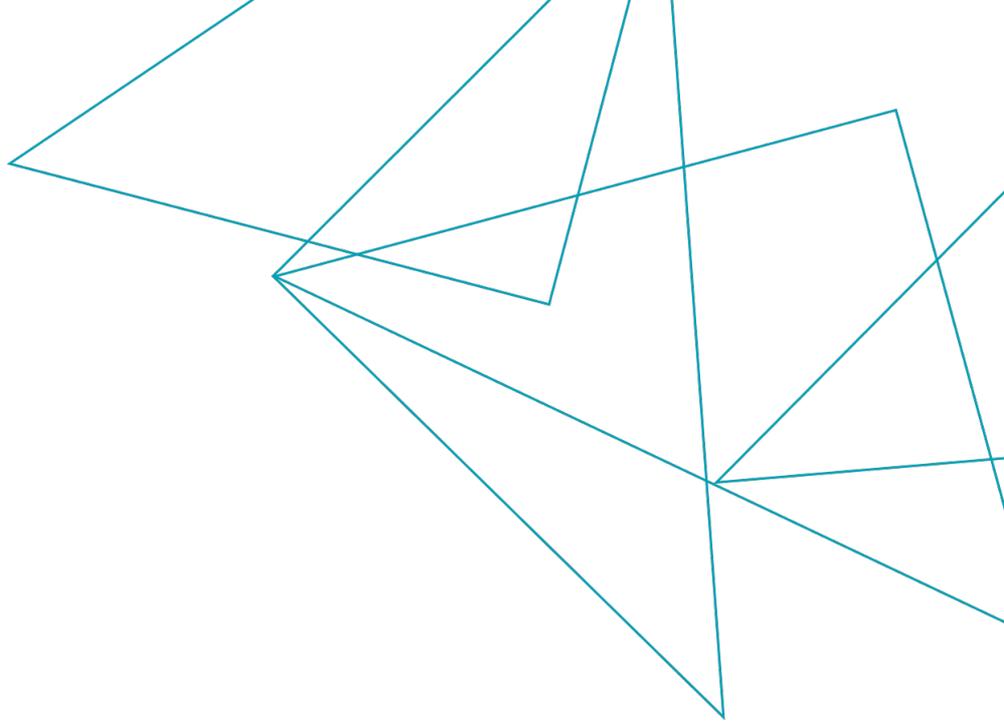# IMPACT ANALYSIS OF UNDP LEBANON MEDIA AND PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES (2020-2022)

SUBMITTED TO:

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

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TRIANGLE
POLICY | RESEARCH | MEDIA

Project Information	
Project title	Peacebuilding in Lebanon project – Phase 3
Atlas ID	0008560
Corporate outcome and output	Lebanon has institutionalized mechanisms to promote peace and prevent, mitigate, and manage conflict at national, municipal and community levels Media empowered to promote balanced and conflict sensitive media coverage
Region	Lebanon
Date project document signed	1/2/2022

Project dates	**Start**	**Planned end**
	January 2020	December 2022

Total committed budget	USD2,259,892
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	USD1,554,582
Funding source	KFW and UKAID
Implementing party	UNDP with the support of Dawaer NGO, Agence France Presse

Evaluation information	
Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Regional Project
Final/midterm review/ other	Final

Period under evaluation	**Start**	**End**
	01 January 2020	31 December 2022

Evaluators	Triangle Consulting SAL (Offshore)
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Evaluation dates	**Start**	**End**
	01 October 2022	10 February 2023

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	Agence France-Presse
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GI	Group Interview
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organizations
KII	Key Informant Interview
LCBI	Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International
MoI	Lebanese Ministry of Information
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNA	National News Agency
OECD-DAC	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
SOW	Scope of Work
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UNDP "Peace Building in Lebanon" project has been working since 2007 on enhancing mutual understanding and social cohesion by addressing the root causes of conflict in Lebanon. The project's third phase (2014-2022) built on the previous two phases and aimed to address new challenges to civil peace and peacebuilding in the country. In addition to the Syrian crisis, Lebanon is currently facing a severe socio-political, economic and fiscal crisis.

The focus of this evaluation is the second output of the UNDP Peace Building in Lebanon project – the media component – which aimed to empower media to promote balanced and conflict-sensitive media coverage. This project component received funding from KFW and UKAID. Key project activities included countering fake news at national and local levels through a) capacity building and partnerships with media practitioners and b) training on hate speech and fake news for youth and their subsequent local awareness campaigns. The project activities also included providing positive media spaces and promoting rational discourse through a news supplement and its subsequent online platform, Salam wa Kalam. The report covers the projects' duration from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2022. This evaluation relied on several data inputs, comprised of quantitative and qualitative data, analysis, and triangulation.

The purpose of this final evaluation, commissioned by UNDP, is twofold. Firstly, assess the project's performance and results according to the OECD-DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, cross-cutting and its overall contribution to the UN strategic plan outcome 3.1: "Lebanon has institutionalized mechanisms to promote peace and prevent, mitigate, and manage conflict at national, municipal and community levels". Secondly, ensure accountability, as well as identify and analyse findings and results to enable the incorporation of lessons learned and prepare recommendations that can be useful for the design of similar projects in the future and for organisational learning.

In conclusion, UNDP's project theory of change was relevant to Lebanon's need to address the impact of fake news and hate speech on social cohesion. The media component aimed to improve intra-community relationships, including between Syrian refugees and host communities, in line with SDGs and LCRP goals. Lessons learned throughout the project were systematically documented to ensure effective and efficient management. The project adjusted its work plan to adapt to the changing context in Lebanon, such as COVID-19 and the fuel crisis. However, there was a lack of baseline data and defined metrics to measure and assess the project's impact, especially on communities targeted by local awareness campaigns.

The articles published on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform covered topics relevant to Lebanon's context, UNDP's development agenda and peacebuilding. The switch from an offline supplement to an online platform followed the modernisation trend of the overall media landscape.

A total of 47 media practitioners were equipped with fact-checking skills readily transferable to their daily work. The training was relevant to their needs and priorities for their work in news organisations across Lebanon. Coaching and follow-up sessions ensured that media practitioners remembered the skills they learnt during the fact-checking training sessions. Furthermore, the project trained 91 youth from across Lebanon on fact-checking and hate speech, helping some find employment in this emerging field. Furthermore, the training and activities for youth improved social cohesion and increased the trust between participants from diverse backgrounds.

The project supported local actors technically in designing and implementing social media campaigns to tackle fake news in their communities. The awareness campaigns addressed communities' lack of awareness and tools to deal with fake news and hate speech in Lebanon. Most notably, interactive plays and videos were used to raise awareness and start conversations about fake news and hate speech in targeted communities. Local awareness campaigns, online and offline, strengthened communities' awareness and understanding of fake news and hate speech. However, the impact of these campaigns was limited due to their low outreach. Overall, while the project design included gender and disability as cross-cutting themes, it did not attempt to mainstream gender. Furthermore, it is unclear how persons with disabilities were consulted and meaningfully involved in programme design, planning and implementation.

Based on this evaluation, key recommendations to UNDP for future media-related peacebuilding interventions in Lebanon include:

1. Extend the fact-checking training programmes to other journalists and journalism students across Lebanon to create a society with credible news sources.
2. Create a baseline for future interventions targeted to the project's direct and indirect beneficiaries.
3. Work on a marketing strategy to increase the visibility of the Salam wa Kalam digital platform to relevant stakeholders.
4. Implement regular follow-up training sessions for media practitioners to ensure they are updated with the latest fake news trends and fact-checking tools.

5. Continue to involve the trained youth participants in other relevant activities.
6. Focus on the local-level impact of project activities rather than the national level.
7. Ensure that future project activities guarantee more solid gender mainstreaming and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The project's key lessons learned include:

- In the current media landscape, digital news platforms are more efficient than printed supplements. However, an adequate marketing strategy is required to reach the targeted stakeholders.
- Media practitioners are confronted daily with fake news and hate speech within their work. Periodic and specific training sessions are essential to ensure media professionals stay updated with evolving fact-checking tools and fake news trends.
- Youths who are involved in journalism and media studies are motivated to tackle fake news and hate speech within their communities. These youths could be involved in training a larger number of local stakeholders.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents a final evaluation of the media component projects and activities implemented by the UNDP Peace Building in Lebanon Project from January 2020 to December 2022. It is the product of an overall assessment of the media component outputs.

This report gives the intended users the information needed to make decisions, take action and add to institutional knowledge. The report focuses on six main points of the OECD-DAC criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and cross-cutting issues such as gender and disability.

This final evaluation report includes a description of the interventions, the evaluation's purpose, scope, objectives, approach, and methodology. It lays out the evaluation's findings according to the six criteria and includes conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION

2.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

A. LEBANON'S MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Traditional media

The Lebanese media landscape has historically been viewed as experiencing relative freedom of expression, a right that is constitutionally protected, albeit inconsistently upheld, by regional standards.[1] Whilst the 'state' has remained comparatively absent in terms of coordinated monitoring and censorship, Lebanon's media landscape nonetheless reflects the dynamics of the country's sectarian system of government. Virtually all mainstream outlets for news media – digital, print, television, and radio – identify with specific religious or political groups and agendas.

In Lebanon, there is presently no legislation prohibiting politicians from being involved in the media, despite some poorly implemented restrictions on monopolies being imposed by Law 382 of the 1994 Audio Visual Media Law.[2] As such, 78% of Lebanese-based television, radio and print media has a "more or less direct political affiliation," according to research by Media

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[1] Freedom House, 2021. "Lebanon Freedom in the World 2021", online at:
https://freedomhouse.org/country/lebanon/freedom-world/2021
[2] Article 13 prevents one person from holding shares in more than one audiovisual media outlet. Nonetheless, former Deputy Prime Minister Issam Fares, for example, is a shareholder in LCBI and Director a Foundation that bears his name as shareholder in another television station, NBN.

Ownership Monitor.[3] Such "political affiliation" in Lebanon's media landscape manifests primarily in three key forms. Firstly, direct ownership of a media organisation by the state or current MPs. Secondly, direct ownership of media organisations by former MPs, candidates for Parliament, or government figures. And finally, the direct ownership of media forums through political parties.[4] Political ownership of media outlets sprawls across a variety of Lebanese news mediums. A survey led by The Samir Kassir Foundation in 2018 found that in Lebanon, nine out of ten of the print outlets, seven out of the eight radio stations, all nine TV stations, and four out of ten covered websites were directly politically affiliated.[5] Indeed, the three most watched television networks – *LBCI, Al-Jadeed,* and *MTV* – belong respectively to the Daher-Saad, Khayat and Murr families, whilst *Al-Manar* is the official television network of Hezbollah.[6]

The Lebanese media sector has faced a profound crisis in recent years. *As-Safir* newspaper was forced to close its doors in 2016 and An-Nahar newspaper was declared financially unviable and forced to restructure. In October 2021, Lebanon's foremost English language newspaper, The Daily Star, ceased publication. Lebanese media outlets have increasingly relied upon investors - in the Lebanese context, typically large media empires with direct political affiliations - as the primary source of revenue. This has accompanied a precipitous drop in Lebanon's standing in international media research surveys. Lebanon is presently ranked 130 of 180 countries in the Reporters without Borders' World Press Freedom Index.[7] This is a dramatic fall from a position of 107 in 2021 and 102 in 2020. It reflects a journalistic landscape still being carved out by a range of political and sectarian agendas, not least due to an increasing financial reliance on politically influential investors who are more often associated with a specific political or religious outlook.

New media

Lebanon's media landscape has been marked by the growth of 'new media' or 'alternative media' since the early-2000s. These forums are predicated upon "offering the means for democratic communication to people who are normally excluded in mainstream media".8 In Lebanon, alternative media outlets were primarily born out of an attempt to counter-act traditional or established media forums closely tied to specific political and sectarian agendas. These outlets argued that in such a partisan 'traditional' media landscape, investigations into systemic issues, including dysfunctional infrastructure, LGBTQ+ rights, or

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[3] Global Media Registry, 2018. "Media Ownership Monitor: Media, Lebanon 2018", online at: http://lebanon.mom-gmr.org/en/media/

[4] Global Media Registry, 2018. "Media Ownership Monitor: Owners Database, Lebanon 2018", online at: https://lebanon.mom-gmr.org/en/findings/political-affiliations/

[5] Global Media Registry, 2018. "Media Ownership Monitor: Owners Database, Lebanon 2018", online at: https://lebanon.mom-gmr.org/en/findings/political-affiliations/

[6] L'Orient Today, 2021. "In Lebanon, political figures and powerful families control the media", online at: https://today.lorientlejour.com/article/1147601/in-lebanon-political-figures-and-powerful-families-control-the-media.html

[7] Reporters Without Borders, 2022. "Lebanon", online at: https://rsf.org/en/country/lebanon

[8] See C. Atton, *Alternative Media* (London: Sage Publications), 2002.

refugees, were typically side-lined or politicised for personal gain.

Lebanon's new media outlets predominantly include digital news platforms such as *Raseef 22, The Public Source, Badil, Daraj, and Megaphone*. Almost all such outlets are active on social media platforms and rely upon journalists, volunteers, and founders who typically have strong links to activism or academia. Indeed, many of these digital news forums were founded during or in reaction to periods of acute political unrest. For example, *Raseef 22* was founded in Beirut in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, whilst Megaphone was established in 2017, two years after demonstrations in Lebanon linked to the rubbish crisis. In a variety of interviews, the various founders of these networks have drawn attention to their political activism aims.[9]

'Traditional' media forums and their 'new' or 'alternative' counterparts are tied together by their common utilisation of digital platforms for news streaming. Indeed, all mainstream news outlets in Lebanon presently have an online presence on at least one digital platform.[10] This has attempted to counter-balance an increasing reliance by Lebanese citizens on free news consumption via social media forums, in particular, WhatsApp and Facebook.[11] This has cultivated an intensely media-saturated environment in which every news item is subject to close monitoring and commentary by dozens of media outlets.

B. IMPACT OF THE MEDIA ON CIVIL PEACE

The strongly political sectarian nature of Lebanon's media landscape carries particular resonance given that as of 2015, 94% of the Lebanese favour Lebanese news organisations over international ones.[12] However, the wide range of available media outlets – including digital forums, social media, print, television, and radio – in Lebanon has not invariably translated into a greater plurality of opinions. A 2020 study focusing on partisan selective exposure in Lebanon suggested that Lebanese consume news content promulgating increasingly narrow political viewpoints. This, in turn, reinforces partisan views and further contributes to pre-existing political polarisation.[13]

C. FAKE NEWS IN LEBANON

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[9] The New Arab, 2021. "Challenging the establishment: How alternative media is promoting a democratic dynamic in Lebanon", online at: https://english.alaraby.co.uk/features/alternative-media-and-democratic-dynamics-lebanon

[10] Lorenzo Trombetta, European Journalism Centre, 2018. "Lebanon: Media Landscape", online at: http://lebanon.mom-gmr.org/uploads/tx_lfrogmom/documents/8-1409_import.pdf

[11] Claudia Kozman, Jad Melki, International Journal of Communication 16, 2022."Selection Bias of News of Social Media: The Role of Selective Sharing and Avoidance during the Lebanon Uprising", online at: https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/viewFile/18811/3796

[12] E.E. Dennis, J.D. Martin, R. Wood, *Media Use in the Middle East* (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2015).

[13] Imad Bou Hamad, Nadine A. Yehya, Communication Research 47, 2020. "Partisan Selective Exposure in TV Consumption Patterns: A Polarised Developing Country Context", online at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0093650216681896

Much of the world has experienced dramatic growth in 'fake news' in recent years. Lebanon is no exception. According to Marwick and Lewis, "fake news is a contested term, but generally refers to a wide range of disinformation and misinformation circulating online and in the media". [14]

According to the UNDP research on 'Fake News and Social Stability', fake news can ignite "fear, tensions, and conflicts among families and sects within the same region or across the same country".[15] The prevalence of such polarization has manifested recurrently during times of crisis in Lebanon. In Lebanon, the depth of the phenomenon was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the spread of misinformation surrounding the spread of the disease, potential treatments, and vaccinations on a plethora of social media forums and 'traditional' media outlets. Civil society organisations in the country launched several campaigns to combat the spread of fake news, including, for example, a collaboration between the WHO, UNICEF, and UNDP with the Lebanese Ministry of Information (MoI). Their joint campaign established a platform that collected and posted fake news, misinformation and rumours circulating in the country surrounding COVID-19 to inform online readers better.[16]

D. IMPACT OF MEDIA ON RELATIONS BETWEEN REFUGEE AND HOST COMMUNITIES

Lebanon presently hosts the highest number of refugees per capita and square kilometre worldwide.[17] With the collapsing economic and financial setting coupled with a fall in job opportunities, Lebanon's Syrian refugees populace, of which 814,715 are registered with UNHCR, has been subject to resentment, harassment, and violence.

