

# Cross Cultures Project Association Lebanon



## Lessons Learned (2005-2012)

---

May 2012



# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

---

CCPA	Cross Cultures Project Association
CCPA LBN	Cross Cultures Project Association Lebanon
MFA DK	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOYS	Ministry of Youth and Sport
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOC	National Olympic Committee
OFFF	Open Fun Football Festival
OFFS	Open Fun Football School
PCA	Popular Club Association
PCF	Popular Club Federation

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
SECTION 1: GRASSROOTS STRATEGY.....	7
1.1 StreetSport (2006-2008).....	7
1.2 Establishment and Expansion of Popular Clubs (2008-2012).....	9
1.3 Promotion of Inter-Communal Interaction.....	14
1.4 Experience of the Daily Running of the Popular Club Network .....	19
1.5 Section Summary and Lessons Learned.....	22
SECTION 2: EDUCATIONAL, CAPACITY-BUILDING AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES.....	23
2.1 Education and Training: Establishment of Popular Clubs.....	23
2.2 Education and Training: Development of the Capacity of Popular Clubs.....	25
2.3 Section Summary and Lessons Learned.....	28
SECTION 3: POLICY-LEVEL AND ADVOCACY STRATEGY.....	29
3.1 Development of National Popular Club Federation.....	29
3.2 Development of Sport in the School Education System.....	33
3.3 Advocacy of Rights for Special Needs Children.....	35
3.4 Media Engagement.....	36
3.5 Section Summary and Lessons Learned.....	37
4. CONCLUSION.....	38
Annex 1: Mapping of CCPA Lebanon Popular Club Network	
Annex 2: Draft Statutes of the Association of CCPA Popular Clubs	
Annex 3: CCPA Lebanon Media Engagement	
Annex 4: Popular Clubs and their Federation	

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

Since 2005 the non-governmental organisation Cross Cultures Project Association Lebanon (CCPA LBN) has implemented a peacebuilding programme through the medium of children's grassroots football throughout Lebanon.

This 'lessons learned' report has been commissioned at an important juncture in the development of the programme: the programme's most recent project, the establishment of a network of 107 grassroots clubs (Popular Clubs), is approaching its conclusion. As the organisation and donor partners look to the future strategy of the programme, now is an opportune moment to assess the overall experience of the CCPA LBN intervention to date.

The report charts the evolution of CCPA LBN's programme in Lebanon, assesses achievements and identifies challenges encountered. The findings of the report are divided into three areas, corresponding to what can be considered three strategic areas of the programme: the development of a grassroots football sector; the implementation of CCPA LBN's educational/pedagogical values; and advocacy activities at the level of national government policy.

# INTRODUCTION

---

## *Objective of Report*

Cross Cultures Project Association Lebanon (CCPA LBN)\* is a non-governmental peacebuilding organisation which has operated in Lebanon since 2005. During this period the organisation has implemented a programme aimed at promoting reconciliation and positive coexistence throughout the country, through the medium of children's grassroots football.

Importantly, while evaluation of specific elements and targets of the programme have been on-going, this is the first study which evaluates and charts CCPA LBN's intervention in Lebanon as a whole. It is also relevant to note that CCPA's strategy in Lebanon has differed markedly from each of the other eleven post-conflict countries in which the organisation is engaged. While the Open Fun Football School (OFFS) product has been implemented by CCPA in a number of countries, Lebanon is the first context in which the respective StreetSport and Popular Club models have been developed and implemented. This report thus fulfils a documentation and analysis need in terms of both the Lebanon programme and CCPA as a whole.

Moreover, the programme's most recent project, the establishment of a network of 107 grassroots clubs (Popular Clubs), is approaching its conclusion. As the organisation and donor partners look to the future strategy of the programme, the intervention is at a critical juncture. As such, it is an opportune moment to assess the overall experience of the CCPA LBN intervention to date.

The report addresses the following questions:

1. How has the CCPA LBN intervention evolved between 2005 and 2012?
2. How successful have elements of the project contributed to the programme's overall goals?
3. What strategies and goals have been successfully implemented?
4. What have been the key challenges to the programme?
5. How successfully has CCPA LBN adapted the programme to manage these challenges?

\* In 2008 the Lebanese branch of the Danish-registered CCPA became a Lebanese-registered NGO in its own right, assuming the name CCPA Lebanon.

## *Structure and Methodology*

The findings of the report are divided into three areas, corresponding to what can be considered three strategic areas of the programme. These are: the development of a grassroots football sector; the implementation of CCPA LBN's educational/pedagogical values; and advocacy activities at the level of national government policy.

The methodology of the report has been a combination of a desk study (in particular drawing upon CCPA LBN documentation) and field research. Qualitative interviews were undertaken with stakeholders (coordinators, coaches, parents and municipality representatives) in Lebanon during April and May 2012 and followed structured or semi-structured formats.

### *Operational Structure of CCPA LBN*

CCPA LBN's modus operandi involves the engagement of a wide range of actors and mechanisms; these can be considered to form three virtual networks, each of which contributes to the central goal of promoting peaceful coexistence in Lebanon through children's grassroots football.

**The Practitioners' Network:** The StreetSport, OFFS and Popular Club models are applied as a tool to build a widespread network of practitioners throughout Lebanon: this network consists of CCPA LBN's eleven coordinators, circa 350 Popular Club coaches, in addition to other actors including parents, municipality members, sport clubs, school teachers and community organisations. The main vehicles of the Practitioner's Network are the StreetSport (between 2006 and 2008), OFFS and Popular Club models, through which democratic values and a 'child centred pedagogical approach' are introduced to and developed in local communities.

The inputs provided by CCPA LBN into the Practitioner Network are, first and foremost, the concept and pedagogical approach of StreetSport, OFFS and Popular Clubs. Additionally, CCPA LBN provides on-going capacity-building and educational training to volunteer coaches and Popular Club leaders, as well as provides sports equipment as required for the implementation of OFFS and the running of Popular Clubs.

**The Knowledge Network:** This network develops and applies the child-centred pedagogical values which underpin all CCPA's activities. The primary actors in this network are the eleven CCPA LBN coordinators, in addition to CCPA LBN and CCPA DK office staff. It is the role of the Knowledge Network to develop CCPA's pedagogical concepts, methods and approaches and to adapt these to the Lebanese context.

The input provided by CCPA LBN to the Knowledge Network consists of the organisation and facilitation of seminars and workshops through which pedagogical, administrative and technical knowledge is imparted to volunteers. In addition, CCPA LBN provides an OFFS Coach and Leader's Manual to assist volunteers in implementing

OFFS. CCPA LBN also facilitates linkages between the Popular Club network and other relevant specialists and institutions working in fields of interest to the network.

**The Interest Network on Sport for Peace and Development in Lebanon:** The StreetSport, OFFS and Popular Club products are applied as tools to build an Interest Network which consists of individuals and organisations which share an interest in the promotion of peace and a democratic sports sector in Lebanon. These actors include government institutions, sport institutions, NGOs, members of the private sector, and local and national media. The Interest Network is committed to, and actively engaged in, inter-community and/or civil society initiatives that promote peace and stability, as well as a democratic sports sector, in Lebanon. The network focus is linked to national policy development, civil society participation as well as local community development efforts related to sport for peace and development.

Input provided by CCPA LBN into the Interest Network includes advocacy and policy-work activities relating to structural change of the Lebanese sports sector (through engagement with national government actors) according to sport-for-all principles. CCPA LBN further advocates for the democratisation of the sports sector through organising conferences related to the promotion of sport in Lebanese society, including within the school curriculum, and also in relation to the sporting opportunities available for special needs children. Finally, CCPA develops the Interest Network through sustained media engagement, thus promoting awareness and interest in its values and activities.

#### *Overview of Evolution of CCPA Programme, 2005-2012*

While the evolution of the programme is discussed in detail throughout the report, the illustration below summarises in simple terms the evolution of CCPA LBN's intervention. In very general terms, CCPA LBN's strategy during 2005-2012 has been characterised by four distinct phases:

1. StreetSport: the establishment of grassroots football in streets and other feasible locations organised by individual coaches (Street Masters).
2. The introduction of StreetSport into a range of social institutions.
3. The formation of Popular Clubs by joining together groups of Street Masters.
4. The development of an umbrella structure (Association) for the Popular Clubs.



