Impact Report 2019
Introduction

Working in Lebanon and Jordan, Seenaryo is a leading specialist in performing arts and education with marginalised communities. Founded in 2015, Seenaryo works with refugees and vulnerable local communities through participatory theatre and choirs, and play-based training and resources for teachers. We use arts and play to strive for a world in which all people – regardless of their background – can express themselves in order to reach their full potential.
Vision
A world in which all people are able to express themselves in order to reach their full potential

Mission
Using a participatory, arts-based approach, our mission is to equip all people in Lebanon and Jordan with the tools to collaborate, think critically, and become resilient as individuals and in their communities

Aims
• Facilitate the creation of powerful, high-quality performances
• Support individuals in building social skills, life skills and wellbeing
• Foster social cohesion within and between refugee communities and host groups
• Increase employment opportunities and professional capacity within teaching and facilitation
• Transform teaching and learning to become child-centred, engaging and inclusive
• Facilitate intercultural understanding within the Arab region and globally
Where do we work?

More than 5 million Syrians have been externally displaced since the war began in 2011, leaving Lebanon & Jordan as the countries with the highest per capita proportion of refugees worldwide. These host countries have welcomed huge numbers of refugees, but many feel they are worse off. The refugee crisis has hit the most vulnerable people hardest.

Seenaryo’s work focuses not only on refugees but on all marginalised communities in these two countries.

We also do UK exchange projects to challenge assumptions about – and advocate for – refugees.

Lebanon hosts the most refugees per capita of any country in the world.

1 in 4

27% of Lebanese citizens live in poverty; the figure for refugees in Lebanon is much higher. Unemployment is rising dramatically due to the current economic crisis in the country.

Jordan is host to the second highest share of refugees per capita in the world.

1 in 12

Syrian refugees in Jordan suffer from long-term deprivation and stress, and tensions between refugees and host communities are high.
What do we do?

1. **Theatre**
   We work with children, youth and women, facilitating the creation of original, high quality and multi-disciplinary theatre, in which participants write their own scripts.

2. **Choirs**
   We run a collection of choirs for children in Lebanon, singing music from around the world in two-part harmony.

3. **Teacher training & resources**
   We’ve developed the Seenaryo Playkit, a resource and training for teachers of 3-8 year olds, supporting them to make their lessons interactive through movement, music, story and play.

In 2019, we had...
15 original theatre productions

WONDERLAND
CHILDREN’S THEATRE LEBANON
Partner | Women Now
Funded by | The Linbury Trust

THE ELEPHANT & THE ANT
CHILDREN’S THEATRE LEBANON
Partner | Women Now
Funded by | The Linbury Trust

JUSTICE IN SPACE
CHILDREN’S THEATRE JORDAN
Partner | Hamzet Wasel
Funded by | Norton Rose Fulbright

THE CAPTAIN’S MAGIC WORDS
CHILDREN’S THEATRE JORDAN
Partner | Hamzet Wasel
Funded by | Norton Rose Fulbright

LIFE ON PLANETS
CHILDREN’S THEATRE JORDAN
Partner | Sama Al Badea
Funded by | Team Archie

THE MYSTERY OF THE FOREST
CHILDREN’S THEATRE JORDAN
Partner | Sama Al Badea
Funded by | Team Archie

SOLVED
SHOWBUILD LEBANON
Partner | Yaabad Scout Troupe
Funded by | The Linbury Trust
THE WATER JOURNEY
SHOWBUILD LEBANON
Partner | Women Now
Funded by | The Linbury Trust

THE CURSE OF THE SEA
SHOWBUILD JORDAN
Partner | Haya Centre
Funded by | Team Archie

THE MAGIC NOTEBOOK
SHOWBUILD JORDAN
Partner | Collateral Repair Project
Funded by | Team Archie

THE METAMORPHOSIS
YOUTH THEATRE LEBANON
Partners | Goethe-Institut Libanon, Dar Al Aytam, Yaabad Scout Troupe, INTERSOS