Polarisation between refugees and host communities has been accentuated by the rise of partisan media reporting coupled with the spread of disinformation and misinformation on social media platforms in Lebanon in recent years. This was particularly visible in August 2022 when fake news spread, claiming that Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon were responsible for the nationwide grain shortage. Such a shortage was, in reality, the result of factors unrelated to Syrian presence in the country, including, but not confined to, the outbreak of war in Ukraine.[18] Such inflammatory and factually incorrect discourse resulted in parts of

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[14] B. Kalsnes, "Fake News", Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication (2018), online at: https://oxfordre.com/communication/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228613-e-809;jsessionid=1172275CE877BFC89C7E727F219B6999

[15] UNDP, "Fake News and Social Stability", (Online, 17 February 2021), p. 5. Online at: https://www.undp.org/lebanon/publications/fake-news-and-social-stability

[16] World Health Organisation, 2020. "WHO Lebanon and partners fight fake news in the time of COVID-19", online at: https://www.emro.who.int/lbn/lebanon-news/who-lebanon-and-partners-fight-fake-news-in-the-times-of-covid-19.html

[17] UNHCR, Lebanon. "UNHCR Lebanon at a glance", online at: https://www.unhcr.org/lb/at-a-glance

[18] Shaya Laughlin, Peter Speetjens, Badil: The Alternative, 2022. "High State Blaming: Lebanon Scapegoating Syrian Refugees For Economic Crisis", online at: https://secureservercdn.net/160.153.138.203/f62.e5d.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/20220831_Syrian-Refugees_Policy-Feature_EN.pdf

Lebanon issuing curfews for refugee populations or requesting that bakeries prioritise Lebanese citizens over Syrians.[19]

E.   PEACE JOURNALISM

"Peace journalism" has been defined as a form of journalism committed to analysing the root causes of conflict to "create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict". Lynch and McGoldrick further noted that it is not invariably about the open advocacy of peace but rather about "giving peace a chance".[20] Its practice by journalists includes methods such as providing depth and context, rather than "blow by blow" accounts of violence and conflict, as well as carefully selecting and analysing the vocabulary utilised in recognition that carelessly chosen words are often inflammatory.[21]

Lebanon's fractious media landscape has witnessed an attempt to counterbalance increasingly polarised discourse through programmes aiming to cultivate the principles and practice of peace journalism. Advocacy of peace journalism in the Lebanese context has focused on integrating the voices of marginalised communities traditionally neglected in mainstream media forums. Most recently, this was marked by a UNDP project developing the peacebuilding skills of women in their communities through peace journalism programmes and projects implemented across Lebanon.[22]

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. PEACEBUILDING, MEDIA & UNDP

The UNDP "Peace Building in Lebanon" project has been working since 2007 on enhancing mutual understanding and social cohesion by addressing the root causes of conflict in Lebanon. The overall peacebuilding project focuses on four outputs: 1. Education promoting social cohesion supported; 2. Media empowered to promote balanced and conflict-sensitive media coverage; 3. Local-level peace-building strategies to mitigate tensions developed in selected conflict-prone areas of Lebanon hosting Syrian refugees; 4. An NGO platform promoting nation-wide truth and reconciliation supported ex-fighters' role in promoting peace building supported.

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[19] Save the Children, 2022. "Lebanon: Bread Shortages Fuelling Tensions with Syrian Refugees", online at: https://www.savethechildren.net/news/lebanon-bread-shortages-fuelling-tensions-syrian-refugees

[20] Lynch, McGoldrick, 2005. *Peace Journalism,* p. 6.

[21] Steven Youngblood, Centre for Global Peace Journalism, 2017. "What is Peace Journalism?" online at: https://mediapeaceproject.smpa.gwu.edu/2017/12/14/what-is-peace-journalism/

[22] United Nations, Lebanon, 2022. "Women in Lebanon at the forefront of non-violent conflict resolution through UN Support", online at: https://lebanon.un.org/en/200234-women-lebanon-forefront-non-violent-conflict-resolution-through-un-support

Building on the previous two phases, the project's third phase (2014-2022) aims to address new challenges to civil peace and peacebuilding in the country. In addition to the Syrian crisis, Lebanon is currently facing a severe socio-political, economic and fiscal crisis.

The evaluation team evaluated the media component (output 2) of the UNDP peacebuilding in Lebanon project which worked on providing positive media spaces and promoting rational speeches to address controversial issues. UNDP attempted to fight fake news published on social media that undermines civil peace by building awareness about how to address it. This study also looks at the comprehensive approach that UNDP decided to adopt in 2020: mechanisms for stability and local development (MSLD)-media-education and whether this has a positive impact on Lebanon's social stability.

Triangle has reviewed all the relevant project documents provided by UNDP (*detailed in Annex* D) and summarised the interventions in the following sections:

B. COUNTERING FAKE NEWS AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS

Throughout its media component, UNDP has attempted to counter the fake news published on social media that undermines civil peace and negatively impacts social cohesion and respect for "the other". This was done through two main project components: training on fact-checking for media practitioners; and training on hate speech and fake news for the youth and their subsequent local online and offline awareness campaigns at a local level.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH MEDIA PRACTITIONERS

To address the problem of the immense amounts of disinformation and minsinformation, UNDP worked on improving the supply of truthful information. This was done by reinforcing journalistic ethics and professionalism and improving media literacy among information consumers. UNDP worked on building institutional capacities inside key media outlets to mainstream the culture of fact-checking for the long term. Through various projects, UNDP raised awareness about fake news and how to identify and tackle it. The main project implementations are detailed in the following Table 1:

TABLE 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF CAPACITY BUILDING AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH MEDIA PRACTITIONERS

Date	Partner	Implementation
2019	Bayanat Box	Production of a series of visual and evidence-based campaigns on fake news and its impact on social stability in Lebanon.
2020-21	LBCI	Raising awareness on the impact of fake news with a series of infographics and campaigns involving social media influencers.
2022	LBCI	Working on combatting the spread of fake news at a national level with two short TVCs to be

		broadcasted on LBCI and different social media platforms (Count till ten campaign)
2022	Agence France Presse	Training 37 media reporters and journalists from different Lebanese media outlets, followed by coaching to tackle the challenges faced during implementation.
2022	Agence France Presse & National News Agency	Training 10 National News Agency reporters and news editors in the NNA headquarters (central team) and field offices on detecting fake news and writing fact-checked reports.

TRAINING ON HATE SPEECH AND FAKE NEWS FOR YOUTH

UNDP is training Lebanese youth on hate speech and fake news and then supporting them in using their newly learnt skills to create local campaigns. In 2020, UNDP in partnership with Dawaer NGO supported a group of 40 youths from several communities across Lebanon to enhance their capacities to detect and debunk fake news. Following the training, the youth participants created a social media campaign called "Healthy news contributes to your health". As a result, Facebook and Instagram pages were created, where fact-checked news was posted on these social media platforms. The youth participants further produced ten local campaigns to counter the spread of fake news at a local level. These campaigns tackled various forms of hate speech that fuel tensions and conflicts, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on stereotyping of communities and individuals.

To build on the successful experience, UNDP expanded its youth training by reaching out to 51 new young students from media departments at Lebanese universities for a regional selection. UNDP trained the 51 selected youth on recognising forms of hate speech, its online tool for fake news, monitoring and detecting them, and advocating against their spread. In a similar approach to 2020, UNDP continued its training for the youth participants to develop new campaigns. These regional and national campaigns – both online and offline - include creating communication and media materials, awareness sessions in 20 villages and universities, and interactive plays.

C. PROVIDING POSITIVE MEDIA SPACES & PROMOTING RATIONAL DISCOURSE

THE NEWS SUPPLEMENT

Since 2012, UNDP has worked on providing positive media spaces and promoting rational discourse by printing and distributing quarterly news supplements called "The Peace Building

in Lebanon News Supplement". The 16-page document addressed issues related to civil peace and the repercussions of local and geopolitical events in Lebanon.

UNDP encouraged journalists, writers and media practitioners to participate in the news supplement, using objective approaches – free of stereotyping and misconceptions - and to offer conflict-sensitive coverage in the media. During phase one, about 40 mid-career TV, radio and print reporters - most of whom are women - from different local media outlets undertook joint assignments in the field on strategic issues and became better informed on the importance of using less "biased" language in their reporting, particularly during conflict. In total, the project published 28 printed issues distributed in Arabic with *Annahar*, previously *As-safir*, in English with Daily Star, and in French with *l'Orient-Le Jour*.

THE ONLINE PLATFORM

In 2021, the project ceased the supplement's print publication and shifted the content to an online digital platform: Salam wa Kalam. On this platform/website, UNDP offers a safe and hate-free space for journalists, writers, and researchers to share content about various topics related to peace and development. The content includes written articles, storytelling video reports, interviews, animation videos, and selected media and TV reports prepared by prominent journalists from local TV stations.

D. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The UNDP "Peace Building in Lebanon" project's outcomes and outputs are as follows:

Outcome 1: Local communities and institutions ability to mitigate tensions and prevent conflict are strengthened, and the overall response on the evolution of tensions informed

Output 1: Education promoting social cohesion supported;
Output 2: Media empowered to promote balanced and conflict-sensitive media coverage;
Output 3: Local-level peace-building strategies to mitigate tensions developed in selected conflict-prone areas of Lebanon hosting Syrian refugees;
Output 4: An NGO platform promoting nation-wide truth and reconciliation supported ex-fighters' role in promoting peace building supported.
See the detailed Results and Resources Framework in Annex E.

E. THEORY OF CHANGE

At the national level, the project's theory of change holds that Lebanese media, with support to provide objective and inclusive reporting which highlights positive contact between refugees and host communities, can decrease the perpetuation of stereotypes and prejudices in the media.

Under the project, media practitioners received training related to fact-checking and fake news. These training also supported Lebanese media to provide objective and inclusive reporting. The online digital platform Salam wa Kalam provided a platform for dialogue and to disseminate peacebuilding messages. The website widely included the experiences and opinions of women and other marginalised groups.

As a result, people have more positive perceptions of and attitudes towards 'others,' including greater trust between identity groups. Complementarily, at the local level, the project supported youth to counter fake news at their villages and local level through fact-checking techniques and coaching so they could launch local campaigns to counter them and promote hate-free speeches.

F. KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The majority of stakeholders were staff from the implementing organization (UNDP) and implementing partners: the NGO Dawaer, Agence France Presse. Additional key stakeholders included the Lebanese Ministry of Information and partner media outlets.

G. ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL GROUPS AND CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

While the project design included gender and disability as cross-cutting themes, it did not attempt to mainstream gender. Furthermore, it is unclear how persons with disabilities were consulted and meaningfully involved in programme design, planning and implementation. The Salam wa Kalam digital media platform regularly published articles focused on cross-cutting themes, such as women and people with disabilities. Additionally, the selection process for youth training on fact-checking and hate speech targeted the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities.

H. PROJECT RESOURCES

From January 2014 to December 2022, the project budgeted USD 4,501,115.50 under output 2 – the media component – of the Peacebuilding in Lebanon project (third phase) to empower media to promote balanced and conflict-sensitive media coverage. The project funding came from KFW and UKAID. At the time of the TOR's publication, in May 2022, the project's expenditure was USD1,554,582. The total allocated budget including KFW7 (upcoming process) is USD2,259,892 during the same period.

4. EVALUATION SCOPE & OBJECTIVES

4.1.   EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The aim of the evaluation was intended to specifically measure the impact of the media component activities from January 2020 to December 2022, inclusive of:
- Salam wa Kalam digital media platform
- Fake news national media campaigns
- Training on fact-checking for the media practitioners
- All training on hate speech and fake news for the youth, including their local online and offline awareness campaigns at a local level.

The evaluation was part of The UNDP Peace Building Project's commitment to assess the achievements of the different components' results against what was expected to be achieved.

These included:
1. Whether media in Lebanon were empowered to promote balanced and conflict-sensitive media coverage:
- Did the intervention inadvertently alter conflict dynamics at local and national levels?
- Did respondents see media as a cause for tension on local and national levels?

2. The extent and quality of public awareness achieved:
- To what extent did local and national campaigns increase awareness of the impact of fake news?
- To what extent was there a change in perception of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of hate speech and fake news?
- Were national local online and offline campaigns effective in their media and communication engagement?

3. Provide recommendations for sustainability and needed follow-up, and determine the challenges, lessons learned, and best practices.

4.2 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

RELEVANCE
The extent to which the intervention suited to the theory of change, and the priorities and needs of the people and communities it intended to benefit, with specific reference to the experiences and opinions of women and other marginalised groups:

- To what extent is the intervention based on an accurate analysis of the conflict, and does it therefore address key driving factors or key driving constituencies of the conflict?
- Is it working on the right issues in this context at this time?
- Is the theory of change on which the activity/policy is based a logical or sensible one in this context at this time?
- To what extent did the project's support relevant to the achievement of the SDGs in the country
- To what extent was the intervention in line with national development priorities, country programme outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?
- To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the design?

EFFECTIVENESS:

The reasons behind the achievement of outputs and whether these are leading to unintended consequences. Whether the media activities are ultimately contributing to the realisation of the project's output or whether outputs are contributing to the achievement of the CPD outcomes:

- To what extent are the programme objectives being achieved or are likely to be achieved?
- What are the major factors influencing achievement or non-achievement of the project objectives?
- To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents (men, women, other groups) and changing partner priorities?
- What have been the key results and changes attained for men, women, and vulnerable groups?

EFFICIENCY

The reasons behind the achievement of outputs and whether these are leading to unintended consequences. Whether the media activities are ultimately contributing to the realisation of the project's output or whether outputs are contributing to the achievement of the CPD outcomes:

- Are the objectives being economically achieved by the programme?
- What is the utilization ratio of the resources used to date? Are activities cost-efficient?
- Are objectives being achieved on time?
- Is the programme being implemented in the most efficient way compared to the alternatives?

- To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

IMPACT

Progress towards the media component output (Media empowered to promote balanced and conflict sensitive media coverage) or impact. The role of the Salam wa Kalam digital media outlet, Fake News campaigns, and the trainings on fact-checking for journalists and on hate speech and fake news for youth and their local online and offline awareness campaigns:
- Is the development intervention contributing to the higher level development objectives?
- What is the impact of the programme in proportion to the overall situation of the target group?
- What real difference is the programme making to beneficiaries?

SUSTAINABILITY

The extent to which the benefits of the media-related activities are likely to continue in the long-term, after their completion.
- What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability in order to support female and male project beneficiaries as well as marginalized groups?
- To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry design?

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES:
- To what extent has the project promoted and contributed towards the other SDG's?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women?
- Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in programme planning and implementation?
- To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?
- To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular?

5. EVALUATION APPROACH & METHODS

5.1 EVALUATION APPROACH

Following UNDP's guidelines and required deliverables, this final evaluation covers all activities undertaken in the framework of the media component from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. The evaluation team adopted a mixed-method approach to research and data collection for the evaluation. This approach relied on several data inputs, comprised of quantitative and qualitative data, analysis, and triangulation.

OECD CRITERIA

Triangle used the reconstruction of the programme's theory of change and the OECD-DAC criteria to evaluate the outcomes, rationales, and implementation of the intervention. Hence, the evaluation adopted a theory-based design, using contribution analysis, to address the evaluation questions.

CAUX GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This evaluation abided by the Caux Guiding Principles as a best-practices framework. This framework was established during a five-day conference held in Caux, Switzerland. During the Caux conference a lengthy and ongoing discussion among various stakeholders involved in evaluating the media's impact in conflict prevention and peacebuilding eventually agreed on Caux Guiding Principles. As a result, a set of eight principles on how to improve the process of assessment were agreed.

5.2. EVALUATION METHODS

In the evaluation, Triangle engaged key stakeholders, which were involved in the implementation process, as well as project staff. Evidence obtained and used to assess the results was gathered from a variety of sources, including data on objectives' achievement, existing reports, and stakeholder interviews. This ensures a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the data, generated through the evaluation.

This evaluation's framework relies on several inputs of data, presenting a robust approach comprised of qualitative data, analysis, and triangulation. Where possible, Triangle's analysis team used multiple sources to support analytical findings, insisting upon inter-source corroboration for optimal results. This triangulation approach allows for direct interaction between different research activities – being KIIs and the adaptive literature review – to maintain analytical objectivity. Accordingly, this section details the various evaluation activities that will support the overarching framework.

This report bears a rating to the project against the OECD-DAC selected evaluation criteria. It uses the 5-point Likert rating method with the following scale against each of the evaluation criteria (5 for highly satisfactory, 4 for satisfactory, 3 for partially satisfactory, 2 for unsatisfactory and 1 for highly unsatisfactory).

ADAPTIVE LITERATURE REVIEW:

In line with the evaluation framework, Triangle has undertaken an adaptive literature review of project documentation provided by UNDP (*see Annex E for full list*), and relevant secondary sources. The latter includes available media sector analysis, reports from development agencies, and academic sources. The literature review started during the inception phase and remained adaptive throughout the evaluation as new information became available and spurred further lines of inquiry. When literature was found to be unavailable, the research team tried to integrate information gaps in primary data collection tools and interview guides.

INCEPTION INTERVIEWS:

Alongside the literature review, a series of inception interviews with programme staff took place to provide the basis for issue identification as well as context-specific introspective tools development. As such, overarching tools were developed and approved by UNDP as part of the Inception Report and were be piloted on selected key informants to test their relevance and appropriateness. Issue-specific tools followed the agreed-upon formats and were amended to be employed during field deployment.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS:

Evaluators conducted a total of 12 individual KIIs with UNDP programme staff, media experts, Salam wa Kalam contributors, and direct beneficiaries to the projects including youth and media practitioners. These interviews were mainly to detect trends and perspectives at a programme and issue-specific level.

