LINES REPORT

Learning for Informal and Nonformal Educators in Lebanon and Jordan

DAMIAN ROSS, MARIA GRAZIA IMPERIALE, GIOVANNA FASSETTA

2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THANKS

INTRODUCTION

The LINEs project worked with teachers of refugees in Lebanon and Jordan to understand, articulate and develop the factors which strengthen their identity and agency. We used arts-based workshops, and participatory methodologies that include the voices of the whole community: teachers, children, parents and NGO representatives.

Specifically, we aimed to:

(a) collect pilot data on the scope and nature of local challenges in Lebanon and Jordan;
(b) explore new ways of co-creating teacher professional development through participatory approaches which strengthen educators' agency and identity; and,
(c) establish relationships and develop trust in Lebanon and Jordan that will help to ensure collaboration and co-creation of knowledge with Global South partners.

In **Lebanon**, we supported our local partner organisation, Mishwar, and the Syrian communities themselves to set up an educational programme to be delivered in four informal refugee settlements where the majority of children have never been to school or have dropped out of school. This involved establishing two new community schools, including sourcing and developing the spaces, and restarting two existing schools that had to pause activities because of lack of resources. The schools have now started, and teachers are focussing on Arabic literacy, numeracy, English, sports and arts.

We then present 'LINEs in Lebanon' and 'LINEs in Jordan' in separate sections which include information about the specific context, the methodology adopted in each setting, and our findings and discussion. At the end of the report we offer our conclusions on the project as a whole.

In Jordan, we worked with Sawiyan, an organisation supporting refugee communities who generally receive less attention from international organisations. We heard from Sudanese, Somali and Yemeni refugee teachers about how they organised, and are now providing, pop-up and intergenerational English language teaching for their communities. Anti-racist education and critical pedagogy ground the work of Sawiyan, and language teaching is key, as refugees are on the move and most hope to stay in Jordan only temporarily.

Although our work in each context covered similar themes, our relationships and objectives were very different. In Lebanon, we had a good familiarity with the context as well as established partners in Mishwar whose previous work was well known to us, and who had their own clear objectives which we aimed to support alongside our own research aims. In Jordan, we had hoped to meet potential partners and if possible to do some initial exploratory work with teachers in a context we were less familiar with. While we spent several days with the teachers and communities in Lebanon, our work in Jordan with Sawiyan was limited to an interview with one of the organisers and one three-hour workshop with teachers.

This report's structure is as follows: in the next sections we briefly clarify the concepts of teacher identity and agency, and outline some general methodological and ethical considerations.

TEACHER IDENTITY AND AGENCY

Teacher identity and agency can sometimes seem vague concepts, perhaps because they are so fluid and multifaceted and consequently can be defined in different ways. For the purposes of this report, we see teacher identity as the hopes, beliefs, values and purpose a teacher holds, which are informed and influenced by inter-related factors such as their personal and professional experiences, the contexts in which they live and work, and the perceptions and behaviour of those around them.

After Mockler (2011), we see the teacher identity "project", as a continual process of understanding, articulating and then trying to align this identity with action. As such it is a fundamental aspect of ongoing teacher education and development which we feel is often overlooked or under-emphasised.

Teacher agency, then, can be seen as the ability to act and make changes in accordance with your values and purpose at the various levels of the eco-system (not necessarily just in the classroom), in relation to the various factors which enable or hinder this process, and agency and identity are inter-dependent (see also Imperiale et al, 2021).
We used different participatory approaches with the teachers in these two contexts to explore how they relate to these concepts and to provided insight into their hopes and needs, but also to support them in strengthening their identity and agency.

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS[1]

Adopting a participatory approach was essential considering these aims of strengthening teacher identity and agency. The term "participation" in research can encompass a range of meanings, from negotiating access and consulting with local partners to fostering sustainable networks that extend beyond the research project itself (Fassetta & Imperiale, 2018).

A participatory lens allowed us to amplify the voices and agency of teachers in refugee settings in Lebanon and Jordan, through providing them with opportunities to nurture and strengthen their purpose.

The approach sought to co-construct knowledge with the participants, emphasizing inclusive ways of working that prioritize collective ownership and the creation of narratives. While the project aimed to build a sustainable network, the challenges of limited time made it a complex task. The hope is that the project can serve as a foundation for further research, allowing for a more comprehensive and sustainable participatory approach.

The project underwent an ethical review and received approval from the ethics committee of the College of Social Science at the University of Glasgow, ensuring that it adhered to ethical guidelines and principles for conducting research involving human participants.

1. We have provided some reflections on the partnerships separately on the LINEs website: https://lineslearning.files.wordpress.com/2023/06/lines-reflective-booklet.pdf

As participants were mostly refugees, even though topics related to their past emerged during the workshops, we did not ask specifically about any potentially sensitive issue, and have ensured complete anonymity in the report, only using initials where it was necessary to indicate different speakers in a conversation.

In Lebanon, we discussed the teachers' own experiences of education and their aspirations for the new schools, and in Jordan, the questions we posed were: what are your roots? What keeps you grounded? What are your strengths and capabilities? What are your hopes and dreams for the future? These inputs were broad enough to ensure that participants told us what they wanted us to know about them - as Frimberger et al (2018) suggested, this is a way to enhance participants' voices and limit extraction in qualitative research.

Our research was conducted multilingually. The research team's Arabic ranges from a basic level to almost zero. In Lebanon, the teachers have varying levels of English, and the parents and children that we met spoke very little English. Consequently, activities were generally conducted in a mix of Arabic and English, with translation in both directions provided by one of the teachers when necessary.

Where we felt that interrupting discussions for translation would have hindered discussions in Arabic between teachers, we waited until the end and asked for a brief summary. Translation was generally done skilfully and conscientiously, with both the teacher with responsibility for translating and the wider group ensuring everyone understood and everyone's voice was heard.

In Jordan, the language used for communication and data collection was English. This choice of language was due to the participants' proficiency in English. In the report, to make it easier to read, we have generally used the translation provided at the time, but in places where we felt it was relevant to the findings (for example with the children in Lebanon), we have included some of the original language use.

Participants received incentives. In Lebanon, the teachers received 50 US Dollars each for their participation across three days of workshops and visits to the camps. In Jordan, the project provided participants with a monetary incentive of 10 Jordanian Dinars (£11.26) for attending the three-hour workshop. This compensation, though symbolic in nature, acknowledges the participants' time and contribution to the project. While symbolic compensation can hold meaning and show appreciation for participants' involvement, providing a monetary incentive – although small - can also have practical benefits, such as covering transportation costs.

LINES IN LEBANON

CONTEXT

In Lebanon we worked with teachers, parents and children in communities of Syrian refugees living in informal tented settlements in the north of the country. According to the 2023 Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) (The Government of Lebanon and The United Nations, 2023),[2] Lebanon is in one of the most severe crises globally since the mid-nineteenth century, due to factors including political paralysis, the 2020 Beirut Port Blast, the Syrian war, the COVID-19 pandemic, economic deterioration, reduced global funding, and a recent cholera outbreak. The LCRP reports that the Lebanese pound had depreciated from 1,500 to the U.S. Dollar to an informal rate of 43,370 by December 2022. When we were there in April 2023, the standard rate was 100,000.

2. Unless otherwise stated, the information in this section is taken from the 2023 Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) (The Government of Lebanon and The United Nations, 2023), which was published in April 2023 and draws on data from United Nations bodies (largely UNHCR and UNDP) and the Lebanese Government.

3.8m of the total population of 5.9m are estimated to be in need of aid, including 1.5m Syrian refugees, nine out of ten of whom are living in extreme poverty (UNHCR, 2023). In addition, the LCRP states that only 17% of Syrians over the age of 15 have valid legal residency, restricting access to basic services and legal protection. Lebanon has the highest number of displaced persons per capita and per square kilometre in the world, but the majority of its own citizens are also extremely vulnerable, leading to increased tensions between the communities, with recent government policy appearing to exacerbate the situation.

Lebanon is not party to the UN Refugee convention and has always lacked consistent asylum laws, instead using a series of operational agreements with UNHCR, which can be changed or ignored (The Tahrir Inistitute for Middle East Policy, 2022). In April 2023, a new wave of summary deportations, amid increased anti-refugee rhetoric and scapegoating, was reported, and 20 international organisations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, published a joint statement in May, calling for a halt to the deportations (reliefweb, 2023).

Since the early stages of the war in Syria, the Lebanese education system has attempted to integrate Syrian students into its schools, including through creating additional afternoon shifts (International Alert, 2015). Significant barriers to attendance, often for economic reasons, and to learning, especially in relation to the use of English or French as a language of instruction in Lebanon, have been evident throughout this period (UNHCR , 2016).

Recently, however, school closures due to the pandemic, the economic crisis, which has led to the de-prioritisation of education, and a teachers strike between January and March 2023 over salaries, have significantly worsened the situation (UNHCR, 2023).

The LCRP estimates 1.45 million school-aged children, including Lebanese, displaced Syrians, migrants, and Palestine refugees, to be in need of support for accessing education, with competition for services including education increasing tensions between communities. They report that over 430,000 of 715,000 Syrian children are out of formal education, meaning demand for non-formal education far exceeds supply. Negative coping mechanisms, including child labour and child marriage compound the problem, and money for transportation and school materials is spent on basic needs (UNHCR, 2023).

AKKAR

We spent four days in the Akkar district,[3] in the North of Lebanon, working with teachers, students and parents.

Our hotel was in Al Mina, a relatively affluent part of Tripoli which is classified as safe to visit by the FCDO, and we travelled to the area where the project is taking place each day by car. The journey took us past a couple of army checkpoints, and along the sea road which, further north, leads to Syria itself, before turning inland into the farmland which makes up much of that part of Akkar. In general, the land is flat and open, with buildings of various types clustered along the poorly maintained main roads, and then fields for food crops and large greenhouses. We could see regular small, groups of tents dotted along the route, many with UNHCR logos on the canvas.

Figure 1: Akkar, Lebanon

The Akkar district is one of the poorest areas in Lebanon. The new education programme is taking place in four larger informal settlements (we use the term 'camps' in the report, since this is the term used by the communities, but they should not be confused with the formal refugee camps in countries like Turkey and Jordan). Each is made up of tents built on the edge of farmland and rented from Lebanese owners, and has a population in the low hundreds.

