



Spark of Change: Results Generated

Name of project:	Spark of Change
Project period:	May-August 2022
Project partners:	PFPPA, TfaC, Nisaa FM in Ramallah
Number of people trained in IRD:	7 (4 female, 3 male)
Average age of people trained:	21
Number of IRD broadcasts:	8
Estimated number of listeners:	170k per broadcast
Average number of dial-ins:	6 per broadcast
Number of Listening Clubs established:	2
Average number of participants in Listening Club:	Gaza and Hebron: 33 (22 female, 11 male)
Percentage of Listening Club participants under 25:	90%

Introduction

In May 2002, PFPPA and TfaC organised a training in the use of Interactive Radio Drama (IRD) to address Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Palestine. The training was attended by seven participants. Following the training eight IRD performances were broadcast over a 2-months period. Two Listening Clubs were established to explore the topics discussed during the broadcasts in more detail and encourage listeners to dial in and touch tag.

This synopsis captures the main results to date. It is informed by multiple sources of information, including a pre- and post-survey among the training participants, diary entries, participant feedback, an interview with the interpreters, broadcast records, Listening Club records and reflections by the Project Coordinator.

At the time of compiling this synopsis no data were available to assess whether the IRD broadcasts are generating extra uptake of the GBV services offered by the National Referral System (NRS).



Characteristics of the cohort trained

In total, seven participants were trained, four female and three male. The average age of the participants was 21, ranging from 19 to 26.

While IRD was new to all participants, two of the participants had some previous experience in working in radio and/or theatre including experience in drama and role play and doing radio interviews.

Participant expectations

As part of the intake process, participants were asked what skills they wanted to develop through the training. Six participants focussed on their desire to develop and improve their skills in the use of drama in general and IRD in particular. Four participants saw the training as an opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of GBV, and two participants expressed their desire to strengthen their skills in working as a team.

Changes at the level of training participants

At baseline most participants were able to describe GBV. As a result of the training, their knowledge further increased, putting more emphasis on the importance of societal roles, traditions, as well as place and time, and the recognition that GBV can also take place between people of the same gender.

The PFPPA baseline and endline did not show a significant improvement in the participants understanding of the NRS. This, however, is not surprising, considering that the NRS was not the focus of the training, as originally anticipated. Instead, the training focussed on the reporting services offered by PFPPA.

Participants' understanding of IRD improved across the board. Nevertheless, there some aspects of IRD where participants were less clear, in particular with regard to the question whether IRD is created and performed by the same group. There seemed to be some confusion around this question, which was likely to be due to the way the question was framed, and possibly the way it translates into Arabic. In practice, all participants were clear that they themselves were both the creators of and performers in the IRD broadcasts.

The evaluation also tried to ascertain whether the participants' reflection skills had improved during the course of the training. Both the training facilitators and interpreters observed a marked improvement in the reflection skills. Unfortunately, it was not possible to further substantiate this by comparing journal entries at the start and the end of the training course, due to the selection of entries the participants chose to share.

The two interpreters, who both played a key role during the training, observed changes at individual level as well as changes in the group dynamics. As the training evolved, participants



became more punctual, enthusiastic, engaged, committed, open and expressive. Their approach changed from being “journalistic” to “facilitators of change” interested in how to get their message across. They also observed changes in team dynamics, with participants encouraging each other and providing peer-to-peer feedback and support. At the start of the training, each participant would make her or his way home by bus. Towards the end of the training, participants would walk back together as a group to discuss the day’s training and the plans for the next day.

The end-of-workshop feedback showed a strong commitment to addressing GBV in general, and through IRD in particular.

IRD broadcasts

Following the training, eight IRD episodes were broadcast through Nisaa FM in Ramallah, with each episode reaching an estimated 170,000 listeners. The broadcasts explored a range of issues related to GBV, including verbal, psychological and emotional abuse by the partner; economic violence; and marital rape. A number of expert guests took part in the broadcasts, including specialists in family planning, gender and GBV.

On average the broadcasts attracted six people who dialled in, ranging from three to nine per broadcast. This number increased over time, except for the last episode during which only three people dialled in.

In general, the people who dialled in were eager to talk about the topics discussed during the broadcasts and share their opinion, but somewhat hesitant to touch tag. Based on these observations, participants in the Listening Clubs were encouraged not only to dial in but also touch tag. However, it will require a sustained effort with Listening Clubs over a longer period of time to make people feel comfortable to touch tag during a live radio broadcast.

The dial-ins also provided a feedback mechanism to assess the extent to which key messages had been understood by the listeners and generate ideas for future episodes. For example, the dial-ins highlighted the need to explore more explicitly what constitutes ‘violence’ and the different ways it can manifest itself. Furthermore, some of the suggestions made by the callers provided ideas for future episodes, such as the suggestion for Nour to talk to her mother or asking her brother to talk to Faisal.

Listening Clubs

Following each IRD episode data were gathered from a Listening Club in Gaza and Hebron to capture the response to the issues discussed during the IRD broadcasts.

On average 33 listeners participated in the Listening Club, 22 female and 11 male. The vast majority of the participants (90% on average) were under 25, with the exception of the



Listening Club during the first broadcast when only 33% of participants were under 25. This shift may be the result of the specific focus of the IRD broadcasts on a young couple.

From the discussions in the Listening Clubs, it is clear that over time participants became more engaged in the topics discussed during the broadcasts. Participants commented that the performances, combined with real-life noise in the background, were realistic. Participants started to speculate how the story would evolve in the next episode. They also commented on the importance of the advice given by the guests.

Given that IRD is a new phenomenon, participants in the Listening Clubs were still somewhat hesitant to dial in. When they do dial in, there is a tendency to talk extensively, rather than touch tag. It will require a sustained effort over a longer period of time, possibly combined with some training of the Listening Clubs, to overcome this hurdle.

Conclusions and lessons learnt

The training of seven participants in the application of IRD was well received across the board. The training resulted in a better understanding of GBV and the acquisition of skills required to prepare, present and broadcast IRD sessions on GBV. Furthermore, teamwork among the participants significantly improved during the course of the training.

This relatively short project has shown that IRD can be a powerful mechanism to discuss GBV in the context of Palestine. The combination of IRD and interviews with experts during the broadcasts was well received. The approach may also lend itself to explore other sensitive issues in society and challenge social norms.

The establishment of Listening clubs to complement the IRD broadcasts provides an excellent opportunity to assess how the broadcasts are received and understood, and to encourage listeners to dial in. Given that IRD is a new phenomenon in the context of Palestine, however, more work is needed to encourage listeners not only to dial in, but also touch tag.

Going forward, it will be useful to monitor change in the uptake of NRS and PFPPA services and the extent to which the IRD broadcasts on GBV play a role in this.