# SECTION 1: GRASSROOTS STRATEGY

---

## 1.1 StreetSport (2006-2008)

---

### *Initial Open Fun Football Schools, 2005*

CCPA began operating in Lebanon in 2005 as part of a regional programme which also included Syria and Jordan. The initial intervention in Lebanon took the form of conducting five Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) in different regions of the country (north, Beirut, Saida, Sour, Hasbaya). Developed in the Balkans, OFFS constitute the core of CCPA's programmes in other countries where it operates. However, in Lebanon the impact of the OFFS were modest, due to the elitist sports ideology in Lebanon and lack of developed sports culture. In particular, football clubs with whom CCPA sought to enter into partnerships displayed a lack of interest in programmes focused on aims other than developing talent.

Shortly after the launch of CCPA's Middle East regional programme, the programme was subjected to a reduction of a third of its funding from its donor partner the Danish Foreign Ministry (MFA DK) as a consequence of an ideological shift within domestic Danish politics. In parallel to this development, Lebanon endured a 34-day conflict occurred between Hezbollah and Israel in July-August 2006. In light of the both the reduction of funding available to the regional project, and the need for psycho-social assistance across the country, the organization made the decision to cease its programmes in Syria and Jordan, in the interest of developing the intervention in Lebanon.

### *StreetSport, 2006-2008*

The particularities of the Lebanese context described above necessitated that CCPA pursued an alternative approach to the Balkan-inspired OFFS model. In particular, CCPA noted that the limited success of the initial OFFS were at least partly a consequence of the lack of a culture of children's grassroots football.

From 2006, through its 'StreetSport' project, the organisation set about cultivating such a culture of popular football for children. The StreetSport project involved the training of local volunteer coaches ('StreetMasters') who then provided football activities to children and teenagers as a mean of fostering dialogue and confidence. In so doing, the programme established a hitherto absent grassroots sport culture in Lebanon. Although the StreetMaster volunteers initially made a three-month commitment with

CCPA LBN, in practice the majority continued volunteering for months beyond this period.

The project enjoyed significant success, involving 7,000-9,000 children on a monthly basis, and 288 volunteer coaches across the country. A key advantage of the StreetSport model was the self-organised and autonomous nature of the individual Street Master, as well as the little organisation or resources required for new activities to start-up. Moreover, the project catered to children between eight and twelve years, a younger age group than existing football clubs engaged with. The project was exclusively funded by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA DK) and implemented in 162 cities, towns, villages and Palestinian refugee camps throughout Lebanon.



Corresponding to CCPA Lebanon's principle of promoting 'sport for all', regardless of ability or social status, during 2008 and 2009 the organisation was expanded into 49 institutions catering for children with social or learning difficulties, among these the youth wing of the Roumieh Central Prison. This project built awareness of CCPA LBN's child-centred pedagogical values among these institutions, which constitute an important layer in Lebanese society (fulfilling social functions which in western societies tend to be provided by the state). On a practical level, the project provided sports opportunities to some of the country's most vulnerable children.

The StreetSport programme aimed to address various negative consequences of the 2006 war: trauma of displacement experienced by children, shelling and cluster bombing in the South, and widespread upheaval. The war heavily reduced the opportunity for children to play sports, not least due to the danger of unexploded ordinance. In the face of these challenges, StreetSport presented the opportunity for football games, through using alternative areas, such as school yards, closed streets or parking lots.

Despite the successes of the project however, the micro-scale nature of the activities meant that the project lacked sustainability: because coaches (Street Masters) were operating alone, after a period of time there was a tendency for them to experience fatigue. Various issues contributed to this fatigue, including the necessity of assuming extra employment, as well as other personal commitments. A further issue was that equipment became worn down and in need of replacement. As a consequence of this combination of factors, activities began to cease.

## 1.2 Establishment and Expansion of Popular Clubs (2008-2012)

---

### *Establishment of Initial Popular Clubs*

In order to increase the sustainability of its activities, from 2008 CCPA focused its attention creating a more robust platform on which to run activities, via the creation of grassroots football clubs. The organisation thus launched the 'Popular Clubs' project, in coordination with its donor partners the Rockwool Foundation and the MFA DK.

The initiation of the Popular Club model was made possible by the success of CCPA LBN in radically changing government policy relating to the organisation of sport in Lebanon. Specifically, during 2007-2008 CCPA LBN was successful in activating a 'dormant' decree (213), issued by the Ministry of Youth and Sport (MOYS), which stipulated conditions under which ordinary Lebanese could organise local clubs – so-called 'Popular Clubs'.

This development constituted a radical change in the structure of Lebanese sports culture, in that it permitted the Right of Association of non-elite individuals to form clubs at the grassroots level. The decree annulled previous stipulations which had restricted the ability of ordinary people to form grassroots sports clubs: including the requirement that members of clubs were professionals and that the club owned the required sports infrastructure (such as a football field). Since CCPA LBN's initial success in activating decree 213, the organisation's continued collaboration with the has resulted in the government adapting on several occasions its administrative guidelines relating to Popular Clubs, in order to meet reality needs of grassroots clubs.

The first step of CCPA LBN's process of forming a Popular Club has been to identify potential stakeholders (volunteer, parents, municipalities). The initial Popular Clubs were formed by CCPA LBN grouping the Street Masters into groups of three or more. Having identified the stakeholders, CCPA LBN delivers a series of seminars and training sessions which provide the club volunteers with the knowledge and expertise to establish a Popular Club. These sessions focus on a range of administrative skills, pedagogical concepts and sport-related topics (the educational programme is discussed in detail in section 2 of the report). Upon completion of the relevant educational sessions, CCPA LBN provides sports equipment to the club, enabling the club to begin regular activities.

In order to be granted official approval, Popular Clubs must apply to the MOYS and the Ministry of the Interior (for their part, Palestinian clubs are registered through Palestinian authorities). However, a series of bureaucratic obstacles has meant that this process has been frustratingly slow. In some cases it has taken over a year for clubs to

receive their registration papers after having filed their application to the government ministries. The requirement that clubs register an address/office location has proved to be a particular obstacle given the commonly lax and lack of law-abiding building practice followed in Lebanon. As a consequence, only eleven of the 107 Popular Clubs in CCPA LBN’s network have registered with the MOYS to date.

### *Expansion of the Popular Club Network and Demographic Profiles of Popular Clubs*

By the end of the project’s first phase, August 2009, the first 50 Popular Clubs had been established. During the project’s second phase, ending August 2010, the number of Popular Clubs was expanded to 88. While, as noted, the coaches of the first clubs to be established were mainly comprised of CCPA LBN’s network of former Street Masters, subsequent club formation has entailed identifying and training new coaches. Many of the newer coaches have come involved with CCPA LBN through knowing existing coaches who encouraged them to join. The Popular Club network has also been joined by clubs which have dropped out of the professional league system and have consequently been required join a new organising body through which to develop and engage in tournaments.

While originally 111 clubs had been established, at the time of writing (May 2012), the number stands at 107 of which 100 are currently active, involving 3,083 children. The clubs operate in all areas of the country and involve children and coaches from Sunnite, Shiite, Christian, Druze, Palestinian and Alawite communities. Initial underrepresentation of the Sunnite community in CCPA LBN’s network of clubs has been addressed during the project’s recent phases by establishing clubs in the Sunnite-majority Northern city of Tripoli. CCPA LBN has undertaken a ‘mapping’ exercise whereby the location and information of each Popular Club has been entered onto Google Maps (see Annex 1).

<b>Total No. Popular Clubs</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Total No. Children</b>	<b>3,083</b>
<b>Ave. No. Children per Club</b>	<b>29</b>

As stated in the Introduction, a central aim of CCPA LBN is to promote dialogue and reconciliation between religiously, politically or otherwise divided communities. Given the geographic segregation between religious communities in Lebanon (religious divides characterise Lebanon both at the regional level and at the local level (there is a tendency for towns and villages to be divided along religious

<b>Religious composition of Popular Clubs (as of May 2012)</b>	
<b>Mixed</b>	25
<b>Sunnite</b>	33
<b>Shiite</b>	19
<b>Christian</b>	13
<b>Palestinian</b>	10
<b>Druze</b>	5
<b>Alawite</b>	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>

lines), this presents a considerable practical challenge.