According to the LCRP 2023, 21% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon live in non-permanent shelters, and informal settlements like these, which are typically on agricultural land, need "comprehensive assistance in basic services, especially electricity, to provide them with basic household lighting, cooking appliances and hot water for bathing and other uses" (p.66). However, the plan also points out that the Lebanese government does not allow the instalment of permanent infrastructure even though some of the settlements have been there for 10 years. In practice, this means that buildings, including schools, cannot be built with bricks, and we are aware of constructions that have been destroyed for doing so.

MISHWAR

Mishwar is a small charity in Akkar which has been working with refugee communities (Syrian and Palestinian) and Lebanese children and youth since 2016. It focuses on creativity and empowerment, and emphasises community leadership in its programmes, which include a range of educational, social and infrastructure activities. It relies largely on the initiative and commitment of community members alongside public donations to run these programmes.

Mishwar has supported the community in the four camps where we worked with schools and activities. In one of the camps, a school they built was burnt down due to issues within the communities, while in another camp a school established in 2017 is still used today. Classes have been run there by teachers from the community and have focused on basic literacy and numeracy, particularly for those not attending formal school, as well as "homework help" for children attending Lebanese schools. The educational activities of Mishwar were suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic and after the Port of Beirut explosion in 2020 and amid the worsening financial crisis, Mishwar had to respond to the basic needs of the community, including access to medicine, food and water, but also safety, security, and the wellbeing of Mishwar members. We approached them in summer 2022 to explore the possibility of partnership in the LINES project, and founder and director Tony Collins told us that Mishwar were keen to re-start their work in education, and that our support would be help facilitate that.

We aimed to help the teachers and Mishwar open two more schools in two other camps, to support the teachers in setting up their education programme, and to work with them to articulate their values, motivations and needs with a view to providing further support and gaining insight that will be useful to supporting other teachers in similar contexts.

OUR APPROACH

Our work in Lebanon consisted of a series of interviews and workshops with six teachers, two workshops with 26 and 11 children respectively, and a focus group with eight parents. We also visited the three camps, as we considered this essential to our understanding of the context, but also to our longer-term relationship with the community. We were shown around by some of the teachers, chatted informally with members of the community inside and outside their homes, and played some impromptu games with the children in the camp. This was not part of data collection.

We used a participatory approach which aimed to ensure the participants' voices were emphasised in our findings, to support their engagement, ownership, and, particularly in the case of the teachers, sense of purpose and leadership in relation to the new schools and education programme, and to build relationships which would allow ongoing dialogue and support as the programme continues.

The first afternoon (Tuesday) focused on establishing relationships with the teachers, building trust, agreeing parameters for the workshops, discussing individual experiences of and beliefs about education, and getting an initial idea of the context. Damian interviewed the teachers individually while Grazia and Giovanna had informal discussions with the rest of the group. We then visited one of the camps. On Wednesday, Damian ran workshops looking at identity and agency with the teachers. On Thursday, we visited two more camps and the teachers then considered how the courses would be run, and did some initial action planning with Damian, while Grazia and Giovanna experienced teaching a group of children from the camp and found out about their hopes for the school. Finally, on Friday, Grazia and Giovanna ran workshops with parents and children in the one camp with a classroom that was already in use, to further explore the community's views on education, specifically what they believe education should be and what their most pressing needs are. Data collected was multi-modal, including recordings of interviews and workshops, as well as posters and "zines", booklets made from folded A4 paper and then drawn or written on by participants.

We have provided further details of the participants and the way we worked with each group where we describe the findings below.

FINDINGS

TEACHERS' VIEWS

PARTICIPANTS AND METHODS

The group of teachers had been recruited by Mishwar to work in the schools, and agreed to work with us as part of getting the education programme started. The group is made up of three women and three men. Four of them are Syrian refugees themselves (two women and two men) who live in the camps, and two are Lebanese with connections to the owner of the land on which one of the camps has been built, and where they will be responsible for the classes. The two Lebanese teachers had not met the others before, but the Syrian teachers all knew each other. The teachers' age range is from mid-20s to mid-40s, and the Syrian teachers have been refugees in Lebanon since the early part of the conflict, meaning two of them arrived as teenagers. The teachers have varied backgrounds and interests in relation to school subjects, including Arabic language, Arabic literature, Biology, Geography, IT, English and physical education. One previously taught in a school in Syria as well as the established school in one of the camps, while most of them have recently been involved in providing extra support for students with their homework after school, and two, who are Syrian brothers, also have experience working with children as football coaches through NGO initiatives.

The work with the teachers was mainly in a very large, L-shaped room in a house owned by one of the Lebanese teachers and adjacent to one of the camps. The room was comfortable and cool, and the size and shape allowed for privacy when teachers wanted to pray or, for one of the teachers, to look after her infant son.

On the first day, Damian interviewed the teachers for 10-15 minutes to get to know them on an individual basis, find out a bit about their backgrounds, and ask them to reflect on their own experiences of and beliefs about education as a basis for the subsequent workshops.

Days two and three consisted of three 2-3 hour workshops focused on developing the teachers' individual and collective sense of identity and agency. This involved consideration of various concepts established in teacher identity literature (see Beijaard et al, 2004, for an overview). We started by brainstorming characteristics of the ideal school (see Figure 2 below). After this, the teachers divided into pairs to discuss broad themes which had come up here and in the interviews in more depth. They recorded their thoughts on flipchart paper and then presented them to the rest of the group for discussion. We then moved the focus more explicitly towards teacher identity and agency, through a discussion of teacher identity itself and its relationship with agency, including concepts such as the importance of values and a shared sense of purpose, and the tensions caused by competing visions of what a teacher should be and do.

Based on this, we then asked teachers to conceptualise the ideal teacher in their contexts, using prompts. Finally, the teachers did some initial practical action planning. The activities were accompanied by lots of laughing and enthusiasm, and good contributions from everyone. This was important as we wanted to ensure the Lebanese teachers, who were new to the group, felt part of it.

Topics were repeated and elaborated on throughout the process, so we have grouped the teachers' thoughts under the key themes that arose:
• Providing a safe space to develop character and responsibility
• Curriculum and resources
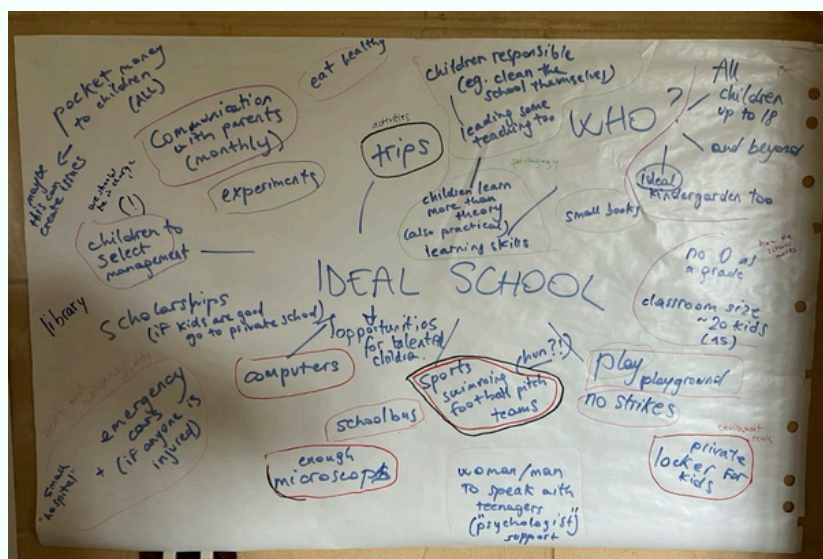• Relationship with the community
• Being a teacher

Figure 2: The ideal school in our context

PROVIDING A SAFE SPACE TO STRENGTHEN RIGHTS, CHARACTER AND RESPONSIBILITY

In the initial discussion of the ideal school, there was agreement that a priority was developing responsibility among the children; that they should be encouraged to clean the school, eat healthily, study independently, and take on some teaching.There was even a suggestion that the children should select the people managing the schools, although there were fears this might do the teachers out of a job! Levels of kindness and discipline came up repeatedly during the interviews when the participants remembered their own teachers.

For example, one of the teachers told us that at the age of 10 he had run away from school in Syria because of being treated badly by teachers and played football for two weeks before his father found out and made him go back, saying,

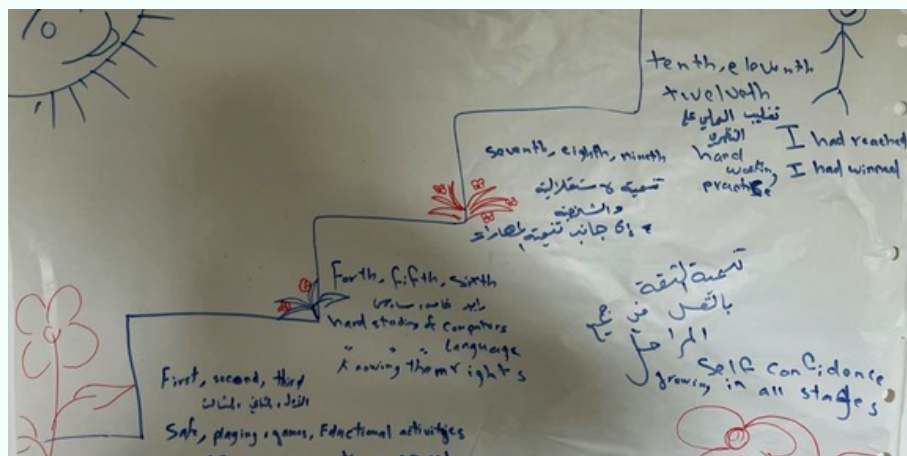> *The most I remember is how the teacher is slapping us.*

Figure 3: Priorities for different age groups

These themes were also important for the pair discussing priorities at different ages (see Figure 3 above), who emphasised the need for a safe environment with learning through fun activities in the early grades, before "hard study" and "knowing their rights" from grade four and then giving children responsibility for supporting other students from grade seven. They highlighted the importance of building self-confidence throughout, which led to wider discussion of confidence and responsibility and their relationship with rights and behaviour in a crisis context:

You have to focus on self-confidence in our society because we have a great crisis and the parents are all the time depressed. Because of that everything is reflected onto the kids. And the kids go to school and they are depressed because of that.

Another teacher said:

Our students are so smart, but they need someone to praise them.

