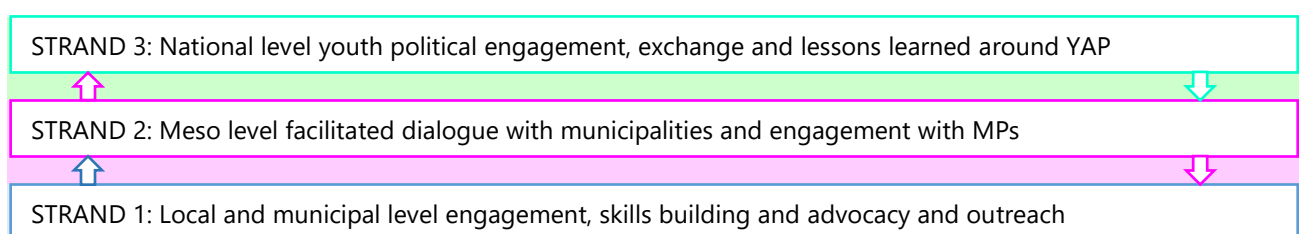## 2. Consortium's Approach and Methodology

Beneficiary groups: The Consortium members will target youth, aged 18-30, who will be eligible votes at the next elections and able to engage in political activism. Specifically, the project will target two sub-groups of young people. 1) youth who is already politically active with traditional political parties and civil society led movement and initiatives, including in universities (referred to as "youth leaders") and 2) less engaged youth who demonstrate interest and will benefit from capacity development and building their social capital through the project. The aim of this project is to explicitly work with new actors and dynamics within Lebanese politics, in addition to the established networks, platforms and parties. While youth leaders will expand their views and networks by engaging in dialogues, advocacy and activities with the municipalities and Parliament, the remaining youth will benefit more from trainings and opportunities to design and implement initiatives, develop their understanding and interest in political processes and be empowered to be active citizens. Though WFD, youth will have opportunities to engage with Parliamentarians. The secondary *beneficiary group* is formed of municipal officials, Parliamentarians and officials, whose capacity and openness to engage youth will be enhanced through the project.

Approach and activities: The project will work at three distinct levels, facilitating both horizontal (cross-community and cross-political strands) and vertical (citizen-state) relationships.

STRAND 3: National level youth political engagement, exchange and lessons learned around YAP

STRAND 2: Meso level facilitated dialogue with municipalities and engagement with MPs

STRAND 1: Local and municipal level engagement, skills building and advocacy and outreach

At the local level in selected municipalities, the project will target local youth groups, provide training, coaching and support to advocacy with local institutions on selected issues. This approach will facilitate trust-building in the political process at the local level; it will empower young men and women to demand participation and accountability, and advocate for the establishment of youth municipal committees and participation of youth in existing municipal committees. This approach will allow for a new group of young men and women to be drawn into political participation and activism. Experiences in Tripoli for example, have demonstrated that existing young leaders from political parties and civil society are viewed as "elitist", coming from a more privileged social background, educated and with a considerable social capital. Youth in underprivileged neighborhoods of Tripoli, where Shift works, have mostly clientelistic relationships with local political factions and do not necessarily understand the nuances and engage politically to change the situation in these areas. Furthermore, the eight years of clashes created a sense of apathy and inability to inflict change among youth. Therefore, the the [Roadmap to Reconciliation in Tripoli](#) (RRT[1]) partners had sensed a clear lack of motivation, initiative, and most importantly leadership skills among these youth who do not feel that they can influence or impact anything in the city. This was also clear from the lack of youth participation in the 2016 municipal elections or 2018 parliamentary elections.

While Beirut and Mount Lebanon were not as severely affected by violence and instability as Tripoli, many of the causes for youth mistrust and disengagement from politics are the same. Clientelist relationships with political leaders and parties continue to provide a lifeline for many families. Youth who have engaged with different social causes advocated by civil society organisations have also suffered disillusionment in the aftermath of the 2015 garbage protests, which did not bring the desired change, and the failure of civil society lists to gain more than a single seat in Parliament. The project will therefore engage youth groups

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[1] The RRT aims at laying the foundation for a long-term communal reconciliation process.

and support them in reaching out to local authorities and recognizing the value of youth participation and issue-based policy making.

Trainings for youth in the target municipalities will be designed and coordinated by the partners Shift and Dawaer, and will include leadership skills, communications, peacebuilding, countering-violent extremism, introduction to policy making and advocacy. Following the trainings, the youth groups will be supported to develop advocacy and outreach initiatives and implement them in their localities.