From a peacebuilding perspective, Popular Clubs would ideally be multi-religious, thereby ensuring the regular interaction of children, parents and coaches of different backgrounds. In practice, however, geographical divides mean that - if clubs are to be grounded in local reality - the majority of them will necessarily be dominated by a single religious group. This reality is reflected in the religious composition of CCPA's network of Popular Clubs; as the table above shows, less than 25% of the clubs are mixed in terms of religion, while 75% are dominated by a single religious sect.

### *The Multifaceted Social Function of Popular Clubs*

Given CCPA LBN's objective of promoting inter-communal interaction, the argument could be made that the focus of the organisation's activities should exclusively be religiously mixed communities. Indeed this has been the strategy advocated by CCPA LBN's donor partner, the Rockwool Foundation. The latter states on its website that,

“the Rockwool Foundation has insisted that the projet *[sic]* should focus on areas with mixed population groups: where the different national groups live in close proximity to one another, and where there are great differences between the groups.”

In the analysis of CCPA LBN however, there is value in engaging with communities *throughout* Lebanon, both those which are mixed and those which are religiously homogenous.

A first reason for this is the difficult in identifying 'heterogeneity': while the civil war was fought based principally along religious sectarian lines, the current-day society is also characterised by political divisions, which do not necessarily correspond to, and are far more complex, than religious divides. The rival March 8<sup>th</sup> and March 14<sup>th</sup> political blocs which dominate the political system cross-cut sectarian divisions, causing divisions within, as well as between, religious communities. Moreover, political alliances are continuously in flux, so that fault-lines between population groups are ever changing. The notion of 'mixed population groups' being easily identifiable along religious lines is therefore not an accurate interpretation of the complex and ever-shifting fragmentation of contemporary Lebanese society.

A second reason why CCPA LBN has engaged with communities across Lebanon, both those which are deeply divided and those which are religiously or otherwise cohesive, lies in its objective of promoting a democratic grassroots sports culture throughout Lebanon. In other words, the objectives of CCPA LBN is to promote positive horizontal relations (between communities), *and* to encourage positive vertical relations (by promoting the concept of sport as an activity open to all, not only societal elites).

CCPA LBN's decision to focus on the promotion of a democratic grassroots sports sector, as well as on bridging divides, appears to complement the priorities of beneficiaries.

During interviews with coordinators, coaches and parents, the development of sport aspect of the programme was frequently stated to be a priority. For example, to the question “what is the most important thing about CCPA?” many interviewees responded with answers such as “CCPA develops children’s sports”, or “CCPA has provided the space and equipment for children to play”. This suggests that the ‘development of sport’ is considered to be as or more important in certain communities as ‘development through sport’.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, the inter-community confidence- and trust-building aspect of the programme was also articulated by interviewees. In sociological terminology, these respondents described the role of the Popular Club project in transforming ‘bonding’ social capital (linkages amongst a single identity group) into ‘bridging’ social capital (linkages across different identity groups).

For example, one coach in the northern city of Tripoli described how in his capacity as Popular Club coach, he has instigated interaction between the city’s Sunnite Bab al-Tibbaneh community and the neighbouring Alawite Jabal Mohsen community (see table

#### **Tripoli’s Bab al-Tibbaneh - Jabal Mohsen Conflict**

These communities in the Northern city of Tripoli have been engaged in protracted conflict for decades.

The Alawite Jabal Mohsen community is loyal to the regime of Bashar al-Assad (having originated in Syria and developed in the 1980s in Tripoli under the patronage of Rifaat al-Assad, the uncle of Bashar al-Assad).

The Sunnite community of Bab al-Tibbaneh are opposed to the regime in Damascus, and especially to Syria’s historic influence over Lebanon.

Divisions between the two communities developed during the 1980s, during which time many of the Sunnite community aligned with Yasser Arafat’s Liberation Organisation (PLO). These divisions culminated in 1986 with the massacre of more than 300 Sunnites in Tripoli by Syrians. Since that then, the Alawites have been viewed by many in the city with suspicion and animosity, and periodic violence has characterised relations between the two communities.

In recent months tensions have increased in correspondence with instability in Syria; clashes between the two communities in February 2012 left three people dead, while five were killed and around twenty injured by clashes in May 2012 as a peaceful resolution of the situation in Syria continued to be elusive.

---

<sup>1</sup> Interviews with coaches and parents, Hasbaya, 26th April 2012

below).

The coach described how the Sunnite children experienced fear and distrust during the first visit to the area of the Alawite community, and how this has subsided during future visits. He further explained how the CCPA LBN project has impacted the perceptions of parents and coaches towards the 'other' group. He also disclosed that his own opinions have changed as a consequence of involvement in the project (in the past he had fought against members of the Alawite community, in revenge for the killing of a member of his family). Through involvement in CCPA LBN he described how he has made the decision to draw a line under the past and to focus on promoting coexistence between the two communities.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to promoting inter-communal coexistence, interviewees also highlighted the value of the Popular Club in promoting intra-community cohesion. A prominent example of intra-group fragmentation concerns Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps. The country's twelve camps, accommodating 62% of the Palestinian refugee population residing in Lebanon, which constitutes around 10% of the total population in Lebanon, (registered refugees: 455,000, Source: UNRWA), are long-established locations of political polarisation and militancy. While CCPA LBN aims to strengthen cooperation between Palestinian and Lebanese communities, its activities also promote coexistence within the camps. A coach in Jalil refugee camp in the Bekaa Valley described how the camp is dominated by two political factions and explained the effectiveness of Popular Clubs within the camp of encouraging interaction between teenagers polarised by support for the rival factions.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Interview with coach, Tripoli, 29th April 2012

<sup>3</sup> Interview with coach, Baalbeck, 24th April 2012

# 1.3 Promotion of Inter-Communal Interaction

## *Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) and Football Festivals*

Due to the fact that the majority of Popular Clubs are dominated by one religious community, CCPA LBN has focused on developing mechanisms through which the Popular Clubs can regularly interact. These include both educational forums such as seminars and workshops aimed at coaches and parents (discussed in the following section), and activities directed at the children.

Every year since 2005 (with the exceptions of 2006 and 2007) CCPA LBN has conducted between three and seven Open Fun Football Schools (OFFS) in different regions of the country. Unique to CCPA, OFFS are four day events during which 200 - 250 children are brought together under the leadership of fifteen coaches to participate in fun football and other sporting activities. First and foremost, the Football Schools bring about interaction between children, parents and coaches of different social, cultural and religious backgrounds. In addition, OFFS play a valuable role in attracting attention from media and municipalities. The Football Schools are thus a forum for building relations across divides by bringing together a diverse range of actors who bond over children's football.

No. Open Fun Football Schools per Year	
2005	5
2006	0
2007	0
2008	7
2009	3
2010	5
2011	6

The OFFS additionally function as the 'practical' element of the package of educational training provided to coaches prior to the coaches establishing their own Popular Clubs. Initially, the OFFS took place after completion of the theoretical aspects of the educational training (OFFS coaching seminar and Popular Club seminar). However, due to the perception among volunteers that this entailed too much theoretical training prior to

2011's Open Fun Football Schools	
<b>Number of OFFS</b>	6
<b>Locations</b>	Tripoli; Akkar and Donniyeh; Beirut and Baabda; Baalbek; Arabsalim; Hasbaya
<b>Total no. of children</b>	1139
<b>Total no. of boys</b>	963
<b>Total no. of girls</b>	176
<b>Total no. of coaches</b>	72

coaches undertaking the practical aspect of the training, the sequencing was altered so that the seminar relating to establishing Popular Clubs now takes place after coaches have undertaken practical training (through implementing an OFFS). During the OFFS, CCPA LBN distributes equipment to the club (footballs, mini goals and other sports equipment), enabling the club to begin regular activities upon completion of the Popular Club seminar.