#8_YEAR_CHALLENGE
YOUTH THEATRE LEBANON
Funded by | Team Archie, Create Syria (Ettijahat Independent Culture)

UP TO THE LIGHT
YOUTH THEATRE JORDAN
Partners | Sawiyah, Tarabot, Haya Centre
Funded by | Direct Aid Program (Australian Government)

TURNED INTO STARS
YOUTH THEATRE JORDAN
Partner & Funder | MMAG Foundation

WHAT’S FAR IS NEAR
WOMEN’S THEATRE EXCHANGE
BEIRUT & LONDON
Partners | Women Now, Southbank Centre, Counterpoints Arts
With funding from | Arts Council England & Lily Harriss

performed 30 times altogether in 3 countries
SPRING: BEKAA LEBANON
Partners | Women Now
Participating organisations | INTERSOS, Gharsa School, Kayany Foundation

SUMMER: BEIRUT LEBANON
Participating organisations | Dar Al Aytam, Amel, Tahaddi

WINTER: BEKAA LEBANON
Partners | Women Now
Participating organisations | Molham Orphanage, Hrouf School, Kayany Foundation

Theatre and choirs reached:
- 511 children
- 54 youth
- 55 women
- 3,581 audience

Playkit trainings reached:
- 62 schools
- 410 teachers
- 10,250 children
168 paid opportunities
5003 social media following
136.9K video views

Our work reached 15,486 beneficiaries
10 highlights of 2019

- Over 10,000 children reached through the Seenaryo Playkit
- One of 120 Global Innovators for Expo Dubai 2020 (chosen from over 11,000 applicants)
- Yaabad Scouts, a grassroots Palestinian group, ran their own Showbuild 5 years after they first took part
- Registration in Jordan, and opening an office in Amman
- Simultaneous Showbuilds in Lebanon and Jordan with participants exchanging video challenges
- New choir in Beirut bringing together Syrian and Lebanese children
- Women’s Theatre production, connecting refugees in London and Beirut via video link-up
- Invitation to present the Playkit at the Queen Rania Foundation’s education conference
- First youth project in Jordan (16-25 year olds)
- 5 new core staff roles created in Lebanon and Jordan
In 2020 we aim to...

- Work with participants to create 20 original theatre productions in 2 countries
- Train teachers working inside Syria to transform teaching through play
- Develop a UK office as a launchpad for scaling our work beyond Lebanon and Jordan
- Present the Seenaryo Playkit at the Expo 2020 World Fair in Dubai
- Gain 1,000 subscribers to the Seenaryo Playkit app
- Work with Integrated International to upgrade our impact measurement, ensuring data-driven practice
- Tour a Youth Theatre production to Germany
- Deliver 7 choirs with children and women
- Reach 30,000 children, young people, women and schoolteachers
THE PROBLEM in Lebanon & Jordan

There is a protracted crisis in refugee service provision; refugees and vulnerable local communities suffer from trauma, isolation and poverty.

Inter-community tensions are high and increasing at the local, national and global level.

Teachers are under-skilled and under-resourced, particularly in early years.

Employment is uncertain and decent work is limited among youth & women.

OUR ACTIVITIES with a focus on work with marginalised communities

- Choirs for children
- Training and resources for teachers
- Theatre for children, youth and women

OUR VALUES

- Meaningful participation at all organisational levels, enabling all voices to be heard
- Deep rootedness in local contexts and partnerships
- The intrinsic value of artistic excellence
- Agility & Innovation

MEDIUM TERM GOALS

- Teachers & Facilitators
  - Participant-centered learning
  - Positive behavior management
  - Inclusive learning environments
  - Enjoyment & inspiration in their work
- Participants
  - Confidence & self-worth
  - Resilience & personal strength
  - Communication skills & self-expression
  - Access to international audiences
  - Professional empowerment

LONG TERM GOALS

- at individual, family, community, national and global levels

1) People from marginalised communities reach their full potential.

2) Participatory approaches are embedded in the development and education sectors across the Arab region.

