

Music and Resilience 2016

co-funded by NISCVT, PM and Welfare Association

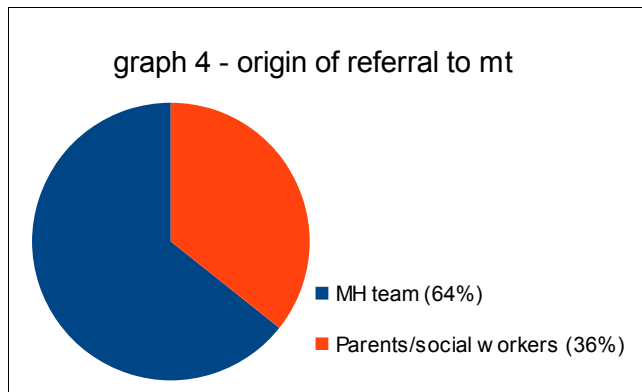
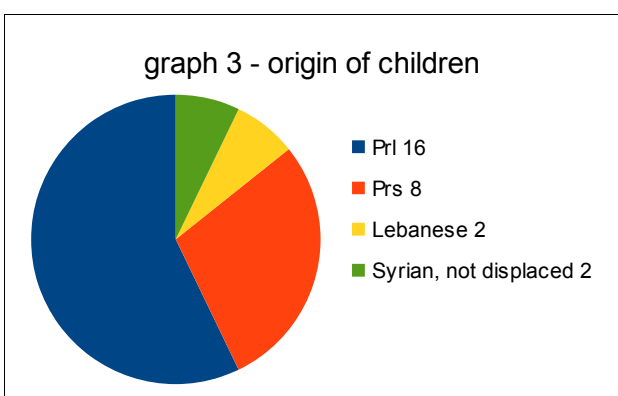
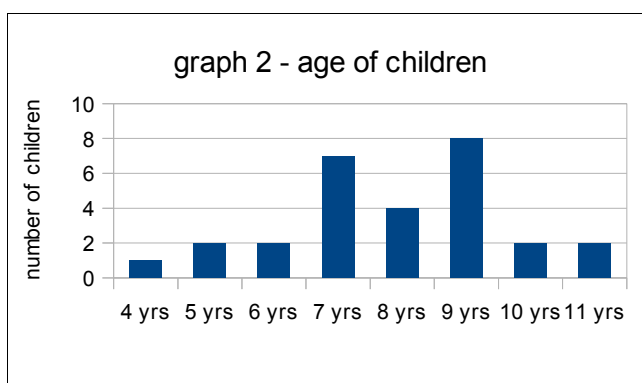
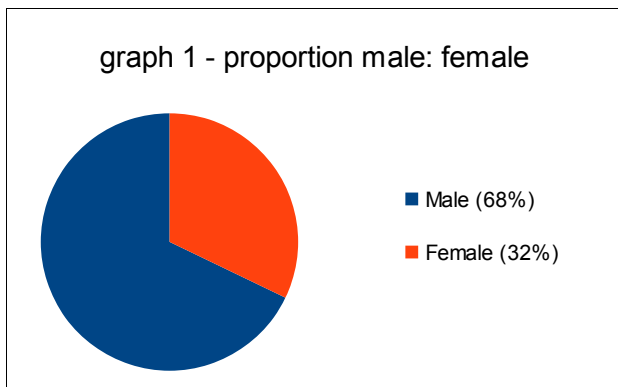
Changing life for refugee children in Lebanon

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I Music Therapy Report

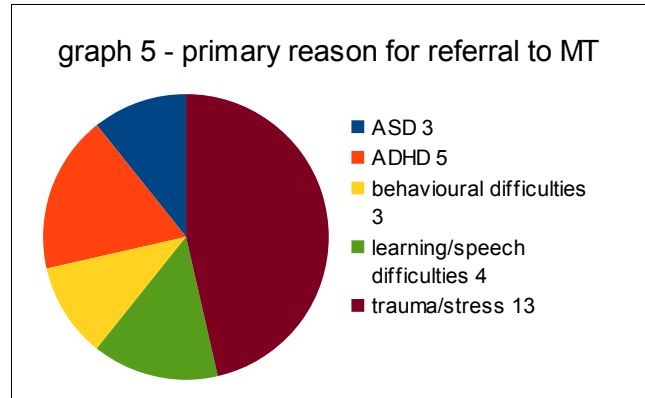
Clinical data analysis for period January-June 2016

During the period January-June 2016, 28 children (9 girls and 19 boys) between the ages of 4 and 11 years, of various origins, were treated in Assumoud's 5 Family Guidance Centers (FGCs). Referrals came through the local mental health teams in each FGC, or directly from parents collaborating with social workers. Graphs 1-4 show these characteristics.