In addition to OFFS, CCPA LBN has organised a range of Open Fun Football Festivals (OFFF) at both regional and national levels in order to foster interaction between clubs from different communities. The largest festival to date occurred in September 2011 with a national Children’s Sports Festival at Ramlet Al Baida beach, Beirut, involving 998 children and 168 volunteer coaches from each of CCPA Lebanon’s 107 active Popular Clubs throughout the country (note that for organisational reasons a ceiling was placed at 10 children attending from each club).

This was a particularly noteworthy event in that it was the first time that CCPA LBN’s the entire network of Popular Clubs had been brought together. The event also strengthened the relationship between CCPA Lebanon and the Popular Clubs, as well as gave substantial media publicity to the overall Popular Club project (the event gained coverage from many national newspapers and two television networks).



A further example of festival involving clubs from different communities was the ‘Sport Unites Tripoli’ event which took place in July 2011 (directly after the violent clashes noted above). The event was arranged in cooperation with municipalities, NGOs and the Ministry of Youth and Sport. The event was a big success with visits by the Danish Embassy, local politicians, more than fifty parents and around 300 participating children.

### *Mini Tournaments*

CCPA LBN adopts a ‘narrative mediation’ approach to reconciliation whereby narratives, based on friendship, are constructed as a counter-story to ‘stories of conflict’ (e.g. characterised by hate, fear and prejudice). This approach to conflict transformation is underpinned by the ‘contact hypothesis’ (Allport, 1954) which holds that, under certain conditions, contact between groups can positively change attitudes.

In post-war contexts, 'conflict stories' are often very deeply engrained within individuals and communities. As such it is unrealistic to expect a counter-narrative cannot be conjured-up after one or two meetings. Rather, building trust is a long process.

It is unclear how effective initiatives are that seek to 'teach' communities to trust; rather, it seems that the emergence of trust requires repeated interaction over a period of time. With this in mind, CCPA LBN has concentrated on developing mechanisms through which children and volunteers can interact on a *regular* basis. Through regular interaction, the organisation seeks to develop narratives, based on the future, which counter and supersede the conflict narratives of the past.

While OFFS and OFFF do promote cross-community interaction, by their very nature they are they are one-off events. After the event, interaction is not continued and the participants return to their normal lives. Since 2008 CCPA LBN has implemented the 'Mini Tournament' system which is designed to instigate more regular interaction between Popular Clubs than can be provided by OFFS or OFFF. Mini Tournaments are one-day events which involve the gathering together of several Popular Clubs gather together and participate in fun football activities. Through participating in Mini Tournaments, the theory is that mixing between communities will move from being a one-time encounter to a 'normal' part of the lives of those involved. Moreover, Mini Tournaments are designed to ensure that the programme continues through the winter, during which time weather conditions do not allow the holding of OFFS.

CCPA LBN remains confident in the theoretical assumptions underpinning the Mini Tournament system. However, the implementing of the system has faced several practical challenges, with the outcome that the Mini Tournament concept has not functioned as effectively as anticipated. Three principle sets of challenges can be identified: practical obstacles, commitment of club volunteers, and commitment of coordinators:

- 1. Practical and logistical challenges:** The issue of the transportation of children to and from tournaments has been the single most serious challenge to organising regular activities between clubs. The public transport system in Lebanon is almost non-existent, especially in rural areas. The cost of hiring private transportation is unfeasible for most clubs, meaning the only option is for children to be transported by club leaders and parents. Obviously this option is dependent upon sufficient means and commitment on the part of members of the community, complicated by the lack of culture in many communities of parents' involvement in organised activities for children. This demonstrates the importance of promoting parents' involvement with the clubs and of developing a mentality of community responsibility in contrast to a culture of individualism.

A second practical obstacle to regular activities between clubs (and within a single club) is the very limited availability of training fields in many communities. Third,

poor weather during the winter prevents clubs from organising training sessions and Mini Tournaments during several months of the year. Finally, political instability in some areas has periodically created obstacles for the holding of regular activities (for example periodic clashes between the Jebel Mohsen and Bab el-Tebbaneh communities).

- 2. Coaches' commitment:** The level of motivation and enthusiasm on the part of club coaches and leaders to organise Mini Tournaments between has been less than expected, with the result that Popular Clubs have been participating in fewer cross-cultural activities than desired by the organisation. In general, coordinators have been required to organise Mini Tournaments (location, transportation, etc.) rather than clubs organising them amongst themselves.

On one level this is a symptom of the lack of a culture of voluntarism in Lebanon, and on another it simply reflects the fact that coaches tend to have substantial commitments (often multiple jobs) and often do not have much time to dedicate to Popular Clubs. During the project's recent phase, CCPA LBN has sought to overcome this problem by recruiting younger coaches who may have fewer commitments and consequently more available time to offer.

- 3. Coordinators' commitment:** In recent months, coordinators have displayed less motivation and enthusiasm to organise activities between clubs: CCPA LBN's office staff have felt the need to continuously encourage coordinators and clubs to hold Mini Tournaments. This decrease in levels of commitment appears to have been at least partly caused by demotivation due to the possible closure of the programme in the near future. It seems likely that some coordinators have begun to focus on life 'after CCPA'.

In particular, the level of coordination between the coordinators has often been disappointing. CCPA LBN has attempted to address this problem by changing the system of payment for coordinators: coordinators are no longer paid a fixed amount per month, but rather are now paid for each activity they organise. The rationale is that this will incentivise coordinators to be more active in terms of organising events between clubs. Since making this change, CCPA has observed an improvement in terms of the motivation of coordinators to organise activities.

### *Development of Tournament Structure*

In light of the challenges discussed above, and in order to enhance interaction between Popular Clubs, CCPA LBN has during 2012 - in cooperation with coordinators and coaches - developed a more structured tournament system. The organisation considers a more structured tournament system to be vital in terms of acting as a 'pull factor' to mobilise the recruitment of children and inspire clubs to continue engaging in regular activities.

It is envisaged that the new system will include features such as the establishment of Child Referee Councils through which responsibility for matters such as disciplinary matters will be delegated to the child/youth assistants. This investment of accountability and responsibility in children reflects core aspects of CCPA LBN's pedagogical values: namely the concepts of 'giving the child a voice', and 'placing the child at the centre'. The new tournament system will also include a range of awards, not only in respect of winning teams, but in the interest of promoting social values such as 'best teammate', 'best sportsmanship', etc. Additionally, the element of prizes will lend the tournaments a more 'real' football feel in terms of introducing an element of competition, which will further act to provide motivation for participation.

The development of the system has involved collaboration between CCPA LBN, CCPA Denmark, and the German grassroots organisation Bunkicktgut (<http://www.bunkicktgut.de/>), the latter whom have developed a similar system in Germany. At the time of writing, the new tournament system is in the process of being piloted via five 'test-tournaments' involving 25 popular clubs in different regions across Lebanon. The next stage is to move from design to implementation by addressing the key challenges which have been raised by coordinators and coaches (as discussed above, transportation remains the principle challenge to any regular mixing activities). Finally, the aim is to integrate the tournament system into the activities of CCPA LBN's Popular Club network.

## 1.4 Experience of the Daily Running of the Popular Club Network

---

This chapter examines a range of issues relating to the day-to-day experience of the CCPA LBN's Popular Club network.

### *Popular Club Activities: Regularity, Attendance and Reporting*

In cooperation with its donor the Rockwool Foundation, CCPA LBN has set a benchmark that Popular Clubs should conduct activities at least twice per week and have a minimum attendance of 70%. The attendance rate of training sessions reported by clubs has generally been high. Attendance figures provided to the CCPA LBN office by coordinators indicate that the majority of clubs have experienced average attendance of between 88% and 94% (although this figure decreases significantly during the winter).

While these attendance figures are positive, the CCPA LBN office has not always been able to obtain comprehensive information relating to both attendance and the regularity of clubs' activities. As a consequence the office has on some occasions not been aware of the activities undertaken by clubs, nor of the numbers of children involved.