VALUES

- Social & cognitive skills
- Emotional wellbeing & resilience
- Engagement with learning
- Professional capacity & employment opportunities
- Intercultural understanding
- Community cohesion
- Long term goals

The intrinsic value of artistic excellence

Agility & Innovation

Meaningful participation at all organisational levels, enabling all voices to be heard

Deep rootedness in local contexts and partnerships

Participatory approaches are embedded in the development and education sectors across the Arab region.
Commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

We aim for Seenaro’s goals to align with sector-wide and international goals for sustainable development (SDGs). Seenaro’s programmes particularly focus on the following two SDGs set by the United Nations in 2015:

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Secondary SDGs addressed by Seenaro are:

5 GENDER EQUALITY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
Theatre | Children

87 children and parents of children evaluated

- felt more **confident** and **capable**
- felt more able to **face** their **worries** and **fears**
- learnt how to **cooperate** in a **team**
- felt better at **understanding** the feelings of **others**
- felt they have their **own** ideas and can **think** more for themselves
- felt they are doing **better in school** now

Lebanon:
- 4 13-week cycles
- 2 weeklong summer Showbuilds

Jordan:
- 4 13-week cycles
- 2 weeklong summer Showbuilds

Partners:
- felt more **confident** and **capable**
- felt more able to **face** their **worries** and **fears**
- learnt how to **cooperate** in a **team**
- felt better at **understanding** the feelings of **others**
- felt they have their **own** ideas and can **think** more for themselves
- felt they are doing **better in school** now

Funders:
- felt more **confident** and **capable**
- felt more able to **face** their **worries** and **fears**
- learnt how to **cooperate** in a **team**
- felt better at **understanding** the feelings of **others**
- felt they have their **own** ideas and can **think** more for themselves
- felt they are doing **better in school** now
“The children’s parents were extremely impressed with the level of **professionalism in this project** and reported a **positive change in their children’s behaviour**... I have received several phone calls from parents expressing their gratitude for the project.”

Mahmoud, Director of Rusaifeh Community Centre (Jordan), where Seenaryo delivered one of our summer Showbuilds

“**If people ask me questions, I know how to answer them better.** I have more **trust in myself.** I’m **not shy anymore** in life, with my friends or at school!”

Mayas, Children’s Theatre participant (Lebanon)
Theatre | Youth

**Lebanon:**
3 intensive projects

**Jordan:**
2 intensive projects

**Partners & funders:**
- Australian Aid
- GOETHE INSTITUT
- PMab Foundation
- Human Rights Foundation of Syria
- Team Archie
- Other organizations and institutions

29 youth evaluated

- **96%** felt they gained **acting** and **innovation** skills
- **100%** felt they gained **teamwork** and **communication** skills
- **100%** felt they increased their **professional capacity**
- **91%** felt they gained **facilitation** and **workshop planning** skills

**Average scores:**
- **9/10** was the average score for the **quality of direction and support**
- **9/10** was the average score for how much they gained from a Seenaryo project vs. others
“I’ve become better at expressing myself. We did a sketch about discrimination and it helped me get my message across. Instead of creating problems and starting fights when things bother me, I can articulate my thoughts and feelings.”

Mustapha, Youth Theatre participant (Lebanon)
In focus | **Fida**

Youth Theatre Participant (Lebanon)

“I’ve done other workshops in the past, but Seenaryo gave me something much fuller. I used to finish work and go to rehearsals even though I was exhausted. It took time to become visible in the group, as I was one of only two girls; but **now we are a family**. It means a lot to be a part of this group, I’m from a conservative background and I’m different from the others. My **self-belief** has become much greater, I’ve **found myself** in theatre. The play gave us space to express ourselves, and gave me the **faith to say whatever I want** in front of others. Outside I don’t feel I can talk in front of people, for example about politics. It was really important to be able to do that in sessions with Seenaryo.”

Fida has since been hired as a designer on our children’s Showbuilds and an assistant facilitator for our Women’s Theatre programme.

