

Key Impact Consulting

**Media Impacting Conflict
Transformation: From Local Action to
Cross-border and Global Outreach**

Mid-term Evaluation Report

Adi Grady-Ashkenazy and Dr. Yuval Ofek
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This evaluation was performed by Key Impact Consulting. The team comprised two Evaluators, Dr. Yuval Ofek and Adi Grady-Ashkenazy. This report is the sole product of its authors, and responsibility for the accuracy of data rests with the authors alone. The findings, interpretations and conclusions presented in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the funder or the implementing organisations.

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List of Abbreviations

AI	Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace
EU	European Union
ISTV	Israel Social TV
MICT	Media Impacting Conflict Transformation

Preface

Key Impact Consulting has been performing a mid-term evaluation for the three-year project "*Media Impacting Conflict Transformation*" (hereafter MICT) implemented in Israel by two local NGOs, the Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace (hereafter AI) and Israel Social TV (hereafter ISTV), and funded by the European Union (EU). The project started in January 1st 2018 and will run until December 31st 2020. The evaluation was carried out in a span of 11 months, between March 2018 and January 2019. The primary audiences for this evaluation report are the AI and ISTV as the implementing organizations, and the EU as the project funder.

The report consists of seven chapters:

- Chapter 1 describes the project evaluated.
- Chapter 2 presents the scope of the evaluation, its approach, methodology and main limitations.
- Chapter 3-6 present the evaluation findings, analyse the project relevance and effectiveness.
- Chapter 7 concludes and provides forward-looking recommendations.

Chapter 1. Project Description

Funded by the EU and implemented by AI and ISTV, MICT is a three-year project that "*promotes peace journalism in Israel as a central catalyst in regional conflict transformation*" (overall goal). The action's specific objectives are to:

- Mobilize a broad spectrum of Israeli media to positively transform public opinion regarding conflict transformation between Israelis and Palestinians.
- Train a large cadre (180) of Israeli media persons as peace journalists and opinion formers committed to conflict transformation.
- Provide these media persons with an in-depth knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, professional media work and effective conflict resolution strategies.
- Support this cadre of trained media persons to produce their own media products in line with peace journalism and disseminate them at the local, regional and global levels.

The action intends to target a broad range of Israeli media persons (Arabs and Jews alike) coming from traditional, new and social media, including professionally trained, paid journalists and also trained, untrained or self-trained, unpaid or paid new media activists.

As part of the activities implemented in the first year, AI and ISTV organized three overnight seminars.

- The first seminar (in May 2018) revolved around the conflict, its history, various narratives, media coverage and possible solutions.
- The second seminar (in June 2018) revolved around the exclusion of various groups in conflict-resolution and peace-building (for instance, women and Mizrahi Jews) and taught about journalism tools.
- The third seminar (in October 2018) revolved around the exclusion from the media of various groups (for instance, Bedouins) and the issue of freedom of speech.

The seminars also included practical training in specific fields of journalism and media work. The majority of the last seminar was dedicated to practical training. In addition to the three seminars four training days of facilitators and a summary meeting took place in 2018. Parallel to the seminars, ISTV has provided individual support to participants in preparing their own media products in the spirit of peace journalism. The first implementation year culminated in the final event in Tel Aviv in December 2018, when some media products were showed as examples.

Chapter 2. Evaluation Approach & Methodology

2.1 The scope of the evaluation

The goal of this mid-term evaluation was to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the first year's project activities. The evaluation combines both summative and formative elements and has its focus on the results (accountability objective) as well as on the implementation process (learning objective). The accountability objective evaluates the range of results achieved during the first year of implementation. It provides an accurate account of accomplishments, whether positive or negative, intended or otherwise. The improvement objective analyses why expected results have been achieved, while making forward-looking recommendations. The evaluation answers the following questions (Table 1):

RELEVANCE	
1.	How relevant is the selected group of participants to the project's purpose?
2.	To what extent are the project activities relevant to the expectations of the participants?
EFFECTIVENESS	
3.	To what extent have project objectives been achieved?
4.	What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of project objectives?
5.	How can project activities be improved to achieve the desired results?
6.	What real differences has the project made to the participants?

Table 1. Evaluation questions

2.2 Evaluation approach and methodology

The evaluation was primarily based on the targets and objectives of the logical framework model developed by the two implementing organizations and approved by the EU. For the collection of data, a mixed-method approach was used, the combination of qualitative and quantitative inquiries. The qualitative inquiry included interviews and observations of project activities. The quantitative inquiry included a survey (in Hebrew) aimed at the project participants at two points of times, in the beginning and at the end of the third seminar. Staff members at AI and ISTV and seminar facilitators collaborated with the evaluation process, and the evaluation team received the necessary data and support. The evaluation comprised the below phases and activities:

1. Preparation phase

The preparation phase saw the review of project documents and a kick-off discussion with the implementing organizations. These activities served the basis for the development of the data collection tools (interview guides and survey).

2. Data collection

The evaluation continued with the qualitative and quantitative inquiries. The evaluation team carried out observations of three seminars and the training of facilitators. Moreover, the research team also attended the final event in Tel Aviv and observed the presentation of the media products. All in all, the evaluation team interviewed eight participants (six of whom completed the project and two of whom dropped out on the way), three facilitators and six project personnel. Interviews with participants who completed the project focused on their expectations, satisfaction with the different activities, mapped the changes in their knowledge, perception and practices. Group coherence, dynamics (especially Arab-Jewish encounters), dialogue styles and relations between participants were also observed as relevant indicators of progress. Interviews with the facilitators and project staff focused on challenges encountered throughout the implementation, the teams' understanding of progress and results, and the changes introduced to improve the project.

As for the quantitative component, participants were targeted with a questionnaire during the first seminar in May 2018 (pre-survey) and during the last seminar in October 2018 (post-survey). The pre-survey was completed by 53 participants, which is 96% response rate. The post-survey was completed by 30 participants, which is 88% response rate.

3. Analysis and report writing

Interviews were summarised, data was interpreted, while common themes were identified and arranged around specific evaluation questions and indicators. Quantitative data was entered and analysed with SPSS. Descriptive statistics, comparative (non-paired, at the group level) and correlation analysis were performed to detect relations between the variables. Open questions in the surveys were manually coded. Finally, all information was triangulated.

2.4 Challenges and limitations of the evaluation

The evaluation team received full cooperation from AI and ISTV. Project staff, facilitators and participants were highly responsive to queries. The high level of support contributed to an efficient and smooth evaluation process. There were no major challenges on the way. However, the research team can highlight one limitation to the evaluation.