Part of the issue is that the level of Popular Club monitoring required by the CCPA LBN office on behalf of its donor partner, Rockwool Foundation, has added a considerable workload to the overall tasks of the coordinators. At one stage of the programme, the level and detail of reporting required by Rockwool Foundation was such that coordinators and coaches were placed under strain to the extent that the programme was in danger of collapsing under bureaucratic requirements.

The key issue was that volunteers, motivated primarily by the desire to be involved in a practical football project, found themselves coerced into time-consuming bureaucratic tasks. This brought about a situation of volunteers 'driven by desire, dying from duty.'

Since then, CCPA LBN and Rockwool Foundation have renegotiated the level of reporting which is required from coordinators and coaches. Nevertheless, there has

---

"Since I started volunteering for CCPA, I got the CCPA virus. I love it so much and I have had so many good experiences. The children are the most important thing. I can make them happy and they make me laugh – this is my motivation to train and volunteer."

CCPA LBN Coordinator

---

remained a consistent gap between the level of reporting submitted by coordinators and the level requested by the Rockwool Foundation.

A further issue is that coordinators are in turn reliant upon club coaches for information regarding club activities. Problems encountered in this respect have been lack of access by many of the clubs to fax and internet facilities. In addition, volunteers are inevitably more interested in practical/footballing aspects of the club rather than on bureaucratic tasks. The overall result is that the CCPA Lebanon office has consistently struggled to gain comprehensive information regarding the activities of the clubs, and the numbers of children attending training sessions.

### *Gender Equality*

As noted in the introduction, the promotion of gender equality through promoting the opportunities open to girls and women to participate in football is an important objective of the organisation. The organisation has agreed with the Rockwool Foundation that girls should constitute a minimum 20% of the proportion of children engaged in Popular Club activities.

Promoting the participation of girls has proved a challenging objective throughout the project. Many elements within Lebanese society (especially Muslim communities) consider football, and sport in general, to be a male activity. Consequently, in many communities (especially in the South) there is no culture exists of women and girls participating in sport. While coaches commonly report the desire of girls themselves to play, parents are often (particularly initially) against the idea. In the words of one coach, encouraging girls to play was 'mission impossible' at the beginning of the project.

Yet the view of sport as a male-only zone is by no means universal, and CCPA LBN has gradually been able to develop the notion of girls' inclusion. Girls' participation in regular Popular Club activities has typically stood at between 13% and 19%, although there is large variation between clubs and areas. In order to respect Muslim tradition that girls do not play with boys after reaching the stage of puberty, CCP LBN has established several girls-only teams.

A related challenge has been to increase the number of female coaches. A recurring problem in this respect is that in some

Muslim communities it is not culturally tolerated for older girls and women to play with or interact with men. This makes problematic the idea of seminars where participants stay overnight in a hotel and undertaken training exercises together on the football

---

“There are no associations which can help the girls. Everything is about men and boys. We want to change this and make clubs for girls, where they can have the opportunities, they deserve.”

(Haifa, CCPA LBN volunteer coach)

---

field. However, over the course of the project, CCPA LBN has noted an increase in the involvement of girls and female volunteers, which is critical to the strategic objective of the programme.

## 1.5 Section Summary and Lessons Learned

---

CCPA's initial intervention in Lebanon in 2005, taking the form of five **OFFS**, generated limited spin-off effects largely as a consequence of the lack of an established grassroots culture. From 2006, the organisation sought to develop such a grassroots culture through establishing a network of **Streetsport** in communities and institutions throughout the country. While attaining widespread impact, the project lacked sustainability; this led the organisation to mobilise the individual Street Master volunteers into forming grassroots clubs (**Popular Clubs**) which function as a platform for regular football activities. Since 2008, the Popular Club network has expanded to 107 clubs, involving 3,083 children.

### *Challenges and lessons learned:*

- i. The programme has faced a tension between **contrasting approaches to conflict transformation** as adopted by CCPA LBN on the one hand and the donor partner (Rockwool Foundation) on the other.

While the Rockwool Foundation has advocated that the project operate only in mixed population areas, the strategy pursued by CCPA LBN has been to achieve nation-wide impact with the aim of developing a framework at the institutional level for the development of communication and collaboration among communities through grassroots sport. To CCPA this national focus is a requirement of peacebuilding, in order to address conflict drivers which stretch far beyond mixed communities and local flashpoints. Hence, local pin-prick initiatives in mixed communities carry the risk of ignoring the overriding conflict patterns. Moreover, mixed communities do not per se guarantee the presence of local tensions and therefore the relevance of intervention.

- ii. The issue of **transportation** has been a critical challenge to the promotion of regular interaction between clubs and religious/political communities.
- iii. The concept of **voluntarism** is new to many aspects of Lebanese society; and developing a culture of voluntarism among Popular Club coaches has been an incremental process.
- iv. The promotion of **girls' participation** has been particularly challenging in the more traditional Muslim areas. Nevertheless, over the course of the intervention, the organisation has been able to gradually increase the proportion of girls and female coaches involved in its activities. The organisation has adapted to local values by establishing girls-only clubs, trained by female coaches.

# SECTION 2: EDUCATIONAL, CAPACITY-BUILDING AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES

This section focuses on the educational and curricular tools developed by CCPA LBN through which the organisation has imparted knowledge and expertise to stakeholders (Popular Club coaches and leaders, parents, municipality representatives).

## 2.1 Education and Training: Establishment of Popular Clubs

### *OFFS Coaches' Seminars*

Instrumental to the establishment of the programme are the CCPA OFFS coaches seminars. The seminars act as key forums for the recruitment of children, coaches and clubs, and for the distribution of the equipment that forms the material basis for expanding children's grassroots football in local communities. At the OFFS seminars, CCPA LBN provides training in the organisation's pedagogical approach, coordination and communication skills, and in the organisation of games. During the seminars coaches also receive an OFFS coaching manual. The seminars take place over three days, providing in total 30 days of theoretical training (in addition to a further 30 hours of practical training delivered through the implementation of OFFS).

As with all CCPA activities, these educational seminars and workshops are applied to mobilise bonding between people of different social, religious and political backgrounds. As one coach explained, the seminars allow coaches to establish contacts which are often sustained beyond the seminar:

<b>Participants' Profile at Coaches' Seminar, Beirut 29<sup>th</sup> April-1st May</b>	
<b>Total number of participants</b>	92
<b>Number of clubs represented</b>	33
<b>Men</b>	80
<b>Women</b>	11
<b>Sunite</b>	37
<b>Shiite</b>	31
<b>Christian</b>	14
<b>Palestinian</b>	5
<b>Druze</b>	3
<b>Alawite</b>	1
<b>Armenian</b>	1

Every two weeks, we are a group of CCPA volunteers who meet up and have fun together. We are some from Tripoli, some from the Bekaa, one from Beirut and one from the South. We are Christians, Sunnites and Shiites, girls and boys, so we must be the perfect example of what CCPA is all about. Now we have to show the children how to meet new friends from other areas on the football pitch.”

Examples such as this illustrate the strategy of CCPA LBN to promote positive relations among multiple stakeholders involved in the ‘football universe’. Children provide the meaning and the incentive for cooperative relations to develop involving a range of actors and locations which would unlikely otherwise take place.

### *Popular Club Seminars*

The theoretical coaching training provided via the OFFS coaches seminars is supplemented by seminars which focus specifically on the concept of establishing Popular Clubs. These Popular Club seminars provide a forum for multiple stakeholders of prospective Popular Clubs (club leaders, parents, municipality representatives) to gather together and undertake a range of exercises related to establishing Popular Clubs. The seminars are typically attended by three to four clubs representing different religious and/or political backgrounds, with each club being represented by between six and eleven individuals (consisting of a minimum of three coaches, two parents and one municipality representative). Originally Popular Club seminars were held over two days; however, difficulties experienced in mobilising parents and municipality representatives for two-day events led to the time-scale of the seminar being reduced to a single day.

Through a series of workshops and discussion forums, the seminars provide the participants with a framework through which to create Popular Clubs. As part of this, the seminar assists stakeholders to identify common values: participants play ‘value games’ through which they identify the main needs of the community and their vision of the role of the Popular Club in the context of those needs. In addition, the seminars assist the participants to establish tangible goals for their Popular Clubs, to rate priorities, and to establish an action-plan for achieving these objectives. Participants also undertake a SWOT analysis of establishing a club (analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats).

