



CMIC

MOBILISATION COMMUNAUTAIRE EN CRISE
COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN CRISIS

التنظيم المجتمعي في الأزمات



uOttawa

ANNUAL REPORT

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN CRISIS

2019



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The Community Mobilization in Crisis (CMIC) Project has continued to expand its work and growth of the communities of knowledge throughout 2019 with workshops, pilots, and continuous collaborations with our grassroots and institutional partners in Canada, the United States, Brazil, Lebanon, Palestine, and Kurdish Iraq. The CMIC community involves researchers, academics, organizers, students, staff, and community members worldwide whose active engagement help create innovative open-access educational materials centered around community mobilization. This report documents the work of the CMIC project in 2019 along two different routes. First, we tested and implemented the curricular materials developed during 2017-18 in a variety of contexts in Canada, the US, Lebanon, and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Second we worked towards building the foundations for a certificate program, including conducting more research to build more teaching materials, improving and developing our platform for ensuring these materials can be easily accessed, and beginning the process of negotiating with a new institutional partner in Lebanon, Université St. Joseph.

Testing and Implementing The Curriculum

SSHRC Training of Trainers Workshops

CMIC received a Connection Grant from the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) in 2018 to run Training of Trainers workshops in Beirut, New York, Ottawa, and Toronto. CMIC invited mobilizers, NGO staff, and those interested in the topic to workshops titled “Shift the Power”. The workshops focused on community-based decisions in designing, creating, and implementing projects internationally and locally. During this time, we asked what the role of a community's agency is when we talk about implementing projects that address social issues specific to a certain context, what the practical differences between international initiatives and local ones are, who holds the power in the decision-making process, and if not the community, then how do we shift this power to them.

CMIC used the digital resources to engage in a series of knowledge mobilization activities, in Canada, Lebanon, the United States to promote the use of the materials in different settings and contexts. Two workshops have been conducted in Ottawa and New York in December 2018 with local grassroots organizations, student activists, and local community members, exposing attendees to the materials and giving them time and space to reflect on their own practice. In January 2019, a pair of workshops were delivered in partnership with Shams Network, attracting NGOs, local organizers, and Lebanese and Syrian civil society members. Two workshops in Toronto were implemented with the Arab Community Centre of Toronto, the first a full-day staff development workshop focused on incorporating greater community engagement and participation as well as addressing key issues in the workplace, the second an evening workshop with a youth group to brainstorm ideas for new projects to develop and run.



التنظيم المجتمعي في الأزمات
Community Mobilization in Crisis
Mobilisation communautaire en crise



uOttawa

**BUILDING
YOUTH-LED
COMMUNITY
INITIATIVES**
AN ACCT YOUTH
DISCUSSION
SESSION



TORONTO 2019

APRIL 18TH

@ 5 PM

**1855 LAWRENCE AVE. E.
SCARBOROUGH**



CMIC@UOTTAWA.CA



uOttawa Student Initiatives

Students at the University of Ottawa have been engaging with the CMIC curriculum as part of their classes with Professor Nadia Abu-Zahra at the International Development and Global Studies department. In class, students are encouraged to work in their “own backyards” as opposed to adopting a saviour complex that would have pushed them into involving themselves into another community’s issues. This is critical to address, especially in fields as International Development, in order to acknowledge the existing global power dynamics and try to educate future practitioners in this field about their roles in either perpetuating these dynamics or attempting to shift them. When working in one’s own backyard, the individual is best equipped with the knowledge and experience of their own environment, and hence, has the capacity to influence change in a matter that is well studied and considerate to all aspects. In this space, the person has insider knowledge on the inner workings of their communities and systems at play. The students were asked to identify a problem that they wished to address in their own “backyards” and communities so that they can think of ways to mobilize. The courses required students to take a leap from the theoretical learning of mobilizations and community organization to the practical implication of this knowledge.

Some of the issues that the students have identified include facing anxiety, finding ways to connect global advocacy efforts, working with youth to foster self-acceptance, and providing clothes for job interviews, among others. The students tapped into their community resources and networks in order to work on a collective effort to help address a problem that they believed affected them and others around them. One group came together to start knitting circle as a coping mechanism open to students to help with their daily anxiety that they face, while another group, “Clothing the Deal”, collected second-hand clothing suited for work and interviews from their friends and relatives and held a day for people to pass by and pick what they needed free of charge.

