across the world and connect people, stories and cultures.

activities, but also between camp residents, whose times were no longer only set on providing their daily needs, but included the starting hours of artistic performances under the dome. These periods were welcomed by all camp residents, unlike other times of the day. The Good Chance Theatre allowed many people who didn't have anything to do with the arts, not even as spectators, to connect with themselves and discover talents that could change their futures. It gave artists who practiced one type of art the chance to try other types of art and created opportunities for them that they couldn't have dreamed of before.

"For instance, it gave me the chance to go on stage, not only as a singer and drummer, but also as an actor in the play 'The Jungle', which is currently being performed in many countries across the world. In addition to these theatre performances, I try to organize concerts to introduce communities to Sudanese songs. These concerts often become very popular and are attended by citizens of these countries, as well as by members of the African or Sudanese diaspora. In conclusion, the Good Chance Theatre project was truly an important gateway for arts and artists from Africa and the Arab region to European and American communities."

RESULT

As Mohammed concludes, "If I hadn't lived that experience in Calais Jungle and stood on its stage, I would have surely become a completely different person. I would have been like the thousands of refugees who are forced to start a new life, but don't know how or from where to start. This experience saved me a lot of time, stress, concern and loss. Having previously been a refugee and found people

to help me carry on by pursuing my artistic passion, people who gave me hope for a better life, and having been able to make it into Britain, I now have the desire, or even the goal, to work with and within communities that are living in difficult circumstances, similar to those that I had once lived in, and try to help them forget these harsh conditions, even if for a few moments. This is something I had never thought of before, and I wouldn't have thought of if it weren't for my story with Good Chance."

Good Chance Theatre in Calais Jungle

In September 2015, a theatre tent was set up to provide a meeting space for immigrants who had left their countries and fled war and persecution; it was also a space to share news, experiences, stories, music, drama, poetry and debate, six days a week.Good Chance ran crowdfunding campaigns to fund the day-to-day running of the theatre and became one of the most successful arts crowdfunding campaigns in UK history.

ALGERIA

National Independent Cultural Council for Democratic Transition in Algeria[37]

COMMUNICATION PHASE

Millions of Algerians took to the streets in February 2019 to reject their president's decision to run for a fifth term and to demand a peaceful and democratic political transition. A group of Algerian intellectuals, including writers, artists and cultural activists, announced their support for this movement and for the people's call for change. A group of 200 intellectuals launched and signed a unified statement entitled "Algerian intellectuals, writers and artists against the fifth presidential term". After the statement was published, a number of these individuals agreed that practical action was necessary in order to raise people's awareness of the risk of an institutional void during the transitional phase. Their goal was to put their expertise and efforts at the community's disposal and to assume the responsibility they were denied by the previous regime. As a result, they announced the establishment of a temporary independent body known as the "National Independent Cultural Council for Democratic Transition in Algeria".

ESTABLISHMENT

The idea of forming a Council was disseminated through social media networks, in order to spread awareness on the Council and its objectives, which were summarized as follows: "Supporting the Algerian people's aspirations and expectations during this period as a force of cultural change; enhancing the culture of peace and tolerance through culture and arts; engaging with the new political powers and guiding them during this transitional phase; addressing general policies related to the cultural sector; contributing to the management of cultural institutions during the transitional phase; and ensuring respect of democratic principles and human rights." In the same way, it was announced that anyone interested in Algerian culture may join the Council. As a result, the Council expanded to include 400 writers, artists and cultural activists. With these 400 individuals, it was necessary to elect a governing body for the Council, which would have the authority to develop and implement a roadmap based on the members' suggestions. At first, 10 Council members came forward to form the Committee responsible for overseeing the election of the body. They then selected 5 members from a variety of ideological backgrounds to the conduct the electoral process. It is worth noting that these members could not run for the Council's governing body. The Council then launched a campaign to elect 7 out of 52 candidates through a webpage that consisted of the candidates' photos and a résumé for each one of them. The election mechanism was simple, as it only consisted of clicking on a button to choose the candidate that the voter wanted as a member of the governing body of the Council for the next 12 months. Only the 400 members of the Council were allowed to vote for the members of the body.

The election required female representation to be at least one-third of the Committee members. The plan was that if the elections did not meet the necessary female quota, a measure would to be taken to eliminate the percentage of men who received the lowest votes and add the women who received the highest votes. Luckily, the Council did not have to take this measure, as the female candidates received a representation of more than one-third. Three women and four men were elected, some of whom had never met each other before. They all finally met during the first official Council meeting a few days after the election results were announced. As the election committee consisted of people from different ideological backgrounds, the Council's governing body also had members from different ideological backgrounds, with French-speaking, Arabized, leftist and liberal individuals, each with a long history in cultural work. Two of the members were founders of the Working Group on Cultural Policies in Algeria, established in 2012, which gained credibility over the past six years for refusing to deal directly or indirectly with official authorities and for distancing itself from disputes or accusations within the cultural sector.

CHALLENGES

Dr. Ammar Kessab, the founder of the Working Group on Cultural Policies in Algeria and a member of the National Independent Cultural Council's body, stated that working within a group whose members know each other and belong to the same ideology is very easy. Therefore, one of the Council's objectives and the first challenge it encountered was to include different ideological trends and, eventually, to have all members work together within the Algerian cultural sector. The Council was subject, since its conception, to great challenges and pressures, which were regrettably not from authorities, but from the media and other cultural activists, who accused the 400 founding members of being opportunistic individuals who wanted to work in advance in order to gain political posts in the future. As for funding, which is a challenge that has not yet been raised before the Council but will be presented in the near future, Dr. Kessab stated that everything that has been achieved so far at the level of the Council's committees and websites has been the result voluntary or self-funded work by members. Speaking about his personal beliefs and not on behalf of the Council, Dr. Kessab has said that he would refuse any external funding offered to the Council. One of the challenges is therefore that the Council will have to obtain the necessary funding for its work from inside Algeria. He justifies this by saying that the Council has a political dimension and is out with any artistic or cultural association. Therefore, in order to steer clear of suspicions and to gain the credibility to which it aspires, the Coun-

37 —— This case study was prepared in cooperation with Ammar Kessab, a member of the governing body of the Council.

cil's funding will have to come from national sources, whether that is from cultural activists or other groups within the community, with all their ideological backgrounds.

PRACTICAL STEPS

The first Council meeting resulted in the selection of a Committee to establish communication between the 400 members and to coordinate the Council's relationship with media outlets of all types. This aspect is considered highly important by all Council members, who believe that the Council should avoid dealing with certain media outlets, particularly extremist ones. As a result, the Council, represented by the seven members of the Committee who have the authority to grant permits and conduct press interviews, agreed to vote among themselves to accept or refuse dealing with certain media outlets.

Given that the transitional period may last for months or even years, and given the Council's hopes that new political powers that support the national project will emerge, it was agreed that a statement will be prepared to clarify that the Council considers the current authorities, including the cultural authorities, to be illegitimate, and that it refuses to deal with them. The statement shall also include that the refusal to deal with the current authorities does not mean that they are exempt from their responsibility to respect the freedom of cultural expression and artistic work. The Council will condemn any violation in this regard and will demand the opening of an investigation should such a violation occur.

Given that the Council is not only an authority responsible for providing proposals but also a collective that will work on conveying the concerns of cultural activists and on implementing them on the ground, planning has begun for holding a National Cultural Symposium within six months from the founding of the Council. This symposium will bring together all cultural activists in Algeria in order to put forward a number of recommendations for the Council to adopt during the transitional period. This would be the first cultural symposium of its kind since the nation's independence, given that the gathering of cultural activists and the organization of several symposiums were not possible before the current movement within Algerian society. The first step in this regard will be to create a website where every cultural activist can list the existing problems in their respective artistic fields and suggest measures that they consider important to enhance the sector, in addition to providing suggestions for what the Council could do to address the matters specific to their fields. This would eventually result in a roadmap for every cultural field and artform which will be presented during the National Cultural Symposium. The Council hopes to hold the symposium in a vast space that would allow several sessions to be held for every type of art or literature, in order to develop a policy emanating from the true needs of every sector. The outcomes of the symposium will be addressed, as will the outcomes of the Group on Cultural Policies which has been working to submit a stronger, more effective and comprehensive cultural policy project in Algeria for the past six years. The above indicates a clear effort to focus on the communication mechanisms adopted by the Council with the group(s) working in the cultural and artistic field. Moreover, the Council aims to portray the new cultural life of Algerian society and ensure the human right to freedom of expression through cultural and artistic work. Since the 400 members of the Council are a natural extension of society, they spare no effort to communicate with it in every way possible, in order to work collectively towards painting a new image of Algerian culture that reflects all their ambitions and aspirations.

SYRIA

The Kafr Nabl Banners[38]

CREATIVITY AND DESIGN PHASE

The Kafr Nabl[39] Banners group was established as a means of expressing reality at an affordable cost. The group did not know it would persist in its activities for as long as it has, nor did it know what obstacles would face throughout its work. However, armed with the necessary tools and confidence, it dealt with all the changes it faced in relation to the security situation and, most importantly, with the political or military powers that were present in Idlib Governorate at each stage of the Syrian Civil War. The people working in the group can be characterized by their ability to create innovative solutions and design various activities that target different segments of the local community.