7 children were treated in groups (2 groups, 4 and 3 children respectively); the other cases were treated individually. In 1 case, as decided by the local MH team, 1 child was given further individual treatment subsequent to group treatment.

The range of primary reasons for referral to music therapy is shown in graph 5; most children are referred for multiple reasons, with overlapping of behavioral, emotional and cognitive symptoms, but the primary reason hypothesized or diagnosed is represented here. Other than developmental pathologies (Autistic Syndrome Disorder: ASD), the number of children referred for symptoms thought to relate principally to cognitive processes (behavioral/ learning/ speech difficulties) roughly equals those referred for symptoms relating to emotional disruption due to trauma and/or stress.



This indication has informed the proposal to develop a clinically controlled research project during 2017 and 2018, investigating and comparing the efficacy of music therapy within the NISCVT's mental health environment, between children with cognitive disorders and children with emotional disorders.

The average number of sessions given in each treatment was 10; for the most part, a cycle of 12 weekly sessions was planned, but in practice many factors related to the precarious living conditions of the client population contributed to irregularity of attendance, leading to the extension of the treatment period. Treatment is suspended during the Ramadan period.

Music therapy is considered an effective treatment for all children referred; many cases progressed from music therapy into other therapies (speech, psycho-motor, psychotherapy), or vice versa, or into psycho-social support activities within the FGC or in other organizations. Where appropriate, children are able to move from the clinical environment into Assumoud's music activities, in order to ensure continuity with this artistic and psycho-educative discipline.

August 2016 – psycho-social music activity

During August, in the FGCs of Beddawi and Saida, 12 children, in 4 groups, were able to benefit from short cycles of psychosocial music activity (5 30-minute sessions on consecutive days) led by 2 music therapy training students from Italian schools, working as therapist and co-therapist, under the supervision of project coordinator Deborah Parker. The children were



chosen by the local mental health (MH) teams and monitored by local FGC staff. Reports have been prepared by the Italian students, for vision by the MH teams, providing information for future planning for these children.

II Community Music Report

Background

The “Music & Resilience” Community Music programme is developed in cooperation with the Family Guidance Centre in Saida – including children from Ein Al Helwa and Mieh Mieh refugee camps – and the Assumoud Centre in Beddawi refugee camp (Tripoli).

Around 40 children ranging between 8 and 18 years old are attending music lessons in the two centres. The courses include theory lessons, group activities and instrumental tuition in violin, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, recorder, guitar, keyboard and percussions.

Teaching Team and Peer Education

The local CM team includes 4 teachers working for a total of 8 hours weekly. In their work they are supported by older students, volunteers between 16 and 18 years old who assist the teachers and help the younger children practising with their instruments.

The approach of the teachers results in a very inclusive and safe environment also for children coming from Music Therapy or other clinical support, who find in the music group a place to express and socialise.

Prima Materia team missions

In 2015-16 three visits and a Summer Camp (see next section) were arranged to follow up the CM project in both centres, to support and consolidate the activities:

- October-November 2015: meetings to assess the project and develop future strategies;
- March 2016: workshops with music groups in both centres; training days for music operators; general meeting in Beirut with the Music Therapy coordinator, CM local coordinators and music teachers;
- May 2016: meetings to follow up the programme and plan the summer activities.

During the visits musical instruments were brought by the Prima Materia team, collected from donors and sponsors in Italy.



Community Music Workshop

A Summer Camp with music programme was held thanks to special funding conceded by Welfare Association to NISCVT between 2nd and 16th August 2016, involving 30 children from Saida and Beddawi. The Prima Materia team was composed of 6 teachers, coordinator and 2 volunteers.



During the first week the PM team worked divided in smaller groups in the two camps separately, together with local teachers. In the second week the two groups (40 children in total) merged together in Beddawi camp. Children from Saida, local operators and Italian team were hosted in the Assumoud Centre.

At the end of the workshop the orchestra and choir of children performed two concerts. The event saw the participation of the choral section run by Al Fayha choir in Beddawi camp and also the teaching team performed a short programme.



III The Children's stories¹

Out of the music therapy clinic and into the music community ...

Osama, 14 years old, came to the for depression due to severe mental retardation.

He worked in individual music therapy for a year, to rehabilitate his cognitive and motor coordination, to improve his emotional balance and self esteem, and to support improvement in expression and communication skills. Subsequently he worked in a music therapy group with 2 other children, concentrating on social skills. With support from FGC team, Osama was then able to leave the clinical environment and join the Community Music (CM) group, where he chose to play percussion. In this group, he shows a growing capacity to be attentive, to concentrate and to collaborate. When he is serene, and with support, he is able to play appropriately with the group, sustaining simple rhythmic patterns.

