

Artmongering with Refugees

Lebanon
July 2019

A collaborative visit to an informal Syrian
refugee camp with War Child Holland and the
local community in Adwi



Contents

Introduction	4
Context	5
Our Purpose: creating moments of joy and connection.....	6
Videos	7
The work	8
Art Stream.....	8
Development.....	8
Evolution	8
Design	9
Implementation.....	9
Output.....	10
Wellbeing Stream.....	13
Hope Circles	13
Trauma Release Techniques.....	15
Music Stream	18
Children’s track: Heartbeat.....	19
Adolescents’ track: Your mindset is ruining our generation.....	20
Adolescent’s track: Multiple Nations’ Friendship.....	21
Women’s Track: My dreams for tomorrow	22
Film & Photo Stream	23
Additional projects in response to the environment	25
Youth Leaders	25

Rubbish! And Sustainability.....	25
Camp Enhancement.....	26
Portraits	26
Evaluation.....	27
Well-being evaluation.....	27
Staff evaluation	28
Lessons Learned.....	29
Budget for 2019 visit.....	30
Next steps	31
Appendix.....	32
Partnering	32
Hope Circles protocol	33
EFT (tapping) protocol.....	34

Introduction

Artmongers is part of the Bold Vision charity and focuses on using art to create moments of joy and connection. We have made several visits to Azraq Camp (Syrian refugees in Jordan) working in partnership with CARE Jordan and are currently in Lebanon working with War Child in the informal Syrian refugee camps in the north of the country.

We are a small team, fleet of foot, incorporating visual arts, music, video and trauma release techniques.

Our focus is on seeding ideas that local staff and volunteers can continue. We work with children, teenagers and women. The project streams are distinct but interconnected.

We don't need much money, but we have a lot of impact. Via hundreds of interactions with a wide range of refugees we generate tangible results (colour and public art interventions, videos, new musical compositions) as well as less obvious ones (measurable and significant uplift in well-being) plus a renewed sense of agency and zest for life. Children and adults alike are enlivened by our visits, learning new skills of cooperation and co-creation as well as a sense of possibility that can disappear in this context.

War Child proved to be an excellent partner in this work, giving us great support not only in terms of access to an ideal camp for the work, but also with interpreters, local knowledge, somewhere to stay and paint for the murals. We very much hope to work with them again in future. Their values and approach fit well with our own, as evidenced by this extract from their website, and we appreciated their open hearted and dynamic approach.

This report is a summary of what we did, how we did it and the outcomes.

Catherine Shovlin

Artmongers

October 2019

Context

Lebanon is a small country with a big role in the lives of Syrian refugees. With a native population of just under 6 million, plus an estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees it has the highest ratio of refugees in the world. This is despite the fact that the Lebanon was under Syrian occupation for 29 years. Ending only 6 years before the first refugees started to arrive (2011). Relations between these peoples are understandably strained therefore and the general attitude seems to be one of leaving the refugees to fend for themselves.

They are informally housed and may or may not have access to services such as health and education. In the case of the Adwi community, where we were working, it is the local tribal leaders who have decided Syrians can create informal camps and rent houses from them.

In general, they are living in poor conditions and there is some resentment that the Lebanese do not treat them as equals. On the other hand, we also saw a high level of cooperation and acceptance between individuals.



Our Purpose: creating moments of joy and connection

We do this through interwoven streams of activity as outlined below. Although we each focus on a different area, there are a lot of creative and practical connections between the projects and we share an integrated vision. One of our first steps is to communicate this to the staff and volunteers we are working alongside on the ground. We recognise our way of working may be new to them and we want everyone to understand that the two weeks of our visit is intense, productive, with highs and lows, surprises and some disappointments. It is a compressed version of regular life.

We believe in working WITH, with the environment we discover on arrival, with the people we meet – staff, volunteers, locals and refugees alike. With the restrictions and realities of life in a refugee camp. All of this is part of the creative process.



Stream	Description	Skills transferred
Art	Working with different groups (kids, teenagers) to understand needs and develop uplifting ideas that will improve the environment and generate a sense of togetherness. The whole community is then involved in creating the artworks.	Drawing, painting, developing ideas alone and together, respecting the team, safe handling of paint and tools
Music	Working in age appropriate ways with different groups, regardless of their prior training or their own view of their musicality. Accessible techniques that draw on the local environment, culture of the people, hopes and dreams to create participatory musical compositions that can be recorded and shared. This is especially successful with young people who see music as 'cool' and are willing to participate patiently and learn new skills / self-esteem.	Vocalisation, rhythm, recording, drumming, keyboard, self-confidence, development of ideas, working together, respecting each other, layering music, listening
Video and photography	All our work is videoed, and we usually produce daily short clips to record our work and communicate the humanity and life force of refugees to our donors and supporters. We want them to be seen as whole people, not only refugees. Often these films contain clips filmed by young people and our film maker is excellent at helping them understand how to use the equipment - usually things they have barely even seen let alone been allowed to use. It is very exciting for them to see their work published online.	Visual discrimination, technical skills eg handling cameras, empowerment eg pop videos
Well-being	Using techniques such as Pal Dan Gum, tapping, TRE (trauma release exercises) and Hope Circles (compassionate listening) we work in different ways with different age groups of children to help with trauma release, centredness, mindfulness, We also work with mothers to help them understand and release their own stress and trauma so they can better help their families.	Listening, holding space, facilitating groups, dealing with emotion, EFT (tapping), Pal Dan Gum, finger holds

Videos

Our short videos give an instant flavour of how we work and can be seen here:

