



RIGHT TO PLAY
PROTECT. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

Music for Emergencies (M4E)

Quasi-experimental Evaluation Design

Baseline Report

November 2022

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CRM	Child and Youth Resilience Measure
CTPS	Critical thinking, problem-solving
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
KII	Key Informant Interview
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
M4E	Music for Emergencies
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PWDs	People with disabilities
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
RTP	Right To Play
ToC	Theory of Change

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings from the Baseline Phase of Right To Play's Music For Emergencies (M4E) pilot project. The baseline evaluation of this pilot involved 17 community centres out of the 24 reached by the project, which were located in Beirut, North and South governorates, and reached 270 children from a treatment group and 267 children from a control group.

The evaluation collected quantitative data through a survey administered to 537 children, and qualitative data through interviews with four Right to Play headquarters staff, six program officers and field facilitators in Lebanon, as well as focus group interviews with 69 children and 18 parents.

The baseline evaluation collected baseline values against which later assess the project's overall effectiveness. Moreover, the baseline study focused on project design, assessing its relevance, coherence, and effectiveness and leading a participatory review of its Theory of change.

The design of a psychosocial support intervention for refugee children and children exposed to the Beirut blast and other trauma, aimed at building back their life skills and resilience through music, is considered **relevant** to the context of socio-economic deterioration that increasingly characterizes Lebanon by headquarters staff and local program officers and field facilitators. Early findings from the implementation show that great effort has been put in place to provide children with *safe spaces* alternative to the increasingly discriminatory and violent environment that surrounds them. Children show interest in participation in Right To Play activities and a sense of security and freedom of expression within the centers. Parents on the other hand, although aware of the positive impact that Right To Play programs (and support programs at large) have on their children, are not always able to appreciate the importance of providing them with life skills and resilience skills, as observed in the focus groups discussions with them.

The M4E program builds, in an **internally coherent** way, on the strong experience of Right To Play in Lebanon, whose previous activities in the country revolved around the use of music to foster children's well-being and social awareness. M4E represents the third phase of the music project that was first developed in 2018 by Right to Play in Lebanon as "Music for Development", then followed by "Music for Social Change". After the economic crisis hit Lebanon in 2019, followed by the Beirut blast in 2020, there was an emergent need to develop a resource that addresses the psychosocial well-being of children who were affected by these crises. From these premises, the "Music for Emergencies" was developed. Right To Play recently introduced this strand of PSS activities, which emerged as an answer to the contexts' needs. M4E is not the only project focusing on PSS in the target community, but it is **externally coherent** with the identified needs of the population and complementary to other interventions planned by other organizations. It stands out, however, for its unique approach based on the use of music to improve children's resilience and life skills. This uniqueness is perceived by interviewees as the element that ensures there is no duplication or overlapping with other interventions.

The baseline analysis established baseline values against which **effectiveness** will be assessed at the end-line. According to what was reported by field facilitators, the training provided to them on the topic of life skills and music was adequate and sufficient. The training material - the Right to Play manual based on evidence of how music fosters life skills and provides psychosocial support to children in at-risk or traumatic situations – was also deemed very useful by field facilitators to carry on the sessions with children.

Children's regular attendance to the project is influenced largely by external causes (availability of and access to transportation, conflicting school or family schedules), but the quality of participation is ensured by facilitators' preparation and ability to create a human connection with the children.

Parents' and communities' involvement, although deemed fundamental to developing children's resilience and life skills, is not pursued by effective strategies within the program but only informally, thanks to field facilitators' efforts.

The evaluation has gathered data on children's resilience (through a CYRM survey) and life skills (through Focus Group discussions). It has emerged that children from treatment and control groups show a high level of resilience. This result, though, could be biased by the limitations of the tool and its necessary adaptation to a very young audience. The involvement of most of the children in other activities offered in the centers by other NGOs could also explain their high levels of resilience.

Focus group discussions on life skills show that children have most difficulties when it comes to communication, self-management, and management of emotions. Both in treatment and control groups, and across regions, ages, and gender, children show a scarce ability to actively listen to each other and often consider aggressive and violent behaviours as a normal and acceptable way not only to settle disputes but also to display their emotions. This is particularly frequent in Beirut, where the use of aggressive behaviours seems children's preferred way of communication and conflict-solving. These could be the consequences of the increasingly violent and disrupted environment that they experience in their everyday life.

This preliminary data will be compared to data in the end-line to assess changes in skills, knowledge, attitude, and behaviour, as well as resilience scores, from this initial baseline.

Building on the capacities of coaches from the affected communities is a key to guaranteeing **sustainability** over time. Moreover, as reported by the Right To Play staff interviewed, other crucial elements are the Ministry of Social Affairs' involvement and the overall support from the LEGO Foundation.

Efficiency and **impact** will be assessed during the end-line, comparing qualitative and quantitative data on efficiency at two points in time and quantifying and assessing changes.

As emerged from the baseline evaluation, the increasing normalization of violence in society has been interiorized by children, especially in Beirut and northern areas. This could require future

adjustments of M4E's contents, to specifically target such a relevant topic. Given parents' relevant role in this project, it is **recommended** to ensure their active involvement.

The **lessons learned** from this baseline evaluation relate to the quantitative and qualitative data collection tools: while the CYRM tool showed its trade-off in its implementation, the review process of the FGDs guidelines through a dedicated workshop was particularly successful.

Project background

Background and context

Right To Play is a global organization committed to improving the lives of children and youth affected by conflict, disease, and poverty. Established in 2000, Right To Play has pioneered a play-based approach to learning and development that focuses on quality education, life skills, health, gender equality, child protection, and building peaceful communities.

Its mission is to support children through play-based methods, leveraging play's power to improve their lives.

Today the work of Right To Play revolves around three different main areas:

1. Education, using play to improve learning outcomes. Right To Play usually develops activities to improve children's literacy and numeracy skills, mainly targeting primary-school pupils, but also teenagers, youth (such as the Lebanon projects), or infants.
2. Gender-responsive programming. All Right To Play initiatives have a gender focus: several projects are more focused on gender, particularly in the classroom, but also some are around gender-based violence, stopping violence against women and girls, promoting more positive messaging, and changing behaviours related to things like child marriage.
3. Health, well-being, and PSS. As emerged during the KIIs with the staff members, the latter is a new area for the organization, which has more and stronger experience in the education sector. The projects in the health area range from sexual and reproductive health, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, to psychosocial support.

The LEGO Foundation's Build Back Better program (January 2022 – March 2023) supports interventions in the latter area of Right To Plays' work on health and well-being, with a focus on this new strand of PSS. The program is composed of six different pilot interventions, each with a specific timeline, results framework, and MEL approach.

Music for Emergencies is one of these pilot interventions.

It is a scale-up of a series of music-based interventions in Lebanon, which have been piloted by Right To Play in several iterations since 2018.

The first project implemented in 2019 was Music for Development. It used music as a tool to build social cohesion in communities, improve the life and organizational skills of adolescents, as well as empower them to become leaders of positive change in their society. 291 adolescents participated in the project.

The second project, piloted in 2020, was Music for Social Change. This project aimed at strengthening vulnerable and at-risk adolescents' life and psychosocial skills and empowering them to become agents of change in their communities using music to advocate and raise awareness about social issues. The project reached 258 adolescents.

The third project implemented is Music for Emergencies. After the economic crisis hit Lebanon in 2019, followed by the Beirut blast in 2020, there was an emergent need to develop a resource that addresses the psychosocial well-being of children who were affected by these crises. With its rare balance between impact and experimentation, this pilot aims at improving the psychosocial well-being, resilience, and life skills of children between six and 12 years old.

As part of the LEGO Foundation's Build Back Better Program, Right To Play is implementing the M4E project in community centers (informal education centers) across three regions of Lebanon (Beirut, North, and South governorates). The project has been piloted among a group of approximately 1,060 child participants and 75 adult supporters, with three Right To Play field facilitators.

Evaluation methodology and implementation

Project management and fieldwork management

The Consultancy's team is composed of professionals from Learn More and COSV, two organizations with extensive experience collaborating in Lebanon and complementary skillsets. Learn More brings a strong background in evaluating complex educational interventions for leading non-profits. COSV's co-profit business unit provides unparalleled in-country data collection capabilities and know-how in quantitative assessment methods.

The project management is carried out by Learn More, while the fieldwork management is supervised by COSV (please refer to Section 3 of the Inception Report for further details).

Starting from the agreed framework (please refer to the [Annex](#) section for further details), the Consultancy drafted all the data collection tools, that were vetted by the client and piloted before running all the data collection activities.

Data Collection

The Baseline Evaluation drew on robust quali-quantitative data collection and analysis based on the framework. The Consultancy gathered quantitative data from a treatment and a comparison group of children through a PSS survey based on the CYRM tool. The survey reached 537 children.

Qualitative data collection included a desk review, in-depth interviews with Right To Play staff, music session observations and focus group discussions with children and parents. Additional qualitative data has been collected through pre- and post-tests directed at the M4E coaches. Triangulation of data from these different sources, vetted with a thorough data quality assurance process¹, has allowed the Consultancy to identify preliminary factors of the contribution of M4E activities to the expected outcomes.

The baseline data collection involved 537 children, 15 members of Right To Play staff and 18 parents and caregivers. The end-line data collection is expected to involve the same number of children and parents, 14 members of Right To Play personnel and two members of the local community.

¹ The purpose of data quality assurance, monitoring and systematization is to provide Right to Play with useful data to inform the decision-making process, i.e., data that adequately meets the standards of Validity (data clearly and adequately represent the intended result), Integrity (data have safeguards to minimize risk of transcription error or data manipulation), Precision (data have a sufficient level of detail to permit management decision making), Reliability (data reflect consistent data collection processes and analysis methods over time), and Timeliness (data are available at a useful frequency and are current).

Table 1 - Data Collection Overview

		Target location	and	Quantity	Targeted groups	# participants	Notes
Quantitative data collection	CYRM survey	Children - Beirut and Mount Lebanon	-	/	5 – 13 years old (intervention)	121	
				/	5 – 13 years old (control)	102	
		Children - South		/	5 – 13 years old (intervention)	65	
				/	5 – 13 years old (control)	45	
		Children - North		/	5 – 13 years old (intervention)	84	
				/	5 – 13 years old (control)	120	
Qualitative data collection	Focus group discussions	Children - Beirut		4	5 - 9 years old	25	Two FGDs with intervention groups and two with control groups.
		Children - South		4	5 - 9 years old	22	Two FGDs with intervention groups and two with control groups.
		Children - North		4	10 - 13 years old	22	Two FGDs with intervention groups and two with control groups.
		Parents		3	Parents	18	One FGD per area with parents of children of intervention groups only.
	Key informant interviews	Right To Play program staff		1	RTP program staff	3	Program manager, project manager, MEAL officer.
		Right To Play program coaches		3	RTP field facilitators	3	One field facilitator per area.
		Right To Play staff HQ		4	Right To Play staff HQ	4	These interviews were conducted online by the Learn More team.
	Music session observations	Right To Play program coaches		5	RTP program coaches, children participating in music sessions	~ 13	Two observations per the Southern areas and Beirut, and one observation per the Northern areas.

Quantitative data collection: CYRM survey

The *Child and Youth Resilience Measure* or CYRM is a self-reported measure of social resilience used by researchers and practitioners worldwide. It assesses children's level of resilience, defined as the capacity of individuals to find psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being.

The original measures were established through a process of interviews with youth and their caregivers in countries around the world. Reflection on the obstacles youth confronts, as well as possible resources called upon to navigate through and/or around these obstacles, resulted in the original version of the CYRM. The measure has been adapted into versions suitable for younger children (aged 5-9 years) and older age groups/youth (10-13 years), with questions that slightly differ for the different age groups².

CYRM is formulated as a questionnaire of 17 questions, based either on a three-valued or five-valued Likert scale. The assessment foresees the following key steps:

² For further information about the CYRM tool, please refer to the following link:
<https://cyrm.resilienceresearch.org/>

1. Selection of the CYRM version: The CYRM Survey targeting children offers two versions serving the same purpose, which is measuring resilience³. The only difference between the two versions lies in the fact that the one aiming at younger age groups contains simpler wordings, resulting in easily understandable questions.
2. Contextualization: Once the version is selected, the wording has to be adapted to be culturally understood and eventually become acceptable to the target audience.
3. Survey Delivery: The Survey is administered through 1-to-1 interviews.
4. Score: The score for each question is summed by the enumerator to get a score of individual resilience.

The contextualized survey was administered to a sample of 537 children, sampled from a total population of 1302 children (with a confidence level of 99% and a margin of error of 4.28%).

The sampling has been performed by COSV applying internal non-probability sampling criteria, aimed at covering the widest range of sub-groups of the targeted population.

This led to a proper representation of the different nationalities, genders, and areas of intervention, as shown in the table below.

Table 2 - CYRM sample disaggregated by locations, gender, and groups

Locations	Sample disaggregated by treatment vs. control and gender			
	Treatment		Control	
	M	F	M	F
Beirut and Mount Lebanon	51	70	45	57
North	37	28	14	31
South	43	41	64	56

As planned, the CYRM surveys were administered by Right to Play coaches, under the supervision of COSV enumerators who were providing technical support (related to the questionnaires, tablets, and the re-phrasing of questions if needed). This made it possible for the children to feel at ease and to collect higher-quality data.

The questionnaire was encoded as a KOBO survey where a three-valued Likert scale and each question was visualized as glasses of water (empty, half-full, and full) to make it more understandable to the children.

³ Generally, resilience is defined as an individual's ability to overcome adversity and continue his or her normal development. However, Dr. Michael Ungar, founder and Director of the [Resilience Research Centre](#), has suggested that resilience is better understood as follows: "In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways."

The CYRM survey assessed both the personal and caregiver/relational resilience of children. The former relates to behaviours, thoughts, and actions that promote personal well-being and mental health. The latter explores the characteristics associated with the important relationships shared with either a primary caregiver or a partner or family.