Activities at the local level constitute the 1st strand of the project, and include:

Strand 1 Activities
1.1.1   Identification of youth leaders in Beirut, Tripoli and Mount Lebanon
1.1.2   Curriculum development with Consortium members
1.1.3   Trainings for youth leaders in Tripoli, Beirut and Mount Lebanon in citizenship, governance and issue-based policy making
1.2.1   Workshops on analysing policy actors, issues and gaps
1.2.2   Planning of advocacy and outreach initiatives to address identified gaps
1.2.3   Accompanied implementation of advocacy and outreach initiatives

At the meso level, the project will establish political dialogue platforms across diverse political groups, engaging traditional and new political actors (Tripoli, Beirut) to build understanding of different ways of doing politics and the role of different approaches/ actors. Through this approach, the project will reach out to existing youth leaders and create much needed opportunities for dialogue. Dialogues on selected topics relevant to youth needs in Tripoli and Beirut will increase participants understanding of the issues discussed, the existing policy responses, the challenges to addressing needs in the two cities and the visions of different political actors on the way forward. The process will thus promote issue-based policy making as an alternative to confessional politics and will help bridge the gaps between activists and supporters of mainstream political parties, members of smaller political entities and activists within civil society. Furthermore, by inviting speakers from municipal councils, MPs and prominent political figures, the dialogues will enhance youth leaders' understanding of how political change happens and how it can most effectively be influenced by active citizens. At the meso level Alert will convene the dialogues with support from Shift and Dawaer. Alert will also seek to collaborate with existing initiatives such as Coffee and Politics, The Lebanese Politics Podcast, and other online spaces for critical discussion.

Activities at the local level constitute the 2nd strand of the project, and include:

Strand 2 Activities
2.1.1   Identification of existing platforms and establishing contacts with political parties and movements in Beirut, Tripoli and Mount Lebanon
2.1.2   Holding facilitated dialogues on specific policy issues
2.2.1   Dialogue sessions with selected municipalities
2.2.2   Engagement with Parliamentary committees and MPs on specific policy issues

At the national level, the project will provide opportunities to youth to engage directly with Parliament, on issues emerging from the local level advocacy and meso-level dialogues. As an additional output of the project, the lessons learnt from local-level advocacy will be consolidated into a lessons learnt report and shared with key stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the Youth Action Plan (the endorsement of which is expecting in mid-2019).

Strand 3 Activities
3.1.1   Workshops on lessons learnt held with key project stakeholders
3.1.2   Production of a lessons learnt report to inform the implementation of the Youth Action Plan
3.1.3   Sharing recommendations with key stakeholders involved in the YAP

3.2.1 Facilitating policy dialogue and exchange around the around the YAP

Conflict sensitivity and gender sensitivity: International Alert's value-add is its specific focus on conflict sensitivity in programming and support to partner organisations in integrating provisions for conflict sensitivity in their work. In the implementation of this project, Alert will convene the partners for regular context analysis meetings and discussions on possible project adaptations to ensure that the project staff identifies potential unintended impacts, mitigates them and maximises opportunities for positive change. Political engagement is an area of work that is particularly sensitive. Partners will ensure that throughout the project staff, trainers and facilitators do not promote affiliation with any particular actors. Instead the programming is centred on promoting principles of participation, transparency, accountability and inclusion, and overall human rights-based approach to policy making. The dialogue platforms will be planned with specific consideration of the political affiliations and perspectives of speakers and participants. The project team will aim to ensure a balance representation of political views from the different sides of the political spectrum as well as from traditional and new political actors.

Alert is also committed to ensuring gender sensitivity of all its programmes. Changing gender norms and gendered power dynamics more broadly is central to Alert's approach in peacebuilding, and we work explicitly on femininities and masculinities, as well as other gender identities where this is possible. In this project the team will not only aim to include a balanced split of male and female youth in activities, and encourage women to take leadership roles in the implementation of initiatives, but will also specifically seek to give voice to women politicians and activists, women members of municipal councils and civil society leaders. Women's political participation is likely to be included as a topic of the dialogues, aimed to highlight specific barriers and opportunities for the participation of young women in politics. The project will also promote women role models by working with professional female project staff, trainers, facilitators and guest speakers.

Geographic targeting: The target locations are selected based on two specific criteria: potential for change and availability of diverse political forces. Beirut and Tripoli are selected due to their unprecedented potential for political change, as demonstrated in the 2016 municipal elections. As the two large urban centres in Lebanon, Beirut and Tripoli largely define the political dynamics at the national level.

