



uOttawa



Our resources are being built to be fully trilingual, in Arabic, English, and French, and will be available for educators and organizers worldwide to incorporate into their work.

Community Mobilization in Crisis:

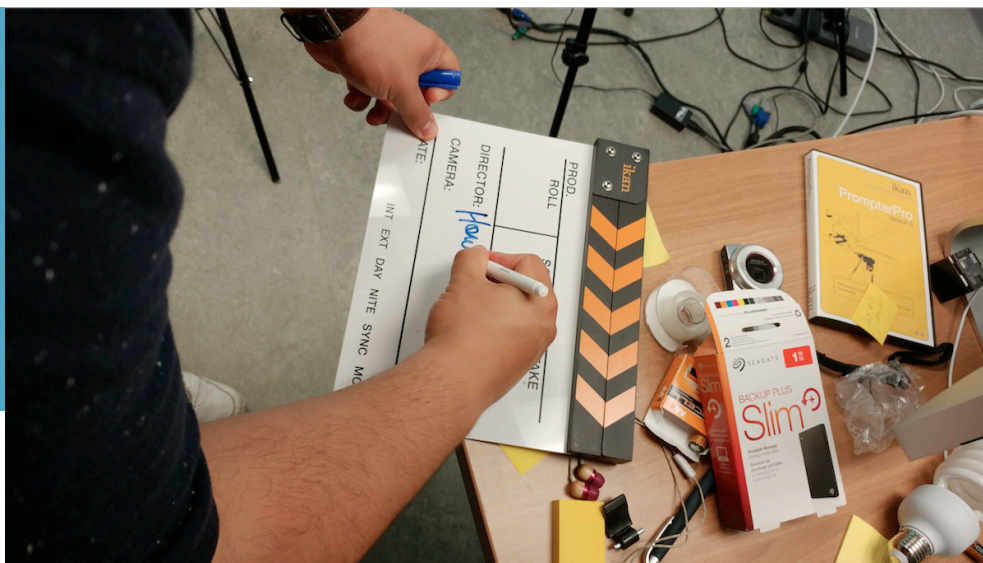
Developing a Digital Curriculum for Teaching Community Mobilization Skills

Research Progress Report 2017–2018

After receiving funding from the Open Society Foundation (OSF), the University of Ottawa's Community Mobilization in Crisis (CMIC) team has been at work developing open-access online resources for teaching community mobilization skills, in preparation for the launch of the pilot in the summer of 2018 in Bekaa, Lebanon, as well as for the full-length program.

The funding provided by OSF has been vital for the creation and development of our resources that are based on original research, including hours of on-camera interviews with mobilizers in Canada, Lebanon, Palestine and elsewhere as well as current cutting-edge research and pedagogical models.

CMIC Resource Building



To date, the CMIC team has conducted over 20 video interviews with mobilizers at the uOttawa campus.

Among these interviews are ones with an Egyptian who founded a school in South Lebanon when she was 21; a Lebanese social worker who facilitated a women's group that continues to lobby today, years later, for safety measures in their neighbourhood; an Indian housing activist who challenged the Indian government for decades to recognize land tenure in slums; a Jordanian who built community ties between Jordanians and Syrian refugees; and a Canadian who set up a tipi for traditional water

protectors on Parliament Hill on Canada Day as part of efforts to decolonize.

Our team of volunteers from the uOttawa student community, including students doing community service learning placements through the uOttawa Michaëlle Jean Centre for Global and Community Engagement, created the transcripts of these videos and translated them into French. These interviews and their transcripts are being used to build our learning modules, which will be translated into all three of the project's languages.

CMIC Resource Building

**In Palestine,
uOttawa
researchers
recorded 21
interviews with
mobilizers from
the West Bank
and Jerusalem.**

With the assistance of our partner, the Dalia Association, we visited rural and urban communities where women are running income-generating and community-building projects to serve children and other women; met with social innovators transforming the Old City of Beit Sahour into a thriving hub of arts and creativity; learned about inclusive schools for students with disabilities, the potential for social change through live action role playing and scholarship programs that commit students to community service; and visited farms, museums and community centres at the heart of community mobilization and empowerment for communities living in insecure and unstable situations.