TABLE 2: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW SAMPLING FRAME.

Strata	Participant Profile	Number
Programme staff, **Experts and Beneficiaries**	UNDP Programme Staff	2
	Implementing Partners	2
	Media Experts	3
	Salam wa Kalam Contributors	2
	Direct beneficiaries (youth and media practitioners)	3

Total	12

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS:

Evaluators conducted a total of 9 FGDs to elaborate upon, validate and draw out nuanced dynamics to inform the analysis and recommendations. FGDs were further stratified to collect valuable data on the perspectives of direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project. FGDs with direct beneficiaries included youth who received training on hate speech and fake news, and media practitioners who received training on fact checking. FGDs with indirect beneficiaries included community members of municipalities targeted by the first and second rounds of the local campaign. The control group included community members in municipalities not targeted by local campaigns.

TABLE 3: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SAMPLING FRAME.

FGD Profile	Participant Profile	Gender	No. participants
Project Direct Beneficiaries	Training on Hate Speech and Fake News (Youth – Group 1)	Mixed (3f, 3m)	6
	Training on Hate Speech and Fake News (Youth – Group 2)	Mixed (3f, 2m)	5
	Training on Fact-Checking (Media Practitioners - Group 1)	Mixed (4f, 2m)	6
	Training on Fact-Checking (Media Practitioners - Group 2)	Mixed (2f, 1m)	3
Project Indirect Beneficiaries	Kfarmatta: targeted by first round of local campaign (community members)	Female	9
	Kfarmatta: targeted by first round of local campaign (community members)	Male	7
	Tripoli: targeted by second round of local campaign (community members) Tripoli	Female	8
	Tripoli: targeted by second round of local campaign (community members)	Male	6
Control	Barja: not targeted by local campaigns (community members)	Mixed (4f, 5m)	9
Total	**9 FGDS – 59 participants (33 females, 26 males)**		

SURVEYS:

Evaluators gathered quantitative data through 436 surveys conducted by enumerators in the municipalities targeted, and non-targeted (control group), by the youth local campaigns. All surveys were further stratified according to male and female.

In total, 336 surveys were completed with targeted communities across 21 villages, whilst 100 surveys were completed with non-targeted communities across 2-3 nearby villages that shared a similar socio-economic and historical background.

TABLE 4: SURVEY SAMPLING FRAME.

Strata	Target Number	Achieved #	Achieved %	Target Per Targeted Village (21)
Community Members Male (targeted)	**168**	**168**	**100%**	8 per targeted village
1. Syrian		17	10%	
2. Lebanese		141	84%	
3. Palestinian		10	6%	
4. None of the above		0	0%	
Community Members Female (targeted)	**168**	**168**	**100%**	8 per targeted village
1. Syrian		11	7%	
2. Lebanese		139	83%	
3. Palestinian		15	9%	
4. None of the above		3	2%	
Total targeted population surveys	336	336	100%	Target completed
Case Study (Control Group) Surveys				
Community Members Male (non-targeted)	**50**	**50**	**100%**	Randomly selected from 2-3 nearby villages that have not been targeted but have similar socio-economic and historical backgrounds.
1. Syrian		4	8%	
2. Lebanese		39	78%	
3. Palestinian		6	12%	
4. None of the above		1	2%	
Community Members Female (non-targeted)	**50**	**50**	**100%**	
1. Syrian		3	6%	
2. Lebanese		43	86%	
3. Palestinian		3	6%	
4. None of the above		1	2%	
Total non-targeted population surveys	**100**	**100**	**100%**	Target completed
Total Survey Number				**436**

5.3.   CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

In addition to OECD-DAC criteria-specific questions, Triangle developed research tools and analysis strategies suited to measuring and understanding cross-cutting issues, which affect the entire evaluation (across all specific criteria). First, Triangle research methodology and tools were appropriate and adapted for gender sensitivity and avoiding gender bias. Where

possible, sampling for KIIs drew on female and male participants in equal proportions. Questions were specifically designed with gender sensitivity in mind, to ensure that they can elicit any potential gender biases; at the same time, Triangle's field team ensured that respondents of all genders could respond free from intimidation or harassment to all research questions. Second, the developed tools tackled the integration of human rights and the inclusivity of people with special needs in the project design and implementation. The tools were specifically tailored to ensure the accessibility and involvement of persons with special needs in the evaluation.

5.4 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (EVALUATION MATRIX):

Triangle maintains rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that data collection, analysis and reporting standards are maintained and developed throughout project lifecycles. These assurance mechanisms are designed to ensure that research produced by Triangle is rigorous, ethical, adheres to international best practices and meets the highest quality research standards. Triangle's management team are the ultimate duty-bearers of quality assurance mechanisms while team leaders are tasked with upholding standards throughout project cycles. In turn, Triangle's management team holds bi-weekly meetings with team leaders in order to ensure that quality assurance mechanisms are adhered to and corrective actions are taken in due course.

5.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research conducted by Triangle seeks to ensure accordance with local laws and regulations as well as the adoption of ethical research principles throughout project cycles. As such, Triangle's management team first conduct legal and ethical briefings with team leaders and primary staff involved in research activities prior to the commencement of research activities. During this process, contextual legalization and regulations are reviewed in order to ensure that research activities fall within the law of any localities where the company operates. Subsequently, an assessment of ethical considerations is conducted depending on the research in question; for example, with regard specific ethical considerations pertaining to research involving children, survivors of sexual- and gender-based violence.

Once preliminary legal and ethical assessments are completed, Triangle then develops a project-specific legal and ethical framework and applies both through the project life cycle. Accordingly, team leaders are tasked with ensuring that legal and ethical guidelines are maintained and upheld. Monitoring and assurance of legal and ethical guidelines are conducted by Triangle management who review progress at project milestones and during bi-weekly quality assurance meetings with team leaders.

Triangle's Code of Conduct (*see Annex I*) lays out ethical standards which ensure the protection of, and respect for informants, clients, and programme beneficiaries, as well as Triangle employees, consultants, partners and their employees. Further, the Code of Conduct is designed to ensure effective processes and accountability for assignments.

See consent forms in Annex F.

5.6. BACKGROUD INFORMATION ON EVALUATORS

Triangle's project team consists of a team, a local research director and a M&E expert. Key personnel were supported by Triangle's in-house analysts, editors, and administrators. Several of Triangle's support staff were involved in conducting and compiling interviews, given the wide reach of the project.

NIZAR GHANEM — TEAM LEADER AND M&E EXPERT

Nizar Ghanem, Triangle's Director of Research, has more than a decade's worth of extensive experience in policy research, economic development, and conflict analysis. Nizar served as the team leader for Real Time Monitoring of Intra-Lebanese Tensions commissioned by UNDP (2020-2021). Nizar's portfolio pertaining his work in conflict studies includes founding the Lebanese based Centre for Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding, one of the early initiatives that worked on post-war reconciliation and national memory; managing a multi-million-dollar conflict resolution programme in Iraq, where he organised tens of conflict resolution workshops; and lecturing on conflict resolution at the Lebanese American University.

Nizar also conducted several conflict sensitivity mapping and strategic evaluations for the EU Commission, Oxfam and USIP, with project spanning Syria, Lebanon, Tunisia and other countries in the region. Also, Nizar has conducted several post-conflict development assessments in Lebanon, including the UNDP commissioned Labour Market Assessment in Arsal 2018 to guide economic recovery in North Bekaa.

At Triangle, Nizar has designed multiple research studies and evaluations for clients such as NORAD, ESCWA, UNICEF, UNDP, Oxfam, DRC, and others. He is currently helping direct Triangle's new media mapping project "The Alternative" which aims to promote a more informed democratic discourse in Lebanon, prioritising political accountability and common sense over sectarian slogans and fear-mongering. Previous to Triangle, Nizar was a Senior Analyst at the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies where he authored various reports and published scholarly articles on a variety of topics related to governance and development in

the West Asia and North Africa region. Nizar holds a Master's in International Relations and Economics from the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

SHAYA LAUGHLIN — LOCAL RESEARCH DIRECTOR

Shaya Laughlin is a research analyst with experience leading data analysis for projects in Lebanon and Syria, with a focus on development, peacebuilding and media. Shaya was recently an analyst for two projects for the United Nations Development Programme in Lebanon (UNDP): a monitoring and mapping project of intra-Lebanese tensions; and an evaluation for an Arab regional trade integration project. She was also the Chief Analyst for a gender and drought study in Northeast Syria funded by Mercy Corps. Shaya is an experienced journalist whose work has been published widely by NewsCorp Australia, as well as other outlets such as the New Humanitarian, Reuters and L'Orient Today. In addition, Shaya is experienced in managing field teams, overseeing project implementation, identifying and mitigating risks as well as developing field strategy. Shaya holds a Master's degree in History and International Relations with a focus on the Middle East from the University of Saint Joseph in Lebanon alongside a Bachelor of Journalism from Bond University in Australia.

AHMAD MUSTAKA— QUANTITATIVE SPECIALIST

Ahmad Al-Mustaka specialises in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies in research and evaluation. He holds more than seven years of hands-on experience in the humanitarian and development sectors in the MENA region. Ahmad previously served as Information Management lead at CARE International, MEAL Senior Officer at Oxfam, and is currently acting as the Regional Information Management lead at IFRC. In this capacity he has contributed to the success of UNICEF, ECHO, UKAID, GAC, BPRM, Clover Leaf, DANIDA, RDPP, and DFAT-funded projects, among others. Ensuring the adoption of Information and Communication Technology, Ahmad has developed various databases from the ground up, deploying mobile data collection methods and ethics, feedback and complaints systems, and visualising findings into interactive dashboards and infographics. At Triangle Ahmad has worked with various international organizations including UNDP, as well as in on TPM projects in Syria for the European Union. Ahmad holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the Lebanese University.

HISHAM JABER-CHEHAYEB — RESEARCH ANALYST

Hisham Jaber-Chehayeb is a researcher analyst at Triangle where he conducts qualitative research and analyses manipulated quantitative data. His work portfolio includes work with several organisations such as Agence Française de Developpement, Mercy Corps, Terre Des Hommes, the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC), and The Lebanese Red Cross. Hisham has extensive experience in conducting research, qualitative and quantitative data collection, data analysis, and reporting. Hisham is currently working towards obtaining

his Master of Public Health degree in Health Management and Policy from the American University of Beirut, in Lebanon, and also holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the same university.

JAD HAJJAR— FIELD COORDINATOR

Jad Hajjar is a field research manager and moderator with extensive experience overseeing qualitative and quantitative field work in governorates and cities across Lebanon. For the past several years, Jad has been the field coordinator for a number of projects and evaluations with Triangle. His work includes preparation for field work such as the adaption of research tools to local contexts and specific dialects, facilitation of focus group discussions and key informant interviews, and overseeing the quantitative data collection team. Jad's role ensures the quality of the data collected for Triangle's analysts, while also assisting them in data cleaning and interpretation. He is currently working on an analytical study of access to justice mechanism for SGBV cases of syrian refugees in Lebanon for UN Women and he has recently completed the field work for an evaluation of the AICS Cash-For-Work Programme in Lebanon. Other recent work includes field experience with Triangle organizing teams to conduct mixed-methods research in Lebanon for UNDP, UNHCR, Oxfam and DRC. Previous to Triangle, Jad has managed projects for clients such as UNICEF and Terre Des Homes, focusing on areas such as protection and education of vulnerable Syrian and Lebanese children. Jad holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics the University of Saint Joseph in Lebanon.

5.7. MAJOR CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

As noted previously, the main limitations of this study were the incomplete documentation regarding baseline data for all activities implemented, and the lack of specific data about the population impacted by national and local campaigns. Hence, following discussions with UNDP project staff, Triangle proposed conducting a comprehensive programme evaluation.

Given that one of the aims of the evaluation is to improve development interventions in the sector, there is a degree of bias to be anticipated, in particular when considering data coming from internal KIIs. The team obtained an adequate cross-section of gender-balanced KIIs, FGDs and surveys to ensure all perspectives were reflected and recommendations are crafted accordingly.

Some of the lines of inquiry in this study bore different safety and security risks for field teams and research participants in Lebanon. Therefore, while Triangle investigated all lines of inquiry in all areas and the specific research tool (for example, FGDs) used in each vicinity differed

according to a conflict-sensitive methodology that reflected principles of do no harm and broader safety and security risks.

5.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data acquired during the desk review was incorporated across several levels of the research to inform sampling, tools, analysis and reporting. Given the timeframe associated with this project, the analysis team commenced cleaning and analysing all qualitative and quantitative data as it came in from field teams. Upon completion of the data collection and analysis, Triangle presented the final findings in a presentation to UNDP.

A team of research analysts conducted the analysis to draw robust and meaningful conclusions rooted in the Lebanese and operational context. All evaluation activities were reviewed directly in Arabic by Triangle's in-country teams to avoid loss of information in translations and reverse translations.

Triangle analysed all qualitative and quantitative data collected using the grounded theory method, also known as the Glaser-Strauss method. Under this approach, the analysis team iteratively reviewed data according to principles of inductive reasoning instead of working deductively from a hypothesis and/or predicted finding(s). The grounded theory method allowed the analysis team to validate the information from the field as necessary, further reinforcing the iterative research philosophy.

Three main approaches were employed during qualitative analysis:

1. **Categorising and classification:** The analysis team defined generalisable categories iteratively according to principles of inductive reasoning instead of working deductively from a hypothesis and/or predicted finding(s).

2. **Comparing, contrasting and synthesis:** The analysis team then identified particular passages from interviews as they relate to emerging analytic categories. The writing of integrative memos allowed for the correlation of different themes and categories around the media sector and UNDP project in Lebanon and explored their interrelation. Data then was disaggregated by demographic indicators (geographical location, institution etc.) to look for patterns and correlations.

3. **Triangulation:** The evaluation team then triangulated data gathered through literature review and the KIIs to ensure the integrity of the findings. A minimum of two methods were necessary to inform a finding.

6. EVALUATION FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

6.1   RELEVANCE

Summary: UNDP's project theory of change was relevant to Lebanon's need to address the impact of fake news and hate speech on social cohesion. The project design aimed to improve relationships between Syrian refugees and host communities in line with SDGs and LCRP goals. The media practitioner training was relevant to their needs and priorities in news organisations across Lebanon. The youth training used real-life examples to teach young people new skills to detect and debunk hate speech and fake news. Overall, the awareness campaigns addressed communities' lack of awareness and tools to deal with fake news and hate speech in Lebanon. The articles published on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform covered topics relevant to Lebanon's context. The switch from an offline supplement to an online platform followed the trend of the overall media landscape. Furthermore, the project design included gender and disability as cross-cutting themes.

This report bears the following rating for the relevance criteria: Satisfactory (4)

UNDP's project theory of change was relevant to Lebanon's need to address the impact of fake news and hate speech on social cohesion. There is evidence that social tensions are increasing in Lebanon, putting social stability and civil peace at stake. The widespread circulation of fake news and hate speech exacerbates an already tense situation, stirring up fears, tensions, and inter and intra-community conflicts. UNDP's project design supported Lebanese media to provide objective and inclusive reporting and was therefore seen as relevant. The project design also aimed to support youth to counter fake news at their villages and local level through fact-checking techniques and coaching so they could launch local campaigns to counter them and promote hate-free speeches. The project's theory of change was based on the project's lessons learned since 2007 and wider UNDP Lebanon experiences in conflict prevention and social stability. Overall, the project targeted the relevant key stakeholders to effectively promote rational discourse in Lebanon and address fake news and hate speech.

The training was relevant to the needs and priorities of media practitioners who work in news organisations across Lebanon. The AFP digital verification team helped journalists to develop fact-checking practices and raise awareness about the dangers of misinformation in all fields. The fact-checking training for media practitioners was relevant to Lebanon's diverse media landscape. The training brought media practitioners from newsrooms with different political and sectarian backgrounds. Qualitative data shows that the examples used during the training were relevant. During KIIs and FGDs, media practitioners gave concrete

examples of how they used the skills they learnt during the training in their newsroom.

"We chose things related to Lebanon, specifically to the elections, to the economic crisis, to everything that was happening during this period in Lebanon," - KII with implementing partner.

The training used real-life examples to teach youth new skills to detect and debunk hate speech and fake news. The training addressed fake news during COVID-19, lockdowns, the Beirut blast, and fuel and bread shortages. Trainers used real-life examples to show the youth how fake news can threaten social stability in Lebanon. Youths then targeted specific issues at the local level for awareness campaigns. Overall, UNDP's training process was flexible and allowed for a customised, context-relevant approach, design and implementation of the activities. Another example is the idea of doing theatre pieces as awareness sessions, which came later into the training. The project design was flexible enough to enable its implementation.

"We came up with the idea [of theatre plays] suddenly, we liked it and insisted on doing it," – KII with implementing partner.

UNDP's project design was flexible enough to allow amendments to its targeting strategy for youth training. The selection process was amended from selecting youths active in their communities in phase one to youths studying media or journalism in phase two. This change of strategy was based on a lesson learned from the first phase. The new approach increased the motivation and commitment of training participants. Out of the 51 youths who started, only a few did not complete the entire training. Furthermore, the amended strategy filled a gap within university programmes that don't currently include fact-checking courses for journalism and media students. Indeed, a study done by LAU's media lab surveyed journalism students and found that more than 70% did not distinguish fake news.