ARRIVE (arriving in Lebanon to work): youtu.be/uROVhHrosal



START (the beginning of our process): youtu.be/kK8Tu55ocCl



HOPE (how Hope Circles work): youtu.be/tJ7sOYxH_ps



FACING (portraits as a way of seeing): youtu.be/CpiiRgz8qRw



BASE (starting artworks): youtu.be/CmXrhRIDYIY



SEEK (involving everyone): youtu.be/RFQF3V-huqw



MURALS (the finished artworks): youtu.be/wVYov-sXfPg



BEATS (making music): youtu.be/oDdnTIUD-ps



VOX (refugees finding a voice): youtu.be/L61VvJTTBC4



SUMMARY: youtu.be/oJDC7csNOiM



The work

Art Stream

Development

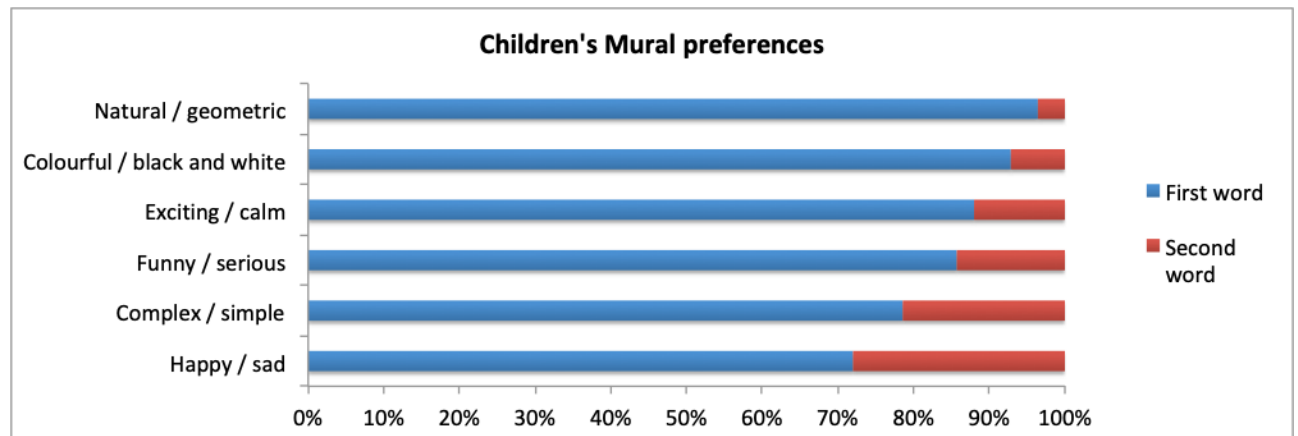
A series of workshops were held with different groups – see table below to explore their frustrations and desires with life in the camp and the way they operate as a community. Themes started to emerge.

Discussion groups	Number of participants	Themes
Children and teenagers	40	Active session involving running to different corners of the room to identify preferences shown in the graph below
Women	2 x 15	What makes you feel at home, what would make this camp feel more like home, what makes you feel comfortable?
Painters (mixed group)	30	Mixing colours, design development, painting techniques
TOTAL participation	100	

This chart is an example of how the activities with the community influence the design process. This is the result of a running game where the children ran to different corners of the room according to their preferences.

Evolution

These ideas were then developed further in subsequent workshops including introducing them to concepts like copyleft and developing ideas collaboratively rather than individually. As it emerged from the first stage that the building, though a single



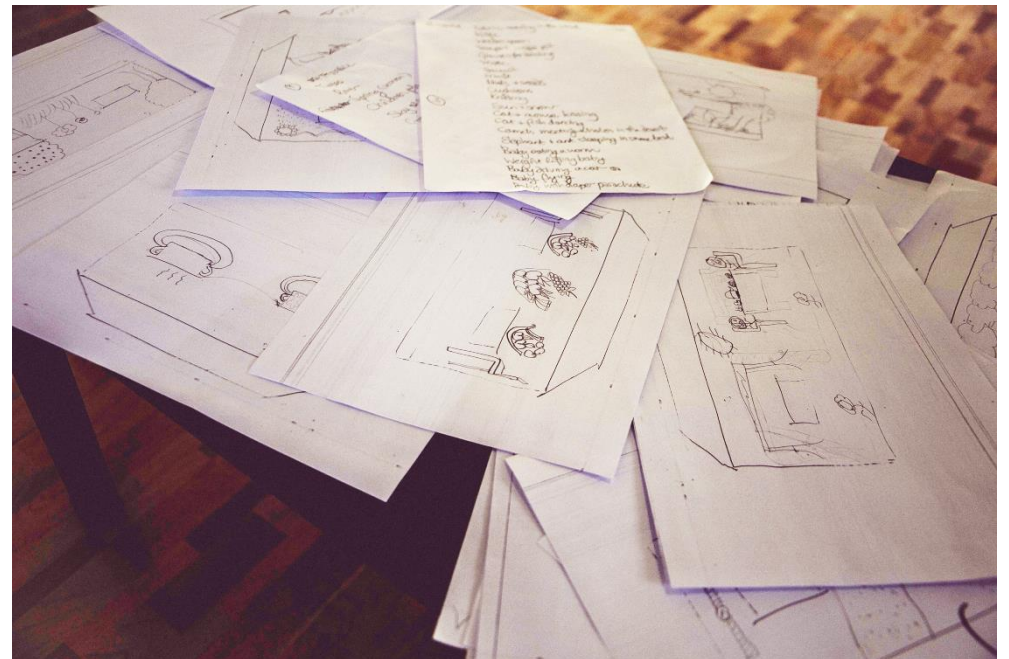
entity on the inside, could be viewed as 4 separate walls from the outside. It became natural to follow the behaviour already established in the camp and use the walls in accordance with that. The picture is of the community centre on our first day.

Design

In the next phase of development, the ideas are worked into a mural concept by Patricio who then discusses it with the stakeholders (those who developed the ideas and those who will be looking at the finished mural from their home).

Implementation

In the final stage the design is painted using blocks of paint that can be painted by those with very little skills, then layering details and elements requiring more artistry. This last stage was completed by Patricio and a couple of artists from the community. Working with large numbers of amateurs is a challenging process – especially when they are children who are fascinated by this rare opportunity to interact with many pots of paint! As well as the actual painting skill, there is a lot of people management required, teaching safety, painting skills and how to all work at the same time without just getting in each other's way. Sometimes this requires more than one supervisor and we appreciate the support from the local community organisation in this regard.



Output

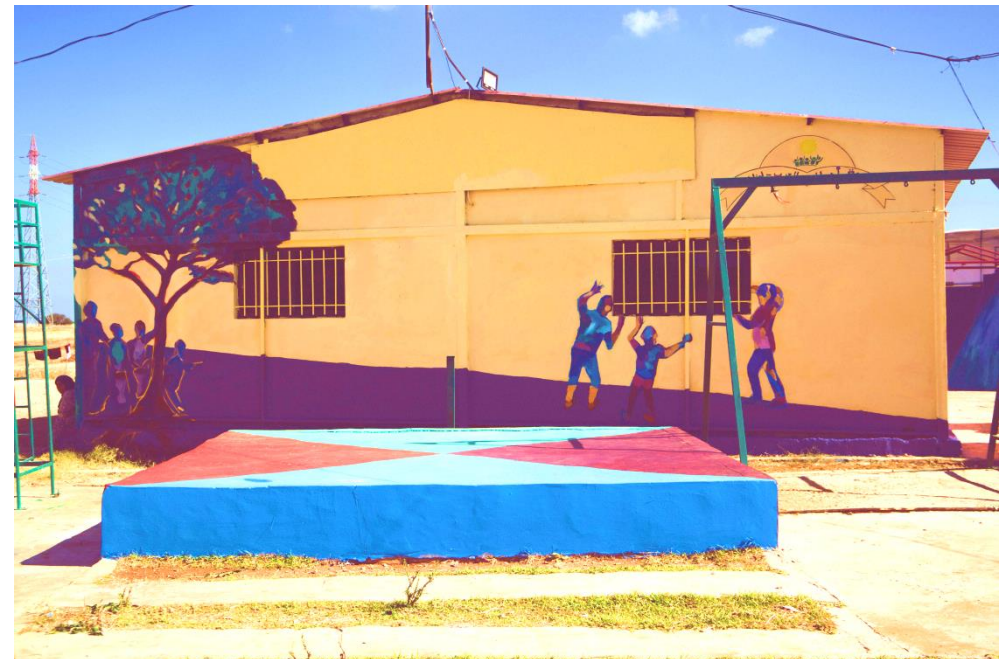
We created 5 murals on the central community building in Adwi. The first picture shows the building on our arrival. It does the job but could do more to draw people in and also to create a valued landmark in the centre of the community.

