



Course of

and Prof. Anthony Amicelle

SUPERVISOR

CO-SUPERVISOR

CANDIDATE

Academic Year

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	3
Summary.....	4
Introduction	5
Chapter 1 : Literature Review.....	11
Section 1 : Conceptualizing NGOs and FBOs	11
Section 2 : Origins and evolution of FBOs.....	17
Section 3 : NGOs in conflict management and diplomacy	18
Section 4 : FBOs in conflict management and diplomacy	20
Chapter 2 : Conceptual and theoretical framework	23
Section 1 : Core concepts and definitions.....	23
Section 2 : Theoretical framework	27
Chapter 3 : methodology.....	32
Section 1 : Introduction	32
Section 2 : Quantitative methodology.....	33
2.1 Research design.....	33
2.2 Data collection	33
2.3 Operationalization of variables	35
2.4 Limitations	37
Section 3 : Qualitative methodology	38
3.1 Case Study justification	38
3.2 Data collection	39
3.3 Analytical framework	39
3.4 Limitations	39
Section 4 : Mixed Method integration.....	40
Chapter 4 : Findings and Analysis	41
Section 1 : Quantitative findings and analysis	41
Section 2 : Qualitative analysis, Sant'Egidio's role in Lebanon	56
2.1 Overview of the Sant'Egidio Community.....	57
2.2 Sant'Egidio and the Middle East	64
2.3 Findings per dimension	69
2.4 Comparing quantitative and qualitative findings	77
Conclusion.....	79
Bibliography.....	83
Appendix.....	91

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to everyone who contributed to the completion of this thesis. I sincerely thank my thesis supervisors, Professor Mohammed Hashas and Professor Anthony Amicelle, for their guidance and feedback. I would also like to thank Professor Pasquale Ferrara.

I am also thankful to the faculty and staff of Sciences Po Bordeaux and LUISS University for creating an intellectually stimulating environment that has allowed me to grow as a researcher.

I also wish to thank my fellow students and friends for their moral support and enriching discussions. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my family for their constant support and love.

SUMMARY

Summary :

The contribution of religious non-governmental organizations in conflict resolution has long been overlooked. This thesis explores how the religious affiliation of an NGO shapes its activities regarding conflict management in Lebanon and how these activities differ from secular NGOs. A mixed-method approach is adopted with a quantitative section examining over 120 NGOs operating in Lebanon followed by a qualitative in-depth case study of the work of one religious NGO, the Community of Sant'Egidio. The findings reveal that religious NGOs do not engage more in Track II diplomacy compared to secular NGOs. In addition, both religious and secular non-conflict resolution NGOs still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy but they focus on peacebuilding. The Community of Sant'Egidio takes part in Track II diplomacy through its dialogue facilitation initiatives, peacebuilding through its Schools of Peace and Prayers for Peace and preventive diplomacy through its humanitarian corridors and International Meetings for Prayer and Peace.

Keywords :

Non-Governmental Organization ; Faith-Based Organization ; conflict resolution ; Track II diplomacy ; Preventive diplomacy ; The Community of Sant'Egidio

INTRODUCTION

The Community of Sant’Egidio, a Catholic Lay organization founded in 1968, was nominated by the Italian government to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. The Community was put forward for its continued efforts in mediation and peacebuilding in different regions of the world. Although the Community of Sant’Egidio started out as a group of university students who wanted to see a real social change in Rome, it has now expanded to become a transnational faith-based organization operating in over 70 countries. Its role in mediating the 1992 General Peace Agreement of Mozambique, the creation of humanitarian corridors for refugees, and its continuing engagement in interfaith dialogue and conflict mediation have made it one of the most visible religious NGOs on the global stage. The fact that a faith-based organization (FBO) was considered for the world’s most prestigious peace award illustrates the perceived significance of such actors in the field of conflict resolution.

The nomination of a religious NGO for the Nobel Peace Prize highlights a broader reality, it proves that religious organizations have become increasingly visible actors in international peacebuilding. Although traditionally these organizations were associated with social services, education, or charitable aid, FBOs are now involved in processes that go beyond welfare provision. They sometimes operate as mediators, facilitators, and peacebuilders in conflicts. They engage directly with political and religious leaders as well as with grassroots communities.

A Faith-based Organizations (FBO) is a “unique type of organisation that combines characteristics of NGOs and religious organisations”.¹ These organizations operate at the intersection of religion and international affairs and gain their legitimacy from spiritual authority, religious networks, and moral narratives. In recent years, faith and religion have played a more important role in “development discourse and policy”.² The study of conflict resolution and peacebuilding has increasingly emphasized the role of non-state actors alongside states and international organizations. Among these non-state actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been highlighted as prominent actors in diplomacy and post-conflict reconstruction. NGOs, which are

¹ Jens Koehrsen and Andreas Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 1st edn (Routledge, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429351211>.

different from International Organizations (IOs) created by states, include different types of organizations, such as community-based organizations, churches and research institutes. Although there is no consensus on a definition, an NGO is generally acknowledged as "a not-for profit, voluntary citizen's group that is organized on a local, national or international level to address issues in support of the public good".³ Faith-based organizations are a specific type of NGO.

The involvement of FBOs in conflict resolution is quite controversial. Their religious identity can be a source of credibility and trust, but it can also raise questions of proselytism or exclusion. FBOs can help foster reconciliation, yet they can also reinforce sectarian identities by highlighting the differences between communities. These contradictions make the role of FBOs in conflict resolution both promising and contested, and thus a subject of growing interest for academia and policy makers.

This thesis will investigate the role of religious NGOs in conflict resolution in Lebanon. The ways in which religious and secular NGO's engage with Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, preventive diplomacy and how their religious (or non-religious) identity shapes both their opportunities and their constraints will be examined. The case of the Community of Sant'Egidio will be further analyzed with the aim of understanding how religious elements of an NGO have a role in its conflict resolution activities. This research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how religious NGOs operate in a very conflict-affected region, the Middle East.

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of NGOs in the areas of development and conflict resolution, significant gaps remain in our understanding of how different types of non-state actors operate in these fields. A substantial body of literature examines the nature of NGOs and the challenges involved in defining them and there is also some research that explores faith-based organizations (FBOs) and their distinct characteristics. However, there are few studies that systematically compare religious and secular NGOs in the context of conflict resolution. Historically, the role of FBOs has been overlooked as these organizations were often assumed to be limited to social service provision. Nonetheless, recent research suggests that FBOs are

² Gerard Clarke, 'Faith Matters: Development and the Complex World of Faith-Based Organizations', in *Poverty: Malaise of Development*, by Anne Boran (Chester Academic Press, 2010), 191.

³ Sally Leverty, 'NGOs, the UN and APA', *APA Office of International Affairs*, n.d.

increasingly active as mediators, facilitators, and peacebuilders, engaging directly with political, religious leaders and grassroots communities.

Existing studies on NGOs and FBOs in conflict resolution frequently rely on qualitative analyses of single organizations, which provide in-depth insights but limit the ability to generalize findings across contexts. This thesis aims to address this puzzle through a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative component maps the activities of over 100 NGOs operating in Lebanon and the qualitative component aims at providing an in-depth analysis of one specific NGO, Sant'Egidio, in order to understand the specific dynamics at play.

Research question and objectives

The central aim of this thesis is to examine the role of religious NGOs in conflict resolution in Lebanon by comparing religious and secular NGOs in order to understand how they differ. Although the contribution of NGOs as peacebuilding actors has been covered in academic literature, the specific role of religious NGOs remains understudied. This is why this thesis aims to explore the following research question : *How do religious NGOs contribute to conflict resolution in Lebanon?* In order to dive into such a question the thesis also bases itself on various sub-questions such as : how do religious NGOs engage in Track II diplomacy? To what extent do religious NGOs differ from secular NGOs in their roles regarding conflict management? Do religious and secular NGOs engage similarly in peacebuilding efforts?

In order to address the main research question, this thesis has three intertwining objectives. Firstly, to map NGO engagement in Lebanon. This will be done by analyzing the involvement of religious and secular NGOs in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy, particularly by situating the role of religious NGO's in Lebanon. Secondly, the thesis will examine the mechanisms through which religious NGOs operate. An in-depth case study of the Community of Sant'Egidio will explore how its religious identity and international network allow the organization to engage in dialogue and mediation. Lastly, this analysis will evaluate the distinctiveness of religious NGOs in comparison to secular NGOs. This thesis aims to understand whether faith-based identity makes a difference in the way an NGO engages in conflict resolution.

Methodology and findings

In order to explore the research question, this thesis employs a mixed-method approach. The use of mixed-methods and the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods allows for a comparison of NGOs across sectors as well as a more nuanced understanding of the practices of a specific faith-based organization, the Community of Sant'Egidio.

Firstly, a quantitative section is provided which maps out NGO activity in Lebanon across three dimensions: Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. A scoring system is used to assess the extent of their engagement in each dimension. The NGOs are classified according to their primary focus: culture and recreation; education and research; health; social services; environment; development and housing; law, advocacy and politics; philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion; business and professional associations and unions; and peacemaking. The scoring system allows for statistical tests to be run and hence a comparative overview of how religious and secular NGOs engage in conflict resolution can be completed. According to this research, religious NGOs do not engage more than secular NGOs in Track II diplomacy. In addition, religious and secular NGOs that are not specifically classified as conflict resolution NGOs still engage in peacebuilding.

Secondly, a qualitative section is offered. The in-depth analysis of the case of the Community of Sant'Egidio explores the mechanisms through which the religious NGO engages in the three dimensions. The Community of Sant'Egidio is a Catholic lay movement, classified as a peacemaking organization, and based in Rome. Sant'Egidio is selected as a case because of its clear religious identity and its role in peacebuilding in different regions of the world. The focus on Lebanon was chosen because of the strong religious plurality in place and the dynamic NGO sector in the country. This research shows that in Lebanon, the Community of Sant'Egidio greatly takes part in track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy through a range of different activities. This includes the organization of meetings for different actors involved in conflict to converse and the bringing together of opposing parties to reach a peace accord.

