



In cooperation with



Handbook: The Memory of War

Increasing mutual acceptance of multiple and diverse narratives on the Civil War in schools and youth groups

The educational system in Lebanon is divided along sectarian and/or political and social lines – schools and other institutions often place their emphasis in the teaching of history on events and narratives according to their political and religious affiliations. Efforts by the Lebanese government to compile a unified history book have failed so far. This has left the Lebanese government in gridlock over approving revised history curricula, leaving the 1971 history curriculum still in effect. Critical events like the civil war and the post-war period are rarely addressed in history education. This bears the danger of teaching unbalanced views of the past and present violence in Lebanon, of reinforcing narratives of victimization, of reproducing stereotypes and of justifying conflict lines and aggression against others.

Our approach

By providing training resources to civil society i.e. teachers, we aim at increasing mutual acceptance of one’s own and other people’s narratives. The handbook includes innovative teaching methods which promote critical thinking and critically reviewing interpretations of past and present violence.

What we do

In cooperation with its partners Lebanese Center for Civic Education (LCCE) and A Step Away, forumZFD has developed a handbook on “The Memory of War” to be used by teachers and NGO staff to address past and present violence in Lebanon. The



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handbook aims to teach youths from the age of 14 that there are various interpretations of history in Lebanon and to help them accept the existence of divergent views on the Civil War. It collects narratives from different sides of the conflict alongside other material about the civil war such as interviews, newspaper articles, pictures and exercises. The material is presented in 12 thematic chapters. Each chapter is designed to be easily integrated in history lessons at school or to be used as workshop guidelines in NGO work. The handbook is complemented by a 23-minutes video documentary “When we grew up during the war” which portrays the personal experiences of six people from very diverse backgrounds during the war. A new edition of the handbook is currently being worked on. Also, we offer a training series for practitioners to support the implementation of the handbook.

Our theories of change

If we provide teachers and NGO staff with innovative teaching resources to look into conflict narratives, this will enable them to better facilitate open and constructive discussions on issues related to past and present violent events.

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