Peace and curiosity:

The front wall (photo bottom right) is deliberately spacious and calm. Reflecting the behaviours we frequently observed of both children and adults gathering under the trees for shade in the harsh heat of the day as well as the children's tendency to try to peer through the community centre windows to see what is going on.

Entering learning:

The wall by the entrance to the building is an invitation to gather round and learn something interesting. Based on how the children looked in one of the development sessions, the blank



pieces of paper could be waiting to be filled with almost anything. What will we learn today?

Teenage airport:

At the back of the building the wall hadn't even been rendered. It was a forgotten space, a dumping ground. It's 'behind the bicycle sheds' feel made it a natural spot for the adolescents to gather, out of sight of most of the camp, to discuss their hopes and dreams. They developed the idea of a friendly spaceship that could take them off to another world – but still be back home in time for tea. They dubbed the area in front of the mural The Airport.

Women's Well:

Gathering in the shade to prepare food for the evening meal is a moment to share, to have a bit of company, to exchange gossip. The women were often here in the morning when this side of the building is in shade. In their design sessions they longed for comfort, luxury, beautiful fabrics and rich colours. They can't actually sit on these sumptuous cushions of course but they still create an ambience that can be enjoyed. And in a culture which can make



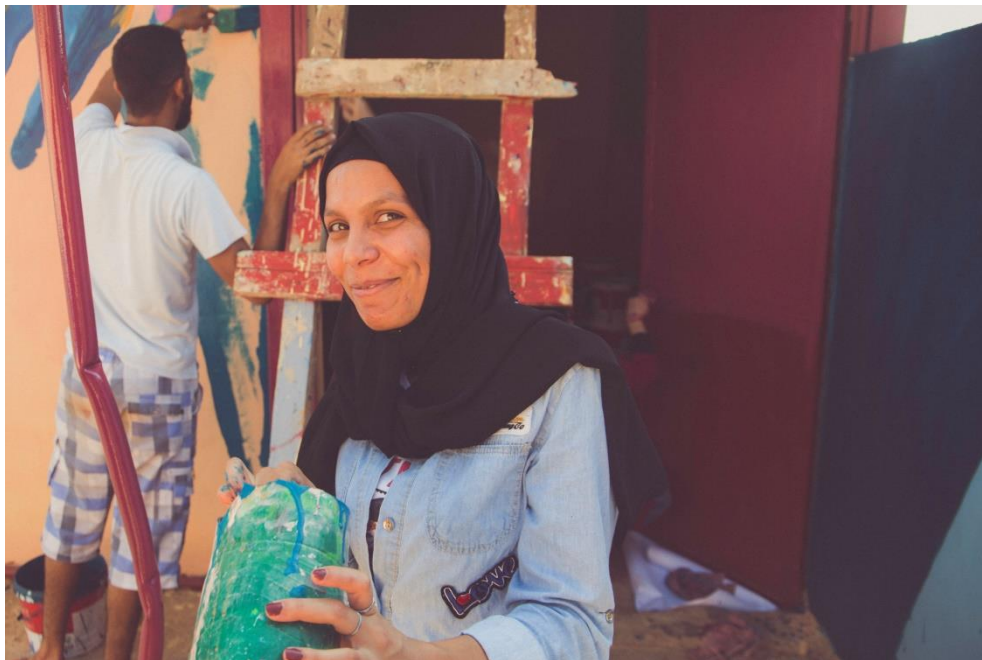
women feel they have no public face; it gives them a shared place to be visible and together. And a great sense of pride.

Tides:

the sweet harmony of the long blue wall encourages the shy or reluctant towards the community centre and offers a welcome backdrop from many places in the camp.

In total then the 5 artworks have a harmony, and also reflect the distinct needs and desires of each area and the people it serves. At Artmongers we love it when the artworks become places and transform dead space into live space. We saw this happen at the neglected back of the building and in the playground as well as the targeted areas.

We love the ripple effects too, like when the staff asked if they could use some of the paint and completely redecorated the inside of the community centre, giving it a fresh bright atmosphere and a great sense of agency and empowerment.



Wellbeing Stream

Hope Circles

Hope Circles were developed by us in the Azraq refugee camp and named that by the women refugees. They are a simple, teachable technology encouraging deep listening, expression of feelings and a sense of togetherness between the refugees.

We ran them in the community centre, under trees, in refugee shelters, staff gardens and in the centre of the other settlement a little way away. It is important that they are in a place that feels comfortable for the participants and also that they won't be disturbed or observed. We sit in a circle and use the Hope Circle bowl to share our thoughts. An important aspect is that each woman speaks what is in her heart while the others practice conscious listening. There is no feedback, criticism, judgement or helpful suggestions. This style of speaking has been proven to have beneficial effects for reducing stress and anxiety, especially in women, and helping to process trauma. Although they are used to chatting, they all found this a very different sort of conversation and were able to say things they had never dared share before.



Where and when

Participation in Hope Circles during this two-week period is shown below

Group	Participants	Any particular TRE / focus?
1	8 staff and volunteers	How it works
2	20 women	Finger holds
3	7 women	Tapping
4	12 women	Finger holds (other village centre, some women Lebanese)
5	8 women	
6	5 women	Hormones, moods, coping mechanisms, tapping
7	7 women	
8	8 teenage boys	Anger
9	5 teenage girls	Anger, gossip. Embodying change
10	15 women	
11	6 teenage girls	What does it mean to be a girl
12	8 women	
13	6 women	What does it mean to be a woman (other village)? EFT and stress management
14	8 women	What does it mean to be a woman? EFT and Stress management. Sara from local community organisation leading.
TOTAL	123 interactions	

The kind of comments participants make in these circles are deeply significant. Here are a few examples:

"I started with a feeling of a big weight here (pointing to heart) but now it has cleared"

"I feel calm"

"I feel reminded of how we can support each other"

"Even though you don't speak my language or know my culture I feel that you see me and understand me"

"Even though we have different backgrounds we felt like one family"

On specific topics we gathered a lot of input which can be clustered into these emerging themes:

WOMEN'S EMOTIONS

- Carrying a lot of sadness – which they feel allowed to express – and anger which they don't

- Feel that they cannot be angry because it will be turned back on them
- Release their anger by hitting their children or crying

WOMEN'S DESIRES

- Education above all else
- Some yearning to return home (to Syria), framed in domestic terms rather than nationalistic
- To feel less tired (minimal awareness of self-care techniques)

GIRL'S DESIRES

- Freedom to go out at night (maybe they could go in groups?)
- Freedom to work
- Freedom to do everything the boys are allowed to do

Note that in the past we have also had Men's circles, but that wasn't possible here because the men were working. We also ran a circle with staff, giving them a rare opportunity to release some of the stress of their work. The [protocol](#) for Hope Circles is included in the appendix

Trauma Release Techniques

These are passed on to us by [Capacitar International](#), an NGO established many years ago to assist displaced and traumatised individuals during the Nicaraguan civil war. Since then they have been used all over the world during wars and natural disasters, to help people cope with the emotions triggered by events and circumstances. They are all simple techniques that can be learnt in seconds. Because they are mostly physical, only minimal interpretation is needed.

