

## **Thematic Area A: Security sector reform and security sector capacity building**

Siren is a specialist security sector development organisation. Our multilingual team of 32 core staff, based in Belfast, Beirut and Amman and database of 220 short and long-term experts have expertise in police leadership and change management, serious and organised crime, Crime Scene Investigation and forensics, human rights, community policing, community engagement and safety, analysis and planning, close protection, firearms, public order, and ICT design and programming. Siren is gender-balanced, with 50% women on its Board of Directors and over 56% women among its core staff. Siren has built trust with police leadership in Lebanon (since 2008) and in Jordan (since 2013) and has worked in Yemen and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), as well as on Syria. In 2017, the British Policing Support Project (BPSP 2016-2019 - jointly implemented by Siren in Lebanon) was graded A by the CSSF annual project review, and in 2016 our Jordan Police Programme JPOL (2014-2017) was graded A/A+.

**Siren values and vision.** A not-for-profit organisation specialising in security sector reform (SSR), Siren helps develop safe and secure societies where there is equal access to justice and freedom from fear. We empower organisations to become more responsive to the needs of communities, consistent with the HMG Stabilisation Unit *Policing the Context*.<sup>1</sup> We guide our beneficiaries through strategic change processes, combining an organisational development approach with advanced technology and customised solutions. Committed to making a difference, we believe that the development of capabilities **cannot be done for organisations** - it must be done **by and in effective partnership with them**. As a result, our approach to SSR is collaborative, client-centred and holistic. We employ rigorous problem analysis and innovative interventions that are gender and conflict sensitive to drive sustainable change, driven by our experience and our commitment to Human Rights centred SSR.<sup>2</sup> Working in fragile and conflict-affected states, we recognise the value of being flexible, adaptable and responsive to our clients' changing needs and changing environments. Our diverse, multidisciplinary teams are highly skilled in the area of SSR.

### **Increasing the capability, accountability and responsiveness of national, local and community level security architectures and structures**

Siren is helping the senior command of the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF) face the challenge of strategic planning. Siren's approach is holistic, deploying expertise in change management, research, strategic planning and analysis through training, mentorship, infrastructure, institutional restructuring, policy development and advocacy. **The result of this integrated approach is the ISF Strategic Plan (2018-2022), endorsed by the President, Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, ISF Director General, and senior police command.** The implementation of the plan, founded on evidence-based research and analysis, will **enable the ISF to become more responsive to security demands**. It will also **support accountability in the ISF**, through its objective 3, "Protect Human Rights and Enhance Accountability" and **increase overall effectiveness** through its objective 4, "Improve Professionalism and Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness". Siren's work with the ISF in one Beirut Police Station (Ras Beirut) has already seen **public levels of full trust in the station rise from 21% (2013) to 46% (2016)**. Siren also worked with the ISF to establish a commitment to advancing the role of women in policing, which is now enshrined in the ISF Strategic Plan. The comprehensive nature of Siren's approach was praised in the ICAI 2018 Report.<sup>3</sup>

### **Security for vulnerable, marginalised and excluded groups, including women, girls and children**

Through the CSSF-funded Jordan Policing Support Programme 2013-2017 (JPOL), Siren supported the government to **respond to the lack of police presence and poor security for refugees in Za'atari and Azraq refugee camps**. Analysis showed that there were insufficient numbers of community police to engage effectively with refugees, leaving

<sup>1</sup> The document 'Policing the Context: Principles and Guidance to Inform International Policing Assistance' (HMG 2014), notes that 'an effective and accountable police service is critical to maintaining national security, safeguarding social and economic development and to helping countries affected by conflict to become more stable, and more peaceful'.

<sup>2</sup> As outlined in the principles of HMG's 'Overseas Security and Justice Assistance: Human Rights Guidance', updated Jan 2017.

<sup>3</sup> The Independent Commission for Aid Impact March 2018 report, 'The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund's Aid Spending: A Performance Review' noted that, 'Training is a common activity for the CSSF in all six of our case studies. In some instances, it is a sensible part of a wider package of support. The CSSF's work with community police in Jordan, for example, included not just training but also mentoring, new standard operating procedures, institutional reforms, infrastructure and equipment.' p.24

community safety issues unresolved and refugees vulnerable as potential victims of crime. We facilitated the introduction of Community Policing in the camps in early 2014, leading to increased security and residents reporting greater confidence in the Jordanian police. In an end-of-project review commissioned by the British Embassy Amman in 2017, JPOL was praised for being 'a timely and relevant response' as well as 'an example of good, flexible, innovative and effective programming', in addition to being upheld as a model of 'speed and agility', illustrating Siren's ability to deliver at pace.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, **70% of Azraq residents independently surveyed cited the Community Police as the most trusted agency in the camp**<sup>5</sup>. In January 2015 in Za'atari Camp, **61% more residents reported that they would interact with the police than in 2013; 97% of Azraq residents surveyed agreed that the presence of CPAs made the camp a safer place.**<sup>6</sup>

