



جمعية العناية الصحية

SIDC

SOINS INFIRMIERS ET DÉVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE

EMPOWER

ADVOCATE

ENABLE

2020 ANNUAL
REPORT

Message from the Executive Director



As with the start of every year, we always hope for fresh beginnings and change. As 2019 ended with a revolution that shook Lebanon and drove unity through vocalizing unfairness and dissatisfaction, we all hoped that 2020 would bring change to the country and a greater sense of justice. However, the year 2020 had been a journey of surprises that only pushed us forward to reach out, expand, and help those in need.

The beginning of 2020 marked instability within Lebanon, with the emergence of a COVID-19 pandemic that forced the world to shut down and individuals into unprecedented states of isolation. To top these off, Beirut and Lebanon, were shaken by the Beirut Port Explosion, which killed hundred, displaced thousands, and left the whole country shattered to pieces.

Despite the impact of these hardships on all the individuals residing in Lebanon (and the world), the union that was created between individuals, NGOs, and iNGOs to support all those who were and are suffering continues to be remarkable.

In the following pages, SIDC's achievements for the year 2020 are displayed, which wouldn't have been possible without its team, partners, and donors that committed and worked on the frontlines despite everything that has been going on.

I end my note with gratitude to all the donors who continue to support SIDC's transparent work, to the team that continues to put their personal struggles aside to fulfill SIDC's mission, and to the beneficiaries that trust our approaches and resort to us to share and find ways to deal with their life struggles.

Nadia Badran

Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nadia Badran". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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An overview about Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire (SIDC)

SIDC (Lebanon) initiated its work in 1987 (decree 9 / AD) with the aim of improving the social and health situation of the most vulnerable groups and defending their human rights, their right to health, social and mental health services as well as their right to work and live in dignity. SIDC is managed by a Board of Directors comprised of six specialists from various fields among which, professionals who used to be one day among beneficiaries. SIDC is composed of a multidisciplinary team including social workers, psychotherapists, STD specialists, addiction treatment and psychiatric disorders experts, nurses, public health specialists, peer educators and professional trainers and volunteers whom assist in various activities.

For the past 35 years, SIDC has been involved in providing a comprehensive package of services within and outside its center (through its mobile unit). These services include mental health, reproductive and sexual health, prevention and treatment for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, drug addiction and related harm reduction services and materials in addition to legal services. Moreover, SIDC was among the first NGOs that integrated a cross-cutting program related to stigma reduction in all of its programs. SIDC built networks and partnerships and developed the capacities of various stakeholders and key players of the HIV response including media representatives, religious leaders, police officers, health and social care service providers, workplace owners and employees among others. Fifteen years ago, SIDC launched an outreach program in Lebanon based on peer approach reaching out to injecting drug users (IDUs), sex workers, LGBTQIA+ and other people at risk to deliver services related to HIV/HBV/HCV/ Syphilis through a mobile unit. SIDC continues to be a pioneer in this area at the national and regional levels. SIDC services and programs reach to adolescents and youth at risk, males and females sex workers, LGBTQIA+, people living with HIV (PLHIV) and People who use Drugs (PWUDs), marginalized girls and women, domestic workers, displaced persons, refugees and prisoners.

In addition, SIDC has been advocating and defending the rights of all of the aforementioned marginalized groups through documentation of violations at various levels, providing access to reliable information, relevant skills, and adequate services and enabling these groups to increase their capacity to claim their rights.

An overview about Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire (SIDC)

To fight for the rights of the above mentioned groups SIDC organized public and social media targeted awareness campaigns, formed alliances, developed policies and revised laws to provide a safe and open environment free from stigma and discrimination towards these groups. SIDC advocated for the support and the integration of policy reform in different fields.

SIDC contributed to the development and amendment of the Law on Drugs in 1996 and was the first to undertake a legal study to protect PLHIV and to conduct a series of studies on the status of marginalized groups and to prepare and / or modify policies to improve the conditions in which they live.

SIDC was involved in the collaborative efforts for a comprehensive response. This became possible through building partnerships and coalitions with official and private public institutions at the international, regional and local levels, and with civil society organizations, with the aim to collectively ensure a better quality of life for the groups.

In 2002, SIDC was a founding member of the Regional/Arab Network against AIDS (RANAA), and continues to be an active member representing Lebanon in the network. RANAA works to strengthen the role of the civil society in limiting the spread of HIV/AIDS in the MENA region, including those working with most at risk populations, and ensuring the rights of PLHIV to live in dignity and have access to support, treatment and care. In 2008, SIDC participated in the creation of the first NGO for PLHIV in Lebanon “Vivre Positif”. In 2015, the Lebanese AIDS Network Association (LANA) was established by SIDC to serve as a consolidated network of local non-governmental organizations that have a direct or indirect role in ending HIV/AIDS in Lebanon. SIDC was also a founding member of the “Human Rights Network” which was established in 2017 under the USAID-funded Building Alliances for Local Advancement, Development and Investment - Capacity Building program (BALADI CAP).

Moreover, SIDC is a member in the World Hepatitis Alliance, and constantly participates in its campaigns, including World Hepatitis Day. SIDC joins international efforts and organizes events on different international days: against stigma, against homophobia, the Zero Discrimination Day, International Women’s Day Poster, WAD, World Health Day, International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Human Rights Day, international day against overdose among others.

SIDC is currently the Sub Recipient (SR) of the Global Fund Programme titled “The sustainability of services for VPs in MENA region” for Lebanon (2019-2021).

Approaches and Strategies

SIDC works on addressing sensitive issues, through:

- 1) Respecting and protecting Human and Gender Rights
- 2) Reducing stigma and discrimination
- 3) Reducing gender disparities and inequalities
- 4) Promoting youth-led field outreach activities
- 5) Assuring a continuum of care and service provision
- 6) Empowering and engaging vulnerable populations
- 7) Research and development
- 8) Raising awareness and advocacy for different stakeholders
- 9) Policy and law reform
- 10) Networking and partnerships

SIDC works in response to national and international strategies and goals including the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets and the principles of harm reduction. SIDC has been working to support achievements of the Millennium Development Goals, and continues to contribute to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Throughout all of its projects, SIDC attempts to support the development of national strategies by ensuring a high level of commitment in their implementation.