Qualitative data collection: focus group discussions, key informant interviews and music session observations

Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were co-led by COSV enumerators and Right to Play field facilitators and coaches. The role of Right to Play staff (both field facilitators and coaches) was to support the enumerators in the facilitation of the focus group discussions while fostering a friendlier and safer environment for participants.

FGDs with parents and caregivers were aimed at collecting background information about the context where children live and exploring parents' perceptions of their children's well-being.

FGDs with children mainly covered their perception of the context where they live and tried to establish a baseline of the life skills targeted by the M4E project.

Key Informant Interviews

The key informant interviews involved Right To Play staff both on the field and in the Global headquarters. COSV administered the key informant interviews with the staff in Lebanon. The three enumerators conducted interviews with the three field facilitators of Right to Play, while the local evaluation coordinator carried out those with the program officers. Learn More managed the interviews with the Global headquarters personnel, hosted online.

KIIs with the Global headquarters personnel were aiming at collecting qualitative information on the coherence, efficiency, and sustainability of the project, with particular emphasis on the high-level design and funding of the M4E project.

Interviews with program officers and field facilitators in Lebanon focused mainly on the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the project.

Music session observations

The purpose of this activity was to understand the nature, content, and delivery of the music sessions, by observing several elements such as the level of participation and engagement of attendees, the venue, the activities delivered and the coaches' abilities to lead the music session. Two enumerators and the Local evaluation coordinator led the music session observations.

For the implementation phase, a deployment plan was set in coordination with RTP, targeting five centres (one in the Northern area, two in Beirut and two in the Southern area).

As outlined in the Technical Proposal, the Consultancy planned up to nine music session observations for the whole evaluation. To better observe the development of all the relevant components of the music sessions, the Consultancy decided to deliver a final number of ten

observations, equally distributed between the baseline and the end-line phase. To provide insightful and relevant data for comparison, the end-line session observations will involve the same coaches observed at baseline.

Limitations

Both the quantitative and qualitative data collection tools showed some limitations. As for the Consultancy's risk management strategy, Right To Play staff was promptly informed of any potential limitations and involved in the design of mitigation strategies, aimed at reducing data collection risks whenever possible.

Quantitative data collection

Some limitations have been reported after the implementation of the CYRM in the baseline phase, namely:

- Opting for a 3-valued Likert Scale simplified the interaction with the children, as well as their understanding of many questions; nevertheless, it led to a less accurate distribution of the collected answers, and therefore to a lower level of comparability with the end-line survey. Mapping the expected change required a triangulation with qualitative data to be collected from the children, in addition to the reported Likert scale's values.
- Social Desirability Bias may have affected the children less familiar with the coaches, specifically on education and supporting system-related questions; these questions (in particular those items referring to children's interaction with the community and the concept of fairness) will have to be better explained during the End-line phase and interpreted into a more child-friendly language.

Qualitative data collection

Neither key informant interviews nor music session observations showed particular limitations.

FGDs with children, although successful, were slightly challenging. The most demanding task was having children interested and focused for the entire duration of the focus groups (especially the younger ones), as they were easily bored and distracted. Another relevant challenge was the availability of adequate spaces for this activity, where children participating in the focus group discussions were separated from others who did not take part in the evaluation. The occasional absence of dedicated spaces brought harder interactions with children, who were distracted by the surrounding environment.

Given the importance of this topic, a Learning Meeting was hosted by the Consultancy to gather feedback and suggestions from the data collectors, which resulted in an improvement of the timeline and guidelines for the end-line data collection. In addition to that, on November 11th, a one-day workshop was held in COSV's office in Beirut with a restricted number of participants involving both the Consultancy and Right To Play staff, to review the guidelines for the focus group discussions with children and design their gamification.

The resulting guidelines, after Right To Play's validation, will be used for the end-line data collection.

Research ethical issues and considerations

The Consultancy applies the following ethical principles:

- Independence – research team members shall maintain their independence.
- Impartiality – research team members, in the performance of their duties, shall always act with impartiality, objectivity, and professionalism. They shall not act in a way that unjustifiably could lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment for or against individuals, groups, or interests.
- Integrity – research team members shall maintain the highest standards of integrity, including honesty, truthfulness, fairness, and incorruptibility in all matters affecting their official duties.
- Accountability – research team members shall be accountable for the proper discharge of their functions and their decisions and actions. In fulfilling their official duties, they shall submit themselves to scrutiny as required by their position.
- Respect for human rights – research team members shall fully respect the human rights, dignity and worth of all persons and shall act with understanding, tolerance, sensitivity, and respect for diversity and without discrimination of any kind.

The Consultancy applies safeguarding principles when conducting research with vulnerable people or categories of people. This means the team is responsible to ensure everybody working with and for the Consultancy commits to respecting Do No Harm principles.

Vulnerable people or categories of people in research terms are defined as:

- Infants and children under the age of eighteen who are still in education or aged sixteen if they are not in education.
- People with learning or communication difficulties or serious mental health problems.
- Patients in hospital.
- Individuals under the care of social services.
- People in custody or on probation.
- Individuals engaged in illegal activities such as drug abuse.
- Persons with a condition or illness which is directly being investigated in the evaluation.
- Refugees and social minority groups.

The Consultancy members respect the standards set by Learn More in its Data Protection and Security Policy, Information Security Policy, and Quality Policy and guarantees all personal and sensitive data are treated according to the GDPR.

Moreover, the consultancy members follow the company Code of Conduct, which establish that:

- LM staff and contractors must avoid developing personal relationships with vulnerable people involved in our projects (beneficiaries or users).

- LM staff and contractors must avoid disclosing personal information

Whenever data collection involves children, parents and caregivers are informed in time and signed caregiver consents are collected before the children are involved in the data collection process.

The Consultancy, together with all the above-mentioned principles, complies with all the obligations, policy and codes of conduct to which Right To Play adheres.

Findings

Relevance

This criterion aims at assessing how M4E goals and implementation are aligned with beneficiaries' and stakeholders' needs. It investigates to what extent the target stakeholders view the intervention as useful and valuable.

As per the Evaluation and Research Framework, KEQs from one to seven aimed at evaluating the *Relevance* of the M4E project. The Consultancy relied on both key informant interviews with Right To Play staff and focus group discussions with children and caregivers to answer these questions.

Summary of findings - Relevance

The M4E pilot takes place in a context lately characterized by social and economic deterioration, strongly affecting the psychosocial well-being of both adults and children. For this reason, Right To Play developed a project focusing on offering PSS to children, building on previous experiences in the local context. As explained by the interviewees, music was chosen as an inclusive tool to reach all participants. Moreover, as confirmed by the literature, music-based activities can impact young and adults' physical and emotional well-being (Dingle et. al., 2021), promoting empathy and prosocial behaviour and helping participants to regulate their emotions (Wu & Lu, 2021).

Great emphasis is placed on creating an inclusive and safe space where children can express themselves freely and improve their life skills and resilience through different activities. This project also tries to offer children alternatives to the discriminating and increasingly violent environment in which they live.

Socio-economic Context

All key informants report a strong deterioration of social-economic conditions in Lebanon, which seriously worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 2019 the country was affected by an economic and financial crisis ranking among the worst economic crises globally since the mid-nineteenth century. GDP per capita dropped by 36.5% between 2019 and 2021, and Lebanon was reclassified by the World Bank as a lower-middle-income country, down from upper-middle-income status in July 2022. The economic crisis has been further exacerbated by the dual economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, and the massive Port of Beirut explosion in August 2020.

The social impact of this crisis is very strong: more than half the country's population is likely already below the poverty line, the unemployment rate increased from 11.4% in 2018-19 to 9.6% in 2022, and the country has witnessed a dramatic collapse in basic services, such as public electricity, transport and food supply.⁴

⁴ For further details please refer to the following link (last updated in November 2022):
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/overview>

This situation is affecting the psychosocial well-being and mental health of all people.

Parents included in the focus group discussions witness a general absence of support and aid for families, who feel alone in bearing the burden of their worsening economic and living conditions:

“During the COVID-19 period, the situation was more difficult; there was a lot of psychological pressure on the whole family, and no one was able to bear the other.”

Parent, South Lebanon

As pointed out by Right To Play project officers:

“The parents are suffering from lots of difficulties and burdens, and these are being transferred to the children as well, and we have seen cases of violence, early marriage, and racism.”

The negative effects on children’s well-being are confirmed also by Right to Play staff that directly works with them.

“[...] Children found themselves stuck in their houses without any space to do the activities they were used to. This has led to further deterioration of the psychological and behavioural situations, and we witnessed increasing violence and being bored with everything. It is significant that children are living desperate life and trying to do anything to keep themselves entertained.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Another field facilitator witnesses the same condition, reporting that children are stressed particularly when they belong to regions or areas suffering from “psychological, social, economic and financial pressures”.

M4E’s design

According to stakeholders, M4E’s design process had some unique characteristics aimed at increasing its relevance to local needs and priorities.

“M4E is the only [project] that has been designed actually locally. It's the only project that has been led and designed by the country team”.

RTP Headquarter Staff

The choice of targeting psychosocial support, well-being and resilience was described as

“[...] something that the Lebanon team has been working on for a long time, again because of the nature of the areas in which the team works, [where] there is a big need for PSS programs and the [local] team has been working with the Global Programs team to strengthen this PSS strand.”

RTP Headquarter Staff

Previous Right To Play experiences in Lebanon converged into M4E, and according to Right To Play program officers in the country, the design of the current activities is completely based on participants' needs.

"A needs assessment was conducted to identify the children's needs, especially those related to children's well-being and PSS. Through these assessments, we have known the exact needs and how to tailor our project based on them, taking the context and the background of the community into consideration. Right now, we are focusing on child protection and PSS, in order to empower the children to become more resilient to carry on in these harsh circumstances. The areas of intervention were chosen based on needs assessment and a pre-applied pilot, some of the areas haven't had NGO intervention before".

RTP Staff, Lebanon

M4E offers children PSS through music, used as a tool for learning through play and improving participants' resilience and life skills:

"The general objective of the project is to provide psychosocial support. Through that, we also teach life skills and cultural skills to distance children from the environment in which they live and make them understand that they can benefit from other things. Step by step, when they learn application skills along with life skills, through play and building their confidence through working groups, many of them will discover their talents."

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Music is the element that unites these previous programs and the current pilot. Its universal language increases the inclusiveness of the M4E project.

Inclusion is not seen only as a feature of the project, but also as a skill that M4E seeks to strengthen in children, to actively respond to the challenges of their context.

"We all have the same needs, regardless of our nationalities and we all live in the same country. During our sessions, we always encourage integration. On the streets, you can find that some children from a certain nationality don't like to deal with people from another nationality. There is this rivalry between them so during the sessions when we integrate them, we are reducing conflict between them. They would work as a group, in one spirit and with one objective which makes them grasp the meaning of cooperation and teamwork."

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Parents too confirm that the context in which their children are living is not inclusive, and detail episodes of racism of which their families had been victims.

“Parents dwelled on personal stories which generally included how some Lebanese parents/children abstain from playing with their kids or stop them from passing through a specific street for no reason etc. Intolerance is also availed when the parents work as janitors and parents find it hard to cope with their job title or being referred to as janitors.”

COSV Enumerator, FGD with parents, Beirut

This issue is perceived as relevant also by parents from the southern region, who actively try to teach their children about coexistence and non-discrimination.

In addition to that, parents seem to be particularly concerned with securing their children’s economic stability.

Only the group of parents from the southern region also added that “children need to feel safe and stable”.

In the view of Right To Play staff, it is usual that parents are so concerned with more pressing immediate economic needs that are not able to identify the need of their children for psychosocial support and acquiring better life skills. Caregivers’ level of engagement is expected to grow over time, thanks to their children’s participation in the M4E project. The possible increased engagement of parents will be assessed in the end-line data collection.

“At the beginning of the intervention, the level of understanding of the parents isn't that significant. But to solve this, we meet with our local partners during the launching process, and they will be communicating with the parents to explain the project and to get them closer to life skills and resilience concepts.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

“[...] the way to include parents in the project [is that] we start by working with children and then [...] we [...] meet with the parents to tell them about their children and what they are doing in particular and the nature of the projects they are participating in. We even tell them about the life skills they learn during the activities so that they are aware of what their children are doing [...] and parents also work with their children for the benefit of the whole community.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Parents’ and caregivers’ involvement in M4E is a crucial means to increase their comprehension of life skills and resilience as relevant tools to improve children’s well-being. Their comprehension of these concepts is expected to improve as happened in previous similar projects:

“Based on previous studies and data collection with the parents, life skills are {now} more familiar to them, and they have provided examples of those life skills that their children attained.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

The concept of *safe space*

Granting children access to a *safe space* is paramount for Right to Play to reach the desired change of improving children’s resilience and life skills. For this reason, the Consultancy decided to assess the relevance of M4E also through an evaluation of the space where the music sessions are led, both from a physical and emotional perspective.

Right To Play puts effort into the creation of safe spaces for children:

“From the emotional/psychological points of view, the spaces are safe, the staff is well trained to deal with children, and there is an atmosphere of freedom where children can express themselves the way they want (in a proper way). As RTP we have carefully selected the coaches through 2 months of training with each coach individually to measure their level of understanding of the project, asking them to apply each game mentioned in the curricula, and following up with them on a periodic basis to check whether further support is needed. From a physical point of view, I can say that the spaces are 90% safe for the kids, and I've chosen 90% because the access/way to some locations may not be that safe (electrical hazards for instance especially in camps), but this thing requires huge work of rehabilitation to the camp which is not in our hand for the time being.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

The five music session observations led by the Consultancy confirmed that Right To Play aims at creating safe spaces around children to guarantee their free expression and development. Most places where music sessions are led are physically safe, easily reachable by children, and offer separate toilets for boys and girls. Due to physical restrictions out of Right to Play’s control, not all venues are accessible for children with disabilities.