Timing of the preparation for the final media products

With a few exceptions, most participants started the intense preparation of their final media products late into the evaluation process, after the third seminar or even after the final event (December 2018). As a result, the evaluation team had only limited opportunities to collect data about this process. The information presented in this report is mostly based on feedback from a few participants who advanced quicker with their projects and thus it is limited in scope. Output data was provided to the evaluation team by the implementing partners.

Chapter 3. Relevance

This chapter examines the issue of relevance. The first section describes the recruitment process and considers whether the selected group of participants is in line with the project goals. The second section describes the expectations of participants and their satisfaction with the project.

3.1 Recruitment and profile of participants

According to initial project plans 180 media persons are to be trained over the course of three years. Implementing partners intend to attract both Jews and Israeli Arabs, men and women, from diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and racial communities. In the beginning of the first implementation year, the management team had invested considerable resources in the recruitment of participants, both in terms of advertising on various platforms and in the screening of applicants. Efforts were aimed at reaching as many media persons as possible and creating a diverse group. Advertisements were published in universities, colleges and film schools throughout Israel. The channels of outreach included posters and mailing lists, social media groups, forums and newsletters to media persons and political activists, as well as websites and contact lists of AI and ISTV and newspaper offices. A specific newsletter targeting Arab Israeli media persons was also used. Moreover, a marketing company was hired to reach relevant applicants on social media.

Due to the intensive advertisement process, more than a hundred people replied to the initial call. The applicants were interviewed in various locations throughout Israel (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Beer-Sheva, Haifa). Interviews were used to determine whether the applicants can comply with project expectations, and whether the seminar content and goals are suitable to them. Expectations to attend all three seminars and produce a final product deterred many applicants who were unable to commit. To be able to reach a satisfactory number of participants ISTV conducted additional online interviews.

All in all, 60 participants were selected into the first cohort out of which 55 showed up for the first seminar. The second seminar was attended by 44 participants, and following additional dropout 34 people took part in the last seminar. The implementing partners reported that 38 participants completed the project. Of those who completed all three seminars, two-third are women. Their ages range from 22 to 47, with the median age being 30. This suggests that most participants of the first cohort were young professionals with some but limited prior experience. When asked about the reasons for dropout, those participants who attended a seminar or two but failed to complete the entire project mentioned "*conflicting schedules*" or that "*it was not what they expected*". Section 3.2 below elaborates on participants' expectations and the way they were met. A gap between participants' expectations and actual seminar

content was also cited by others, those who did complete the project (see section 4.1 on seminar content).¹

The recruitment process was hampered by several factors. The implementing partners were unable to recruit as many Arab Israeli participants as they had initially hoped for. According to initial expectations, half of the participants would have been Arabs from Israel and East Jerusalem (who do not need permits). Finally, Israeli Arabs comprised a third of the first cohort. This exceeds their share in the total population of Israel which is a little over one-fifth and their share among Israeli media professionals which is around 2%.

The project management succeeded in attracting participants from various geographic locations, partly because of the transportation made available in the project. Moreover, implementing partners were also successful in attracting a small number of participants from excluded populations such as members of the Ethiopian community or Haredi (ultra-orthodox) Jews. One step taken by project staff to help members of religious communities to take part was to allocate time for prayers (for both Muslims and Jews) as well as to avoid the use of electricity during Sabbath. These were positive measures, which enabled the participation of religious participants, and they shall be continued in the coming years.

It was also challenging to attract more experienced, practicing media persons and keep them interested in the project. About 40%² of participants who completed the seminars were practicing media persons, while the majority were media enthusiasts or activists. Interviews revealed that prior commitment to the production of media materials prevented the recruitment of practicing professionals who often have binding contracts with media outlets. Such contracts can ban professionals from producing articles or any other pieces for a media outlet (in this case, for ISTV) other than their employers. For example, there was an applicant from Channel 11 who did not receive permission from his employer to produce a media piece under the project and thus was unable to join the seminars. Journalists who took part in the project all worked as freelancers or they were journalists in alternative media outlets or new media journalists (i.e. bloggers, podcasters).

An additional obstacle to the participation of journalists from mainstream media outlets stems from the fact that "*peace*" and "*peace-building*" in today's Israel are considered as partisan or left-wing issues. As mainstream media outlets perceive themselves as "*balanced*" and "*objective*", media persons at these outlets – especially in entry level positions – do not wish to compromise their profile and openly favor a specific political agenda by attending a series of

¹ It is important to mention already here the project was never defined as a training in journalism, namely to teach young adults how to become professional journalists. Participants had false expectations in this regard.

² While 37% of the participants in the last seminar had defined themselves as "*journalists*", the evaluation team knows for a fact that some of those who dropped out between the second and third seminar were practicing journalists. It seems that while some participants dropped out because of conflicting schedules, others discontinued their project involvement due to disappointment with the content or owing to "*the lack of professional networking opportunities*".

seminars focused on conflict-resolution and peace-building. A participant who is a former journalist in one of Israel's largest newspapers confirmed that "*peace*" is viewed today in the mainstream circles as "*off the table*", or in other words as not news worthy. She mentioned that after enrolling in the project she distributed the call among her former peers, but none showed interest. She also explained that her peers usually attend seminars on critical thinking for journalists concerning issues that are currently perceived as "*hot topics*", such as "*reporting sexual violence*" or "*ethical journalism in covering the justice system*". "*Peace*" today is considered by mainstream media circles a "*non-issue*" and therefore the seminars remain largely unattractive to these groups.

Despite the prevailing sentiments in certain media circles, implementing partners were able to recruit some self-declared right-wing media persons to the project. This was an important achievement as it further diversified the first cohort and contributed to meaningful discussions and exchanges of differing opinions during the seminars. For their important added value to the project, AI and ISTV are encouraged to continue investing in the recruitment of participants from mainstream and more right-wing media outlets also in the coming years, regardless of the difficulties.

When the implementing organizations realized the composition of the first cohort and the background of participants, they tried to make some adjustments in the content, for instance to use the experience of facilitators in writing or media in order to add on practical workshops and expand professional skills. Staff at AI and ISTV are aware of the need to make additional adjustments in the seminar content for the coming years, and align it better with the actual profile of participants. Besides additional modifications in the content, implementing organizations might consider changing the sub-groups from professionally heterogeneous ones to somewhat homogenous ones, thereby tailoring the practical workshops to the level of experience and professional aspirations of the different groups.

Since only half of the participants who completed the project are practicing media persons (37%) and students of media (13%) it is worth exploring the professional background of other participants. Some of those who did not identify as students appear to be recent graduates (young professionals who are currently looking for a job in the media or communication-related fields), while some of those who did not identify as practicing media professionals are possibly veteran media persons. Most participants who are not directly related to media are engaged in fields such as marketing, political lobbying or teaching communication. Others are activists of NGOs or work independently. Others again, came with an artistic background, such as film makers who want to produce documentaries and other types of arts. Regardless of their diverse professional backgrounds, three-fourths of the participants defined themselves as political or social activists to a large or very large extent – an indicator for the interest of the group.