The study draws upon a range of data. For the quantitative section, the data was collected from official NGO websites, NGO reports and international NGO directories. For the qualitative section, the data was collected from Sant'Egidio's website, annual NGO reports, academic literature and media coverage on the Community. This thesis

does have some limitations. The quantitative section relies on publicly available data which may exclude smaller NGOs without an online presence. Additionally, the coding of NGOs as either religious or secular may not reflect the full complexity or identity of an NGO as it is based on self-identification. In addition, the quantitative section's generalizability is limited as it only focuses on one NGO and therefore may not capture the reality of all NGOs in the country or region.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured into four main chapters, each of which builds upon the previous one in order to address the research question. The first chapter is a literature review with four sections. The first section explores how the literature defines the terms NGOs and FBOs. The second section provides an overview of the history and development of FBOs and how the current literature understands these developments. The third section looks at NGOs within conflict resolution. The last section of chapter 1 dives deeper into the role of faith-based organizations in conflict resolution and the debate in the literature regarding the role of such organizations.

Chapter 2 outlines the conceptual and theoretical framework of the thesis. Section 1 outlines the key concepts that are essential for this research such as conflict, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, Track I and II diplomacy and preventive diplomacy. Section 2 outlines the theories that guide this research, notably John Paul Lederach's conflict transformation theory, Thania Paffenholz and Christoph Spurk's typology and Eleni Karampini's theory on the role of NGOs in conflict management.

Chapter 3 details the methodology of this research. It first explains how the quantitative section of the thesis will be conducted in order to map out NGO engagement in Lebanon. This section explains how the dataset, including over 100 NGOs present in Lebanon, provides a statistical analysis to understand the dynamics at play. Chapter 3 then dives into the methodology of the qualitative section of the thesis which focuses on one religious NGO, the Community of Sant'Egidio, in order to understand how the religious nature of the NGO has an effect on its work in Lebanon. The chapter finishes with a section on the mixed-method approach to explain how combining qualitative and quantitative research helps explore the research question.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and the analysis of this thesis. Section 1 runs various statistical tests in order to test the different hypotheses. This section provides

graphs and tables in order to understand how the religious affiliation of an NGO has an effect on its engagement in peacebuilding, Track II diplomacy and preventive diplomacy. Section 2 of chapter 4 examines the Community of Sant'Egidio's role in Lebanon. It analyzes how one specific religious NGO engages in peacebuilding, track II diplomacy and preventive diplomacy.

CHAPTER 1 : LITERATURE REVIEW

Section 1 : Conceptualizing NGOs and FBOs

The term non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is very broad and covers many different types of organizations such as community-based organizations, professional associations, churches, research institutes, international charities... According to the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), an NGO can be defined as “a not-for profit, voluntary citizen’s group that is organized on a local, national or international level to address issues in support of the public good. Task-oriented and made up of people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizen’s concerns to Governments, monitor policy and program implementation, and encourage participation of civil society stakeholders at the community level.”⁴ Although the UNDPI defines NGOs as not-for profit, Steve Charnovitz, an American legal scholar, notes that associations of profit-seeking business entities can be considered NGOs.⁵

NGOs represent a highly diverse category of actors with varying structures, funding sources, and modes of collaboration with other stakeholders. NGOs can either work independently or collaborate with different actors such as bilateral donors, private firms, grassroots organizations and authorities. Although they have different focuses and aims, the majority of NGO funding is focused on basic humanitarian assistance and development.⁶ NGOs range in size from one individual to a complex structure with large annual revenues.⁷

NGOs are different from typical international organizations (IOs) such as the World Health Organization (WHO) or the African Union (AU). On the one hand, NGOs are created by individuals or groups so they do not receive their legitimacy from states and hence NGOs need to earn their influence. On the other hand, IOs are established

⁴ Leverty, ‘NGOs, the UN and APA’.

⁵ Steve Charnovitz, ‘Nongovernmental Organizations and International Law’, *The American Journal of International Law* 100, no. 2 (2006): 350.

⁶ Eric Werker and Faisal Z Ahmed, ‘What Do Nongovernmental Organizations Do?’, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 22, no. 2 (2008): 74–77, <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.22.2.73>.

⁷ Werker and Ahmed, ‘What Do Nongovernmental Organizations Do?’

through treaties between states and their actions are constrained by these.⁸ NGOs do not have any legal international personality hence they have to follow national law.⁹ The status of NGOs varies depending on the country it is located in because national law on associations varies. Legal problems can arise for NGOs when they operate internationally and fall under different systems of national law.¹⁰

The term NGO has evolved significantly with different interpretations emerging in both legal and sociological contexts. The term was initially coined by the United Nations as the UN charter stipulates under article 71 that NGOs can be “accredited to the UN for consulting purposes”.¹¹ Since the 1980s, the term NGO has been used to refer to various societal actors outside of the UN framework. Although there is growing literature on NGOs, the term NGO has not yet been sufficiently defined, Kerstin Martens argues that “NGOs remain terra incognita”.¹²

The term NGO and its widespread usage have come under increasing criticism from scholars and practitioners alike. Philip Alston, a New York University School of Law professor and UN Human Rights Council’s Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights (from 2014 to 2020), criticizes the rigid legal thinking of the term as it adheres to traditional categories. Alston insists on defining actors as what they are not.¹³ Some authors, such as Weyers, argue that the term NGO should be replaced by words with more of a positive connotation.¹⁴ As Rachel Brett explains, in some countries the term has very negative connotations and in Chinese it even translates to ‘anti-government’.¹⁵ Some authors, such as Anthony Judge suggest to keep the acronym NGO, but to change the meaning to Necessary to Governance Organization.¹⁶

NGOs are not a new phenomenon, they have existed for many decades and influential groups in history that were not considered NGOs at the time could nowadays

⁸ Charnovitz, ‘Nongovernmental Organizations and International Law’, 348.

⁹ Kerstin Martens, ‘Mission Impossible? Defining Nongovernmental Organizations’, *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 13, no. 3 (2002): 271–85.

¹⁰ Martens, ‘Mission Impossible?’, 275–76.

¹¹ Martens, ‘Mission Impossible?’, 270–71.

¹² Martens, ‘Mission Impossible?’, 272.

¹³ Philip Alston, ‘The ‘Not-a-Cat’ Syndrome: Can the International Human Rights Regime Accommodate Non-State Actors?’, in *Non-State Actors and Human Rights* (Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁴ Martens, ‘Mission Impossible?’, 277.

¹⁵ Rachel Brett, ‘The Role and Limits of Human Rights NGOs at the United Nations’, *Political Studies* 43, no. 1 (1995): 96, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1995.tb01738.x>.

¹⁶ Martens, ‘Mission Impossible?’, 277.

be labelled as NGOs. Traditionally in the literature, there was often a strong sense of optimism with regards to NGOs and a general understanding that they were “doing good”.¹⁷ They were often “idealized as organizations through which people help others for reasons other than profit or politics” and they are seen as more efficient in providing goods and services compared to governmental institutions.¹⁸ However, this view is overly optimistic and has since been disproven in more recent research.

A clear “religious turn” is visible regarding NGOs and in development policy more generally. This “religious turn” can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁹ Religion and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) are playing a new role in developmental geopolitics. Development practices had previously been shaped by the modernisation theory, in which there is an assumption that religion has negative impacts for development.²⁰ Recently, this assumption seems to be replaced by the idea that religion has an increased potential for development and transformation. Faith-based organizations are now seen as crucial agents in development initiatives and in international relations as a whole.²¹ For example, religious NGOs constitute the majority of actors in the field of humanitarian aid.²² Due to the view of FBOs having great potential, their exclusion from development work is now clearly diminishing.²³

Defining FBOs is a difficult task and authors have diverging views on how to categorize such organizations. The clarification of the term ‘faith’ is necessary. Faith and religion are distinct but differentiating between the two can be a difficult process. According to Clarke and Jennings, religion can be understood as the “values, rules and social practices that stem from belief in a spiritual and supreme being” and usually

¹⁷ William F. Fisher, ‘Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices’, *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1997): 439–64.

¹⁸ Fisher, ‘Doing Good?’, 442.

¹⁹ Anne Stensvolddell, ‘Religious NGOs: The New Face of Religion in Civil Society’, in *The Routledge Handbook of Transregional Studies*, 1st edn, ed. Matthias Middell (Routledge, 2018), 441, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438233-1>.

²⁰ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*.

²¹ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*.

²² Blandine Chelini-Pont et al., ‘Réseaux religieux, sociétés civiles et relations internationales’, in *Géopolitique des Religions* (Le Cavalier Bleu, 2019), <https://shs.cairn.info/geopolitique-des-religions--9791031803708-page-69>.

²³ Matthew Clarke and Vicki-Anne Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations: How FBOs Are Contrasted with NGOs in International Development Literature’, *Progress in Development Studies* 15, no. 1 (2015): 38, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993414546979>.

codified in sacred texts.²⁴ Faith can be understood as less rule bound and can include not only the major book religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Daoism and Shinto but also “political philosophies with strong religious elements such as Confucianism or Rastafarianism, (...) and belief systems associated with traditional indigenous societies”.²⁵

Koehrsen and Heuser define FBOs, also called religious NGOs, by their boundary-crossing character. They argue that FBOs « cross boundaries between secular and religious organisations, denominational lines and different development contexts and discourses ».²⁶ They explain that religious organizations are not merely NGOs with a religious designation but, “constitute a unique type of organisation that combines characteristics of NGOs and religious organisations”.²⁷ Berger explains that FBOs, can be considered “formal organizations whose identity and mission are self-consciously derived from the teachings of one or more religious or spiritual traditions and which operate on a nonprofit, independent, voluntary basis to promote and realize collectively articulated ideas about the public good at the national or international level”.²⁸ Throughout this thesis, the definition of FBOs by Clarke and Jennings will be used, “any organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within the faith.”²⁹ This definition has some shortcomings but remains the most inclusive one without considering all NGOs to be FBOs.