The environment created by the coaches is adequate for the participants’ needs, clean and tidy, and particularly friendly for the children. Whenever required, all children have the same access to learning materials, and they are all equally involved in the activities. This reflects the project’s efforts to grant an inclusive environment for all the participants.

Children’s well-being

Focus groups with children aimed at exploring M4E relevance to their needs. They focused at first on understanding how children feel in their communities, what things they value, and what difficulties they face in their daily life. The Consultancy also tried to grasp how children perceive

their relationship with families, parents, or other caregivers, triangulating the CYRM relational resilience results with the FGDs answers.

The 6-9 years old children report that playing and having fun are the activities they like the most (playing, basketball, football), while older children can offer more detailed answers (“taking part in activities with my dad, including fishing”, “when I go to horseback riding”, “I like to sing”).

Attending school, learning, and studying are mentioned five times as pleasant activities for children, regardless of age, but of these five times only one is reported by boys. Going to school is mentioned as an unpleasant activity only twice, by a group of boys and a group of girls aged 6-9. In particular, as reported in the FGDs with girls, “one of the children indirectly spoke about the school she attended as being ugly, explaining that the schoolteacher did not explain well, and she used to yell at her.”

Duties and rules to be followed at home seem to be elements that children do not like, regardless of their age. Younger children refer mostly to housework, while older participants often report about family dynamics (please refer to Table 3 below for further details).

Table 3 - Housework and family dynamics

Age	Location	Control vs. Intervention	Gender	(5-9 y.o.) Are there things that you find difficult or that you don't like in your daily life? What do you do when you face them? (10-13 y.o.) What kinds of things are most challenging for you growing up here?
5-9	South	Control	Girls	“Taking out the trash because the bag is heavy, and the container is far.”
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	“Climbing the high roof [...] of our building to fill the water.”
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	When moms ask them to organize their clothes or pack some items. Also not obeying means being beaten or yelled at. One of the children mentioned how she escapes hard tasks by pretending to be asleep. Some of them hide or go away.
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	“My brother annoys me when he asks for a lot of things from me, or when he orders me around or hits me.” “When my cousin comes over, my mum gives him my stuff, which annoys me”. “I get annoyed by my sister's commands, like when she asks me to bring her a glass of water while she can do it herself”

Only children from the southern areas refer that they do not like going to bed too soon and get up early in the morning to go to school.

Children from 10-13, in particular girls, describe their difficulties with specific social and relational situations. In the FGDs with girls from the northern region, they often mention negative behaviours like bullying and gossiping: “when people make fun of a certain person's appearance”, “I am bothered by comparisons between one person and another as well as discrimination”, “Society's perception”. Other girls from the same areas report being scared by clashes happening between people.

Violence seems to surround children in their daily life, as many of them often describe resorting to violence as a common, normalized, and socially acceptable way of dispute settlement with peers. Children from both Beirut and northern areas seem to be more often in contact with violent surroundings. They show a great familiarity with weapons and refer to episodes within their families that show how possessing and using weapons is a normalized behaviour. An overview of the most salient comments of children regarding their exposure to violence, and their interiorization of it as a normal feature of daily life, is summarized below:

Table 4 - Children and violence

Age	Location	Control intervention	vs.	Gender	(5-9 y.o.) Are there things that you find difficult or that you don't like in your daily life? What do you do when you face them? (10-13 y.o.) What kinds of things are most challenging for you growing up here?
5-9	Beirut	Control		Girls	Children's communication skills are very timid with a high focus on cash, violence, and school.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention		Girls	Dealing with friends is mostly resolved with violence.
5-9	Beirut	Control		Boys	Children also showed relatively high experience when it comes to weaponry as it is a part of their daily life (my dad brought a gun, my brother has a sniper, etc.)
5-9	Beirut	Intervention		Boys	"Sometimes I can't convey my ideas to others, so I resort to hitting them."
10-13	North	Intervention		Boys	"If my brother is guilty, I hit him; however, if the other children are, then I hit them."
10-13	North	Control		Girls	"One time, my brother took a picture of me with a gun."
10-13	North	Intervention		Girls	"If I was bullied, I would hit the person."

Field facilitators have direct experience with the increasing militarization of society and actively try to offer children different and positive models to follow.

"One time, I went to Beddawi to give a session. There were security officers who always carry weapons. Kids also carry weapons. Schools have placed signs on their doors to prohibit carrying weapons inside the premises, which shows how ordinary it is to see children and adults carrying weapons. We are trying as much as we can to distance children from the environment that they were raised. In camps such as the Beddawi Camp, they are organizing training camps to teach children how to carry and use weapons. This is really sad and pushes us to provide educational and recreational materials for children, materials that they love while being exposed to people who are trying to teach them the wrong mindset."

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Children's relation with caregivers

To understand the family environment where children live and whether it supports children's psychosocial well-being, the Consultancy tried also to assess participants' perceptions of their relations with families and caregivers.

All children involved in the focus group discussions refer to feel generally heard by their families, but they often decide whether to involve their parents depending on how busy they are, or the relevance of the topic. This perception is equally reported by younger and older children, with no difference according to gender.

Table 5 - Children's relation with caregivers

Age	Location	Control vs. Intervention	Gender	"Do grownups listen to children in your family/community? Are you free to say whatever you want in your family?"
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	"Yes, at times, based on importance. If my parents are angry, they don't listen to us."
5-9	South	Control	Boys	Yes, they listen to them, but not always. [Children do not involve their parents] in order to avoid being yelled at.
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	Those who are older listen to [children] but not always, depending on the importance of the subject or how busy they are. [Children] are not obligated to do anything in case they're not happy with it - they can express themselves freely.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	Yes, but some things are kept to themselves. When they are angry, they don't listen to those older than them. They think that those who are older don't care about what the younger ones say. They do not express their thoughts within the family because they have work to do.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	Some can raise the issues with their parents, but others feel afraid to do so. Some of the kids joked about being beaten by their parents in case of an argument.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	They communicate their troubles and where they go to their parents. Their parents guide them on how to resolve their issues as they listen to their issues.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	Not always, it depends on the topic and the mood of the parents. Generally, the girls of this group avoid telling their parents what goes on in their lives as they are either mad or they will use this issue to bring up the phone addiction topic which the children avoid in order to avoid being punished.
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	"My mother doesn't believe me when I tell her something, whereas she believes my little brother because he's younger than me". "I was once hit by a boy, so I told my father who had a fight with the boy's father." "We are a peaceful family, but whoever comes close to us we stand against them." "I tell my uncle about everything because my mum cannot speak to men." "I tell my uncles." [...] "I tell my brother everything that happens to me."
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	"I tell my sister or my friend (my cousin)." "Sometimes parents hear us depending on the circumstances." "I talk to my mother because my father is at work." "I feel that I am closer to my father than to my mother, so I talk to him."
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"I don't like to talk to anyone." "I don't like to disturb my father; I would defend myself." "I would take matters into my own hands" [...] "I would tell my parents and they would both be by my side."
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"I tell everything that happens to me to my parents." Most girls said that they tell both their parents everything and sometimes they tell the teacher. "I tell my brother." "I tell my sister."

As the CYRM survey investigates children's relational resilience (please refer to the *Children's resilience* section), the Consultancy isolated the CYRM answers of FGDs participants to triangulate them with the qualitative data collected. This analysis showed that children's answers to the CYRM were not as nuanced as those in the FGDs: almost all the children replied that they talk with their parents and that their caregivers know where they are and what they do. This confirms the methodological constraints of the quantitative data collection tool, as outlined in the *Limitations* section.

Coherence

This criterion aims at assessing the compatibility of M4E with other interventions in Lebanon or in this sector. It evaluates both *internal coherence* (the analysis of synergies and interlinkages between the M4E and other interventions carried out by Right to Play) and *external coherence* (the study of the consistency of the intervention with other actors' interventions in the same context).

As per the Evaluation and Research Framework, the KEQs from 8 to 11 aim at evaluating the *Coherence* of the M4E project. Both key informant interviews and focus group discussions were used to assess this criterion.

Summary of findings - Coherence

The M4E program builds on the strong experience of Right To Play in Lebanon, whose previous activities in the country revolved around the use of music to foster children's well-being and offer them appropriate PSS.

As revealed by the interviewees, Right To Play recently introduced this strand of PSS activities, which emerged as a positive spill-over of activities that were originally focused on social impact. As soon as stakeholders also reported positive effects on participants' well-being, Right To Play decided to gather solid evidence to assess its initiative's impact, not only from a social but also from a PSS perspective. The LEGO Foundation's Build Back Better program addresses this very need.

M4E is not the only project focusing on PSS in the target community, but it stands out for its unique approach based on the use of music to improve children's resilience and life skills. This uniqueness is perceived by interviewees as the element that ensures there is no duplication or overlapping with other interventions.

Internal coherence

As outlined in the *Project Background* section, Right To Play has 20-year-long experience in developing play-based activities to support children's learning and development. The organization has also recently developed a strand of projects focusing on PSS for children.

Within this strand of PSS projects is the M4E pilot, developed from the previous music-based intervention led in Lebanon (Music for Development, Music for Social Change) and supported by LEGO's Build Back Better program.

Evidence about the effectiveness of these previous iterations, although not robust, was encouraging. All pilots have shown some promising (but anecdotal) signs of effectiveness. For this reason, as seen also in the high-level key informant interviews, getting more evidence about what changes in children's resilience and life skills as a result of these interventions is a crucial aspect of this whole evaluation. The Build Back Better program allowed Right To Play not only to

improve and scale up the activities designed in the previous music interventions but also to answer an internal need to gather solid evidence on the project's impact.

As detailed by one of the interviewees, in the last ten years, Right To Play focused primarily on developing play-based resources and materials to support their social-cohesion programs all over the world.

Although these programs focused mainly on supporting vulnerable children and creating positive relationships between refugees and host communities, stakeholders reported increasing psychosocial well-being among targeted children.

From this unexpected positive spillover arose Right To Play's interest in designing PSS programs. Their development required not only a more holistic and theoretical approach to well-being project design but also stronger evidence to assess these programs' effectiveness.

In this sense, the need to collect data and evaluate the effectiveness of Right To Play's interventions emerged as an essential growth step rather than a demand for external accountability. LEGO Foundation is thus perceived as a collaborative donor that is supporting Right To Play in the realization of this learning journey.

External coherence

This paragraph summarizes findings on the consistency of M4E with other actors' interventions (both governmental and not institutional) in the same context. This includes complementarity, harmonization and coordination with others and the extent to which the intervention is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.

M4E is interacting both with the Ministry of Social Affairs and with the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, a group of 126 partner organizations built to assist more than 3.2 million crisis-affected people living in the country.⁵

In Lebanon, there seems to be a high offer of various leisure activities for children. As referred by all the older participants from the northern areas during the FGDs, they attend different projects and activities both inside and outside the centers, ranging from sports (swimming, football, basketball) to English courses.

Concerning the availability of other similar projects in the target community, only girls from the northern areas report participating in another psychological support program.

One of the field facilitators offered a complete overview of the current situation:

⁵ For further information, please refer to the following link: <https://lebanon.un.org/en/172232-2022-lebanon-crisis-response-plan-lcrp>

“There are projects that are similar to the M4E project and that work on psychosocial well-being and on providing psychological support through activities. There are a few organizations and individuals who use music. The objective of M4E is to help children develop themselves and their skills to become citizens capable of helping their society, and yes, it is also the objective of other projects, but they don't reach it through music.”
RTP Staff, Lebanon

The unique way of using music to offer children PSS is recognized by all Right To Play staff members as the key element of the uniqueness of this project. It is perceived as a powerful and adaptive tool to reach all participants and affect both individuals and the community.

Music is also the element defining M4E's uniqueness. Thanks to it, the interaction with other actors in the target context, whenever present, is not perceived as competitive but as complementary.

“The work methodology differs from one region to another. [...] In other regions like Tyre, Northern Burj Camp, children attend sessions for other projects or participate in activities implemented by other local associations, but those projects are not the same as ours, we complete each other, and each project works on specific skills so that children can benefit in all aspects.”
RTP Staff, Lebanon

Effectiveness

By effectiveness, we mean the extent to which M4E achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across targeted groups. The following analysis aims at establishing baseline values against which effectiveness will be assessed at the end-line.

According to the Evaluation and Research Framework, KEQs from 12 to 25 aimed at exploring the *Effectiveness* of the M4E project. Both quantitative (CYRM) and qualitative tools (KIs, FGDs and music session observations) were used to assess this criterion.

As outlined in the Logic Model (please refer to [Annex 3](#)) and the first Theory of Change, M4E's expected outcome is to improve resilience and life skills among children who participate in this music-based intervention. A key assumption of the project is that music-based interventions have a positive impact on the psychosocial well-being and life skills of children.

To reach this goal, Right To Play identified three different outputs, which are:

1. Improve the coaches' capacities to lead M4E sessions.
2. Foster children's regular attendance at the M4E project.
3. Engage parents and the communities to develop children's resilience and life skills.

According to the first Theory of Change visualization, a crucial step to improve coaches' abilities to lead the music sessions is offering them proper training, together with ongoing psychosocial support sessions and mentoring.

To foster children's regular attendance, Right To Play focuses on the creation of a safe space, defined as being both physically accessible and inclusive. Coaches are expected to use inclusive language and to be respectful of differences in abilities, gender, and socio-economic background.

Engaging parents and the communities in supporting children's development of resilience and life skills is a crucial step towards reaching the final goal. As outlined in the assumptions of the Theory of Change, there is scarce knowledge of the psychosocial needs of children among parents, and whenever there is awareness of these, it is not a priority. To improve families' support, Right To Play aims at involving parents in the project, communicating effectively the aims and contents of M4E.