The name Kafr Nabl has become linked to the numerous banners, written in several languages, and caricatures that were raised during demonstrations before the outbreak of war. The importance of studying the establishment and development of these banners, which achieved great fame, stems from the ability of banners to make significant impact using the simplest of tools and in the hardest of circumstances. It is also significant to examine the forms of these banners and the changes they underwent, both in terms of the language and the discourse they used. Similarly, their importance stems from their continued use, which has lasted for almost eight years at the time of publication, not to mention the projects and activities that branched out from these banners, which will be discussed separately in this study.

DEFINITION [40]

The banners raised in Kafr Nabl were quite unique in that they depicted the bloody events that Syrians are exposed to every day in simple and direct ways. The Syrian community[41], as well as the Arab and international communities concerned with Syrian af-

fairs, began anticipating these banners every week with their direct satirical discourse which targeted everyone, from the Syrians demonstrating on the streets to political world order. The banners can be considered an integral part of the historiography and documentation process of the popular movement that started in Syria in 2011 due to their ability to capture the contradictions of the local, Arab and international political landscapes and to their boldness in criticizing all political and military parties involved in Syrian affairs.[42]

THE BEGINNING

One of the problems faced by the Arab Spring in general has been the absence of neutral media coverage, which does not serve the specific interests of certain authorities and regimes. This void in media coverage and documentation, coupled with technological advancements, has led to a surge in citizen journalism. The city of Kafr Nabl has not been immune to this trend, and its citizens have resorted to using banners as a means of expressing their demands and documenting ongoing events. On the 1st of April 2011, the city witnessed its first demonstration, in which more than 300 protesters participated, calling out slogans demanding freedom and dignity. However, the local media at that time claimed that the demonstration was not in Syria but rather in another Arab Spring country. Therefore, with a desire to document the event, artist Ahmad al-Jalal wrote the name of his city, "Kafr Nabl", on a piece of cardboard and lifted it up in the second demonstration. In this regard, Ahmad al-Jalal mentions that, during the first year of the movement, they used to write the day and month only on the banners because they believed that the situation would not last long and the circumstanc-

es would change the following year. During the first months, the banners, just like the demonstrations overall, were spontaneous. Any protester could write a phrase on a piece of cardboard or a banner and raise it.

The citizens of Kafr Nabl contributed in making these banners, which expressed ideas agreed upon by the majority, such as the rejection of sectarianism,[43] the preservation of the unity of the Syrian people, and their right to freedom and decent living.[44]

During the subsequent stage of demonstrations, journalist Raed al-Fares[45] formed an organized group to write the banners. He coordinated those who were interested in the project to exchange ideas and tools necessary for writing. Ahmad al-Jalal became a member of the group; today, he remains one of the few who are still alive. He provided us with many of the details which were needed to conduct this study.

When the armed forces of the Syrian regime entered the city on the 4th of July 2011, the group in charge of the Kafr Nabl banners, along with a number of young men wanted by the regime, fled to the nearby orchards in Kafr Nabl and to the neighbouring villages, where they lived in tents for about six months. Looking back at Kafr Nabl and its demonstrations, people first remember Raed al-Fares, who was named the 'Engineer' behind the Kafr Nabl Banners, although the group also included many other youths, including Ahmad al-Jalal, Hamoud Junaid, Khaled al-Issa, lawyer Yasser al-Saleem, activist Abed al-Hamid al-Bayoush, and Ali Abdullah al-Salloum . They used to discuss the topic to be

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38 ——— This case study was prepared in cooperation with artist Ahmad al-Jalal, one of the group members.

39 ——— Kafr Nabl is a city located in the Idlib Governorate in North Syria. When the popular movement first started in Syria, the city's population was approximately 30,000.

40 ——— Kafr Nabl is a city located in the Idlib Governorate in North Syria. When the popular movement first started in Syria, the city's population was aboutapproximately 30,000 thousand persons.

41 Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/1c7tdz, Published on: 10/09/2012, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

42 ——— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/hf6tdz, Published on: 30/07/2012, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

43 ——— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/nf7tdz, Published on: 01/11/2013, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

44 ——— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/bi7tdz, Published on: 01/03/2013, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

45 ——— Ahmad Hamza, Raed al-Fares... details on the last week in Kafr Nabl which he refused to leave, [Online Reference], The New Arab website, Link: https://cutt.us/Qm12B, Published on: 24/11/2018, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

46 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/bi7tdz, Published on: 12/06/2012, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

47 —— An armed rebel faction founded by a group of officers and soldiers who defected from the regime's Syrian Armed Forces in July 2011 in order to protect peaceful demonstrators. The faction was later joined by several young civilians who took up arms for the same purpose.

48 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/qs7tdz, Published on: 17/05/2013, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

49 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/cw6tdz, Published on: 18/01/2013, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

50 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/1h6tdz, Published on: 22/03/2013, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

51 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/ux7tdz, Published on: 12/04/2013, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

52 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/556tdz, Published on: 31/10/2015, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

53 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/o16tdz, Published on: 10/12/2015, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

54 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/9z6tdz, Published on: 13/06/2014, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

chosen for the banners in the next demonstration, and would then would divide themselves into two teams: the first team was responsible for the large fabric banners written in both Arabic and English and directed towards people abroad, while the second team was responsible for the small cardboard placards, some of which were written in colloquial Arabic and occasionally used impolite language as an expression of anger and rage; these were directed towards people in the city.[46]

The group used to enter the city secretively and raise its banners during the demonstrations. When members were no longer able to attend due to fears of getting arrested (which worsened as the regime opened more and more checkpoints), the group would hold demonstrations in the nearby orchards and raise its banners up high. This began attracting media attention internationally as a peaceful form of expression in the face of violence.

In one of the tents in the orchards near the city, the banners developed significantly, according to Ahmad al-Jalal, who says: "Raed al-Fares and calligrapher Yasser al-Moussa wrote the banners, which became a necessary part of every demonstration, in both Arabic and English. I used to help them by writing on cardboard placards marked in red and black. In September 2011, we were still living in tents on the city's outskirts. I saw a cartoon on the phone of one of the young men, so I tried to copy it onto one of the cardboards; that was the first drawing used in the demonstrations. Despite the inconsistency of its colours, it represented a new event in the orchard demonstrations and contributed in attracting more fame to the Kafr Nabl Banners, given that drawing is a universal language".

At first, the group members bought the supplies to make the banners with their own money. After a few months, as prices increased, they started facing difficulties in buying these supplies. As a result, they established a fund to collect donations from the city's residents and expatriates abroad. The written banners and drawings attracted a lot of attention from the people of the city and its surroundings as they were considered, in their simplicity, to be the only way to make the voices of civilians heard by those in power. Nevertheless, the banners were also criticized by some who believed that the costs of producing such banners, principally for colourful paints and inks, could be put to better use by giving the money to the many people in need.

At that time, the banners focused on targeting internal policies and portraying military practices. Sometimes, they would criticize the international community's lack of action and silence regarding the situation in Syria. After the armed forces of the regime left the city on the 8th of October 2012, the Free Syrian Army [47] took control of the city and its surroundings. This period lasted for more than a year, during which those who had fled the city returned to their homes. The Kafr Nabl Banners no longer directed its messages towards the regime and the international community only, but also towards the Syrian opposition[48] that began taking shape in both its armed and civilian forms,[49] with the purpose of directing it towards the demands of the Syrian people.[50] By the end of 2013, the Al-Nusra Front, a radical Islamist organization affiliated with al-Qaeda, was established. Known at the time of publication as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (Sham Liberation Front), the group expanded throughout northern Syria, took control over the greater region and

even managed to take control of regions no longer under the authority of the official regime.

This group became the new target of the banners, and it was criticized by the group explicitly and severely.[51] At this point, the banners' harsh messages were now directed towards the Syrian regime and its supporting forces, which targeted regions out of their control on the pretext that they were an incubator for Islamic radicalism,[52] as well as Islamic organizations and their supporting forces, which were seen as one of the regime's many tools with which it suppressed freedoms and stifled freedom of expression,[53] in addition to carrying out other practices intended to make human life in the areas under their control in environments of unbearable hell not so different from an active war-zones.[54]

One of the pillars of creative intervention and innovation is analyzing and understanding reality; this is evident in the work of the Kafr Nabl Banners group. Despite the fast change of events, the several parties that took control over the city, the changes in the working conditions of the group, and the nature of the risks they faced, the group always strove to keep abreast of the various developments in the region. They raised questions that concerned the international community and fulfilled the goal they set for themselves within their political, social and artistic vision of the change they desired. This analysis made way to the specific actions that the group undertook in order to carry out their work, using the resources available to them – cardboard, pens and social media. Even when all parties involved resorted to arms, the Kafr Nabl Banners group insisted on using words, drawings, paint brushes, colours and harsh, sarcastic expressions in the face of weapons

The "Kafr Nabl" Banners | February 6, 2016 | Syria
https://www.facebook.com/kafrnbl

and despite the assassinations, prosecutions and arrests its members faced. The last drawing made by Ahmad al-Jalal in his city, Kafr Nabl, was on the 30th of November 2018, in which he wrote: "To the remnants of al-Qaeda: it's time for you to leave,"[55] closing, perhaps only for a while, the chapter of the Kafr Nabl Banners. Mr al-Jalal headed to Turkey to escape from Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which had sentenced him to imprisonment in "Okab", one of its worst and most notorious prisons. During his escape, he managed to save dozens of drawings and banners from Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which sought to destroy them and punish, and perhaps even kill, not only the person who made them, but also those who carried and collected them.