SIDC's VISION

A safe and healthy society free of stigma and discrimination where key populations' human rights are fully respected.

SIDC's MISSION

To commit to the provision of equitable access to healthcare and the improvement of the quality of life of vulnerable groups in partnership with them through the three Ds' strategies:

- 1)** Delivering harm reduction, HIV/STIs/SRHR, mental care services and referral, **2)** Developing capacities for NGOs and other stakeholders at the national and regional level and **3)** Defending and advocating for human rights.

Services

At

SIDC

Delivering Harm Reduction Services

Harm Reduction. The harm reduction program established in the year 2000 is meant to reach out to the following Key populations (KPs): PWUDs, LGBTQIA+, MSWs, FSWs and their partners or peers.

This program is comprehensive, whereby individuals are targeted through online outreach, information communication technology activity, and through field outreach, using SIDC's mobile unit. The beneficiaries are then given access to Opioids Substitution Treatment (OST), urine tests, provided with sexual and reproductive health services, and mental health services, where applicable. Additionally, harm reduction and hygiene kits are distributed to beneficiaries.

At the harm reduction center, ESCALE, beneficiaries who use and/or inject drugs are supported by a multidisciplinary team composed of: a nurse, 2 social workers, 1 mental health service coordinator, 1 center coordinator and a team of mental health professionals composed of 2 psychiatrists, and 15 therapists, psychologists, and counselors.

Number of tests done for HBV, HCV, HIV and Syphilis:

- **113**
 - 103 male
 - 10 female
 - 44 PWID
 - 35 DU
 - Age between 18 and 50+

Number of Vaccines:

- 80 doses
- 25 fully vaccinated

Nursing Services for 252 beneficiaries
(232 males and 20 females)

1,200 harm
reduction
sessions

**8736 nursing
services (OST,
urine tests, etc.)**
of which received
OST

Social Services

242

Beneficiaries
(222 males and 20
females)

91

Families
(82 males and 9
females)

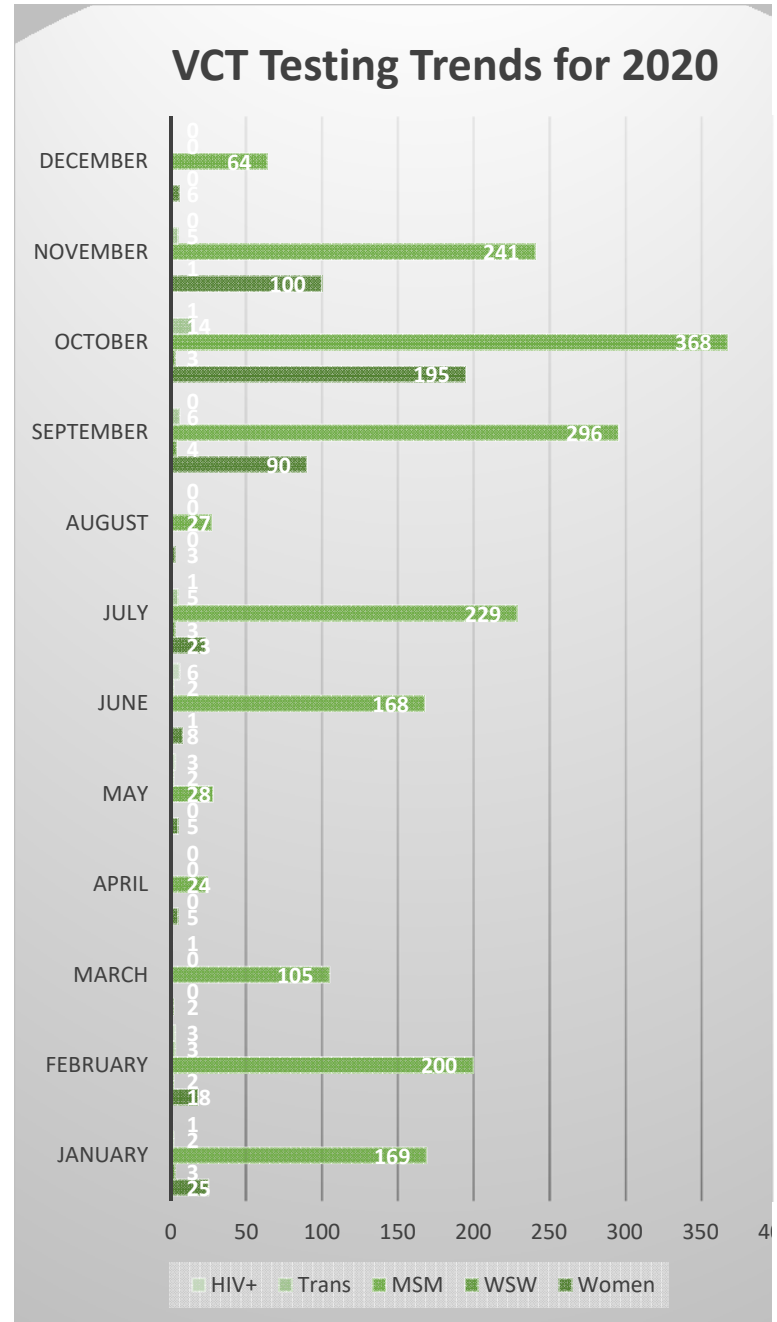
- Individual interventions: **1585**
- Family Interventions: **241**
- Legal follow up: **134** follow up and reporting (courts, police station..) and **112** follow up with the addiction committee for **14** referred cases

Sexual & Reproductive Health. During the year 2020, SIDC continues with the provision of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. The team is composed of a peer educator, nurse, and social worker (all who have been trained on voluntary counseling and testing (VCT)), a midwife, counselor, dermatologist STIS specialist, and a gynecologist as a recent addition.