Although the term FBO has only recently been used to identify organizations that are sectarian in character, the existence of organizations with religious affiliations, focusing on improving the lives of the disadvantaged, is not a new phenomenon.³⁰ FBOs have long played a crucial role in society because of their role in providing essential services, which can be traced back to the origins of religion.³¹ FBOs share some basic

²⁴ Gerard Clarke and Michael Jennings, eds, *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*, International Political Economy Series (Palgrave Macmillan (Firm)) (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 5.

²⁵ Clarke and Jennings, *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations*, 5.

²⁶ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 7.

²⁷ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 8.

²⁸ Julia Berger, ‘Religious Organizations’, in *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance*, ed. Ali Farazmand (Springer International Publishing, 2016), 16, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_2514-1.

²⁹ Clarke and Jennings, *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations*, 6.

³⁰ Rick James, ‘What Is Distinctive About FBOs?’, *International NGO Training and Research Centre, Praxis Paper*, vol. 22 (2009): 3–22.

³¹ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 41.

characteristics with non-religiously affiliated NGOs: they are not-for-profit, voluntary and altruistic. The main difference is that FBOs are affiliated with a religious structure, doctrine or community.³² Although organizations with a faith basis play an important role in the non-governmental development sector, there is currently a debate within the literature regarding the unique characteristics of FBOs in contrast to NGOs and how to classify these.

Clarke and Ware consider that there are six typologies of FBOs ranging from being considered the same as NGOs to being considered entirely incomparable, and the authors provide a seventh typology.³³ The first typology considers that FBOs can be categorized as both NGOs and religious organizations because of the work they do and their faith-based identity.³⁴ According to scholars such as Jaffrelot, this intersection between NGO and religious organization can be found in FBOs of all faiths.³⁵ The second typology considers that FBOs are completely different to NGOs and the two are incomparable. This is because the religious element of FBOs, that motivate their existence, is sufficient to consider them completely different to NGOs.³⁶ The third typology conceives FBOs and NGOs to be substitutive because there is no empirical evidence to prove that religious motivation has an impact when working with local communities.³⁷ The fourth typology considers FBOs as a subset of NGOs. The term NGO here is used to describe a large range of organizations and FBO can be considered a subsection of the term. The fifth typology considers that FBOs coexist with NGOs within the civil society. In this typology, FBOs are given equal weightage as NGOs and other civil society grouping.³⁸ The sixth typology considers FBOs as an “atomistic group of many individual and distinct organizations that have many differences but a common faith-based premise”.³⁹ Clarke and Ware offer a seventh typology: “FBOs are constitutive of a number of bodies that are involved in development activities. FBOs can claim heritage and relationship to NGOs, religious organizations, civil society organizations and communities.”⁴⁰ Therefore, FBOs and NGOs are distinct but contain

³² Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 40.

³³ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 38.

³⁴ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 41.

³⁵ C Jaffrelot, ‘Hindu Nationalism and the Social Welfare Strategy | Request PDF’, in *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organisations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular.*, ed. G Clarke and M Jennings (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), https://doi.org/10.1057/978023037126_11.

³⁶ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 41.

³⁷ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 42.

³⁸ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 44.

³⁹ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 45.

⁴⁰ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 45–46.

some similar elements. Berger argues that FBOs “represent a unique hybrid of religious beliefs and sociopolitical activism”.⁴¹

Some scholars may consider that a major difference between NGOs and FBOs is that FBOs are regularly accused of practicing proselytism, the act of promoting “conversion to a particular ideology or religion or otherwise pressuring potential converts to accord with specific norms and practices”.⁴² This is not the case for NGOs that are not considered religious in any way. In the development sector, proselytism ties aid to conversion or an agreement to act according to certain norms or practices, creating a clear ethical issue. It should be noted that there is a generalization in the literature of FBO proselytism but the majority of FBOs reject “strategic proselytism and tend to identify with standards of secular humanitarianism”.⁴³ This issue of ‘proselytism’, although not in the religious sense, is also visible in secular NGOs, as some secular NGOs tie aid to acting in a certain way. According to Lynch and Schwarz, contemporary neoliberalism influences aid policies, pressuring recipients to adopt practices and norms that may conflict with their own beliefs and traditions ; they coin this term as “donor proselytism”.⁴⁴ Therefore, since ‘proselytism’ can also be practiced by NGOs with no religious orientation, according to Koehrsen and Heuser, proselytism cannot constitute a characteristic able to help distinguish between FBOs and NGOs.⁴⁵

Scholars have highlighted the limitations of the term FBO. They argue that it “conceals much more than it reveals” and that it gives the misleading impression that all FBOs are the same and that their faith identity plays out in the same way.⁴⁶ This is not so simple as not only can FBOs be from completely different faiths, but even within each faith there are differing strands. Each faith and each strand may (or may not) use their religious identity in different ways. Interpretations of faith also greatly differ in different cultural, social, political and geographical contexts. As James states, “The current catch-all term FBO confuses and divides because no clear definition exists of what it means to be faith-based”.⁴⁷ However, the term FBO or religious NGO is still relevant to conduct research on the topic and remains essential to show the difference

⁴¹ Berger, ‘Religious Organizations’.

⁴² Cecelia Lynch and Tanya B. Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’, *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2016): 636.

⁴³ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 10.

⁴⁴ Lynch and Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’, 639.

⁴⁵ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 10.

⁴⁶ James, ‘What Is Distinctive About FBOs?’, 4.

between such an organization with a religious affiliation and a secular NGO. Although it should be used with caution, without forgetting the subtleties of each organization and context, the term FBO remains effective to refer to these organizations and to research their functioning.

Section 2 : Origins and evolution of FBOs

For many years, FBOs were overlooked in mainstream development discussions. One explanation for this may be the fact that FBOs are more embedded within communities and hence less visible to external agents. Another explanation could be the choice of some FBOs to remain more closely aligned with their affiliated religious institutions and remain deliberately outside the development sector.⁴⁸ Before the 1980s and 1990s, FBOs did not receive special attention since their religious affiliation was not acknowledged as a defining characteristic.⁴⁹ They were rather considered as part of the broad category of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The emergence of FBOs in global governance systems was linked to the visible incapability of state-organized development in the 1980s. As the Cold War came to an end and new conflicts emerged, humanitarian responses became urgent and the number of FBOs and NGOs increased in order to address these.⁵⁰ In addition, the rise of neoliberalism led to a decrease in state intervention regarding the provision of social welfare.⁵¹ Civil society became more relevant as an actor alongside state governance and economic systems, and as NGOs gained gradual importance so did FBOs. The increasing recognition of FBOs within international development policy gained traction in two key phases.⁵²

The first phase, over the 1990s, peaked with the adoption of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000. This phase was marked by a will to revisit the role of religion in development. Religion had previously been categorized as negligible or even a barrier to effective developmental policies. “The ignorance about the social transformative potentials of religion diminished through coincidental proceedings in

⁴⁷ James, ‘What Is Distinctive About FBOs?’, 3.

⁴⁸ Clarke and Ware, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations’, 38.

⁴⁹ Lynch and Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’.

⁵⁰ Lynch and Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’, 638.

⁵¹ Lynch and Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’, 637.

⁵² Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 1.

developmental geopolitics”.⁵³ A notable initiative was the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) in 1998 organized by the World Bank and various religious organizations. This initiative helped integrate religious perspectives into development policy by shedding light on the link between religion and development. When the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted in the year 2000, FBOs embraced them since they aligned with FBOs’ longstanding development priorities.⁵⁴ Over time, the growing scholarly interest in the intersection of religion and development reinforced the recognition of FBOs as key social actors in global development efforts.

The second phase corresponds to the transition period leading up to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015.⁵⁵ FBOs became genuine partners for international development politics as the focus was on creating a “multistakeholder, participatory and value-oriented approach to sustainable development”.⁵⁶ FBOs are now recognized for their organizational strengths, including their global and local networks and experience in managing both small and large-scale projects. Their focus on basic needs, poverty eradication, and environmental advocacy aligns closely with the core objectives of sustainable development. Additionally, FBOs are recognized as valuable “facilitators of public discourses on development and are seen as vehicles for trust-building relationships at the grassroots level”.⁵⁷ However, it remains important to emphasize that the impact of FBOs on development processes is difficult to establish due to the limited data available. The exact number of FBOs acting in the international arena is also difficult to pinpoint, as there is no clear way of determining the religious nature of non-governmental organizations. At the United Nations, it is estimated that “over half and up to three quarters of all FBOs have a Christian faith-background”.⁵⁸

Section 3 : NGOs in conflict management and diplomacy

Understanding how diplomacy is defined in the academic literature provides a necessary foundation for analyzing how NGOs operate in conflict management.

⁵³ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 4–5.

⁵⁴ Lynch and Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’.

⁵⁵ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 4–5.

⁵⁶ Lynch and Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’, 6.

⁵⁷ Lynch and Schwarz, ‘Humanitarianism’s Proselytism Problem’, 6.

⁵⁸ Koehrsen and Heuser, *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*, 2.

Diplomacy is defined differently across the literature. Some authors such as Robert L. Hutchings (diplomat and professor) equate the diplomacy of a country to its foreign policy. Similarly, authors such as Vernon McKay, consider diplomacy to be more broadly a country's foreign relations.⁵⁹ Whereas, authors such as the economist Jean-Robert Leguey-Feilleux, view diplomacy as “a method of political interaction at the international level - and the techniques used to carry out political relations across international boundaries”.⁶⁰ This definition will be used throughout this thesis as it is better suited to reflect the changing dynamics of diplomacy nowadays. As Leguey-Feilleux argues, “At the core of the concept of diplomacy is the idea of communicating, interacting, maintaining contact, and negotiating with states and other international actors”.⁶¹ The practices of diplomacy have been considered part of customary international rule throughout the years and have been codified in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, as well as in the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.⁶²

Within the study of NGOs and conflict resolution, there are different schools of thought. The “liberal peacebuilding” school of thought can be seen in Roland Paris’s ‘At War’s End’ and Doyle & Sambanis’s ‘Making War and Building Peace’.⁶³ Although they do not focus specifically on NGOs, both studies reveal how post-Cold War peacebuilding regards NGOs as auxiliary actors in a top-down framework dominated by states, international organizations, and donors. These authors consider NGOs as implementers of externally designed conflict resolution programs. Another strand of research focuses on the local aspect of NGOs and how this impacts their conflict resolution techniques. John Paul Lederach’s *Building Peace* (1997) repositions NGOs as locally embedded actors rather than mere implementers of the agendas of external agents.⁶⁴ While Lederach highlights NGOs as part of middle-range leadership capable of facilitating reconciliation, Ginty emphasizes their ambivalent position as both local agents and translators of the initiatives of external donors.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Jean-Robert Leguey-Feilleux, *The Dynamics of Diplomacy* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2009), 15.