Tripoli is further selected due to its multiple local political forces and a history of violent confrontation. Furthermore, youth in some neighbourhoods of Tripoli continue to be among the most marginalised groups in the country with limited economic and educational opportunities. The contested political space and the large number of civil society initiative that have emerged after the Tripoli clashes provide for a rich dialogue on the role of youth in local development.

Beirut Municipality is politically diverse with a strong support base for new political actors as demonstrated by the 2016 municipal elections. The presence of many civil society organisations in the capital provides alternative views on policy making centred on advocacy, campaigning and direct engagement with institutions on specific issues. **Baakline Municipality** is diverse politically and is aiming currently to have a more effective role of the youth in the community. Baakline was part of the municipalities that Dawaer has worked with within the "Social Stability Initiative" in partnership with UNDP and thus, positive relationships prevail that will facilitate the process. **Chiah Muncipality** is diverse politically, has a child council that works to promote a child friendly city. In addition, the municipality is positive and willing and is also part of the social stability project. In the area of Chiah, Dawaer has worked with the ministry of social affairs and youth in schools which will also facilitate the communication and implementation. **Beit Mery Municipality** is diverse politically, active and has implemented several community initiatives related to recycling and cultural heritage. Dawaer has positive communication channels with the municipality which will facilitate implementation. **Jounieh Municipality** is an active municipality and engages youth in sports and cultural activities. Moreover, the mayor of the municipality is also the head of the unions of municipalities in Kesrwen which will enhance the promotion and the replication of the initiative to the other municipalities.

Local partnerships: The Consortium members will engage local organisation able to convene youth groups, provide training and support advocacy with municipality and others. In Tripoli, youth groups will be introduced to existing interest or advocacy groups active in the city on issues such as statelessness, families of the detainees, Disabled from the clashes (Harake Barake), Taht El Saef and Qalb El Mashrouaa (Hariri Communal Housing) and Former Fighters. Additional interest groups will be identified along the course of the training pertained as relevant to the participants interests.

The main goal for that exposure is to link youth with actual causes they can support and build a relationship with as part of their course but also beyond that in the future. They will be later divided into groups to work on supporting different advocacy campaigns and causes as relevant. Therefore, these visits will help them learn about challenges, lessons learned, and best practices.

Networking is an essential tool to reach out to as many politicians, institutions, political and social activists as possible. Thus, youth groups will create strong bonds with the local communities by raising awareness (flyers, brochures, local magazine, blogs etc…), with politicians and MPs on local and national level, institutions, municipalities, and other key stakeholders. Networking is also essential among the youth themselves and this can be made through trainings on communication and mitigation as well through activities that gather them together and enhance cohesion among them before networking with different stakeholders along with teambuilding activities.

In Beirut and Mount Lebanon, town hall meetings will engage local organisations, scouts, the Ministry of Social Affairs' Social Development Centers, political parties, and independent youth leaders who are politically active. The role of schools and parents will also be emphasized in the support of youth in implementing policies and campaigns.

At the meso level, as identified above, partnerships will be pursued with existing debate clubs and producers of online content. At the central level, the project will be coordinated with other initiatives supporting transparency and accountability, as well as organisations supporting the Parliament.

Linkages to national-level strategies: The project will be directly linked to the Youth Strategy and the Youth Action Plan and will engage responsible ministries based on learning from the field. The National Action Plan on Prevention of Violent Extremism (expected to be finalized at the end of 2019) and its chapter on youth empowerment is another relevant policy framework. As it is working with the Swiss MFA and in partnership with British Council on the PVE consultations process, with relationships with the PVE National Coordinator's Office, Alert is well positioned to identify and create synergies with these processes. The Consortium will identify opportunities for creative engagement with the National Coordinator on PVE and relevant Ministries to exchange experiences and inform the modalities of action plan implementation.

Communication and visibility: A communication and visibility plan will be developed with the Consortium members at the start of the project and will be based on partners' understanding of local sensitivities in the targeted areas. Specific objectives of the communications and visibility plan:

- To amply the reach of the project through strategic advocacy and use of communications.

- To communicate the objectives of the project transparently to young people, local and national government, community leaders, CSOs, INGOs and other stakeholders.

- Raise awareness of role of young people in dialogue and democratic processed.

- To inform policy and practice of key project stakeholders, practitioners and decision-makers (such as CSSF Lebanon) through disseminating the learning and outcomes of the project.

- To promote the work of CSSF and contribute to its communications and visibility objectives.

- To ensure that this project is visible in a way that ensures safety of staff, partners and participants