Specific challenges were raised in relation to gender; "[Boys need to] feel like leaders. [Then] they will be active, not naughty. At this age they feel like men…"I will fight for everyone, I will kill everyone." There is nothing only fight. If you give them responsibility it will solve this." Cultural and societal norms were seen to make an emphasis on rights and responsibility difficult for some girls, "because their parents ban them from this sort of thing."

The attraction of the financial benefits of early marriage were also mentioned:

When a girl is 13, the parents tell them, "You will be a bride soon." So, when she is 15, she thinks she is a woman. Her parents tell her to act in a certain way to attract men. Some girls get depressed and are afraid. The school and parents should be in cooperation.

The teachers see educating children about their rights as essential to their role, with one saying, "All of this is focused on the rights of the kids. If the kids know their rights, everything will be OK," and emphasised the need for specialist pastoral and psychological support within the school. As in the interviews, non-academic activities, such as sports and school trips were mentioned several times as being essential. One of the teachers talked about his experience of working with a football team in a private centre;

Kids [were] aggressive, and had knives and they used to fight. When we had a team, they played together, they won together, they lost together. This encouraged them to go to the centre to study. This is important not only for physical, but also for brain health.

Three participants brought up issues related to a safe, welcoming learning environment in relation to the provision of formal schooling. They said that the Syrian children who do go to the Lebanese schools attend overcrowded afternoon shifts, with three of four children per desk. There is little integration, the teachers are exhausted and the curriculum is unsuitable, often because of language issues, meaning there is even less incentive to attend. As a result of this, many children do not go to school:

A large part of children don't go to schools. Really, ya'ani, this is a big problem for them. Reading and writing Arabic is a big problem for them.

CURRICULA AND RESOURCES

In relation to curricula and resources, we discussed both an ideal situation for their new schools, and the reality that teachers had experienced. The teachers felt that ideally, the schools should be for all ages, with those of school age a priority. They emphasised languages and literacy, saying that "Lebanese school doesn't take care of Arabic," but that French was also necessary to support children in French-medium Lebanese schools, and English was generally important. They felt they should support students with the Lebanese curriculum as much as possible. Computer skills were also mentioned as important by several teachers. To support student learning, they focused on being selective and not overwhelming the students with information, providing "entertainment activities" to keep students happy and interested and, in terms of achievement, agreed that "no-one gets zero," and that "talented" students should get the right support and opportunities, including scholarships to private institutions.

The need for practical as well as theoretical learning was agreed by the group, especially for older children. Two of the teachers talked about the desirable features and resources of a good Lebanese formal school. These included the building itself, a set timetable, uniforms, official certificates, a football team, experienced teachers who focused on their own specialisms and a laboratory.

Thoughts on an ideal maximum size for their own classes varied from 15 to 20 students, and classroom equipment such as microscopes, computers, projectors, books and a library were mentioned, as well as playground space and facilities for sports.

These suggestions quite often corresponded to the teachers' own areas of expertise and interest, with microscopes from the biologist, the library from a passionate student of Arabic literature, and sports facilities from the football coaches. One teacher also suggested individual lockers "like in European schools" for the children, "to give them some privacy." Other suggestions were particularly reflective of the contextual challenges, such as a school bus, pocket money for students, and "a small hospital" and emergency transport in case anyone gets hurt.

In their previous teaching experiences, teachers said that they have had limited resources to draw from. Since there has been no budget for books in the existing school, the two teachers who have worked there used existing materials where possible. They described a variety of approaches to preparing lessons, using aspects of both Syrian and Lebanese curricula and materials, online resources, particularly Youtube videos, as well as their own ideas. For example, one teacher who had been working in the existing school, said that, regardless of age, she used Lebanese kindergarten materials for students with no Arabic, Lebanese first grade materials for those with a little Arabic, and when supporting those attending formal school she focused on what they were studying at the time.

Another said that she had downloaded a Syrian curriculum for those in early grades, and for higher grades, since she had no resources, she worked from scratch trying to cover the fundamental parts of each subject. The teachers put an emphasis on teaching through games and competitions to support student motivation.

On the last day, we had initial discussions of what a syllabus and timetable might look like, bearing in mind there was still some uncertainty about the number and age of the students who would be involved until the teachers had recruited them. After agreeing to propose eight hours each to Mishwar, who would be paying them, the teachers worked in the pairs allocated to each camp to consider how the hours would be allocated before presenting their thoughts to the group. For the first time, there was disagreement and animated discussion, particularly when it came to the inclusion of football within the timetable. The two former coaches made strong arguments about the benefits for mental health and behaviour, but the rest of the group felt that the majority of their eight hours should be dedicated to the academic study, and in particular literacy.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

Throughout, the teachers emphasised the importance of communication between the school and the community. Often, parents were seen as a challenge to providing education. A teacher said,

> *Parents in the camps don't take care of the kids.*

This was echoed by another, who said,

If the families care that means everything will be more than perfect, but if the family don't care that will be so tough because you must be the teacher and the family in the same time, I am the father and then at the same time the teacher.

He had arrived in Lebanon at school age, and described his own experiences of tensions between immediate family needs and education:

When I arrived here, one organisation offered me to be in the school. I [asked] them, 'It's official school or unofficial?" They told me unofficial school, "If you succeed, we cannot give you a certificate." I told them that means I will waste my time for nothing. They told me, "Your choice…" I thought, "I will complete, I will go, unofficial school, better than nothing." But my family told me, "You must go to work, we need money." I told them, "Please, send me, I want to improve my knowledge, I want to be good in the future." They told me, "No, you must go to work. No discussion."

Some of the participants felt that the responsibility for children was seen to lie solely on teachers' shoulders, absolving the parents themselves, and described the difficulty of explaining to parents when their children were doing badly. They also discussed the tension created by parents' focus on exam results rather than a more holistic understanding of education, but one said, "Parents judge me on results, and it affects you. We have to care what they think." On another occasion, he mentioned the positive side of this, speaking of his pride when parents in the camp heard about the good results he was getting and came to ask him to help with their children.

Teachers recognised the enormous challenges that parents face in sending their children to school, but saw it as part of their job to help parents see education as a priority. One teacher explained that relationships with parents are the first step in making the schools successful, because it is "very important for [the parents] to know me," if they are going to be persuaded to send their children to his classes. He gave an example of creating a Whatsapp group for parents, checking up on absent children, generally showing he was interested in them and demonstrating the value of sport by sending them pictures and videos of their children playing football, and of the subsequent pride of parents when they saw them.

The teachers suggested that in the new schools, there should be monthly meetings with parents, and that if the parents didn't come, the teachers should go to their homes. Good relationships with parents and the community were also seen as important for creating the right environment for the school to flourish, including being quiet while the children are learning. One pair also suggested that, in an ideal world, richer families would support the school with funding.

The wider community beyond the school was also considered an important learning space for broadening children's horizons, through taking them on field trips to factories, hospitals and pharmacies, and helping them make their own choices about what they wanted to be in the future, through seeing jobs like doctors, tailors and painters first hand. They emphasised the need to foster ambition and self-confidence, with one saying, "We have to learn to be open-minded with our children," and discussed the challenges of getting away from a mindset of, "I want to be like my father."

BEING A TEACHER

'Being a teacher' was a recurrent theme across the 3 days. During the initial interviews Damian explored teachers' own experiences of schooling as a way of further breaking the ice and, given that teachers' own experiences at school have a well-established link to teacher identity, as a lead in to discussing other aspects of their identity as teachers.

Figure 4: The existing school in one of the camps

The quickest answer came from the teacher who set up the existing school, who said she had to designed it to be as similar as possible to her own school (see Figure 4), but discussion generally centred around memorable teachers.

Most of the group mentioned the importance of teachers who could explain things clearly, but, as noted above, nearly all of them remembered their teachers in terms of the relationship between kindness and discipline, and sometimes corporal punishment, as in the following separate comments:

I remember the teacher of Maths. He was a very good teacher. We understood his subject. For that reason, I like very much maths. He was a professional. He treated us very well, his body language and his voice, his techniques were good. He knows how to give the information in the right way.

I wasn't good at Arabic, but the teacher was tough and made everyone learn. "If you are not good, that's OK, but if you don't try, I will punish you." Because of him I had good confidence.

[My Arabic teacher] was assertive but not aggressive , had a good strategy, asking the children to explain what they had learnt, and didn't hit us with a ruler…

Three of the Syrian teachers mentioned their education being interrupted by the war. One said it took her eight years, but she eventually managed to get her degree in Biology. Another tried to go to Damascus to finish school after the school in his town closed, but he was treated with suspicion by the army because of where he was from and had to return home and study by himself.

Talking about their previous experiences as teachers, most of them mentioned the simple satisfaction of feeling they had helped children learn something as the most rewarding aspect. For example, one said,

When I can reach the information to the children, I feel in them love for me.

Another said

I don't know why exactly but when I teach them I forget everything about my war, I forget everything about what happened to us, we need the new children to be good in the future.

Another mentioned the satisfaction of coaching football to children from different backgrounds, seeing them integrate and helping with character development:

I was very happy when we trained Lebanese and Syrians and Gypsies and, in the beginning, they used to fight, and then maybe two months later they liked each other. I felt very happy to teach the kids good habits.

One teacher expressed his sense of frustration that it is the children who are suffering through no fault of their own:

They don't belong to this war. This war was created by force, by some political people.

In a final activity the teachers reflected on discussions so far, including some theoretical discussion about teacher identity and agency, and what these meant for their own roles, to produce a list of characteristics for an "ideal" teacher in their context. They were given short prompts, and after working in two groups of three and after discussing their ideas, agreed to the following:

Ideally, a teacher in our context

• knows how to adapt to different situations
• knows how to understand the students
• is aware of every student and their level of education
• knows how to explain the lesson very well
• knows how to [make] the students think
• believes that every student has the same rights of learning
• is able to make the students understand the lesson equally
• is able to make the students one team
• cares about following the students' news and their situation, especially in relation to education
• is aware of their context and how the situation outside the school is hard
• is able to be there as a friend for students when they are having a bad time
• knows how to connect and communicate always with parents
• is allowed to explain their lesson [in a way] that they are good at
• is allowed to be funny and assertive at the same time
• believes in their abilities
• believes that they need to learn
• believes in their message

• believes they are able to create a good generation, and are ambitious for their students

• believes that education is developing and they are a part of it, and that they must keep in touch with the wider community of teachers to stay up-to-date

• supports the other teachers in the group as part of a team

To strengthen the sense of shared identity purpose among the group, we asked them to review the list, and consider whether the points could act as a kind of manifesto that they would try to support each other in working towards. They checked, made a few suggestions for small alterations, and agreed.