⁶⁰ Leguey-Feilleux, *The Dynamics of Diplomacy*.

⁶¹ Leguey-Feilleux, *The Dynamics of Diplomacy*.

⁶² Leguey-Feilleux, *The Dynamics of Diplomacy*, 2.

⁶³ Roland Paris, *At War’s End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*, 1st edn (Cambridge University Press, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511790836>; Michael W Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace: The United Nations since the 1990’s*, 2005.

⁶⁴ John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, 9. printing (United States Inst. of Peace Press, 1997).

⁶⁵ Roger Mac Ginty, ‘Where Is the Local? Critical Localism and Peacebuilding’, *Third World Quarterly* 36, no. 5 (2015): 840–56.

Although in the past states were the principal actors in the international arena, this has since changed. The inclusion of different actors in the international political process has led to a diversification and broadening of the term diplomacy. Non-governmental organizations and multinational corporations (MNCs) are now involved in international affairs.⁶⁶ Chataway conducted a set of interviews with American diplomats and found that due to budget cuts and the decrease in the number of professional diplomats, some diplomatic functions have to be out-sourced. He argues that the most effective forms of diplomacy outsourcing are networks of businesses and institutions, academics and NGOs.⁶⁷ These can be considered ‘Track II diplomacy’.

Joseph Montville and William Davidson coined the term ‘Track II diplomacy’ to refer to a “practice (...) of facilitated informal interactions between unofficial but influential actors in armed conflict”.⁶⁸ Today, the practice of Track II diplomacy has expanded and includes a larger range of activities compared to when it was coined by Montville and Davidson in 1981. Track II diplomacy is now understood to be a more “action oriented” form of diplomacy.⁶⁹ The expansion of Track II diplomacy in the 2000s and 2010s can be explained by an increasingly globalized world order leading to a multifaced understanding of conflict analysis and resolution.⁷⁰

Section 4 : FBOs in conflict management and diplomacy

While religion has historically been seen as a conflict generator, and is often still seen as such, its contribution to peacekeeping has often been overlooked. Similarly to secular NGOs, religious NGOs or FBOs also play an important role in conflict resolution, diplomacy, peacebuilding and development. Many scholars have pin-pointed the identity of the mediator as a critical component of success in the process of conflict mediation. In ethno-religious conflicts, faith-based actors are becoming increasingly

⁶⁶ Cynthia J. Chataway, ‘Track II Diplomacy: From a Track I Perspective’, *Negotiation Journal* 14, no. 3 (1998): 269–87, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.1998.tb00165.x>.

⁶⁷ Chataway, ‘Track II Diplomacy’, 272.

⁶⁸ Julia Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy? A Review of the Literature’, *Negotiation Journal* 37, no. 4 (2021): 428, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nejo.12376>.

⁶⁹ Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy?’, 429.

⁷⁰ Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy?’, 433.

involved.⁷¹ The involvement of faith-based actors, such as religious leaders and religiously motivated organizations, in conflict resolution is not a new phenomenon but recently they have become more visible. Although FBOs have been receiving increasing enthusiasm, James notes that “FBOs can still have an undeniable dark side” notably in terms of gender equality.⁷²

According to Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana, not only do religious actors play a role as “educators, advocates, intermediaries, observers, and pursuers of transnational justice” but they also “provide training in conflict resolution and conflict prevention”.⁷³ At the World Conference of Religions and Peace in 2001, it was concluded that religious communities “are uniquely equipped to meet the challenges of our time: resolving conflict, caring for the sick and needy, promoting peaceful co-existence among all peoples.”⁷⁴ As Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana point out, until recently the role of religion in conflict resolution was understudied (as opposed to the role of religion in conflict creation). However, as the Cold War came to an end and the number of etho-religious conflicts increased, more research was conducted on the link between religion and conflict resolution. The 2001 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon brought the question of religion and conflict to the centre of focus in research.⁷⁵

NGOs are also involved in what Sandrine Lefranc coins as ‘bottom-up peacebuilding’. She mentions religious organizations as a type of organization that plays an important role in bottom-up peacebuilding.⁷⁶ The landscape of religious actors in peacebuilding is mostly dominated by Protestant groups, with Muslim organizations emerging. Lefranc argues that Catholic actors such as Sant’Egidio are more involved in citizen-led diplomacy efforts rather than bottom-up peacebuilding. The author mentions Caritas as a Catholic organization which is taking part in bottom-up peacebuilding but she notes that the ‘Peacebuilding: a Caritas training manual’ document was largely

⁷¹ Jacob Bercovitch and S. Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana, ‘Religion and Mediation: The Role of Faith-Based Actors in International Conflict Resolution’, *International Negotiation* 14, no. 1 (2009): 176, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157180609X406562>.

⁷² James, ‘What Is Distinctive About FBOs?’, 10.

⁷³ Bercovitch and Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana, ‘Religion and Mediation’.

⁷⁴ James, ‘What Is Distinctive About FBOs?’, 7.

⁷⁵ Bercovitch and Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana, ‘Religion and Mediation’, 177.

⁷⁶ Sandrine Lefranc, ‘Du droit à la paix: La circulation des techniques internationales de pacification par le bas’, *Sociologie, Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 174, no. 4 (2008): 52, <https://doi.org/10.3917/arss.174.0048>.

inspired by the Mennonites.⁷⁷ These religious organizations consider themselves not just as additional actors but rather as alternatives to conventional, state-led peace processes. Religious NGOs are not so much interested in political elites but rather focus on “ordinary people, local elites” as well as religious leaders, university professors and the youth.⁷⁸

While there is a growing body of literature exploring the intersection between religion and conflict resolution, the specific role of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in this domain remains underexamined. Numerous scholars have acknowledged the increasing involvement of FBOs in peacebuilding processes, particularly in complex, multi-faith societies and post-conflict environments. However, much of the existing research on FBOs in conflict resolution remains largely qualitative, case-based, and descriptive, focusing on anecdotal narratives, interviews, or isolated success stories. While this body of work is undeniably valuable for understanding the lived experiences and contextual dynamics of peacebuilding, it often lacks the systematic, comparative, and empirical analysis necessary to generalize findings or assess broader trends.

A major gap in the literature is the absence of quantitative and mixed-methods approaches that examine how the religious identity or affiliation of an NGO may influence its conflict resolution activities, strategies, and outcomes. Particularly in countries such as Lebanon, which has a complex religious mosaic and a history of sectarian violence, this oversight limits our understanding of how religiously affiliated organizations operate and whether their religious identity effects their effectiveness as peacebuilding actors. In addition, there are few detailed case studies of specific religious NGOs in practice in the literature.

This thesis aims to address this lacuna by employing a mixed-methods research design to investigate the role of religious NGOs in conflict resolution in Lebanon. It will combine qualitative insights with a quantitative, statistical analysis of how variables such as religious affiliation and NGO classification can effect the engagement in different conflict resolution efforts. In doing so, this research seeks to move beyond descriptive accounts and contribute to a more theoretically grounded and empirically robust understanding of the dynamics that shape FBO engagement in conflict contexts while also providing a detailed case study of one religious NGO in one country.

⁷⁷ Lefranc, ‘Du droit à la paix’.

CHAPTER 2 : CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Section 1 : Core concepts and definitions

Before outlining the theoretical contributions that guide this research, it is crucial to first clarify and define several key concepts related to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and their role in peacebuilding. These foundational concepts serve as the building blocks of both the theoretical framework and the analysis. In the field of International Relations and Peace Studies, terms such as “NGO,” “faith-based organization,” “peacebuilding,” and “conflict resolution” are contested. Therefore, it is essential to clearly articulate the conceptualizations that will be used in this thesis in order to ensure analytical coherence and methodological transparency. This conceptual clarification lays the groundwork for how the research problem is approached and how variables are identified and operationalized in the empirical analysis. This section will conceptualize conflict, peacebuilding, the different tracks of dimplomacy and preventive diplomacy.

Conflict and armed conflict

According to Thania Paffenholz and Christoph Spurk, conflict is a “divergence of interests, views or behavior between persons or groups, and is normal in any society”.⁷⁹ Drawing on Burton’s Human Needs Theory, this research understands conflict not as a mere clash of interests, but as a result of unmet non-negotiable needs, such as identity, security, and recognition.⁸⁰ Armed conflict is defined by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program as a conflict between two parties in which at least one of the parties in the state and which results in at least “25 battle-related deaths per calendar year”.⁸¹ War is different from conflict as it is defined by having at least 1,000 battle-related deaths per year.⁸² Throughout this thesis the concepts conflict, armed conflict and war will be used interchangeably. Armed conflict can be described in three phases: prior to the outbreak of violence, armed conflict and after the end of armed violence. Armed conflict rarely

⁷⁸ Lefranc, ‘Du droit à la paix’, 52.

⁷⁹ Thania Paffenholz and Christoph Spurk, ‘Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding’, *Social Development Papers: Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction* 36 (2006).

⁸⁰ John W. Burton and Dennis J.D. Sandole, ‘Generic Theory: The Basis of Conflict Resolution’, *Negotiation Journal* 2, no. 4 (1986): 333–44, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.1986.tb00373.x>.