For Osama, CM signifies an essential step towards normal social integration, becoming an independent member of society who can contribute in a unique and positive way which is acknowledged and appreciated by his teachers and peers.

Youssef, 12 years old, came to the FGC for disruptive behavior, due to family violence and stress from the family's problematic economic situation. He was in depression due to high stress levels and was diagnosed with moderate mental retardation. He was moved to a special school and admitted to a psychotherapy program, to work on family violence, to reduce his stigma and to build his self-esteem. Subsequently he entered a music therapy group composed of children with similar diagnoses, with the aim of improving his emotional expression and control and his social skills, and to give him the experience of a safe and enjoyable social environment. When he finished this cycle, which was successful and made his musical motivation and skills emerge, he was given the opportunity to join the CM group. He chose to play saxophone, and is making very good progress on this instrument. He still needs to work on discipline, related to his mood, and needs support for sustained motivation. These issues are worked at during the CM lessons, in a discreet but firm way, with good collaboration between the music teacher and FGC MH professionals. For Youssef this is an opportunity to develop a sense of responsibility to his peers and to the teacher, in an activity which he cares about, in order to learn how to behave in a socially appropriate and respectable way.

Ahmad, 13 years old, was in psychotherapy for anxiety and depression. He was very shy and inhibited, unable to express himself without the help of the therapist, and unable to participate in group activities with his peers. He progressed to group therapy, to work on self esteem and trust and he asked to join the CM group. He chose clarinet, and began to show motivation caring for the instrument and trying to learn.

A great difference has been noticed by all FGC staff in his behavior since returning from the Summer Music Camp. He is now able to express himself well, and his shyness has decreased; he

¹ All names and personal details of the children have been modified, in order to protect their privacy.

initiates communication with his peers, plays with them, and he has become more aware of self care and respect.

Firaz's parents both have very serious and preoccupying health problems. Firaz came to the FGC for speech delay, and was referred to a special school, where he made good progress, so that after 3 years he was re-admitted to regular school. Despite good language development, he was intensely shy and insecure, unable to use eye-contact, unwilling to leave the house, and took refuge in selective mutism outside the home.

The FGC negotiated with him to take part in the CM group, where he sat in silence, watching but not participating. In March 2016, the Prima Materia team brought instruments to Saida FGC and guided music workshops for the children. Firaz showed interest in the saxophone and began to learn it, finding his voice with the instrument. The teacher describes him as the most concentrated and attentive member of the wind section. Now he is beginning occasionally to speak one or two words quietly during lessons. He is also able to use eye-contact consistently for social communication.

After the Beddawi Summer Camp, Firaz's family report that he now leaves the house alone, to go to the shop to buy something.

All these children are accepted and respected members of the group, who contribute invaluable to its life and developments. When the group is working and performing, it is not possible to detect which members have come from the clinical environment.

What the students said about the Summer Camp in Beddawi, August 2016

“What a wonderful camp! It was a wonderful experience for us to learn music with each other and we met new people. I love this experience especially because it was with the Italian team. We feel happiness and enjoyment. I wish that it could be back these days, and the training with the teachers. We succeeded in a great work together and we arranged 2 parties inside Beddawi camp, all just in 2 weeks! I love you all so much.”

(Mohamad, 11 years old)

“This camp meant a lot for me; it gave me an experience I never had before and it pushed me to keep trying and not to give up. I met new friends in Beddawi and we lived with them a whole week and it was a brilliant week there.

The Italian team – what can I say about them? They are so lovely and professional. I learned from their experience and I thank you for this opportunity.

I hope that this camp happens again - I want to live this experience again.”

(Sawsan, 16 years old)

“When we went to Beddawi camp and learnt music, for me it felt like a new life, especially after we met new friends and played together. When I went onstage I felt nervous, but the teachers



*National Institution of Social Care and Vocational Training 'Beit Afal Assumoud',
Lebanon; Ass. Prima Materia, Montespertoli (FI-Italy); Welfare Association Lebanon in
collaboration with Ulaia ArteSud Onlus (Rome-Italy)*

supported us, standing beside us to help us to play well. And we did play well, and this moment was the greatest in my life!

We miss you all guys - please come again to teach us!"
(Omar, 12 years old)

"Those were beautiful days with the Italian people. This camp helped us make new friends and helped us in communication. We learned amazing songs and got to know new cultures, like the Italian food and other traditions. I love these kind of activities. I would like to have this experience again."

(Nadr, 15 years old)

NISCVT and Prima Materia wish to thank all sponsors and donors for the financial support for this project.