3.2 Initial expectations and overall satisfaction

Participants joined the project because of one or more of the following reasons: Some of them wanted to promote peaceful conflict resolution and thought that MICT could present them with practical tools of influence, either in the traditional media or on social media. The initial very high level of importance ascribed by the participants to peace journalism (4.68 out of 5) demonstrate that the main topic itself was a prime motivating factor. Despite the high relevance, three-fourth of participants had had no prior experience in peace journalism before joining the project. This demonstrates that most participants were eager to get a first acquaintance with the topic. Some participants joined due to their interest in Arab-Jewish dialogue. Others hoped to receive a professional training in the preparation of media products. Finally, some participants thought that the project would provide a good opportunity for networking and setting a foot in the media world.

Project staff and facilitators alike found the participants being divided in terms of their background as well as their expectations vis-à-vis the project and each other. These divisions influenced whether somebody completed the project and his/her overall satisfaction. The general satisfaction was high (4.03) among those who attended all three seminars. However, this result must be considered in light of the high dropout rate, which was 31% (out of the initial 55 participants). While the dropout of some people is natural in each project, in the case of MICT the high number of participants discontinuing their seminar attendance is a strong indicator for an expectation gap.

Those who had expected dialogue and had had some prior experience with journalism were the most satisfied with the project. These participants felt they have learnt new, interesting and practical information, and they have met new people they otherwise would not have met. Others, who had had no media experience, were frustrated because of the lack of practical training and the choice of lecturers who were mostly academic researchers rather than journalists. This group of participants expected to receive media training and networking opportunities to help them enter or progress in the world of journalism, even though it is not an explicit goal of the project³. Finally, participants with extensive experience in journalism in general or in peace journalism in particular, and those with considerable experience in Arab-Jewish dialogue were the least satisfied (especially those who came with experience in both fields). These participants felt that the level of discussions was low, and the seminars did not provide them with new tools or information. Several of these participants did not complete the project. Prior professional experience was a factor in the level of satisfaction. The statistical analysis revealed a significant, very strong and negative correlation between the age of participants (which is an indicator for professional experience) and the extent to which they were satisfied with the range of topics presented to them. To sum up, it is obvious that the first

³ The implementing partners wish to note that sufficient explanation and clarification was provided to the applicants about the goals of the project during the recruitment process and the expectation gap was not caused by misinformation.

cohort included a very diverse group of participants, regarding their professional background, level of experience and expectations.

3.3 Ways for improvement

Implementing partners are advised to consider the formation of a few, professionally more homogenous groups under one cohort. Grouping people according to their experience, limitations and expectations would help AI and ISTV better align the content of seminars to the various sub-groups in the future. Implementing organizations may also set different conditions for participation in the different groups in order to attract practicing professionals from mainstream media outlets too. Alternatively, to avoid the dropout, implementing partners may decide to recruit a specific group of people in the upcoming cohorts from the very beginning, with a more homogeneous professional background. Implementing organizations believe that it is preferable to form separate groups: for those who are more experienced and for students and adapt the content accordingly.

Chapter 4. Effectiveness: Seminars

Participants were exposed to seminars and could benefit from individual support. This chapter presents the effectiveness of seminars, while the next chapter (Chapter 5) presents the effectiveness of individual support provided by ISTV. The first sections in this chapter consider the structure and content of seminars, and analyze their influence on the participants' knowledge and perception. The last section provides recommendations for improvement.

4.1 Structure and content of the seminars

MICT included three overnight seminars. The first and second seminars were seven weeks apart, while the second and third seminars were three and a half months apart. This relatively large break between the second and third seminars was because of the Jewish and Muslim holidays and was meant to be used by the participants to gather raw materials and work on their final products.

Each seminar opened with the presentation of its rationale and schedule. The schedule of activities was clearly presented and displayed throughout the events. Seminars included both theoretical and practical sessions (workshops), though according to initial project plans practice was meant to be more prominent in the second and third seminars. In addition, expectations from the participants were laid out clearly in the beginning of each seminar through a set of rules (such as privacy of participants, language, level of commitment required, phones aside).

Each daily schedule included an external lecture (60 to 90-minute long), a discussion of all participants and three or four workshops lasting 60-90 minutes each. The days also included short refresher and prayer breaks of 15 to 30 minutes and longer 60-90 minutes breaks for meals. Half of the evenings ended with a social gathering supporting networking among participants. When asked about the structure of seminars nearly 60% of participants were pleased with their schedule, while the rest wanted some changes.

Figure 1 shows the participants' satisfaction with various aspects of the seminars. According to survey findings, 58% of participants who completed the project were pleased with the number of seminars held. 62% of participants were pleased with the intensity of the seminars. 66% were pleased with the balance between lectures and workshops as well as with the balance between the variety of topics discussed.