⁸¹ ‘UCDP Definitions - Uppsala University’, text, 29 May 2024, <https://www.uu.se/en/department/peace-and-conflict-research/research/ucdp/ucdp-definitions>.

simply goes linearly through the three phases and it is more often circular going back and forth between the phases. Nonetheless, figure 1 does help understand theoretically the stages and intensity of a conflict.

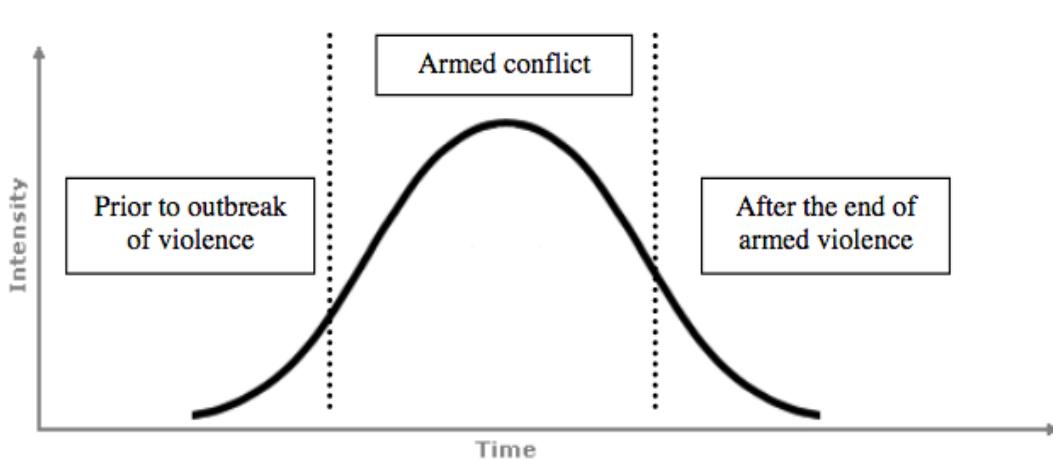


Figure 1. Stages and intensity of armed conflict (from Thania Paffenholz and Christoph Spurk, 'Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding', *Social Development Papers: Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction* 36 (2006), 15.)

Peacebuilding, conflict resolution and conflict management

Defining peacebuilding is a complex task due to the complexity in defining peace and determining when peace is achieved. Galtung distinguishes between two types of peace: negative peace, understood as the end of violence and positive peace, understood as a peaceful society at all levels.⁸³ The definition of peacebuilding has evolved over time. In the 1992 UN Agenda for Peace, peacebuilding was defined as "preventing large scale violence or the recurrence of violence immediately after wars or armed conflicts (1-3 years, maximum 5 years)".⁸⁴ This definition only includes processes directly aimed at preventing violence. A compromise needs to be found between having a very narrow definition of peacebuilding and a wider one which would make it difficult to effectively define what is included in peacebuilding.

There are three phases of peacebuilding that correspond to the three phases of conflict described above. The peacebuilding phases are (1) "the prevention phase aiming at preventing armed conflict", (2) "the conflict management or peace-making phase

⁸² Paffenholz and Spurk, 'Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding'.

⁸³ Johan Galtung, 'Violence, Peace, and Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167–91, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336900600301>.

⁸⁴ Paffenholz and Spurk, 'Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding', 15.

aiming to end armed conflict and reach a peace agreement” and (3) “the post-conflict peacebuilding phase”.⁸⁵ Post conflict peacebuilding can further be divided in two phases: the immediate aftermath of armed conflict (between 1 and 5 years after the end of the conflict) and the period after (between 5 and 10 years after the end of the conflict).⁸⁶

Track I, Track II and Multi-Track diplomacy

Track I diplomacy, sometimes referred to as Official diplomacy, is considered to be the primary tool of a state’s foreign policy in order to achieve peace. It happens at the state to state level and follows a certain protocol. States are not the only actors of Track I diplomacy, other actors may include the United Nations (UN) and regional economic and political organizations such as the European Union (EU), the Arab League (LAS), the African Union (AU).⁸⁷ Track I diplomacy was developed as a foreign policy tool in order to improve the relations between nations and it involves mostly politicians and high-ranking military personnel.⁸⁸ Although it undoubtedly has key strengths, Track I diplomacy does also have some weaknesses such as power imbalances and rigid procedures.

The term Track II diplomacy, or non-governmental peace management, was coined in the 1980s by Joseph V. Montville in an effort to overcome the failures of Track I diplomacy. He defines Track II diplomacy as “unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aim to develop strategies, to influence public opinion, organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict”.⁸⁹ Definitions of Track II diplomacy have evolved over the years, before Track II diplomacy was understood as a small dialogue between unofficial actors and has now moved towards “more robust forms of inclusive mediation”.⁹⁰ The expansion of this understanding of track II diplomacy and peacebuilding is linked to the end of the Cold War and the new globalized world order.

⁸⁵ Paffenholz and Spurk, ‘Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding’, 16.

⁸⁶ Paffenholz and Spurk, ‘Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding’, 16.

⁸⁷ Jeffrey Mapendere, ‘Defining Track One and a Half Diplomacy : Its Complementarity and the Analysis of Factors That Facilitate Its Success.’ (Royal Roads University, 2002), <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/services/services-libraries/theses/Pages/item.aspx?idNumber=1006814427>

⁸⁸ Daniel Wehrenfennig, ‘Multi-Track Diplomacy and Human Security’, *Journal of Human Security* 7 (2008).

⁸⁹ J Montville, ‘The Arrow and the Olive Branch: A Case for Track Two Diplomacy’, in *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships*, Lexington Books, ed. V. D. Volkman et al. (Lexington, 1990).

⁹⁰ Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy?’, 428.

Track II diplomacy involves the participation of influential and unofficial actors who operate outside formal state structures. The objective is the “transfer of ideas (norms, attitudes, identities, and principles) or people (participants) from unofficial to official conflict resolution interventions”.⁹¹ Third parties also play a central role in facilitating and shaping Track II diplomacy. Not only can third parties be scholar-practitioners such as academics but increasingly this intermediary role has been taken on by unofficial organizations such as NGOs.⁹² NGOs have included dialogue and mediation as part of their activities which has increased their role as facilitators of Track II diplomacy. By using their neutrality, local networks and flexible structures, NGOs have emerged as key players in Track II initiatives.

Track II is considered by peace practitioners to be a more inclusive peace process because different stakeholders are included and have a say in the process as opposed to Track I where only states are convened. Track II diplomacy also tries to address the power asymmetry by including different participants in the peace process.⁹³ The broader and systematic participation of civil society in peace building is deemed a key element of Track II diplomacy and essential in order to achieve peace.⁹⁴

Diamond and McDonald introduced the term Multi-Track diplomacy which looks at “the web of inter-connected parts (activities, individuals, institutions, communities) which operate together, whether awkwardly or gracefully, for a common goal: a world at peace”.⁹⁵ This Multi-Track diplomacy includes several new approaches, recognizing eight different tracks, in addition to traditional diplomacy as important tools for peacebuilding. Some scholars even include Half Track Diplomacy which combines different groups and issues creating an even larger number of tracks all included under Multi-Track diplomacy.⁹⁶ In this thesis I do not use the terms Half Diplomacy and rather only consider Track I and Track II.

⁹¹ Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy?’, 435.

⁹² Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy?’

⁹³ Julia Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy? A Review of the Literature’, *Negotiation Journal* 37, no. 4 (2021): 437, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nejo.12376>.

⁹⁴ Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy?’

⁹⁵ Diamond and McDonald, *Multi Track Diplomacy* (1996), quoted in Jeffrey Mapendere, *Defining Track One and a Half Diplomacy: Its Complementarity and the Analysis of Factors That Facilitate Its Success*, Royal Roads University, 2002, 1.

⁹⁶ Wehrenfennig, ‘Multi-Track Diplomacy and Human Security’.

NGOs can participate in all Track levels of diplomacy in different ways. At the Track I level, NGO mediators can engage directly with official negotiators, offer support to formal mediation processes, and assist in behind-the-scenes discussions. At the Track II level, they can conduct discussions involving influential but unofficial actors, and at the Track III level they collaborate with grassroots communities.⁹⁷ Often the distinction of the work of NGOs between the different tracks is not so clear cut and the lines between the categorizations become blurred as NGOs participate simultaneously in different tracks.

Preventive diplomacy

The term preventive diplomacy can be traced back to the 1960s when the then Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld, used the concept to highlight the importance of preventing superpower conflicts in third-world countries from escalating into global crises.⁹⁸ In the 1992 Agenda for Peace, preventive diplomacy is defined as “action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur”.⁹⁹ Preventive diplomacy is hence associated with actions of facilitation, mediation, conciliation, adjudication and arbitration.¹⁰⁰ Preventive diplomacy is different from conflict prevention which focuses on human rights, humanitarian aid and development programs. The timing of the intervention is crucial in implementing preventative diplomacy, if it happens too soon it will not prevent conflict and if it's too late the conflict is already underway. Preventive diplomacy has a strong economic appeal for UN member states and agencies notably because investing in preventive action is cheaper than humanitarian, peacekeeping, reconstruction and stabilisation operations.¹⁰¹

Section 2 : Theoretical framework

⁹⁷ Palmiano Federer, ‘Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy?’, 440.

⁹⁸ Eileen F. Babbitt, ‘Preventive Diplomacy by Intergovernmental Organizations: Learning from Practice’, *International Negotiation* 17, no. 3 (2012): 349–88, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718069-12341236>.

⁹⁹ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, ‘An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping’, *International Relations* 11, no. 3 (1992): 11, <https://doi.org/10.1177/004711789201100302>.

¹⁰⁰ Steven A. Zyck and Robert Muggah, ‘Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention: Obstacles and Opportunities’, *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 1, no. 1 (2012): 68, <https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.ac>.

¹⁰¹ Zyck and Muggah, ‘Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention’.

This section focuses on the key theoretical contributions that shape how conflict resolution is understood and how it will be analysed throughout this thesis. There has been a clear shift in peace building techniques from a state-centred approach to conflict resolution towards a more human centred transformative model of peace. The theoretical framework of this thesis is based on the work of Lederach, Paffenholz and Spurk, and Karampini.