The former have been able to distribute self-tests, provide **2,475** free HIV, Hepatitis B & C, Syphilis, and other STIs testing, and **164** Hepatitis B and **26** HPV vaccinations, **28** partner notifications, and **172** STI consults with the specialist; while the latter, the gynecologist, has recently begun with the provision of **93** free, remote and onsite, reproductive health consultations that include pap smear tests, laboratory cultures for STIs, and gynecological examinations.

Additionally, from the **172** consultations conducted with the STIs specialist, **70** LGBTIQ individuals have been referred for prep **20** MSM for pep services, half of whom have been redirected to NAP. The patients who underwent the treatment have tested negative afterwards. From SIDC's gathered data with beneficiaries, the end of the COVID-19 confinement, the unsafe encounters resulting from Prep implementation, and the spread of Chemsex, have been the cause for most of the PEP referrals. Most importantly, the inflation and high prices of condoms has created an additional challenge for populations at risk to access basic protection and harm reduction material from the market. Therefore, SIDC continues to stress the provision of free condoms to all individuals that require them. During 2020, a total of **4,395** condoms and **3,990** lubricants have been distributed.

Provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health Services



Mental Health Services

Mental Health (MH). Prior to October 17th, 2019, SIDC has been providing mental health (MH) support in its harm reduction center, ESCALE, for drug users. In anticipation and response to the mental health needs after October 17th, SIDC expanded the provision of MH services to reach out to all individuals in need of support. SIDC has launched a MH hotline, 70028221, from the start, however, the demand and traffic on the line has seen an unprecedented rise.

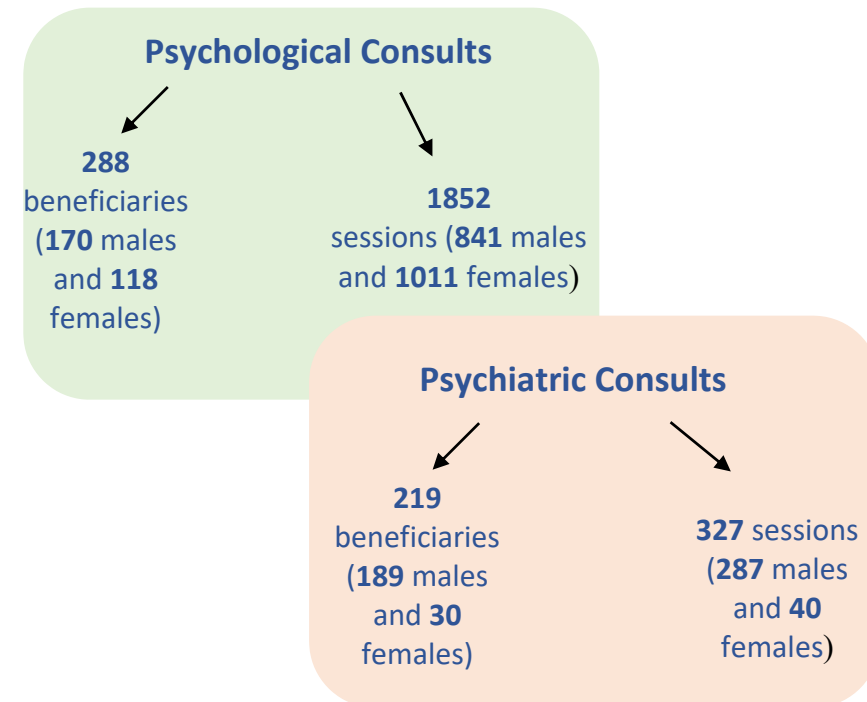
Due to this high demand, SIDC expanded its mental health team to become composed of: 2 psychiatrists and 15 psychologists, counselors, and individuals who provide psychosocial support. The mental health team have been providing sessions to individuals in the center and remotely.

In months following the revolution, the demand for MH support has amplified, reaching its height after the Beirut Port Explosion on August 4th, 2020.

Since November 2019, SIDC has been implementing a project titled: “Mind the Gap” with the support and close collaboration of ACTED and funded by EU MADAD and AFD. The project aims to increase awareness on mental disorders, psychosocial stressors and the stigma experienced by vulnerable adolescents and youth to the adolescents and youth themselves, parents and the general public. One of the project’s achievements involved the provision of psychological and psychiatrist support either in ESCALE or remotely for **adolescents** and **youth** aged between 11 and 29. SIDC executed around **361** psychological sessions and **22** psychiatric sessions

between the months of August and November 2020. Moreover, SIDC disseminated an online survey to identify the psychosocial stressors experienced by the adolescents and youth aged between 11 and 24. **302** adolescents and youth were reached through this activity. Based on the survey’s results, the topics chosen to be discussed during the awareness sessions were: Bullying, Stress, Peer Pressure and Communication. As a result, SIDC conducted online and face-to-face awareness sessions about "Stress" with **113 parents** and **887 adolescents** and **youth** aged between 11 and 24.

Additionally, with the support of the UNFPA, SIDC provided a total of **621** sessions targeting **207** women, girls, drug users, and individuals from the LGBTQ++ community who have been affected by the Beirut Explosion.



**Outreach
Activities
Online & Field**



Online Outreach. The online outreach is conducted by a team of **4** peer educators. This activity is accomplished through mobile dating apps to reach out to individuals from the LGBTIQ++ community, commercial sex workers (CSWs), and heterosexual individuals, with the support of the NAP, Global Fund and UNICEF.

This innovative online awareness activity has been ongoing for the past two years. At the launch of this activity, SIDC's presence has been focused on the LGBTIQ++ dating apps, the groups reached include Lebanese and non-Lebanese MSM refugees, Male sex workers (MSWs), transgender women, MSM living with HIV, and those using party drugs. As of January 2020, the peer educators expanded their spread to reach out to heterosexuals, commercial sex workers (CSW), and trans.

Throughout all of 2020, the online outreach team focused on conducting a minimum of three sessions per week. Approximately, 15 to 20 messages have been sent out per session, reaching to **900** messages being sent on monthly basis.