It has been generally found, and is also our experience, that outside of the 'West', there is much less resistance or scepticism around trying something like this. The concept of 'portable medicine' exists in many poor and/or rural communities with limited access to allopathic (Western / modern / science based) medicine. These are important for staff as well as refugees, helping to dissipate vicarious trauma.



Finger holds

Each finger stores unexpressed or trapped emotions. In this technique, the individual holds each fingertip in turn (or focuses on the one corresponding to the emotion they feel most strongly) for a couple of minutes, eyes closed, breathing softly. Sending love and support to the finger. Accepting the feelings stored there, without judgement, and breathing them away.

The women identified in particular with anger (middle or longest finger) and feeling small (little finger). The technique can provoke some strong feelings and part of the training of local staff was in holding space for those feelings, allowing them to be expressed and resisting the urge to help, advise, judge or criticise.

Tapping

EFT or tapping is a rapidly spreading technique based on meridians, as used in acupuncture or acupressure. The protocol and an example script for this technique is included in the appendix and gives measurable relief. At the beginning when framing eg a situation that makes you feel hurt, each participant identifies one and then gives it a 1-10 rating for how much it affects them. At the end we do this again and see typically

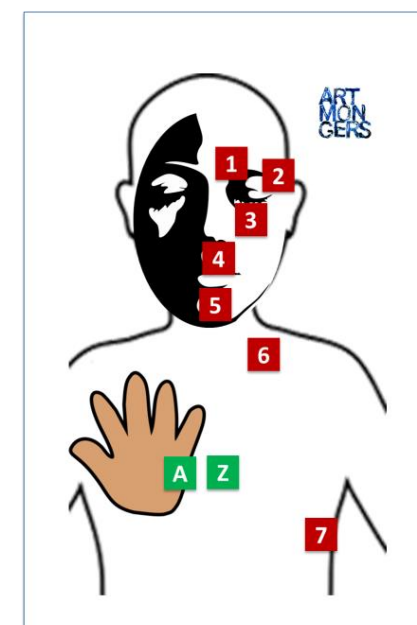
drops from scoring 7-10 to scoring 1-4.

We trained the local staff in both tapping and finger holds, and left a stack of cards with the pictures shown here to the right. However it is probably useful to have a refresher to build their confidence.

In [the appendix](#) is an example of as script using this technique.

Pal Dan Gum

This is a Chinese system, similar to T'ai Chi, using physical moves to embody and release emotions. It worked particularly well with the children, helping them learn focus, self-control, paying attention to following instructions, feeling more stable in their bodies, breathing well and just having fun.



Catherine adapted some of the moves to make them more relatable and explained, as she was teaching, how these were developed for Chinese warriors so they could be calm in the face of battle. Not to be angry or aggressive but to be in control of their feelings. Embodying eg the power and focus of the Eagle or the strength in flexibility of the Tree.

The children, especially the boys, took to these moves with gusto and we ended up having repeat sessions throughout the two weeks.

Wool work

Research confirms that simple repetitive small motor movements calm agitation in the mind, helping with PTSD and ADD. This effect is also observed if someone watches someone else doing the movements, so Catherine always had some knitting with her for odd moments between activities. And a couple of spare sets for the inevitable requests to learn. Using donated materials from UK, Catherine worked with the children and women to teach them knitting. Few of them had the patience to get through the early disheartening stage of not 'getting it' but some did, and they inspired the others to try again. Some of the older women rediscovered dormant skills and were proud of their work. They decided it would be useful if we made small pouches they could wear around their necks for phone, glasses, coins, keys etc. This also had the advantage of being a quick and simple project.

Their lack of confidence in their ability to learn new things manifests as a readiness to give up. So we also made friendship bracelets – something everyone could do. They had to work in pairs for the twisting to work so they learnt something about cooperation too. The older ones helped the younger ones – and some of the younger ones who got the hang of it quicker helped the older ones. They enjoyed choosing their own colours and wore their bracelets with pride.



Music Stream

Isa worked with groups of women and also with teenagers to develop their own original music compositions. These can be heard here (<http://artmongersaction.org/artmongering-in-lebanon/>)

In several cases Hope Circles were used as the basis for the music work as the women were already opened and trusting, able to work together and express vulnerable feelings. In some of the Hope Circles we asked them why they liked music:

- I like to dance
- It's a way to express my feelings and emotions
- It makes me more kind
- It is comforting and calming

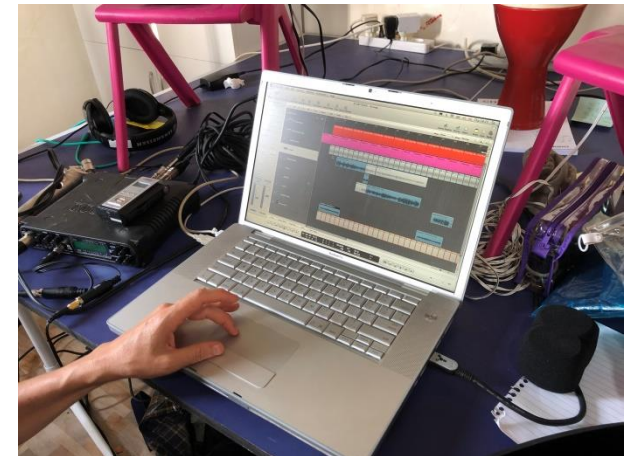
Isa's professional approach allowed even the nervous teenagers to feel held and supported in the space, overcoming their shyness and expressing themselves powerfully. The blend of technical and personal skills was imparted subtly with quiet confidence. Isa's hands-on approach to sound technology and song-writing is fun, accessible and relaxed.

Her work included voice training and warming up the voice, beats and harmonies and creating the overall shape of the music. in response to or with participants' creative inputs. She observed a hunger for learning among them all, including some of the staff and volunteers who also got involved.

Activities included:

- Singing, performing and recording vocals, learning microphone techniques
- Musical improvisation using Darbuka drums, keyboard, a melodica, the human body and vocals
- Hands-on experience with sound technology using Isa's portable sound-studio (set-up on site) to create, record, mix and produce original songs, soundscapes and spoken word

At the end of the project, the songs and tracks were saved on the community centre's computer drive, for the local NGOs' staff to give to each participant.



After the project, Isa sent the final tracks to War Child in Lebanon, so that each participant gets their tracks to share with their friends and families and/or to use as portfolio for their future projects and for their own sense of achievement and satisfaction!

Children's track: Heartbeat

Working with 17 children and teenagers

Each day in the camp there is a break in the electricity supply for four hours. This takes place at different times on each day. We required electricity for the keyboard and laptop so had to plan our music studio sessions around this situation.

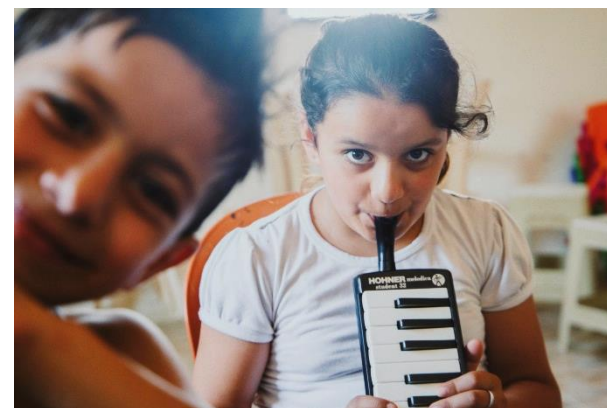
The community centre has a portable speaker amp which works on batteries so that helped a lot. We could plug Isa's microphone or portable audio recorder into it, record live performances and jams and play them back.