Summary of findings – Effectiveness

Children's resilience has been assessed at baseline through a CYRM quantitative survey. The frequency of item responses as well as the average scale CYRM scores show overall high levels of personal and relational resilience. Age was not significantly related to resilience scores in both age groups. Among 5-9 years old children, no statistically significant differences in children's resilience scores based on the area of residence were registered. However, females scored significantly higher on caregiver/relational resilience. Among 10-13-year-olds, males scored significantly higher on individual resilience compared to females. Moreover, children in the South of Lebanon scored significantly higher on caregiver/relational resilience compared to children from Beirut and Mount Lebanon.

Data from focus group discussions show a more nuanced picture of children's relational environment (parents, families, coaches) and their life skills. Especially in Beirut and the Northern Region, they show a significative attitude to consider aggressivity, bullying, and violence as normal and socially accepted means of solving disputes or expressing emotions, thus showing scarce management of emotion skills and communication skills.

Coaches show an adequate level of ownership of the project and engagement and report having received sufficient and adequate training. This is supported by evidence from music session observations.

Parents' engagement, although considered necessary to reach the project goal, is not pursued through structured activities. Parents do not perceive PSS as the most urgent need for their children. However, they attribute importance to their children's regular participation in activities targeting emotion management and communication.

Children's improvements in resilience and life skills

Music effectiveness in improving children's life skills and resilience is a key assumption of the M4E pilot. This assumption is grounded theoretically in RTP's learning-through-play approach

and operationalized through a careful selection of activities meant to improve children's life skills and well-being, grounded in solid pedagogical research.

"I think in terms of the global literature, there is quite a lot that would suggest that involving children and young people with music to spread messages related to life skills is very effective because it's something that everyone can relate to."
RTP Headquarter Staff

"The core of all our psychosocial well-being programs goes back to the initial thinking and Theory of Change, and the literature that supports this work is that play enables children to build life skills and these life skills then enable children to feel a sense of well-being. And to be able in what we have done, year after year is to try from a pedagogical perspective and make sure that each of these activities is aligned to a particular specific life skill. So, it's not just a random selection of activities and then you just play. It is identifying these activities that contribute to specific life skills which have been mapped. So, we went back to the literature to say which are the key life skills for children to feel well-being, and [the projects] are based on that. Then we started mapping out the activities that would align with it."
RTP Headquarter Staff

All Right To Play's staff members strongly believe in the effectiveness of music as a learning tool. Field facilitators daily experience how this tool can be both entertaining and effective, allowing children to improve their life skills while having fun.

To design the M4E pilot, Right To Play identified the most relevant life skills for children and then created activities targeting those skills through its pedagogical and play-based approach, whose effectiveness is another key assumption of this project.

The next sections illustrate baseline findings on children's life skills from quantitative (CYRM survey) and qualitative (Focus group discussion) data collection.

Children's resilience

The CYRM survey (Child and Youth Resilience Measure) assesses children's levels of resilience, defined as the capacity of individuals to find psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being.

This survey tries to assess both personal and caregiver/relational resilience. The former relates to behaviours, thoughts, and actions that promote personal well-being and mental health. The

latter explores the characteristics associated with the important relationships shared with either a primary caregiver or a partner or family.

As for the resilience levels, is relevant to consider that there are no pre-defined thresholds or cut-offs that indicate a “good” or “normal” level of resilience because resilience tends to vary between contexts. Therefore, one approach to better understand resilience scores is to create three groups based on the sample mean and standard deviation.⁶

The CYRM tool used was administered to 537 children, of whom 270 children were from the treatment group and 267 children from the control group.

The questionnaire was encoded as a KOBO survey where the three-valued Likert scale of each question was visualized as glasses of water (empty, half-full, and full) to make it more understandable to the children.

Demographic differences between intervention and control group

Sex and age were balanced across the intervention and control groups.

As for the nationalities of children involved, if compared to children of other nationalities, there were noticeably more Lebanese children in the control group and Syrian children in the intervention group. Moreover, children from Beirut and Mount Lebanon as well as the North of Lebanon were relatively overrepresented in the intervention group compared to children from the South.

Figure 1- Number of children in the intervention and control group by area and gender

⁶ As reported in the *User manual*, “our recommendation is to instead to contrast high and low scorers within your sample. Alternatively, you could consider that individuals scoring greater than one standard deviation above your sample average have ‘higher resilience’, those between one standard deviation above and below the average have ‘moderate resilience’, and those below one standard deviation have ‘low resilience’.” For further details, refer to the following link: <https://cyrm.resilienceresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CYRM-ARM-user-manual-V2.5.pdf>

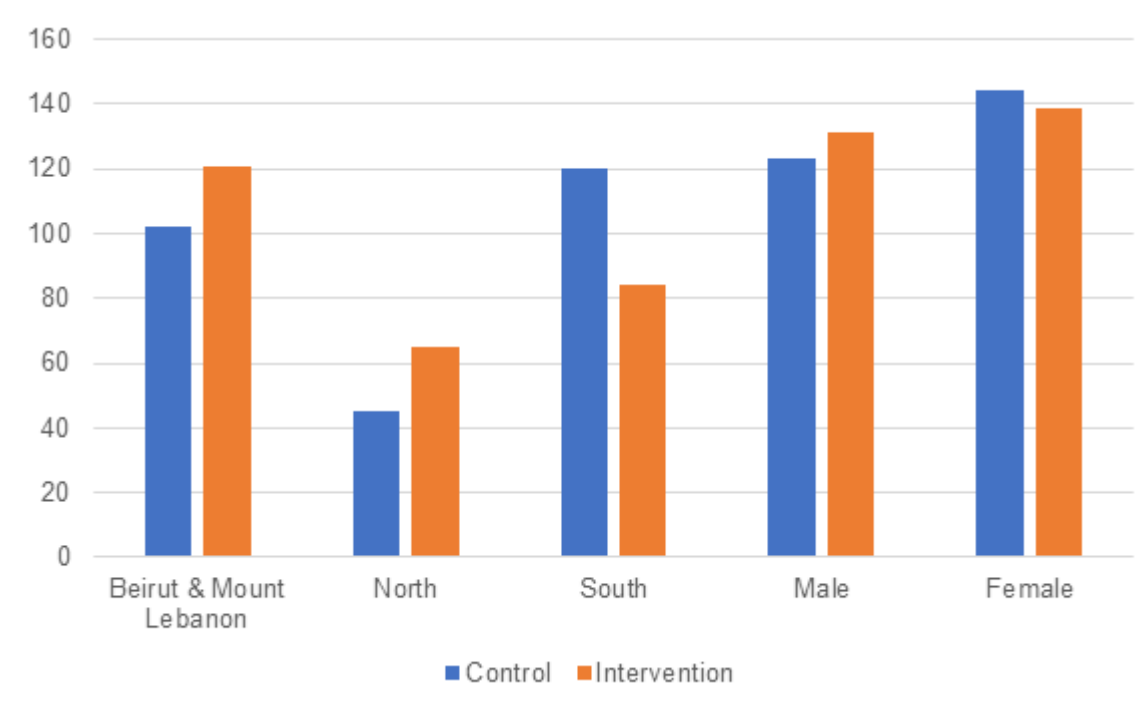


Table 6 - Number of children in the control and intervention group nationality

Nationality	Control	Intervention
Lebanese	116 (58.9%)	81 (41.1%)
Palestinian	86 (48.6%)	91 (51.4%)
Sudanese	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
Syrian	65 (41.1%)	93 (58.9%)
Syrian (stateless)	0 (0%)	3 (100%)

Answers on the CYRM items

As for the CYRM results, the 17 items received overall high levels of endorsement.

To calculate the total scores, different points were assigned to each answer: three points for “yes” (a full glass); two points for “sometimes” (a half-full glass); one point for no (an empty glass).

The frequency of item responses as well as the average scale scores indicate overall high levels of personal and caregiver/relational resilience. Among 5-9-year-olds, items belonging to the “individual resilience” domain show somewhat more variability compared to other items. One

example is item 12, which is about perceived support during personal challenges from friends. 22% of the 5-9-year-olds answered “no” to this item, and 20.6% answered “sometimes”.

Similar trends for item 12 can be observed for 10-13-year-olds. Another noticeable example is item 8 (“I talk to my family/caregiver(s) about how I feel (for example when I am hurt or sad)”) with 20.3% of the 10-13-year-old children answering “no” and 21.6% answering “sometimes”.

Resilience levels

Regarding the resilience levels, the thresholds were based on the sample mean and standard deviation, as there are no pre-defined cut-offs to define a “normal” level of resilience.

As shown in the tables below, the minimum scale score of individual resilience is 10 and the maximum is 30 on a 3-point version, while for caregiver/relational resilience the minimum scale score is 7 and the maximum is 21.

Children scoring greater than one standard deviation (SD) above the sample average (M) have “higher resilience”. Children scoring between one standard deviation above and below the average have “moderate resilience”. Children scoring below one standard deviation below the average have “low resilience”.

Table 7 - Descriptive statistics of the CYRM scales of personal and caregiver/relational resilience

	5-9-year-olds			10-13-year-olds		
	Min; Max	M	SD	Min, Max	M	SD
CYRM individual resilience	12; 30	26.40	2.92	15; 30	26.10	2.99
CYRM caregiver/relational resilience	9; 21	19.84	1.49	12; 21	19.55	1.52

Table 8 - Children with low, medium, and high levels of personal and caregiver/relational resilience

	5-9-year-olds			10-13-year-olds		
	Low	Medium	Higher	Low	Medium	Higher
CYRM individual resilience	46 (15.6%)	214 (72.5%)	35 (11.9%)	40 (16.6%)	167 (69.3%)	34 (14.1%)
CYRM caregiver/relational resilience	48 (16.3%)	247 (83.7%)		55 (22.8%)	186 (77.2%)	

Table 9 - Individual resilience

Item #	Question	Age	No	Sometimes	Yes	Prefer not to answer
1	Do you share with people around you?	5-9	27 (9.1%)	28 (9.5%)	240 (81.1%)	
		10-13	17 (7.1%)	45 (18.7%)	179 (74.3%)	
2	I would be interested in learning how to read and write.	5-9	12 (4.1%)	21 (7.1%)	242 (81.8%)	13 (4.4%)
		10-13	8 (3.3%)	9 (3.7%)	200 (83%)	17 (7.1%)

Item #	Question	Age	No	Sometimes	Yes	Prefer not to answer
3	Do you know how to behave/act in different situations (such as home, center, neighbourhood, mini market)?	5-9	26 (8.8%)	42 (14.2%)	226 (76.4%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	36 (14.9%)	65 (27%)	140 (58.1%)	36 (14.9%)
7	Do other children like to play with you?	5-9	18 (6.1%)	47 (15.9%)	229 (77.4%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	12 (5%)	61 (25.3%)	167 (69.3%)	1 (0.4%)
9	Do you have friends that care about you?	5-9	43 (14.5%)	49 (16.6%)	202 (68.2%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	19 (7.9%)	58 (24.1%)	164 (68%)	
10	Do you feel you fit in with other children?	5-9	38 (12.8%)	35 (11.8%)	221 (74.7%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	25 (10.4%)	32 (13.3%)	184 (76.3%)	
12	Do you think your friends care about you when times are hard (for example if you are sick or have done something wrong)?	5-9	65 (22%)	61 (20.6%)	167 (56.4%)	3 (1%)
		10-13	39 (16.2%)	58 (24.1%)	144 (59.8%)	
13	Are you treated fairly?	5-9	23 (7.8%)	41 (13.9%)	230 (77.7%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	25 (10.4%)	47 (19.5%)	169 (70.1%)	
14	Do you have chances to show others that you are growing up and can do things by yourself?	5-9	28 (9.5%)	44 (14.9%)	222 (75%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	23 (9.5%)	34 (14.1%)	183 (75.9%)	1 (0.4%)
16	Do you have chances to learn things that will be useful when you are older (like cooking, working, and helping others)?	5-9	9 (3%)	28 (9.5%)	257 (86.8%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	11 (4.6%)	21 (8.7%)	208 (86.3%)	1 (0.4%)

Table 10 - Relational resilience

Item #	Question	Age	No	Sometimes	Yes	Prefer not to answer
4	Do you feel that your parents/caregivers know where you are and what you are doing all of the time?	5-9	7 (2.4%)	23 (7.8%)	264 (89.2%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	1 (0.4%)	7 (2.9%)	233 (96.7%)	
5	Do you feel that your parent(s)/caregiver(s) know a lot about you (for example, what makes you happy, what makes you scared)?	5-9	22 (7.4%)	32 (10.8%)	240 (81.1%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	13 (5.4%)	44 (18.3%)	184 (76.3%)	
6	Is there enough to eat in your home when you are hungry?	5-9	25 (8.4%)	39 (13.2%)	231 (78%)	1 (0.3%)
		10-13	12 (5%)	38 (15.8%)	191 (79.3%)	
8	Do you talk to your family/caregivers about how you feel, for example when you are hurt or feeling scared?	5-9	21 (7.1%)	24 (8.1%)	249 (84.1%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	49 (20.3%)	52 (21.6%)	140 (58.1%)	
11		5-9	5 (1.7%)	14 (4.7%)	275 (92.9%)	2 (0.7%)

Item #	Question	Age	No	Sometimes	Yes	Prefer not to answer
	Do you think your family/caregiver(s) cares about you when times are hard (for example, if you are sick or have done something wrong)?	10-13	0 (0%)	5 (2.1%)	236 (97.9%)	
15	Do you feel safe when you are with your family/caregiver(s)?	5-9	4 (1.4%)	5 (1.7%)	285 (96.3%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	1 (0.4%)	10 (4.1%)	230 (95.4%)	
17	Do you like the way your family/caregiver(s) celebrates things (like holidays or family traditions)?	5-9	4 (1.4%)	11 (3.7%)	279 (94.3%)	2 (0.7%)
		10-13	8 (3.3%)	25 (10.4%)	208 (86.3%)	

“Higher individual resilience” was found among 11.9% of the 5-9-year-olds and 14.1% of the 10-13-year-olds, respectively. Average scores are very high also for caregiver resilience (19.84 for younger children and 19.55 for older ones, as shown in Table 7). Nevertheless, no child scored in the “higher caregiver/relational resilience” group: this is due to the fact that the average scores for “caregiver resilience” are close to the maximum score (which is 21).