EMERGING PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

When an artistic project is developed, several activities usually branch out from it. But in the case of Kafr Nabl Banners, it was quite the opposite. The continued use of these banners for almost two years, along with the widespread fame they attracted, helped Raed al-Fares and his group to collect funds that enabled them, on the 1st of December 2012, to establish the Union of Revolutionary Bureaus (URB),[56] a civil society organization in the region not under the official control of the regime. The Union included a management bureau, comprising five members who approved projects based on their importance and feasibility, as well as 450 employees in bureaus working in management, media, finance, relief and statistics.

Given that the present study cannot detail all the activities and services provided by the organization, relevant online links have been included herein. Nevertheless, a quick review of some of these

projects as models is necessary, such as the "Live" (Eish)[57] campaign launched by the organization in an effort to brighten the walls of the city and neighbouring cities so as to spread happiness and hope despite the destruction inflicted upon them. Thus the walls, like the banners, became a means of broadcasting political messages and messages of hope and enthusiasm for life in spite of the war. In addition, the organization established a number of centers across Kafr Nabl and neighbouring cities concerned with educating, entertaining and providing psychological support for children.[58] The URB also established *Mazaya*[59] centers for training, educating and rehabilitating women. These centers also conducted vocational training sessions to help women secure sources of income, as well as sessions for studying and learning foreign languages and designing projects.

One of the organization's most important media projects is "Radio Fraîche,"[60] which broadcasts news in northern Syria. Among its main foundational goals was to alert citizens when aircrafts left the surrounding airports so they could take precautions to hide in less dangerous places or flee to the orchards, away from targeted buildings. Since its establishment, the radio station has faced an intellectual war with Al-Nusra Front on the basis that offers formal employment to women and discusses topics that opposed Al-Nusra Front's belief, such as the revolutionary goals of freedom and democracy. It also discusses citizenship and human rights and broadcasts other programmes that were in conflict with the Front's approach and orientation.

The Front would often raid the radio station's headquarters, confiscate its equipment and arrest some

55 —— Occupied Kafr Nabl Banners, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/x07tdz, Published on: 30/11/2018, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

56 —— Union of Revolutionary Bureaus URB, [Online Reference], URB website, Link: https://bit.ly/2oJSb7G, [No Date], Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

57 —— Eish (Live) Campaign Kafranbel, [Online Reference], Facebook, Link: http://tiny.cc/6v3udz, Published on: 13/05/2019, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

58 —— The Child, [Online Reference], URB website, Link: https://bit.ly/2oH8Zfz, [No Date], Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

59 —— Mazaya Center, [Online Reference], URB website, Link: https://bit.ly/2pxFzkn, [No Date], Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

60 —— Media Programme, [Online Reference], URB website, Link: https://bit.ly/2oQd80A, [No Date], Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

Everything Falls | The "Kafr Nabl" Banners | April 3, 2013 | Syria
https://www.facebook.com/kafrnbl/photos

of its workers. Despite harassment by Al-Nusra Front, the station and its workers have been able to continue their work until the present day, due to the ability of those in charge to work around the situation and come up with solutions and measures to ensure the station's continued existence. For example, when the Front objected Radio Fraîche broadcasting music and songs between its programmes, which is considered to be an affront to their religion, the station started broadcasting sounds of nature and bird tweets instead. When the Front objected to one of its programmes, the station would formally end the programme and broadcast it again under a different name, but with the same content. Ahmad al-Jalal states that all the programmes broadcast by Radio Fraîche were related to Al-Nusra Front, even if not explicitly, as the latter controlled and intervened in all aspects of life in the city and its surroundings. He also stresses that the presence of Raed al-Fares, with his acquired fame, provided some sort of protection for the radio station and its employees. However, after Mr al-Fares was assassinated in 2018, the programmes became less confrontational towards the Front. The people left in charge of Radio Fraîche still insist on its continuance under all circumstances, believing that the station's endurance represents a victory for the philosophy that Mr al-Fares managed to instill in the region.

CONCLUSION

In one of his media appearances, engineer Raed al-Fares mentioned that "most of the messages on the banners were directed towards governments directly and towards the people indirectly, since governments don't change their stances or interests merely because of a banner or demonstration"[61]. Indeed, the Google tool Google Adwords indicates that the average number of searches for the name of the city since the beginning of the Syrian movement rose to 3,600 searches per month.[62] The banners, particularly those drawn or written in more than one language, attracted worldwide attention. A collection of banners also reached international museums and exhibitions. The most prominent exhibition of banners so far is the "I Have a Dream" [63] exhibition which was launched in March 2013 in several U.S. cities, as well as in Toronto and Montreal, Canada. The exhibition included 120 banners and cartoons that were raised in the demonstrations and reproduced duplicates of the drawings, with the aim of auctioning them and dedicating their proceeds to help the people of Kafr Nabl.

61 —— Naomí Ramírez Díaz, Kafranbel, esos de las pancartas... [Electronic Reference], The Electronic itu website, Link: https://bit.ly/2oJQmHU, published on 05/24/2013, visited on 28/09/2019

62 —— Zaina Erhaim, Syrian city of "Kafr Nabl" writes a bloody history... with a pen and a smile, [Online Reference], Zeina Erhaim Blog, Link: https://bit.ly/2nhPvOo, Published on: 25/12/2011, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

63 —— Tarek Abdul Wahid, "Kafr Nabl Banners move across North America", [Online Reference], Al Jazeera website, Link: https://bit.ly/2py3DDJ لوحات-كفرنبل-تطوف-أميركا-الشمالية, Published on: 10/06/2013, Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

يسقط النظام والمعارضة... تسقط الأمة العربية والإسلامية... يسقط مجلس الأمن... يسقط العالم... يسقط كل شيء...

كفرنبل المحتلة ١٤ ١٠ ٢٠١١

"Everything Falls", the Kafr Nabl Banners

The name Kafr Nabl has become linked to the numerous banners, written in several languages, and caricatures that were raised during demonstrations before the outbreak of war.

Syria, April 3, 2013
https://www.facebook.com/kafrnbl/photos

PALESTINE

Return of the Soul: The Nakba Project[64]

DISCOVERY PHASE

A wire net fixed to the ceiling with transparent strings, holding at the ends pale wax figures which swing in the air, capable neither of flying in the sky nor setting their feet on the ground. This symbolizes the state of instability lived by a person who no longer has a homeland. Thousands of figures suspended geometrically and artistically in an accurate manner, depicting the forced displacement of thousands of people. Each and every figure narrates the testimony of a Palestinian who left their homeland at that time and still dreams of returning. Along with these figures, a sound sculpture is broadcast, ringing in the ears of visitors, inspired by Jane Frere from the videos of the first generation of Palestinian refugees who tell the details of their stories and memories of that moment.

Visitors to the exhibition can observe the art installation, listen to the stories of its people and read their testimonies that they themselves have written on boards. It is as if the artist desired to document the very fingerprints of those people in a clear attempt to turn these figures from merely wax sculptures into individuals with identities, features, expressions and feelings. The artist aims to show the visitors that every figure belongs to a real character from Palestine, a character with their own story, place, name and voice, inviting them to once again spare a thought for the Palestinian cause.

Jane Frere is a Scottish artist who studied theatre and fashion design in cinema and theatre. She uses a variety of methods, such as sculpting and sound and video installations, in her experimental artistic works on humanitarian issues. Her interest in the Holocaust committed by the Nazis against the Jews in the last century enabled her to understand the real tragedy faced by this group of people. This brought her to the Nakba of 1948, which touched the lives of nearly 800,000 Palestinians forced to abandon their homes and flee into exile. Their number has increased to reach more than three million Palestinians who have descended from the first generation of refugees and who are now living in camps across Palestine and neighbouring countries. The artist, known for her interest in humanitarian issues, decided to address the Palestinian Nakba and highlight it before the global public opinion, not as something that occurred and ended decades ago, but rather as a source of suffering inflicted upon generations of Palestinians and resulting in negative impacts that still, to this day, affect them and their environments. As an issue met with unprecedented media blackouts and of which

people outside the Arab region have almost never heard, Jane Frere wanted to retell the story of the Nakba and address it in an artistic manner, filled with humanitarian tales far from traditional political views, in an attempt to contribute to creating a new global awareness regarding the Palestinian cause.

NOT MERE SCULPTURES

"I had been studying the Palestinian Nakba since 2005. After watching the documentary Soraida, a Woman of Palestine by director Tahani Rached at the London Palestine Film Festival, I found the best artistic method I was searching for to depict the issue. In the film, a woman recounted her dream about hundreds of Palestinians suspended in the air like clothes hung on a laundry line to dry. The film came as an inspiration, and I started working on developing the art concept and form, as well as conducting workshops to make thousands of suspended wax figures. However, it didn't seem realistic for me to actually start implementing the project before getting to know the small details of the everyday life of the people I wanted to work with and depict. Therefore, I headed to Palestine in 2007, after being invited by the British Council in Palestine, in cooperation with the Palestinian Art Court, where I would reside and start the project Return of the Soul.[65] This marked the true beginning of the project in October 2007, when I began making the figures. The project ended with its first exhibition on the Nakba day on the 15th of May 2008. During that period, I moved between the Palestinian refugee camps and lived with them in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan."