When we asked which of these "ideal" characteristics would be the biggest challenges, one teacher said that they would all be easy with experience, but others mentioned a range of challenges. These ranged from fundamental practical issues, such as a lack of stationery, to more complex social and systemic problems mentioned above, such as engaging parents, the role of NGOs, and the Lebanese school curriculum.

One talked about the wellbeing of the teachers themselves:

Sometimes the situation out of the school is affecting us as a teacher. No money, problems, the police is chasing the Syrians.

Two of the teachers, prioritised training in the inclusion of students with different needs and levels. Another explained how the war had made the students "more naughty" and that teachers had to adjust their expectations of both behaviour and learning.

Several returned to the issue of dealing with parents, and one teacher reiterated the challenge of sustainability, saying,

Sometimes projects last for six or seven months and then stop and the kids forget everything.

The teachers emphasised that they needed to be continually learning, but some felt they needed to get some experience to understand what they needed in terms of training, for the time being focusing instead on the need for them to "be one group and share and discuss" so that they could help each other with approaches to different students, and talking to parents.

However, another made the point that things didn't have to be perfect to be successful:

With some support, the schools will work. This has already happened with Mishwar's support. [The students] don't always need something professional to make them happy.

At the end of the day, there was a strong sense of positivity, optimism and unity among the group. One of the more experienced teachers, who is also a leader in her camp said:

We are going to solve something that society, the economic crisis, the war destroyed. […] We may not be able to create doctors or professionals, but at least we can teach children to participate in society.

Another replied:

Or that they love reading, or love studying or love school.
The first responded:
We have a purpose, and we will work to achieve it.

CHILDREN'S VIEWS

Grazia and Giovanna ran two workshops for children to learn about their views while engaging in games, drawing, art, and learning, as they would also be teaching some words in English in the process.

The planned structure of the first workshop was as follows:

1) **Introduce ourselves** (in a circle, the children say the name of the first person and repeat the names of everyone else in front of them, for example: The first person starts with her name, Grazia. The second child repeats Grazia and then adds their name. The third child repeats Grazia, the name of the second child, and also adds their name, etc.)

2) **Form a line without speaking**, only using gestures, in order from the youngest to the oldest child (the first option was to do this based on how long they had been in Lebanon, but we realised this would have been too complicated).

3) **Learn the names of school items** in English using flashcards (the facilitator shows some flashcards and the children have to say what the items are).

4) **Colour in and write the names of school items** on flashcards (with help and, for older children, in both Arabic and English)

5) **Draw a school in groups,** and add the things they would like to have in the school. While doing this, talk about what they would like to learn.

In the second workshop, we aimed to create a "zine" with the children, giving them the opportunity to explore the following topics: myself, what is important to me, what I would like to be when I grow up, what I need/want to learn in school.

WORKSHOP 1

The workshop took place in the space designated for one of the community schools, which was actually a garage with a toilet and a small window. There was a blackboard, some chalk, and a few pieces of foam for the children to sit on. The space was incredibly dusty and the concrete floor lumpy and uneven.

One of the people responsible for the camp, who had been with us during the previous days, had gathered 26 children from the camp and they were waiting for us. (We didn't actually figure out the exact number until afterwards, when we were able to count them in our photographs, because during the workshop we felt like there were at least 60 of them!) The children were all sitting with their backs against the walls of the room, silently staring at us as we walked through the door. The oldest was maybe 12, 13 years old, but there were also many young children who might have been 3 years old or even younger.

We began our activities as planned, knowing that we would have to play it by ear and adjust as the workshop progressed. After the first game, we decided to skip the second and move straight to the third, introducing the flashcards and school items. By now, most of the children were laughing and talking loudly to each other. The echo in the empty room made it difficult to hear them well. Only 3 of them seemed to know that they could raise their hands when they wanted to say something, the others just shouted. The youngest ones were happy enough to watch what was happening.

Figure 5: Workshop 1 with children

We soon gave up on the idea to get them to learn the names of the items on the cards and instead decided to distribute several copies of the black and white flashcards for them to colour. When we gave them markers and crayons, most of the children asked for more because they did not want to share them. We tried to explain, in our shaky Arabic, the need for sharing, but did not get very far as children argued loudly over the pens. Eventually, they sat quietly colouring for a few moments, and we noticed that many of them, and not just the youngest, had difficulty holding the pens or colouring within the lines. We managed to get the oldest children to write a few words. The noise quickly resumed as we were running out of flash cards for them to colour, and fights over colouring pens started again.

We decided to divide the group so we could work with the older children. Giovanna took the youngest ones outside to sing and play games while Grazia worked with the older children in while they drew their ideal school on large sheets of paper, and talked about what the school needs and what they want to learn:

Sho bidkum fihi bil-madrasa? [What would you like to have in your school?]

- Tawlat [Desks]
- Kalam [Pens]
- Wa daftar [And notebooks]
- Hony daftaryyn fihi [inaudible] [We have notebooks…]
Wa sho kaman? [And what else?]
- Kalam [Pens]
- Katab kutub [Books, books]

[All children shouting]

The findings from the poster activity are actually clear: the children think that a school needs desks, pencils, notebooks. Only one child, who was unable to read and write, mentioned books.

Figure 6: Workshop 1

Grazia: Sho bidkum at ata3llam bil-madrasa? [What would you like to learn at school?]
- ABC [pronounced in French]
- English
- Ana, ana [Me, me (raising her hand). Un, deux, trois [One, two, three]
Grazia: Un, deux, trois en Français? [One, two, three in French?]
- Bil-english kaman […] [In English too]
Grazia: Wa enti? [And you?]
- Ana inglisi wa un, deux, trois, [For me, English and one, two, three [in French]]
Grazia: Al-arqam? [Numbers?]
- Ah, al-ryadiyat [Yes, Maths)

Grazia: Wa ente? antum ta3allmtu innu aktab wa aqra bil-araby [And you? Have you learned to read and write?
- Na3am, wa hya la. [inaudible] [Yes, but she didn't]
[Children shouting throughout]

The other groups of children all agreed that they wanted to learn English, French, and Arabic. However, they did not mention numeracy.

By the time we finished these activities, we were completely exhausted. We reflected on the fact that most of the children had never attended school and that this was evident in the lack of routines such as raising hands to speak, waiting for one's turn, or limiting shouting, fights and physical violence. We made a note of the challenges many of the children had with holding pens, colouring within the lines and writing. The group of children who thought about their ideal school did engage for at little a while, but not long enough for us to get a real sense of their opinions (there were 20 of them divided into four groups). However, they all enthusiastically shared their ideas, and some asked if we would be their teachers and whether they would learn what they had told us they wanted to learn in their new school.

The first workshop left us with the feeling that we had not managed to engage with the children as much as we had hoped. We hadn't had the opportunity to understand the dreams and hopes which we believe also determine their educational priorities. The second workshop was conducted with a much smaller group of 11 children, between the ages of 10 and 16 years old, in a different camp.

Figure 7: Workshop 2

This second camp already has a school, which is a wooden structure with seats and desks for about 20 small people. The children sat at the desks quietly and were ready to participate in the activity. Most of them had attended the local community school until activities had to be suspended due to lack of funding. Some of the children also attend the Lebanese school and are accustomed to following routines and rules. However, some of the teenagers were not confident in writing because, as they told us, their time in school was very limited because they had to work to support their families.

We folded paper into "zines" (see Figure 8 below), and then asked the children to draw themselves on the cover page, followed by: what is important to them; what they want to be in the future; and what they think they need to learn to be who they want to be (see the pictures on the next page). As they drew each page of the zine, we went around the room to look at the children's drawings and to ask them to talk to us further about what they had drawn.

A few of them named their family and friends as the people most important to them, others listed their hobbies, and others their favourite food (pizza!). Poignantly, after the workshop, two little girls said that playing mattered the most to them. We also took part in the workshop, sometimes more, sometimes less comfortable in drawing our own thoughts on the zines, and we also shared our pictures in the conversations with the children.

Figure 8: Zines created by children about their lives and hopes.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the conversations we had with this group was when they told us what they wanted to be in the future: we had some proud French teachers, three doctors (one of whom drew a car accident and explained he wanted to be an emergency doctor), and two brothers who told us that they wanted to be, respectively, a farmer and a chef with the chef cooking what the farmer supplies.

Figure 8: Zines created by children about their lives and hopes

When the children told us what they still needed to learn, languages (English and French) are what they all had in common. The future doctors mentioned that they needed to learn about the body, while the future farmer told us he also needs to learn to drive a tractor.

As the activities were finishing, a teacher from the camp drew Damian aside, and pointed out a 15-year-old girl. She explained that the girl is an orphan, and that she was recently married to a man from the camp, who was now absent, working in Beirut. The teacher explained the need to keep the girl with the other children, "not with the women," so that she could both have a childhood and get some education.

PARENTS AND CARERS' VIEWS

In the second camp, we also conducted a focus group with some parents and carers whose children had attended the community school. There was only one father, who left the focus group early to attend to a child's needs, and 7 women. Some children were walking in and out of the room during our conversation, as were other women.

We started by discussing some of the challenges that hindered the children's education. Until five or six years ago, they told us, the situation was easier than today. The children were going to school, some of them going to Lebanese schools during the afternoon shifts that are offered to refugee children, but then their learning was interrupted because the schools were closed due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

This had happened in conjunction with cuts from UNHCR and changes in the way the funding to support children from the camps was allocated and, as a consequence, getting the children to school had become difficult if not impossible. The local schools are often far from the camps and children need transport to get to school.

Before the pandemic, the parents told us, UNHCR paid drivers directly to take the children to school, but this money was supposed to be shared with the families and used also for other needs. As drivers often kept all the money for themselves, UNHCR changed the system and started paying the families directly. Due to the financial crisis in Lebanon, which has severely impacted everyone and – of course – the poorest the most, many families used the transportation money to meet the basic needs of the family. This had an impact on the children's education, and many of them dropped out of school.

We then asked the parents what they thought the priorities were in education:

Ta3allamu!
[To learn!]

A mother told us that her son is 15 and still he cannot read:

If you know how to read... education is very important for the future. For example, if the mum cannot read, then the kids should be able to.