"There is no media literacy in the Lebanese curriculum and society," – KII with Lebanese media expert.

The awareness campaigns addressed communities' lack of awareness and tools to deal with fake news and hate speech in Lebanon. As fake news and hate speech are seen increasing, the campaigns remain relevant. A third of survey respondents in the non-targeted control group said hate speech was highly prevalent in their community. Furthermore, 81% thought the prevalence of fake news in their community was increasing, 21% said they didn't know what hate speech was, and 76% said not enough was being done in their community to combat misinformation. Syrians and Palestinians rated the prevalence of hate speech in

their communities as much higher than Lebanese in both targeted and non-targeted villages. All Syrians from non-targeted villages said its prevalence was very prevalent, compared to only 23% of Lebanese. Qualitative data also corroborated these findings. All FGD participants thought fake news threatened social stability in Lebanon, especially since 2019. Several participants perceived fake news and hate speech as having a more significant impact on younger populations because of their higher internet usage. While some younger participants knew the need to validate with trusted sources or investigate more and surf the web, they did not report using any steps or tools to perform more structured and reliable fact-checking.

"It's terrible, we see hate speech every day in our society," – FGD female participant in Kfarmatta.

"It's destroying national unity," – FGD participant in Barja.

The switch from an offline supplement to an online platform followed the trend of the overall media landscape. The majority of media organisations now have an online presence. The circulation of all three newspapers - Daily Star, OLJ and An-Nahar - in which the supplement was published has decreased significantly and continued to suffer a severe slowdown. As such, the Salam wa Kalam digital platform responds better to modernisation trends in the media field. UNDP's new vision also allowed the introduction of new content formats, such as video reports which continue to dominate online, particularly social media, trends. In theory, the online platform could help have a comprehensive outreach and dissemination of peacebuilding messages.

The articles published on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform covered topics relevant to Lebanon's context. The produced content was relevant to UNDP's development agenda and its link to peacebuilding. The issues addressed topics such as human rights and freedom of expression, which are essential to Lebanon's context. The platform widely included the experiences and opinions of women and other marginalised groups. Content contributors' areas of expertise were relevant to the content they contributed to the website.

The project design aimed to improve relationships between Syrian refugees and host communities in line with SDGs and LCRP goals. The project responds to SDG 16: "Building inclusive and peaceful societies". It is also in line with the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP 2017-2022) for the Syrian crisis adopted by the Government of Lebanon.

The participation of Syrians and Palestinians in the project's training activities was limited, despite refugees being key targets of fake news and hate speech in Lebanon. Out of the 47 youth who fully participated in the project's second phase, only four were Syrian

(two females and two men), and two were Palestinian (one female and one male). Most media practitioners involved in the training were Lebanese, with only a few Syrians. The project design did deal, however, with refugee themes. During KIIs, UNDP programme staff said the low number of Syrian and Palestinian participants was mainly related to UNDP's project design to target media practitioners in Lebanese media institutions who the majority are Lebanese, and media students from media faculties, who are also mostly Lebanese. Furthermore, the youth training and awareness campaigns followed a local approach. Notably, the project's objective was not only to target Syrians but also to work on changing the discourse vis a vis of Syrians and non-Lebanese in general.

"The program and mandate of UNDP are to work with host communities. We do target refugees within the country, but our main objective is the wider communities," KII with UNDP project staff.

The project design included gender and disability as cross-cutting themes but did not attempt to mainstream gender. Article topics for Salam wa Kalam included gender and disability. Overall, however, project planning documents did not address gender mainstreaming, which made it difficult to subsequently monitor or evaluate activities. Additionally, no key informant mentioned gender mainstreaming during interviews. During KIIs, the project was considered non-discriminatory and inclusive of men and women, since there were more females than males in the training for media practitioners and youth. However, a high number of female participants is not a significant indicator as it does not provide insight into whether the women involved participated meaningfully and were able to influence project activities.

6.2   EFFECTIVENESS

Summary: The Salam wa Kalam's digital media platform created a safe and positive space for dialogue in Lebanon. More than 170 articles were posted on the Salam wa Kalam digital media platform from May 2020 to the end of 2022, with a total view of 27,334. A total of 47 media practitioners were equipped with fact-checking skills readily transferable to their daily work. The project trained 91 youth from across Lebanon on fact-checking and hate speech, helping some find employment in this emerging field. The project supported local actors technically in designing and implementing social media campaigns to tackle fake news in their communities. Interactive plays and videos were also used to raise awareness and start conversations about fake news and hate speech in targeted communities. The project adjusted its work plan to adapt to the changing context in Lebanon, such as COVID-19 and the fuel crisis.

This report bears the following rating for the effectiveness criteria: Satisfactory (4)

The Salam wa Kalam's digital media platform created a safe and positive space for dialogue in Lebanon. The supplement was initially printed since 2013 and during the evaluation timeframe (in 2020 and beginning of 2021) in partnership with OLJ, Daily Star, Assafir (before its closure) and Annahar. The supplement went digital in December 2021 as the Salam wa Kalam digital platform. The website is one of Lebanon's few hate-free spaces promoting rational discourse in addressing controversial topics. The platform has a wide range of content creators from different sectarian and political backgrounds, including journalists from the old and existing newspapers; journalists from the new media and platforms; researchers and policymakers; youths and artists. Contributors are trained to use conflict-sensitive language and informed on the importance of using less "biased" language in their reporting**.** Key national issues addressed on the platform included transport and mobility, energy and peacebuilding, among others.

"With neutrality, you can reach more people," – KII with UNDP project staff.

More than 170 articles were posted on the Salam wa Kalam digital media platform from May 2020 to the end of 2022, with a total view of 27,334. The total number of articles posted (171) included the archive of the printed supplement, as well as the articles of the latest four issues. The average number of views per article was 161. All the articles were published in English and Arabic; only 2% of the articles were not published in French. Website data about the number of views per language was not available. Thirty video reports were published the digital platform, aligning with its new vision. The average number of views when the content included video was 88, about half of the overall average number of views per article**.** Overall, website visitors mainly came from Lebanon, followed by the US and France. The website data did not make it possible to visualise the geolocation of readers or view trends over time.

"I have never seen someone or even another media platform talk about this site or say they engaged in it," – KII with Salam wa Kalam contributor.

A total of 47 media practitioners were equipped with fact-checking skills readily transferable to their daily work. UNDP trained media practitioners, at both local and national levels, on fact-checking techniques to support them in better facing this phenomenon. The training promoted fact-based and non-biased media coverage. In phase one, from February 2020, 37 journalists from 18 media outlets - television stations, newspapers, new media, radio stations, and websites - attended the training. In phase two, from June 2022,10 reporters from the National News Agency attended. All media

practitioners later received coaching sessions on fact-checking strategies and techniques. Qualitative data shows that most journalists used the skills they learned in their newsroom, confirming UNDP's assumptions that they would. All journalists said the training promoted balanced and conflict-sensitive media coverage. A guidebook was also produced on this topic.

"They introduced us to a lot of very useful tools, that I had not heard of," – KII with media practitioner participant, phase one.

The project trained 91 youth from across Lebanon on fact-checking and hate speech, helping some find employment in this emerging field. UNDP trained youth on fact-checking techniques and coached them on launching campaigns – at their village and local level – to counter fake news and promote hate-free speech. In phase one, in 2020, 40 youths launched local online and offline campaigns in 10 villages. In phase two, in 2022, 51 youths launched local online and offline campaigns in 21 villages. During FGDs, youth reported learning new skills to detect and debunk hate speech and fake news. Youth also participated in launching national online campaigns on UNDP and Dawaer social media platforms.

"I am studying in this field, and this training helped me a lot in university," – FGD with youth participants, phase two.

"They brought back my passion for the media after I had lost it…" – FGD with youth participants, phase two.

The project supported local actors technically in designing and implementing social media campaigns to tackle fake news in their communities. UNDP with the support of Dawaer coached youth and provided them with technical support through online and offline training to implement campaigns:

Phase one:

Phase one campaigns targeted 10 villages: Aley, Choueifat, Damour, Amyoun, Ryaq, Qab Elias, Tripoli, Maghdoushe, Haret Saida, and Chekka. The youth trained youth were involved in designing a social media campaign – "sohtak men sohet el khabar" (real heathy news contribute to your health/wellbeing) – to enhance awareness among local communities on how to identify and combat fake news. As part of this, they produced 11 animated videos using local examples. The reach and engagement of the videos on the UNDP and Dawaer social media platforms rose positively throughout the project. For example, UNDP and Dawaer gained nearly 1000 followers on Instagram and on Facebook, where engagement on

both platforms increased by about 60% since the campaign began. The campaign also received interest from local and international media outlets.

Phase two:

Phase two campaigns targeted 21 villages and areas. Youths were involved in producing visibility materials, ads on hate speech and fake news, and campaign videos on social media. Two national campaigns were also produced and posted on UNDP and Dawaer's social media platforms. There were two main activities for offline campaigns: discussion sessions in universities and interactive theatre performances in villages. As part of the online. The video campaigns' reach was a total of 94,921 across UNDP and Dawaer's Instagram and Facebook pages, and the engagement 62.

Interactive plays were used to raise awareness and start conversations about fake news and hate speech in targeted communities. Overall, 20 theatre performances were conducted across Lebanon, which drew more than 1300 spectators – primarily women, children and youths. The engagement was reportedly good, especially during the discussions. UNDP supported the youth in writing the script and rehearsing for the shows. MSLD committees[23] in the targeted villages provided continuous support, especially in booking and reservations for the play. An additional and separate two discussions were held at AUST and LU. Notably, half of the surveyed respondents from targeted villages said they learnt about UNDP's campaign by attending a theatre performance. In comparison, a third of respondents said they had been involved in an awareness session. In non-targeted areas, 86% of the people who knew about the UNDP campaign said it was after watching a related video.
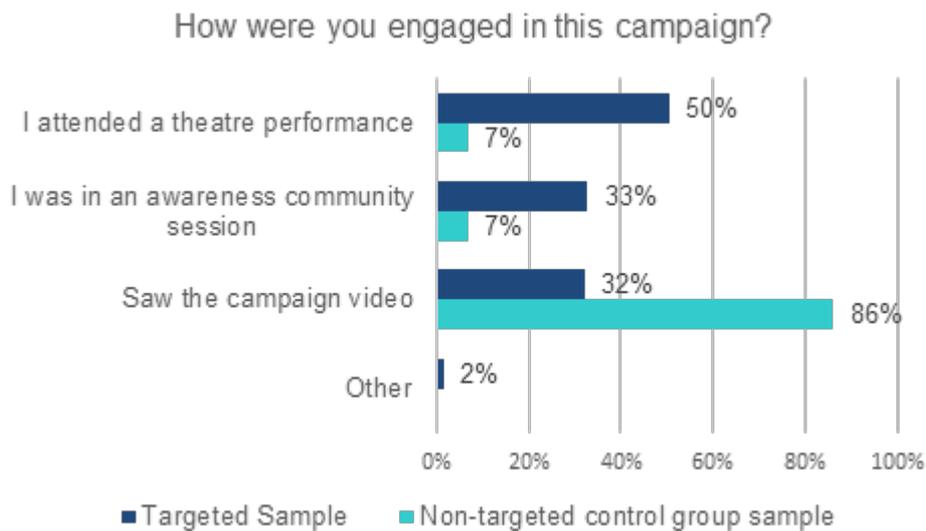

FIGURE 1: SURVEY RESULTS FOR CAMPAIGN ENGAGEMENT.

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[23] The Stability and Local Development (MSLD) committee, formed by diverse members of local communities, are part of UNDP's continued engagement and efforts with MLSD processes.

"The interaction was excellent. We could see how happy the elderly and the kids were. It was an amazing experience," **FGD with youth participant, phase two.**

The project adjusted its work plan to adapt to the changing context in Lebanon, such as COVID-19 and the fuel crisis. When COVID-19 started, the in-person training sessions were moved online. Implementing partners conducted PCR tests for youth training, and anyone who tested positive attended the session online. Amid Lebanon's fuel crisis, the two-day training for NNA journalists was condensed into one day.

6.3   EFFICIENCY

Summary: UNDP effectively collaborated with key external stakeholders and leveraged existing partnerships to publish content on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform. Content contributors to the Salam wa Kalam platform reported benefiting from UNDP's smooth coordination, editorial process and strategy. Media practitioners praised AFP's professionalism and competency in conducting fact-checking training. Coaching and follow-up sessions ensured that media practitioners remembered the skills they learnt during the fact-checking training sessions. Despite external challenges, training sessions with youth were conducted efficiently and without major delays. Lessons learned throughout the project were systematically documented to ensure effective and efficient management.

This report bears the following rating for the efficiency criteria: Highly Satisfactory (5)

UNDP effectively collaborated with key external stakeholders and leveraged existing partnerships to publish content on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform.

Externally:

UNDP primarily partnered with Lebanese University, Issam Fares Institute for Public policy and international affairs, new media outlets, and the youth leadership programme. Partnerships were also based on the topic at hand. For example, for the 'Mobility and Peacebuilding' issue, UNDP partnered with 'Riders' Rights' for content. During KIIs, some contributors said they wouldn't have contributed content to the Salam wa Kalam platform without an existing partnership between their institution and UNDP. Other key external partners included the Ministry of Information.

Internally:

UNDP collaborated with MSLD village coordinators in the targeted areas to strengthen the relationship between the youth and local communities and to facilitate the implementation

of activities. MSLD coordinators helped youth understand the challenges and dynamics of each village and supported the youth's awareness campaigns.

"It was a great experience because we got connected with several TV journalists," – KII with Salam wa Kalam contributor.

Content contributors to the Salam wa Kalam platform reported benefiting from UNDP's smooth coordination, editorial process and strategy. During KIIs, contributors said they were given the platform and resources to share their expertise more creatively. Contributors were given the ability to work in various mediums, such as video, to communicate their message better. Furthermore, contributors who usually write in one language had the opportunity to have their work published in other languages. However, some contributors noted that additional brainstorming sessions to exchange ideas would have been beneficial. Project staff raised minor technical issues and delays with procurement for payments and agreements with content contributors.

The peacebuilding supplements published on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform were, on average, about 40% more efficient financially than printed supplements. According to cost comparison data provided by UNDP, the total cost needed to produce four supplements on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform was USD79,284.55 (on average, USD19,821.14 per digital supplement). On the other hand, the total cost needed for six printed supplements was USD197,070 (on average, USD32,845 per printed supplement). While writing, editing and translation costs were similar for digital and printed supplements, printing and distribution costs were much higher than the costs of video content production.

Media practitioners praised AFP's professionalism and competency in conducting fact-checking training. During FGDs, all training participant praised AFP's two trainers and their expertise in the field. AFP has an excellent reputation in journalism for fact-checking, and the training lived up to it. Qualitative data shows that all the training sessions were practical and included a good mix of theory and practice. The AFP trainers used clear ideas and examples that were understandable by both in-person and online training attendees. During KIIs, UNDP internal staff said that AFP had exceeded expectations for the quality of the training.

"The two trainers were very competent," – FGD with media practitioners, phase two.

Coaching and follow-up sessions ensured that media practitioners remembered the skills they learnt during the fact-checking training sessions. One month after the training

sessions, the media practitioners attended coaching sessions - one online and one in-person. The sessions were to discuss the challenges faced during the implementation and work on assignments developed by the AFP team as a follow-up and refresher on the tools acquired. During the coaching sessions, media practitioners could ask follow-up questions on scenarios they had faced at work. However, during KIIs, several participants reported that the training was too short and that it should be extended with additional content.

"We wanted to make sure that all the techniques and tools were very well explained and that journalists are really using them," – KII with implementing partner.

Despite external challenges, training sessions with youth were conducted efficiently and without major delays. Overall, the project overcame external challenges such as COVID-19, the Beirut explosion and rising fuel prices. Implementing partners helped motivate youths amid a difficult period for Lebanon. Qualitative data shows that the collaboration between UNDP and Dawaer was efficient throughout the ten months of training. Internal project documents report only one minor misunderstanding between the two regarding the institution's name on shared campaign video content.

"I didn't feel that it was like Dawaer and UNDP, I felt like it was one team working together for the sake of the project" – KII with implementing partner.

In phase one, youth noted a need for more engagement with their content on social media and an overall low return on investment. During FGDs, youths from the first round of training raised doubts about the efficiency of the project compared to its allocated budget. Some youths noted that help from more skilled media experts during the training would have been beneficial to increase engagement with their online content. Furthermore, several youths pointed out that the project was halted abruptly without any explanation or recognition for their work. Programme staff noted several challenges in implementing the first phase of training, including COVID-19, the financial crisis and the Beirut blast. Notably, similar concerns were not brought up by youth participants in phase two.

"For a project with this much funding, we expected better," - FGD with youth participants, phase one.

Lessons learned throughout the project were systematically documented to ensure effective and efficient management. Internal project documents show that UNDP and its implementing partners kept in-depth and clear reporting documentation of ongoing and concluded project activities. For example, UNDP changed its targeting strategy for youth training based on lessons learned. At the end of the training periods for media practitioners and youth, UNDP conducted internal FGDs with training participants to get a deeper

understanding of their perceptions of the training, as well as the skills and knowledge that they learned. UNDP used these insights to improve further training programmes.