Before making the wax figures, Jane Frere invited some Palestinian artists to participate in a series of interrelated workshops, as well as the main workshop on the anatomy of the human body and the relation between proportions and dimensions. This included explaining and training the participants in some artistic practices and physical exercises, so as to merge the theatrical expression of the figures into the project and highlight the psychological state of these characters during the incident. Another workshop on memory and narration was organized to train participants on the mechanism of recording and documenting memories and how to obtain the largest amount of details from stories, some of which were forgotten. Moreover, a workshop on Palestinian clothing worn in the1930s and 1940s was carried out in an attempt by the artist to grab her audience by the hand and take them back to that moment using all artistic means at her disposal. In order to depict the image as closely as possible to reality, Jane Frere distributed a detailed questionnaire to the Palestinians of the Nakba generation in all the camps where she worked, so as to encourage them to remember every detail of the incident, including, for example: What are the things you took with you the day you had to flee and leave your home behind? Who accompanied you? How did you travel: on foot, by car, or on a donkey?

CHANGES ACHIEVED BY THE PROJECT

The first changes achieved by the project took place within the Palestinian refugee community in the camps. When the artists who participated in the workshops returned to the Palestinian camps to present the idea of the project and train those who wished to participate in making the wax figures,

60th Nakbah day opening Al Hoash Jerusalem.

66 —— Stephen Fiddes, Review: paintings scream to break walls of silence [Online Reference], The Electronic Intifada website, Link: http://tiny.cc/p51kdz, Published on 29/11/2010, Retrieved on 28/09/2019.

women and men of all ages joined in. As such, the project enabled hundreds of Palestinians to gain the technical knowledge and skills that were the main goals of these workshops. According to Jane Frere, this new expertise impacted the lives of Palestinians, whether in terms of practicing a hobby or providing new job opportunities at a later stage. In addition, those interested in making dozens of figures were each paid a symbolic amount of money which provided additional income to help them in their daily lives during that period. On another note, the project reconnected the ties that were otherwise almost broken between the first generation of the Nakba and the later generations. It also created a means of communication between mothers and daughters, grandparents and grandchildren, and the narrators of the detailed stories that were almost forgotten and the listeners who were so eager to depict the stories through the wax figures. Despite the pain caused by recalling such harsh memories in daily conversation, doing so for the sake of this art project was met with a great deal of enthusiasm and with the hope that their voices would reach others after being silenced for decades.

On a humanitarian level, the artist also targeted non-Arab societies, stating that: "the purpose of my work, as an artist, on this issue is to raise questions. I achieved this goal exactly as I had planned, because dealing with any issue in an artistic manner gives it another dimension, one that attracts people's attention and raises their awareness to seek the truth. What helped me achieve the desired impact was that the figures were not educational or provocative, but rather filled with humanitarian stories and made from wax, which is strongly related to the spirituality of Europeans. This effect was evident during the exhibition in the city of Edinburgh, because it incited and pushed visitors to raise questions regarding this humanitarian situation that had evolved throughout the years. Many of the visitors were surprised by the tragedy and asked about the fate of all the people who were embodied in this human art installation."

The humanitarian idea, along with the high artistic value that marked all the elements of the exhibition, attracted exceptional media coverage in a clear indication that art depicting humanitarian issues is capable of effecting actual change and directing public attention towards the Palestinian cause on a wider scale. This may contribute to reducing the gap between the West's political stance and its general humanitarian stance towards others.

Despite this positive impact, there are still some people who oppose and fight anyone who talks about the Palestinians and approaches their cause from a humanitarian point of view, particularly those who actually visit Palestine and form ties with the Palestinians living under occupation. The ready-made accusation directed towards Jane Frere, like many supporters of the Palestinian cause, was one of anti-Semitism.

THE PROJECT'S JOURNEY

During project implementation, about 7,000 wax figures were made in the three countries: Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. 3,000 figures were displayed simultaneously in Jerusalem and Jordan, and 3,500 figures were displayed in Lebanon and Edinburgh in 2008. The plan was to display the project in many cities and countries around the world, before returning the figures to a Palestinian museum in the West Bank in an attempt to bring Palestinians back to their homeland, even if only symbolically, since their actual return is not possible for the time being. Even though the project ended in 2008 and the planned tours were carried out, the artist did not give up. She continued, until 2010, to give lectures, which constitute an essential part of the project. She also gave separate presentations using the photos she had taken during her work in the camps. Unfortunately, she was unable to present the videos still archived as raw material due to the lack of funds for editing. Frere also returned to Palestine in 2009 and 2010 to learn about the 'apartheid wall'. She even held some workshops that culminated in a series of layered paintings inspired by the layers of images and colours found on this wall, as a result of constantly erasing the images and repainting them. The paintings were later displayed in Scotland under the title "In the Shadow of the Wall." [66]

Return of the Soul installation

During the implementation of the project, 7,000 wax figures were made in the three countries: Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. 3,000 figures were displayed simultaneously in Jerusalem and Jordan, and 3,500 figures were displayed in Lebanon and Edinburgh in 2008. The plan was to display the project in many cities and countries around the world, before returning the figures to a Palestinian museum in the West Bank in an attempt to bring Palestinians back to their homeland, even if only symbolically, since their actual return is not possible for the time being.

EGYPT

The BuSSy Project[67]

CREATIVITY AND DESIGN PHASE

BuSSy[68] is an art project that attempts to fight societal restrictions through theatre and aims to create a free space for women and men in Egypt to share their untold personal experiences in society. Women and men from various Egyptian communities and cities stand on stage to share their stories. The BuSSy Project documents these stories, which are classified within our Arab society as taboos not to be spoken of, and presents them in theatres or other alternative venues in different communities in Egypt and abroad.

67 —— This case study was prepared with the cooperation of Sondos Shabayek, the technical director of the project.

68 —— BuSSy, [Online Reference], BuSSy website, Link: http://tiny.cc/ez1kdz, Cairo, [No Date], Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

69 —— BuSSy Street Experiment, [Online Reference], BuSSy website, Link: http://tiny.cc/sx2kdz, Cairo, [No Date], Retrieved on: 28/09/2019.

70 —— BuSSy on the Metro, [Online Reference], BuSSy website, Link: http://tiny.cc/6s2kdz, Cairo, [No Date], Retrieved on: 28/09/2019

ESTABLISHMENT

The BuSSy Project started in 2006 as a student project on one of the theatres of the American University in Cairo. A group of female students gave a presentation about women's experiences, stories and problems. For four years and as part of an annual student project, the group would work for three months on collecting and documenting stories then presenting them as performances at the American University theatres only. Most of the performances were in English and were not closely related to the issues and problems facing Egyptian women.

With the project limited to the American University in Cairo, all performances were presented in its theatres, and all training exercises took place within the university. However, in 2009, most of the female students who managed the project had graduated and the university had moved its headquarters to a region somewhat far from the original premises and not easily accessible. As such, the BuSSy Project expanded out of the university to become an independent volunteer project presenting its performances on various theatres other than those of the American University. These performances also became more diverse in order to create a space for expressing issues that concern all segments of Egyptian society.

After expanding its scope out of the American University, the most important changes in the BuSSy Project included:

- The project became an independent project with its own goals and plans.

- A space was allocated specifically for the project.

- Some individuals devoted themselves to working on the project on a full-time or part-time basis (dedicated human resourcing).

- The project works year-round on collecting and documenting stories as well as presenting performances.

- All performances are now presented in Arabic and revolve around issues and cases that concern all segments of Egyptian society.

- Egyptian men became involved in storytelling sessions presented by the project after initially being restricted to women.

- The project works with a number of different communities; this has resulted in greater diversity in the forms and themes of shows.

- The project not only collects stories and presents performances, but has also begun working on attracting more participants, organizing documented storytelling workshops, documenting the stories told and documenting their presentation to the audience.

CREATIVITY AND DESIGN PHASE

This phase is based on two forms of work; one precedes the other and is a cornerstone thereof:

1.PERFORMANCES

The BuSSy Project addresses, through its performances, the most controversial topics and taboos in Arab societies, such as harassment, rape, discrimination, honor killings, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, motherhood, domestic violence, child abuse and mass sexual assaults, among other topics.

In 2010, BuSSy presented its first performance outside of the American University. After that, its performances started expanding to reach seven Egyptian governorates, including Cairo, and nine other Arab and European countries.

In Arab countries, particularly in Egypt, BuSSy generally tries to present its performances in closed areas, so as to ensure the safety and protection of the participants and audience. In 2012, the BuSSy project carried out two experiments to hold performances in Cairo in open public spaces, so that everyone from different backgrounds and cultures could take part in them. The two performances were "BuSSy Street Experiment,"[69] which aimed at observing the reactions of people on the street to the issue of harassment, and "BuSSy in the Metro,"[70] which aimed at performing a set of stories that incited different reactions in women-only metro cars. However, these performances were not repeated because the general situation in the country made it practically impossible to do so.

Theatrical performance

For the purposes of the project, theatre is the most appropriate form for the performances because it gives youths, men and women the opportunity to communicate directly and spontaneously with the audience. This type of communication represents one of the project's main goals, as it allows the people in charge of the project to capture the interaction and the audience's reaction directly and use them to inform future performances. In addition, storytelling has a great impact on the person telling their story before a live audience, which completely differs from recording scenes using a camera, for example. When the project first began, the performances took place using a platform and a black background, with the person telling their story while carrying a microphone. This type of simple performance is necessary in some cases, particularly when presenting outside Cairo where the time or budget allocated for the performance are limited. Even though the project does not aim to present theatrical performances in a professional way, it works with specialists in the field of lighting, sound and sometimes costumes to serve the purpose of the project and achieve the best impact and level of interaction. The project also cooperates with specialists who train participants within specific contexts on performance skills, such as spontaneity and the ability to keep talking and overcome reactions or comments from the audience. However,

not all theatre and acting specialists have experience in dealing with people who tell their true, often painful, stories, which is why this form of theatre training has special requirements, determined in cooperation with the project managers.