The seminars further provide participants with the necessary administrative skills for the establishment of Popular Clubs and impart knowledge of club governance issues as stipulated by the MOYS. During the Popular Club seminar, Popular Club members are assisted to draft their club statutes, which the club members finalise in their own time and submit within one month to CCPA LBN. In addition, guidance is given to participants regarding how to organise a General Assembly of club stakeholders, during

which election to the board, executive committee and other club committees can take place.

## 2.2 Education and Training: Development of the Capacity of Popular Clubs

### *Mobilisation of Communities' Involvement*

As described above, CCPA LBN adheres to a pedagogical approach whereby a range of actors within civil society (volunteers, parents, municipalities, football associations, local and national media, local sponsors) are mobilised around a children's grassroots football 'universe' in which the child is at the centre (as the illustration below depicts). An important part of the CCPA LBN's pedagogical values is the concept of the child as an individual in his or her own right. CCPA delivers a range of workshops and seminars, which provide a sustainable platform for these actors to come together and interact.

CCP LBN considers **parents** to be key stakeholders of Popular Clubs and their active involvement to be critical to the local ownership and sustainability of the clubs. As a group, parents not only constitute the clubs' largest stakeholder but as responsible for their children, their involvement and support are crucial (particularly with respect to the issue of transportation). Furthermore, from a conflict transformation perspective, the involvement of parents offers many opportunities in terms of building trust and social cohesion within and between communities.

Reflecting the model developed by CCPA in the Balkans, CCPA LBN organises workshops for parents, normally consisting of between 15 and 20 participants, where a range of issues are discussed relating to children's football and Popular Clubs. In order to coordinate with the children's activities, the workshops take place during the OFFS.

A general lack of voluntarism culture in Lebanon, combined with the concept of children's 'play' not



being deeply grounded in society, has meant that encouraging parents to get involved has been challenging. Commonly, parents see no reason why they should be involved in their children's activities.

Despite these challenges, many parents have shown interest in and dedication to the clubs. Parents' workshops have proved to be valuable in generating parents' enthusiasm and motivation. In particular, the workshops have been particularly successful in involving mothers and as such have played an important role in altering parents' attitudes towards girls' participation in football activities.

**Municipalities** constitute another key stakeholder in the Popular Club project. CCPA LBN's strategy is to involve municipalities in the establishment of Popular Clubs (via Popular Club seminars, as noted above) and in their development. In particular, municipalities can play an incredible important role in terms of a) the financing of Popular Clubs, and b) sports facilities (this may entail allocating a piece of land in which clubs can establish a playing field).

However, the level of support offered by municipalities to Popular Clubs has in general fallen substantially short of the ideal. At least three reasons can be identified for the modest response demonstrated by municipalities. First, municipalities are generally under-resourced. Second, they tend to prioritise infrastructure projects over social initiatives. Third, there is a lack of established practice or formal frameworks through which to deliver incremental support to grassroots sports. This fact has meant that it has been particularly important for CCPA LBN to use events such as Mini Tournaments to develop direct contact with municipality officials.

While the level of support from municipalities in general has been modest, they have supported clubs in a variety of ways. This support has predominantly taken the form of in-kind donations, particularly during OFFS, such as the provision of football pitches/fields and refreshments free of charge.

### *Development of the Financial Sustainability of Popular Clubs*

A key element of CCPA LBN's educational training programme has related to increasing the capacity of Popular Clubs in the field of financial sustainability. Achieving financial sustainability is critical if the Popular Club project is to continue beyond the intervention by CCPA LBN. The organisation has organised a range of seminars on the issues of management and fundraising, conducted by both CCPA office staff and external experts.

As noted above, financial support from municipalities has been extremely limited; thus clubs have had to identify other sources of local support. The most common method of generating funding has been to raise funds from within the clubs themselves. This has taken the form of introducing fees from players (e.g. monthly charge of USD 2-4 per player), or alternatively of obtaining contributions from the board members.

A small number of clubs have been successful in obtaining funding from local companies and individuals. These sponsors have contributed to the costs of items such as football outfits and equipment. However, entering agreements with local businesses has been difficult for many clubs and impossible for others. Firstly, there is a need for clubs to be regarded as politically and religiously neutral; clearly this neutrality is at risk if local donors are viewed as partisan. Secondly, many areas, especially the South, are characterised by a lack of medium and large businesses. For clubs located in Palestinian refugee camps, funding from local businesses is clearly not a viable option. Yet for all these funding obstacles, the network's clubs are viable entities, operating on a self-sustaining basis.

### *Networking Seminars and workshops*

Further capacity building of the Popular Club network has taken the form of periodic seminars and workshops focused on a particular issue. For example, in March 2012 60 participants from across the Popular Club network attended a seminar which focused on the design of a new tournament system (as discussed above). The organisation values such seminars not solely from an education perspective, but also in terms of developing links between clubs and volunteers and thereby giving cohesion to the network.

### *Cooperation between CCPA Offices*

A further element of the capacity-building programme has been educational collaboration between CCPA LBN and other CCPA offices. In August 2010 CCPA LBN office staff and coordinators undertook an educational trip to Bosnia, where they were hosted by the local CCPA office. The purpose of the trip was for CCPA LBN coordinators and staff to learn from the experience of the longer-established CCPA project in Bosnia, especially with regard to OFFS and spin-off activities. The experience provided the coordinators with renewed motivation and ideas to further develop the project.

Collaborative work has also been developed between local CCPA offices in the Middle East region. In particular, coordinators from the Iraq programme have attended workshops in Lebanon together with their Lebanese counterparts. Such collaboration has been useful in terms of exchanging ideas and experiences between the respective programmes. In addition, since 2011 CCPA LBN has been involved in a joint initiative with the Jordan Red Crescent, whereby coordinators and office staff from the Lebanon programme have delivered capacity-building training to volunteer Street Masters from the Jordan Red Crescent. Capacity-building took place in two phases, a total of ten days duration.

## 2.3 Section Summary and Lessons Learned

---

CCPA LBN's pedagogical approach comprises of a range of educational initiatives which focus on a variety of themes and target groups.

Thematically, the organisation delivers seminars and workshops on administrative issues (concerning establishing and developing Popular Clubs), technical issues (concerning sports coaching), and financial skills (focusing on the building the sustainability of clubs).

In terms of target groups, the CCPA educational product has been aimed at a wide range of actors: coordinators, club coaches, parents and municipality members.

### *Challenges and lessons learned*

- i. The level of **involvement of parents** has varied considerably from club to club. In general, it has been a challenge to mobilise parents to actively participate in the clubs. Increasing parents' involvement remains a crucial priority, especially with regards to overcoming the issue of transportation which remains a key obstacle to the organising of regular inter-club events.
- ii. The support offered by **municipalities** to Popular Clubs, has been modest and usually non-financial. Nevertheless, their support has played a facilitative role and has also often extended to in-kind donations (e.g. use of football pitch or allocation of space/land for establishment of same).
- iii. Some clubs have made modest progress in the formal **self-financing** of their activities (through player fees and other local donations), though this has not been uniform across the network. This being said, whatsoever the formal economy, the informal economy (volunteering, in-kind, incremental support, players' fees) has successfully sustained the active clubs within the network.

## SECTION 3: POLICY-LEVEL AND ADVOCACY STRATEGY

---

In support of, and in parallel to, the grassroots activities described above, CCPA LBN has pursued a strategy of advocating national-level government and institutional policy change within the sports sector. In broad terms, the aim of this branch of the organisation's activities has been to advocate for a more democratic and egalitarian structuring of the sports sector in order for the sector to function as a vehicle for bridge-building and sports collaboration transcending ethnic, religious, social, religious pitfalls characterising the Lebanese reality. This chapter discusses the activities undertaken by CCPA LBN towards this objective.

While CCPA LBN's activities at the grassroots level have from 2008 been funded by the Rockwool Foundation, the organisation's policy-level initiatives have been funded (up until December 2011) by the MFA DK. CCPA LBN's policy-level work runs parallel to, and in tandem with, its grassroots activities by aiming to bring about the structural conditions which will allow the sustainability of the grassroots Popular Clubs in the long term.