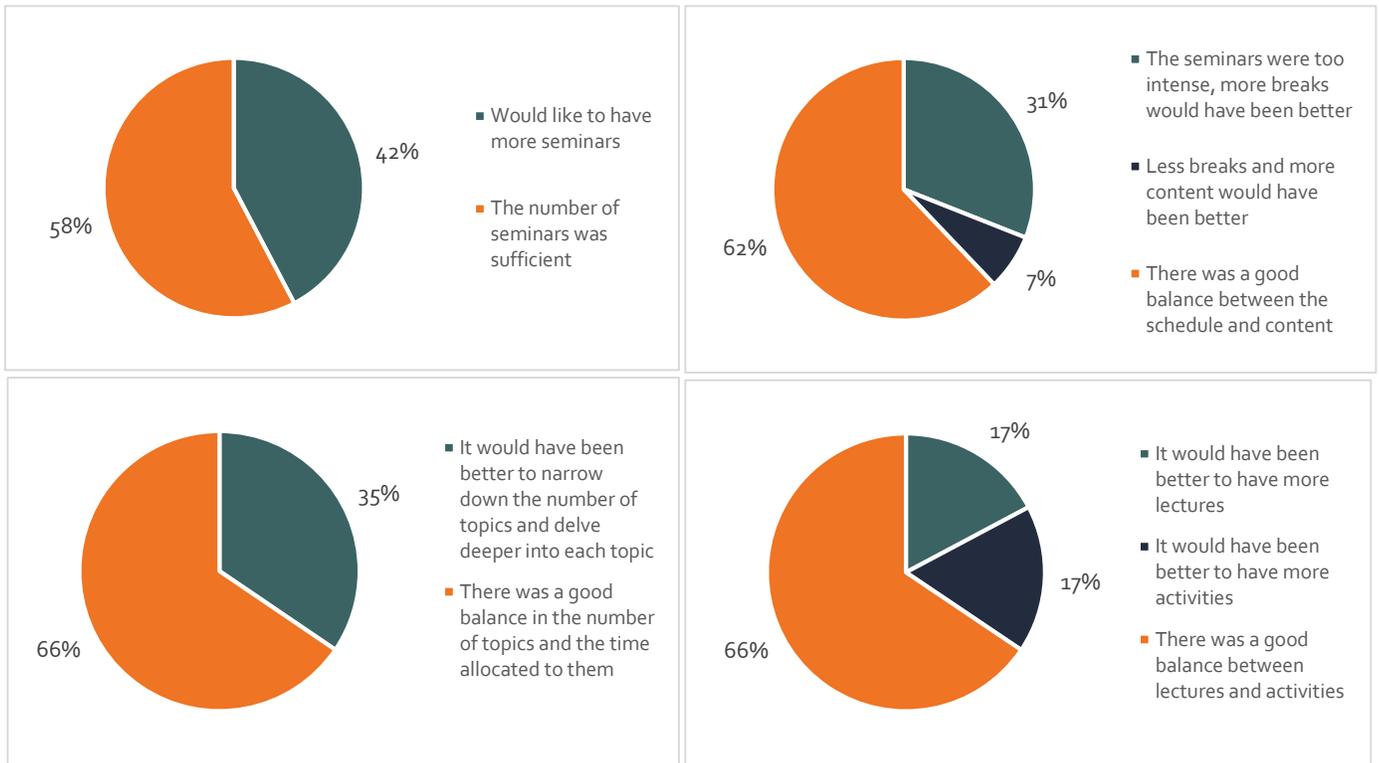


Figure 1. Participants' satisfaction with aspects of the structure of seminars

Participants who would have liked to have more lectures were mainly interested in meeting practitioners of peace journalism, in other words journalists whose work has already included principals of peace journalism. This result relates to the finding presented above under section 3.2 (expectations and satisfaction), namely that inexperienced participants wished to benefit from the knowledge of and acquaintance with practicing media professionals. Since among their fellow group members there were fewer practicing professionals, less experienced participants were hoping to acquire new knowledge and build relations through the encounters with the lecturers. It is recommended that implementing partners respond to this expectation in the future. The formation of sub-groups according to different levels of experience would allow the project staff to better tailor seminar content towards the needs and invite lecturers with different backgrounds.

Participants who would have liked to see more activities during the seminars were mainly interested in skills-building exercises. Both asks – for more lectures as well as for more workshops – indicate the need for practicality in MICT. Participants were keen on learning more about the following topics during the seminars: training in writing, editing, photography, audio casting (for podcast or radio) and social media activism, analysis of examples of peace journalism and field work (for example, holding the seminar in a place worth reporting on and creating a news item on it together or in small groups). The below figure, Figure 2, also shows

that the participants were moderately satisfied with the practicality of the tools (3.60) and knowledge (3.73) they received during the seminars.

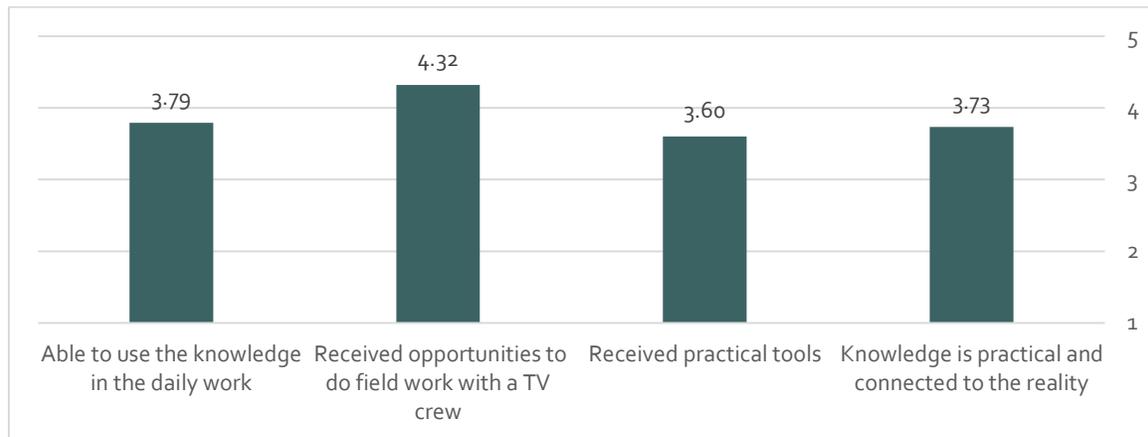


Figure 2. Participants' satisfaction with the practicality of the project

Staff at ISTV explained that training in skills such as photographing, video and sound recording, video editing and writing would take longer than the time frame set for the seminars. However, it is likely that satisfaction and the number of final products (see below in chapter 5) would have been higher if more practical training was included in the project, even at a low, introductory level. Practical skills-building is especially relevant if the composition of future cohorts remains similar to that of the first cohort. With a majority of participants being neither students who could receive such training in school, nor journalists who would train on their job in a media outlet, practical skills-building seems to be highly relevant for most of them. There will always be a tradeoff between the theory and practice. The challenge for the project is how to strike a good balance between the two. If the schedule does not allow for actual training in the future, implementing partners could refer participants to external or online skills-building opportunities (e.g. webinars, or training courses of other institutions).

As opposed to the lack of skills-building, the theoretical knowledge was considered a major strength of the project. In addition, those who completed the project were also highly satisfied with the facilitation (see Figure 3). Each workshop was led by a pair of Jewish and Arab facilitators. Facilitators acquired their knowledge through a preliminary training and from materials provided by the implementing organizations. Pairs who coordinated their facilitation work in advance were perceived by the participants as better organized. Most facilitators were considered very professional and knowledgeable in their fields. Moreover, facilitators' moderation experience also came in handy, as they were available to participants with issues, especially to those being the odd one out, and those who did not feel comfortable to express themselves in their groups. For instance, a facilitator recalled talking to a participant who considered leaving the project and finally convinced her to stay. This indicates that the high dropout rate did not depend on the facilitation, but on the content of the seminars and composition of the first cohort. Besides the theoretical knowledge and facilitation, participants were also highly satisfied with seminar logistics (4.23) and the exemplary openness of staff

members at AI and ISTV towards suggestions and criticism (4.63), as shown in Figure 3. This openness on the side of the implementing partners resulted in countless adjustments in the seminars.