Demographic differences in baseline resilience scores

Regarding the demographic differences in baseline resilience scores, age was not significantly related to resilience scores in both age groups.

Among 5-9-year-old children, females scored significantly higher on caregiver/relational resilience compared to males, while among 10-13-year-old children, males scored significantly higher on individual resilience compared to females.

Among 5-9-year-olds, there were no statistically significant differences in children’s resilience scores based on the area of residence. Among 10-13-year-olds, children in the South of Lebanon scored significantly higher on caregiver/relational resilience compared to children from Beirut and Mount Lebanon (Figures 2 and 3 below).

We cannot infer any causal relationship from these baseline results due to the following potential confounding factors⁷:

⁷ In research that investigates a potential cause-and-effect relationship, a confounding factor is an unmeasured third variable that influences both the supposed cause and the supposed effect. It is important to consider potential confounding factors and account for them in research design to ensure the results are valid. If left unchecked, confounding factors can introduce many research biases causing misinterpretation of results.

- Heterogeneity in distribution of children in control and treatment groups across locations: e.g. in South of Lebanon children were overrepresented in the control group compared to children in other locations, as shown in Table 6).
- Heterogeneity in age distribution of children across locations: e.g. in the South there were significantly more 5-to-9-year-olds (62.3% of the total sample of 204 children from the South) compared to the other location.
- Heterogeneity in nationalities distribution across locations: e.g. most Lebanese children in this study reside in the south (106 out of the total of 197 Lebanese children). In contrast, most Syrian children (133 out of 158 total) reside in Beirut and Mount Lebanon.

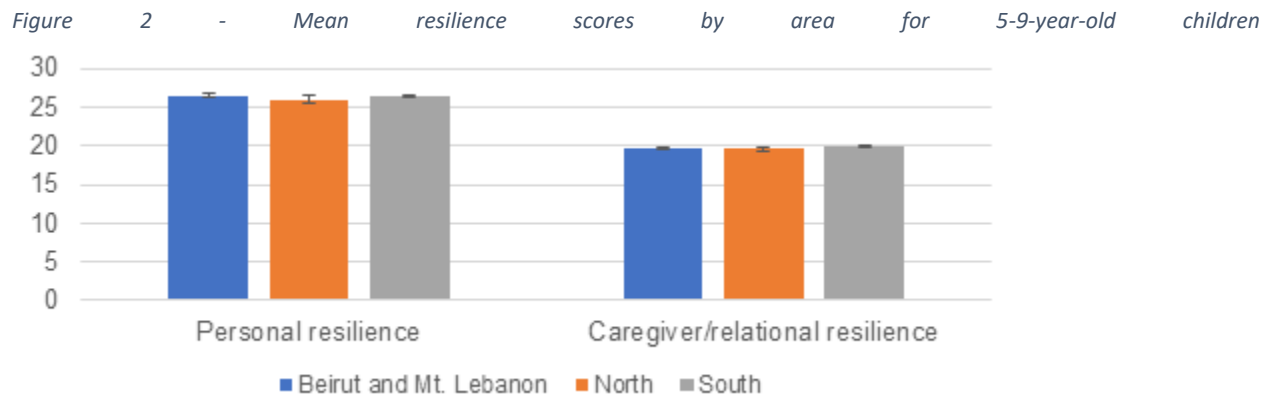
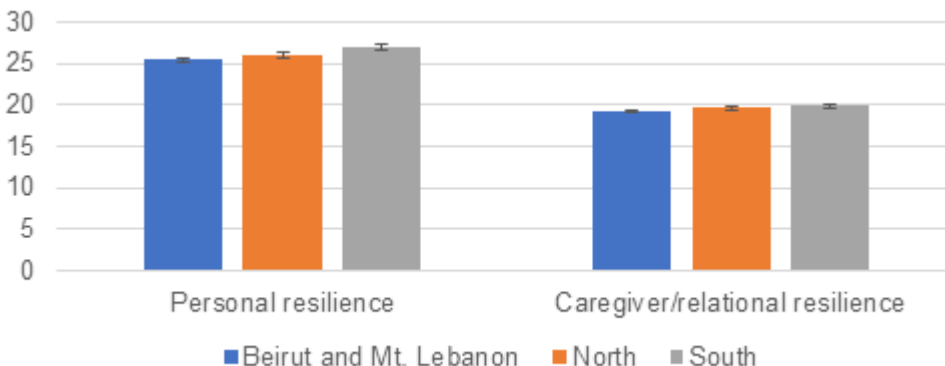


Figure 3- Mean resilience scores by area for 10-13-year-old children



Differences in baseline resilience scores between intervention and control group

In this baseline assessment, there were no statistically significant differences in CYRM individual resilience scores between children in the intervention and the control group.

However, among 10-13-year-olds, children in the control group scored significantly lower on caregiver/relational resilience at baseline compared to children in the intervention group (medium effect size).

Children's life skills

Focus group discussions with children aimed at establishing a baseline of their life skills, namely the ones tackled by M4E:

- Respect and communication skills.
- Respecting the speaking turn and listening to each other.
- Teamwork.
- Critical thinking, problem-solving (CTPS) and creativity.
- Self-expression.
- Self-confidence.
- Management of emotions.

Field facilitators did not have precise expectations about the participants' strengths and weaknesses:

"We can't generalize. They differ from one child to another and from one region to another. One can have communication skills, but it could be an integral part of their personality and vice versa. Instead, behaviours are acquired by facing problems and solving them and that would make you learn different skills. So, children have different needs and come from different regions but of course, society needs all skills."

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Respect and communication

The first life skills assessed during the FGDs with children were respect and communication. The Consultancy decided to develop two scenario questions, to ask children how they would behave if someone said a bad thing to them, and if they were the ones saying a bad thing to a friend.

These two scenarios were presented to children from 5 to 9 years old as a unique question. The Consultancy preferred to split these scenarios into two different questions for older children, as more articulated and detailed answers were expected.

As can be seen from Tables 11 and 12 below, there are no specific behavioural patterns that could be attributed solely to boys or girls.

Overall, older children shared deeper reflections about their feelings and showed a wider range of behaviours.

The use of aggressive behaviours and violence to settle disputes and communicate feelings of discomfort is described as a possibility by children in the northern areas, and the preferred way of communication and conflict-solving by children in Beirut. Physical and verbal aggression is mentioned at least once in each FGD in that location. Responses range from bullying and pulling other children's hair, to punching. They do not report how to behave in case they were the ones who talked badly.

Older respondents from the northern locations show a higher ability in detailing and managing their emotions. A wider range of answers can be seen, that include involving adults, clarifying the misunderstanding with the person involved, or recurring to hitting. All the respondents say they would apologize if they were those who talked badly about someone.

Children from the southern areas often report relying on adults for help in case of someone talks badly about them. If upset, they use it as a way of communicating their discomfort not speaking with the child involved. All children recognize apologizing is the right thing to do if they were those who talked badly about someone.

Table 11 - Respect and communication, 5-9 years old children

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What do you do when a friend says a bad thing to you? What do you do when you say something bad to a friend?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	They tell older people. Apologize. Report (to parents, brothers).
5-9	South	Control	Boys	They tell the person or decide not to speak to them. They speak with someone in private. "If we were the ones to say anything bad, we would apologize to the person."
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	Speak with the person in charge or with the parents in case negative words are addressed to them, apologies to one another, and reconcile in case they said negative things to one another.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	They tell adults. They apologize to them.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	They mock each other. "We pull each other's hair, and we tear off each other's papers." [...] "We do not like to resolve issues. If we stay fighting, it's ok." [...] "We do not want to stop hitting each other." "We resolve our problems with violence." One of the children bullied another child and spoke about making her leave. Also, the same girl joked about resolving her problems by puncturing the other's eyes with pencils.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	[...] This brought up a discussion on beating others which the children considered a normal way to joke around. "If someone attacks me, I try to hold his hand, I punch him or I tell their parents". Other children consider asking about it and the reason behind it. One of the ways to resolve an issue is to leave it for the day or allow older people to interfere.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	Resolving any sort of physical or verbal attack or even a play dispute is directly associated with beating the person, however, this center had special attention to weapons. Boys proposed specific weapons to beat up each other.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	When a dispute arises, some prefer not to apologize or prefer to stay away and admit feeling burdened by the relationship. One of the kids mentioned that she exchanged physical violence with one girl. The moderator inspected whether the children could find ways to resolve a dispute and they suggested giving each other's gifts, visiting each other's, and giving each other cakes.

Table 12- Respect and communication, 10-13 years old children

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What do you do when a friend says a bad thing to you?	What about if you do or say something bad to a friend? What can you say or do to tell a friend you're sorry?
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10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	"I don't talk to them anymore", "I tell their mother", "I hit them", "A boy was talking bad to me so I told him that I will tell the coach", "I tell them: "God forgive you".	"I get annoyed when this happens", "I was annoyed with myself, and my father hit me because I did this". There was a small argument between the children because a similar situation occurred to them. "I have no problem apologizing if it was my mistake."
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	"I would tell her the same things she's saying", "I block her" "I don't react", "I try to find a solution if she is someone who means to me", "I would've told my mum and she would've talked to her."	"I would calm myself before talking to the person, then I would apologize if it was my mistake", "I would apologize if it was my mistake, but if it was not, I wouldn't."
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"I would stop talking to them", "If they say anything about mothers I would kill them", "I would tell them the same thing they're telling me", "I would kill them", "I would go tell their mother", "I would say the same thing they're saying to me".	Everyone said they would be sorry except one child "I wouldn't apologize if it was their fault", "If they don't apologize, I would kill them", "If they hit me I would defend myself."
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"Every time someone does anything wrong to me, I hit them". One of the girls shared a situation that happened to her with a friend of hers, and she confronted her: "If no one hits me or curses me, I don't hit them".	"I don't apologize because they are the ones who do me wrong", "I don't talk to them", "I would apologize" [...] "I mean, for example, if someone says something I didn't say, I don't apologize to them", "For example, someone said that I was cheating on the exam so they said they're going to tell the teacher, so I yelled at them", "My mum and their mum were involved in the argument".

Respecting the speaking turn and listening to each other

The second area of life skills assessed during the FGDs with children was the ability to respect the speaking turn when talking in a group, and the ability to listen to each other.

All children were asked how they would behave when they all want to speak at the same time, probing on their ability to listen to everyone, regardless of their previous relationship with the speaker.

As shown in Table 13 there are no striking differences either across gender or age. The respondents' answers vary, but most of them understand the consequences of speaking altogether (impossibility to listen to what other children are saying, losing concentration). They also tend to listen to everyone who is speaking, regardless of whether he or she is their friend.

Some of the children express that they do not like when they all speak at the same time, while a group of boys proactively suggest attributing numbers to help everyone respect his speaking turn.

Focus groups with children in Beirut showed a higher difficulty in managing communication among children, and in three out of four FGDs held in this area, the enumerator reports that children are not able to listen to each other. During the focus groups, bullying incidents occurred, the management of which required momentary interruptions.

Table 13 - Respecting the speaking turn and listening to each other

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What happens when we all want to speak at the same time? When is not your turn to speak, do you listen to all the other children, or just to your friends?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	"The noise, and the fact that we won't understand one another", "[We would be] listening to everyone, regardless of who is speaking".
5-9	South	Control	Boys	"It produces a lot of noise and makes everyone lose concentration." "When it is not my turn to speak, I listen to the speaker even if it's a person that I don't know."
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	"[There would be] Fights about who will speak first." They will not understand one another. They listen to everyone (strangers and those they know).
5-9	South	Control	Girls	Loud noises. They cannot hear one another. Yes, they listen to other children and respect others.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	They all speak at the same time and they interrupt each other. The moderator found it hard to control the turns as well. One of the children suggested waiting until someone finishes to speak but others objected. They also started to yell to cover each other voices.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	They all wanted to finish the soonest and tell stories about each other which makes interruptions higher and some complained about having to wait a lot for their friends to talk. They already interrupted each other and did not let the others finish. We asked the children to stick to their turns, but they couldn't.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	Children respect each other's turn and do not feel rushed to not listen to each other. When asked this question the children replied as: "we become distracted, we can't hear each other's well".
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	"We don't hear each other's" but the girls generally communicate peacefully and respect each other's turns.
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	"There would be noise and we won't hear one another", "I listen to everyone, but sometimes when I don't like the conversation, I don't listen"[...].
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	"There would be noise", "I would get annoyed", "I would get angry and shout until everyone is silent and I then I would talk".
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"We'd be annoyed and no one would understand what the other is saying", "It's better to divide the roles [speaking turns] and each person speaks alone (1-2-3...)", "I would like to play in a team but without everyone talking all at once."
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"This is not a good thing and it is annoying", "We listen to one another and then we speak".

Teamwork

Asked about their preference between playing alone or in a team, children of all ages didn't express a strong preference: depending on the games or activities proposed they may prefer one or the other. Positive features of team play were "there will be more opinions and enthusiasm", "being in a team makes a person stronger".

Answers are more homogeneous across the different locations and gender, except for an FGD in Beirut where an episode of bullying and difficult teamwork relations is reported.

Table 14 - Teamwork

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	Do you prefer to play alone or to take part in a team play? Why? Do you think there are games or situations in which being in a team is better than being alone? Can you give us an example?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	Playing with others, listening, learning skills [...], playing with friends (in a team) or playing by themselves and learning from others.
5-9	South	Control	Boys	They want to play with their friends to enjoy themselves and root for their team. "The games we play by ourselves are spinning tops, football juggling (freestyling), and PUBG."