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**SDG 10.2 Reduce inequalities** | By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

**SDG 5.5 Gender Equality** | Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.
“I felt incredibly proud to participate in a Seenaryo project and work with people who have different mentalities, backgrounds and perspectives to my own. We learnt to adapt to each other and work as a team.”

Mobarak, Youth Theatre participant (Jordan)
Theatre | Women

Lebanon:
2 intensive projects, including an exchange project with London

23 women evaluated

felt the project helped them understand the situation of people they hadn’t met before

felt more confident, capable and able to express themselves

felt more able to face their worries and problems

felt they learnt how to cooperate in a team

was the average score for the quality of direction and support

was the average score for how much they learnt from the project

96%
100%
100%
96%
100%
8/10

Partners:

Funders:

with support from Lily Harriss
A key part of our Women’s Theatre programme this year was our production of *What’s Far Is Near*, a **cross-border theatre exchange** bringing together migrant and refugee women living in Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley and London, UK. Working across national and language barriers, these women came together to form one company, rehearsing together weekly over Skype, with facilitators in both countries using participatory devising processes. The production was showcased to **audiences of 710 people** at London’s Southbank Centre and The Palace Theatre in Beirut via video live stream.

Of 57 audience members evaluated across both countries:

- **91%** said this was the first time they had seen this type of digital exchange
- **84%** said the project made them empathise with refugee women around the world
- **91%** said the performance made them see something from a new perspective
In focus | Najah
Women’s Theatre Participant (Lebanon)

Najah from Aleppo in Syria has participated in all three of Seenaryo’s Women’s Theatre programmes to date. Outside of theatre, she is a football instructor at a local school. She says:

“Theatre is probably the most important thing that has happened in my life in the two years that I’ve been involved with Seenaryo. Before theatre, I hadn’t adjusted to life in the place in which I was living. Theatre helped me to laugh more. At home, there’s a lot of noise and I hate noise. But here, it’s me that makes the noise!

“Theatre puts my life in order, it organises my time and organises my thoughts with the people around me: sometimes I disagree with them, but I don’t think anyone is 100% aligned in their points of view. I don’t need to agree with everyone in order to commit to sticking with them. In this group, we help each other.”

Now, almost three years since she first started with Seenaryo, Najah uses the exercises that she learns in theatre to lead her football sessions. “There are certain games which really help me to manage the children’s behaviour,” she says. “Theatre helps me to build confidence and skills for my working life.”
In focus | Asia
Women’s Theatre Participant (Lebanon)

“My life in Lebanon is hard: making ends meet, keeping a roof over our heads, everything is difficult. I wanted to escape a little, and I found another life in theatre. I got to know new people, and was able to get rid of some of the sadness inside me.

“My life has changed so much since I left Syria. I now live in a camp, and it’s difficult to make enough money to get by. But here in the theatre, we can put across our true thoughts. I have to travel two and a half hours to get here for each rehearsal and the same to get back, so I have to put a whole day aside every time we have a rehearsal. Others might not do it, but I need theatre to get rid of negative energy, and to communicate the reality of the life that we live to audiences. Nothing except theatre allows me to make my voice heard.

“As Syrians, our situation is hard, but we still like to laugh and find the funny side.”

SDG 5.5 Gender Equality | Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life.
Choirs | Children

191 children, parents and teachers evaluated

- 96% of children felt more confident and capable
- 98% of children felt they had learnt to sing with a nicer sound
- 100% of teaches agreed students’ behaviour and participation was better post-project
- 88% of children felt they had made new friends
- 92% of parents felt their children were better at understanding the feelings of others
- 92% felt their children were more accepting of different people’s opinions

Lebanon:
2 cycles in the Bekaa Valley
1 cycle in Beirut

Partners:

Participating organisations: as well as Amel, Molham Orphanage, and Hrouf School
“He’s often scared and alone because of his disability, but he’s been getting along much better because of the choir. It’s helped him interact with his peers, and slowly he’s becoming more independent from me”

Mother of student from Aswat Seenaryo choir (Bekaa Valley, Lebanon)
“My body fills with positive energy while I sing – It makes me forget everything negative. I wish this experience would never end.”