6.4   IMPACT

Summary: The media practitioners' training increased the capacity of media organisations across Lebanon to provide their audiences with factual information. The training and activities for youth improved social cohesion and increased the trust between participants from diverse backgrounds. Youth who participated in the training reported using the skills they learned through the UNDP project both personally and professionally. Local awareness campaigns, online and offline, strengthened communities' awareness and understanding of fake news and hate speech. However, their impact was limited due to their limited outreach. Furthermore, Salam wa Kalam's digital platform also did not have a significant impact on Lebanon's democratic media culture, also due to its limited outreach. There was a lack of baseline data and defined metrics to measure and assess the project's impact, especially on communities targeted by local awareness campaigns.

This report bears the following rating for the impact criteria: Partially satisfactory (3)

Salam wa Kalam's digital platform did not have a significant impact on Lebanon's democratic media culture. UNDP's assumption was that the content would be read by opinion makers, community leaders and social referents, who can influence public beliefs. Hence, in 2022, the content's dissemination targeted networks of journalists, youth, and the UNDP platform at a national level. However, media experts interviewed said they did not read the content published on the Salam wa Kalam website. Notably, only 15 people signed up for the Salam wa Kalam newsletter through the website. During KIIs, content contributors noted that they had hoped for a wider reach and more feedback on the content post-publishing. The engagement on Twitter was reportedly low. At the local level, only about a quarter of survey respondents said they knew about UNDP's Salam wa Kalam platform (23%). The number of those who knew about the platform was slightly higher in targeted villages - 23% vs 19% in non-targeted areas.

The media practitioners' training increased the capacity of media organisations across Lebanon to provide their audiences with factual information. Qualitative data showed that most newsrooms across showed enthusiasm and motivation towards the fact-checking training. Indeed, all FGD participants noted the importance of the project activities. Phase one journalists said they shared the workbooks provided by AFP with their newsroom colleagues. During FGDs, it was noted that An-Nahar's department in charge of checking fake

news had grown since the UNDP training. The training motivated other media practitioners and newsrooms to seek out similar programmes. However, phase two journalists (NNA) said they found it challenging to share the information with their colleagues due to a lack of interest.

"We write the news in a more conscious way… we pay attention to several details that we were unaware of before the training," FGD with media practitioners, phase two.

The training and activities for youth improved social cohesion and increased the trust between participants from diverse backgrounds. Qualitative data shows that the training, in both phases, brought together youth from across Lebanon. The youths travelled across Lebanon to perform interactive plays. For some, it was their first time visiting certain areas of the country. The project activities helped address their preconceptions and stereotypes about people from different regions or backgrounds. During FGDs, youth noted that they had created new networks of friends who stay in touch through the training programme.

"We built a new family and made new friends. We stayed for over a year together and made a lot of memories," – FGD with youth participants, phase two.

"This bonding, I guess, is one of the reasons for the success of this project," – KII with implementing partner.

Youth who participated in the training reported using the skills they learned through the UNDP project both personally and professionally. During FGDs, youth reported sharing the skills and tools with their families and communities. According to internal reporting, the participants showed increased knowledge on fake news and hate speech. The youths also expressed more critical thoughts about ongoing events and presented improved communication skills and teamwork. Qualitative data also showed that the skills were also valuable for the youths' future development as media professionals. Indeed, about four youths found employment in fact-checking after the training.

The impact of local awareness campaigns was limited due to their low outreach. Only 39% of the survey respondents from targeted villages said they were familiar with UNDP's local fake news and hate speech campaigns. In the areas which were not targeted, 14% of people said they had heard about the campaign. Qualitative data also shows that the campaign's reach was low. In Tripoli, no FGD participant had heard of the UNDP campaign. Furthermore, similar perceptions regarding fake news and hate speech were noted in both

targeted and non-targeted villages. For example, survey respondents reported similar ways of knowing whether the information they received was accurate.
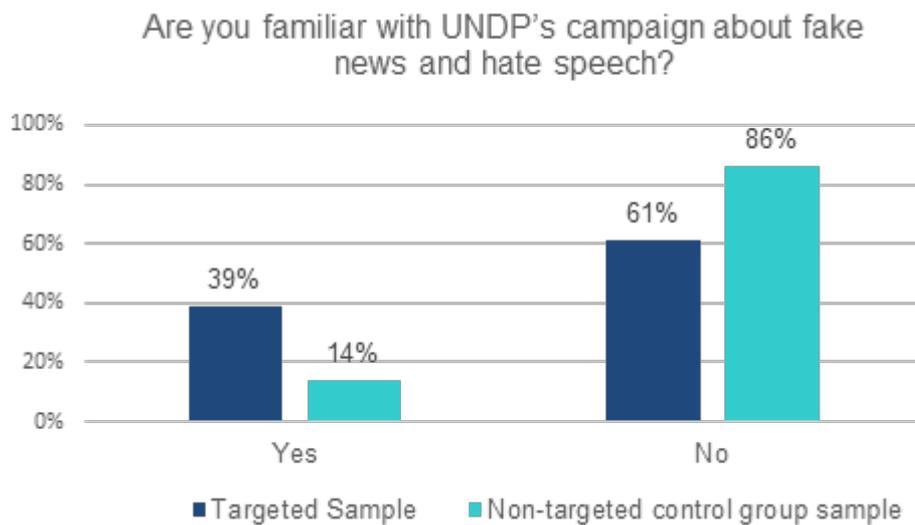
Are you familiar with UNDP's campaign about fake news and hate speech?

FIGURE 2: SURVEY RESULTS FOR CAMPAIGN OUTREACH.

Local awareness campaigns, online and offline, strengthened communities' awareness and understanding of fake news and hate speech. Nearly half of the survey respondents rated their improvement in understanding fake news and hate speech as three out of five. Similarly, 51% of respondents gave the same score (3/5) regarding the tools they received from the campaign to detect fake news and hate speech. Most of the respondents from targeted areas said the skills they learnt were helpful to them daily. Most of the campaign audience said they shared what they learnt through the campaign with other community members.

To what extent did the campaign strengthen your understanding of fake news and hate speech?
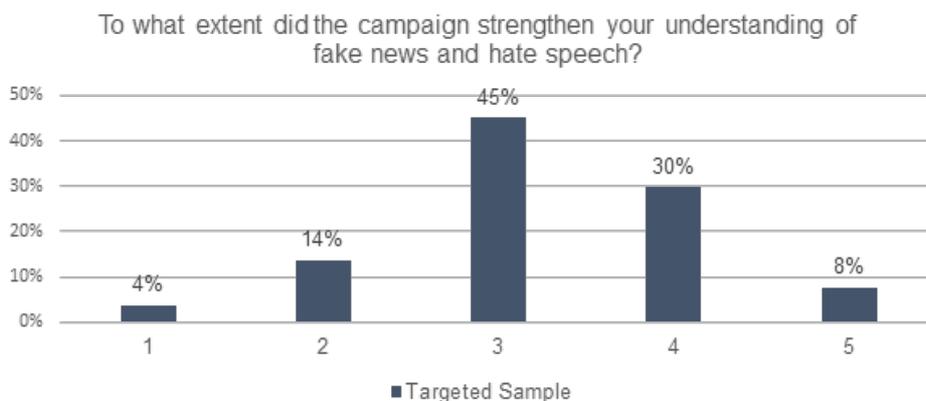

FIGURE 3: SURVEY RESULTS FOR CAMPAIGNS' IMPACT ON POPULATION'S UNDERSTANDING OF FAKE NEWS AND HATE SPEECH.

Eighty per cent of survey respondents who knew about UNDP's campaign said it changed their thoughts about fake news. The rest of the respondents said it had not changed their

thinking on the topic (11%) or did not know (9%). Notably, respondents with higher levels of education reported higher levels of change in their perception of fake news.
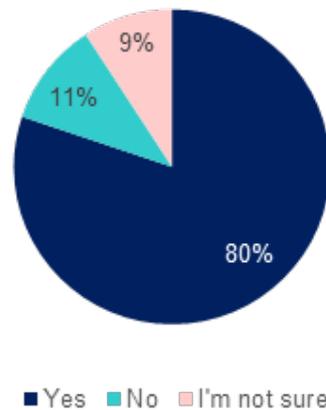

FIGURE 4: SURVEY RESULTS FOR CAMPAIGNS' IMPACT ON POPULATION'S UNDERSTANDING OF FAKE NEWS AND HATE SPEECH.

Only respondents from targeted villages said they used verification apps or websites to check what they read online through verification apps or websites (7%). Overall, about a third of respondents from targeted villages said they double-checked information they read online through a second source of information, compared to only 9% from non-targeted areas.
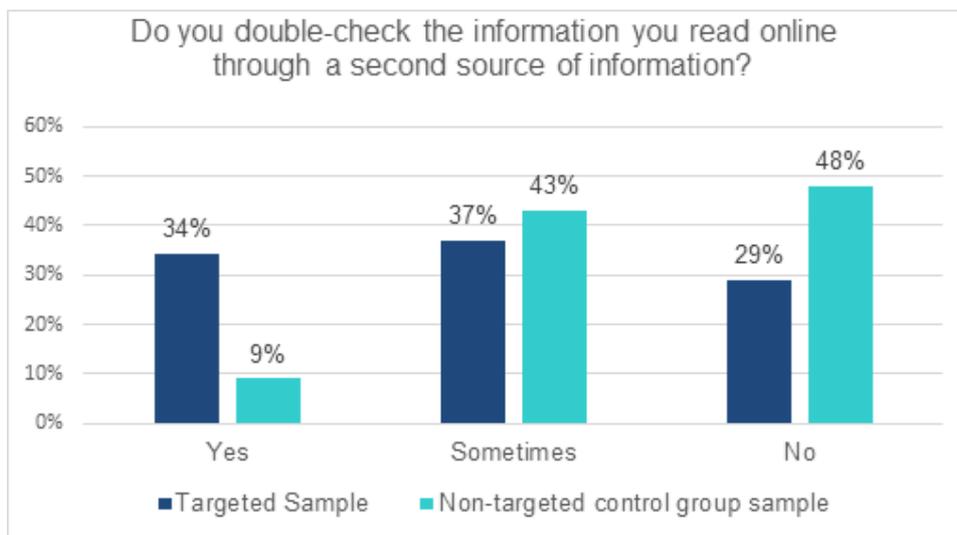

FIGURE 5: SURVEY RESULTS FOR POPULATION'S FACT-CHECKING HABITS.

There was a lack of baseline data and defined metrics to measure and assess the project's impact, especially on communities targeted by local awareness campaigns. No baseline study was conducted on which to build monitoring indicators, impeding UNDP's ability to monitor the overall programme. UNDP's monitoring systems did not possess a conceptual framework backed with flexible tools to capture baseline, mid-line and end-line

data. As a result, it made it difficult to determine to what extent the project contributed to reducing inter and intra-community tensions.

6.5 SUSTAINABILITY

Summary: Salam wa Kalam's move to an online platform made it more sustainable in the current media context. Following the UNDP training, several youth participants used the skills they acquired to create an independent fact-checking platform. Media practitioners reported needing additional training to keep up with fake news trends and the latest fact-checking tools. UNDP's continuous work on building institutional knowledge through in-depth reporting of project activities will facilitate future interventions.

This report bears the following rating for the sustainability criteria: Satisfactory (4)

Salam wa Kalam's move to an online platform made it more sustainable in the current media context. Fewer people are buying newspapers. Most people seek their information and news online. However, UNDP's exit strategy to enable the platform to sustain itself is unclear. Indeed, the website did not reach self-sustainability, and the platform is still far from reaching independent economic viability whereby earning its own revenue to conduct reporting.

"One of the (major) struggles that the media landscape is facing nowadays in Lebanon is sustainability," – KII with Lebanese media expert.

Media practitioners reported needing additional training to keep up with fake news trends and the latest fact-checking tools. During FGDs, all media practitioners said they needed regular training to keep practicing what they had learned and to stay ahead of constantly evolving fake news trends. The coaching sessions were not deemed enough. During KIIs, AFP also said regular training rather than one-off sessions were needed.

"One session is not enough. Continuous sessions are needed since we face fake news on daily basis," – FGD with media practitioners, phase one.

"I would tell my dad not to send news he is not sure of," - FGD with youth participants, phase two.

Following the UNDP training, several youth participants used the skills they acquired to create an independent fact-checking platform. As part of a competition, a group of six youths pitched their idea and then independently launched their own platforms and reached out to local communities to form partnerships on their own. They marketed the initiative through a QR code. The Sawab initiative started via Whatsapp and is now on Instagram and other social media platforms. UNDP and Dawaer supported the team initially, and the youths now run the initiative.

"The youth are now continuing the work we started on their own platforms and without guidance from us," – KII with UNDP project staff.

"We are now able to conduct a campaign [Sawab] in the name of the youth, which is used to check the news," – FGD with youth participants, phase two.

UNDP's continuous work on building institutional knowledge through in-depth reporting of project activities will facilitate future interventions. Reporting helps with the lesson-learning process. It also ensures that staff are kept up to date on project progress and can build on previous work. The project's detailed record-keeping will help enhance future projects' performance in the long term.

6.6. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Summary: Women outnumbered males during the youth and media practitioner training programmes. The selection process for youth training on fact-checking and hate speech targeted the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities. It is unclear how persons with disabilities were consulted and meaningfully involved in programme design, planning and implementation. The project design supported the inclusion of refugees, women and youth on the Salam wa Kalam platform, but a lack of data made it difficult to measure the extent of their participation. The platform regularly published articles focused on cross-cutting themes, such as women and people with disabilities.

This report bears the following rating for the sustainability criteria: Partially satisfactory (3)

Women outnumbered males during the youth and media practitioner training programmes. Out of 51 youths involved in the second training phase, 31 were female – 26 Lebanese, three Syrian, one Palestinian and one Jordanian. Overall, out of the 37 media practitioners who participated in the training sessions, 28 were women. During KIIs, the higher level of females was attributed to the high number of females in media professions.

Despite a higher level of women participants, it is unclear how the project contributed to SDG 5: "Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls".

It is unclear how persons with disabilities were consulted and meaningfully involved in programme design, planning and implementation. Data provided by UNDP lacks information about how persons with disabilities were involved in the project. There is no disaggregated data per disability for training participants or Salam wa Kalam contributors.

The Salam wa Kalam digital media platform regularly published articles focused on cross-cutting themes, such as women and people with disabilities. The topics with the most views on average were risk reduction (772 average views), citizenship travel emigration initiative (498) and initiative art youth wa Kalam photo stories (460). However, a lack of clarity on how articles were categorised made it hard to conduct further analysis. Other topics included: refugees, migrant workers, the elderly, LGBTQ+, and persons at risk.

"We're offering this a safe space to discuss topics related to development and peacebuilding according to the needs of local communities, women, refugees, LGBTQ, and other vulnerable groups in Lebanon," – KII with UNDP project staff.

The project design supported the inclusion of refugees, women and youth on the Salam wa Kalam platform, but a lack of data made it difficult to measure the extent of their participation. Internal documents show that the project design gave space to Syrians, Palestinians and other nationalities of artists and journalists to contribute to the Salam wa Kalam platform. Additionally, the project focused on supporting the inclusion of women and youth to contribute their content, articles or artwork. Furthermore, qualitative data shows that, in each issue, there was a minimum of about three topics highlighting stories of women, refugees, elderly women, Syrians and Palestinians. However, the content data was not disaggregated by the author's nationality.

"In certain issues, we would have six or seven out of our ten writers be women," – KII with UNDP project staff.

The selection process for youth training on fact-checking and hate speech targeted the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities. However, it is unclear how these specific criteria were used throughout the training programme. For example, there is no documentation outlining whether any youths identified as LGBTQ+ or as having a disability and whether they had any agency over the project activities.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1:

UNDP's project theory of change was relevant to Lebanon's need to address the impact of fake news and hate speech on social cohesion. The project design aimed to improve relationships between Syrian refugees and host communities in line with SDGs and LCRP goals. However, the participation of Syrians and Palestinians in the fake news program was limited, despite refugees being key targets of fake news and hate speech in Lebanon.

Conclusion 2:

Lessons learned throughout the project were systematically documented to ensure effective and efficient management. The project adjusted its work plan to adapt to the changing context in Lebanon, such as COVID-19 and the fuel crisis. However, there was a lack of baseline data and defined metrics to measure and assess the project's impact, especially on communities targeted by local awareness campaigns.

Conclusion 3:

The articles published on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform covered topics relevant to Lebanon's context, UNDP's development agenda and peacebuilding. The switch from an offline supplement to an online platform followed the modernisation trend of the overall media landscape. UNDP effectively collaborated with key external stakeholders and leveraged existing partnerships to publish content on the Salam wa Kalam digital platform. Content contributors to the Salam wa Kalam platform reported benefiting from UNDP's smooth coordination, editorial process and strategy. However, Salam wa Kalam's digital platform did not have a significant impact on Lebanon's democratic media culture due to its limited outreach.

Conclusion 4:

A total of 47 media practitioners were equipped with fact-checking skills readily transferable to their daily work. The training was relevant to their needs and priorities for their work in news organisations across Lebanon. Media practitioners praised AFP's professionalism and competency in conducting fact-checking training. Coaching and follow-up sessions ensured that media practitioners remembered the skills they learnt during the fact-checking training sessions. The media practitioners' training increased the capacity of media organisations across Lebanon to provide their audiences with factual information. However, they reported needing additional training to keep up with fake news trends and the latest fact-checking tools.