#### **Human rights-compliant counter-terrorism legislation development and capacity building**

Early in its programming in Jordan, Siren identified the inability of different security agencies to share even routine intelligence, undermining the collective response to terrorism. As a result, an 'Investigative Counter-Terrorism Policing' workstream was developed. Siren helped to build the capacity of the various security agencies to gather, process and effectively utilise and share intelligence for CT. Siren recognises that effective intelligence gathering is largely dependent on the willingness of ordinary citizens to engage with and report unusual activity to the police. As a result, Siren works with the police to build trusting relationships with communities within the camps, in host communities and in exclusively Jordanian communities through a community policing programme. Siren is working to enable early detection of suspicious extremist behaviour by fostering links between the community police and religious leaders in Syrian refugee camps. As a result, there **was a 277% increase in the number of cases reported to the Community Police in Azraq camp**. This figure **reached 393% in Za'atari by September 2016.**<sup>7</sup> This is a prime example of the interdependence between security sector reform, counter-terrorism and state-civil society engagement, which Siren fully understands and integrates into its programming.

**Siren's innovation in SSR.** In line with DFID's 'Digital Strategy 2018 to 2020'<sup>8</sup>, Siren considers digital technology a crucial tool in SSR. To this end, Siren has developed a partnership with CME, a leading technology provider in the Middle East, enabling us to engage in innovative research and development initiatives. In Lebanon, Siren developed Fenix™, a software that captures police workflows and a broad range of police operations, including investigations, patrols, intelligence, complaints, and inspections, allowing for data analysis. **The software, now used by all departments of the Beirut police, was designed in response to needs identified by the Beirut police and in close collaboration with them.** In addition, the Siren team has recently built a prototype adapting **Blockchain technology and a distributed ledger approach to the software, ensuring interoperability, transparency, confidentiality, and security.** This is a pioneering development in the field of security sector reform.

#### **Capacity building, strengthening structures and response arrangements for crisis management and major incidents**

Since 2013, Siren has been working with the Jordanian Gendarmerie to improve its command and control capability, and more recently its Critical Incident Response. The 2016 terrorist attack at Karak, which led to 14 deaths and 37 injuries, highlighted the need to further enhance command and control and to improve the effectiveness of first responders. In the last year, through Siren's Critical Incident Response workstream and a Training of Trainers programme, 110 Rapid Response Unit members have been trained and a training facility for tactical entry and search has been refurbished. Through a separate Canadian-funded Siren project, **84 male and female officers** will be trained as Rapid Response Unit tactical trauma medics and **46 female officers** will receive Tactical Response Team firearms training by March 2019. In addition 71 commanders have attended workshops to improve command and control capabilities. Two communications campaigns are being developed: an internal 'Stay Safe' campaign which targets first responders, and a nationwide 'Be Safe' campaign which gives guidance to the public on how to respond to incidents. This represents a comprehensive and innovative approach to improving critical incident response.

<sup>4</sup> Jordan Policing Project: *End of Project Review*, 2017, p6, p1, p19

<sup>5</sup> REACH & UNHCR, *Mass Communications in Azraq Refugee Camp*, December 2015, p6

<sup>6</sup> University of Jordan Centre for Strategic Studies, 'Perceptions of Police Survey', April 2016

<sup>7</sup> Figures given to Siren by Syrian Refugee Affairs Directorate Community Police

<sup>8</sup> Department for International Development, 'Digital Strategy 2018 to 2020: Doing Development in a Digital World', January 2018

## **Thematic Area B: State-Civil Society Engagement**

Siren believes that stability and prosperity must be built inclusively, working together with state and non-state actors. Only in this way can states develop legitimate institutions and governance to provide security, justice, and economic opportunities.<sup>9</sup> This is evident in the Middle East, Siren's primary area of implementation, where cycles of violence continue to be aggravated by the distance and distrust between state and citizen. Siren engages with a range of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to empower marginalised voices, while working in a way that avoids dependence and promotes sustainability. Specifically, Siren understands from experience that meaningful security sector reform is not feasible without strong state-civil society engagement. We have adopted three different approaches to promoting state responsiveness to civil society: (1) direct support for capacity building of CSOs, (2) support for civil society and the state to work together, and (3) support to the state to work with civil society.

From Siren's headquarters in Beirut and offices in Jordan and Belfast, we have built relationships with local and international civil society organisations. Siren's team has strong experience working with civil society in Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen and the OPTs. We have expertise in organisational formation and management, conflict and gender analysis, community assessment and research, and police-community engagement.