2. STORYTELLING WORKSHOPS

The BuSSy Project also organizes 'storytelling workshops' in a number of places throughout the year under the supervision of specialist moderators. These workshops constitute safe places without prejudice, opinions or advice, with the intention of attracting people of different ages and backgrounds who want to share their untold stories, thereby achieving the project's goal of helping these people come to terms with their experiences (their stories) and overcome their pain. These workshops function on the basis of the participants' desire to tell their stories. Therefore, moderators simply work with what the person wishes to reveal, no matter how brief, and do not in any way seek to encourage them to elaborate their story to provide more details or learn different angles. Doing so would contradict the project's goal and would be harmful to the person's psychological health. Moderators also realized that sex segregation during storytelling resulted in a feeling a safety and freedom among the male and female participants sharing their stories. As a result, segregation became the norm in most workshops.

Workshop Moderators

A group of young people who are enthusiastic about the idea of performances and who believe in their importance and impact

train, support and encourage participants to share their personal stories. Given that there is no academic major that is directly related to the project and best serves its goal, the male and female workshop moderators come from different academic majors and need special expertise, and they undergo continuous training and development by the team behind the BuSSy Project.

Moderators' Training Workshop

As a result of the expansion of the project over the past years, the need for an additional number of male and female moderators for storytelling workshops emerged. As such, the BuSSy Project held one training workshop in 2016, in which twelve trainees participated. What motivated them join the training workshop was the fact that their own values and concepts were closely aligned with those of the project, in addition to their desire to work and develop themselves, and their openness to the idea of undergoing the psychological treatment they would need as a result of the painful stories that they were going to hear. For one and a half years, the selected trainees received training in various technical domains closely related to the shape and purpose of the project and with the help of the BuSSy team, which possessed expertise in relevant work mechanisms and conditions. After that, the trainees worked for one year with other moderators, before becoming independent moderators themselves.

Over the past three years, BuSSy designed its own model for training workshop moderators. The model is still used and is being developed within the project. It must be noted that BuSSy has no intention of conducting a second training workshop any time soon because first, this requires significant time and effort and a budget that is not easily provided, and second, the current number of working storytelling workshop moderators (five) is sufficient and the existing staff are able to achieve all the project's goals at the present time.

REFLECTION AND RECONSIDERATION PHASE

- Over recent years, the project has undergone many consecutive changes, but this did not lead to changes in the project's goal, structure or general strategies.

- The managers of the BuSSy Project cannot set a long-term evaluation, reflection or reconsideration plan because this would be unrealistic in light of the general situation in the society in which they work, which is unstable and subject to several possibilities and changes.

- Whatever party chooses to fund an activity presented by the BuSSy Project also agrees to appoint a specialist to conduct and submit an evaluation of the activity.

- At the end of each year or after completing each workshop or performance, the BuSSy team conducts an internal evaluation to review what has been accomplished, whether it was beneficial or not, and whether it could have been done differently, so that the project can build on each experience for the next actvity.

- At the end of each workshop, questionnaires are distributed in an attempt to understand the participants' impressions and their opinions regarding the pros and cons of the workshop. The results of the questionnaires are then used to develop the workshop in order to achieve the goal of the project.

- Audience interaction during performances may affect organizational considerations, particularly in terms of the logistics related to the performance's location and accessibility.

- One of the most important results of evaluation and reconsideration was highlighting the necessity of carefully considering the performance's location. In this regard, the performances were presented in closed spaces and all possible risks were assessed, in addition to considerations of how to deal with these risks and stay in contact with relevant parties to provide help if ever these risks occur. Based on this result, the project no longer presented any performances in open spaces, as was the case for the "BuSSy on the Street" and "BuSSy in the Metro" performances.

"Why Do You Look at Her Like That?"

From the Show "Why Do You Look at Her Like That?" in the context of the fourth edition of the International Feminist Festival "You Saw Them".
7th of September 2018
The National Tunisian Theatre – Bernard Turin Sale- Al Halfawin

Photographer: Roua'a Baida
https://www.bussy.co

MAURITANIA

The House of Mauritanian Filmmakers[71]

REFLECTION AND RECONSIDERATION PHASE

"The House of Mauritanian Filmmakers" is an institution established in 2002 to develop and revive cinema in Mauritania by working on a number of projects, most notably the annual National Film Week Festival, Traveler Screen, Oases Cinema, Two with no Ties and The Casting, among others. The House trains and qualifies youths in the seventh art, including photography, editing, script writing and directing. This drew the attention of Mauritanian youths who hope to benefit from this expertise. Mauritania is known for its rich cultural diversity, since it combines different cultures such as the Beni Hassan, Arab, Pulaar, Berber and Tuareg cultures. Mauritania is also characterized by its highly diverse communities, which range from conservative, traditional groups to nomadic, open youths who are eager for liberation, Africans who hate Arabic and Arabs who hate French. These combinations and diversities, as well as many others, confuse those intending to plan and present any artwork in this highly diverse society. Since its establishment, the House set ambitious goals for itself which are hard to achieve even in societies are more harmonious than Mauritania.

THE IDEA

Abdurrahman Lahi/Ahmad Salem, founder of the House, grew up in cinema halls of Nouakchott at a time when the city had about 20 cinema halls and a population of no more than 400,000. Back then, the city's cinemas screened American, Chinese and Arabic movies, not even remotely related to Mauritanian life and culture. Abdurrahman's childhood influenced his dreams and his desire to produce films representing Mauritanian society, its dimensions and its cultural and geographic diversity, particularly after the closure of many cinemas in Mauritania towards the end of the last century. Mauritania became scant in this field; cinema halls were sparse and cinematographic institutions didn't exist. And yet, Abdurrahman's dream grew bigger and bigger.

AN OPPORTUNITY

Mauritanian director Abdurrahman Sissako travelled from France to Mauritania in 1999 to shoot his film Awaiting Happiness, which addressed some aspects of life and culture in Mauritania. Sissako offered Lahi the opportunity to work with him as an assistant director. Lahi travelled to Paris after 90 days of work to complete the editing process. He had a chance to enroll in a training course at the International Film School of Paris (ESRA) before he returned to his country enriched with film production experiences. Given that he was the first Mauritanian to receive such an opportunity, one which could not very well be repeated, he decided to establish the House of Mauritanian Filmmakers to share his experience with the Mauritanian youth.

71 —— This case study was prepared in cooperation with Abdurrahman Salem, the former director of the House.

SAMPLE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES BY THE HOUSE OF MAURITANIAN FILMMAKERS

Although the House's production capabilities were humble, it touched upon all Mauritanian cultures, which allowed it to expand across Mauritania. The House created an ongoing artistic space not limited to the annual National Film Week Festival, through qualified cadres with future independent projects or through the renewable projects and programmes it plans. The House of Mauritanian Filmmakers not only accords a great deal of attention to planning and implementing projects and programmes, but also to choosing where to implement them in order to achieve the best results and goals. One of the projects implemented by the House is "Express." It aims to establish cinemas in four Mauritanian provinces - Dar-Naim, Riyadh, Atar and Bogue - in an attempt to keep up with the youth's increasing desire to express their opinions and share their thoughts through different cognitive, artistic and political means. These provinces were chosen for several reasons; in general, they are more disadvantaged provinces in terms of the geographic distribution of arts activities and facilities. Furthermore, each of these places has its own specificity. Nouakchott provinces (Dar-Naim and Riyadh) are characterized by having the largest number of youths within them; they provide examples of how simple and modest Mauritanians, with their ethnic and cultural diversity, can coexist peacefully, given that they were formed on the rubble of formerly popular neighbourhoods and therefore carried the same cultural content. Atar (far northern Mauritania) is known for its strong and motivated youths. Bogue (far southern Mauritania) has an illustrious history as a hotbed for the foundation of organizations. The first Mauritanian organization was formed in it in 1948, even before the establishment of the Mauritanian state. Thus, each one of these regions represents a different cultural model.

REFLECTION AND RECONSIDERATION PHASE

In the early years of the establishment of the House, it did not prioritize reflection and reconsideration, but rather rushed its work in an attempt to accomplish things quickly. The House was under constant pressure to produce programmes and cinema projects as it was the only cinema institution in Mauritania. This prevented it from carrying out careful scientific evaluation. Nonetheless, the projects within the House were evaluated in a simple manner in the form of sessions held at the end of each activity and in the presence of journalists and beneficiaries, who were able to share their thoughts and discuss strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the House sought feedback from audiences and beneficiaries continuously by distributing questionnaires, inviting participants to vote on programmes and evaluate certain performances. Even though the collection of this evaluation data was difficult (and awkwardly not based on known scientific tools and approaches), it still made a significant contribution to the planning of future projects.

In 2012, ten years after the establishment of the House, reflection and reconsideration became necessary as a means of evaluating the work the House had achieved before the next generation of stakeholders took over its management. According to the managers, the House had achieved 95% of the goals it had set in 2002.