One particular initiative showed the development of the community mobilization mindset and practice over time. Another initiative incorporated dance as a tool to work with highschool girls to address issues that they are facing in their daily lives. At first, the student organizing this initiative took it upon herself to organize and mobilize every aspect of the initiative. But once she realized that the girls were not as invested in the dance classes as she was, she decided to involve them in the decision making process. The girls were now responsible for helping with organizing the weekly dance sessions, picking the songs, choreography, and the issue that they were to discuss as a group. Once they had taken a part in organizing the initiative, they began to take ownership of the initiatives and fulfill their parts to make things work. Part of the CMIC curriculum now tackles this issue of delegating tasks and committing to making the mobilization or initiative a communal effort and ownership rather than an individualistic one.



Pilot in Dohuk, Kurdistan Region of Iraq

CMIC collaborated with Youth Speak, an NGO in Duhok, in order to deliver a five-week course titled “Designing Community Solutions” in March and throughout May, 2019. Youth Speak utilized CMIC’s curriculum in a way that suited the context and the needs of the community in Duhok. Since CMIC’s materials already were intended to be flexible and repackaged by NGOs and community organizations, the process of designing the program was centered on what tools were needed in a context of refuge and crisis specific to the community on the ground. The course focused on the skills needed to hone community-based design, creation, and implementation of projects. Participants in the course were asked to think about local needs and issues affecting their communities and in turn, CMIC and Youth Speak worked towards highlighting the skills needed to best utilize these resources, as well as provide support towards skills in communication, assessment, and group work. Participants began designing community-based initiatives that addressed main issues in the community spanning from the economic, political, and even environmental. One project aimed at reducing waste during the everyday and intended on giving plastics new life as sustainable and reusable bags, while another project wanted to address a bureaucratic barrier that refugees have been going up against in terms of receiving paperwork and registration. The Youth Speak team remained in touch with the participants after the end of the course in order to further support the initiatives and ensure a continuity to their efforts, and this follow up became very important as internally displaced refugees began to make their way to Duhok towards the end of 2019. The participants from the course realized the sensitivity of the situation and mobilized to adapt their initiatives to the urgent needs of the new arrivals. For example, one participant changed their project to sew winter clothing and accessories and engage the community to provide the materials and the working hands needed to produce these warm articles of clothes.

CMIC continues its collaboration with Youth Speak in order to provide support to these initiatives and provide them with a platform to share their experiences and become authors in the community mobilization curriculum.



CMIC & YOUTH SPEAK

دئ خولەکی لژیر ناڤی
"دیزاین کرنا چاره سه ریپین جفاکی"
پیشکیشکهن

دهوک ۲۰۱۹

۳۱ ی ئاداری - ۵ ی گولانی

پینج دهفتیپین فیڤرکرنی بریکا ئینته رنیتی (ئونلاین) ویڤکفه روینشتن
وانه دبی بهرامبهرن

دوماهیک ژفان بو خو تۆمارکرنی ۱۸ ی ئاداری

[HTTPS://GOO.GL/FORMS/PNEGikOD05WPVDY01](https://goo.gl/forms/PNEGikOD05WPVDY01)