Conclusion 5:

The project trained 91 youth from across Lebanon on fact-checking and hate speech, helping some find employment in this emerging field. Youth who participated in the training reported using the skills they learned through the UNDP project both personally and professionally. Despite external challenges, training sessions with youth were conducted efficiently and without significant delays. UNDP's project design was flexible enough to allow amendments to its targeting strategy for youth training. Furthermore, the training and activities for youth improved social cohesion and increased the trust between participants from diverse backgrounds. Following the training, several youth participants used the skills they acquired to create an independent fact-checking platform.

Conclusion 6:

The awareness campaigns addressed communities' lack of awareness and tools to deal with fake news and hate speech in Lebanon. The project supported local actors technically in designing and implementing social media campaigns to tackle fake news in their communities. Most notably, interactive plays were used to raise awareness and start conversations about fake news and hate speech in targeted communities. Local awareness campaigns, online and offline, strengthened communities' awareness and understanding of fake news and hate speech. However, the impact of local awareness campaigns was limited due to their low outreach.

Conclusion 7:

While the project design included gender and disability as cross-cutting themes, it did not attempt to mainstream gender. Furthermore, it is unclear how persons with disabilities were consulted and meaningfully involved in programme design, planning and implementation. The Salam wa Kalam digital media platform regularly published articles focused on cross-cutting themes, such as women and people with disabilities. Additionally, the selection process for youth training on fact-checking and hate speech targeted the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of these findings, the evaluation team highlights the following key recommendations for future UNDP programming and engagement for its media component:

Recommendation 1 deals with	Relevance: project scope
Recommendation 1 is directed at	UNDP

Extend the fact-checking training programmes to other journalists and journalism students across Lebanon to create a society with credible news sources. Given the need for training to debunk fake news and identify hate speech, UNDP should advocate to include media literacy classes in school curriculums across Lebanon. UNDP should also ensure the meaningful participation of Syrians and Palestinians in the fake news and hate speech activities so that their voices are represented in a topic that significantly affects them.

Recommendation 2 deals with	Efficiency: M&E architecture
Recommendation 2 is directed at	UNDP

Create a baseline for future interventions targeted to the project's direct and indirect beneficiaries. Defined metrics are needed to assess the project's impact, especially on communities targeted by local awareness campaigns. Baseline data is also needed to determine the extent to which the project reduced inter and intra-community tensions. Furthermore, UNDP should continue building institutional knowledge through comprehensive reporting and lessons learned documentation.

Recommendation 3 deals with	Impact: increasing outreach
Recommendation 3 is directed at	UNDP

Work on a marketing strategy to increase the visibility of the Salam wa Kalam digital platform to relevant stakeholders. UNDP should revise its plan to target Lebanon's opinion makers, community leaders and social referents, who can influence public beliefs. A specialised team is needed to manage the Salam wa Kalam digital media platform. Hiring a managing editor and social experts would relieve pressure on the programming staff.

Furthermore, UNDP could link contributors with professional journalists and editors to help them express their ideas to a wider audience. Furthermore, additional tools are needed to measure and evaluate the website's data. For example, more detailed demographic data of readers, disaggregated by gender.

Recommendation 4 deals with	Efficiency: frequency of activities
Recommendation 4 is directed at	UNDP

Implement regular follow-up training sessions for media practitioners to ensure they are updated with the latest fake news trends and fact-checking tools. UNDP should consider having different levels of training depending on the person's experience in fact-checking – for example, beginners and advanced. The length of the training sessions for media practitioners should be extended. The sessions would be more useful if they were shorter but more regular on specific topics.

Recommendation 5 deals with	Effectiveness: project scope
Recommendation 5 is directed at	UNDP

Continue to involve the trained youth participants in other relevant activities. For example, skilled youth could help train others in their universities and communities about fake news and fact-checking. UNDP could consider giving a stipend to youth who dedicate a long period to project activities to increase their commitment and motivation.

Recommendation 6 deals with	Relevance: project scope
Recommendation 6 is directed at	UNDP

Focus on the local-level impact of project activities rather than the national level. UNDP could leverage its connections in local communities through MSLD focal points and youth to build on its project activities and awareness sessions at the local level. The Salam wa Kalam digital platform outreach strategy could also focus on local actors. As part of this, UNDP could expand and decentralise the training for media practitioners to target local journalists and news organisations.

Recommendation 7 deals with	Cross-cutting issues: gender
Recommendation 7 is directed at	UNDP

Ensure that future project activities guarantee more solid gender mainstreaming and inclusion of persons with disabilities. The project design needs to formulate explicit objectives to mainstream gender and meaningfully involve women and persons with disabilities. Such objectives should be designed to impact advancing the empowerment of women and persons with disabilities positively. The project could work on assessing the impact and consequences of fake news and hate speech on women and persons with disabilities. Further considerations should be given to promoting employment for women and persons with disabilities and challenging discriminatory social norms in the media industry.

9. LESSONS LEARNED

- Tools to measure project activities' impact are essential to capture the initiatives' benefits for beneficiaries adequately. To measure project activities successfully, baseline data needs to be gathered before implementation.

- In the current media landscape, digital news platforms are more efficient than printed supplements. However, an adequate marketing strategy is required to reach the targeted stakeholders.

- Media practitioners are confronted daily with fake news and hate speech within their work. Periodic and specific training sessions are essential to ensure media professionals stay updated with evolving fact-checking tools and fake news trends.

- Youths who are involved in journalism and media studies are motivated to tackle fake news and hate speech within their communities. These youths could be involved in training a larger number of local stakeholders.

- Awareness campaigns have a bigger impact at the local level, than at the national level. Future initiatives should leverage existing partnerships and influence within local communities for increased effectiveness and efficiency.

- Gender mainstreaming cannot be limited to increased female participation in training and workshops. The meaningful involvement of women needs to be an integral part of the gender mainstreaming of all media-related initiatives.

10. ANNEXES

ANNEX A: ENDLINE PERCEPTION SURVEY

[attached separately]

ANNEX B: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE

[attached separately]

ANNEX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

[attached separately]

ANNEX D: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. Direct Beneficiaries
- Reporters AFP-Annex E: List of names and Contact Details
- Youth 2021-2022-Annex C: Fake News Candidates Details
- Youth 2021-2022-Annex D: Village Focal Points and Contact Details

2. Donors Quarterly and Annual Reports
- First BPRM Report (October-December 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    a. US-BPRM – Progress Report (October-December 2021)
- Q1. US-BPRM 3 Progress Report (January-March 2022) & Relevant Annexes
- Q2. US-BPRM 3 Progress Report (April-June 2022) & Relevant Annexes
- KfW4_2021
    a. Annual Report 2021 & Relevant Annexes
    b. Q1: KFW4_bi-monthly report (Jan-Feb 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    c. Q1: KFW4_progress report Feb-April 2021 & Relevant Annexes
    d. Q2: KFW4_progress report May-July 2021& Relevant Annexes
    e. Q3: KFW4_progress report August-October 2021 & Relevant Annexes
- KFW4_2022
    f. KFW4_progress report February-April 2022 & Relevant Annexes
    g. KFW4_progress report May-July 2022 & Relevant Annexes
- KFW5_2021
    a. KFW5 – Annual Report 2021 & Relevant Annexes
    b. KFW5_progress report August-October 2021 & Relevant Annexes
    c. KFW5_progress report Jan-Feb-Feb-April 2021 & Relevant Annexes
    d. KFW5_progress report May-July 2021 & Relevant Annexes
- KFW5_2022
    a. KFW5_progress report Feb-April 2022 & Relevant Annexes
    b. KFW5_progress report May-July 2022 & Relevant Annexes
- KFW6_2021
    a. Q1 Report (Feb-April 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    b. KFW6_progress report Feb-April 2021
    c. Q2 Report (May-July 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    d. KFW6_progress report May-July 2021
    e. Q3 Report (August-October 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    f. KFW6_progress report August-October 2021
    g. KFW6 Annual Report 2021 & Annual Report
- UK5_2021
    a. Q1 Progress Report FCDO5 (Jan-March 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    b. Q2 Progress Report FCDO5 (April-June 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    c. Q3 Progress Report FCDO5 (July-September 2021) & Relevant Annexes
    d. Q4 Progress Report FCDO5 (October-December 2021) & Relevant Annexes

ANNEX E: RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

Results and resources framework as per the UNDP Project Document:

INTENDED OUTPUTS	OUTPUTS TARGETS FOR (YEARS)	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	INPUTS
Output 2: Media empowered to promote balanced and conflict sensitive media coverage Baseline: 1) Lack of impartial and multifaceted reporting on issues affecting social cohesion in Lebanon and with communities hosting Syrian refugees 2) The Journalists' Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace signed but not yet implemented 3) Limited media monitoring on the type of and effects of reporting 4) Poor or biased coverage of strategic issues regarding the implementation of past agreements 5) Lack of channels for conveying positive messages through media 6) Lack of a fact checking oriented media culture and lack of skilled reporters in fact checking techniques	Targets (year 1) The media observatory established and the required experts recruited 4 Periodic data reports on the implementation of the Journalists' Pact articles published 4 Animated infographic videos covering the Journalists Pact published and broadcasted on two main TV channels Production of a TV conveying the main messages of the Journalists' Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon 4 joint supplements produced by reporters and editors from different media outlets A participatory Media Campaign on the impact of the Syrian crisis onLebanese hosting communities covering issues related to social cohesion organized 4 newsletters portraying the different achievements and challenges of the Action	2.1. Support media monitoring based on the Pact through an establishment of a media observatory that will have a team of observers analysing a media database 2.2. Publish periodic data reports on the implementation of the Journalists' Pact articles 2.3. Publish animated infographic videos covering the "Journalists Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace" to be broadcasted on two main TV channels 2.4. Organise an annual discussion forum around the above themes and the annual media coverage report regarding the achievements and challenges in implementing the Pact 2.5. Produce a 30 seconds TV spot conveying the main objective of	Media outlets at the national and local levels Ministry of Information Reporters Youth	Total: USD4,5601,15.49

Indicators: 1) Number of reporters covering national and critical issues in an impartial, accurate manner 2) Number of reports produced on the implementation of the Journalists' Pact 3) Number of media outlets cooperating to produce supplements 4) Number of news articles and social media outlets covering national priority themes 5) Number of campaigns, articles, emissions, conveying positive message on key sensitive topics 6) Number of campaigns raising awareness on fact checking culture 7) Number of youth and reporters trained on fact checking	Targets (year 2) 2 Periodic data reports on the implementation of the Journalists' Pact articles published 2 Animated infographic videos covering the Journalists Pact published and broadcast on two main TV channels Four joint supplements produced by reporters and editors from different media outlets The media observatory monitoring the implementation of the pact Production of the final report on the implementation of the Pact's articles An annual discussion on the Journalists' Pact implementation results organized 4 newsletters portraying the different achievements and challenges of the Action	the Journalists' Pact for Strengthening Civil Peace in Lebanon 2.6. Organize a participatory Media Campaign on the impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanese hosting communities covering issues related to social cohesion 2.7. Publish four supplements peryear on civil peace related issues both in the key national newspapers including Annahar and As-safir, as well as promote wider dissemination through social media 2.8. Launch 2 campaigns per year on countering fake news e news 2.9. Train 100 youth per year on countering fake news 2.10. Train 35 reporters on fact checking techniques		

ANNEX F: CONSENT FORMS

A. INFORMED CONSENT FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

At the beginning of the FGD, the informed consent statement was read, explaining the purpose of the researcher's work. Each researcher explained that all information shared and obtained during the FGDs would be treated as confidential. It was also necessary to be clear that participation was entirely voluntary, and that participation or non-participation had no impact on their wider access to assistance.

Once the above was explained, enumerators established informed consent by asking the participants if they had understood and agreed to the terms, purpose, and intention of the interview. Only when all the participants stated that they had understood and agreed to the terms, purpose and intention of the interview, did enumerators commence with questions. If any participant required assistance, this was provided. The enumerator signed off on this on the next page.

Accordingly, the following statement of consent was read out loud before commencing activities:

Hello, my name is _____ and I am part of an independent research team conducting a study on behalf of UNDP. The purpose of this focus group discussion is to better understand: [to be adapted to each FGD] the experiences and perceptions of fake news and hate speech in Lebanon/ your experience with UNDP's campaign or training. The research aims to assess the logic and implementation of UNDP's media activities from January 2020 to December 2022

We are asking about things that you have been involved with directly as a participant in fake news/hate speech training or indirectly as a member of a community which was targeted by local campaigns.

All participation in this discussion is voluntary and anonymous. It is important that you feel safe and free to talk. If you agree to participate in this research, all your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. UNDP that commissioned the research will not see your individual responses. Results of this discussion will not be shared with your neighbours or any authority, and any results will not be reported in any way that could allow for your identification. Your names and contacts will not be asked for or used.

All of you are important in this discussion and all your voices are of equal value here. We encourage everyone to share their views and respect others' opinions. We ask that you confirm that we each keep each other's participation and answers confidential as we will be discussing sensitive topics.

If you do agree to take part now, you can change your mind at any time during the focus group without any implications. If you prefer to participate in an individual discussion this is also possible. However, if a question causes any anxiety or discomfort, you may also choose not to answer without giving a reason. Participation in this exercise will not result in any immediate direct benefits, nor is this linked to you receiving any services, or has an impact on

Ensure that each participant provides verbal agreement. The interviewer signs off on having acquired the informed consent of the interviewees:

"I _____confirm that all participants have provided informed verbal consent to participate in this focus group discussion."

B. INFORMED CONSENT FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

At the beginning of the KII, the informed consent statement was read, explaining the purpose of the researcher's work. Each researcher explained that all information shared and obtained during the KIIs would be treated as confidential. It was also necessary to be clear that participation was entirely voluntary, and that participation or non-participation had no impact on their wider access to assistance.

Once the above was explained, enumerators established informed consent by asking the participants if they had understood and agreed to the terms, purpose, and intention of the interview. Only when all the participants stated that they had understood and agreed to the terms, purpose and intention of the interview, did enumerators commence with questions. If any participant required assistance, this was provided. The enumerator signed off on this on the next page.

Accordingly, **the following statement of consent was read out loud before commencing the interview**:

All participation in this discussion is voluntary and anonymous. It is important that you feel safe and free to talk. If you agree to participate in this research, all your responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. UNDP that commissioned the research will not see your individual responses. Results of this discussion will not be shared with your neighbours or any authority, and any results will not be reported in any way that could allow for your identification. Your names and contacts will not be asked for or used.

All of you are important in this discussion and all your voices are of equal value here. We encourage everyone to share their views and respect others' opinions. We ask that you confirm that we each keep each other's participation and answers confidential as we will be discussing sensitive topics.

If you do agree to take part now, you can change your mind at any time during the focus group without any implications. If you prefer to participate in an individual discussion this is also possible. However, if a question causes any anxiety or discomfort, you may also choose not to answer without giving a reason. Participation in this exercise will not result in any immediate direct benefits, nor is this linked to you receiving any services, or has an impact on employment. For note-taking purposes, this interview will be recorded, however with no names, to ensure confidentiality. The records of this interview will be destroyed in 5 months and anonymity will be completely protected. Even the raw data given to UNDP, will not include any identification markers.

This discussion should take approximately thirty hours to complete. If the discussion raises any concerns for you, please feel free to raise them with the facilitator privately after the session or contact the field coordinator at the following email: [Focal point determined with UNDP]

Can we all agree to this? Do you have any questions that you would like to ask before we begin?

Ensure that the participant provided verbal agreement. The interviewer signs off on having acquired the informed consent of the interviewee:

"I _____confirm that the participant provided informed verbal consent to participate in this key informant interview."

C. INFORMED CONSENT FOR SURVEYS

At the beginning of the survey, the informed consent statement was read, explaining the purpose of the researcher's work. Each researcher explained that all information shared and obtained during the surveys would be treated as confidential. It was also necessary to be clear that participation was entirely voluntary, and that participation or non-participation had no impact on their wider access to assistance.

Once the above was explained, enumerators established informed consent by asking the participants if they had understood and agreed to the terms, purpose, and intention of the interview. Only when all the participants stated that they had understood and agreed to the terms, purpose and intention of the interview, did enumerators commence with questions. If any participant required assistance, this was provided.