### 3.1 Development of National Popular Club Federation

---

Having established a network of 107 Popular Clubs, CCPA Lebanon has sought to bring these clubs together under a unifying structure: a Federation for Popular Clubs. CCPA LBN considers such a structure to be an essential element of the sustainability of the Popular Club network. It is envisaged that the Federation will function as a representative body of Popular Club and as a source of expert assistance to all Popular Clubs. Moreover, the Federation is seen as an effective body through which Popular Clubs will obtain government and other funding,

The establishment of the Federation has been an (on-going) two-step process. The first step has been to establish and develop an Association of CCPA LBN's 107 Popular Clubs (PCA). It is CCPA's intention that is that this Association will function as a 'model' for an official Federation of all Popular Clubs in Lebanon (PCF). This Federation will involve Popular Clubs of all sports disciplines (both those within and out-with the CCPA Lebanon Popular Club Association).

### *Establishment of Association of CCPA LBN Popular Clubs*

CCPA LBN initiated the process of establishing an association for CCPA's Popular Clubs in November 2011 with the organisation of an assembly of all of the CCPA Popular Clubs. The purpose of the assembly was to establish lay the groundwork of forming the PCA and to discuss the draft statutes of the future PCF. The PCA is due to be officially formed by the end of May 2012, following a General Assembly of CCPA LBN Popular Clubs during which the statutes drafted at the November assembly will be adopted, and a representative board will be elected.

Once the PCA is officially formed, CCPA LBN envisages that it will continue and development its current role as Association secretariat, where its primary role is to conduct advocacy work, provide policy advice, ensure capacity-building for club leaders and coaches and coordinate regional and national Popular Club activities.

### *Development of a National Popular Club Federation*

Central to the development of a PCF has been advocacy activities undertaken by CCPA LBN aimed at instigating a democratic change in Lebanon's sports culture.

Of particular importance in this regard was the organisation April 2010 by CCPA LBN, in collaboration with the MOYS and the Lebanese National Olympic Committee (NOC), of a Sports-for-All Conference, the first ever such conference held in Lebanon (The conference built upon a study trip to Denmark the previous year by the NOC's Sport for all Committee and the MOYS during which the visitors met with key stakeholders of the Danish sport sector in order to learn about Danish sports culture and sport-for-all practices). The conference emphasised the importance of embracing the concept that sport should be something for all Lebanese society, regardless of talent or social/financial status, and explored the opportunities of developing linkages between institutions involved in developing a Sport-for-All culture.

The conference resulted in the recommendation by the Sport-for-All committee that the MOYS establish a Federation for Popular Clubs. Correspondingly, the 10-year strategic plan issued by the MOYS the following year (2011) includes the establishing of the Popular Club Federation as one of its main elements.

Parallel to this development, collaboration between the MOYS and CCPA LBN has resulted in the amendment of Decree 213 the text of which has been agreed in writing between the Director General of the Ministry and CCPA Lebanon. This stipulates the legal conditions and requirements which will govern the Popular Club Association (see Annex 2) and is at the time of writing pending the Lebanese Parliament's adoption.

### **The primary functions of the future Popular Club Federation:**

1. To represent all CCPA Popular Clubs throughout Lebanon.
2. To mobilise support for the concept of Popular Clubs, and act as a mechanism for regular inter-club interaction, thus contributing to building cross-community cohesion.
3. To provide a source of expertise and support to clubs through organising activities such as coaching, educational, marketing and administrative courses and seminars.
4. To act as a body through which funding for Popular Clubs will be mobilised from government ministries and elsewhere.
5. To promote the concept and practice of the right of all individuals within Lebanese society to participate in sport.

In the meantime, the CCPA LBN has been preparing for the establishment of the PCF by continuing to liaise with Popular Clubs of other sports disciplines, the latter which will form part of the future Popular Club Federation. In collaboration with the MOYS, CCPA Lebanon has at the time of writing identified a list of 209 clubs for inclusion in the future Federation. CCPA Lebanon has since been in contact with 97 of these clubs, in order to compile information regarding their sports disciplines, contact information etc., and to assess their interest in joining a national Federation. Of these 97 clubs, 58 have responded positively. The organisation is continuing this surveying, which is due to be completed by the end of 2012.

#### *Cooperation with Government ministries and Sports Federations*

Despite the highly political and often polarised environment which characterises issues of governance and policy in Lebanon, as has been noted CCPA LBN has achieved significant success in gaining the trust of a range of actors at the policy level. These include government ministries as well as with sports federations. Two factors have been important in this regard.

The first is CCPA LBN's reputation as a politically impartial organisation. This reflects CCPA's standard practice of striving to ensure that it is perceived as apolitical by the 'host society'. This priority has led CCPA LBN to ensure that it engages with all religious communities, and areas of the country. At the level of funding, the organisation analyses possible implications in terms of its perceived impartiality before entering partnerships with prospective donors.

Secondly, the development of constructive professional relations between the organisation and a range of institutional actors has been aided by the influential and respected status in the Lebanese sports sector of CCPA LBN's Country Coordinator (Chairperson of the Sport-for-All Committee of the NOC, President of the Lebanese Canoe Kayak Federation and Advisor to the Minister of Youth and Sport, former member of the national Football Federation). The trust which this has consequently existed between CCPA LBN and institutional actors has been critical in the organisation's ability to instigate policy change, not least the restructuring of the sport sector through establishment of a Popular Club Federation.

## 3.2 Development of Sport in the School Education System

---

A further strand of CCPA LBN's activities policy-level activities has been its advocacy of a reformulation of how sport is practiced in and between schools. Undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MOE), this set of activities corresponds to the organisation's commitments to both the promotion of sport in everyday life, and to stimulating cross-cultural interaction (through schools' tournaments, discussed below). CCPA LBN's cooperation with MOE dates back to 2009 when collaboration was initiated relating to the environmental project Things Talk ([www.thingstalk.net](http://www.thingstalk.net)).

Engaging with the school sector also has a grassroots rationale in that schools possess infrastructure (e.g. school yards) to which Popular Clubs are excluded due to regulations outlawing the use of school yards after school hours. Through engagement with schools, it is hoped that greater cooperation between schools and Popular Clubs can be developed whereby Popular Clubs are able to use the infrastructure possessed by schools. Further, especially considering that a significant proportion of coaches are physical education teachers in schools, it is intended that by developing links between Popular Clubs and schools, the latter will act as a referral mechanism for local Popular Clubs whereby children in schools are encouraged by physical education teachers to join Popular Clubs.

In October 2011, CCPA Lebanon in cooperation with the MOE, the Danish School Sport Organisation ([www.skoleidraet.dk](http://www.skoleidraet.dk)) and the Danish National Olympic Committee and Sport Confederation of Denmark organised a Conference for the Development of School Sports, with the participation of a range of governmental and official bodies, including the MOYS, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Culture, the Head of the Parliamentary Education Committee, the Head of the Parliamentary Sport Committee, the Lebanese NOC, the Danish School Sport Federation and the Ambassador of Denmark to Lebanon.

Preceding the conference was a study trip by the General Director of the MOE to Denmark. During the stay the General Director was introduced to Danish school sport cultures, its principles, organisation and practices, through contact meetings with key stakeholder organisations and practitioners characterising the organising of sport in Denmark. Likewise, CCPA HQ held a consultancy meeting with the Minister of Education.

The conference addressed a wide range of issues relating to sport in schools and in particular focused on ways in which the Danish School Sports Federation model could

be adapted and implemented to meet needs in Lebanon. Important themes of the conference has been the linkage between the development of physical activities in schools during and outside school hours and the associated need for opening up of school premises allowing for extra-curricular activities outside school hours. In that case school premises can provide a basis for the creation of school clubs, further cater to local "Popular Sport Clubs" in need of physical infrastructure where to organise sport. Among more wide-ranging implications of a developed school sport sector are opportunities for a growing interaction among pupils, teachers and local communities where organised sport can act as a catalyst towards national dialogue and integrity.