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	Do you prefer to play alone or to take part in a team play? Why? Do you think there are games or situations in which being in a team is better than being alone? Can you give us an example?
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	They prefer to play in groups because they have fun there and they can play by themselves, too.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	"No, we don't like to play by ourselves, we prefer to play in groups because we don't like being alone." On some rare occasions, they prefer to play by themselves
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	Some of them said they don't like to play alone because it's boring. the rest were too distracted to answer. However at the beginning of the FGD, four girls who were cousins showed to be very close and teamed up against a girl. The FGD started by discussing how there is a constant conflict between the two teams. After the FGD, the girls explained how they don't like to share toys, crayons, or other items. During the FGD, they took each other's items and did not share the papers.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	Some said they like to play in groups and the others prefer to play alone.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	Kids play together and prefer teams for big games. They also have a big group of friends as some mentioned up to 10 friends within their near circle. They attend prayer together, play football games, visit the park, or attend the center together. Two of the children preferred to play alone but the rest preferred to be in a team. They also think being in a team makes a person stronger.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	Some preferred being alone and mostly in groups. Playing in a team allows you to play games you can't play if you were alone but staying alone allows you to have a clearer mind.
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	"We like to play in a team" "I sometimes like to sit alone at home", "I like to sit with my mother and tell her what's bothering me."
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	Most girls prefer to play or take part in a team because there will be more opinions and enthusiasm - "It's better to be in a team"
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"I would like to play in a team and to divide the roles in order to help one another" "I sometimes like to play alone: because they always hit me, I'm more comfortable when I'm alone."
10-13	North	Control	Girls	The game is more fun with a team because there are usually more ideas together, "the teacher always divides us into teams". "We share thoughts with one another."

Critical thinking, problem-solving (CTPS) and creativity

To assess the skills of critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity, the Consultancy prepared a scenario question, to test children's ability to think outside the box. When asked what would happen if the moon was made of cheese, most respondents answered that they would eat it, showing the ability to recognize a concrete problem and find a creative solution to it.

Some of the children explained that they would use it to feed vulnerable people ("give it to the poor and Syrian people because they cannot find work to be able to buy food", "feed the entire neighbourhood", "I would like to wear a space suit, bring the moon to earth, slice it, and give it to needy people"). From the answer, it also appears a recognition of a specific group ("Syrian people") as most in need, but it is impossible to say whether this knowledge comes from what children hear in their households or in their community environment.

A few interviewees explain that they would prefer the moon to remain like it is, while older respondents can add considerations that show an ability to make logical connections across

different areas of knowledge (“it would be dark and we cannot see anything anymore”; “If the sun shines on the moon, then the cheese would melt and then I can eat it”), and also across different levels of thought, such as abstract vs concrete (“I wouldn’t eat it because my mom’s name is Amar [moon]”). These answers show a more creative attitude from children, who were able to make logical connections among different topics.

These answers establish the baseline values against which children’s CTPS and creativity will be assessed in the end-line.

Table 15 - CTPS and creativity

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What would happen if the moon was made of cheese?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	They eat it. They hand it out. They grill it or eat it in a pita sandwich.
5-9	South	Control	Boys	“A rocket is launched, and we eat it”, one child doesn’t eat it because his mother’s name is Amar (moon), “It is taken to become a prisoner”.
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	They will eat it and give it to the poor and Syrian people because they cannot find work to be able to buy food.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	Astonishment (my goodness!): “We would eat it, wrap it in a pita sandwich and feed the entire neighbourhood.”
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	They were all laughing and talking and barely heard one of them saying we won’t feel hungry anymore.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	“I will send a drone to drop it down and eat it”, “I will bring it back to eat it”, “Only god can bring it down.” “Guys who work in space will work to get it.” “I don’t know.”
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	“We will eat it”, “We will keep it up for Ramadan month”, “I will cut it in half”, “I will go up and get it to have my lunch” “I will bring a rocket and tie it to a rope and bring it down”.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	“I will roast it”, “I will make it <i>picon</i> (cheese)” “I will ask my mom to put it in a sandwich for me” “I will put it in the fridge.”
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	“I don’t like cheese”, “I would attack it if it was made of chocolate” “I would eat it”, “I like the moon as it is, I don’t like to change it” “I like it to have small round pieces” “I would eat the cheese” “I like <i>Picon</i> cheese the most” “I imagined it as a butterfly because I like butterflies” “I don’t want the moon to change.”
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	“It would be yellow”, “I don’t like cheese, so I wouldn’t look at it”, “It would be edible”, “I go to space and eat it”. Girls would prefer if the moon was made of chocolate.
10-13	North	Control	Boys	“I see it melting”, “I see it shining” “It would be dark and we cannot see anything anymore”, “I would love it because I like cheese” “I would put it in a sandwich and eat it.”
10-13	North	Control	Girls	“I don’t know how to imagine”, “I would’ve cut the moon in pieces and sold them to people”, “I got excited about the cheese idea, I imagine it dripping while I’m slicing it”, “I want to make <i>Kaak</i> (bagels)”, “I would like to wear a space suit, bring the moon to earth, slice it, and give it to needy people”, “I said that the moon cannot be sliced”, “I decided to do a project of bringing cheese from the moon, make sandwiches, and sell them”, “I would’ve eaten all of it because my name is Amar”, “If it gets dark, then the cheese might drip on me”, “If the sun shines on the moon, then the cheese would melt and then I can eat it”.

Self-expression

To probe the ability of children to express their needs and thoughts to non-peer audiences (adults, older children, and adolescents), respondents were asked how they would behave and whether their interlocutors replied they are too young to talk about that issue.

Children's answers vary, and there does not seem to be specific patterns across age groups or gender. As observed in previous questions, children from Beirut show a more marked trend of recurring aggressive behaviours. Violence is normalized in their family and community environments: some girls refer that their families teach them to take revenge in case there are in fights at the center, and another recalls the picture her brother took her with a gun. Boys from the same location report there are no topics they cannot discuss with their fathers or cousins, and that they are used to talking with them about weapons and religion.

The topic of phone addiction is raised by children from Beirut, where girls explain that they do not talk with their parents about what they like and dislike, because "they will blame anything and put it on the phone". The topic of phone addiction is referred to mainly by children and parents from Beirut.

Answers from older children living in the northern regions are more mixed: some boys and girls feel not to be always listened to by their parents, while others report that they are always considered mature enough to talk about anything with their families.

Children from the southern areas provide the most emotional answers, explaining how being dismissed as too young would make them feel unwanted, sad, or disrespected.

Table 16 - Self-expression

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What happens when you want to say something, and grownups or other children think you're too young to say what you think?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	They feel unwanted by the person, they wouldn't want to annoy them but they would feel like they are not loved, and then requests would be repeated until they are heeded.
5-9	South	Control	Boys	They get sad and sometimes will speak of this to the person, or there would be things that children are told they shouldn't get involved in.
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	Yes, they can speak with others, convey the ideas that they want. Parents respond well to their children except in cases where they are busy with important things.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	They would be bothered by the person. It's disrespectful. This may perhaps be a sensitive issue that cannot wait.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	Parents (specifically moms) do not allow their kids to indulge in problems at the center. They can't freely complain about issues which occur to them. In general, they are taught to take revenge but are not allowed to talk back at their parents. (one of the girls said her friend's parents hit her if she tells them what she wants/does at the center)

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What happens when you want to say something, and grownups or other children think you're too young to say what you think?
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	It was asked: do you feel comfortable telling your parents about big issues? [...] Children refuse to tell their own parents unless they want to make the fight bigger [...].
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	Fathers of this group take their kids with them shopping and visiting relatives. The boys spend most of the time at the park or with their boyfriends. They don't have issues which they think they are too young for. They discuss weapons and religion with their fathers and cousins. They do not comment or interfere outside this interest. [...]
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	The moderator redirected this question to: "do you feel comfortable conversing with your parents about your likes and dislikes?" Answers were: "They will blame anything and put it on the phone", "They are always angry", "I don't tell anyone" "No they don't listen (then she changed her mind and said yes they do)", "I tell my mom only".
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	"Sometimes, my father doesn't believe me" "From my family, no".
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	"Sometimes I say something, so my parents listen, but they don't do anything about it", "They say: This is your opinion" "My parents listen to me."
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"I would get annoyed but it wouldn't happen, everyone takes our opinion into consideration."
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"My mum always tells me that I'm young so I don't have to talk or she doesn't listen to me, she makes me feel that I'm really that young", "My mum doesn't make me feel that I'm young at all", "My mum tells me that I'm a grown-up now", "I get annoyed when my mum does that."

Self-confidence

To assess the level of self-confidence of children, the Consultancy decided to evaluate their self-perceptions. All participants were asked to comment on the things they are really good at, or things they like about themselves.

Some patterns emerged across gender and age groups.

When asked about the activities children feel to be good at, many children, regardless of gender, mention studying, drawing or generally playing, but boys often mention specific sports or physical activities (racing, football, kick-boxing, mountain climbing), while girls frequently report activities related to personal interaction with other people ("helping my mom", "being affectionate and generous", "I like to advise other people").

Boys and girls feel confident in their accomplishments regarding school and studying.

Children aged 10 to 13 (both boys and girls) also mentioned aspects related to their physical appearance.

Table 17 - Self-confidence

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	Tell me something that you're really good at.
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	Drawing, writing, playing football, tree decoration, mobile games.
5-9	South	Control	Boys	Racing, football and exercise.

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	Tell me something that you're really good at.
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	Studying and playing.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	Drawing, cooking, and offering sweets.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	Zero capacity to raise this question. The moderator was overwhelmed by trying to avoid aggression between kids.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	Children were not at ease and there had been a lot of noise. [...] The moderator was also forced to finish earlier so the kids to be able to leave with their parents.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	Studying, being intelligent, schooling, playing with balls, playing with cards, [...].
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	"Cooking a cake", "helping my mom", "studying", "playing".
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	Football, studying, kickboxing, "I like adventures", mountain climbing, "I like climbing trees and staying up there" [...] "I like swimming."
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	Among the qualities that girls like about themselves are: "Being affectionate and generous", "My height and eyes", "My hair", "My self-confidence", "I like studying"
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"I like my smile", "I like my cheeks", "My hair", "My heart", "I like to change my clothes" [...] "I like to laugh".
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"I like to advise other people" "I help people" "If I want to have fun with someone, I put make-up for them and they'll do the same to me", "I like to sing" "I like the colour of my eyes", "I like to do a braid", "I like my hair", "I like to dance".

Managing emotions

To understand whether children can manage their emotions, the Consultancy asked them to explain how they behave when they are angry.

There is no recurrent pattern across different age groups or gender; once again, children from Beirut and northern areas seem to be more prone to recurring to violence, aggressivity, and bullying, and less able to recur to different tools to manage their emotions effectively. Most children have difficulties in managing aggressiveness; whenever angry, their reactions range from breaking things to hitting people, including family members ("I hit my little sister"; "I hit my mom"). In Beirut, one girl insisted on excluding another girl from the activities and threatening to hurt her once the activities were finished, while boys described physical and verbal violence as normal communication tools.

Few children show that they can positively handle their emotions, regardless of gender or age. To manage their anger, some of them suggest activities such as taking a deep breath, speaking with friends, distracting themselves from negative emotions playing with friends or sleeping, and pulling themselves together in order not to hurt anyone else.

In the northern areas, children 10 to 13 years old often use the hyperbolic expression "to kill someone" to express their feelings of anger and annoyance toward a person.

Table 18 - Managing emotions

Age	Location	Control intervention vs. Intervention	Gender	What do you do when you're angry?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	Playing or going to friends' houses to play.
5-9	South	Control	Boys	Hitting, taking a deep breath, smiling and trying to get a hold of the emotions.
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	Sleeping, breaking things, hiding, speaking with friends.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	Not listening to anyone. Hitting. Breaking glasses.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	"We hit each other; we pull each other hair." One of the girls was incredibly annoyed by the presence of another girl. Most of the FGD attention was pooled there. {Girl 1} couldn't tolerate {girl 2} and wanted her to leave the sessions and stop attending the center. The moderator explained that is not possible to defy a person we do not like, and {girl 1} insisted that this is possible, and she wanted {girl 2} to leave the center. The moderator explained this is not possible and asked {girl 1} if she can understand this and welcome {girl 2}, {girl 1} said she would but would hurt her or keep her outside.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	A lot of the stories told made fun of beating others and considered it a normal way to express their emotions. The question was indirectly asked in several segments as the question or the phrase (being angry) thrilled the participants to brag about their most violent encounters which was not the sole of the discussion. Instead, the moderator inquired about actual incidents. Most of the fights held with their friends included physical or verbal violence (mockery, insult, or calling names and bullying), that were not solely associated with anger, but were part of communication. [...] Most of the boys say they will hit whoever made them angry and mad. One of the boys considered this a normal issue that is forgotten on the other day, and this was his own way to deal with anger.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	This question was discussed as scenarios which make a person angry. The children reacted with the following answers: "I won't be sad", "I will be sad a little then I will forget about it", "I will try to fix the cause", "I won't do anything about it", "If it was caused by a friend on purpose, I would hit the person."
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	"I bump my head to the wall", "I hit my little sisters", "I become angry with my parents", "I hit my mom", "I sleep", "I do nothing".
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	"I yell", "I hit", "I have different facial expressions and I get grumpy", "I break things", "I feel I want to hit someone", "I go play to make myself feel better", "I like playing with dogs".
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	"I would stay angry until I resolve the problem", "I kill someone, and whenever someone talks to me, they would get beaten", "I hit them", "If I don't talk to someone about it, I wouldn't feel okay" "I get angry, and when I am, I don't like anyone to come close to me."
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"It would be visible on my face", "I would stay patient" "If someone jokes with me while I'm angry I would kill them", "I distract myself with other things" "I would stay silent, but if the person keeps on harassing me I would kill them" "I wouldn't say anything at first, but then I would come from behind and kill them".
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"When I'm angry no one talks to me or else I will hit them" "I don't like someone talking to me when I'm angry", "I would break stuff", "I don't like to hurt anyone, so I pull myself together", "when I'm angry I don't talk to anyone". I bite.