بو پتر پیزانینان هوین دشین بریکا فان ناڤو نیشانان په یوه ندیی بکهن

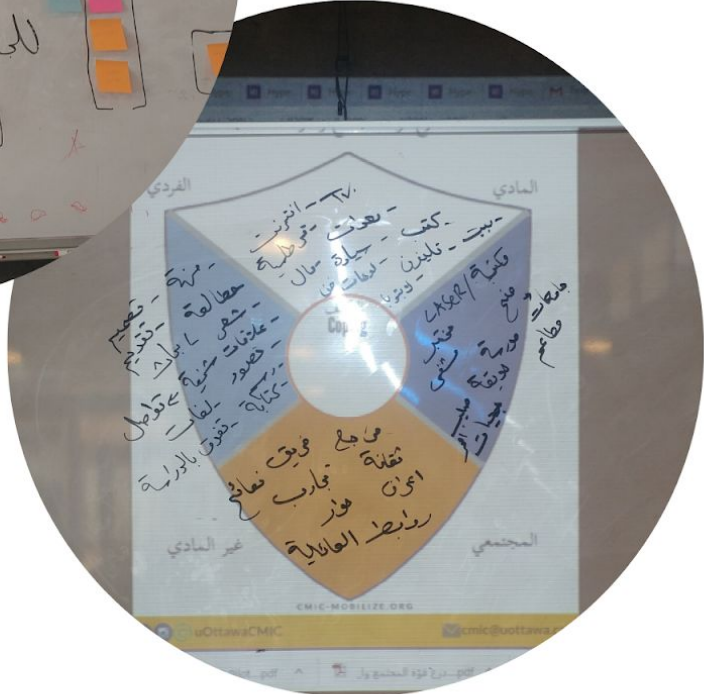
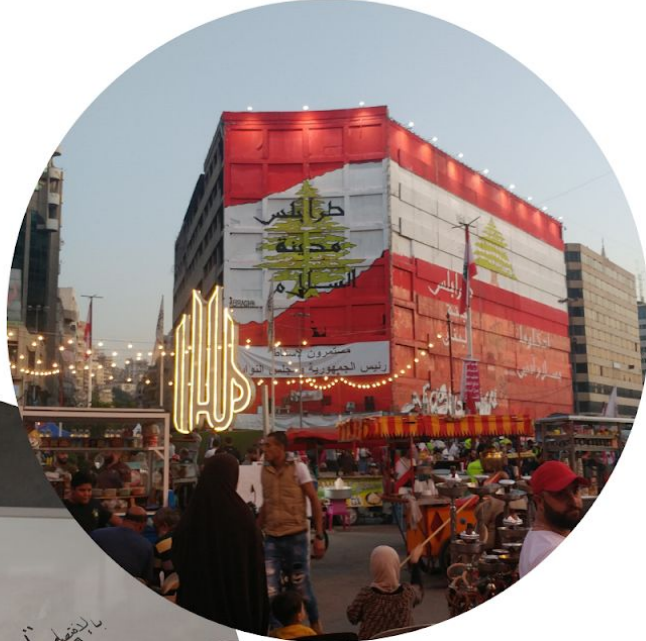
MKELLY@YOUTHSPEAKNGO.ORG

CMIC@UOTTAWA.CA



Pilot in Tripoli, Lebanon

Supported by funding from the Issam Fares Institute of the American University of Beirut, CMIC collaborated with the Lebanese Association for Scientific Research (LAsER), an NGO which works with Syrian youth in Tripoli to increase access to higher education and successful completion of secondary school, in order to run a pilot of our materials focused on identifying and mobilizing against barriers to the secondary to post-secondary transition. The process of holding the pilot was disrupted multiple times because of the civil uprising in Lebanon in October and November of 2019, the original scheduled period for the pilot; however, it was able to be implemented in November and December. The pilot brought together thirty-five Syrian youth, most of whom were still in secondary school but also some who were in university programs or who were not formally enrolled. Over the course of nine sessions (extended from six sessions as originally planned, in dialogue with LAsER staff and the youth themselves), youth built their mobilization skills, identified key barriers to their educational progress, and developed mobilizations that responded to these barriers. The six mobilizations developed responded to issues such as challenges in English learning, the need for tutoring in specific subjects, access to scholarships, concerns, and better integration between Syrians, Lebanese, and Palestinians. After the pilot, three projects were selected for continued support in 2020; however, these initiatives were launching right around the time when Lebanon began a lockdown in response to the novel coronavirus, so implementation has been paused until the summer.



Building The Foundations

Data Collection and Research

With support from the National Geographic Society's Explorers Grant, the CMIC team worked with our partners in Canada, Lebanon, Palestine, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and Brazil to document how people who had learned with our materials used them to support their own mobilizations, as well as to document additional mobilizations. The goal of this project is to develop a variety of open-access teaching resources, including blog posts, short video case studies, as well as longer comparative videos suitable for classroom use, covering a total of 25 different mobilizations.

In the summer of 2019, Diana recorded students in Nadia's courses discussing their mobilizations, and has edited some of them into brief case studies, which are currently being translated and subtitled. In November 2019, Emily worked with Dalia Association, a CMIC partner organization headquartered in Ramallah, Palestine, to collect five case studies of mobilizations supported in part by Dalia. These included a youth group in Na'ilin which organized a festival to support a variety of initiatives in the village, as well as emphasize the historic value of the town; a women's cooperative in the multiply-displaced community of Susya, outside of Hebron; the first community-supported agriculture farm in Palestine, Om Suleiman Farm, built on land reclaimed from a crucial lawsuit against the Israeli separation wall; a kitchen project that grew from over thirty years of mobilizing among women in a mixed Christian-Muslim village; and a second-hand store that aims to address issues of consumerism, environmental impact, and generating community funding for local projects. Data collection is underway in Brasilia, Brazil, where two projects have already been recorded, Horta Comunitária de Itapoã, a community garden, and Tulipas do Cerrado, a network of harm reduction practitioners and sex workers in the region around Brasilia. The uprising in Lebanon delayed our data collection there, but the youth who were engaged in the Tripoli pilot mentioned above will likely become a part of the data collection and their mobilizations will be highlighted. In addition, new refugee arrivals from Rojava delayed data collection in Dohuk, but Youth Speak will focus on the youth who participated in their pilot.