A series of recommendations emerged from the conference, including: developing the school physical education; strengthening the links between schools and Popular Clubs; mobilizing school sports clubs; renovating school sports facilities; and improving the school sport tournament system in order to involve a greater number of schools and children.

Building upon the recommendations of the seminar, CCPA LBN implemented in collaboration with the MOE a consultative workshop with Physical Education (PE) teachers in October 2011. The seminar was attended by 110 PE teachers from public schools across Lebanon. The conference formed part of CCPA's ongoing activities to facilitate the creation of official policies and related administrative guidelines that can meet the developments of broad civil society engagement where organised grassroots sport is used as a hub for dialogue while cutting across existing divides among Lebanon's population groupings.

Further to the Popular Club-project, since December 2011 CCPA LBN has also participated in the SFCG peacebuilding television project, "The Team". As part of this collaboration, CCPA LBN was responsible of a school tournament, which was implemented across the country. After completing a programme of launching seminars and meetings and finalising the schedule of matches per district based, the CCPA Team School Tournament was initiated across the six districts of Lebanon, with the final prize giving ceremony held in May 2012. In total, through the CCPA Team School Tournament, CCPA LBN conducted six regional presentations with P.E-teachers and principals from sixty schools, and 156 matches for boys and girls (total participant numbers were 300 girls and 540 boys).

## 3.3 Advocacy of Rights for Special Needs Children

---

A further strand of CCPA LBN's promotion of an egalitarian sports culture is its advocacy activities concerning opportunities and rights for children with special needs to participate in sports. In cooperation with the MFA DK, between December 2011 and April 2012 CCPA LBN implemented a campaign of three Football Festivals (in Bint Jbeil, Mount Lebanon and Tripoli) through which the organisation has promoted giving young people with special needs the same opportunities as others. In total, these festivals involved 358 children and young people in need of a wide range of special care, from around twenty institutions from across Lebanon, joining hands with 130 children from the CCPA national network of 107 Popular Clubs.



Through these events, CCPA LBN has striven to confront the stigma experienced by many families with children in need of special care, further to demonstrate the positive effects of children participating in activities together, regardless of ability. The organisation views the integration of people with special needs into organised activities as an important development in terms of addressing some of the social disadvantages faced by those with disabilities in Lebanon.

Building on these advocacy activities at the grassroots level, CCPA LBN aspires to promote the rights of special needs children at the institutional level by establishing Popular Clubs for special needs children – which would join the organisation's network of Popular Clubs. *The first ever Popular Clubs in Lebanon for special needs children, this would constitute a milestone in the field of providing Rights of Association for disabled children on a par with those opportunities provided to children of other Popular Clubs.*

## 3.4 Media Engagement

---

CCPA LBN has strategically engaged with the media as a means of promoting awareness of the organisation's work. Given its advocacy involvement with regards to promoting a democratic sports sector, the organisation considers raising national awareness of the issues with which it is engaging as a crucial aspect of the project.

CCPA Lebanon's proactivity in this field is suggested by the fact that 363 news items on the organisation have been published or broadcast, through a variety of media (newspaper, TV, radio, online), between 2007 and 2012 (see overview of media engagement in Annex 3).

The organisation has been vigilant in maintaining its apolitical reputation by evenly engaging with Lebanese newspapers. This is particularly important given that the Lebanese media is strongly partisan and therefore to be seen to be aligned with a particular newspaper would risk damaging CCPA LBN's impartial credentials. The organisation's work has also been reported by international media based in the Middle East, Europe, Central and South Asia, the United States and Australasia. In addition, CCPA Lebanon promotes its activities via its regularly updated website (<http://www.ccpalebanon.com>) and Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/ccpalebanon>). Several of the Popular Clubs have also developed their own Facebook pages.

---

**“The project that has had the greatest media success - without comparison.”**

(Danish Ambassador to Lebanon on CCPA LBN)

---

## 3.5 Section Summary and Lessons Learned

---

CCPA LBN has undertaken advocacy for policy reforms informed by the concept of 'sport for all'. This has entailed:

- i. The successful lobbying of, and collaboration with, government actors in order to instigate legislative reform allowing for a Federation of Popular Clubs to be formed. In acting as an umbrella structure for Popular Clubs, CCPA LBN believes that the future Federation will function as a crucial mechanism for the long-term development and sustainability of Popular Clubs.
- ii. Advocacy activities and awareness-raising relating to the promotion of physical education in schools.
- iii. Advocacy activities and awareness-raising relating to the institutionalised discrimination suffered by special needs children in the area of sports.
- iv. Promotion of CCPA LBN's strategies and values through local, national and international media engagement.

### *Challenges and lessons learned*

- i. Formal establishment of the Popular Club Federation has been delayed by the deferment (for political reasons unconnected with CCPA LBN) of the Lebanese Parliament's acceptance of the amended decree 213.

## 4. CONCLUSION

---

This report has assessed the intervention by CCPA LBN in Lebanon from 2005 until the present, with the objective of identifying the achievements and challenges of the implementation of the programme.

### *Strategic Objectives*

This study has identified three issue-areas on which the CCPA LBN has focused: the development of a grassroots football sector; the implementation of CCPA LBN's educational/pedagogical values; and advocacy activities at the level of national government policy

The report finds that through each of these three initiatives, CCPA LBN has pursued two complementary, though distinct, objectives:

- i. To bridge divides between religious and political communities through children's football (This can be conceptualised as 'development through sport').
- ii. To promote democratisation of, and wider participation in, the sports sector (This can be conceptualised as 'development of sport').

### *Implementation*

With regard to the implementation of these strategic objectives, the following are the most important achievements and challenges as identified through this assessment:

#### *Achievements:*

- i. The establishment of a grassroots platform for children's sport through the establishment of a network of 107 Popular Clubs. The right of civil society actors to form non-elite grassroots clubs has constituted the breaking of the top-down monopoly of power which generally has characterised not only sports in Lebanon but also all elements of organised society. This has been achieved through the government's reform of administrative guidelines relating to the governance of sports organisations to meet grassroots sport needs whereby any seven individuals can now join together to establish a local association.
- ii. The promotion of cohesion between and within communities. Through inter-club Mini Tournaments, OFFS and OFFF, a range of actors (children, coaches, parents, municipality members) have been brought together. Of particular note, the organisation has facilitated interaction between deeply divided communities, such as the Jabal Mohsen and Bab al-Tibbaneh communities in Tripoli.
- iii. Policy reform of the governance and structure of the national sports sector. CCPA LBN's success in convincing the MOYS to twice amend decree 213 has been

critical in permitting the formation of a future Federation of Popular Clubs. The Popular Club Federation represents a ground-breaking development in the organisational structure of Lebanese sport: the bottom-up, democratic Popular Club Federation lies in direct contrast to the current elitist sports federations, governed by top-down management structures. Furthermore the Popular Club Federation is ideally placed to play a key role in the sustainability of Popular Clubs given that the apolitical and socially representative characteristics of the Popular Club Federation can be expected to cause it to be viewed favourably by government donors (e.g. MOYS). Further, the successful establishment of a Popular Club association will further cement the liberalisation of rights of association achieved by CCPA Lebanon through successfully advocating for changes made to administrative guidelines regarding the formation of Popular Clubs.

- iv. Awareness-raising of the 'sports for all' principle through strategic media engagement.

#### *Challenges:*

- i. Fostering a culture of voluntarism: For many stakeholders, the CCPA LBN project has been the first time they have been introduced to the concept of voluntarism. Each stage of the programme (OFFS, StreetSport, Popular Clubs) has been developed around a network of volunteers. Identifying willing volunteers, and ensuring their commitment to the programme, has been a key continuous challenge.
- ii. The involvement of all local stakeholders, including municipalities, is a core tenant of CPPA's philosophy. However, the intervention in Lebanon has been challenged by a reluctance and/or inability of municipalities to provide support to Popular Clubs beyond in-kind contributions.
- iii. The cost of transportation constitutes one of the greatest challenges to increased interaction between clubs, especially on a regional or national scale.
- iv. Promotion of female participants (girls and female coaches) has been especially challenging in some Muslim communities. However, there has been a notable increase in female participation since the start of the programme and the proportion of girls to boys currently stands between 13% and 19%.