Accordingly, **the following statement of consent was read out loud before commencing the survey**:

> *Hello, my name is _____ and I am part of an independent research team conducting a survey on behalf of UNDP .*
>
> *The purpose of this survey is to better understand the experiences and perceptions of fake news and hate speech in your community and [for targeted communities] your experience with UNDP's campaign on the topics.*
>
> *If you have 15 minutes I would like to ask you some questions. Your individual responses will not be reported publicly; they will be anonymized (removing any personal details), treated confidentially and used only for statistical purposes to help UNDP serve the population better. Your participation is on a voluntary basis and you're free to skip any question you don't want to answer. Additionally, you can terminate the discussion at any time. Participation in this survey has no impact on access to assistance or employment opportunities.*
>
> *Do you agree to continue this interview now? Yes/ At another time / No*

ANNEX G: SAFETY AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

SAFETY AND SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

Security and Do No Harm

The security situation varies widely in Lebanon, presenting different risks for staff and research teams. Triangle regularly assessed security risks facing its field staff and beneficiaries to maintain operational integrity and a Do No Harm[24] approach. The "Do no harm" approach minimised research risks for all stakeholders while seeking the most significant benefits for research projects. To ensure the minimisation of risks to stakeholders, Triangle and its staff respected research subjects' decisions on participation (in whole or in part), always ensured voluntary and informed consent of research subjects, as well as made an effort reasonable effort to protect research subjects from foreseen risks (e.g. through safe places for KIIs). Research teams were trained in the Do No Harm and signed confidentiality agreements with Triangle. KII participants gave their informed consent to agree on which information would be shared. All research activities, apart from certain KIIs, followed strict privacy and anonymity procedures. Participants were also given the chance to opt out if they changed their minds or felt uncomfortable, and data was anonymised and securely held. If a subject disclosed or was suspected to be at risk outside the study, a referral system was in place to refer the subject for relevant support. Triangle's data protection policies were be applied throughout

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[24] Following the OECD DAC Guidelines's standard definition, "Do-No-Harm" is here defined as: "Ways in which international humanitarian and development assistance given in conflict settings may be provided so that, rather than exacerbating and worsening the conflict, it helps local people disengage from fighting and develop systems for settling the problems which prompt conflict within their societies."OECD (2012) *Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility: Improving Learning for Results*, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, OECD Publishing, p. 11

this research, including informed consent and safe ID. Upon confirmation with UNDP, all data will be destroyed three months after completing all research activities. All Triangle researchers were be trained to abide by data protection policies, research ethics and soft skills, Do-No-Harm and safe identification. Regular updates of security risks were provided to research teams.

Emergency protocols were activated in case of an emergency in the field, and UNDP were immediately informed. The protocols entailed that whenever an incident occurred, the field team in question immediately notified the senior field coordinator, who, in turn, informed agency focal points and the team leader of the security issue. As a matter of principle, whenever a security issue occurs, all field teams are withdrawn from the field to a safe location in a prompt manner but, as much as possible, does not raise suspicion or concern amongst the local community. At the same time, agencies, the senior field coordinator, and the team leader consider the threat level and then direct field teams to either return to the field, remain in place, or relocate to a safe location.

Data Policies

Triangle conducted the evaluation according to the principles outlined in the UNEG "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation" as required by UNDP.[25] This included ensuring the security of collected information before and after the evaluation. The information knowledge and data gathered were solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses.

ORGANISATIONAL RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Risk Management Matrix

Risk	Likelihood	Mitigation Measures
Inaccessibility of project area of operations due to security or public health concerns.	High	♦ Slightly postponing the field activities in a particular locality or seeking an equivalent locality from a sampling perspective in a more secure locality. ♦ Shifting methods in a particular locality to remote modalities (KIIs).
Risk of harm to research	Low	♦ In cases where there is an

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25 UNEG, 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation', 2020. Access at:
http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866

team and research participants by government agents or armed groups.		emergency in the field, emergency protocols will be activated and UNDP will be immediately informed. The protocols entail that whenever an incident occurs, the field team in question will immediately inform the senior field coordinator who, in turn, informs agency focal points and the team leader of the security issue. ♦ As a matter of principle, whenever a security issue occurs, all field teams will be withdrawn from the field to a safe location in a manner which is prompt but, in as much as possible, does not raise suspicion or concern amongst the local community. At the same time, agencies, the senior field coordinator and the team leader will consider the threat level, and then direct field teams to either return to the field, remain in place, or relocate to a safe location.
Exposure to infection and spreading of COVID-19 to research team, research stakeholders, and local communities in the area of operations.	High	▪ Strictly adhering to COVID-19 containment measures (e.g. social distancing, mask-wearing, use of gloves and hand sanitation) in case of low risk. ▪ In case of high risk, cancel field trip to area of operations, and adopt remote evaluation modality and limited research scope in that particular locality.

ANNEX H: QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS & PROCEDURES

TRIANGLE QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS & PROCEDURES

Triangle maintains rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that data collection, analysis and reporting standards are maintained and developed throughout project lifecycles. These assurance mechanisms are centred around six core mechanisms to ensure that research produced by Triangle is rigorous, ethical, adheres to international best practices and meets the highest quality research standards. Triangle's management team are the ultimate duty-bearers of quality assurance mechanisms while team leaders are tasked with upholding standards throughout project cycles. In turn, Triangle's management team holds bi-weekly meetings with team leaders in order to ensure that quality assurance mechanisms are adhered to and corrective actions are taken in due course.

ADHERENCE TO LEGAL AND ETHICAL GUIDELINES

The research conducted by Triangle seeks to ensure accordance with local laws and regulations as well as the adoption of ethical research principles throughout project cycles. As such, Triangle's management team first conducted legal and ethical briefings with team leaders and primary staff involved in research activities prior to the commencement of research activities. During this process, contextual legalization and regulations are reviewed in order to ensure that research activities fall within the law of any localities where the company operates. Subsequently, an assessment of ethical considerations is conducted depending on the research in question; for example, with regard specific ethical considerations pertaining to research involving children, survivors of sexual- and gender-based violence.

Accordingly, team leaders will be tasked with ensuring that legal and ethical guidelines are maintained and upheld. Monitoring and assurance of legal and ethical guidelines are conducted by Triangle management who review progress at project milestones and during bi-weekly quality assurance meetings with team leaders.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management procedures at Triangle are an integral part of research activity and resource allocation. Triangle's management team consistently allocates and manages human and non-human resources to particular projects during the proposal phase, so as to ensure that such resources are available when projects commence, according to the level of effort planned.

When projects commence, Gantt charts are only the start of project planning and resourcing at Triangle. During the inception phase of projects, Triangle engages in a deep assessment of project requirements and reallocates resources according to an updated set of needs and timelines. During this process, a set of internal Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are set by Triangle management and agreed to as realistic and achievable by team leaders. Team leaders are mandated to produce bi-weekly quality assurance reports and present them to Triangle's management team for approval of project progress and agreement upon adjustments, if required.

TRAINING & TECHNICAL CAPACITY

Triangle believes that each research project requires a specific set of general skills and competencies that are supplemented by project-specific training to ensure that quality assurance standards and mechanisms are understood as well as adhered to by all research team members. Each team member undergoes a one-on-one assessment by a team leader to ensure that they have the technical capacity and resources to implement research activities accorded to them. Once the assessment is complete, any general training is scheduled and resources are allocated accordingly. When all team members are assessed to have the general training, skills and resources to conduct research activities, team leaders engage with Triangle's management team to identify project-specific training, technical capacity, and resources. Having identified these needs, Triangle management schedule and conduct project-specific training in advance of deployment.

TOOLS & ADAPTATION

Research tools developed by Triangle's team undergo a rigorous process of review by team leaders, technical advisors and external quality assurance officers. Once tools are compiled by Triangle's team, they are passed on to a technical advisor with knowledge of the project for review. Doing so ensures that the tools adhere to the technical specifications of project sector's as well as the any project requirements that may have been overlooked during tool compilation. Once technical comments are incorporated, tools are then submitted to for external quality assurance to Triangle management before they are submitted to clients for review.

After client review, tools are translated and formatted according to the needs of the project (for instance programming on hand-held devices). In particular, translated tools are reviewed to ensure meanings translate across languages. Once this process is complete, the Triangle team takes a segment of research subjects and pilots research tools on these subjects accordingly. Data from the pilot testing is then assessed by project teams in order to identify areas that are non-applicable or can be tailored to make tools more context-specific and

results oriented. Finally, tool adaptation is discussed between team leaders and management teams at Triangle before amendments are agreed and adapted for deployment.

Adaptation of tools at Triangle continues throughout field research. Team leaders cover the need or lack thereof for tool adaptation with management teams during bi-weekly quality assurance meetings and at key project milestones. Decisions on the applicability of adaptation are then taken jointly between team leaders and clients.

ANALYSIS & REPORTING

Upon completion of research activities, data from the research activities underwent a process of review and cleaning before analysis commences. Data and formats are reviewed by team leaders and analysts to identify any gaps in deliverables or number of research activities. If such gaps are identified, field teams are queried for justification and/or further completion of research activities. Field teams also remain on standby throughout the analysis and reporting phase for probing and clarification of any emerging needs from analysis teams.

Analysis frameworks vary from project to project based on the nature of the research in question. That said, each project contains a built-in analysis framework which team leaders monitor and ensure adherence with by analysts. These frameworks are developed during the pre-project and inception phases, and are adapted during the field research phase to reflect data collection realities.

Triangle ensures a minimum of two analysis rounds in order to ensure that findings are grounded in rigorous consideration and review, while the expectations and needs of clients are also incorporated in analysis and reporting. Triangle analysts employ analysis frameworks to produce a set of preliminary findings, trends and patterns from the data provided by field teams. These preliminary findings are then discussed by core team members to identify areas for further probing and quality assurance. In order to ground-truth, preliminary findings are shared with field teams for their input. Only then are preliminary findings shared with clients for review and further discussion on probing, direction and areas for recommendation.

Once this multi-stakeholder feedback has been compiled, analysts conduct another round of assessment in order to wean out nuanced findings and conduct further probing of priority areas. This process could, upon the approval of Triangle management, require further fieldwork to be conducted. At the end of this process, preliminary findings are updated and compiled as findings. With findings completed, analysts, the team leader and Triangle management discuss appropriate recommendations to meet client needs and address research questions in full.

The writing process at Triangle is both iterative and adaptive: team leaders ensure that analysis outputs are formulated in a manner which can be incorporated into clear, concise and accessible language that reflect previously agreed upon reporting formats. Reports are compiled jointly by writers, editors, analysts and overseen by team leaders. At the end of the first draft, an external quality assurance officer who is knowledgeable of the research field in question is informed of project and client requirements and mandated with a thorough review of the document in question. Project teams then address external quality review concerns before first draft reports are copy-edited and submitted for client review, comment incorporation and report finalisation.

LESSONS LEARNED & PROJECT COMPLETION

Triangle believes in fostering relationships with clients beyond project completion. That is why Triangle engages clients in a post-project debrief to identify lessons learned, areas for further cooperation, as well as methods to improve quality assurance during future research projects. Project review workshops produce written reports on the aforementioned areas, which are then reviewed for accuracy by clients and filed accordingly.

END OF QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS & PROCEDURES

ANNEX I: CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

Triangle's Code of Conduct lays out ethical standards which ensure the protection of, and respect for informants, clients, and programme beneficiaries, as well as Triangle employees, consultants, partners and their employees. Further, the Code of Conduct is designed to ensure effective processes and accountability for assignments. All those contracted by Triangle (hereafter: staff) shall act by, and uphold the core values and guiding principles laid out in the document below in all their professional activities to avoid misconduct in workplace settings[26]. Outside of workplace settings, staff should uphold the standards set out in this code of conduct so as to ensure that no ill repute comes to themselves or to Triangle. Senior personnel at Triangle have a particular responsibility to uphold these standards and shall set a good example in all their activities.

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[26] A 'workplace setting' is defined as any location or conveyance used in connection with Triangle's activities, including, but not limited to Triangle's offices, client offices, field research locations, conferences, social events connected with Triangle or its clients, email correspondence or phone conversations.

To ensure that the Code of Conduct is enforced at all times, Triangle will train its staff on its Code of Conduct regularly. External research personnel contracted by Triangle will be instructed on research subjects' protection. Triangle is also committed to keep its Code of Conduct updated and will inform and educate its internal and external staff about any updates.

CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Do no harm

Triangle's "Do no harm" philosophy commits to the values of the Charter of the United Nations, the respect for human rights, social justice, human dignity, and respect for the equal rights of men and women. The "Do no harm" approach minimises research risks for all stakeholders, while seeking greatest benefits for research projects. To ensure the minimisation of risks to stakeholders, Triangle and its staff respect research subjects' decisions on participation (in whole or in part), will always ensure voluntary and informed consent of research subjects, as well as will make effort reasonable effort to protect research subjects from foreseen risks (e.g. through safe places for KIIs).

Respect and equality

Triangle and its staff acknowledge and respect local cultures, customs, and traditions and always take into account cultural differences and corresponding approaches. As such, all stakeholders (i.e. research subjects, staff and clients) will be treated with courtesy and respect. The selection of research subjects will be fair and based on circumstances on the ground. Triangle and its staff will act — and interact with all stakeholders — truthfully and without deception at all times. Triangle is also committed to treating all stakeholders fairly, regardless of gender, ethnicity, national or religious background, age, disability, marital status, parental status or sexual orientation.

Vulnerable groups

Triangle and its staff are aware that vulnerable groups (such as—but not limited to—children, youth, women, and people with disabilities) are predominantly prone to violence, exploitation and/or neglect, which gives extra reason to commit to handling their participation in the research process according to internationally-recognized best practices. Triangle and its staff also recognise, respect, and understand the physical and emotional privacy of participants of the vulnerable populations. Apart from emotional safety, Triangle and its staff recognise the need for a physically safe environment to conduct research activities and will strive to ensure gender- and context-sensitivity at all times. Furthermore, Triangle and its staff will strive to

facilitate accessible venues for people with disabilities to secure their participation in the research process.

Quality of work and fairness

Triangle offers a comprehensive approach to its work to impress upon stakeholder's competence, integrity, and honesty. By agreeing to an assignment, Triangle acknowledges to have understood projects' objectives, to possess staff qualified to achieve those objectives, as well as to have the necessary capacity to process the assignments' tasks. Triangle always seeks to establish a mutual understanding with clients about objects, scope of work, and workplan. Furthermore, Triangle stands for fairness and impartiality and acknowledges the fact that all disputes are multifaceted. For this reason, Triangle and its staff will seek to provide balanced objective reporting, no matter the complexity of the subject at hand. Triangle and its staff will abstain from personal opinions and will confine themselves to evidence-based reporting and recommendations.

Confidentiality and privacy

Triangle is aware of the sensitivity and confidentiality of data collected in the field. Therefore, Triangle and its staff will protect the privacy of research subjects and will not disclose any confidential information (such as names, addresses, etc.) unless prior approval by the research subject is provided. Qualitative and quantitative information gathered during the research process will be used in an aggregated format or will be cleaned from identifying information to ensure that any agreed upon anonymity is upheld.

Conflicts of interest

Triangle strongly avoids conflict of interest to rule out biased objectivity in its research process. However, in case conflicts of interest occur, Triangle and its staff will inform all parties involved in a transparent manner and endeavour to remove or mitigate the effects of any conflicts of interest. Triangle and its staff and the work they produce is and will always be independent and will not be influenced by political or social pressures or economic incentives, bribes or favours.

Harassment and anti-fraternization

Triangle is committed to providing a safe environment for all its staff and stakeholders free from discrimination on any grounds and from harassment at work including sexual

harassment.[27] [28] Triangle operates a zero tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the workplace, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Any staff member found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence and no one will be victimised for making such a complaint. Triangle also recognises that anyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. Triangle recognises that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex. What matters is that the sexual conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the person against whom the conduct is directed.

Triangle also upholds anti-fraternization policy which prohibits all supervisor-subordinate romantic relationships and requires staff to notify Triangle's management of romantic relationships with other staff, so that the Triangle may place the staff in different departments or projects. Any relationship that interferes with the company culture of teamwork, the harmonious work environment or the productivity of employees, will be addressed by applying the progressive discipline policy up to and including employment termination. Adverse workplace behaviour —or behaviour that affects the workplace that arises because of personal relationships — will not be tolerated.

END OF CODE OF CONDUCT

ANNEX J: TOR FOR THE EVALUATION

[attached separately]

END OF DOCUMENT

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[27] Sexual harassment is defined as an unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient. Sexual harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal.
[28] UNSG (2017) 'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach '. https://undocs.org/A/71/818

ANNEX A: ENDLINE PERCEPTION SURVEY

Hello, my name is _____ and I am part of an independent research team conducting a survey on behalf of UNDP .

The purpose of this survey is to better understand the experiences and perceptions of fake news and hate speech in your community and [for targeted communities] your experience with UNDP's campaign on the topics.

If you have 15 minutes I would like to ask you some questions. Your individual responses will not be reported publicly; they will be anonymized (removing any personal details), treated confidentially and used only for statistical purposes to help UNDP serve the population better. Your participation is on a voluntary basis and you're free to skip any question you don't want to answer. Additionally, you can terminate the discussion at any time. Participation in this survey has no impact on access to assistance or employment opportunities.