Another stressed the importance of girls' education:

The most important is education for girls, they will be mums and will need to raise their children. I couldn't learn at school and I want my kids to learn so they can have a good future, maybe find a job even if it is difficult.

An interesting conversation emerged around what children should learn at school:

- Arabic is the most important. And French. Children like Arabic but in the Lebanese school the curriculum is in French so the kids prefer to be taught in Arabic.
- But French is important too
- And English
- Yes, languages.
Grazia: *What else?*
- English is important to travel, in the future they will leave the camp inshallah.
- English is important also to read, for example all medicines are written in English.
Giovanna: *Anything else?*
- Maths as well.

As was the case with the children and teachers, languages were mentioned by the parents as the key to children's education and a door-opener to a better future. Surprisingly, Maths only came up when we repeated the question, and again, was not often mentioned by either the children or the teachers.

Another interesting conversation worth mentioning is that, while the children could well imagine their future and dreamed of becoming doctors, teachers, cooks or farmers (see section above), the parents had quite different ideas about the future. Someone told us:

We dream that our kids can learn, to not be as depressed as their families are now. We are completely destroyed

Another added:

First with Syria, and now here […]. Security and safety are our dreams too.

They then discussed the raids that were taking place in refugee settlements in Lebanon during the time we were there (which had started a few months earlier) especially at night, as the Lebanese Armed Forces were checking people's residence permits and, if they were missing, taking people back to the border, to be handed over to the Syrian army. While some people escape or pay bribes to return (often having to ask family and friends for the bribery money), many others are detained, and not much is known about them after this:

We have to forget about this situation in front of our kids, because this has an impact on them. […] It is difficult but we need to do this for the kids.

After a discussion about what makes for a good teacher, whose qualities were described by the parents as being kind to the children and gentle and care about them an interesting discussion developed about the importance of games and sports and whether this should be part of education or considered an extracurricular activity. Everyone agreed that these activities are very important for children, and it was also agreed that they can take place in the afternoon, or after school. This confirmed the priorities mentioned earlier regarding Arabic literacy and languages.

Finally, we asked them about their own learning needs:
'If the children learn, we are happy,' they agreed. They then commented that they would like to learn too, if that were possible, languages mainly, but someone also mentioned sewing. They also told us that sometimes they meet up in the morning even if only to drink coffees and chat together. They also went away on Mothers' Day to a café outside the camp, and without children, and they are looking forward to the next one. These 'activities', they commented, are important to build community and for them to have a space to get together, although none of them explicitly mentioned wellbeing apart from the leader of the camp.

CONCLUSIONS

We hope and believe that the findings above largely speak for themselves. During the workshops, the teachers developed and articulated a clear, shared vision of how they see their work.

Their description of the ideal teacher shows how their values and conceptions of a teacher are rooted in their understanding of the community and its needs, largely based on their own experience in the camps and their familiarity with the hopes, needs and challenges within the community. This is evident in their emphasis on the school as a safe environment, which nurtures character-building and responsibility, and the way that they see advocacy and activism, in particular in terms of promoting the value of education, promoting and protecting children's right to a safe, inclusive education, and supporting children's rights to choose their future paths, as part of their job. In this last point, we can see an aspirational aspect to their work, but this is complemented by a more immediate, practical understanding of the need to compensate for the lack of basic education available to children in their context. It was interesting to see that when it came down to discussion and planning of an initial syllabus, the teachers own interests and some of their initial ideas faded in favour of a consensus around a strong focus on foundational skills, underpinned by the ongoing need to help children develop holistically in safety.

In the weeks following our visit, classes have started in four camps, with a total of about 250 children enrolled. At the time of writing, beginning of June 2023, three schools are still in the process of being renovated, for instance, in one of them there are still no desks and chairs, which one of the camp residents is now making.

One of the schools had previously been prevented from starting by the owner of the land, but this has now been resolved through a small monthly payment. The teachers have been sharing pictures and videos, and reporting back on generally happy, engaged students although one teacher did say, "Teaching them is tiring, but if the tiredness pays off, that's okay."

Teaching itself offers paid employment, but also the opportunity for members of the community to have some control and agency in a context where, in other areas, there is little. The establishment of the schools is already an extraordinary demonstration of agency and resistance, enabled largely by the teachers' strength of purpose, courage and determination to support the communities' resistance in the face of daily threats and violence, extreme poverty, and minimal or non-existent support from the government and international organisations. The teachers are working without the support structure available in formal education settings, and without the related systems to fall back on if something goes wrong, including for child protection or specialist psycho-social support. However, as long as they continue, children who might otherwise have no education at all, will develop their literacy and numeracy, as well as learning about their rights, in a relatively safe space, offering protection and opportunities in both the short and long-term. We reiterate here the words of one of the participants:

We are going to solve something that society, the economic crisis, the war destroyed. […] We may not be able to create doctors or professionals, but at least we can teach children to participate in society.

Finally, we have summarised below what we have understood as the needs of the schools and teachers as the programme develops and to support sustainability. At this point, we should reiterate the role of the LINEs project. We were principally there to help the teachers articulate their shared vision for education in the camps and to report on this. We have also been able to provide financial support, and some advice to teachers based on our experience in other contexts to help the teachers realise this vision, but we are not expert practitioners in Arabic literacy, nor, more importantly, do we hold the expert understanding of the context which gives the teachers the basis for making decisions. The education provided in the camps is led by the community, with support from Mishwar, and this list of priorities to support the strengthening of their identity and agency is based on what they told us:

• **The learning environment:** including developing the classrooms and providing stationery and other classroom equipment. The schools are in varying states, but need ongoing work to be comfortable and safe for classes, and to represent as much as possible the idea of a "school" to the community.

• **Teacher development and learning resources:** child protection and psycho-social support, and integrating this into the curriculum; planning and teaching literacy and identifying and developing related learning materials; creating inclusive classrooms with minimal resources and mixed abilities.

• **Good relationships with parents and other community members:** including being explicit about how the schools are meeting the community's needs. This is seen by the teachers as vital to achieving their vision for the schools. The challenges faced by teachers who are from the camps themselves and those from the outside will be different, and it will be important for these teachers to support each other, but if possible, additional support in advocating for and explaining approaches to education would reduce the burden on teachers. This might be through a committee of community members or external support.

• **A strong community of teachers:** this needs to be continually maintained and strengthened. Mishwar has committed to paying the existing teachers for a year, which is a hugely significant step, but it is still in the process of securing funding through crowdfunding and donations. In addition, the teachers have worked together with the LINEs project to establish their shared vision, and are already meeting regularly to share skills and materials and address issues that arise. The teachers will often be working in an extremely stressful environment, and some might be suffering from both their own historical trauma and vicarious trauma through their students. There will be times when teachers are unavailable or leave the area permanently and the group will need continual support from each other, but also externally. We believe that the opportunity to share experiences and learning with international colleagues and friends is a small but effective way of reducing a sense of isolation, and providing recognition for the vital work they do. We also believe that developing and maintaining the relationships developed during a project like this is a core benefit to everyone involved, and though difficult to measure quantitively, should be recognised as such explicitly.

First day at our school   08:48

Figure 9: A Whatsapp message from one of the teachers on the first day of school

LINES IN JORDAN

CONTEXT

Our work in Jordan was with English teachers who work mainly with Sudanese, Somali and Yemeni refugee communities. Although, like Lebanon and many other countries in the region, Jordan is not a signatory to the UN Refugee Convention, it hosts the second highest number of refugees per capita in the world. This includes two million Palestinians registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), and nearly 760,000 other refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR, of which 88.5% are Syrians, 8.8% Iraqis, 1.7% Yemeni, and almost 1% from Somalia and Sudan (reliefweb, 2023) However, including those not registered, the total is much higher, with Syrians alone estimated to number 1.3m (acaps, 2022). Most non-Syrian asylum seekers enter Jordan on visas for medical treatment, tourism, study or work, but in January 2019, the government stopped UNHCR registering anyone who entered on these visas as refugees, increasing isolation and vulnerability for many who are now essentially in Jordan illegally once their visa has expired (ACHRS, 2022).

UNHCR reports that because non-Syrian refugees live in small communities alongside Jordanians, and they are less visible than the much higher number of Syrian refugees, isolation is increased and donor support is limited (UNHCR, 2021). The Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) (Hall, 2022) is a key tool used by the humanitarian sector in Jordan for analysis of the refugee population. It included non-Syrian refugees for the first time in 2022, and was the most recent UN report we found to do so. However, it is limited for this population as it only includes those with up-to-date status as registered refugees with UNHCR, and as it points out, "While national coordination mechanisms, platforms, and advocacy frameworks relevant for Syrian refugees have been plentiful, these are not inclusive of non-Syrian refugees, whose situation receives less attention."

The VAF finds that children from these communities face additional barriers in attending school, as they are required to pay fees (in some cases these are covered by UNHCR), and may be particularly affected by factors such as distance to school, availability of places in a school, financial and economic barriers for buying books etc, and gaps in prior learning, and that 40-50% of registered refugee children are highly vulnerable in relation to education. A 2019 report in partnership commissioned by the Norwegian Refugee Council found that although some schools are using their discretion to register non-Syrian asylum seekers, the registration process is generally a major barrier. They also reported significant levels of racism, bullying and violence for children from this population.

SAWIYAN

Sawiyan, the organisation we worked with in Jordan, was introduced to us as potentially sharing our interests and values by the British Council, who have been providing training for their teachers. Sawiyan is a grassroots non-profit organisation who provide support to vulnerable communities in Jordan, including Jordanians as well as refugee communities, and particularly those that may be overlooked by larger organisations. Their areas of work include advocacy, community development, inclusion and anti-discrimination, training and educational programmes, and emergency assistance.

Their website describes educational programmes which include "English courses for men, women, and youth as well as courses on parenting skills, mental health coping strategies, legal rights of refugees, and the resettlement process, and professional skills development." They emphasise empowerment through community-led, participatory approaches. These approaches are elaborated on in an interview with one of their organisers in the findings below.

METHODOLOGY

As described in the introduction, in LINEs in Jordan, as in Lebanon, an important aspect was adopting a participatory approach, this time with the aim of strengthening teacher identity and agency among English teachers. Despite English being an international language used by diverse communities worldwide, and efforts at decentring, the ELT (English Language Teaching) sector continues to be dominated by anglophone countries (Imperiale et al, 2021).