Lederach's conflict transformation theory

According to Lederach's theory of conflict transformation there are three transformative processes at the heart of peacebuilding: "striving for social justice, ending violent conflict, and building healthy cooperative relationships in conflict-ridden societies."¹⁰² He believes that peace building is "an array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships".¹⁰³ Conflict transformation is more than a set of specific techniques so it should rather be understood as a set of lenses through which we can comprehend conflict.¹⁰⁴

In Lederach's transformation theory, reconciliation and justice are essential and they are the basis for institution building. Lederach places reconciliation at the heart of his theory and hence he argues that in conflict there should be a strong focus on relationships. According to this theory, external actors play a role in conflict transformation but their role is limited to "supporting internal actors, co-ordinating external peace efforts, engaging in a context-sensitive way, respecting local culture and applying a long-term approach".¹⁰⁵

Another key element of Lederach's theory is the view that peacebuilding should be understood as a long-term process of systemic transformation from war to peace, it should be a holistic approach to conflict resolution.¹⁰⁶ Peacebuilding requires the healing and rebuilding of relationships for the long run. According to the theory, building peace

¹⁰² John Perry, 'Reconciliation and Healing as the Ultimate Reality and Meaning of Peacebuilding in the Thought of John Paul Lederach with Special Reference to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia', *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* 35, nos 3–4 (2012): 317–31, <https://doi.org/10.3138/uram.35.3-4.317>.

¹⁰³ John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, 9. printing (United States Inst. of Peace Press, 1997), 20.

¹⁰⁴ Lederach, *Building Peace*.

¹⁰⁵ Perry, 'Reconciliation and Healing as the Ultimate Reality and Meaning of Peacebuilding in the Thought of John Paul Lederach with Special Reference to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia'.

¹⁰⁶ Lederach, *Building Peace*.

is not just just a top-down (Track III) or a bottom-up process (Track I) but it is also a middle-out process. Bottom-up (Track II) links grassroots movements with the political agendas of elites; top-down (Track III) involves resources that only national elites can activate. Middle-out (Track II) bridges these vertical approaches by adding horizontal capacities that enable navigation across social boundaries in both directions.¹⁰⁷ He states that organizations in civil society often take this role of middle-out (track II) diplomacy and hence they are essential in conflict resolution and transformation. So, peace is built through inclusive, multi level relationships. Lederach also notes that religion is a key aspect of track II.¹⁰⁸ This explains why I have chosen to look at the role of non-governmental organizations and more precisely how religion in these non-governmental organizations contributes to conflict resolution or transformation. All in all, according to the theory, multiple levels of actors participate in peacebuilding and it is the combination of the different tracks that make it possible to achieve peace. It is important to note that Lederach's work is based on the Anabaptist-Mennonite religious framework.

The conflict transformation theory is different from conflict resolution in various ways. The most striking difference that Lederach explains is in terms of its purpose. The purpose of conflict resolution is to "achieve an agreement and solution to the presenting problem creating the crisis" whereas the purpose of conflict transformation is to "promote constructive change processes, inclusive of, but not limited to, immediate solutions".¹⁰⁹ Notwithstanding the difference between conflict resolution and conflict transformation, this thesis will use them interchangeably.

Lederach's transformative theory really puts an emphasis on actors embedded in local communities and how they are better positioned to facilitate informal dialogue and that social reconciliation leads to peace. Since religious NGOs are embedded in local communities (often more than secular NGOs) this leads to the first hypothesis of this thesis (H1): *Religious NGOs engage more frequently in informal, dialogue-based conflict resolution strategies (Track II diplomacy) than secular NGOs.*

Paffenholz and Spurk's typology

Paffenholz and Spurk developed an analytical framework of civil society functions based on the democracy theory, development discourse and case study knowledge and they then applied this framework to peacebuilding. Throughout this

¹⁰⁷ Lederach, *Building Peace*.

¹⁰⁸ Lederach, *Building Peace*.

thesis and my analysis I will use their framework in order to better understand the role of NGOs in peace processes. According to Paffenholz and Spurk, civil society organizations have seven core functions: (1) protection of civilians; (2) monitoring and accountability; (3) advocacy and public communication; (4) socialization and a culture of peace; (5) conflict sensitive social cohesion; (6) intermediation and facilitation; and (7) service delivery.¹¹⁰ The authors, note that the role of the state is also very important and they draw some lessons from their research notably that: “civil society has important roles to play in peacebuilding”, “not all civil society functions are equally effective in all conflict phases”, “civil society can also have a dark side”, “civil society is more than NGOs”.¹¹¹ Paffenholz and Spurk’s theory lead us to the second hypothesis (*H2*): *NGOs that are not formally classified as conflict resolution organizations (e.g., humanitarian or development NGOs) still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy.*

Karampini’s theory on the role of NGOs in conflict management

According to Eleni Karampini, there are three main categories of NGOs: humanitarian NGOs, human rights NGOs and conflict resolution NGOs. Aall (2000) defines conflict resolution NGOs as organizations which act as intermediaries in an active conflict. This categorization however is not so simple and Karampini acknowledges this. Conflict resolution NGOs often “perform roles outside of their area of activity” for example they regularly promote human welfare in conflict zones, which could be considered more of an activity of humanitarian NGOs. Hence, the line between these categories of NGOs is quite blurry and often NGOs can be classified in multiple categories.¹¹² Aall describes four major roles that conflict resolution NGOs perform: “providing early warning of impending conflict, acting as channels of communication between parties in conflict, working at the grassroots to effect reconciliation at the local level, and providing training for post conflict administrators in the intricacies of civil society”.¹¹³

Karampini developed a theory that NGOs contribute to conflict management through conducting Track II diplomacy, peacekeeping and building and preventive

¹⁰⁹ Lederach, *Building Peace*.

¹¹⁰ Paffenholz and Spurk, ‘Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding’, 13.

¹¹¹ Paffenholz and Spurk, ‘Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding’.

¹¹² Eleni Karampini, ‘The Role of NGOs in Conflict Management’, *International Journal of Non-Profit Sector Empowerment* 2, no. 1 (2023): e34182, <https://doi.org/10.12681/npse.34182>.

¹¹³ Pamela Aall, ‘NGOs, Conflict Management and Peacekeeping’, *International Peacekeeping* 7, no. 1 (2000): 121–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533310008413822>.

diplomacy.¹¹⁴ Track II diplomacy refers to informal dialogue and relationship outside of the classic government channels. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding includes helping disarmament, repatriation of refugees, human rights monitoring and institution building. Preventive diplomacy involves identifying risks and engaging with them before the conflict escalates. Pamela Aall emphasizes the crucial role of NGOs in conflict management through preventive measures and acting as intermediaries in active conflict.¹¹⁵

Considering the theories outlined above, I propose two hypotheses. The first hypothesis (H1) is: *religious NGOs engage more frequently in informal, dialogue-based conflict resolution strategies (Track II diplomacy) than secular NGOs.* This hypothesis is based on Lederach's emphasis on the role of organizations in civil society who often take the role of middle-out (track II) diplomacy. Religious NGOs, due to their inherent trust and moral legitimacy within local communities, are often better positioned to engage in informal, dialogue-based peacebuilding processes. Therefore, I hypothesize that religious NGOs are more likely to implement Track II diplomacy strategies compared to secular NGOs.

The second hypothesis (H2) is: *NGOs that are not formally classified as conflict resolution organizations still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy.* This hypothesis is rooted in Karampini's work which highlights the role that humanitarian and development NGOs play in peacebuilding. Paffenholz & Spurk's Peacebuilding Framework also serves as a basis as it states that many NGOs often find themselves in situations where conflict resolution and preventative diplomacy are an inherent part of their mandate even though these NGOs are primarily focused on development and humanitarian aid. Therefore, I hypothesize that NGOs that are not specifically categorized as conflict resolution NGOs still take part in Track II diplomacy.

Therefore, from the theories described above, specific expectations have been derived and then operationalized into two testable hypotheses

¹¹⁴ Eleni Karampini, 'The Role of NGOs in Conflict Management', *International Journal of Non-Profit Sector Empowerment* 2, no. 1 (2023): e34182, <https://doi.org/10.12681/npse.34182>.

¹¹⁵ Aall, 'NGOs, Conflict Management and Peacekeeping', 129.

Hypotheses
H1: Religious NGOs engage more frequently in informal, dialogue-based conflict resolution strategies (Track II diplomacy) than secular NGOs.
H2: NGOs that are not formally classified as conflict resolution organizations still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy.

CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

Section 1 : Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to investigate the role of religious Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in conflict resolution in Lebanon. In order to address the research question: *How do religious NGOs contribute to conflict resolution in Lebanon?*, a mixed-methods design has been employed, combining both quantitative and qualitative components. This approach allows for a broader understanding of trends across a diverse range of non-governmental organizations in order to understand how they participate in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. However, a large quantitative analysis has some shortcomings as NGOs are very context dependent making generalization difficult, hence adding a qualitative analysis offers a deeper, context-rich examination of a specific case.

The quantitative section involves a comparative analysis of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon, using a scoring system to measure their involvement in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. By applying this framework to a broad sample of NGOs, the study aims to test the two hypotheses: (H1) Religious NGOs engage more frequently in informal, dialogue-based conflict resolution strategies than secular NGOs; and (H2) NGOs that are not formally classified as conflict resolution organizations still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy.

In addition to this quantitative section, the qualitative component focuses on an in-depth case study of the Community of Sant'Egidio, a religious organization with a well-documented history of engagement in peace processes. This case will help show

how religious identity shapes conflict resolution practices in a specific case. Together, the two methods are designed to reinforce one another, offering both generalizability and depth.