Coaches' abilities to lead the M4E sessions

As detailed in the first Theory of Change visualization, the first step needed to reach the final desired change is that “coaches working with children are properly trained”. KEQ 14, 15 and 16 focused on assessing this feature of the program.

The key informant interviews involved field facilitators. Their main role in the M4E implementation is to directly supervise coaches in their activities with children.

Two of the three facilitators interviewed had already worked with Right To Play in Lebanon. The most important difficulties they had to face were related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Beirut blast, but both are satisfied with the adaptability of the music project, which was previously adjusted to suit the needs of the pandemic context, and then was modified to target a younger age group of participants (from 6 to 10 years old).

All three interviewees feel adequately supported in their training and learning journey, thanks to various opportunities provided by RTP to improve their work and feel more confident. They mention training packages about how to deal with children and child safeguarding policies. All respondents seem to be satisfied with the level of ongoing support and guidance that they periodically receive.

“We have periodic follow-up meetings (almost on monthly basis) or whenever there is a need. If there is a new need emerged, a custom-designed workshop is prepared and delivered. I think we don't have essentials to be focusing on, since we have all got the basics and the essentials in the very beginning.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

As explained by the respondents, among the field facilitators' tasks there is also the trainers' training. They feel to be properly prepared to train the coaches who will lead the music sessions.

As explained by the field facilitators, coaches are trained in a 4-day workshop and then evaluated in a 1-on-1 session, where they apply the material they learned during the workshop.

Music session observations confirmed the effectiveness of training for both field facilitators and coaches: all five coaches observed are able to manage the learning setting, organize and manage activities with participants, give clear instructions to children, foster positive group dynamics, capture and maintain the children's attention, listen to children and modify activities according to their needs.

Another crucial element in achieving the desired change is not only to enable coaches to conduct sessions that improve children's resilience and life skills but also to improve the life skills of the coaches themselves. For this reason, the Consultancy decided to assess whether the field facilitators perceive an improvement in their life skills, thanks to the training and learning journey they undertook.

All the field facilitators interviewed feel they have improved their life skills. One of the interviewees has a deeper comprehension of the importance and utility of developing one self's life skills, while the others explicitly mention enhancements in their soft skills: "every skill that I teach children I'm also improving in myself", "[...]especially positive/active communication".

Children's regular attendance at the M4E project

As outlined in the Logic Model, Right To Play's expected outcome can be reached by fostering children's regular attendance at the M4E project. To achieve this output, the space where the music sessions are led must be safe, inclusive and welcoming.

Granting children access to a safe space is not only a crucial step to reaching the desired change but also a condition that enables children's learning. The Consultancy, therefore, decided to evaluate children's perception of the space.

All children involved in the FGDs like spending time in the center, where they can play and have fun, study and see their friends. The activities they prefer are playing sports, such as football or swimming; the activity *One thousand and one nights*, led by another organization, is often mentioned by children from the northern areas.

Particularly relevant is that older boys from the northern region mentioned the solid relationship they have with their coaches as the first item to explain why they like spending time in the center.

Table 19 – Children's participation in the centres' activities

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	Do you like being in the centre? Why so? Which are your favourite activities? Can you say whatever you want here?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	They like Sama because they play (hide and seek, running) and make use of the different toys.
5-9	South	Control	Boys	"Yes, because we have fun, spend time together, chat and play" - they love to play. They can express what they love but they don't because the coach would have already prepared a game.
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	"Yes, I love being at the centre because my favourite activities are available: writing, drawing, and dancing."
5-9	South	Control	Girls	Yes, they like the centre because they play, and meet with their friends. Their favourite activities are drawing, playing with the ball, and playing catch and hide and seek. They cannot always divulge what they want to
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	"We come here to play and study, and we have breaks also. We don't feel tired here at all and we enjoy our time. We learn the alphabet, pronouns, and numbers."
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	"Yes, we come, and we study here. Some were secluded because of multiple absences. We meet up with some friends here."
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	The kids have been attending for at least 5 months. They play balls, have a <i>dabke</i> ⁸ session, and play with clay, in addition to basketball.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	They enjoy coming to the center. Enjoy drawing and painting and playing on the roof. Some children enjoy playing with the Barbie dolls. They also like watching <i>Tom and Jerry</i> at the center.

⁸ It is a Levantine Arab folk dance.

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	Do you like being in the centre? Why so? Which are your favourite activities? Can you say whatever you want here?
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	"Yes, we love the centre so much, we also love coach {1} and coach {2}." "I consider coach {1} as my brother." "I love coach {2} the most." "{We took part in} <i>One thousand and one nights</i> , which is a series of stories for children, football practices, and the club (swimming, football)." "Each one of us pays 5,000 or 10,000 to take part in the activities and field trips instead of camping. We are divided into two groups." "Yes, we are happy at the centre, we played football and then went to the club to swim. We love football and swimming the most." "[...] We talk about the things that bother us with the coach."
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	"Yes, we used to train with coach Amira and coach Saleh, but then there was the COVID-19 pandemic; we wanted to have more activities, but we couldn't attend much."
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"We don't always come to the centre, we took part in the football training and the <i>One thousand and one night's</i> activity and we were so happy."
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"{We took part in} <i>One thousand and one nights</i> , where they used to tell us sweet stories" "My sister and I didn't take part because there were no places available" "We were very happy and comfortable, and we used to have fun when we played."

As outlined in the Theory of Change visualization, the creation of inclusive spaces and activities is crucial to reach the second output of the M4E pilot.

All the activities are designed to be inclusive for all participants, with no distinction based on age, gender, or nationality, and inclusiveness is actively promoted during the music activities.

"We encourage the presence of boys and girls in the same class to break this stigma of boys alone and girls alone. During games, we divide them into mixed groups to promote partnership between them and make them understand that a boy's role is the same as a girl's role. In the event that people with special needs are among the participants, we modify the games based on the needs to include them and give them a role to promote the team spirit."

RTP Staff, Lebanon

During music session observations coaches did not show any bias based on gender, nationality, or disability, and they also try to actively challenge stereotypes fostering positive and inclusive behaviours among children.

Parents' engagement

Engaging parents and the communities in supporting children's learning path is a crucial step to reaching the final goal. As outlined in the assumptions of the Theory of Change, to improve families' support, Right To Play aims at involving parents in the project and communicating effectively the aims and contents of M4E.

For this reason, the Consultancy decided to also survey parents' expectations of their children's participation in the M4E pilot.

When asked about the most relevant activities that the centers should target, parents do not identify psychosocial support as an urgent need for their children; confirming the project assumption that families do not always attribute adequate importance to, or fully recognize the value of PSS activities.

Respondents from the northern region suggest that projects done in the center should revolve around both psychological and physical activities, such as sports or music, always respecting religious beliefs. Parents from Beirut also mention the topic of cultural adaptation and the importance that activities do not challenge local cultural models.

Caregivers from Beirut highlight the importance of education, which is described as “a weapon that will let [children] have better opportunities and have a chance to select their career”. They also stress the importance of self-confidence as a means for children to defend themselves from bullying.

As reported in the *Relevance* section, parents from southern areas attribute high importance to children’s stability: “Children need the entertainment to get rid of life pressures. [...] The centre should train or teach children to listen and to address some difficulties that they might face in their life or during the day”.

All respondents agree on the usefulness of activities targeting children’s management of emotions, and their abilities to effectively communicate and create positive relationships with others. As they report:

“[Management of emotions] is very important because this is a way for children to build relationships, obtain support, and be close to the participants in order to vent and coexist with the community in which they live.”

Parents,

Northern

Area

“They need to be able to say “no” and to express what discomforts them.”

Parents, Beirut

“They could talk about what is happening with them and learn to use their mind instead of their emotions; we should not pressure them psychologically but rather teach them to control their feelings.”

Parents, Southern Area

All parents believe that regular attendance to the center’s activities is important, although caregivers from the southern region expressly would prefer more activities to take place during summer or winter holidays when children have more free time.

The only difficulty faced by some parents is transportation or gas prices; but in the Beirut area the respondents refer that “when some children can’t attend, the coaches pass by to pick them up”.

Limitations

The most relevant element of the M4E project identified by interviewees as a potential limitation is the timing of implementation: all interviewees were cautious in declaring themselves confident of discovering clear improvements in children's resilience in only four months, although they all were very confident in the effectiveness of the project.

The possibility to gather evidence of significant children's improvements despite the limited time frame is a relevant issue for the efficiency of this pilot, too (please, see the *Efficiency* section for further details).

Efficiency

This criterion assesses M4E's efficiency from both the time and cost perspective. Cost-efficiency evaluates if M4E is able to reach its goals in the most cost-effective way possible. Time-efficiency studies if the goals are reached within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context. The following analysis aims at establishing baseline values against which efficiency will be assessed at the end-line.

As reported in the Evaluation and Research Framework KEQs 26 and 27 aim at evaluating the Efficiency of the M4E project. To assess this criterion, the Consultancy relied primarily on interviews with Right To Play HQ personnel.

Summary of findings - Efficiency

Although Right To Play has not yet developed a precise strategy to monitor both cost and time efficiency, the interviews offered the Consultancy relevant perspectives on these two criteria.

M4E structure reflects economic considerations: the choice not to use conventional musical instruments or not to rely on musicians to lead the music sessions shows the importance attributed by the Right To Play team to cost efficiency.

This evaluation will also provide Right To Play relevant insights about the time efficiency of M4E, trying to assess the impact of this four-month intervention.

Cost efficiency

Right To Play staff refers not to have yet developed a strategy to monitor M4E cost-efficiency:

"I think the organization is not quite there yet, as it is not something we've been able to prioritize so far. Nevertheless, it's something that Right To Play is definitely interested in further developing in terms of our approach, and it's definitely on the radar of the MEL strategy."

RTP Headquarter staff

Although there are no specific requirements to assess M4E's cost efficiency, the interviewees provided relevant insights about the topic.

The choice of implementing M4E and previous projects in Lebanon without using conventional and highly expensive musical instruments contributes to the project's cost-efficiency. Children use their own bodies, environmental and background sounds, or musical tools that they build from recycled materials as musical instruments.

M4E is cost-efficient also because it relies on facilitators and coaches that do not necessarily have a strong, professional music background, but understand the implications of producing sound from a pedagogical perspective:

"[...] it was not about bringing in just musicians to work with the children, but it was very much about bringing in people that don't need to have a music background but have the willingness and interest and are excited about learning something new [...]. And then it was on us to really work with them to ensure they're able to do that.

So, from my perspective, [cost-efficiency] is developing and creating really accessible methodologies and tools for people that don't need, you know, strong or any music background, to be able to use music to make a change in the lives of children."

RTP Headquarter staff

Besides cost-efficiency, this choice also makes project implementation more accessible and adaptable to different socio-economic conditions.

Time efficiency

Although not addressed directly by the research framework of this evaluation, time efficiency is a crucial point for this pilot. Its total duration is six months, divided into two cohorts of three months each for the activities with participants.

"I would say M4E is a very short intervention, so if we are able to see changes among children in just that short amount of time, that would be a really interesting and useful finding for us to say, you know, 'even in just this amount of sessions, this is what we've observed'."

RTP Headquarter staff

Another interesting perspective shared with the Consultancy from one of the respondents points at the pedagogical element of repetition as a key pedagogical approach to help children learn. Studying the time efficiency of M4E in light of Right To Play's methodological approach could mean, as explained:

"Looking at the activities where there is redundancy: Is Right To Play doing it enough? Are some parts repeated too much? What is the {appropriate} level of repetition? What's the frequency? What's the dosage?"

RTP Headquarter staff

More accurate findings on time efficiency could be shared at the end-line.

Impact

This criterion aims at assessing M4E's potentially transformative effects. The Consultancy tried to evaluate the potential social effects of this intervention that are longer-term or broader in scope than those already captured under the effectiveness criterion.

As per the Evaluation and Research Framework, KEQs from 28 to 31 aim at evaluating the *Impact* of the M4E project. Both key informant interviews with Right To Play staff and focus group discussions with children and caregivers were used to assess this criterion.

As outlined in the Logic Model (please refer to [Annex 3](#) for further details), the expected impact of the M4E pilot is that "improved life skills make children more hopeful and optimistic, with better projections of themselves in the future". The assumption is that children with stronger resilience and life skills are more hopeful and optimistic, and then are more able to see their future positive role in the community.

Summary of findings - Impact

Children seem to lack perspective and optimism about their future, due to the socioeconomic limitations that surround them. They are also very aware of how this situation of deprivation affects their possibility to reach their goals in the future. A great potential for impact for M4E lies in the possibility to offer an alternative set of values and skills to children to improve their self-esteem and sense of agency in the community that surrounds them.

Children's future projection of themselves

To identify elements pointing at the M4E's potential impact in the long term, the Consultancy tried to assess children's future projection of themselves, whether they feel hopeful and optimistic about their future, and which is their level of self-esteem. Given the complexity of these questions, the Consultancy relied mainly on parents' and field facilitators' answers, while children were asked to explain what they would like to be when they grow up.

As reported by field facilitators, children do not always have high self-esteem and are not frequently optimistic about their future. They think this is connected to the social, psychological and economic pressure children suffer, and to the lack of support from their families and communities.

“In many cases, they have no hope and no purpose for the future. Children are subjected to violence everywhere and [...] there are many psychological problems among children, whether they are refugees or residents. The percentage of children who value themselves know what they did or what they have, but that is not the case for a lot of [children] since they are not exposed to people who help them acquire the skills to value themselves.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

When asked what they want to do when they grow up, children offer detailed answers about the potential professions they would like to do.