Our data collection in Amman involved an in-depth interview with one of Sawiyan's organisers, Mobarak, who goes by Ricky, and a workshop with 11 volunteer English teachers, using the Tree of Life approach. The interview with Ricky provided insights into the potential benefits of incorporating the Tree of Life approach, as Ricky thought that this tool could be a valuable opportunity for the volunteer teachers to engage, reflect, and share their stories, strengths, and aspirations. The Tree of Life method was seen as a means to strengthen the personal and professional development of the teachers, as well as foster a sense of community and shared identity among them.

THE TREE OF LIFE APPROACH

The Tree of Life method is a strength-based approach developed by Zimbabwean psychologist Ncazelo Ncube (2006, 2007) with the support of the Dulwich Centre in Australia. Originally designed as a narrative therapy technique for children who had experienced loss and trauma, its primary goal is to promote individual well-being. The approach provides a safe space for individuals to share their traumatic stories while also highlighting their strengths and encouraging them to envision a positive future

The Tree of Life method has not only been utilized within the therapy domain but has also been employed as a decolonizing research methodology (White, 2007). Its positive impact on individuals led to its application outside of therapy, particularly in research settings aiming to challenge and transcend traditional power dynamics. Although the method was initially designed for "vulnerable" individuals, it can be beneficial in any research project. Denborough (2008) presented examples of the Tree of Life method applied in various contexts as a hopeful methodology for individuals and communities facing challenges and adversity. By unpacking individuals' stories, strengths, dreams, and hopes, this approach helps to foster a sense of empowerment.

The Tree of Life method has not only been utilized within the therapy domain but has also been employed as a decolonizing research methodology (White, 2007). Its positive impact on individuals led to its application outside of therapy, particularly in research settings aiming to challenge and transcend traditional power dynamics. Although the method was initially designed for "vulnerable" individuals, it can be beneficial in any research project. Denborough (2008) presented examples of the Tree of Life method applied in various contexts as a hopeful methodology for individuals and communities facing challenges and adversity. By unpacking individuals' stories, strengths, dreams, and hopes, this approach helps to foster a sense of empowerment.

The Tree of Life method utilizes a metaphorical representation of a tree to guide participants through a series of workshops. During these workshops, participants engage in discussions about their past experiences (represented by the roots of the tree), explore their strengths and abilities (represented by the trunk), and envision their aspirations and hopes for the future (represented by the leaves and blossoms). In narrative practice, participants typically create their individual trees, reflecting their personal journeys.

The approach has been used before for work on teacher identity and agency, on a project on which Grazia and Damian worked on (Imperiale et al, 2021). The project, funded by the British Council, was conducted with a group of ten early career English teachers from Armenia, Brazil, Morocco, Nigeria, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The aims of the project were to:

1) **Strengthen teacher development**, by providing a platform for early career teachers to come together and share their knowledge and experiences with colleagues from diverse backgrounds.

2) **Explore teacher identity and agency**: the project sought to understand the perspectives of early career teachers regarding their identities as educators and their sense of agency.

3) **Inform new ways of working at the British Council,** fostering a more inclusive and effective approach to teacher development and intercultural exchange.

We adapted the tree of life approach slightly during that project, as, instead of growing separate trees, all participants' stories were integrated into one "collective tree." This adaptation aligned with the project's objectives of fostering community and shared identity, emphasizing the interconnectedness of the participants and the strength that comes from the collective (Imperiale et al 2021). With the teachers at Sawiyan, time was limited to one three hour workshop, so discussions and findings were necessarily condensed, but provided a good platform for future work.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants in the workshop were a diverse group of 11 volunteer English teachers at Sawiyan, consisting of 5 women and 6 men. Some of them had been collaborating with Sawiyan for a considerable period, starting as students and later becoming teachers within the organization. The majority of the participants were refugees from Sudan (5), Somalia (1), Yemen (1), Ghana (1), and Palestine (1, born in Jordan). There was also a woman from the US. who was both starting to volunteer at Sawiyan and conducting data collection for her Ph.D. In addition, Ricky, who is also a teacher, participated in the workshop, providing another perspective as one of the leaders of Sawiyan.
It is worth noting that some of the participants held a master's degree, and others were working towards one. The diverse varied backgrounds, experiences, and educational qualifications contributed to a rich and dynamic workshop environment.

SAWIYAN: INTERVIEW WITH ONE OF THE COMMUNITY ORGANISERS

The first step of our data collection was an in-depth interview with Ricky. This conversation gave us a chance to learn about the organisation mission, its values, and the impact they would like to create.

Ricky shared the story behind Sawiyan's founding and the vision that drives the organization. Sawiyan does a lot of work supporting refugees other than Syrians, with its mission to challenge the traditional narrative of refugees and immigrants as receivers, and instead empower them to be givers within and beyond their communities.

Ricky discussed the importance of community engagement and how Sawiyan actively involves the refugee community through grassroots activities, which include English language teaching and learning, discussions on activism and cultural activities. These programmes aim to promote interaction, understanding, and anti-racism. He pointed out that people of colour are still the targets of racist attacks, and having a clear aim to tackle this is important to refugees and to the host community too. By empowering teachers within their community, Sawiyan hopes to foster a sense of agency and allow them to give back and make a positive impact:

At Sawiyan we are family [...] all teachers are also activists. You know refugee communities and how the refugees and immigrants are always receivers and can't be givers, so this allow us, like in this community they can be givers, so through our curriculum here we reinforce that. We have teachers teaching the host community and other refugee communities [..] so this is like we create the other story.

Teachers and volunteers have been reading and discussing critical pedagogy and especially the work of Paulo Freire. This was suggested to them by a co-director, as a way to further unpack and clarify the aims and ethos of the organisation.

A Freirean approach is starting to be applied to the curriculum and the teaching approach. Sawiyan are developing their own teaching materials, and when asked how critical pedagogy is being applied, Ricky explained that first, it is found in responding to students' needs and students are active members of the community who co-create the curriculum with their teachers. Second, they run workshops during which they read together and discuss the work of critical pedagogues, this providing teachers with further knowledge and opportunities for reflection. Through the curriculum and those moments for reflections, they hope to reinforce the idea that refugees have valuable knowledge, skills, and experiences to offer, that '[they] can be givers'.

By having teachers from the community teach not only within the refugee community but also to the host community and other refugee communities, they are creating opportunities for mutual learning, understanding, and connection. This work also challenges stereotypes and promotes a more inclusive and diverse perspective. By creating "the other story," Sawian's teachers contribute to fostering refugee communities' sense of pride and empowerment among teachers and students alike. These initiatives speak to the work of Freire as they ultimately have the potential to create positive social change and are the testimony to the transformative power of education and the impact that teachers can have as 'agents' (see Imperiale, 2022).

Finally, when finding strong commonalities between ours and Sawiyan's ethos, we showed him an animation from a previous project conducted by Grazia and Damian (see Imperiale et al, 2021), in which we discussed teacher identity and agency using he Tree of Life approach. It was then that Ricky expressed his interest in providing a similar workshop to Sawiyan's volunteer English teachers, and so that's what we did the following day.

FINDINGS

The workshop took place in Sawiyan's premises, a bright, modern set of offices shared with a media company. After introductions, we divided the participants into two groups of five and six participants, each facilitated by one of the research team and in a different room. Each group created an outline of a tree, added their thoughts individually on post-it notes, and then discussed them. We gave them the following prompts:
• **Roots:** (no prompt given)
• **The trunk:** your strengths and capabilities
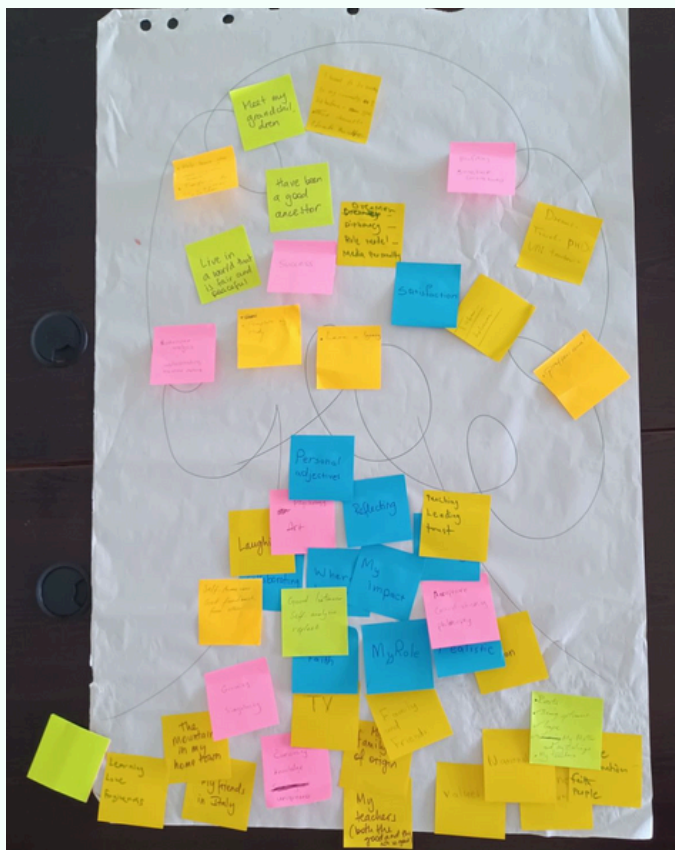• **The leaves and blossoms:** your aspirations and hopes

Figure 10: The "Tree of Life" by one of the groups in Jordan.

THE ROOTS

When asked to make notes about their roots, the first thing many of the teachers thought of was the idea of "home", and often its connection with family. For example, one wrote "Sudan, Africa, HOME," and commented as follows.

When I was thinking about my roots.. I was thinking ya'ani, I was thinking of my home. That's the place where I connected like so much with that place, my life was there so the place is like my... identity, where I feel safe […] all my identity and father and mother are from there and as Sudanese community we are very much connected and we have that connection and I feel comfortable, I feel safe, talking about root so all my grand- grand- grandfathers come from this home, if you ask I know all my oldest relatives and they told us these are your roots, and they used to draw us like the … family.. yes the family tree […] and it is a big family tree.. they used to taught me that so I know all of them.

Some talked about the formative influence of family members, for example:

My father died when I was too young, and I come from Somalia and there is civil war happening, and my father was someone who graduated from a [unclear] university. He [unclear] who believed that he can change. He started like there is warlords that, a young man like him, he was being [unclear] they didn't like that. He was really fighting for, so… he get killed. So my mother was really my everything, she was a single mum and she [unclear] offered everything she can, really give me… who I am today it's because of her.