Given the electricity situation and the high level of energy among the children, Isa identified drumming as a good option. War Child provided six new drums for us to use during the project and then leave behind for the children and teenagers to use at the end of the project. As they did not have any musical instruments, this was great and contributes to the sustainability of the project.

The Heartbeat track started to develop one hot afternoon when a group of children gathered under a tree with Isa. The aims of the music activity were to release the high energy levels that many kids and teenagers had, leading them to a calmer state.

The starting point was to each listen to our individual heartbeat, and then play our own heartbeat to each other using a drum or clapping. Isa then led a series of improvisations building on the heartbeat, using a question/answer rhythmical-vocal game. The new track that emerged had a catchy tune and became a popular song among the children in the camp as they enjoyed chanting the made-up words. The melodica that Artmongers brought also became a popular musical instrument - one child learnt how to play the main Heartbeat melody on it and enjoyed the feeling of this new skill.

We recorded the track from a live performance.



Adolescents' track: Your mindset is ruining our generation

Ashein and his accomplice took to the mic at Adwi Camp to create this soundtrack with Musical Compose, Isa Suarez. Listen here: soundcloud.com/user-162289136/your-mindset-is-ruining-our-generation

Rap lyrics: (the rap at the beginning and end of the track)

Our story remains the same.

The same cause: don't talk about religious discrimination

Arabic. People in the West don't discriminate us among our own people / ourselves:

"His religion is not like mine so I will destroy him. He does not have the same opinion as mine so I will stab him yo!!"

We People have ethics so "get out " from your own ignorance. Get out.

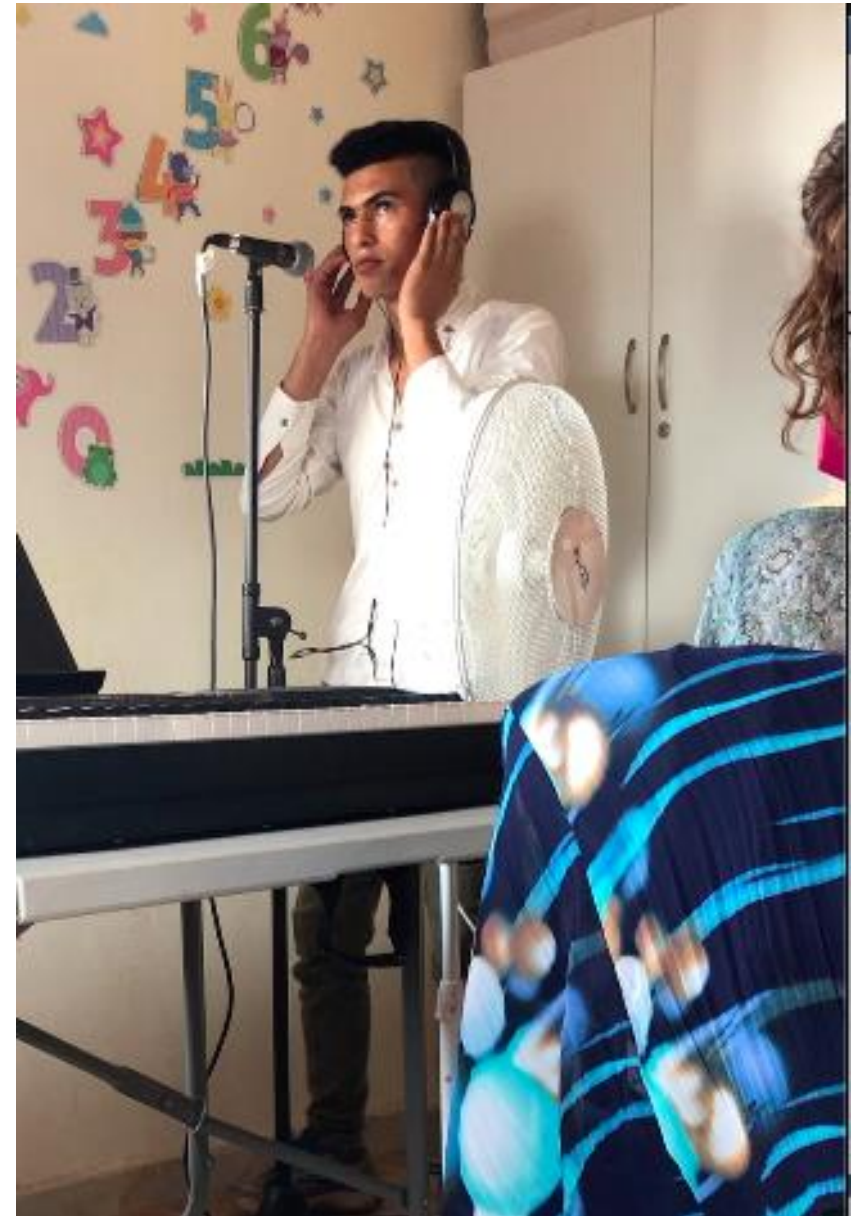
It seems like the whole nation is ruining nations by (the) billions.

Get out of the darkness so we can live in peace

peace

peace

peace



Adolescent's track: Multiple Nations' Friendship

For this track the young people worked with Isa to identify themes they wanted to express in their lyrics – collaboration, respect, happiness - and then develop them into a layered song. It is less common for the girls to sing and they needed a little encouragement to share their voices. As a musical starting point, the teenagers shared their favourite songs so Isa could identify the kind of sounds and beats they like. The male teenagers focused mainly on making the beat, bass line and melodies by experimenting and improvising on the keyboard: Isa recorded their ideas using Logic Pro Music software and developed the whole track with their input. Meanwhile, the female teenagers together with one male teenager and a female staff member, Sourour, who is an excellent singer, sang and recorded vocals. During several sessions, Isa recorded and mixed their vocals and music recordings. Participants took part in the whole production process and learnt skills while enjoying being creative.

It can be heard here: <https://soundcloud.com/user-162289136/multiple-nations-friendship>

Here are the translated lyrics.

Respect, Respect

Collaboration, Collaboration

Happiness, Happiness

Collaboration, Happiness, Respect

Collaboration, Happiness, Respect

Lalala la la la lala...

*Some friends are brothers, they deserve love, in
friendship, love is important*

*Some friends are sisters, they deserve love, in
friendship, love is important*

Collaboration

Respect

Happiness

Lalala la la la lala...

Happiness, Collaboration, Respect

Happiness, Collaboration, Respect

Mmmmm, mmmm, mmmmm...

Happiness

Mmmmm, mmmmm, mmmmm...

*Brother, sister, world nation
we deserve some love*

*Brother, sister, world nation
we deserve some love*

Lalala la la la lala...

Happiness, Collaboration, Respect

Happiness, Collaboration, Respect

*Some friends are brothers (sisters), they deserve
love, in friendship, love is important*

some love

Lalala la la la lala... (2)

Collaboration

some love

Lalala la la la lala...