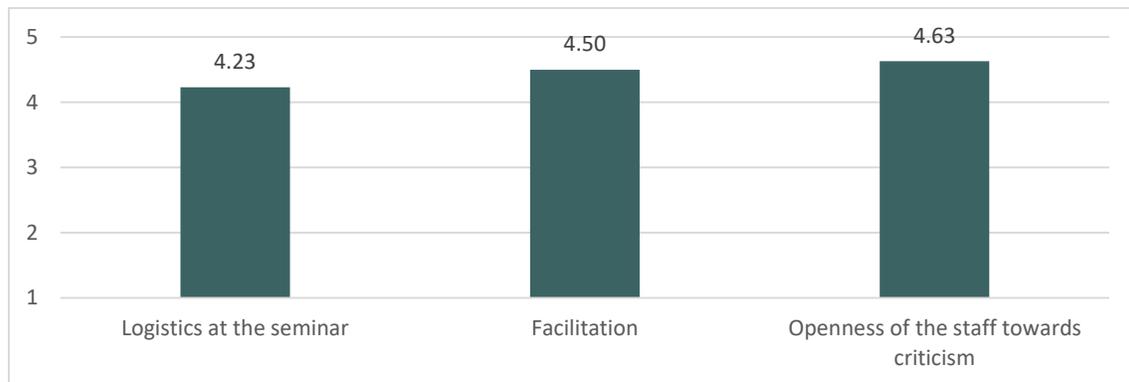


Figure 3. Participants' satisfaction with the logistics, facilitation and implementing organizations

4.2 Project contribution to knowledge and perception

According to the project goals, the seminars intended to provide participants with new knowledge on peace journalism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and effective conflict resolution strategies. Interviewees claimed that the three most important topics in which they have learnt new information were the principles and definition of peace journalism, the importance of representation of various voices, and the roles of disenfranchised groups in conflict resolution, such as women, Bedouins and Jews of non-European decent. For example, a veteran journalist said:

"I was interested in the principles of peace journalism, but the most meaningful was the content about Bedouins and Mizrahi Jews. There was controversial content there, I did not agree with everything, but it was definitely worth hearing it".

A graduate of media school who recently obtained an entry level job with a popular online news site said:

"The practicalities are less interesting to someone like me, I was especially interested in what I learned about exclusion and different narratives, I needed the exposure to the political aspects. I felt completely new to the conflict".

Survey results supported qualitative findings. Comparison of the participants' knowledge prior and at the end of the project revealed that they gained the most information on issues of peace journalism (see Figure 4). For instance, participants increased their knowledge from initially low levels to high levels in the difference between peace and war journalism (with 1.12 point increase) and on the issue of peace journalism and multiple narratives (with 1.49 point increase).

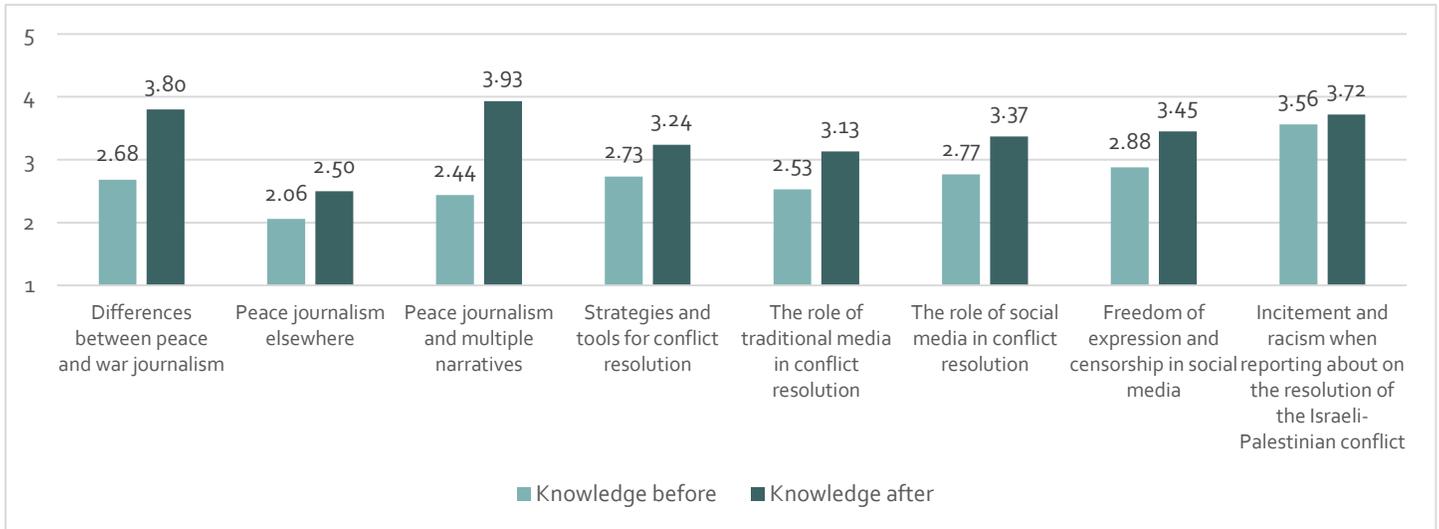


Figure 4. Change in participants' knowledge in peace journalism and conflict resolution

As seen in Figure 5, the project was also successful in increasing the participants' initially moderate knowledge on the role of excluded groups and gender issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There were also a few issues, in which different trends were detected among Jewish and Arab participants. According to their survey results, Jews have learnt a great deal about issues of human rights in the conflict (from 3.08 to 3.59) while Arab participants arrived in the project with relatively high levels of initial knowledge in this field (3.62 to 3.71).

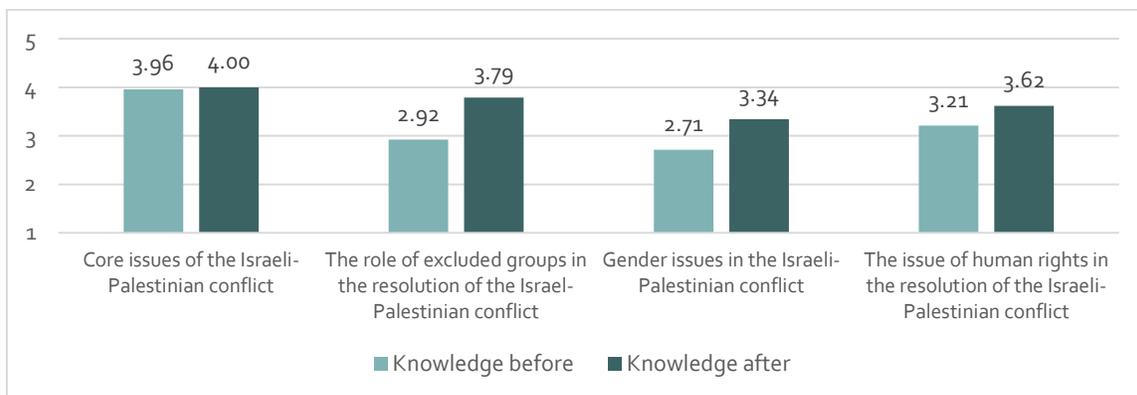


Figure 5. Change in participants' knowledge related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Despite these positive results, there were also a few topics in which participants gained only little new information. Though it is one of the main goals of the project to equip participants with strategies and tools for conflict resolution, this has only been moderately achieved (although the seminars included various sessions on related topics). Nor did the participants feel that they have learnt a lot about the roles of different types of media (traditional or social media) in conflict resolution. Moreover, MICT did not significantly change participants' knowledge about "the others vis-à-vis the conflict". As Figure 6 shows, Jews and Arabs arrived in the project with moderate levels of knowledge on each other's narrative of the conflict (3.18

and 3.38 respectively) and completed the project with only slightly more knowledge (3.39 and 3.43 respectively). Implementing partners are advised to pay more attention to these areas of knowledge in future cohorts.