They also reflected on the idea of home and safety, and how they feel in their current circumstances:

Grazia: can I ask you a question, is Jordan home now?
- Ehm.. you know.. Home for me is important, it is like I connect with you, I feel safe with you so this can be home.

However, another commented:

My root is where I come from, where I belong – we are live here right in Jordan, it is not a house, you can buy a house everywhere but how do you feel you belong somewhere like you feel yourself – here, right now I don't feel like me as N [her own name], like the one I know, I am not myself, so my home is my root.. my community also, my friends my family, everything that belongs to me there […]

For some, family did not have a central role, and one of the teachers was keen to stress how much they differ from their family members, and how they find this difference to be central to who they are. Another pointed out how people outside the family (e.g., teachers, friends, colleagues) had the most impact on them growing up, as they do not get this support from their family. In addition, for two of the teachers, others' perspectives came via the TV, internet and cinema:

I wrote TV because it has a great role in shaping my personality because… I grew up as an introverted kid, so I did not have much friends so I spent much of my time watching TV and in TV I actually found how do I look at people and how do I look at myself.

Although many of the examples alluded to learning from others, only one specifically mentioned education. He cited an interesting example where, at only 10 years of age, he had been called to teach older children, using a traditional Islamic teaching practice called 'circle education':

When you teach teenage boys and you're a 10-year-old, it was quite a challenge. But it really helped me too. I really [unclear] what they call circle education, the way that Islamic scholars used to teach, and it was fascinating. They have traditional classic way to teach.

THE TRUNK

Discussions on the 'trunk' of the tree involved both thinking about what strengths participants have as teachers, and what they think they like about themselves. Qualities as a teacher were often reflective of more general points about character and personality. For example, one referenced the importance of listening and learning from students:

So I'm a teacher, I really try to listen to my students. What is on their mind, what they like, what they don't like, what motivates them, and I try sometimes to get feedback from them, [unclear] try to self-analyse, so I can grow to be a better teacher, to be a mentor for them.

Another highlighted the importance of their ability to establish trust:

So there is some… even when we were students or teenagers, there is some professors, or a teacher, immediately when you see the person, your mind will tell you to, like, believe and trust and share everything with that person. I think I have that kind of personality, so when I am in front of my students, like they feel like to come around to talk about everything, […] to just reaching out.

While others referred again to their family, friends and communities. One said:

First of all, my strength is my mum. She is my power.

And another talked about how the love they had received in the past constitutes one of their main strengths now:

So, love… so I received so much love from my family, as I am receiving the love from all the relationships I have […] ehm I thought like to give, to share this love with others. Like my mum is a very sharing person with the family, the community, with others.. and I took this one for me too like this keeps me going.

Many of them said that they are self-confident, and that they do not easily give up, when they want to achieve something, and in one of the groups there was also a discussion of dealing with mental health, with two teachers feeling that it is better to keep one's problems in:

I think I can't share everything I feel, especially [unclear] pain. Because, first of all I think people wouldn't understand, they wouldn't see it as it is. Inside it's really big, but when I talk about it, it makes it small and seems simple. So, if I deal with it on my own, that makes me stronger.

Keeping things in was thought to help to build strength and resilience. However, when asked whether, as teachers, they would advise their pupils to keep their problems to themselves, they all agreed on the importance of creating safe spaces for their students, and of ensuring that they always remain alert to young people's difficulties.Finally, one teacher talked about being hopeful and having hope as being their most important strength:

You know I achieve what I want, I don't give up because I have a hope, like that's my strength – a hope.

LEAVES AND BLOSSOMS

Hopes and aspirations ranged from very broad hopes for peace in their countries, to individual and personal aspirations. One teacher covered the whole range in a single response:

First thing I want my country to be safe, to have peace, I want to be with my family with my brothers not only the small family I have over here. I want to improve health and education in my country. I want to give help […] and also.. [giggle] in the past my like wish, what I wanted, I want to be a doctor […], as I said the health condition in Sudan is really very bad so I thought we have doctors but it still is very bad [..] we need a hospital, we need equipment so.. I want to build a hospital. [giggle] And treat people for people for free. And also, I want to study, this is a selfish one, so I want to study, I want to keep studying learning, like forever. And also I love coffee, so [giggling] I want to have a small café with.. ehm another selfish one!

Giovanna found that the group she was working with initially focused a lot more here on being a teacher and on professional roles than the previous two parts, in particular with aspirations related to giving back and making a difference, the importance of professionalism and working to the best of one's abilities in any chosen job, including teaching. However, the conversation took an interesting turn when one of the teachers noticed one of Giovanna's own post-it notes, which read, "Live in a world that is fair and peaceful":

- Sorry, but where are you from?
***Giovanna**: Italy*
- Italy?
***Giovanna**: Yeah*
- And you're talking about peace?
[everyone laughs]

The exchange was indicative of the openness of exchanges in the group, and while it caused some minor discomfort for Giovanna, who felt that as a privileged outsider, her credibility was possibly being challenged, it also led to serious discussion of war, conflict and the potential for (and even desirability of) of peace. One teacher said:

I believe there is a balance between good and bad. Wherever there's good there will be bad. The world [unclear] is not perfect. It's not a world, actually, we're not living if we are not facing challenges, you have to face challenges. Even as an individual or as a community, in order to grow.

Another added:

To me, I see we are here in a land for a reason, ok? So, there's nothing called like [unclear] peace or war, ok? Challenge in life it adds something, you know? Without challenges a life would mean nothing, actually. If you would be living in peace, it would be boring. You would need something to broke it.

This was followed by a deep exchange on the inevitability of human greed and the role of conflict in growth. There was no consensus, but three out of five participants could not envision a future in which justice and peace would be possible.
This was in contrast to the other group, where peace was often seen as intrinsic to hopes and dreams for the future:

I hope that people believe in peace, because … through my journey experience I saw how the war and conflict is affecting the life of people especially kids… who can't grow up like other kids and there lots of things they have to do when they are kids […] they don't have that feeling. Nowadays I am sharing the news a lot because now of what is happening in Sudan […] and this war will give a new generation that will not be able to go home.

TEACHERS' NEEDS

After the teachers presented and discussed their trees, the group divided again to discuss their needs. We have presented the findings, which were similar in each group, under three themes: financial support and resources; motivation and professional development; mental wellbeing.
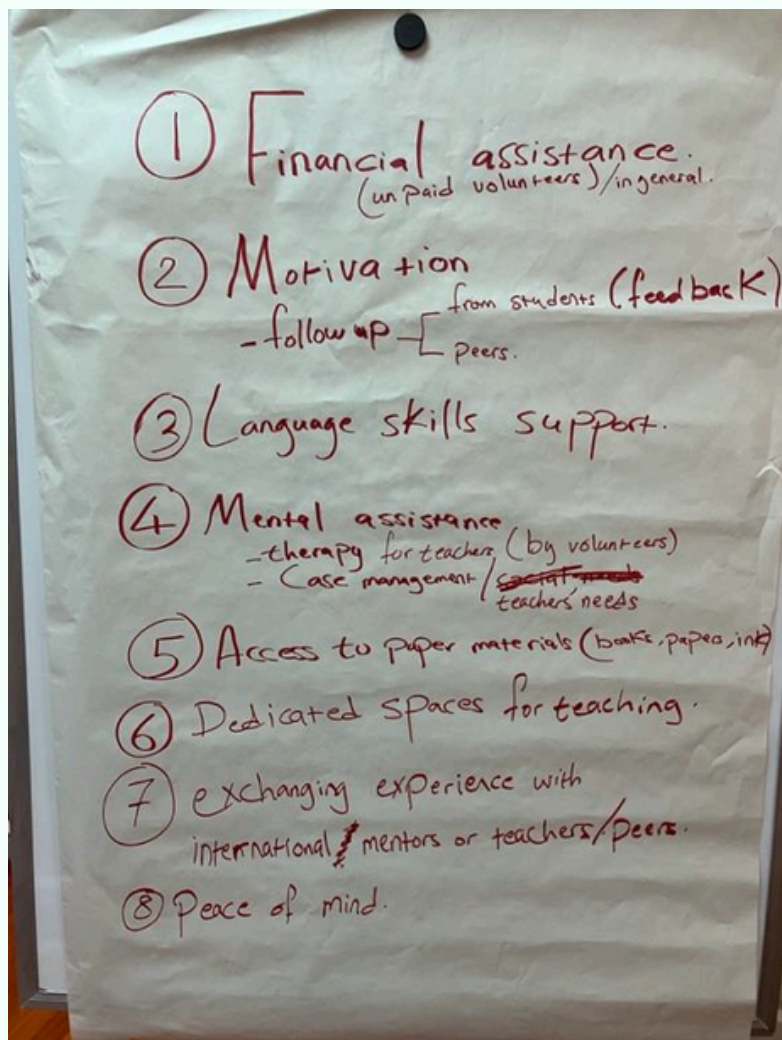

Figure 11: Poster of Sawiyan teachers' needs

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Both groups recognized the importance of financial support, especially as participants are all volunteer teachers, who often face financial constraints. They discussed the need for adequate salaries and for covering their living expenses. Although they emphasised and demonstrated that they are highly committed and recognise the importance of voluntarism as a way of giving back to the community, having salaries would mean they have more financial stability and it may have an impact on motivation and job satisfaction.

Both groups also emphasized the significance of providing teachers with access to resources, including teaching tools, technology, textbooks, and educational materials. Adequate funding and support from educational institutions or governments can help ensure teachers have the necessary tools for effective instruction. However, during this discussion, Ricky also pointed out the importance of donors to respect the 'culture' of the organisation. He talked about a project Sawiyan was involved in when, after a while, the team felt that donors were not 'respectful of our culture… I mean not culture like culture… but the culture of Sawiyan', and in that case, they decided to withdraw from the project.

Participants also emphasised the importance of working within adequate spaces. Providing teachers with well-equipped classrooms, libraries, for and other dedicated spaces can enhance their ability to deliver quality education.

MOTIVATION AND CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Participants in both groups mentioned 'motivation' and 'inspiration' as key to their work, and the importance of 'maintaining these alive' in order to stay engaged and enthusiastic in their profession.