Respect

some love

Lalala la la la lala...

some love

Lalala la la la lala...

Women's Track: My dreams for tomorrow

The Syrian women are not encouraged to make their voices heard, especially in public. However they do sing to their babies, so we started there. It was lovely to see how their faces lit up when they sang a traditional lullaby together. Also the inevitable collection of babies and young children they had brought with them to the session all fell immediately silent with big smiles of contentment on their faces.

For the dreams part of the track we asked in Hope Circles what they dreamed of and then recorded them one at a time voicing their dream aloud. This was a brave action full of shy hope. Most of them had never held a microphone before, nor had they been in a sound studio environment. Isa was patient and gentle and they appreciated the privacy of working one at a time with her. Later they had the opportunity to play their recorded voices via the keyboard: as they pressed a key, they could hear one of their dream phrases. Isa incorporated their keyboard performances into the final composition together with them singing the lullaby and a field recording of the local river.

The track can be heard here: soundcloud.com/user-162289136/my-dreams-for-tomorrow

The translated lyrics for the dreams part of the song are:

MY DREAMS FOR TOMORROW

My dream.... to be a chef

My dream is.... education for my daughters

My dream is.... education and knowledge

My dream is.... to do make-up and sewing

My dream is.... graduation at College

My dream is.... having a sweet house to live there with my children

My dream is.... to go back to Syria and to live happily with my kids

My dream is.... to live happily with my husband and kids



My dream is.... to continue studying, to be a teacher and to live safely with my son

My dream is.... to continue studying and to be a military officer

My dream is.... to be a lawyer and to have success, and to learn how to drive

My dream is.... to be a football player and a sightseeing photographer

My dream is.... to be a schoolteacher

My dream is.... to go back to Syria

My dream is.... to travel to a foreign country

My dream is.... to travel to Canada

My dream is.... to travel to a foreign country

Film & Photo Stream

As well as making the videos referenced above for our online following, Hamza also ran portraiture and music video projects.

Portrait project

In a world where refugees feel unseen and unheard, these portraits were a powerful source of visibility. We saw this on the first day when Patricio did quick pen portraits of several people and this confirmed the value of the portrait project which Hamza had planned and researched before our visit. In the process of working with the refugees he developed this further, using props and artefacts available in the camp. He created a sense of occasion, framing the individuals and families in innovative ways to give value and respect to the subjects.

When some of these photos were shown at our closing event on the last day, those featured were delighted to see themselves. Even the women, used to hiding more than displaying, giggled and smiled at the sight of their faces a metre high on the projector screen.



Music video project

The rappers who were working with Isa on the music stream were also interested in making their own music video. Hamza shot footage and then edited it into 4 different treatments that they could choose between. We showed this at the closing ceremony too – they looked like rock stars! This not only gave them something very valuable to have for themselves, it also raised awareness among the adults in the camp that the young people do have some skills and application.

It was a great bonus for them when the Regional Director of War Child asked if they could perform at a fundraising concert in Beirut later in the year.



Additional projects in response to the environment

Youth Leaders

As the Hope Circles revealed and our own observations confirmed, the young people in the camp are at a bit of a loose end. There are almost no activities they can engage with and there is resentment from older adults that they are not contributing.

We held a focus group discussion with a group of about 10 young people and asked them if they felt they were ever undervalued **All the time!!**

We asked if they would like to play a more active role in the community **Absolutely! That would be exciting.**

We told them we were considering setting up a youth leader scheme and asked if any of them had a special skill they would like to share with children in the community **Definitely!**

They volunteered skills including maths, reading, football, boxing, basketball, Zumba, running, rap and dance. Together with the local staff we identified

- how many children they could teach at a time
- what age group
- gender
- equipment needed (local organisation had a lot of this already but had never used it)

Lastly, we asked what benefit they expected for themselves as a consequence of doing this work. It is important for the sustainability of volunteering projects that there is an acknowledgement of "what's in it for me" and we wanted to embed that in early on. The reasons they gave were touching and thoughtful

- I will get to spend more quality time with the children in the camp
- Feeling better about myself because I am doing something good for the kids
- Get to dance more!
- I will improve my own skills by teaching others
- I will develop more self-confidence
- I will get better at organising
- Preparing myself to be responsible for my own family one day by practicing with this group

Rubbish! And Sustainability

Our work is low input. We also bring an awareness of environmental considerations and model that when we are there. This includes obvious things like turning off lights and fans in the community centre, as well as reframing by using trash to create art. Two days ago I had a small tribe of 10-year-old girls excitedly 'treasure hunting' for plastic bottle tops all over the camp

then using them to make mosaics. Afterwards they gathered them up and put them back in the discarded biscuit box we had found blowing around as if they were an expensive toy. They had seen how trash can become valuable items and been alerted to how many things are just thrown away when they could be used.

We noticed that there was quite a bit of debris in the camp and a tendency to throw rubbish on the floor. We decided to see if we could shift that at all.

We used every opportunity to encourage the refugees to take care of the space. Having rubbish gathering competitions with the children and bottle top gathering which then became a treasured box of play equipment as the girls made pictures on the floors of their shelters.

We also showed them how to make instruments using the myriad plastic water bottles on site, filling some with sand, some with gravel and some with water then observing the different noises they could make with them

Camp Enhancement

We also intend that our work has a knock-on effect. So in spare moments we might model behaviours like cleaning up, making use of what is there (birdsong, bottle-tops, unused materials...).

One example of this was when children playing on one of the trees broke a main branch. The staff were going to pull it off so it wasn't a danger, but we noticed that in fact enough of it was still connected for it to heal. We needed to find a way to bind it so it could start to reconnect the fibres. There was an old rag which lifted the weight of the branch – then we used some of the knitting wool instead – creating something beautiful from the problem.

Portraits

As shown in the [video](#) link above, part of our process of situating ourselves in the camp on day one included Patricio doing a number of rapid portraits for children and adults. This generated curiosity and delight as they saw themselves emerge on the page. It helped to build connection between us and the local community and had the added advantage of needing no words of explanation. A visual conversation between artist and model.



Evaluation

We like to understand the impact of our work – and we balance that with our compressed timeframe and need to keep energy on the project until the last minute.

Well-being evaluation

With that in mind we have devised a visual evaluation form focusing on the five factors of well-being plus some demographic data.

We keep it simple so that we can train young women in the camp to collect the data for us (higher acceptance in homes plus of course language issues). That requires some risk of data integrity but has the advantage of being quick, easy and replicable. In this case we surveyed 27 refugees from the 200 or so living in this camp. They tended to be women and children as the men are out working during the day.

In general, we saw higher levels of well-being than we have measured in the large formal camps in Jordan. The key difference was the low level of learning. This also came up anecdotally during our two weeks and in some of the Hope Circles (see separate section). This appears to be the most fruitful area for applied improvement.