Section 2 : Quantitative methodology

2.1 Research design

The quantitative section of this study (chapter 4, section 1) employs a comparative, cross-sectional research design in order to systematically assess the role of religious and secular NGOs in conflict resolution in Lebanon. Lebanon is selected due to its ongoing post-conflict dynamics and the presence of a diverse landscape of civil society actors as the “Lebanese NGO sector, (...) is one of the most dynamic in the Arab world”.¹¹⁶

A custom dataset was constructed containing NGOs active in Lebanon, selected using predefined criteria to ensure relevance and comparability. The core objective is to test whether religious affiliation influences the degree of engagement in conflict management. Each NGO is assessed using a standardized scoring system across three dimensions of engagement: Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. The resulting scores enable statistical testing of the relationship between religious identity and conflict resolution activities. Further details on variable construction and coding are outlined in section 2.3.

2.2 Data collection

The data for the quantitative section was collected from multiple sources in order to ensure comprehensiveness and reliability. I based my dataset on two existing datasets. The first dataset is the Peace Facilitation Organisations Mapping Dataset created by Bel and Rolandsen in 2024 for the Peace Research institute Oslo (PRIO).¹¹⁷ Only the NGOs that operate in Lebanon were included in my dataset. An important feature of the PRIO dataset is its classification of each NGO’s involvement in Track I, Track II, and local

¹¹⁶ Jad Chaaban and Karin Seyfert, *Faith-Based NGOs in Multi-Confessional Society: Evidence from Lebanon* (Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies, 2012), 1, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep12659>.

¹¹⁷ Øystein Rolandsen et al., ‘Peace Facilitation Organizations (PFOs) Mapping Dataset’, Peace Research Institute Oslo, version 1.0, 10 December 2024.

peacebuilding activities. These classifications (High, Medium, Low) were used to guide my own scoring system.

The second dataset which provided the basis for my dataset is the ‘Who does What Where (3W) Lebanon’ dataset created by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) which maps out the NGOs that are present in Lebanon.¹¹⁸ Using the NGOs in these two datasets, I then found the relevant information to compile my table. I mostly used the official website of the NGO in order to find the missing information such as the religious affiliation, the year the NGO was founded, the year the mission in Lebanon started, the size of the NGO and the size of the Lebanon mission. The size was coded in the following way: small <50 employees, medium 50–200 employees and large >200 employees.

In addition to these variables, each NGO was also categorized according to its primary areas of focus. This classification, developed for the purpose of this study, includes the following categories: culture and recreation; education and research; health; social services; environment; development and housing; law, advocacy and politics; philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion; business and professional associations and unions; and peacemaking. I based this classification on the International Classification of Non-profit Organizations by Salamon and Anheier.¹¹⁹ Many NGOs were assigned to more than one category to reflect the multidimensional nature of their activities. This classification was done based on the first page of the official website of the NGO. This classification was used to test the second hypothesis and see how the formal dedication to conflict of an NGO influences its peacebuilding activities.

The selection of NGOs followed predefined criteria designed to focus the analysis on relevant actors. Only NGOs with a clear focus on Lebanon were included to maintain geographic scope and ensure the feasibility of my research. Furthermore, in order to ensure organizational stability and sufficient activity history, only NGOs that have been active for at least five years were considered. Lastly, NGOs had to demonstrate ongoing activity at the time of data collection, as evidenced by recent

¹¹⁸ OCHA Lebanon, ‘Who Does What Where (3W) Lebanon’, 2025, <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/lebanon-operational-presence>.

¹¹⁹ Lester M. Salamon and Helmuth K. Anheier, *The International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations ICNPO-Revision 1, 1996* (The Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, 1996).

reports or updates, to be eligible for inclusion in the dataset. The NGOs that do not have an official website or an active facebook page were excluded from the dataset due to the difficulty in finding reliable information on the activities of the organization.

In order to code the different dimensions primary sources were used including official NGO websites, which provide detailed information on organizational missions, activities, and project descriptions. In addition, relevant databases and directories were consulted such as ReliefWeb, arab.org, NgoBase in order to identify and verify NGOs operating in Lebanon.¹²⁰ Secondary literature, including academic publications and reports on NGO activities in the Middle East, supplemented the dataset by offering contextual insights and additional verification.

This rigorous data collection process and strict selection criteria serve to create a robust and representative dataset of NGOs engaged in informal conflict management in Lebanon.

2.3 Operationalization of variables

The dependent variable is the level of engagement in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. Each NGO is assessed and scored across these three dimensions, which reflect different aspects of informal diplomacy and conflict management. The scoring system follows a standardized scale from 0 to 3:

- **0** indicates no significant activity,
- **1** reflects minimal or occasional involvement,
- **2** corresponds to regular, structured engagement,
- **3** signifies a central mission with sustained activity.

These scores are used to test the relationship between NGO religious affiliation and their level of engagement in track II diplomacy. This score is also used to see how NGOs not classified as conflict resolution NGOs participate in the three dimensions.

The Track II diplomacy score reflects the NGO's facilitation of unofficial dialogue, mediation efforts, or trust-building initiatives between conflicting parties. The peacebuilding score captures activities aimed at reconciliation, reconstruction, and long-term social cohesion. The preventive diplomacy score evaluates NGO efforts to address

¹²⁰ 'ReliefWeb - Informing Humanitarians Worldwide', 2 September 2025, <https://reliefweb.int/>; 'Lebanon NGO Directory | Arab.Org', accessed 2 September 2025, <https://arab.org/countries/lebanon/>.

the root causes of conflict, including early warning mechanisms and conflict-sensitive programming. The scoring was based on publicly available information found on NGO websites, including their project descriptions, reports, and mission statements. I developed some clear indicators in order to score each NGO.

Table 1: Indicators for assessing NGO activity in Lebanon across the three dimensions : Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy

Dimension	Indicators
Track II diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the NGO facilitate dialogue between communities involved in conflict? • Does it organize or participate in mediation or reconciliation workshops? • Does it hold interfaith gatherings or similar initiatives? • Are peace envoys or facilitators involved in its projects? • Does the NGO use terms such as “Track II,” “dialogue,” “facilitation,” or “mediation”?
Peacebuilding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the NGO run reconciliation projects post-conflict? • Does the NGO take part in education, reintegration, or trauma-healing programs? • Does it support coexistence between different communities or organize youth peace education? • Does it explicitly mention "peacebuilding" in missions or programs?
Preventive diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it put in place early warning systems, risk monitoring, or community alert networks? • Does the NGO conduct research or advocacy on conflict risks? • Are programs designed with conflict-sensitive approaches? • Does the NGO engage with local political actors or religious leaders to de-escalate tension?

Source : author

The independent variable of this thesis is the religious affiliation of the NGO. The religious affiliation of each NGO was determined primarily through information provided on the NGO's official website. In many cases, the religious identity is explicitly stated on the homepage but when this was not the case, I conducted a thorough search across the website's content. If no mention of a religious background or

connection was found, I categorized the NGO as secular. For the purpose of this analysis, religious NGOs were coded as 1, and secular NGOs as 0.

While it is important to recognize the diversity within religious traditions, I applied a simplified classification system. For Muslim NGOs, I distinguished between Sunni and Shia; for Christian NGOs, I identified whether they were Catholic, Ecumenical, or Evangelical. These subcategories were noted during data collection (so they are visible in Appendix A) but they were not used in the main statistical analysis. Due to feasibility, I decided to focus the research on the binary religious/secular distinction and did not code for finer religious differences.

Several control variables were introduced to account for alternative factors that might influence an NGO's involvement in conflict resolution. Firstly, the size of the NGO, measured by the number of employees, was controlled whenever this data was available. Larger organizations may have more resources to engage in Track II or peacebuilding efforts regardless of their religious affiliation. Secondly, the type of organization, notably whether the NGO was explicitly founded as a conflict resolution or peacebuilding NGO, or primarily as a development/humanitarian actor. Lastly, the date of the creation of the NGO was included, as older NGOs may have established networks and trust that facilitate informal diplomacy. Therefore, I only included NGOs that are at least 5 years old, those established after 2020 were excluded. This is because newer NGOs may still be in their foundational or experimental phase and may not yet have a track record of activities relevant to this study's focus. Additionally, a minimum age of five years increases the likelihood that sufficient public documentation is available to support consistent and reliable coding. In cases where reliable data were missing, the variable was treated as missing for that case.

2.4 Limitations

This research design presents several important limitations. Firstly, the dataset relies exclusively on publicly available online data. Some NGOs may provide incomplete, outdated, or selectively curated information, which could affect the reliability of the scoring system. Additionally, NGOs that are active in peacebuilding in Lebanon but lack an online presence were excluded from the dataset, potentially introducing a selection bias toward larger, more formal, or better-resourced organizations.

Secondly, the coding of certain variables, particularly organizational size, was sometimes hindered by missing data, as many NGOs do not publicly report their number of employees and some NGOs only have volunteers. As a result, some control variables were not consistently applied across the dataset. Thirdly, although the scoring system is based on defined criteria, the process of coding inherently involves a degree of subjectivity. Classifying NGO activities as Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy may lead to differences in interpretations. Other researchers might disagree with how certain activities were categorized or scored, which affects the replicability and reliability of the dataset. Lastly, the coding of religious affiliation was simplified to a binary variable: religious (1) versus secular (0). Although subcategories of religion were noted descriptively, the analysis does not account for the potential influence of specific religious traditions, such as Catholic, Shia, Evangelical, on patterns of NGO engagement in conflict management. This limits the explanatory depth of the independent variable.

Section 3 : Qualitative methodology

3.1 Case Study justification

The case of the Community of Sant’Egidio was chosen using a strategic case selection approach. Sant’Egidio was selected as a “crucial case,” meaning it is particularly likely to provide insights about the role of religious NGOs in conflict resolution in Lebanon. As a well-established Catholic organization with a prominent and documented presence in peacebuilding and Track II diplomacy, Sant’Egidio represents a key example of a religious NGO deeply engaged in conflict management. As Chelini et al. note, when discussing peacekeeping through hybrid diplomacy, special recognition must be given to the Community of Sant’Egidio.¹²¹

This makes Sant’Egidio a crucial case because it exemplifies the potential influence of religious affiliation on peace facilitation efforts. Its sustained activity and extensive involvement provide a strong basis to test whether the patterns identified in the quantitative dataset apply in practice. By focusing on Sant’Egidio, this study can better understand the mechanisms through which religious NGOs contribute to conflict resolution in Lebanon. Moreover, Sant’Egidio’s extensive publicly available

¹²¹ Chelini-Pont et al., ‘Réseaux religieux, sociétés civiles et relations internationales’, 71.

documentation, including reports, project descriptions, and statements, facilitates rigorous qualitative coding and analysis. This case thus serves as an illustrative example that can help to deepen understanding of the patterns identified in the quantitative section, and test whether these patterns hold true in practice.