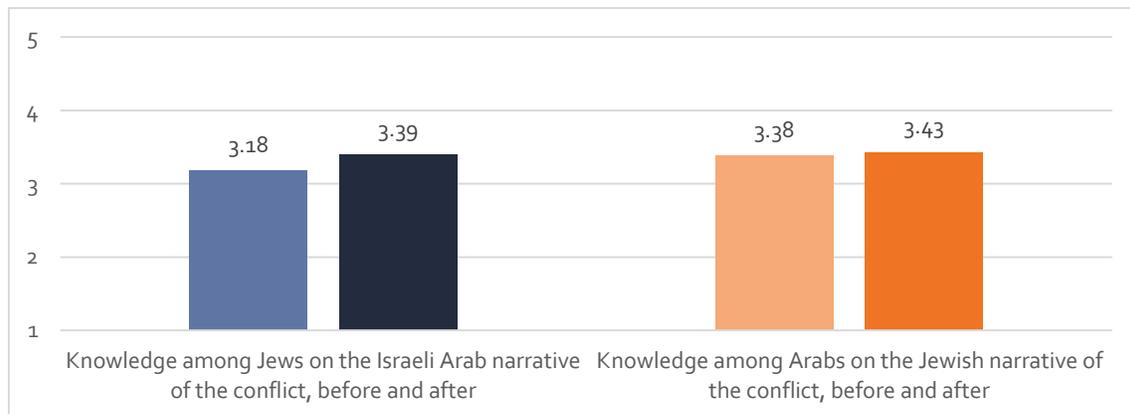


Figure 6. Change in the participants' knowledge about "the others"

4.3 Ways for improvement

Participants asked for some improvements regarding the facilities and seminar locations. The facilities at Beit Berl were disliked, while the facilities at Neveh Shalom were liked by the participants. Contrary to that, facilitators would have preferred Beit Berl over Neveh Shalom. Some participants asked for more outdoor activities during the seminars. For instance, visiting an Arab Israeli village (e.g. Jaser Al-Zarqa) was suggested or any other location which could be relevant for reporting on as an example of peace journalism. As for improving the logistical arrangements, implementing partners could better communicate the group divisions, activity rooms and accommodation arrangements. Interviewees repeatedly mentioned about slight disorder in these aspects.

Most participants asked for more practical knowledge and tools to be distributed by the project. Interviewees of all groups pointed to practical issues of journalism as an important topic to expand on in future cohorts. Experienced professionals particularly felt the lack of new information and tools, but the latter was also missing for inexperienced participants. As explained by the implementing organizations, professional media training takes longer than the project time frame and it is not in line with the overall goals. MICT should certainly not become a substitute for formal journalism training. Nevertheless, there are some professional skills which could be enhanced during the project. The profile of most participants also necessitates this, especially because it was mostly inexperienced participants who completed MICT. For instance, as Figure 7 shows, there was a large gap between participants' willingness to produce a final media piece by the end of the project (4.07), and their self-perceived ability to use various types of media to promote peace journalism (3.24) or their ability to produce an actual article on peace journalism (3.52). This gap can also explain why it took so long for some participants to kick start and intensify the preparation for their final media projects.

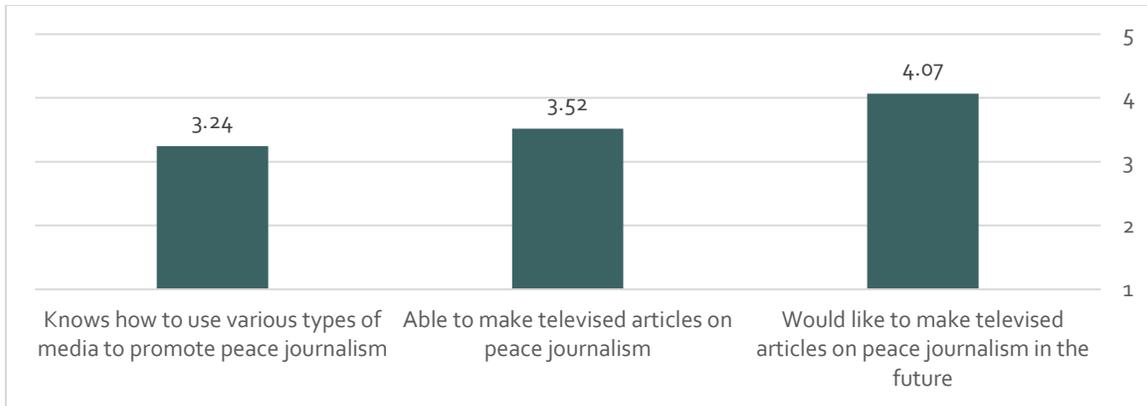


Figure 7. Gap between participants' willingness to produce a final media piece and their practical skills

As a concrete measure, implementing organizations could include more hands-on examples in the seminars, such as demonstrations of good practices from peace journalism in Israel and in abroad, and organize facilitated meetings with journalists who practice peace journalism in their daily work. Small group exercises working on short media products during the workshops could also serve as meaningful skills-building opportunities. Finally, active reference to online and external training opportunities could also be helpful.

Chapter 5. Effectiveness: Individual Support

The following sections elaborate on the effectiveness of individual support, provide an overview of the final products and suggest ways for improvement.

5.1 Content and contribution to the final products

The preparation for the production of media pieces began during the second seminar and included workshops and the optional guidance by ISTV. All in all, ISTV invested 550 hours in tailor-made individual support, which ranged from providing participants with feedback on drafts to editing, footage and more.. While both facilitators and project staff were described as approachable and responsive, until the final event (which took place in December 2018) not many of the participants took the opportunity and made use of the individual support beyond the designated hours within the schedule. A few participants were particularly enthusiastic, proactive and produced more than one product (two persons for instance produced three pieces each), while others, less proactive, needed more time, more professional skills and perhaps the inspiration of the final event.