Research and Platform Development

In line with our co-creation and collaborative philosophy, the CMIC project aims to continuously create new resources and update existing ones as our conversation with mobilizers, staff members, and community members expands. After delivering the Training of Trainers workshops in Canada, the United States, and Lebanon as part of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's (SSHRC) Connection Grant, as well as implementing the pilots in Lebanon, Brazil, and Iraq and using the materials in uOttawa classes, identify key areas in need of further resource development, such as:

- ▶ What is Community Mobilization
- ▶ Community-based Psycho-Social Support
- ▶ Starting in your own backyard
- ▶ Facilitation & Moderating Conflict
- ▶ Program Management Skills
- ▶ Research Skills
- ▶ Proposal and Grant writing
- ▶ NGO-ization & the Non-funded Model of Operation

Material development in these areas is ongoing.

Meanwhile, the AUB team that collaborated with the uOttawa team to implement the pilot in 2018, Dr. Sawsan Abdulrahim and Zahraa Beydoun, have continued work on the three case studies they developed in advance of the pilot, turning each of them into a detailed, multi-vocal case study for classroom use. Sawsan and her colleagues at the School of Public Health plan to test these materials in their teaching, and they will be made available through the CMIC website.

In addition, feedback from those interacting with the online resources have provided us with technical input in order to transform the website into a more user-friendly platform that allows users to fully engage with the resources and make the best use of it through networking and community building online. As a first step, we are placing materials in static formats on the website at <http://cmic-mobilize.org/materials>, sorted by language. These materials consist of thematically organized 'learning objects,' which consist of introductory text (which varies in length from object to object), a video or written material that expands upon the introductory text, and a series of e-portfolio questions which aim to guide the user into thinking about their own experiences, initiatives, or goals. CMIC has developed a complete guide on how to use the materials in their different formats and options as either a mobilizer in training, a team leader in an organization or group, civil society activists, or individuals trying to learn new techniques and new themes. The Trainer's Guidebook can be found here: <http://cmic-mobilize.org/materials/the-trainers-guidebook/>.

However, our materials are meant to be remixable and stackable, in order to permit different users to create dynamic presentations of the material in different learning scenarios. In particular, we want to ensure that different users can build 'playlists' either for their personal use, or to share with, for example, students enrolled in a class or community mobilizers participating in a program. This will both greatly increase usability for us, and make the materials more useful for other users. We are collaborating with a WordPress developer based here in Ottawa with familiarity with academic applications to implement this new platform in the coming months.

Certificate Program in Collaboration with the USJ

The Chief Internationalization Officer of uOttawa, Adel El Zaim, facilitated a connection between the CMIC team and the Faculty de Sciences Humaines at Université St. Joseph, a major private university with a large campus in Beirut as well as satellite campuses in other regions. After several conversations, Emily traveled to Lebanon in November 2019 in order to meet in person. Vice-Recteur Carla Eddé, Dean Christiane Assaf, and Professor Michel Abs, the chair of the sociology and psychology department, met with Emily and Diana and began conversations about curriculum, administration, and student recruitment which was very satisfactory. Upon returning from that trip, we began the administrative process of negotiating a memorandum of understanding between our two universities, as well as drafting a program budget to understand the financial implications of working in this manner. Although the closures due to the novel coronavirus have substantially delayed this work, we are hopeful that we will sign a formal MOU in the coming months and begin work on implementing this program.

NADIA ABU-ZAHRA, CO-DIRECTOR
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL STUDIES
UOTTAWA

EMILY REGAN WILLS, CO-DIRECTOR
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
SCHOOL OF POLITICAL STUDIES,
UOTTAWA

DIANA EL RICHANI, PROJECT MANAGER
M.A ANTHROPOLOGY, UOTTAWA



CMIC@UOTTAWA.CA
CMIC-MOBILIZE.ORG
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
120 UNIVERSITÉ PRIVATE
OTTAWA, ON K1N 6N5
CANADA