CMIC Resource Building



Our Lebanese partner Sawsan Abdulrahim along with the project coordinator at the American University at Beirut have been developing context-specific case studies in Lebanon, Egypt and Tunisia. In Lebanon, the team has been developing a case study on the community organization that came together in the face of a carcinogenic landfill that had been threatening their community for years. The Naameh landfill has been successfully shut down due to the community's efforts. In Egypt, the team has been focusing on community mobilization around labour issues and laws, and in Tunisia, they are studying advocacy efforts to promote women's rights.

Even traditional educational institutions in the Arab world struggle to find pedagogical materials for social work and community development that are contextually relevant and available in Arabic. By developing fully online, low-bandwidth-friendly and offline sharable resources that can be distributed to educators, civil society organizations and others, we have the potential to make a massive impact on education for change in the region.



The Spotlight Grant

In January 2018, we were able to bring our Lebanese partner, Professor Sawzan Abdulrahim, to Ottawa for a week of collaboration, talks and events. In her talk titled ***Feminist perspectives on women's health in displacement and protracted crisis: Syrian refugees in Lebanon***, sponsored by the Refugee Hub, the Human Rights Research and Education Centre and the Centre for International Policy Studies at the University of Ottawa, Professor Abdulrahim examined two social and health outcomes that affect women in displacement—early marriage and poor birth outcomes—through a feminist approach based on examining intersections between gender and other forms of inequities. The talk was followed by a networking lunch, giving a chance for people working in refugee-related contexts to connect and share ideas and initiatives.

CMIC has been awarded the Spotlight Grant from the Refugee Hub in order to promote the discussion on refugee-related issues within the uOttawa community.

CMIC held meetings with the different groups and individuals involved in the different aspects of the program-building process for the pilot and the full-length program. Together, we drafted a module breakdown for the pilot program, explored the custom learning management system we plan to use and developed strategies for the future life of the project.

Both the uOttawa and AUB teams are incorporating the CMIC project into their teaching of regular university classes. Students in Professor Nadia Abu-Zahra's Solidarity Economy and Conflict and Development courses (both fourth-year courses in the International Development and Global Studies BA program) tested some of the experiential activities we hope to use in our program and wrote case study profiles to support our research. This term, in her graduate courses in the MPH program, Professor Abdulrahim will be testing the case studies that the AUB team is writing. Professor Regan Wills is holding directed readings courses with exceptional fourth-year students, where they are researching and developing teaching materials on key issues in community mobilization. As we develop more materials, we plan to continue integrating them into our teaching and to make them available to our colleagues more broadly.

We are seeking ways to fund and build institutional support for the offering of our planned certificate program, from both the University of Ottawa and the American University of Beirut. We have found substantial support for this project in principle within our institutions and are working on building these alliances into more formal support. We have submitted an application to Global Affairs Canada to fund the project for four years but have not yet received a response. Major donor support will be necessary to ensure that we can provide students in our programs with the material support necessary to launch their own projects.



Towards implementing our materials—in Lebanon, Canada and elsewhere

Outside our certificate program, several of our partners have expressed the desire to use our materials in teaching and training.

They include Youth Speak, an NGO located in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq that collaborates with the University of Dohuk, and Dalia Association, a community foundation in Palestine. We hope to build a broad network of postsecondary programs and civil society actors who might have use for these materials in order to ensure that the materials are accessible and relevant, and to monitor the results of their implementation.

University of Ottawa

Nadia Abu-Zahra, Co-Director
*Associate Professor, School of International
Development and Global Studies*

Emily Regan Wills, Co-Director
Assistant Professor, School of Political Studies

Diana El Richani, Project Manager
MA, Anthropology

American University of Beirut

Sawsan Abdulrahim, Research Partner
*Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Health Promotion Community Health*

Zahraa Beydoun, Project Coordinator
MPH, Faculty of Health Sciences

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cmic@uOttawa.ca
University of Ottawa
Faculty of Social Sciences
120 University, Room 8005
Ottawa ON K1N 6N5
Canada