Taking into account that the House considers the results it achieved in terms of its goals as a criterion for the reflection and reconsideration phase, below are the main goals of the House and the relevant results it achieved.

Reconciling recipients with cinema: When cinema was first brought to Mauritania by French colonizers in the form of mobile screenings, it was referred to popularly as the "genie's daughter" or the "demon's vehicle". This demonstrates Mauritanian society's rejection of this artform, which was especially strong in remote communities in desert, coastal or agricultural areas. This rejection stemmed not from bad intentions, but rather from fear of the foreign 'Other' or the foreign 'magician' as some kind of direct threat to the culture, civilization and the future of the country. However, the House of Mauritanian Filmmakers was able to help transform this negative attitude despite religious and social pressures. The desired reconciliation was thus achieved on a horizontal social level with recipients in general, and at in a more formal, vertical manner, with the traditional religious authorities which believed that cinema was not permissible.

On a social level, the House has achieved this reconciliation through the many programmes and projects it implements throughout the year in all Mauritanian provinces. The "Traveler Screen" is one of the projects that paved the way to reconciliation through effective means of communication within communities. The project's aim was to present cinema shows all year round in remote communities that had never watched televisions before. At first, the project was not welcomed (as some communities had hoped), and sometimes it was even met with harsh and severe reactions. The House's man-

agers realized that this rejection was not only due to the communities themselves, but also due to the way in which first contact had been established with them. Therefore, they changed their method approach from an initial one-step approach of visiting once will the sole purpose of setting up a projection screen, and started a two-step approach where manager would visit the communities twice. During the first visit, the team would arrive was without a screen and simply use photography equipment to try to get acquainted with the local people and the influential figures within the community. They went about calmly filming the people's everyday lives, taking into account the specificities and cultures of every community they visited to the extent that they would even travel by camel if the community in question was not used to using cars as a means of transportation. Then, during their second visit, the team used the "traveler screen" to show what had been filmed during the first visit. As these otherwise strange tools had previously been accepted and the team had been allowed to film aspects of the community's life, people in the community became eager to watch what had been filmed. Thus, refusal changed into acceptance, and the community no longer regarded cinema as a tool of foreign cultural and psychological invasion, but rather as part of Mauritanian society, since it spoke the same languages as Mauritanians and addressed issues that were relevant to them. Although the House faced barriers to social change – as can be the case in any society - the organization was able to deal with communities in a clever manner which, in turn, widened the segments of society that were willing to accept, and even interact with, cinematography. At the level of religion, the documentary My Friend who Disappeared (Mon Ami Disparu) was notable for the way it addressed radicalism among the

youth; this represented a turning point for reconciliation between the House with Mauritanian and the Mauritanian religious authorities. At first, lecturer sheikhs, mosque imams and Islamic scholars criticized the documentary intensely and claimed that it stigmatized Mauritania as a hotbed for Salafism and takfiri thought. Those working in the cinema industry were even threatened with being shunned from Islam. However, the House managed the situation with skill, which led to a phase of reconciliation with the religious authorities whereby some religious institutions even started working in cinema production.

Reviving the Culture of Group Spectatorship: In the beginning, the relationship between audiences and cinemas in Mauritania was severely lacking to the point that it was almost nonexistent. Cinema was widely rejected on the basis that it first appeared in the country through colonization. Moreover, much of the content shown in cinemas at the time of its introduction was deemed to be obscene. The House's first goal was to improve this relationship by screening films about Mauritanian life and drawing people's attention to the events happening in their immediate lives or in their surrounding areas and cultures.

Given the circumstances, it was not possible for the House to monitor the results achieved in pursuit of this goal in any regular or uniform manner. Therefore, the House monitored the results after each show by gauging whether the number of people in the audiences were growing and how diverse the audiences were in terms of age, gender and colour. To this day, many of those who attend the annual festival organized by the House never skip any of

its editions, and many of them insist on scheduling shows according to their holidays. Although this is a rather archaic method of evaluation, it still provided the intended results and demonstrated that audiences were becoming increasingly interested in cinema.

Forming a Generation of Young Mauritanian Cinematographers: Despite the absence of supportive official policies and a general lack of public interest in cinema, the House attracted a large number of youths eager to work in this field and develop their cinematography skills under special terms. Due to the House's limited funding, it always stressed to the young participants that the equipment itself does not create cinema, it only projects the creativity of the human mind. In addition, it avoided sending them to train in institutions with modern equipment so as not to confuse them when they would return, as they would believe that they could only achieve great things by using modern equipment. The House faced many challenges of this kind; the youth were creative but they lacked equipment. Consequently, the House worked with young people to produce ideas that could be executed with the equipment available to them, although this did not always succeed. Later on, the youths became more familiar with the production capabilities available to them in the form of cell phones and simple cameras, which helped them to produce professional videos and films. It is worth noting that the generation that benefited from the House and its expertise ultimately became the main cadres of Mauritanian television institutions, most notably the five institutions which have been established recently. Without a young generation of this kind, Mauritanian television institutions would have had to rely far more heavily on skilled foreign workers. Cinema

also provides these young people with an income, enabling them to have stable lives using the skills they acquired from the House. Cinematography thus transitioned from being simply a hobby one might abandon in favor of a serious job to a serious source of income. This will encourage a new generation of Mauritanian youths to enroll in the House which, in turn, will affect its scope and effectiveness in society positively.

RESULTS AT THE LEVEL OF SHARING EXPERIENCES

The House of Mauritanian Filmmakers has great ambitions regarding cinematography projects, yet it does not have the resources available to be able to achieve many of these ambitions. The House seeks to share its experiences so as to provide an opportunity for others to establish similar institutions, cinema projects and programmes. The House has contributed to national institutionalization by forming the Mauritanian Filmmakers Union in an attempt to unite all the associations interested in cinema and expand the scope of their work. However, the Union has not yet been established fully, and the associations the House has tried to develop have not seen much progress. Sharing the House's experiences happened spontaneously and without much effort, since the project naturally stimulates interest by itself. All of those who benefited from the House have tried to present their own cinema projects, although not all of those projects made it all the way to production.

RESULTS AT THE LEVEL OF TECHNICAL QUALITY

In its early stages, the House somewhat ignored the technical quality of its productions: it had to make

any sort of cinema production possible, even if it did not live up to the standards envisioned the managers. The main concern was to deliver topics of interest to Mauritanian society, which was especially important given that participants lacked the resources and expertise needed to produce high-quality films. As time passed, the participating youths were trained and gained knowledge in the field; simultaneously, cinematography equipment became much more widely available and very high-quality films were produced. Focus has since shifted towards content and the need to deal with more daring topics. The House has been working on this transition for almost six years, with the ultimate aim of producing more films like My Friend who Disappeared, which addresses radicalism, 1989, which revolves around the bloody events that took place between Mauritanian blacks and Arabs in that year, and a film directed by a woman about homosexuality, which is a controversial topic. The directors who began their career at the House seek to develop their techniques constantly. They now work independently and have the freedom to choose the topics they want address and the artistic dimensions of their films. The House has not yet fulfilled its ambition to produce cinema content that meets the standards to which it aspires. According to the founder, it will not reach its ultimate ambition in the foreseeable future since there no one has dared to fund such projects. Meanwhile, no stakeholders in the field are capable of establishing an institution to fund the House's productions and foreign producers are currently not interested in this generation of cinematographers, which is still considered to be amateur.

مرحبا بضيف دار السينمائيين الشيخ محمد الحسن ولد الددو

"The House of Mauritanian Filmmakers" is an institution established in 2002 to develop and revive cinema in Mauritania by working on a number of projects, most notably the annual National Film Week Festival, Traveler Screen, Oases Cinema, Two with no Ties and The Casting, among others. The House trains and qualifies youths in the seventh art, including photography, editing, script writing and directing.

Appendices

In this section, we present two training programmes in the hope of illustrating how users of this toolkit can use the methods and techniques presented above to achieve practical solutions. The two programmes described in this section can be adapted, expanded upon and enriched to suit the needs and conditions of users of this toolkit, whatever their requirements.

Create Syria Workshop Agenda, Second Edition, 2018

This appendix includes the agenda designed and implemented for the Create Syria Workshop in 2018. The workshop was held over six days and represented the first test of the adopted methodology and suggested work mechanisms.

Ten artists and cultural actors participated in the workshop, representing five projects chosen to join the second edition of the project. Two trainers moderated the workshop, as well as a number of artists and intellectuals who shared their visions and experiences regarding the workshop topics.

DAY 1

9.00 – 9.20

Opening Session Introducing the participants

Introduction Exercise (1)

The group moves freely in the hall. Find someone you don't know, say your name and tell them:
1- Where would you invite them if you decided to meet outside the workshop? What is this place and why did you choose it?
Move again, find another person you don't know, say your name and tell them:
2- About something you like to do in life.
Move again, find another person you don't know, say your name and tell them:
3- What pushed you to participate in this workshop and project.

Introduction Exercise (2)

Move freely in the hall. The moderator asks the participants to form groups based on gender. They move freely in the hall again, then the moderator asks them to form groups based on their field of work or interest (theatre, music, sports, food, etc.). Once again, the participants move freely in the hall and the moderator asks them to form groups based on categories such as "the oldest children in the family" or "only children" …

9.20 - 10.00

Participants introduce themselves

Pecha Kucha is a systematic technique used in time-bound project introductions using slideshows with only pictures to express what will be delivered. It is characterized with strict adherence to a specific timeframe.