Children’s aspirations partially vary across age, gender and location.

As previously noted, children aged 10 to 13 can give more nuanced answers; in this case, they were considering the variable of their context and explained how this affects the possibility to achieve their dreams. Girls are able to explain which profession they cannot reach due to socio-economic limitations (professions that are not allowed in the country or that non-Lebanese people cannot pursue).

Some professions are exclusively referred to by boys, mainly those related to sports (football player, football trainer). Girls are the only ones who mentioned the teaching and cooking professions.

Technical and medical roles (doctor, architect, engineer) are referred to by both boys and girls.

Particularly relevant is the fact that in Beirut and northern areas both boys and girls mention professions connected to the military environment.

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What do you want to be when you grow up?
5-9	South	Intervention	Boys	Pilot, Architect / Engineer, Car showroom owner, Travel around the world. Hairdresser.
5-9	South	Control	Boys	Architect / Engineer, pilot, doctor, traveller, and trainer of the Real Madrid team.
5-9	South	Intervention	Girls	Doctor, architect/engineer, cook, teacher, hairdresser, a stay-at-home wife.
5-9	South	Control	Girls	Teacher, doctor, hairdresser, toy store owner.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Girls	Hairdresser, a person who mocks others, doctor, a policewoman, English teacher, I want to help people. A professional chef. One of the children wants to collect a lot of cash. One of the kids wants to make a school better than the one she attended.
5-9	Beirut	Intervention	Boys	No capacity to raise this question. The children left. [...]

Age	Location	Control vs. intervention	Gender	What do you want to be when you grow up?
5-9	Beirut	Control	Boys	Policeman, and a Sheikh (a religious scholar). They referred to a Sheikh as a guy who reads Quran and wears a nice Abaya.
5-9	Beirut	Control	Girls	Math teacher, hairdresser, professional cake maker, ballet dancer.
10-13	North	Intervention	Boys	A famous football player, an emergency doctor, an engineer, a lot of children like football and like to be famous players.
10-13	North	Intervention	Girls	"A doctor or a teacher", "Dreams that come true: A surgeon - a maths teacher, dreams that don't come true: Acting, because it is forbidden, a flight attendant but I cannot do it in Lebanon", "I want to add something: once my mother had the chance to give me the Lebanese citizenship because she is Lebanese and my father is Palestinian but she did not accept; my dream is also to be enrolled in the ISF (Internal Security Force) but it doesn't work because I'm not Lebanese." "If we were still abroad maybe it would've worked", "A hairdresser", "A doctor or a pharmacist - there is also another dream: A model, but I don't think it will come true", "I like to work as a painter, a decorator, to be in the army, or a pharmacist"
10-13	North	Control	Boys	"A chef", "Just like Cristiano Ronaldo - to play football", "A scout", "Go on cruises", "A surgeon", "An engineer", "To enrol in the military (3 people)"
10-13	North	Control	Girls	"I would like to enrol in the military", "I want to go to university" "I will keep saving money so I can achieve that", "I want to study abroad and become a doctor and come back", "I want to be a hairdresser" "I like to study, graduate, become a lawyer, and travel and never come back here" "I like to travel to the United States", "I like to be an engineer".

The KEQ 30 assessed whether children would like to participate in a final public event to showcase their results and share them with their community. This question was designed as a proxy for children's self-confidence and satisfaction with the results of the M4E project.

In order not to generate the expectations of a final event for the M4E project, children were asked if they like to show their work to parents or friends.

All children like to showcase their results to parents and families and would probably appreciate taking part in a final event of the M4E pilot.

As referred by the program officers, due to time constraints a final event for the first round of M4E implementation was not planned.

M4E's expected impact

The Consultancy explored also whether parents and Right To Play expect this project to improve children's hopefulness, optimism and projection of themselves.

Parents' expectations have varied, and on occasion highly depending on the immediate needs of the family, without considering the added value of psychosocial support *per se*.

"The children are happy with anything, even if it was a small thing, so, of course, they would be happy with such programs."

Parents, North area

Parents from Beirut share more precise ideas on the kind of activities that would help children in the long term, specifying that they need to learn how to manage peer pressure and negative environments.

“Children also need to gain confidence to confront others and know what they want. Also, children need motivation and if they are left undirected, they will stay the same. They need their questions to be answered and they need their points of strength to be highlighted.”

Parents, Beirut

Field Facilitators and program officers place high expectations on M4E’s impact. According to them, this project can improve children’s self-confidence and help them do the right choices for their future.

“Today when they learn the self-confidence skill they also acquire the self-expression skill, emotional control and how to recognize feelings. If I can trust myself, build my future, put a plan for the future and work in groups then yes, it helps me have a good self-image.”

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Program officers share the same expectations, as previous evaluations of other RTP projects showed a satisfying increase in children’s self-esteem.

As reported by field facilitators, M4E also provides positive role models for children to follow, so much so that by the end of previous projects many children aspired to become coaches or musicians.

Sustainability

According to the OECD definition, this criterion includes:

An examination of the financial, economic, social, environmental and institutional capacities of the systems needed to sustain net benefits over time. Involves analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs. Depending on the timing of the evaluation, this may involve analyzing the actual flow of net benefits or estimating the likelihood of net benefits continuing over the medium and long term.⁹

⁹ Please refer to the following link for further details: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/543e84ed-en/1/3/4/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/543e84ed-en&_csp_=535d2f2a848b7727d35502d7f36e4885&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book#section-d1e4964

Given the early stage of development of M4E's pilot, the Consultancy considered such a complex evaluation of this criterion to be premature. Therefore, more general questions were developed, focusing on the involvement of local authorities, long-term plans, and the scalability of the project.

This consideration was reflected in KEQs 32 and 33 of the Evaluation and Research Framework. To appraise this criterion, the Consultancy relied on key informant interviews with Right To Play's HQ personnel and program officers.

Summary of findings – Sustainability

The assessment of this criterion revolved around both the interaction with authorities and the opportunity to scale the M4E pilot.

As for the first topic, Right To Play developed a network of partnerships that include both national and local institutions, whenever possible.

As for the long-term opportunities for scalability, the adaptability of M4E's resources could allow its dissemination in other countries where Right To Play implements its activities.

Authorities' support

As previously mentioned (please refer to the *External coherence* paragraph in the *Coherence* section), Right To Play program officers reported that M4E has developed a strong interaction with governmental or national authorities, such as the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan.¹⁰

As for the involvement of local authorities, the same respondents explains that:

"We always focus on the local partners and work with them. Working with authorities comes at a later stage, and not having them involved doesn't mean that we have failed, but it's recommended to have them on board. Some authorities were collaborating more than others."

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Long-term perspective

Interviews with Right To Play HQ's personnel were particularly relevant to sense the long-term expectations around the M4E pilot.

Future developments of M4E are closely linked to the results of this evaluation and the evidence that will be produced. As explained above (please refer to the *Coherence* section), the LEGO

¹⁰ Please refer to p. 27, *Note 5*, for further details on the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan.

Foundation's Build Back Better program supports Right To Play in this evaluation of the impact and future potential of M4E. As clearly explained by one of the respondents:

"Sustainability and scalability are really at the core of this grant, so the main purpose is to understand what works and why, and then use that evidence, particularly in the advocacy area, and seek more funding. I think Lebanon is a tricky context, in other countries where we work, we are working with the governments, so we have a lot of dissemination planned with the government itself and a lot of scalability plans in terms of interweaving this with the ministerial structure. In Lebanon, because we are working with refugees in refugee camps, I get the sense that it is more about other international agencies, and other donors, like UNHCR, that normally provide more funding. I'm not sure to what extent the dissemination will also target government authorities."

RTP Headquarter Staff

As for the potential growth and expansion of M4E, one of the interviewees suggests that not M4E itself, but its approach stands at the core of any scalability opportunity. The resources developed for this pilot are described as extremely accessible and adaptive, as demonstrated by their rapid adaptation following the Beirut blast:

"We tweaked the manuals a little bit. If we were able to use it, you know, much quicker and in a more effective manner, just three or four days after the explosion happens, it speaks to the ease at which you're able to really contextualize these tools when you are also scaling up to different countries, right? Now there's interest in Jordan and Ethiopia. It won't look the same, but the basics of it are there, and then you're able to contextualize it in each country based on the needs that are there."

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Right To Play deliver activities in 15 different countries, and there are several contexts where M4E can be easily adapted to answer local needs:

We work in a lot of emergencies and refugee settings, for example, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, and even countries like Pakistan that are going through climate emergencies at the moment, I think there is a lot of potential for this to be scaled up in other settings where we work with particularly vulnerable populations. Because of how it's been tested with refugee groups I would say these other countries that I mentioned where we worked with a lot, so for example in Tanzania a lot of work is with Burundian refugees, and some of the work that we've been doing, in the previous Covid grant, was really focusing on refugee camps, so I could see a very clear link to what we do there. In Jordan, as well, a lot of work is done with refugees, it's a different context in the sense

that it's a donor landscape that is similar to Lebanon. There are smaller grants, with a less active donor environment compared to other countries where we work. A lot of our larger programs are focused in East and Southern Africa, so I would expect that could be a potential context.

RTP Staff, Lebanon

Several elements previously discussed indicate the potential sustainability of this project. These include the bottom-up design of all Music iterations or the cost efficiency of M4E. Another detail relevant to assessing this criterion is reported by one of the facilitators in the field, who explained how some teenagers who participated in previous iterations of the Music project have now become coaches, "creating continuity, which is something we focus on because we want them to be able to continue when we leave". Moreover, the choice to strengthen the capacities of community coaches, and work through them, is another main component of sustainability.

Conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

Conclusions

The preliminary findings from this baseline phase show that the project has been carefully designed tailoring activities and overall Theory of Change to the needs of the local population and based on preliminary promising evidence on psychosocial support and the role of music in enhancing children's life skills. M4E also appears to be coherent with other interventions on the ground, complementing rather than competing with the projects of other NGOs.

The baseline also indicates emotion management skills and communication skills of children as areas where it is expected to see a change in practices and behaviours. Parents' buy-in is considered important but not addressed in a structured way: findings from the end-line will provide definitive evidence to assess if engagement is effective even if not targeted with specific activities.

The project didn't have a specific focus on gender. Disaggregated data collection did not show strong differences between boys' and girls' levels of resilience and life skills.

Considerations on time efficiency also need to be completed with findings from the end-line; at this stage, it is possible to highlight that the short duration of the pilot raises some concerns. On the contrary, the short duration could provide an ideal timeframe to test and pilot the intervention in an effective way. It will be possible to comment further once endline data has been collected and analyzed.

Scalability and potential for impact can be better assessed at the end-line; however, elements of the M4E design (such as its adaptability to different contexts and its bottom-up design), characteristics of previous iterations of similar programs (the ability to retain children and adolescents that become coaches themselves), and RTP's strong relation with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) shows promise for the continuity of the program and its scaling to other crisis contexts.

Lessons learned

The main lesson learned from the baseline evaluation revolves around the limitations of the quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

As detailed in the *Limitation* section, the CYRM survey didn't capture a very nuanced picture of children's resilience. This is due to two main factors: the 3-choices answers were easier to understand but allowed for a lesser scale of answers; and it is possible that the one-to-one setting of survey administration, where children were answering directly to an adult, has biased their answers towards social acceptance. This seems supported by evidence collected during FGDs, where children expressed a rich diversity of opinions and ideas. The different context (peer

presence and co-lead of the groups by coaches they know and respect) may have led to children expressing themselves more freely, and providing more complex, in-depth answers.

This shows the trade-offs in the implementation of the CYRM: the use of a simplified version to make it more understandable for younger children risks limiting the difference in answers. Moreover, the use of one-to-one administration of the survey, while granting the individuality of the answers could compromise their authenticity.

As for qualitative data collection tools, FGDs with children, although successful, were slightly challenging. The most demanding task was having children interested and focused for the entire duration of the focus groups (especially the younger ones), as they were easily bored and distracted.

After two learning meetings with data collectors to gather suggestions for improvement in the FGDs, a one-day workshop was held in Lebanon. This fruitful meeting brought important changes in the FGDs guidelines, making questions more engaging and playful for the participants.

The successful revision process of this Topic Guide showed the importance of co-design data collection tools, including in this process both MEL experts and field practitioners who have direct experience with children.

Recommendations

During the baseline, a new contextual variable not considered in the first design emerged: the increasing normalization of violence in society has been interiorized by children, especially in Beirut and northern areas. This emerging finding requested an adjustment in the project's second Theory of Change, as shown in the [Annex](#) section. To better target this relevant contextual change, adjustments in activities and topics that coaches address in the M4E project will be required.

As shown in the Theory of Change and Logic Model, although parents' engagement is considered necessary to reach the project goal, it is not pursued through structured activities. As revealed during FGDs, parents do not perceive PSS as the most urgent need for their children. However, they attribute importance to their children's regular participation in activities targeting emotion management and communication. Considering parents as relevant stakeholders in the M4E projects, the Consultancy recommends ensuring that Right To Play's partners actively engage with caregivers, whenever RTP is not able to directly do it.

The design and testing of the data collection tools showed relevant limitations that led to the lesson learned above.

As for the CYRM survey, the Consultancy would recommend testing the use of a five-valued Likert scale for future evaluations. In case young children are involved (aged from six to ten years old), it would be relevant to make sure that they are able to understand the difference in nuance and use a wider range of options.

Since a deeper understanding of CYRM results was reached through a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data, the Consultancy suggests ensuring future CYRM (and other quantitative surveys) are complemented by qualitative methods in all projects going forward. Moreover, Right To Play could consider testing other measures of resilience and wellbeing in programmes in the future.

As for qualitative data collection, the Consultancy would recommend paying great attention to the design and gamification of tools targeting children. Right To Play should rely on its staff members and community coaches who are knowledgeable in this type of activity, bringing them into the tool development and review process of data collection tools.