This activity helped SIDC reach individuals from all the Lebanese governorates. The dating apps targeted have been: *tinder, scruff, growlr, bumble, daddyhunt, grizzly, tagged, spicy, grindr, hornet, blued, fitgorilla, badoo... etc.*

The total number of people reached in 2020 were: **3,542** persons aged between 18 to 50 years old with a mean age of **28** years old whom have been reached over **277** sessions. **30%** of the individuals who have been reached through online outreach have been referred to SIDC to receive services.

Furthermore, SIDC has developed and is currently testing **2** mobile applications for the purposes of prevention and case management. These two apps have been developed with the support of UNICEF.



Field Outreach. As part of SIDC's harm reduction program, field outreach activities are conducted through SIDC's mobile unit. During the year 2020, SIDC's outreach mobile unit targeted PWUDs, PWIDs, youth at risk of substance use in the streets, individuals from the LGBTIQ++ community, women, and girls to provide one-on-one awareness, distribute harm reduction, female, and hygiene kits, and provide free anonymous and voluntary Hepatitis B/C, HIV, and STI tests with referral and case follow-up. Depending on the target groups, individuals reached in the streets receive harm reduction kits including syringes, cookers, sterile water, condoms, and lubricants. Depending on the areas, PWUDs are given a container for sharp needles to be able to dismantle the needles after usage while making sure they deliver the container back to the Escale center.

The outreach work is done through peers from different KPs groups who attend comprehensive trainings tackling Knowledge, Attitudes, Behaviors and Practices to assure the quality of the shared information. A coordinator is always present to monitor the interventions while ensuring regular and follow up meetings related to the field outreach. During 2020, the SIDC outreach team grew to become formed of **9** peer educators (among which are 2 ex-DUs), **2** VCT counselors and a driver. The team implemented a total of **173** field outreach sessions, during which a total of **6,155** women and girls were reached aging between 16 – 75 and **5,280** youth aged between 18- 28 mostly composed of males. The outreach activities focused on the areas of *Sin El Fil, Sed El Bauchrieh, Sabtieh, Fanar, Rweisset, Dora, Bourj Hammoud, Ghine, Zouk and Furn el Chebbak*. Each field outreach would insure a minimum of 15 VCT as well as condoms, harm reduction kits and pamphlets distribution. A total of 2537 harm reduction counseling sessions were conducted in addition to the distribution of 2250 IEC materials, 2987 condoms, 1395 harm reduction kits and 410 hygiene kits.

All outreach workers fill forms (indicators' tracking system) where they include the shared messages, answered questions in addition to noting feedback from the beneficiaries and their profile. A referral to safe and appropriate services is the main message to deliver. This documentation is a part of a monitoring system built with SIDC's target groups.

During the last four months of 2020 and with the support of UNFPA, a total of **1,000** female kits were distributed to women and girls in the field. The kits have been composed of a toothpaste, a tooth brush, a towel, 2 bars, 3 packs of pads, and a face mask.

**Response to
COVID-19
&
Beirut Port
Explosion**

Response to COVID-19

COVID-19. For more than a decade, Lebanon has been enduring an accumulation of unfortunate events that ignited the birth of the revolution against injustice, on October 17th, 2019. The resultant road closures prevented individuals from reaching their schools, universities, and jobs. Lebanon continues to grapple with the worst economic crisis since 1990 brought by the devaluation of the Lebanese pound and unregulated inflation. Adding the COVID-19 pandemic on to all these challenges, compounded the economic downward spiral.

Individuals living in Lebanon have been dramatically impacted by all these ongoing obstacles; more so, marginalized groups are amongst the most who continue to suffer. All along, these groups have been stigmatized from attaining their basic rights, healthcare services, and employment, categorizing them amongst the communities at highest risk.

These groups include people who use drugs (DU), people who engage in sex for money (SW), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex individuals (LGBTQIA+), people living with HIV (PLHIV), and individuals with disabilities. Youth and adolescents (Y&A) have also been among the groups that have been deeply impacted as they are a high-risk group and are prone to psychological distress as well as substance abuse.

Assessments. In response to the pandemic, SIDC sent out an online assessment to its beneficiaries, PLHIV and DUs, to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown. Results of the assessment indicated a high drop in employment, a need for food boxes, and mental health support.

Findings of the assessment – **161** responses:

- 84% Lebanese, 8% Syrian, 4.5% Palestinian and 3.5% other nationalities
- 60% have no access to an income, 28% have partial access to income and 12% have access to an income.
- 41% stated they had ups and downs when asked about their mental health, 24% were coping reasonably well with the lockdown, 8.5% were coping very well, 9.5% have some problems, 9.5% definitely have problems coping and 7.5% said they didn't know how they were feeling.
- The top 5 of mental health issues PLHIV faced during Lockdown were stress, mood swings, anxiety, negative thoughts and no interest in doing anything.
- 18% asked for mental health support, 10.5% asked for psycho-social support, 25.5% required food boxes, 22% support with rent, 6% required COVID-19 related awareness, 24% needed someone to talk to, 17% required medical support (medication, testing...), 2% required OST referral, 2% asked for financial support, 2% asked for help in finding employment and the rest didn't ask for support. (Multiple answers were allowed)

Moreover, funded by UNICEF, and as a response to COVID-19, SIDC assessed the psychosocial stressors among adolescents and youth aged 11-24 living in Lebanon. Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, uncertainties that occurred, other stressors such as bullying and peer pressure, and since adolescents and youths are exposed to psychosocial stressors have been at high risk of depression, drug and alcohol use, smoking and many more medical conditions, SIDC has decided to address specific psychosocial stressors faced by youth in order to decrease the burden of mental disorders and promote mental wellbeing among adolescents and youth. Virtual Focus Group Discussions (FGD) have been conducted with youth and adolescents to assess their opinion regarding the psychosocial stressors that they are facing. Additionally, **12** Dardashe sessions have been conducted reaching **207** individuals with ages ranging from 14 to 24 years. Six of these sessions have been conducted virtually and six face to face. The topics

“When I was in grade 4 I used to experience a lot of bullying from my friends. I see a lot of bullying everyday on the street... Bullying is very prevalent in our society. Some bullying in violence and some bullying on the way people dress especially in Lebanon.”

