

“ImPOWER Project” to “Educate, Engage and Empower Youth”

January to June 2020

Introduction

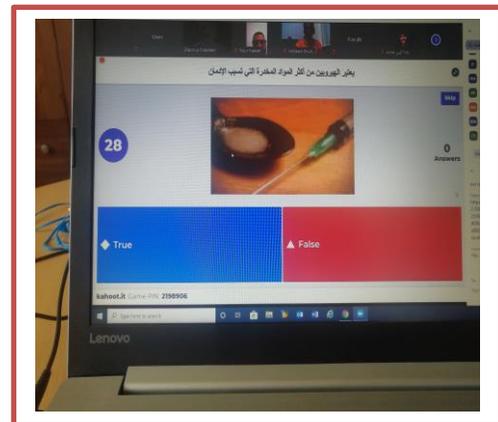
The “ImPower Project” was a project supported by UNICEF and funded by Germany through the German development bank KfW and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and implemented by “SIDC” NGO in Lebanon. The project entailed outreaching youth NGOs to partner with “SIDC”, training their youth leaders on “Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)” and “Substance Use” and engaging their youth in the design and implementation of initiatives to raise awareness on the previously mentioned topics. Within the framework of this project, “SIDC” and “Chabibeh Club” signed a memorandum of understanding and collaborated together for the main aim of the project which was educating youth on the topics of STIs and Substance Use, and empowering them to develop and implement their own initiatives.



Implementation

Under the MOU signed between “SIDC” and “Chabibeh Club”, the following was implemented from January 2020 until June 2020:

- 1. Training for youth leaders:** “Chabibeh Club” nominated 2 youth leaders who participated in a 4 days training organized by “SIDC”. The training enhanced their knowledge on the topics of “STIs” and “Substance Use” and developed their capacities to work with young people on the design, development and implementation of youth-led initiatives on the same topics.
- 2. Training for youth:** After their participation in the “SIDC” training, the “Chabibeh Club” youth leaders organized a 2 days training for a group of youth at “Chabibeh Club” in order to transfer the knowledge and skills gained through the “SIDC” training. This training for youth came as a follow up to the “SIDC” training with the aim to transfer the knowledge acquired to other groups of youth working in vulnerable areas in order to come up with initiatives.
- 3. Coaching:** The youth were coached by the youth leaders after the training, in order to work on their initiatives as groups. The coaching phase supported the youth to meet regularly, discuss their initiatives, agree on the final concept, distribute roles and implement the initiatives.



4. Youth-Led initiatives: At this phase, the youth were able to implement their initiatives which focused on sensitizing other youth and raising their awareness on STIs and Substance Use. The “Chabibeh Club” youth group designed and implemented 5 youth-led initiatives:

- 2 online games on Substance Use
- 1 online game on STIs
- 1 outdoor board game on Substance Use and STIs
- 1 short awareness raising movie

The youth initiatives implementation phase was very challenging, due to the Corona virus spread, which affected youth mobility. This led to amending the initial initiatives and transformed most of it into online activities. However, youth were able to implement and to collaborate with other NGOs in order to outreach other youth, especially the “Makassed Volunteers Unit”. One of the main modifications done was related to the budget. While the budget had lines related to transportation and food for the initiatives and the coaching sessions, it was not possible to use it anymore due to the lock-down. By assessing the situation closely, “Chabibeh Club” requested the permission to use this budget and buy gift coupons for the winners of the online awareness raising games. This request was approved by the partners and welcomed by the participants.



5. Evaluation: This was an ongoing process. After every training and initiative done by “Chabibeh Club”, youth were encouraged to take part in an evaluation exercise where they had the chance to assess their learning process and their participation. In addition, and at the end of the project, “SIDC” ran an online evaluation covering all the project duration and invited all youth and youth leaders to take part in it.

6. Closing: “SIDC” organized an online closing event to present the projects outcome. “Chabibeh Club” representatives at this event included members of the management board, members of the youth department and representatives of the youth who participated in the project and implemented initiatives.

Outcome

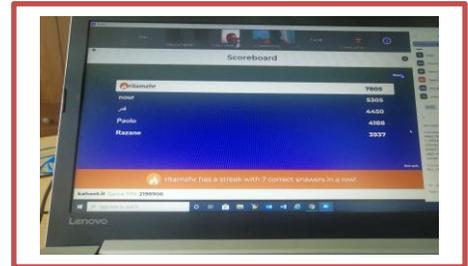
- **2** youth leaders from “Chabibeh Club” enhanced their knowledge and skills on STIs and Substance Use and developed their capacities to work with young people on the design, development and implementation of youth-led initiatives on the same topics.
- **15** youth participated in a training on STIs and Substance Use and designed and implemented youth-led initiatives reaching other young people.
- **5** youth-led initiatives were implemented to sensitive youth and raise their awareness on STIs and Substance Use.
- **40** youth reached through the online awareness raising games and outdoor board game.
- **9** youth received gift coupons following their participation in the online games (3 winners for each



online game who ended in first, second and third places based on their answers to the questions during the games)

Lessons learned

- The importance of quickly responding to unexpected crises: The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the youth activities was remarkable. This raised the importance of developing the skills and knowledge of youth workers on using online platforms, and on keeping youth motivated and engaged even if mobility is frozen.
- The importance of adaptability: the economic crisis in Lebanon followed by the Corona virus spread had a large impact on the psychological well-being of youth. Youth NGOs need to adapt their interventions in order to keep contact with the youth, support them in staying engaged and motivated and respond to new needs that may rise due to political, social and health events and crises.
- The importance of networking: When youth NGOs work together and collaborate, more youth can be reached through more activities thus creating more opportunities and a greater impact. Through this project, “Chabibeh Club” collaborated with “Makassed Volunteers Unit” and it was a successful partnership.
- The importance of coaching for youth: Youth are full of energy and ideas, and coaching helps them in consolidating their energy into impactful initiatives while teaching them how to communicate and take into consideration other stakeholders when designing, planning, and implementing their initiatives.



A reflection by “Chabibeh Club” youth leader “Rim Hazzouri”

As the initiatives of the youth at “Chabibeh Club” finally saw the light, I cannot but remember one essential topic I have stressed on during my work with them throughout this project: Assertiveness. I repeatedly stressed on the importance of **being assertive** enough to refuse falling into peer pressure, being bullied, harassed, or assaulted especially sexually. It's great to have all the knowledge needed for our wellbeing, but unfortunately it is not enough. When we work with youth on awareness, not only do we cover theoretical ideas, but also practical ones. We offer them the know-how, and the competences needed to handle such happenings. And this shows in the way they designed their initiatives: 5 initiatives were implemented regardless of the very hard situation due to the global pandemic and the lockdown, 3 of which were online awareness games (2 on Substance-Use, and another on STIs), a board game that has been developed to become part of the training library at “Chabibeh Club”, and a short raising awareness video on HIV and AIDS. I loved how inclusive the different initiatives were, covering the topics raised from various angles. And yes, it makes me super proud to know that a



small group of youth are out there positively influencing another group of young people.