### **Direct support to civil society: Developing the capacity and sustainability of nascent organisations**

Siren has supported civil society to engage with the Lebanese state around controversial issues such as state corruption. In 2014, Siren was CSSF-funded to research issues around corruption and the consequent lack of trust in the Internal Security Forces (ISF) and other government institutions. As part of the research, Siren held an extended workshop attended by local and international specialists and civil society representatives in anti-corruption. This led to the formation of the local anti-corruption NGO Sakker el Dekkene ('Close the Cornershop', in reference to the 'cornershop state', where everything is 'for sale'). Siren then provided project management design and delivery and organisational support to Sakker el Dekkene. Four years later, [Sakker el Dekkene](#) continues to provide an online platform for Lebanese people to report cases of corruption, large and small, which are reported in real time to create a 'leaderboard' of state agencies by degree of corruptness (see Figure 1). Siren achieved sustainable results as Sakker el Dekkene became financially self-supportive after the British Embassy's initial funding.



### **Supporting the state and civil society to work together in the application of law and order: promoting harmonious local governance through inclusive decision-making and planning processes**

Security institutions that lack legitimacy cannot provide sufficient security for communities, risking instability and violence. In Lebanon, lack of trust in the Internal Security Forces (ISF) results in people preferring to report crime and

<sup>9</sup> The World Bank 'World Development Report: Conflict, Security, and Development', 2011, p.2

concerns, and seek remedies via non-state actors, thereby undermining the legitimacy of the state and eroding its capacity to apply law and order. Recognising the asymmetric relationship between state and civil society on security sector reform in Lebanon<sup>10</sup>, Siren is committed to bridging the gap between these actors. To that end, Siren works to **build the state's legitimacy and stability** by supporting the ISF to engage with communities and civil society on law and order in a human rights compliant manner. Through the CSSF-funded Internal Security Forces Professionalism, Rights and Outreach (ISF PRO Project 2008-2016) and British Policing Support Project (BPSP 2016-2019), Siren has developed a pioneering model police station together with the ISF, which places the community at the heart of policing. The model is now being rolled out across Beirut. Siren ensured that Civil Society representatives were fully engaged in the design of the police station and concept of policing, ensuring that it represents the needs of citizens. As a result, the model police station allows for ease of access by all citizens, including the disabled, provides a venue for meetings between the police and local residents and establishes a framework of neighbourhood policing which is close to the community. Integral to the concept of the model police station was an ISF Code of Conduct, developed in 2012 by the ISF, civil society and Siren.

In designing a framework for police-civil society interaction, Siren supported the ISF to set up platforms **for formal engagement** (public meetings, working groups, grant schemes, visits to public institutions, grant partnerships) and **informal engagement** (neighbourhood patrolling, relationship building in the community). Through these meetings, Siren brought the ISF together with more formalised organisations including CSOs such as KAFA (countering family violence), universities, NGOs, and student bodies. Equally, more informal groupings of concerned residents had opportunities to collaborate on particular issues through the formation of temporary working groups to engage with the police on specific issues including begging, traffic and rehabilitation of public spaces. Between 2013 and 2016, **the likelihood of a member of the public making a report to the police if they witnessed a threat to law and order rose from 39% to 51%**. As a result of our work, the **ISF leadership have now enshrined the concept of engaging with civil society in its policy guidelines**, including the ISF Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and the Policing Modernisation Roll-Out Guidelines.

#### **Supporting social cohesion and conflict resolution in local communities to build resilience to conflict and instability**

The empowerment of youth can be a powerful tool in improving the relationship between the state and society through conflict resolution. Siren supported youth to gain skills and create platforms to engage with the state in the city of Russeifa, an industrialised area in Zarqa Governorate (Jordan) that suffers from spiraling unemployment, a relatively high crime rate and a risk of radicalisation. Siren, as part of the UK Policing Support Team, worked with a Jordanian NGO, Al Aman for Rehabilitation and Human Rights, in the Community Safety Ambassadors Project (2017-2018) joint-funded by Japan and UNDP.

For this project, Siren and Al Aman carried out a conflict and needs analysis of relations between the state and the community in Russeifa. Consequently, Siren and Al Aman's gender balanced training team trained 27 Community Ambassadors, including 17 women, in problem solving, partnerships, working with vulnerable groups and identifying drivers for local crime, disorder and radicalisation, in order to support them to engage with state agencies, notably the police. These Community Ambassadors then took on conflict resolution responsibilities within their communities, working together with the police. The youth involved in the project responded extremely positively, noting the particular value of gaining international experience and placing themselves within a broader context of civil society. This led to a concept note for a sustainable follow-up project being accepted by a major donor.

Siren is dedicated to the practice of state and civil society working together to build sustainable peace and break conflict cycles. It values the perspectives of civil society and its ability to represent diverse communities, carrying out ongoing consultation and organizing staff trainings from CSOs on issues such as gender-based violence (April 2018) and drug abuse and mental illness (July 2018). With its experience and capabilities in engagement, Siren works effectively with the state and civil society and plays a productive bridging role between them.

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<sup>10</sup> International Alert, 'Civil Society's Role in Security Sector Reform in Lebanon, An Asymmetric Partnership Despite A Growing Working Relationship with Security Services', 2015, p5.