(21 year old, male)

“It was about shisha – I don’t like it. So when I used to go out with a group of friends that all smoke it I used to get bullied that I was old-fashioned and that I should take up argileh and stuff. But I didn’t give in to it.”

(24 year old female)

Thinking about the future and plans stresses me out especially in a country like Lebanon. Should I leave, what will I work? This makes me very anxious.”

(20 year old female)

discussed included stress, anger management, anxiety, positive coping mechanisms, and healthy life styles.

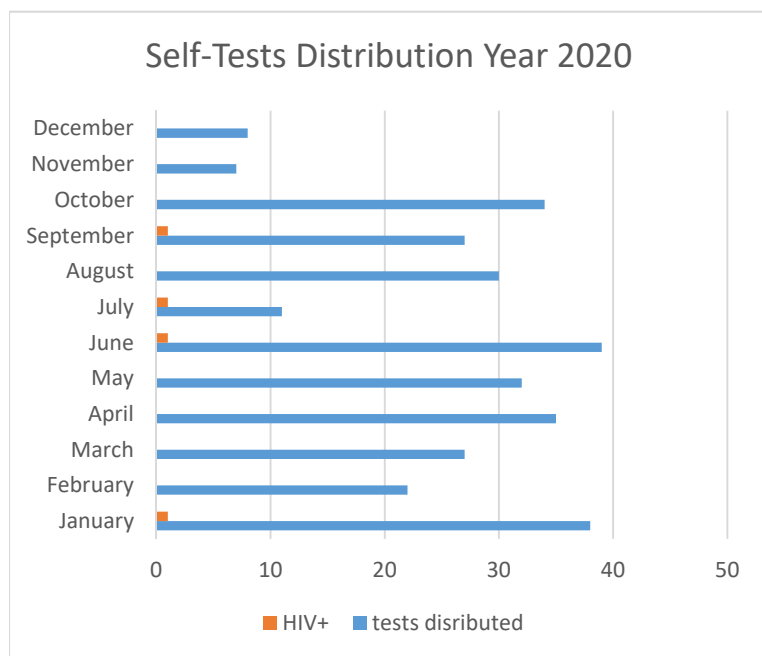
The worsening economic crisis in Lebanon coupled by the COVID-19 lockdown brought about unprecedented challenges and worsening the overall wellbeing and mental health status of the LGBTI community. As such, funded by the European Union and in order to respond to the mental health needs of the LGBTI individuals during the COVID-19 lockdown, an assessment was developed and disseminated online to explore the mental health needs and struggles of the LGBTI community and refer them to mental health support services. A total of **27** participants took part in the survey whereby **11** who were struggling with mental health issues as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown were referred and sought mental health support services at SIDC. A short video was developed to further raise awareness about the impact of the lockdown and other stressors on mental health and the importance of seeking help. This video was shared across social media platforms.

Service Provision. Furthermore, during the lockdown, SIDC took the necessary precautions within the clinics and centers to ensure the highest levels of safety for its beneficiaries and staff. Plexi glasses have been placed within the mobile unit and the sexual health clinic.



As for services, the sexual health clinic was completely closed and therefore, vaccination, VCT, and face to face consults by the STIS specialist were put on hold.

However, SIDC ensured the provision of its services during the lockdown through the intense distribution of the self-test. The VCT officer remains on call with the user while they perform the test to ensure delivering the necessary support and counseling.



Additionally, the HPV vaccine have been given upon appointments, since pretesting is not required.

As for the provision of STI consults with Dr. Maatouk, they have been transferred to become virtual consults. SIDC continued to provide the usual services, medication, support and counseling, through face to face encounters at SIDC and through the hotlines for its beneficiaries, PLHIV. Additionally, messages were disseminated SIDC's PLHIV beneficiaries to ensure they are taking the necessary precautions during lockdown.

As for the harm reduction center, Escale it remained open every week for a few days to support their drug user's beneficiaries accordingly and ensure they have access to OST, all the while taking the necessary precautions. For the beneficiaries who found themselves unable to attend their weekly visits because of financial situations, transportation has been provided.

Mental health services have been shifted to be conducted virtually on platforms that are best suited to the beneficiaries.

Finally, with the support of Global Fund and after assessing the needs of SIDC and its 8 partners within the grant (Sub-Sub Recipients), PPEs and **500** hygiene kits have been distributed to individuals in need, beneficiaries, and staffs. Furthermore, **500** food vouchers have been purchased and distributed to beneficiaries with the support of ALL OUT and Global Fund.

Response to the Beirut Port Explosion

On August 4th, 2020, at 6:07 pm, Beirut and Lebanon were shaken by the explosions that took place in the port of Beirut. The explosion was deadly, devastating and ripped through all of Beirut leaving thousands of people in its wake dead, injured, and homeless. The tragic impact of the explosion resulted in the death of at least 200 individuals, injured thousands of people, and displaced more than 300,000 individuals. SIDC, similarly to many other organisations, suffered material damages. However, regardless of its damages, SIDC responded to its beneficiaries immediately!

Within the first 48 hours, the social workers conducted a rapid assessment with all of SIDC's direct beneficiaries (PLHIV, DUs, MH patients, and VCT Clients) to ensure their safety, assess their needs, respond to them, and/or refer to other relevant organisations. SHIELD and Frontline Engineers were contacted for direct responses and SIDC shared results from the primary assessment as well as their damages, and insured follow up. A preliminary list of **42** names have been sent to SHIELD for swift assistance.

The week following the blast, SIDC began receiving requests for support (mostly shelter and food aid), SIDC referred each of the requests to relevant organisations. Furthermore, when needed, SIDC directly provided psychological and psychiatric support through our Mental health hotline to **39** patients, and the beneficiaries were given appointments either virtually or face to face according to their preference.