Some teachers would like to keep improving their language skills through attending advanced courses. Sawiyan provides now beginner and intermediate classes, but teachers identified their willingness to continue their own learning. This relates not only to English but also to other foreign languages, as the extract below shows:

N: We never thought about teaching at all... we ... we started to understand the value of being a teacher for, for giving something to your community because we saw Ricky […] and then moved by that, I started to learn Spanish too […]

S: I will try to learn a new language

Grazia: What language would you like to learn?

S: French

Grazia: Ah, why French?

S: Because I... would like to... it is impossible to learn, it is very difficult, so I challenge myself like... I can do it. […]

N: And we are refugees, we have to learn a lot of languages because we don't know where we will be tomorrow [giggle]

S: Yes, that's why we have to learn.

N: Yes, we never thought we are going to be outside of our country, like being in Jordan. So we don't know where tomorrow we are going to be. And anywhere we go we need to communicate, so…

S: Also, it can change a lot what I want to be in the future, also studying or working, everything.

N: So true! It just changes everything […]

N: Also, in other countries they... they say, you can't do this if you don't know the language so maybe if we learn this before and we can go to another place it will be easier for you to do … everything.

Participants also highlighted the need for knowledge exchange, including meeting international 'mentors' and exchanging experiences with other teachers in similar contexts. This would contribute to their own professional development and to keeping them 'inspired' and 'motivated'. As part of their own professional learning, they did not mention teaching skills only, but they pointed out that learning the 21st century skills would be meaningful to them. Some of them, for example, shared as an example, their minimal knowledge of IT and technology, they explained that it often happened that they needed the help of Ricky when something was not working, if they were to become more independent this would be beneficial for the organisation as they could help the co-directors further, or at least they would not need their assistance with, as they said, 'these silly things'.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Finally, both groups mentioned that teachers themselves need support in terms of their own mental health. They mentioned that having access to some forms of counselling would be beneficial. They stated that when they are in the classroom they need to 'leave their problems outside' in order to build a 'classroom of hope'. Most of the students they interact with have been having challenging life trajectories, and the majority of teachers also need to deal with difficult problems on an every-day basis, and this has an impact on their own mental health. Some of the teachers mentioned also during the Tree of Life workshop that they are hoping to get 'peace within themselves', or 'peace of mind', and some professional support for their mental health could be beneficial to all.

In Jordan, the primary objective of the project was to forge new partnerships, followed by gaining an understanding of the situation faced by refugee English teachers. A new partnership was established with Sawiyan, facilitated by the British Council. Through this collaboration, we had the opportunity to get to know one of Sawiyan's organisers and we realised that their vision aligned well with our own ideas. We then engaged with volunteer English teachers to explore teacher identity and agency through the Tree of Life approach: we delved into their roots, strengths, and aspirations. We also discussed the type of support they think they need.

What emerged from our work in Jordan is that first, the teachers are also activists. They view themselves as agents of social change, who can promote social justice, challenge stereotypes, and language learning becomes a tool through which they are empowered and can advocate for refugee rights. Language education is also meaningful to them as they are people on the move, who, as they said, 'don't know where we will be tomorrow'. They want to change the narrative that refugees are only receivers, they want to show that they have contributions to make to their own communities. By focusing on their strengths and hopes, we also aimed to amplify their agency and to reflect on their role as active contributors.

Second, having a community plays a crucial role in supporting refugee English teachers. Their community, both their past community in the home country, their present community found in Sawiyan, and the hope to build peace and to make people believe in peace emerged throughout the conversations we had. By cultivating a community, they foster a sense of belonging and collaboration, they build a new home. A community is also found in the classroom – where the classroom itself can become a source of hope:

As teachers we make the classroom a source of hope, where they can feel saf…ehm safety because no matter what is going outside the classroom, but like when they come to the classroom, we create what we call... community. You know. The class is a source of hope.

We did not have time for a deep discussion of the challenges teachers faced, perhaps these kinds of conversations require a level of trust that we could not achieve in our three hours with them. We were able to gather their needs, as presented above, and we hope to develop this side of the conversation. We would also like to explore in more detail the way that Sawiyan's emphasis on critical pedagogy is applied in the classroom, and if the teachers are interested, work together to understand and develop this area.

Figure 12: Workshop at Sawiyan.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

The LINEs project aimed to investigate the role of educators working in refugee settings in Lebanon and Jordan, and pilot ways of strengthening teacher identity as a core aspect of professional development with the educators themselves, nurturing agency. We supported teachers in these two contexts in examining and articulating their vision for refugee education, and established relationships between the teachers and the research team. We also strengthened our partnership with Mishwar and initiated a new relationship with Sawiyan, in both cases identifying potential areas for future work.

Perhaps the most striking findings are related to the personal and political dimensions which the teachers bring explicitly to their work. Mockler (2011) sees teacher identity as the interaction between the spheres of personal experience, professional context, and the external political environment. In reflecting on our findings, it is noticeable for many of the teachers we worked with on this project how present and inseparable these three areas are in their discourse about being a teacher, meaning that being a teacher itself is a form of activism and resistance, built on a deep understanding through lived experience of the needs and hopes of the communities where they work.

As a result, the teachers do not aim to simply recreate or substitute the formal schooling which may be unavailable to their students, they take an active leadership role in community development. In Lebanon, the teachers prioritise the happiness, safety and character development of their students, while at the same time recognising and addressing the gaps in children's education in relation to engagement with formal education as well as their wider needs.

They also emphasise their role in promoting education more widely within the community. In Jordan, the teachers are providing English classes which meet the community's direct needs as people in transit, but aim to underpin this with principles and approaches that empower the communities in which they work.

So, the closeness and moral responsibility the teachers express in relation to their communities appears to be a key enabling factor in strengthening both their identity and their agency, helping the teachers to tailor their directly in response to the needs of their students. However, in both contexts, we had the impression that this was also nurtured by the charisma and drive of key leadership figures. In Lebanon, the first school was established in its current form through the vision of the camp shaweesh (leader), who is also one of the teachers. Her calm but authoritative presence was evident throughout the workshops, and, while collegiate and open discussion was the norm, when decisions had to be made, she gave a clear direction. The approach of the Scottish founder of Mishwar, Tony, is also fundamental. He has established close relationships with the community, living adjacent to one of the camps for many years, and as well as working tirelessly to secure funding and resources including paying the teachers, ensured that the teachers and community feel the schools are theirs, and their responsibility, rather than the imposition of an outside NGO. This has included appointing a teacher from the community as project manager, who has already supported the group in getting lessons started in the four schools.

In Jordan, Ricky's consistent and clear articulation of the principles underpinning Sawiyan's work, as well as his obvious care for the teachers themselves, seemed to have created a particularly strong sense of shared purpose.

In the absence of the structures for teacher support and development which might exist within formal schooling, and in contexts where the teachers may or may not be there long-term, leadership figures like are vital for a strong community of teachers who support each other's wellbeing and development. If the community of teachers is strong, and the strength and clarity of purpose maintained, there is more hope for sustainability, including in the integration of new teachers into the programmes, from inside or outside the communities.

It is also in supporting the strengthening of these communities, and learning from this process, that we see the future of the LINEs project. In the limited time we spent in Lebanon in Jordan, we saw the value of giving teachers the opportunity to reflect on their identity and agency, with a view to integrating this into their teaching and professional development. As one teacher in Jordan put it:

We never stopped to think about this… Like our roots and strengths and hope it is like who we are. [...] I should do one tree at home [giggle] and I can go back to it when I feel… lost. [...] Yes, we can use it to guide us.

However, we did not have the opportunity to see how they put their principles into action, to find ways to provide support for developing their practice, or work together on related resources. We found that the teachers were motivated by and interested in developing new connections, and feel that bringing the teachers from the two different contexts together to discuss their approaches to community-based and critical pedagogy might be a useful next step.

We have found in previous work and from our personal experience, including on this project, that bringing teachers from different contexts together to build connections, and discuss both theory and practice, has practical benefits for their teaching, but also contributes to a sense of enjoying and belonging to the wider teaching profession, and even to new friendships.

We should also note that other priorities and time limitations meant we did not spend as much time considering the relationship between languages and teacher identity as we had originally intended. The topic of languages, was, however, ever present, and we hope to investigate this further, both alongside our partners in Lebanon and Jordan, but also with those working in other countries. The project has already opened conversations with other organisations who work with refugees in Turkey, Greece, Portugal and Italy, and we will be following these up to understand how a bigger project might facilitate international learning and collaboration, with a view to supporting better understanding of the education and language experiences of refugees and those working with refugees, especially teachers, in different contexts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

acaps. (2022, July 4). Jordan Overview. Retrieved from acaps: https://www.acaps.org/country/jordan/crisis/syrian-refugees

ACHRS. (2022, September 6). Jordan Is Excluding Non-Syrian Refugees from Protection. Retrieved from ACHRS: https://achrs.org/english/2022/09/06/jordan-is-excluding-non-syrian-refugees-from-protection/

Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity . Teaching and Teacher Education , 107–128.

Fassetta, G., & Imperiale, M. G. (2018). Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships, and Knowledge Mobilisation: Think Piece. UKRI.

Frimberger, K., White, R., & Ma, L. (2018). 'If I didnt know you, what would you want me to see?' Poetic mappings in neo-materialist with young asylum speakers and refugees. Applied Linguistics Review, 9(2-3), 391-419.

Hall, S. (2022). Vulnerability Assessment Framework 2023: Population Survey for Refugees in Host Communities. UNHCR Jordan.

Imperiale, M. G., Mander, S., & Ross, D. (2021). Early career English teacher identity project report: Exploring teacher identity and agency through the Tree of Life approach. London: British Council.

International Alert. (2015, November). Better Together: The impact of the schooling system of Lebanese and displaced Syrians on social stability . Retrieved from International Alert: https://www.international-alert.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Lebanon_LebaneseSyrianSchoolingSystem_EN_2015.pdf

Mockler, N. (2011). Beyond "what works": understanding teacher identity as a practical and political tool. Teachers and Teaching 17 (5), 517-528.

reliefweb. (2023, May 11). Joint Statement- Lebanon: Halt Summary Deportations of Syrian Refugees. Retrieved from reliefweb: https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/joint-statement-lebanon-halt-summary-deportations-syrian-refugees-enar

reliefweb. (2023, March 12). Refugees and migrant health country profile: Jordan. Retrieved from reliefweb: https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/refugees-and-migrant-health-country-profile-jordan

The Government of Lebanon and The United Nations. (2023). Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2023. United Nations.