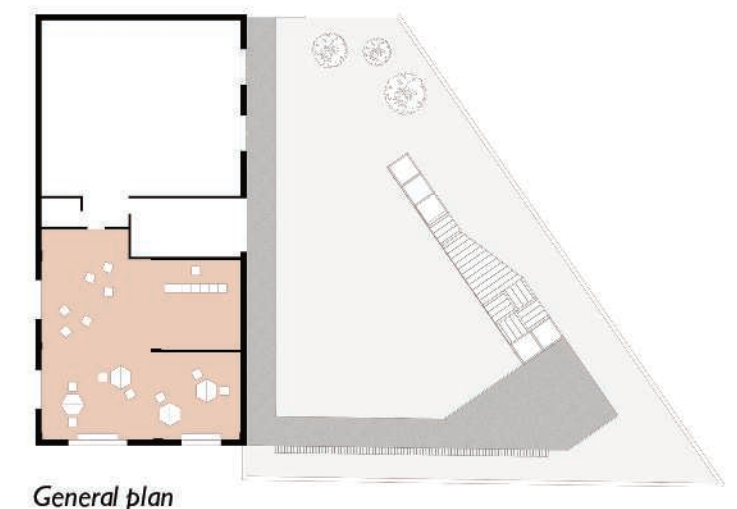


SAFE SPACES TO NURTURE CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION

The main objective of this project was to rehabilitate an existing community centre, transforming it into an innovative child friendly space (CFS). The building is located in Bouday (North Bekaa, Lebanon) and it is run by the Lebanese Organisation for Studies and Training (LOST) as a space for different psychosocial activities for Syrian and Lebanese children, youth and adults. Before the intervention carried out by CatalyticAction, the indoor spaces where the activities were conducted were lacking colors and the configuration of the furniture was only offering a 'traditional' classroom setup, which is not always ideal for psychosocial support sessions. The outdoor space, which was mostly used as a parking, was not safe for children to use and did not offer any opportunity for learning and playing. The new CFS provides spaces where children can learn and play in a safe environment which contributes to improve resilience and mental health.



CHILD FRIENDLY SPACE IN BOUDAY (LEBANON)



COMMUNITY-ENGAGED CONSTRUCTION

During this phase CatalyticAction engaged with the local community to physically build the project. The construction took 4 weeks to complete, and it was carried out by a team of 16 local women and men, 8 national and international volunteers together with our team. CatalyticAction follows specific values during all the phases of each project. In particular, during the implementation phase, we prioritise the use of local materials to boost the local economy through the project. Labour is also hired locally and often from the most disadvantaged communities. Equal engagement is another fundamental value for CatalyticAction, which is why women are equally employed for the construction phase as men. During one week of the implementation we also hosted a design-build workshop where local and international volunteers participated in the construction of the project together with the local community. Children also took part during the implementation by decorating the playground through different structured activities. These activities aim at developing a sense of ownership towards the project, as children experience a direct involvement in its construction.



13 LOCAL BUSINESSES involved



16 LOCAL WORKERS hired



8 local and international WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS



CHILD FRIENDLY SPACE IN BOUDAY (LEBANON)

CatalyticAction 

PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The design was tailored around an interdisciplinary approach between the different stakeholders, having the community at the core of the process. The participatory planning phase of the project consisted of a series of exercises involving the children and youth in the design process. CatalyticAction designed the exercises for the three age groups that the programs are usually run with. The activities were then conducted with the support of the program facilitators because a relationship of familiarity and trust exists between them and the children, therefore the exercises' outcome would be more valuable. The aim of the activities was to engage the children in the vision of their child friendly space and to start the conversation with them around the new space. Through the use of participatory planning the community has been empowered as the participatory methods used during the sessions were transferred to the community members.



CHILD FRIENDLY SPACE IN BOUDAY (LEBANON)

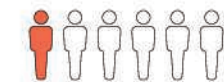


THE RIGHT TO PLAY

One in six persons in Lebanon is displaced from Syria, with around 54% of all Syrian refugees that are under 18 years old making it largely a crisis of children and youth. Most Syrian refugees live in housing without sufficient space for play.

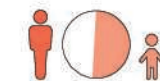
Article 31 of the UN convention for the Rights of Children states that we should recognise their rights to: “rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities ... to participate fully in cultural and artistic life”.

Educational spaces, such as schools, playgrounds etc. have a fundamental role for children to create social networks, improve their behaviour and partially heal any psychological trauma they might have experienced. A playground has the power to be a space for education; a space for stress release and where children can develop their creativity and imagination; a space much needed in a context where child development is challenged by the effects of a war and displacement crisis. The innovative process lies within not simply providing playing facilities but rather in exploring opportunities that enable children to design the playground themselves.



1 in 6

Out of 5.9 million population living in Lebanon, 1.1 million are Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2018)



54%

of Syrian refugees are children and adolescents (Gov. Leb., 2017)

CHILD FRIENDLY SPACE IN BOUDAY (LEBANON)