Also, SIDC has distributed **37** food coupons from Spinneys, funded by All Out, and **73** food boxes, provided by Marsa and AFEMENA/ Tayf) to its direct beneficiaries, Drug users at Escale center and PLHIV, with the help of Vivre Positif. Moreover, the office rehabilitation costs for SIDC and the 8 sub-sub recipients of the Global Fund grant were covered in addition to the procurement of 790 hygiene kits, 400 food vouchers and the provision of MHPSS for SIDC and its partners' beneficiaries affected by the blast.

Furthermore, with the support of UNFPA, SIDC's reproductive services were reintroduced, whereby a gynecologist was hired to provide services to women and girls. Also, with the support of ECHO, SIDC's reproductive services were expanded to include the purchase of an ultrasound machine.

Finally, the period after the Beirut Port Explosion, the field outreach activities have been focused in the areas that were affected by the explosion, with the support of UNFPA and IPPF.



Capacity Building

Social Workers & Frontliners

SIDC, funded by UNICEF, and in collaboration with the Syndicate of Social Workers, Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), and the National Mental Health Program (NMHP), in 2018, created a training manual targeting social workers working with vulnerable youth entitled: *“Mental Health and Psychosocial support: A special focus on youth- A Training manual for social workers”*. In 2019, a pilot training was given to **27** social workers on this manual. Upon the successful completion of the pilot training held in 2019, a refresher session took place in 2020 to all the **27** social workers who attended the pilot training. An additional 3-day training, via zoom, has been conducted to **83** new social workers and **22** frontliners who have been recruited with the support of the Syndicate of Social Workers and MOSA.

The themes covered have been introduction to adolescent mental health and community-based mental health, and the identification, assessment, management and referral of five common mental health conditions among youth, with an emphasis on practical PSS interventions. Noting the high prevalence of psychosocial adversities and burnout among Social Workers, the training also included training on basic self-care. Additionally, participants learned how to assess for specific mental health conditions, how to provide Psycho-education and basic PSS interventions, and when to refer. The section on self-care was based on the National Self-Care Curriculum developed jointly by the MoPH-NMHP and ABAAD.

Moreover, SIDC conducted a training to **100** frontliners in all Lebanese governorates on substance use to individuals who work closely with youth. This training has been delivered after a group of NGOs and a network of frontliners in Akkar reached out to SIDC.

Media Professionals

With the financial support of the European instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, SIDC, in partnership with ACTED, is implementing a 2-year project titled: "Enhancing the Inclusivity of the LGBTI Community in Workplaces in Lebanon" with the overall objective of promoting and protecting the rights of the LGBTI individuals by increasing their employability and accessibility to the workplace in Lebanon. Under this funding, a training for media professionals and employees from the private sector was held.

A workshop targeting media professionals on promoting and defending the rights of the LGBTI community in the media whereby a total of **12** media professionals were trained virtually on topics related to concepts and definitions of sexual orientation and gender identity, human and legal rights of the LGBTI community and role of media professionals in respecting their code of conduct and portraying a positive representation of the community in the media. Human success stories of members of the LGBTI community working in inclusive work environments will be written and published in local and online newspapers and social media outlets.

Training on Stress Management and Self Care for SIDC Staff

In light of the difficulties that the year 2020 had on SIDC staff members, SIDC management decided to conduct a stress management and self-care workshop over 2 days. The training was conducted by **Dr. Sabah Saliba** to all of SIDC’s staff including its fulltime, part time, and field outreach workers. The first session has been conducted in the Padova Hotel taking into account social distancing and COVID-19 safety measures. In order to better understand the topics the staff need to discuss and work on, a survey had been sent internally to be filled which allowed the management to accommodate the needs identified within the survey through this workshop.



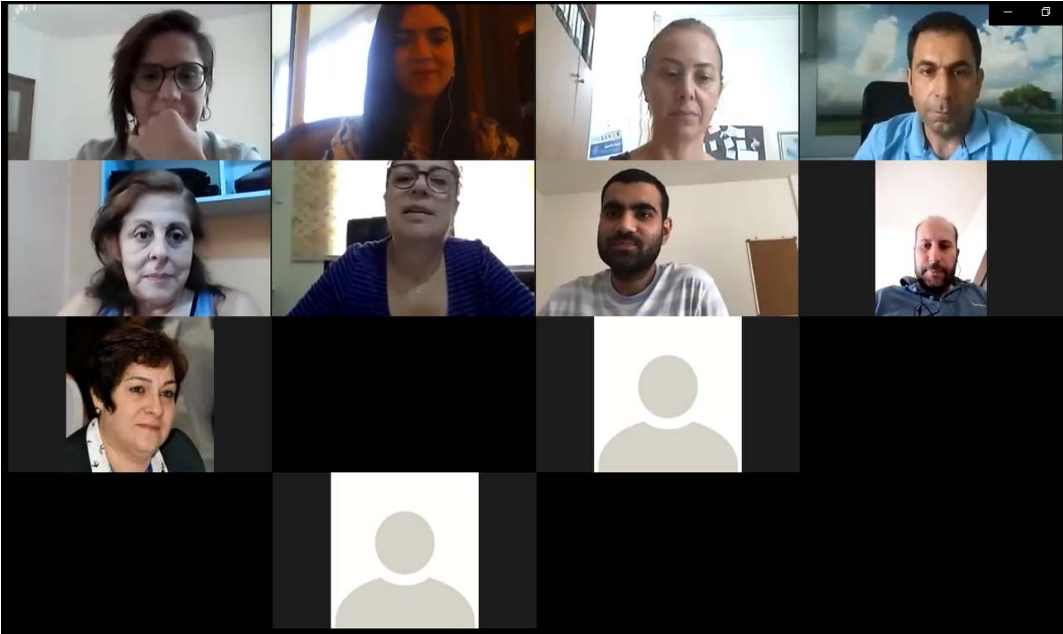
Private Sector Employees

In 2020, funded by the European Union, a capacity building training for employees of private sector companies was conducted. The training focused on creating an inclusive work environment for the LGBTI community which was delivered to the employees of Azadea, a retail company. A total of **25** participants were trained virtually on topics related to concepts and definitions of sexual orientation and gender identity, human and employment rights of the LGBTI community, stigma and discrimination means of identification and reduction and role of employees in building an inclusive work environment.