10.00 – 10:45

Participants' expectations concerning the workshop, the Create Syria programme and workshop fundamentals.

1. Expectations The moderator asks the participants to think about their expectations for this workshop and share them with a person in the group. Then, the moderator asks them to share these expectations in front of the whole group. The moderator tries to record and categorize these expectations to highlight the most interrelated and common ones.

The moderator ensures that the information shared is vital and essential for the workshop and for developing its agenda as much as possible during the progress of the workshop.

The moderator asks: Are the expectations shared and is the agenda which has been distributed compatible with our collective expectations? Or should significant adjustments be made? After discussing the expectations, the trainer asks: What have we brought to this workshop to accomplish these expectations? What are the bits of knowledge, stories, past experiences and artistic practices shared by the participants in the workshop which will contribute to achieving these expectations?

2. Workshop Fundamentals The moderator underlines the concepts and common values that participants will engage with during their work, noting that they [the moderator] are not an expert in the projects and that the participants know the projects and artistic practices better than anyone else. They should also highlight that the agenda is flexible and can be amended according to the needs felt throughout the different stages of the workshop. In addition, they should stress that the entire team is responsible for accomplishing the workshop goals. The team will face challenges during workshop, but this is a normal occurrence when individuals change their regular daily rhythms and leave their comfort zones. Indeed, doing this will stimulate learning and innovation.

10.45 – 11.15

Coffee break

11.15 – 12.45

"Vision Landscape"

The participants share their views on the two main themes of the programme:
1. The resilience of Syrian artists and the Syrian cultural sector
2. The resilience of Syrian refugees and host communities.

CLICK TO VIEW VIDEO

THE ROLE OF ART INTERVENTIONS IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Ettijahat – Independent Culture has conducted a workshop on the role of Art Interventions in Times of Crisis within the programme of Create Syria: a Project to Empower Syrian Art in Exile the second edition. The training journey had many stops and activities which can be viewed in this video that shows the group's first steps in the Create Syria journey.

The moderator or one of the team members briefly presents the two main goals of Create Syria:

1. The resilience of Syrian artists and the Syrian cultural sector.
2. The resilience of Syrian refugees and host communities.

The participants are split into two groups. Each group works for about 40 minutes and is given a flipchart with three questions on it:

First Group

- What does 'the resilience of Syrian artists and the Syrian cultural sector' mean to you?
- What are the challenges in your society (society in general, the art community, your associations, etc.) that stand between you and achieving this resilience?
- What are the strengths in these societies that will help us to achieve this resilience?

Second Group

- What does 'the resilience of Syrian refugees and host communities' mean to you?
- What are the challenges in your society (society in general, the art community, your associations, etc.) that stand between you and achieving this resilience?

- What are the strengths in these societies that will help us to achieve this resilience? The two groups are asked to discuss the questions and prepare a way to present their answers using drawings, performances or any other artistic way.

After they complete their task, the following points are discussed:

- What inspired you or gave you a certain idea?
- What changes should be made in order to achieve the goal we have discussed? What interventions can be implemented to help realize these changes?
- What is the relationship between the two goals?

12.45 – 13.30

The Place Learning Journey [72]

The group goes to the stairs[73] and passes through a place-related journey. We are in a house, the house belongs to an association, and the association is located on these stairs in Beirut, in the midst of a political and cultural space that is related to a specific memory, which makes this journey different. Walking on these stairs provides an educational and spatial journey.

This journey requires preparation by the moderators or one of the team members who is capable of leading the group. Spontaneity and the possibility of unexpected events must also be kept in mind throughout the journey.

After returning from the tour, we are asked if we can tell the stories of the places in which we work and, if we know them, their histories, hidden secrets, hidden and open conflicts, relationships between their residents, and so on.

How do we build knowledge? This can, of course, be done in different ways according to the place, its history, the people living there and their relationship with the place.

13.30 – 14.00

Introduction to the concepts of Conflict and Crisis

At this stage, the moderator explains the logic suggested for the sequence of sessions and topics. The group work we previously did to introduce ourselves on a personal and creative level was just the first step in establishing a relationship that brings us together. This is important, since we will be spending several hours together in the same room for six days. Moreover, we will discuss many issues that may be sensitive, and we need to know who we are sharing our stories with.

We will also be trying to build some kind of communication with the place, the room, and the programme (indeed, that is the central reason for being there) and the institution behind the programme. We even addressed the location of the institution itself while we were on the stairs in Beirut, in an attempt to expand our understanding of the context and look into the complicated surroundings in which we live and work.

72 —— During the Create Syria session, the 'test course' was called a 'learning journey'. The change in name reflects a desire to use a more precise term for what is expected from the approach.

73 —— The 'stairs' refers to the Vendome Stairs in Beirut where the office of Ettijahat – Independent Culture is located and where the workshop was hosted in 2018.

14.00 – 15.00

Lunch break

15.00 – 17.00

Discussion with Hazem Saghieh[74]

The concept and analysis of a crisis, highlighting the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon, relevant prospects and how artists and cultural institutions handle this crisis.

17.00 – 17.15

Coffee break

17.15 – 18.00

Culture, Crisis and Conflict (follow-up)

DAY 2

9.00 – 9.20

Recalling the events of the previous day, highlighting important points, inspiring ideas, unconvincing points and what we would like to work on. The session is moderated by one of the participants.

9.20 – 10.50

Practices and approaches adopted by the participants on creative work mechanisms in troubled societies.

Recalling the previous day: On the first day, we started with our personal experiences, our journey to this place, and our understanding of the work of Create Syria and the places and societies in which we work. Today, we will try to explore our relationships with our artistic practices; how we see them and what to do with them.

We now ask the participants to talk about their personal journeys and mention some of the major events in their lives which led them to become who they are today. These may be professional or personal events. Then, the participants are asked to describe where these events have led them and what creative practices and attitudes they have adopted.

The participants are divided into two groups, and each participant shares their experience with the group.

74—— Hazem Saghieh: Lebanese author, journalist, critic and political commentator.

10.50 – 11.10

Coffee break

11.10 – 12.40

Working on two essential ideas of the work-shop through the World Café exercise within two discussion groups:

- Creative intervention strategies during crises and conflicts
- Different roles of creative interventions during crises and conflicts

The hall is set to be like a coffee shop. The participants sit at different tables. Each table has different goals and questions. A host on each table moderates the discussion, remains seated throughout the exercise and takes notes, while the participants move freely between the tables to participate in different discussions.

12.40 – 13.00

Lunch break

13.00 – 14.30

A visit to the Action for Hope[75] school in Bekaa

75 —— Action for Hope was founded in 2015 to provide cultural development and cultural relief programmes that meet the social, cultural, and psychological needs of distressed and displaced communities.

DAY 3

9.00 — 9.20

Recalling the events of the previous day, highlighting important points, inspiring ideas, unconvincing points and what we would like to work on. The session is moderated by one of the participants.

9.20 – 11.50

Failure scenarios (with a coffee break in at a suitable midway point)

The group is split into smaller work groups. Each prepares a failure scenario that may happen in their project, focusing on failures which may occur in the relationships between artists and the societies in which they operate. After each group decides on a scenario and roles to play within it, it invites the others to watch and interact. The group can ask other participants to help in role-playing.

11.50 – 12.15

Three analytic techniques: Problem Tree analysis, Community Analysis, and Stakeholder Analysis. (Divide the participants into three groups, explain the exercise and hand them the reference materials.)

12.15 – 14.00

The groups apply the three techniques to their projects and present one of them to the other groups

14.00 – 15.00

Lunch break

15.00 – 16.00

Continue presenting group work

16.00 – 18.00

Notes by the moderators. The institutions apply the three techniques to their projects.

DAY 4

9.00 – 9.20

Participants exchange their reflections while drinking coffee. The session is moderated by one of the participants.

9.20 – 9.40

Recalling the events of the previous day, highlighting important points, inspiring ideas, unconvincing points and what we would like to work on. The session is moderated by one of the participants.

9.40 – 11.00

Application of SWOT Analysis (which was briefly introduced during the previous day)
Creative intervention planning: Overall goals and specific goals (explanation and group work)

11.00 – 11.30

Coffee break

11.30 – 12.30

The "Assumptions" exercise

focusing on relationships between artists/cultural activists and the local communities with which they work.

The "Assumptions" exercise, also called "Two Truths and a Lie": Each participant takes a post-it note and writes down two truths and a lie about themselves. The true and fake information must be hard to differentiate. The moderator first applies the technique to themselves and then asks the participants to identify the truths and the lie. The moderator tells the participants to stand up in front of everyone and read their own sentences. Each time, the group should guess the truths and the lie.
The moderator asks the following:
▪ Who felt that most of the other participants failed to differentiate the truths from the lies?
▪ Ask one or two of those who answered in the affirmative to reread their sentences and tell the group why it is that their peers failed to guess the correct answer.

We use the term "assumption" - but what are some synonyms for this term in this context? (To guess – stereotypes – preconceived ideas – judgments, etc.)
The moderator stresses that assumptions are normal and we all make assumptions all the time.

12.30 – 14.00 — Creative intervention planning: Overall goals and specific goals (explanation and group work)

14.00 – 15.00

Lunch break

15.00 – 16.00 — Presenting and discussing the results of the group work

16.00 – 17.00 — Creative intervention planning: Expected intervention results (explanation and group work)

17.00 – 17.45 — Presenting and discussing the results of the group work

DAY 5

9.00 – 9.20 — Participants exchange their reflections while drinking coffee. The session is moderated by one of the participants.