Until today, 22 participants have initiated 38 media products (such as videos, radio pieces or social media posts). In addition, 11 participants submitted their concepts for preparing a video piece. Some concepts have been refused by the implementing partners because of their low quality or lack of alignment with the project goals.

In some cases, participants did rely on ISTV's support during the preparation, in other cases they did not make use of it. According to survey results, a little under half of the participants reported to have received useful information from the project implementers which contributed to the production of their media pieces. This result however reflects participants' opinion during the last seminar. A freelance journalist mentioned:

"ISTV provided the physical tools – cameras and the knowledge of how to operate them, editing room, etc. – and also the mentoring, which was very helpful."

She is in the process of producing a news item, and was sorry that she could not make use of the resources beyond this one specific product. At the same time, there were participants who were less satisfied with the individual support.

5.2 Final products

According to the project goals, final media products are to be disseminated by ISTV at the local, regional and global level. Thus far, 19 media products have been published on ISTV's products list (including seven English translations of original Hebrew pieces). These products – articles, op-eds, video articles and podcast episodes – were made by eight participants, the most active ones who started their preparation on time or progressed quickly with the process.

The video articles and news reports published are of high quality. They have been edited with ISTV's assistance – lay readers and viewers cannot distinguish between these final products and other professional TV and news articles. Published pieces are brief, focused on intriguing sound bites, use background music, etc. They revolve around newsworthy information, but report or interpret them with emphasis on multiple narratives, thereby giving voice to disenfranchised populations. Some of the products report on groups who might be perceived as "*the other*" in a non-stereotyping positive manner. Some, yet not all, offer paths to co-existence or conflict resolution.

These pieces are all linked to ISTV's website, which has thousands of entrees each day. Exposure of the products varies, as some products have received only a few dozen views, while others have tens of thousands (The Hebrew version of "Tom Elyachin" on "Fouda" received over 14K views, an English version available: <https://tv.social.org.il/en/on-fouda>). Some final products have not been published on ISTV's website but have been distributed as podcasts, blogs and op-eds through other channels. Finally, there are also at least seven participants who are still working on their pieces (editing raw materials and reworking article drafts), alone, with ISTV's assistance and/or with a partner.

It is also important to note that a few participants did not prepare any specific product, despite this being a pre-requisite to join the project. Some of these participants are regularly engaged in the media, and adhere to principles of peace journalism in their daily work thus they did not feel the need to prepare an additional piece. For instance, one student participant runs a campus radio show in a Hebrew speaking college where he introduces popular Arabic music. Another example comes from a newspaper reporter who regularly reports on the discrimination of Bedouin communities.

5.3 Ways for improvement

As discussed, most participants who completed the seminars and worked on the final products were not practicing media professionals and therefore they were missing some practical skills. This was somewhat addressed in the third seminar, when one of the workshops was dedicated to scripting, writing, editing, etc. This was helpful to participants who came prepared for the third seminar and brought their drafts or raw footage. However, the practical session was not effective for all participants, as many of them did not prepare in advance (despite the long break between the second and third seminars). It seems that there has been an issue with the timing of the preparation for the final products.

Implementing partners may consider screening the initial intent to produce media pieces already during the application process or as part of the initial interviews. Even if the final products differ from initial ideas, it will help participants to properly plan for the production and come more prepared for the seminars. To those who do not arrive with concrete ideas, it would be important to provide inspiration early on in the project, perhaps already during the first seminar. In the first cohort several participants intensified the work on their products after the final event, where examples of the completed pieces were presented. Showcasing some final

products of the first cohort in future groups would help motivate participants, clarify expectations early on and support a more realistic planning process.

Moreover, for the final products to be created in a more efficient manner, implementing partners may consider including some benchmarks along the process. They could ask for concrete outputs to be prepared for each seminar – e.g. a written description of a desired product by the end of the first seminar, collection of raw materials by the second meeting, etc. – so participants will not need to deal with these tasks all at once, and mostly at the end of the seminars when commitment is already lower. The process of providing individual assistance could also be more structured and could include some smart nudges instead of it being entirely driven by the participants. For instance, it could start as early as the first seminar and could include designated consultation hours for the different phases of the development process.

Chapter 6. Relationship-building

This chapter examines relationship-building in the project. Though relationship-building *per se* is not an explicit goal of MICT, it is an expectation by most participants. Moreover, the relations between the two implementing partners determine the implementation process. Hence it is important to address this aspect the project. The first section in this chapter presents the networking among participants. The last section describes the relationship between AI and ISTV.

6.1 Relationship-building among participants

Some participants (who completed all three seminars) mentioned about the encounters with fellow participants as a strength of the project. They either started a friendship or professional work relation with others or foresaw future friendship and professional / political collaboration. A few interviewees reported the beginning of joint journalistic projects. Many participants also highlighted the usefulness of the Whatsapp groups created to share information. Some participants were satisfied with the sub-group divisions, but they would have liked to have more opportunities to meet members of the other two groups. Other interviewees hoped to meet more experienced people, in journalism as well as in dialogue work. Those who expected networking with practicing journalists were somewhat disappointed, both in the profile of their fellow group members as well as in the lecturers (most of whom were academicians).

During the seminars there was designated time for networking and informal social activities. Generally, participants felt they established good personal contacts with fellow participants, as shown in Figure 8. Personal relations within the cohort were rated at a high level of 4.03, and were characterized with high level of cooperation (3.87). However, Jews and Arab Israelis gave somewhat differing answers. Arab Israelis ranked both their personal contact with other participants as well as with participants with a different background as moderate (3.57 and 3.00 respectively), while Jews ranked these items as high (4.17 and 3.83 respectively). It is likely that the larger number of Jewish participants made it easier for them to build good relations with each other.