Policy and Law Reforms

Policy & Law Reforms. For the first time, a comprehensive law has been proposed that included a broad definition of discrimination relating to all groups. The USAID funded and BALADI CAP supported project titled "Supporting anti-discrimination law to protect the rights of vulnerable groups" that has been implemented in 2020, came to assist in developing a comprehensive law that will protect every individual residing in Lebanon from discrimination. Moreover, a mapping document has been generated that includes discriminatory clauses and articles within the Lebanese laws and has been considered a tool that can be used by all advocates of human rights' issues, especially the most marginalized groups. The project has also helped forming a coalition of different actors to set a strategic plan related to the proposed law.

Through the different organized consultation meetings, the project brought together civil society organizations, ministries, national bodies, jurists, lawyers, judges, etc. This diversity has been useful in drafting the anti-discrimination law, taking into consideration and benefiting from the different experiences and backgrounds of the involved stakeholders. Finally, the proposed law has established a new approach in legislation according to human rights' approaches and in pushing all groups, in addition to the Lebanese state, to amend and create consistent, integrated and comprehensive legislation for all.



Human Rights

Human Rights' Network. The Human Rights Network (HRN) consists of non-governmental organizations, universities, local civil society organizations, and individuals working on defending human rights. It aims to defend and protect marginalized groups and reduce discrimination, violations, and bad practices against these groups in the health, social, security, and economic facilities/spheres/institutions. The network has been established in 2017, composed of the Arab Institute for Women at the Lebanese American University, Soins Infirmiers et Développement Communautaire (SIDC), Skoun, Lebanese Addiction Center, and Dar Al Amal, Vivre Positif, Marsa and AJEM Organizations under the USAID-funded Building Alliances for Local Advancement, Development and Investment - Capacity Building program (BALADI CAP).

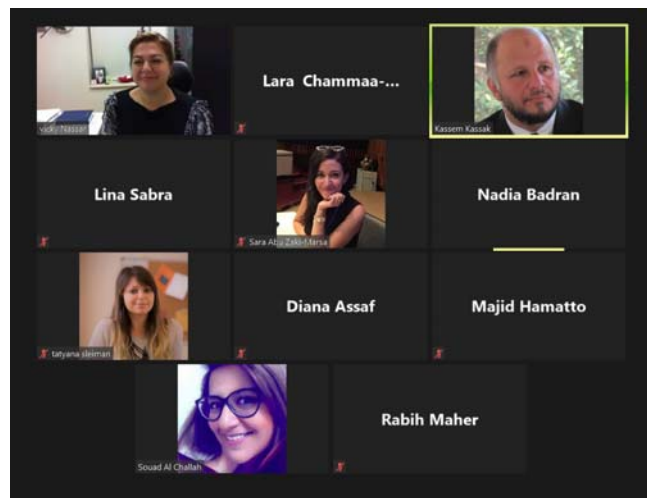


In October 2020, an SIDC-led project has been implemented by the HRN that aimed at reducing discrimination and stigmatization among vulnerable Lebanese populations within media institutions. To reach this objective, an applied course on the rights of vulnerable groups was developed for journalism and media faculties in Lebanese universities. Moreover, an anti-discrimination and anti-stigmatization Code of Ethics was developed for TV Stations in addition to an index comprised of both qualitative and quantitative indicators to serve as a measurement tool for HRN and CSO monitoring of social programs on Lebanese national television.

Documenting Violations. With the financial support of the European Union, SIDC in partnership with ACTED documented a total of **50** cases of human rights violations experienced by members of the LGBTI community in the workplace of which 27 were homosexual, 2 bisexual, and 1 queer, and 23 identified themselves as transwoman, 1 transmen and 1 gender fluid with the rest identifying themselves as males or females. The most common forms of violations experienced have been: verbal abuses such as insults, threats of firing employee, mocking, bullying and name-shaming in addition to physical abuses such as sexual harassments, touching, violence, arbitrary expulsion, withholding salaries, and blackmailing. Support services have been provided to the documented cases that include: health support, legal support, cash for shelter and economic empowerment. Additionally, with the support of Global Fund, SIDC and its partners (SSRs) documented **40** cases of violations experienced by key populations (REAct).

**Studies
&
Reports**

Studies/Reports. The Global Fund MENA region is a three-year multi country programme that started on the 1st of January 2019 till the 31st December 2021 and is being implemented by CSOs from Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia and by regional networks that aims at increasing sustainability of quality HIV prevention, treatment and care services for key populations in MENA that would accelerate progress on UNAIDS Fast-Track targets. Throughout 2020, the financial, social and legal barriers to KPs and PLHIV access to services in Lebanon have been mapped. Also, HIV health budget analysis and expenditure data has been conducted in partnership with the National AIDS Program, for ministries, non-governmental and private sector expenditure on HIV programs and a final analysis report of the findings has been produced to identify and highlight the gaps. Moreover, several meetings were organized with LANA members in order to develop a three year sustainability plan for the network.