Nour, Aswat Seenaryo choir participant (Beirut, Lebanon)
“When I’m in choir, I feel that something will happen in the future – that **when I grow up I’ll be somebody**. I feel that me and my friends help each other and we’re **not afraid of anything**.”

Imtisal, Aswat Seenaryo choir participant (Bekaa Valley, Lebanon)
Teacher training & resources

274 teachers and headteachers evaluated

- 82% use games every other day or more (previously 45% never used games)
- 86% act out a story once a week or more (previously 56% never did any acting)
- 99% agree that children’s learning has improved
- 81% say children spend more time speaking in class
- 94% use our classroom management techniques every day (64% said behaviour used to be a challenge)
- 88% found it easier to include all children (44% said they found it difficult to include all children before)

Lebanon: 9 teacher trainings

Jordan: 10 teachers trainings

Our teacher training and resource is the Seenaryo Playkit: a bank of hundreds of games, songs and interactive stories. It helps kindergarten, Grade 1 & 2 teachers deliver the curriculum in a play-based, child-centred way.

In 2019 we created the Seenaryo Playkit mobile phone application with digital agency WonderEight.

Funders:

SUPPORTED BY
“When doing the interactive story Finding Mishmush, a student who is usually very shy joined in. This was his first time showing progress in activities related to language.”

Terre des Hommes teacher

“I have been teaching for 21 years and this is the best training I’ve ever had. We left feeling like we really knew the content well and are ready to start delivering the activities in our own classes tomorrow.”

Caritas Jordan headteacher

SDG 4.a Quality education | Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

SDG 4.c Quality education | By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states.
What’s in the Playkit?

Activities

- GAMES
- SONGS
- INTERACTIVE STORIES
- CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Topics

Languages

- Arabic
- English
- Français

Activities:

- GAMES
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Topics:

Languages

- Arabic
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How does it work?

1. ATTEND A TRAINING
   Teachers participate in an intensive training where they are introduced to the Playkit’s activities, its core values and pedagogies.

2. DOWNLOAD THE APP
   They download the app, and…

3. FOLLOW UP
   Seenaryo follows up with the school to check progress and troubleshoot any issues they are facing.

#### Search for the topics they are teaching

#### Watch step-by-step instructional videos

#### Save and print relevant flashcards

#### And play music in their classroom
Playkit Clients

Seenaryo works with teachers directly through emergency schools as well as via grassroots organisations, NGOs and iNGOs who have their own school networks or education centres. See some of our 2019 Playkit clients on the right.

In 2019, we reached:

62 schools
410 teachers
10,250 children
“I had a child in my class who constantly hid under a table. When he saw us playing *Jump or Touch* he came out and wanted to participate. Since then he’s been *joining in with everything*.”

Caritas Austria teacher

“Children from refugee camps are often hyperactive but the *Playkit classroom management strategies* helps them benefit more from the lessons and helps me control the classroom more efficiently.”

Al Qabas teacher

“The Playkit is so organised and easy to follow. We’ve asked our school administration if they can just replace our *curriculum books* with Seenaryo’s Playkit!”

Gharsa School teacher
How can you help?

- $200 pays for one child to take part in a summer Showbuild course
- $300 pays for 10 children’s transport for a whole term between refugee camps and our workshops
- $600 pays for 50 teachers to subscribe to the Playkit app for one year
- $2,000 pays for an entire school staff to take part in the Seenaryo Playkit training course
- $6,500 pays for 30 children to take part in Aswat Seenaryo choir for one year
- $13,000 allows us to initiate a brand new programme in Jordan or Lebanon
2019

Institutional Funders


Project related: Arts Council England, Azm Foundation, Create Syria (a project by Ettijahat Independent Culture in partnership with the British Council), Direct Aid Program (via the Australian Government), Expo Live (an Expo 2020 Dubai Initiative), Goethe-Institut Libanon, Help Refugees: Choose Love, Kids Rights, MMAG Foundation, Norton Rose Fulbright, The Linbury Trust, St James’s Place Charitable Foundation, Team Archie

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