As the graph shows, there is a higher level of well-being expressed by those participants who were involved with any of the Artmongers activities. In particular they were active and learning, both of which are highly valued in a lifestyle which is low on stimulus, leaving too much time and energy for idle gossip and 'hanging around' (the most frequent accusation of adults when speaking of youth)

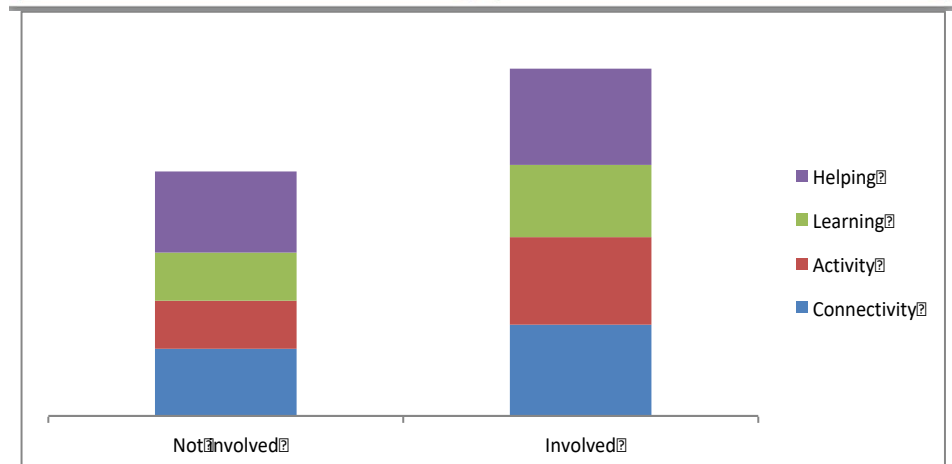
The form consists of two main panels. The left panel has five sections, each with a radio button and a series of icons representing increasing levels of the factor:

- Connected?**: Radio button, then 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 circles of varying sizes.
- Active?**: Radio button, then icons of a person lying down, sitting, standing, walking, and running.
- Learning?**: Radio button, then the Arabic word 'تعلم' (ta'allam), and icons of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 blocks.
- Helping?**: Radio button, then icons of 1, 2, 3, and 4 hands.
- Awareness?**: Radio button, then icons of a person with a tree, two people with trees, a person with a house, and a person with a globe.

The right panel shows demographic data with radio buttons and icons:

- Community: Radio button, then icons of a man and woman.
- Workshop participant: Radio button, then icons of a child, a person walking, a person walking with a cane, and a person walking with a cane.
- Volunteer: Radio button, then icons of a person sitting at a desk, a person with a camera, a person with a camera, and a person with a camera.

Below these are three ovals labeled 'Community', 'Workshop participant', and 'Volunteer'. At the bottom of the right panel is the text 'Tell me more'.



Staff evaluation

At the end of each day during the project we had a staff meeting. During that session we considered what had gone well and what could be improved for the next day.

This gave the staff a chance to raise any concerns suggestions or understand better what or why we were trying to do something. It also gave us a chance to raise any concerns eg how to keep the children away from unsafe substances.

During these meetings we also planned the next day. As you can see from the schedule this was a moving feast! We were constantly adapting and adjusting as local conditions changed eg staff availability, weather, religious activities.

At the end of the two weeks we had a more in-depth review meeting. Here are some of the remarks made.

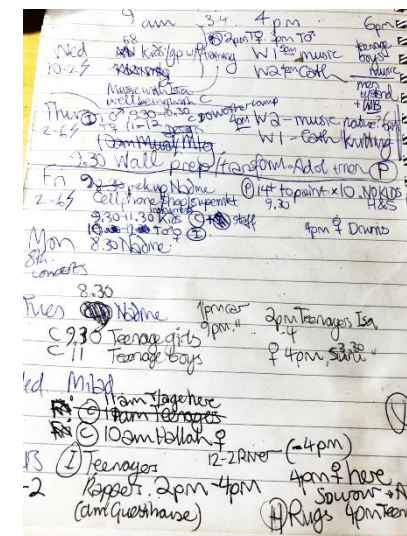
- You changed everything with all of the things you do
- You bring spirit
- I learnt a lot about painting from Patricio, how to mix colours
- When you are here it's not depressing, it's exciting!
- The daily program is a good way to be organised. We will continue with that
- We appreciate your willingness to try and understand us

We also asked about the pressure we put everyone under. And why they think that is the way we work.

- You want to do a lot in a short time
- You are ambitious in your ideas
- You think we can grow

We asked them what they felt they had learnt during our visit. They said...

- To be more organized
- To have more activities
- To engage more people
- New techniques like Hope Circle and tapping



Lessons Learned

- **Preparation:** a project like this is intense and demanding. The fact that war child had put in work beforehand, briefing the community and identifying support for us, made it possible for us to achieve far more.
- **Language:** this was the first time we had interpreters working with us and it allowed for much deeper understanding – us of the refugees and local community, their needs and concerns and them of what we try to achieve and why we do things the way we do
- **Capacity building:** it was a good improvement to have more meetings and training sessions with local staff and volunteers. We hope that some of what we do has an ongoing effect in the community
- **Adaptability:** when for example the earlier versions of the adolescents' mural caused concerns in the refugees who look onto it, we were open to discussing the problems and amending the mural until it was acceptable both to the artist and to the onlookers.
- **Protocols:** while we did have a format for Hope Circles, we realise that more training materials, in local language, are necessary if local staff are to continue with our work. We will try to secure funding to generate some of those materials in Arabic.
- **Pacing:** particularly for the artworks, the timetable was very ambitious, given the searing heat from 11am to 4pm.
- **Children:** we loved the enthusiasm of the children and seeing them all rush over as soon as they saw us. However, we would have benefited from more support from the community in managing them to avoid some of the chaos and paint hazard.

Budget for 2019 visit

Lebanon 1: Refugee camp project minimum budget - pilot				
Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total per visit	in kind
TRANSPORT				
Travel from UK	4	750	3000	0
Travel to LHR	2	78	156	0
Car hire and fuel	1	1078	1078	0
ACCOMMODATION				
Hotel in Beirut (first and last night)	8	40	320	160
Accommodation on site	56	30	1680	1680
Meals	57	14	797	125
MATERIALS				
Materials (art)	3	500	1500	1500
Changemaker t-shirts	30	8	240	240
Other printing	1	30	30	30
Local staff	10	400	4000	4000
Total expenses per visit			12801	7735
ARTMONGERS TEAM FEES				
Artist/facilitator fee (days)	14	150	2100	2100
Cameraman and edit fee (days)	14	150	2100	2100
Music composer (days)	14	150	2100	2100
Well-being facilitator fee (days)	14	150	2100	2100
Project management + report writing	3	150	450	450
TOTAL			21651	16585
Funding				
Artmongers Fundraising			1291	
Artmongers funds			3775	
In kind			16585	

Next steps

We hope to continue our partnership with War Child. Below is the budget per visit. It would be good to build on what has already been learned and also to extend to other camps.

Note that this is the total cost if everything is paid out, it does not take into account items which can be provided in kind.