Do you agree to continue this interview now? Yes/ At another time / No

1. Are you familiar with UNDP's campaign about fake news and hate speech?	1. Yes 2. No	Ring single
2. How were you engaged in this campaign?	1. Saw the campaign video 2. I was in an awareness community session 3. I attended a theatre performance 4. Other	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q1 "Yes"]
3. If "other", please specify	[Insert value]	Insert value [Skip logic: if Q2 "other"]
4. Gender	1. Male 2. Female	Ring single
5. Pick your nationality	1. Syrian 2. Lebanese 3. Palestinian 4. None of the above	Ring single. Hint: If they identify as multiple nationalities, ask them to choose the most resonant one
6. How long have you been living in this community?	1. 0-2 years 2. 3-5 years 3. 6-7 years 4. 7-9 years 5. 10-11 years 6. Before 2011	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q5 "Syrian"]

7. What village do you live in?	[To determine the list of villages with UNDP]	Ring single Hint: If "none of the above" selected, stop survey.
8. Education attainment	1. Illiterate 2. Write and read 3. Primary 4. Intermediate 5. Secondary 6. University 7. Higher Studies 8. Vocational 9. Other	Ring single
9. If "other", please specify	[Insert value]	Insert value [Skip logic: if Q8 "other"]
10. Do you personally use the internet?	1. Yes 2. No	Ring single
11. If yes, how do you access the internet?	1. I pay for a wifi subscription at my house 2. I use my phone 3 or 4G 3. I use public wifi 4. I use internet cafés 5. I share wifi with neighbours/social networks. 6. Other	Ring single [Skip logic: If Q10 "yes"]
12. If "other", please specify.	[Insert value]	Insert value [Skip logic: If Q11 "other"]
13. What social platforms do you use?	1. Whatsapp 2. Facebook 3. Instagram 4. Twitter 5. Snapchat 6. Youtube 7. Ticktock 8. Other 9. None	Ring multiple [Skip logic: if Q10 "Yes"]
14. If "other", please specify.	[Insert value]	Insert value [Skip logic: If Q13 "6. Other"]
15. To what extent do you trust the information you read online?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single [Skip logic: if Q10 "Yes"]
16. How do you know if the information you receive is true or not?	1. It's from an established media outlet (a reputable source).	Ring single Hint: don't mention options.

	2. From government communication. 3. From other trusted people 4. Style of content is credible. 5. I don't know 6. Other	
17. If "other", please specify.	[Insert value]	Insert value [Skip logic: If Q16 " Other"]
18. Do you double-check the information you read online through a second source of information?	1. Yes 2. Sometimes 7. No	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q10 "Yes"]
19. How do you double-check if information is true of not?	1. Ask a friend/family member. 2. Check a well-known online source. 3. Check a well-known offline publication 4. Check through verification apps or websites. 5. Other	Ring single [Skip logic: If Q18 "yes" or "sometime"]
19. If "other", please specify.	[Insert value]	Insert value [Skip logic: If Q18 " Other"]
20. On a scale of 1 to 5 how prevalent is fake news in your community?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single
21. To what extent do you think fake news negatively affects relationships within your community?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single
22. To what extent do you think fake news negatively affects relationships with people from other communities?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single
23. Since 2019 do you think the prevalence of fake news in your community is increasing or decreasing?	1. Yes 2. No	Ring single
24. Do you know what hate speech is?	1. Yes 2. No	Ring single

25. On a scale of 1 to 5 how prevalent is hate speech in your community?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single
26. Since 2019 do you think the prevalence of hate speech in your community is increasing or decreasing?	1. Increasing 2. Decreasing 3. I'm not sure	Ring single
27. Do you think enough has been done in your community to combat misinformation?	1. Yes 2. No 3. I'm not sure	Ring single
28. Are you aware of Salam w kalam website?	1. Yes 2. No	Ring single
29. Did the campaign change the way you think of fake news?	1. Yes 2. No 3. I'm not sure	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q1 "Yes"]
30. To what extent did the campaign strengthen your understanding of fake news and hate speech?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q1 "Yes"]
31. To what extent did the campaign give you tools to detect fake news and hate speech?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q1 "Yes"]
32. To what extend were these skills useful to you on a day-to-day basis?	1-5 scale (1: not at all; 5: very much)	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q1 "Yes"]
33. Did you share what you learned through the campaign with other members of your community?	1. Yes 2. No	Ring single. [Skip logic: if Q1 "Yes"]

ANNEX B: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE

EVALUATION CRITERIA	QUESTIONS
RELEVANCE	**Direct beneficiaries: media reporters trained in fact-checking techniques** ▪ Do you think it's urgent and necessary for media practitioners to attend training on fact-checking? ▪ Do you think fake news threatens social stability in Lebanon? ▪ How would you rate your knowledge to detect and debunk hate speech and fake news? Did the training the project provided help you improve/professionalise these skills? ▪ Were the training sessions relevant to the context of your news organisations/community? ▪ What were the challenges of implementing and using fact-checking tools and techniques in your media institutions? ▪ Were the training adapted to and inclusive of grassroots and local media professionals, particularly women and refugees, in program design? ▪ How often do you use the tools (image and video verification) which you learnt during this training? **Direct beneficiaries: youth trained on hate speech and fake news** ▪ Do you think it's an urgency and a need for youth to attend trainings on fact-checking? Why, why not? ▪ Do you think fake news is a threat to social stability in Lebanon? Are there particular demographics that you think are more impacted? (probe: nationality, age). ▪ How would you rate your knowledge to detect and debunk hate speech and fake news? ▪ Did the training the project provided help you improve these skills? ▪ Was the training relevant to the context of your local community?

UNDP programme staff & implementing partners
- Were the training methodologies appropriate to the needs of project participants? What can be improved?
- Were local partner organisations adequately experienced and resourced to implement the project activities?
- Was the project contextually relevant to Lebanon's social, political and economic circumstances?
- Was the project designed relevant and applicable to the circumstances of Lebanon's marginalised groups (especially women and refugees)?
- Did the project sufficiently focus on collaboration and cooperation among all partners?

Salam wa Kalam contributors
- Do you think that safe spaces for dialogue (regarding your subject) are needed in Lebanon? Why?
- Do you think that the platform itself is relevant to Lebanon's context? Why, why not?
- What do you think are the main differences - in terms of quality and relevance - between the peacebuilding supplement in print, compared to the online version?

  - What do you think of its move to an online platform? What are the potential associated positive and negative outcomes?

- How relevant are the articles published online to Lebanon's context?
- Is your area of expertise relevant to the content you contributed to the website?

Media experts
- What would you say are the main challenges facing media in Lebanon?

- Do you think it's urgent and necessary for media practitioners and youth to attend training on fact-checking?
- How aware do you think Lebanon's communities are about fake news and hate speech?
- Do you think fake news threatens social stability in Lebanon?
- Do you think that UNDP's project design (the media component) is successful in countering fake news at the national and local levels, providing positive media spaces and promoting rational discourse?
- Do you think UNDP's media component project is contextually relevant to Lebanon's social, political and economic circumstances?
- Do you think UNDP's project is relevant and applicable to the circumstances of Lebanon's marginalised groups (especially women and refugees)?

EFFICIENCY

Direct beneficiaries (youth or media practitioners)
- Were there any time delays in the training?
- Were the different activities (training, coaching sessions, online, and offline campaigns) all useful? Was it a comprehensive approach?
- Did you think that your trainers had the necessary skills/experience to give this type of training?
- Do you think that the timeframe/scope of the training was suitable? Do you advise to do it differently?

UNDP programme staff & implementing partners
- Were project activities cost-efficient and reflective of value-for-money investment choices?
- Were objectives achieved on time and with appropriate quality?
- Was the project implemented most efficiently compared to alternatives?
- Are the project outputs financially viable in the long term?

Salam wa Kalam contributors
- Do you think the Salam wa Platform creates a safe space for dialogue in Lebanon?

- How efficient do you think the platform is in Lebanon's general/media context?
- Do you think the platform's contributors have the relevant expertise for the published content?
- What is the platform's publishing strategy? Is it efficient?
- Were there any delays with publishing your content? If so, why?

Media experts
- What activities do you consider necessary for Lebanon's media sector to address fake news and hate speech?
- What activities do you deem necessary to provide positive media spaces and promote rational discourse in Lebanon?

EFFECTIVENESS

Direct beneficiaries: media reporters trained in fact-checking techniques
- Are the skills you gained through the project beneficial to your future development as a media professional?

Direct beneficiaries: youth trained on hate speech and fake news
- Has the training positively impacted issues of concern within your community? Why, why not?
- Did you learn any new and revealing fact-checking skills they weren't aware of?

UNDP programme staff & implementing partners
- What have been the results of the training implemented on fact-checking, hate speech and fake news?

Salam wa Kalam contributors

- Do you think that the platform is effective in creating a safe space for dialogue? Why, why not?
- Do you think that the platform is a useful peacebuilding tool in Lebanon's context?
- What is the added value of the Salam wa Kalam platform in Lebanon's media context?

- How did you personally benefit from contributing to the website?
- Did you receive support during the publishing process? (eg. editorial support, copy-editing).
- Did the process help you become better informed on the importance of using less "biased" language in your reporting?

Media experts
- Who are the main stakeholders in Lebanon that should be involved in UNDP projects to address fake news and hate speech, provide positive media spaces, and promote rational discourse in Lebanon?

IMPACT

Direct beneficiaries: media reporters trained in fact-checking techniques

- Have you significantly expanded your skills in fact-checking techniques as a result of the project?
- Has the project raised awareness of the importance of fact-checking within your news organisation?
- To what extent did the project strengthen fact-checking as a tool for more factual news within your news organisation?

- Did the activity increase the trust between participants coming from diverse backgrounds? Did it strengthen social cohesion amongst peers?

Direct beneficiaries: youth trained on hate speech and fake news

- Has the training improved your/ your community's awareness of hate speech and fake news? Why, why not?

- Did the activity increase the trust between participants coming from diverse backgrounds? Did it strengthen social cohesion amongst peers or community members?

- Has the training increased your ability to advocate against the spread of hate speech and fake news? Why, why not?
- Did you already have a chance to advocate for it? How did you?
- Has the training increased your ability to work as a fact checker?
- What skills did you acquire other than fake news (probe: conflict-sensitive reporting, critical thinking)?
- Would you be willing to pursue a career as a fact checker?

UNDP programme staff & implementing partners

- Did the project improve the fact-checking capacity of media stakeholders involved in the project?
- Did the project strengthen the skills of marginalised communities, particularly women and refugees in Lebanon?
- How many stakeholders – organisations or individuals – have directly benefitted from the project activities?
- Do you think the training/activities improved social cohesion and increased the trust between participants from diverse backgrounds? Why, why not?

- Do you think the project contribute to reducing inter and intra-community tensions?

Salam wa Kalam contributors
- Did the platform contribute to opening a free and safe dialogue between contributors and thus encouraged a democratic media culture?
- What was the reach of Salam wa Kalam's platform? Was it more significant or lesser in comparison to the earlier print version?
- What was readers' feedback on your contributed content on the platform?
- Did UNDP relay to you any feedback after publishing your content?

Media experts
- Do you read the content published on the Salam wa Kalam platform? Why or why not?
- Do you think that the content is balanced and conflict-sensitive?
- Are you aware of the UNDP campaigns to counter fake news and hate speech? If so, what did you think of them?
- Do you think the Salam wa Kalam platform contributes to opening a free and safe dialogue between contributors and thus encourages a democratic culture of media?
- Does Salam wa Kalam have an added-value compared to other platforms in Lebanon's polarised media landscape?
- In today's media context, do you think that Salam wa Kalam's impact was more significant through the printed supplement or through the digital platform?

SUSTAINABILITY **Direct beneficiaries (youth or media practitioners)**
- What lasting positive effect do you anticipate the training/activities will have on you/your community?
- How will you use the skills that you learned in the future?
- Have you made any networks/connections through the training that may be useful to you in the future?

- Do you think this network is relevant, efficient and sustainable? Please explain.
- With whom did you share what you learnt during the training?

UNDP programme staff & implementing partners

- Have the project outputs established independent economic viability? What factors could positively or negatively impact the future economic viability of the outputs?
- What lasting positive effect do you anticipate that UNDP's media project will have in Lebanon?
- Have synergies with other donors or UN agency programs been produced with UNDP's project?
- To what extent were lessons learned documented and continually shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?
- Have contingency plans for the COVID-19 pandemic been developed to maintain the economic viability of the project outputs?

Salam wa Kalam contributors

- What lasting positive effect do you anticipate the platform will have in Lebanon?

- Do you think Salam wa Kalam's move to an online platform made it more sustainable in the current media context?
- Do you think that the platform is sustainable in the long term? Why, why not?
- What is needed to ensure the platform remains relevant to Lebanon's general/media context?

- Have synergies with other contributors been produced with this online platform?

Media experts

- What are the major risks you foresee for the future in Lebanon regarding fake news and hate speech in general?
- How will this affect social cohesion between and amongst communities?

- Do you think UNDP's project is ensuring the readiness of relevant media stakeholders to face these mentioned challenges?

ANNEX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

EVALUATION CRITERIA	QUESTIONS
ICE-BREAKER	**Ask all** ▪ How would you describe fake news and hate speech? Have you encountered it before? When?
RELEVANCE	**Direct beneficiaries: media reporters trained on fact-checking techniques** ▪ How did the training provided by the project help you to professionalise your fact-checking skills? - How relevant to the context of your news organisations/community were the training sessions? - To what extent do you see your learned skills transferred to a newsroom/professional setting? ▪ Were the training adapted to all local media professionals? (Probe: women and refugees? Why? **Direct beneficiaries: youth trained on hate speech and fake news** ▪ What skills did the project provide you to detect and debunk hate speech and fake news? ▪ How well did you understand the concept of hate speech and fake news in the training? ▪ How confident do you feel in debunking hate speech and fake news after attending the series of trainings? ▪ Do you think that the training was relevant to the context of your local community? **All community members** ▪ Can you list the main challenges you face when it comes to fake news? Why? (Probe: access to truthful information, causes tensions in the community). ▪ How often do you encounter fake news in your community? - Do you think this is increasing or decreasing? Have you noticed any changes since the start of the 2019 financial crisis? ▪ How do you deal with fake news usually?

- To what extend do you check information? How do you double-check information?

Direct beneficiaries (youth or media practitioners)
- Were there any time delays in the training?
- Were the different activities (trainings, coaching sessions, online, and offline campaigns) all useful or not? Was it a comprehensive approach?
- Did you think that your trainers had the necessary skills/experience to give this type of training?
- Do you think that the timeframe of the training was suitable? Do you advise to do it differently?

Targeted community members
- How would you describe the impact of hate speech/fake news on social cohesion and social stability?
- UNDP has conducted campaigns in your community about fake news and hate speech. Have you felt that this has resulted in more awareness about these? Why and why not?
- Do you think these online and offline campaigns were efficient?
- Do you think these campaigns were needed in your community?
- Are you able to recognize fake news when you encounter them ? -- Do you think your knowledge of fact-checking, fake news, and hate speech has increased after attending offline campaign events or watching online campaigns?
- Do you know people in your community who participated in creating the campaign?
- Are you aware that there is a network of fact-checkers in your community?

Non-targeted community members
- Have you been involved in any activities/campaigns regarding fake news and/or hate speech?

- Do you think enough is being done in your community to combat misinformation? Why, why not?
- What do you think should be done in your community to combat fake news and hate speech?

EFFECTIVENESS

Direct beneficiaries: media reporters trained on fact-checking techniques

- Are the skills you gained through the project beneficial to your future development as a media professional? Why, why not?
- Have you made any changes to your work methods as a result of the project? How so?
- Did you learn any new and revealing fact-checking skills that they weren't aware of?

Direct beneficiaries: youth trained on hate speech and fake news

- Has the training positively impacted issues of concern within your community? Why, why not?

- Did you learn any new and revealing fact-checking skills that they weren't aware of?

Targeted community members

- Have you seen any changes in your community regarding fake news and hate speech since the campaign? How?
- Did you share or use the fact-checking tools and campaigns developed (sawab- did you share the short videos?)

IMPACT

Direct beneficiaries: media reporters trained on fact-checking techniques

- Have you significantly expanded your skills in fact-checking techniques as a result of the project?
- Has the project raised awareness of the importance of fact-checking within your news organisation?
- Did the project strengthen fact-checking as a tool for more factual news within your news organisation? How?
- Did the activity increase the trust between participants coming from diverse backgrounds? Did it strengthen social cohesion amongst peers?

Direct beneficiaries: youth trained on hate speech and fake news

- Has the training improved your/ your community's awareness of hate speech and fake news? Why, why not?

- Has the training increased your ability to advocate against the spread of hate speech and fake news? Why, why not?

- Did you already have a chance to advocate for it? How did you?

▪ Has the training increased your ability to work as a fact checker?
▪ What skills did you acquire other than fake news (probe: conflict-sensitive reporting, critical thinking)?

▪ Did the activity increase the trust between participants coming from diverse backgrounds? Did it strengthen social cohesion amongst peers?
▪ Would you be willing to pursue a career as fact checkers?

Targeted community members
▪ How do you think the campaign has improved your community's awareness to deal with fake news and hate speech?
- Did the campaign change your way/ your community's way of dealing with them? Why, why not?

Non-targeted community members
▪ What is the impact of fake news and hate speech on your community?

- Who does it affect the most? How and why?

SUSTAINABILITY **Direct beneficiaries (youth or media practitioners)**
▪ How will you use the skills that you learned in the future?
▪ Have you made any networks/connections through the training that may be useful to you in the future?

- Do you think this network is relevant, efficient and sustainable? Please explain.

▪ With whom did you share what you learnt during the training?

Targeted community members
▪ What do you think should be done in the next few years to combat fake news and hate speech in your community?
▪ Did you share what you learn through the campaign with other people in your community? How?
▪ Since the campaign, how have you dealt with fake news/hate speech on a day-to-day basis?

- How have you been checking information?
- What have you been doing when encountering fake news/hate speech?

- Has the content you have been posting on social media been different to before? How?

Non-targeted community members
- If fake news and hate speech increase in your community in the next few years, what do you expect will be the consequences? (Probe: tensions, conflicts).
- Do you think of there is a need of more awareness on fake news and hate speech?