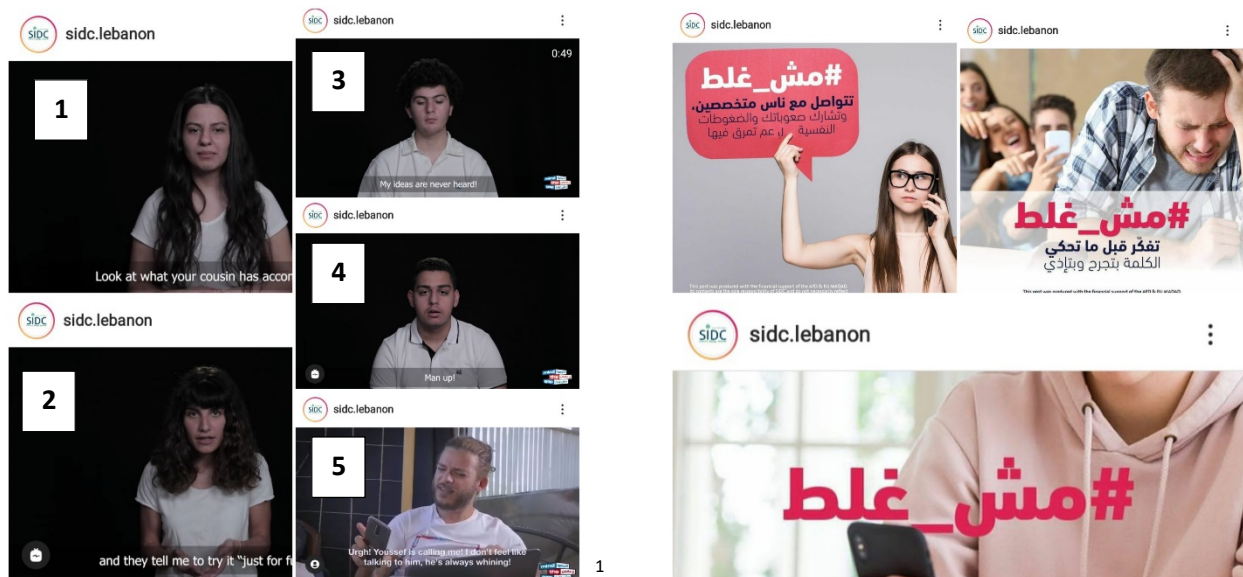
Moreover, with the financial support of the European Union, SIDC developed an "Assessment of the Perceptions and Attitudes of Employers towards the LGBTI at the Workforce and a Situational Analysis of the LGBTI Community in the Workforce".

The psychosocial stressors experienced by youth aged 11-24 living in Lebanon were also explored in order to inform and tailor the topics of awareness sessions prepared by SIDC. This work was part of the project titled "Mind the Gap" under the support and close collaboration with ACTED and funded by EU MADAD and AFD. Three main psychosocial stressors were chosen as a focus of the assessment following further examination of literature relevant to Lebanon, in order to ensure that awareness sessions are properly tailored to address them. The chosen external stressors common to, and experienced, by adolescents and youth are bullying, peer pressure, and familial relationships and communication.

**Communication
&
Visibility**

Awareness Campaigns

Several campaigns were launched throughout the year 2020 on SIDC's social media platforms Facebook and Instagram. The first campaign was composed of **5 short videos** and a series of **3 social media posts** to raise the populations' awareness on mental health disorders, stigma, and psychosocial stressors experienced by adolescents and youth. This campaign was achieved under the "Mind the Gap" project, with the support and close collaboration of ACTED and funded by EU MADAD and AFD.



The second campaign was focused on the LGBTIQ++ community living in Lebanon and it was composed of **2 videos** and a series of **stories**. With the financial support of the European Union, on May 17th, 2020, the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOT) was commemorated to sensitize the general public about the various forms of labeling that marginalized minorities, such as the LGBTI community, are being subjected to.

¹1. Video on stress: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CIs0XctIuj5/?igshid=87321dijlov7>

2. Video on peer pressure: <https://www.instagram.com/tv/CIntOPEKqSw/?igshid=fhq3mx49vadx>

3. Video on communication: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C1qPljLoFwC/?igshid=5781nyls9ueq>

4. Video on bullying: <https://www.instagram.com/tv/C1lhWKR0Qo9/?igshid=13nhiinx9cpjx>

5. Video on mental health disorders and stigma: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CH7ddF6glud/?igshid=vs8foeprim2g>

The campaign comprised of a series of 3 stories of individuals from the LGBTI community and the forms of labeling they were subjected to which were shared on 3 consecutive days over SIDC and ACTED’s social media platforms. At the end of each story, the audience were asked to share their own experience with labeling. The third campaign involved a [video](#) being created to display the mental health status of the LGBTIQ++ community during the lockdown and another [video](#) focused on the impact of the Beirut Port Explosion on the same community.



Harm Reduction: Overdose and Hepatitis

A series of videos were also launched throughout the year 2020 on SIDC’s social media platforms to raise the populations’ awareness on prevention against Overdose and risks of getting infected by hepatitis B and C while sharing substance abuse tools. These videos were produced under with the support and long collaboration of MENAHRA and MacAIDS Fund to promote the services of our Harm Reduction Center “Escale” while continuing to encourage testing and treatment especially for people who use drugs.

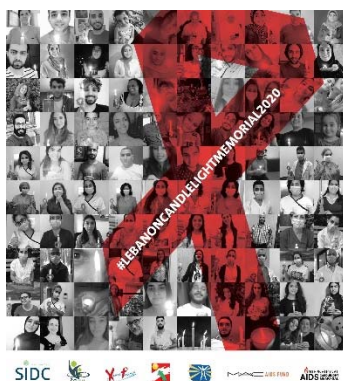
Social Media Links:

<https://www.facebook.com/SIDC.Leb/posts/10158730160324485>

<https://www.facebook.com/SIDC.Leb/posts/10159108333304485>

https://youtu.be/i5v4_YUaix0

Lebanon Candlelight Memorial 2020: PLHIV and COVID-19



Another campaign was launched to raise social consciousness about HIV and AIDS. More than 100 people lighted a candle for this memorial from their homes in support of PLHIV in Lebanon. An important intervention for global solidarity, breaking down barriers of stigma and discrimination, and giving hope to new generations. These posts was launched under with the support and long collaboration of MENAHRA and MacAIDS Fund. The main headline was sharing information about the coronavirus and its prevention specifically for PLHIV.

Social Media Links:

<https://www.facebook.com/SIDC.Leb/posts/10158426147324485>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=537992126865329>

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=257838138903352>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CAaU-grF3m6/>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CAVMRfcFwAi/>

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THANK YOU!!