Lebanon 2: Refugee camp project budget			
Item	Quantity	Unit Cost £	Total £ per visit
TRANSPORT			
Travel from UK	4	750	3000
Travel to LHR	2	80	160
Car hire and fuel	1	1260	1260
ACCOMMODATION			
Hotel in Beirut (first and last night)	8	60	480
Accommodation on site	56	40	2240
Meals (per diem)	56	20	1120
MATERIALS			
Materials (art)	1	1500	1500
Changemaker t-shirts	30	10	300
Other printing / props	1	200	200
Local staff costs	10	30	300
Total costs per visit			10560
TEAM FEES			
Artist/facilitator fee (days)	14	150	2100
Cameraman and edit fee (days)	14	150	2100
Music composer (days)	14	150	2100
Well-being facilitator (days)	14	150	2100
Project mgmt and report	4	150	600
Insurance	4	30	120
Total staff costs per visit			9120
TOTAL			19680

Appendix

Partnering

War Child contributed in kind with accommodation (in their guest house) and workspace. They also paid for the materials. Artmongers fundraising covered transportation of the team to the site (from London), and in country: food, project management, and transport. All the Artmongers team worked on a voluntary basis both pre visit (fundraising and planning), during the visit and afterwards (evaluation, report writing, video editing).

In country we worked under WarChild policy guidelines on child safeguarding, health and safety and media. They trained us in those at the beginning of our visit.

The materials we produced were all cleared with WarChild with great expediency and they supported us on consent forms. Their staff and volunteers were actively involved in the work and happy to be learning from us. The Regional Director and Child Safeguarding Officer also visited the project. We gave some feedback on our observations.

It has been a professional, productive and delightful partnering experience.

We hope that this project demonstrates value and we will convince a funding partner to join the project and allow us to continue to do this important work with other Syrian refugees

Hope Circles protocol

This is also available as a ppt and in Arabic

HOW TO HOLD A HOPE CIRCLE.

Make a circle of chairs with the 'Hope Circle' sign in the middle

All over the world women sit in circles like these to share their feelings. A time for them - not for their children, their husbands, their home ...

We open the circle by each saying our name + welcoming the person.

eg *I AM CATHERINE* *WELCOME CATHERINE*

① Attention on self
② Attention on circle
③ Attention on speaker

We will now have two rounds more. I will give you a phrase to complete (see list of phrases). Each time listen with an open heart, not to 'fix' or judge or interrupt. Thank each person. Close the circle by each saying "I am leaving today feeling ..."

Why? HOPE CIRCLE (out trolley)

- BENEFITS** - resilience, pressure release, stress management
- ADD** - format (protocol), identity (Hope Circle)
- KEEP**
 - Circle
 - Sharing
 - Listening
 - Women's Time (not for others but for themselves)
 - Women only
- DROP**
 - Trolley (too visible, too difficult)
 - Soap opera (Hay El Mater)
- ? music

Speech bubbles: "I feel heard", "Somebody cared about me, instead of me always caring for others", "We feel stronger together", "It feels special. A magic circle", "I feel more relaxed now", "It feels good to share my suffering".

Key Training Points

SPACE ①②③

- Pay attention to yourself. Breathe calmly + deeply. Settle into your belly. Feet flat on the floor.
- Pay attention to the space. Let your energy fill the room. Imagine you have your arms around the whole circle, holding a safe space for everyone.
- Pay attention to the person who is speaking. Listen with an open heart as though what they are saying is the most important thing you ever heard. You do not need to 'fix' their problem, or judge them. The only feedback you give is to thank them. You can see 'Thank you that was very powerful' or 'Thank you for your honesty' or 'thank you for being open'.

FORMAT

For each round, listen to each person, even if they only say 'I have nothing to say'. Try to stop others interrupting, commenting or chatting. If it gets difficult, do ①②③ again.

PHRASES TO COMPLETE (HOPE CIRCLE)

These are ~~an~~ examples to give you the idea. You can make new ones. They should always be open ...

- I felt happy for a moment today because ...
- I like music because ...
- I am hoping for ... because ...
- I would like to learn ...
- I fear ... because ...
- I want my daughter to have

Remember to listen with loving attention, no response is required. Just thank each person

eg 'Thank you for your honesty'
'Thank you for sharing'

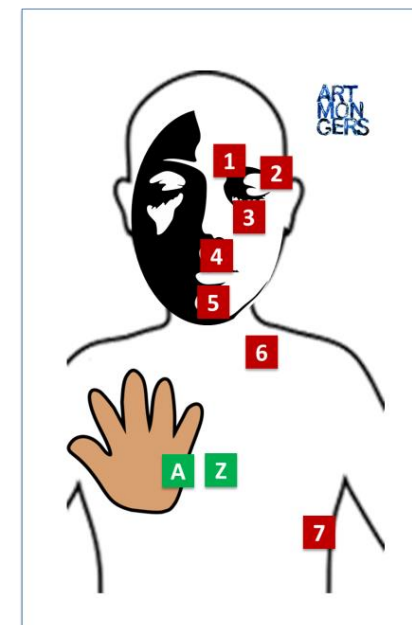
EFT (tapping) protocol

This was provided during our visit and left with local staff. It would be useful to have it translated into Arabic and then run a refresher session together to help them build confidence. To help with this I have recorded a video demo which you can find here youtu.be/sLbZqu8qgo4.

Start by sitting upright in a chair, back straight, shoulders relaxed, chin tucked in both feet flat on the floor. Take a couple of deep breaths.

Think about a situation or memory which still gives you emotional pain. Give it a number between zero (very low impact on your well-being) and ten (extremely high impact) and remember the number or write it down. Then work through the script, allowing the other people to repeat each phrase after you

Position	Words
A (karate chop)	Even though This bad thing happened to me It still makes me feel terrible I love and accept myself Exactly as I am
A (karate chop)	Even though This bad thing happened to me It still makes me feel terrible I love and accept myself Exactly as I am
1 (inner eyebrow)	This was a horrible thing. It should never have happened to me
2 (outer eyebrow)	Why did it have to happen to me?
3 (under eye)	It's just not fair
4 (under nose)	I still hate to think about it
5 (under mouth)	It still affects me
6 (collar bone)	It still makes me feel sad
7 (under arm)	It still makes me feel angry
8 (top of head)	It still upsets me
1 (inner eyebrow)	It's like it's part of me. It's become me
2 (outer eyebrow)	It's filling me
3 (under eye)	It still hurts so much
4 (under nose)	I hate to feel like this
5 (under mouth)	I don't like it
6 (collar bone)	I don't want it
7 (under arm)	I wish it could change
8 (top of head)	What if it could change?



1 (inner eyebrow)	What if I could feel different? Not to forget it but to feel alright about it
2 (outer eyebrow)	To feel some peace
3 (under eye)	To not keep suffering
4 (under nose)	That would feel better
5 (under mouth)	That would help me cope with everyday life
6 (collar bone)	That would help me find some peace
7 (under arm)	Maybe I can let something go today
8 (top of head)	Maybe today I can start to let go. To let go of the pain and the suffering. To let go

Then place your hands on your heart and take a couple of deep breaths. And let what just happened be incorporated into your body.

Then consider again the 0-10 scale and see if the number has changed.

Maybe it has reduced a little, or a lot. Maybe you want to do this again tomorrow to reduce it further. In a very small number of cases the number may go up because the memory has been stirred. This is normal and repeating the process will help reduce the number.

When we did this in the camp, refugees started with ratings in the 7-10 range and ended in 3-6.