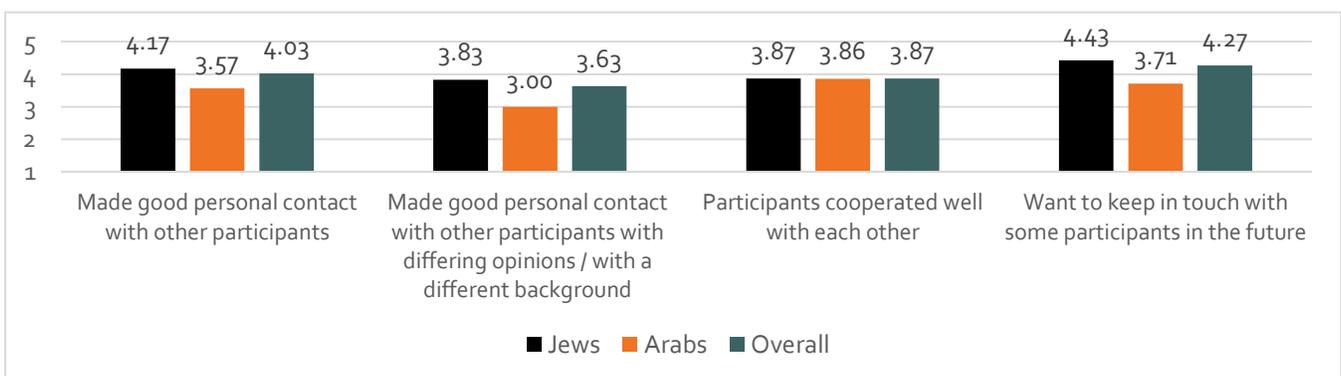


Figure 8. Relationship-building among project participants

6.2 Collaboration between implementing organizations

Collaboration between the two NGOs seems to be a very strong suit of the project. Both management and facilitators noted the good cooperation and trust that has developed between the organizations. An example for this trust-building was recorded during the recruitment process. While at first, interviews with applicants were performed jointly, later each organization trusted the other and completed their interviews on their own. Another example that illustrates the good relation between AI and ISTV is their openness towards sharing resources such as each other's offices, distribution channels, etc. The two partners were perceived by project participants as a cohesive management rather than two separate teams.

This success can partly be attributed to the good personal relations among staff members of the two organizations, and partly to the effective task division. While seminar content is mostly the responsibility of AI (as well as the liaison with facilitators and outside lecturers), ISTV mainly acts as the professional advisor on practical media issues (writing a synopsis, preparing an article, etc.). This division of roles and responsibilities is clear, it relies on the strength of each partner and all in all it benefits the project.

It is also worth noting the similar organizational culture of the two NGOs as a possible factor contributing to their good collaboration. Both AI and ISTV are agile, flexible, attentive and able to improvise on the go. This has also been positively noted by the participants who complemented the partners for their openness to criticism. As a result of this openness, countless positive changes have already been included in the seminars. For example, one of the facilitators mentioned to the management about the too intense agenda of the first seminar. Changes were then included, and the second seminar already had more time for informal social gathering. Another adjustment made on the go to help cater to the needs of less experienced participants was the use of relevant practical skills of facilitators, such as writing and filmmaking, and including more personal workshops in the third seminar.

Chapter 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Main conclusions

Relevance

Following an extensive recruitment process and despite some difficulties, implementing partners attracted a large number of applicants and recruited a satisfactory number of participants into the first cohort of MICT. They were less successful though in keeping the participants – especially more experienced and practicing media professionals – interested all along in the project and in maintaining a high number of participants until the very end of the seminars. The dropout can be attributed to an expectation gap.

Effectiveness

Most participants have been satisfied with the structure of the seminars. As for the content, those who completed the project were satisfied but the high dropout rate indicates that there was also a group of dissatisfied participants who left halfway through. Practical aspects of peace journalism and skills-building were identified as the issues most lacking from the seminar content.

MICT has been effective in increasing the participants' (theoretical) knowledge about peace journalism and the role of excluded groups in conflict resolution. However, the project was less effective in increasing participants knowledge about conflict resolution (strategies and tools, the role of different types of media), and about the narrative of "*the others vis-à-vis the conflict*".

With the production and dissemination of quality media pieces, there has been a clear progress made towards the overall project goal. However, the timing of the preparation could be improved, and individual support could be somewhat formalized and better aligned with the seminars.

Relationship-building

Relationship-building among participants who completed the seminars was quite successful. Jews seemingly have built stronger relations than Arab participants.

Collaboration between the project implementers has been exemplary. Mutual trust, efficient task division and their similar, open and flexible organizational cultures are key for this success.

7.2 Recommendations

Relevance

Implementing organizations are encouraged to continue investing in the recruitment of different groups such as Ethiopian Jews, religious participants and Arab Israelis.

In addition, it would be worth investing in the recruitment of practicing media professionals from mainstream and right-wing media. To make it easier, implementing partners could revise the conditions for participation and accept pieces produced by practicing journalist during their daily work as "*final products*", as long as they are in line with principles of peace journalism.

It is recommended that the basic conditions for acceptance and expectations – seminar attendance and the production of media pieces – are spelled out clearly, already in the project advertisement. Applicants could be encouraged to think about a final media product as early as in their application. This recommendation has already been implemented during the recruitment of the second cohort.

Implementing partners are advised to create a few training paths to fit the professional background and aspirations of participants. For instance, three sub-groups could be created as such:

- One for journalists and students who have graduated or are near graduation focused on deepening their understanding of peace journalism and less on practical skills.
- One for aspiring journalists, focused more on practical training.
- And one for participants who join from adjacent fields (such PR, political lobbying, activism, creative writing, art, etc.), and need "*lighter*" practical training suitable for amateur or social media professionals.

Effectiveness

Though seminar facilitation was considered very good, there is room for improvement. It would be worth addressing the issue of managing power relations in mixed (Jewish-Arab) groups. Though the facilitators are aware of this task, putting more emphasis on it could increase the involvement of Arab participants and support their relationship-building.

In order to bridge the expectation gap, seminar content and schedule should be tailored to the profile of participants. Inviting practicing journalists to present about their work and answer the participants' practical questions would be recommended, on top of having academic lecturers.

A central addition to seminar content should be skills-building in specific fields, at least at a basic, introductory level. Skills-building activities could either be arranged around short, easy to produce media pieces such as social media products, or around a single, more complex project prepared in smaller groups. If it is not possible to include skills-building activities in the seminars, implementing partners are advised to refer participants to external / online training courses.

Another practical addition to the seminars could be a field workshop, held at a location relevant to the conflict / conflict-resolution. Such a field workshop could provide good opportunity to learn about the conflict, get to know each other's narratives and to practice the making of an actual news item.

In order to improve efficiency and increase the number of completed final media products, AI and ISTV are recommended to kick-start the preparation process earlier, already during the first seminar, when the participants' commitment is at its peak. Showcasing successful products of the first cohort early in the project would also be a good idea as it could provide inspiration and clarify expectations. Finally, the use of clear benchmarks is also recommended as well as the alignment of the individual support with the seminars. This would provide more structure and nudges for those participants who are less pro-active.

Relationship-building

Despite the successes in relationship-building, the project staff could consider enhancing interaction between Arab and Jewish participants. This could be addressed either in formal interactions, such as joint tasks or groups, or within semi-informal interactions (sitting and accommodation arrangements). While some participants, both Arabs and Jews, had participated in dialogue projects in the past others come to the project with no such experience. It would be beneficial for the project to mix these groups during the activities, thereby supporting inter-group relationship-building.



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