9.20 – 9.40 — Recalling the events of the previous day, highlighting important points, inspiring ideas, unconvincing points and what we would like to work on. The session is moderated by one of the participants.

9.40 – 11.00 — Creative intervention planning: intervention strategies (explanation, group work and presenting results)

11.00 – 11.30

Coffee break

11.30 – 13.00 — Reflection and reconsideration: measuring results and how this differs from measuring impact (explanation, group work and presenting results)

13.00 – 14.00

Lunch break

14.00 — A meeting with Lucien Bourjeily[76]

76 —— Theatre playwright. He is a filmmaker from Lebanon, and works in the field of interactive theatre.

DAY 6

9.00 – 9.20	Participants exchange their reflections while drinking coffee. The session is moderated by one of the participants.
9.20 – 9.40	Recalling the events of the previous day, highlighting important points, inspiring ideas, unconvincing points and what we would like to work on. The session is moderated by one of the participants.
9.40 – 12.00	Designing Activities (with a coffee break in at a suitable midway point).
12.00 – 13.30	Designing Implementation plans
13.30 – 14.00	Explaining self-evaluation for project development
14.00 – 15.00 **Lunch break**	
15.00 – 16.30	Working on self-evaluation
16.30 – 18.00	Exchanging views, evaluating the workshop and discussing the upcoming steps in the Create Syria programme
20.30 – 22.30 **Closing dinner**	

Micro-Workshop Proposal to Develop an Initiative or Creative Intervention with Communities

This proposal represents a broad framework that strengthens the course of action provided by the Create Syria programme and translates it into a concrete proposal for a group workshop targeting a group of artists who believe they have a role to play in society at a certain moment. This proposal must be based on a set of assumptions, since each initiative presents a unique experience and each artist has their own logic and work mechanisms, as well as a different relationship with their creative practices and role in social change. Therefore, the implementation of this proposal requires extensive imagination in order to amend and develop it as necessary and in accordance with the actual intervention and the many variables it faces.

FIRST

HOW IS THE GROUP FORMED?

We know through practice that creative interventions begin with an idea proposed by one person or a group of people who have previously worked together and have shared experiences. Thus, a creative working group is usually formed by people who have known each other, even if it is only for a short period of time. Nevertheless, the group might also include one or more people who have never worked as part of a group before.

It is very important not to assume that prior knowledge negates the need to establish a connection. On the contrary, the group is now working in a different environment, and group members have certainly changed, going through exceptional circumstances, including the psychological, social and cultural changes that surround and affect them. Team-building and mutual understanding thus constitute a necessary phase to be designed based on each group.

SECOND

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE WORKSHOP?

This workshop strengthens the creative intervention's course of action. The workshop itself may be held over seven days, while the entire initiative is actually carried out over two years. The workshop might include only five artists contributing in the intervention, while the number of artists participating in the actual implementation might reach twenty or fifty.

THIRD

HOW IS THE WORKSHOP LOCATION CHOSEN?

The best choice is often within or near the community with which we are working. However, this is not always feasible. Most of the time, we may have to carry out the workshop in more remote locations. In these cases, we must find creative solutions to build a connection with the targeted community and explore it.

FOURTH

WORK PROPOSAL

As previously mentioned, the final group work proposal is based on several factors. However, in principle, it should not last for less than four days and might extend to ten days, depending on the situation. This proposal suggests a workshop for seven to eight days divided as follows:

Communication one day – one day and a half
Discovery one day and a half – two days
Creativity and Design three days
Reflection ad Reconsideration one day

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3, 4, 5	DAY 6
GOALS	**GOALS**	**GOALS**	**GOALS**

DAY 1 — GOALS

- Getting to know other members of the group and building connections with them.
- Looking into our personal pasts, our different characters and what brought us to this moment.
- Understanding the personal and collective relationships within the creative experience we are about to begin.

DAY 1 — PROPOSED TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES

- List Poem: this technique was previously explained on page 20.
- Two Truths and a Lie: this technique was previously explained on pages 31.
- Building a Rhythm together: this technique was previously explained on page 20.
- Vision Landscape: this technique was previously explained on page 27.

DAY 2 — GOALS

- Discovering the environment we are working in and what motivates us to intervene in this environment.
- Identifying, loosely, what change you seek in society and how you intend to achieve it.
- Discovering the bigger picture that in spires and moves us all.

DAY 2 — PROPOSED TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES

- World Café: this technique was previously explained on page 27.
- Stakeholders Analysis: this technique was previously explained on page 29.
- The Actual to the Ideal through Image Theatre: this technique was previously explained on page 31.
- The Mincer: this technique was previously explained on page 27.

DAY 3, 4, 5 — GOALS

- Analyzing the work environment in an accurate manner and specifying the problem addressed by the project.
- Designing and planning the creative intervention.

DAY 3, 4, 5 — PROPOSED TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES

- Problem Tree on page 34.
- SWOT Analysis on page 36.
- Defining the overall goal and the specific goals of the creative intervention on page 38.
- Specifying the expected results and the strategies to be adopted on page 38.
- Specifying the activities and the implementation plan on page 39.
- Setting a budget for the creative intervention

Days 3, 4, and 5 are joined together because they are all part of the Creativity and Design Phase, which requires at least three days

DAY 6 — GOALS

- Specifying how to ensure that the work done will achieve the desired results and change.
- Specifying what to do in order to learn and improve.
- Agreeing on how to get feedback.
- Ensuring that we are capable of measuring the change we make on different levels.

DAY 6 — PROPOSED TECHNIQUES AND ACTIVITIES

- Specifying the indicators to be used and collected throughout the different stages of the implementation of the intervention on page 43.
- Planning these indicators and determining how to verify them and who does so.

Ettijahat-Independent Culture

Ettijahat - Independent Culture is a cultural institution promoting independent culture in Syria and the Arab region. Established since 2011, Ettijahat works to stimulate independent culture and arts in order for the latter to play a positive role in the cultural, political and social change process. The institution strives to establish a genuine relationship between the cultural and artistic sector and Syrian society in all its plurality and diversity. It achieves so by supporting artists and culture initiative-takers, empowering young researchers, building associations and alliances between individuals and cultural institutions, promoting arts and artists through regional and international platforms, as well as working to deliver culture and arts to Syrian communities wherever they may be.

Ettijahat focuses on four areas:

Supporting production and artistic promotion

Ettijahat contributes to the activation of the artistic movement and enables artistic production in all creative fields and at all levels by cooperating with artists, supporting their productions and presenting their artistic projects on regional and international platforms.

This is reflected through Ettijahat's efforts to provide grants to artists and help them in networking and reaching an audience through creative platforms.

Supporting cultural research and knowledge production

Ettijahat contributes to the development of cultural, academic and field research and studies by building the capacities of independent researchers and cultural practitioners and by building partnerships with universities, academies and cultural institutions.

This is reflected in building the capacities of researchers, supporting the production of cultural research papers and enriching online Arabic content.

Empowering art in exile and promoting social practices

Ettijahat empowers artists in exile, provides legal support for them amid social and cultural changes and considers the potential roles the arts might play in strengthening the recipients' adaptation by developing support frameworks concerned with arts and change.

This is reflected through Ettijahat's work in developing artistic interventions in the context of social change, contributing to the support of the essential role of the independent cultural sector and empowering arts at the levels of knowledge and the law.

Teaching arts and building artistic capacities

Ettijahat contributes to the development of the artistic education sector, links the arts to the labor market and builds artistic capacities that promote the professionalism and the image of the art sector with respect to other sectors by supporting the teaching of arts in academic and vocational institutions, as well as developing artists' skills and knowledge.

This is reflected by supporting the academic study of arts and by building the capacities of those in the performance arts sector.

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The British Council

The British Council for Syria is the UK's international organization for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We provide Syrians worldwide with learning opportunities and enable international collaboration between them and people in the UK.

We believe that through innovative learning, creative expression, social participation and inclusion we can realise our vision where young Syrians would feel less isolated and have greater access to opportunities that give them hope for a better future. The British Council has been present in Syria for more than 70 years. Since 2012, the Council started working with a number of teams worldwide to ensure the continuity of its programmes in the context of cultural relations targeting Syrian youth, teachers, artists and cultural actors wherever they may be.

Building cultural relations and initiating greater connections, knowledge sharing and collaboration between the people of the UK and Syria lies in the heart of what we do. Since 2013, and through our wide range of projects, and our different partnerships and collaborations; our programmes have benefited over 215,000 Syrian refugees and tens of thousands more in host communities across the region. We have also worked with Syrians based in 11 countries around the world and connected over 100 Syrian, UK, and international organisations together, enabling collaboration and exchange.

The Create Syria project was developed within the framework of our culture and development programme, which supports the role of art in social change processes. The British Council believes that arts and culture play a vital role in periods of conflict and crisis. Artists can face challenges and overcome borders and restrictions and culture and arts provide alternative perceptions, encourage others to imagine a new reality and achieve it, contribute to humanization, give a voice to those affected by conflict and provide societies with much needed spaces for discussion and exchange.

Syrian artists and cultural activists have played effective roles in their societies during the past ten years of crisis. Create Syria was developed to empower these cultural practitioners involved in social work, so as to create a stronger and more sustainable impact in the societies they work in.