3.2 Data collection

The qualitative analysis relies primarily on documentary sources. These include official publications by the Community of Sant'Egidio (annual reports, speeches, and press releases) and international and local media coverage of its initiatives in Lebanon. The qualitative analysis also relies on secondary academic literature which assesses the Community's role in peace and conflict resolution. Together, these sources provide a basis for understanding Sant'Egidio's actions and analyzing them within the three analytical dimensions of Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy.

3.3 Analytical framework

The qualitative case study is examined through document analysis of reports, public communications, speeches, reports, and media coverage relating to the Community of Sant'Egidio's work in Lebanon. In-depth document analysis allows for identification of strategies that reflect how the organization positions itself in the fields of Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. Within this framework, three aspects of Sant'Egidio's conflict resolution strategy are examined:

1. Track II diplomacy
2. Peacebuilding
3. Preventive diplomacy

3.4 Limitations

Several limitations to this qualitative research design and analysis need to be acknowledged. As a single case study, the analysis provides case-specific insights that may not be generalizable to all religious NGOs or to all contexts of conflict. Sant'Egidio's prominence and access to political and religious leaders give it a distinctive identity that smaller organizations may not replicate. Secondly, the reliance on documentary and secondary sources creates potential biases because the NGO website tends to highlight successes and not report on failures or internal tensions. It was, for example, not possible to find information about how the actions were received by the local population. Access to internal decision-making processes and confidential negotiations was not possible, which restricts the level of detail available. Finally, the

qualitative approach captures the depth of Sant'Egidio's practices but cannot fully measure their scale or long-term impact, which would require broader comparative data.

Section 4 : Mixed Method integration

This study adopts a mixed-method design to investigate how an NGO's religious affiliation influences its involvement in conflict resolution in Lebanon. This approach allows for both the identification of broad patterns across organizations (through the quantitative section) and a deeper understanding of one NGO's practices and motivations (through the qualitative section). The qualitative case study focuses on the Community of Sant'Egidio, a faith-based organization known for its international peace facilitation efforts, including in the Middle East.

A mixed-methods design is particularly suited for this research question because it captures the depth and breadth of the nature of NGO engagement. The quantitative section enables systematic comparison between religious and secular NGOs through a standardized scoring system across three key dimensions: Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. However, understanding why certain NGOs are more involved than others, or how their religious character shapes their peace-related activities, requires qualitative depth. Sant'Egidio, as a Catholic NGO with a history of participating in conflict resolution, offers an interesting case through which to explore the three dynamics.

This research design follows a logic of complementarity since the quantitative analysis provides patterns across many NGOs, while the qualitative case study provides depth, context, and potential explanations. The quantitative results will be used as a frame of reference when analyzing Sant'Egidio's operations, assessing whether the organization fits expected patterns or diverges from them. If the case study aligns with broader trends, it will strengthen the internal validity of the research by illustrating the underlying logic behind statistical correlations. If Sant'Egidio contradicts the trends, for example, being highly active in peacebuilding despite a weak correlation between religiosity and peace efforts in the broader dataset, this will be used to interrogate possible limitations of the scoring criteria or highlight unique organizational attributes that defy general classification.

This approach also manages the trade-off between generalizability and depth. The quantitative component enhances external validity by identifying trends across a larger set of NGOs. However, it simplifies complex dynamics into numeric categories. The Sant'Egidio case compensates for this by revealing how religious identity is expressed in practice. This combination of methods increases the study's explanatory power and provides a more holistic account.

CHAPTER 4 : FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Section 1 : Quantitative findings and analysis

Descriptive Statistics

The dataset created for this thesis (appendix A) includes 122 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are all currently active in Lebanon. The sample includes only NGOs with a sustained presence of at least five years. The methodology chapter outlined the data sources and selection criteria of the NGOs included in the dataset. This quantitative data and analysis section will test the hypotheses by running different statistical tests.

Pie chart of religious affiliation of the non-governmental organisations in Lebanon in 2025

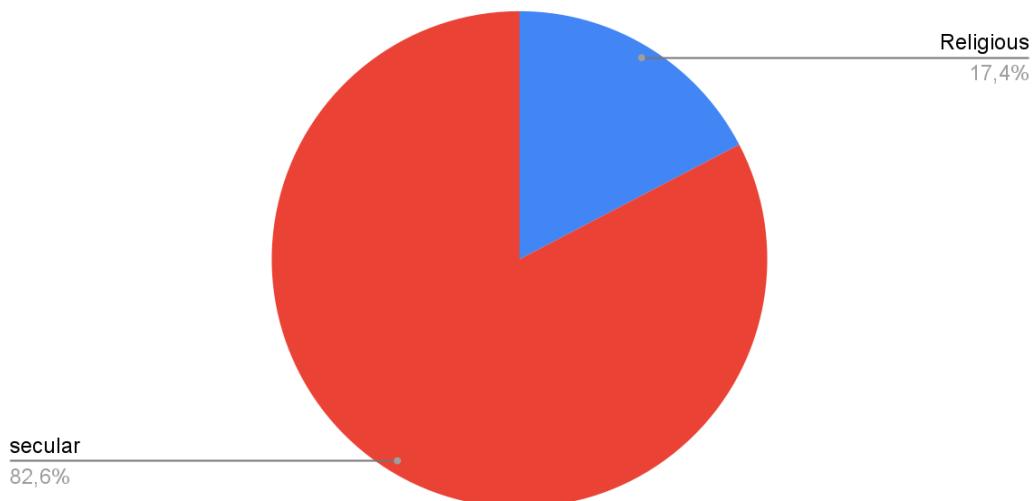


Figure 2. Pie chart representing the number of religious and secular non-governmental organizations in Lebanon

Firstly, in order to explore the first hypothesis: (H1) Religious NGOs engage more frequently in informal, dialogue-based conflict resolution strategies than secular NGOs, it is essential to look at the distribution of my data between religious and secular NGOs. Figure 1 displays this distribution of the number of religious versus secular NGOs in Lebanon. It is clear that in the data shows that there are more secular NGOs working in the country ; this finding is not surprising as secular NGOs are dominant worldwide. Out of the 21 religious NGOs in the dataset, 16 are Christian and 5 are Islamic.

Formal Classification of NGOs

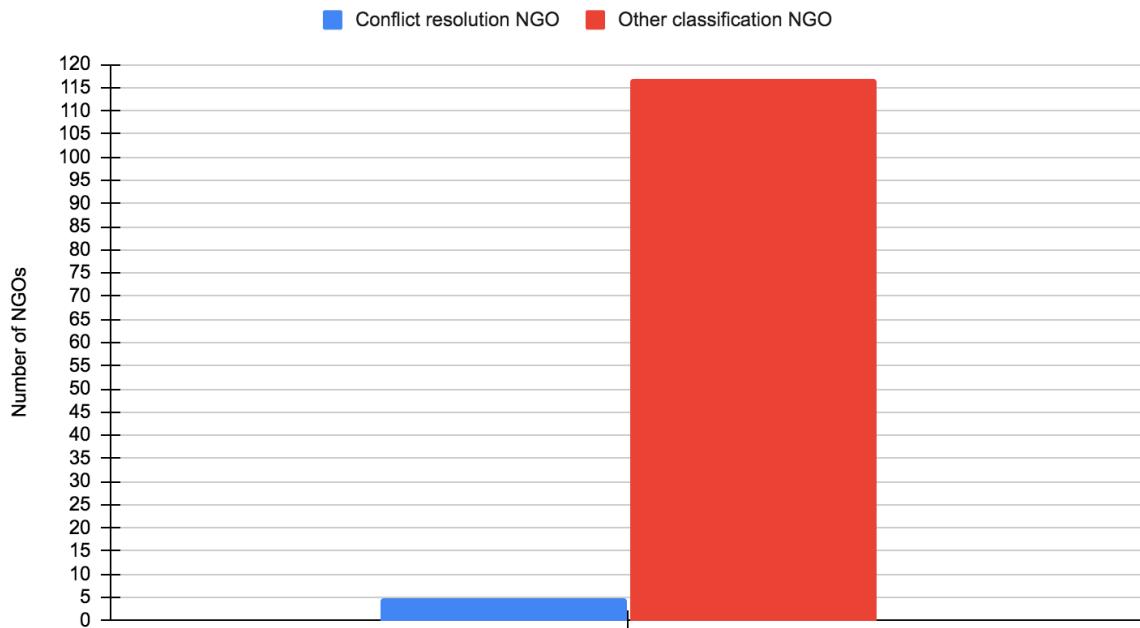


Figure 3. Histogram representing the number of NGOs formally dedicated to conflict resolution vs the number of NGOs dedicated to other causes in Lebanon

Secondly, since the second hypothesis is: (H2) NGOs that are not formally classified as conflict resolution organizations still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy, it is essential to look at the number of NGOs with are formally dedicated to conflict management versus the ones that are classified as other types of NGOs such as development and housing or social services. Figure 2 depicts this distribution between formally classified conflict resolution NGOs and the others. Only 5 NGOs are formally dedicated to conflict resolution versus 117 with other formal classifications.

It is also interesting to look at the control variables to see how they are distributed among the data. The NGOs, in the sample, were founded between 1855 and

2020, with a mean founding year of 1988 and a median of 1996. The mode is 1979, which is likely explained by the rise in the creation of NGOs towards the end of the Cold War. In terms of their operations in Lebanon, NGOs began their missions between 1920 and 2020, with a mean year of 1964 and a median of 2004, indicating a significant increase in NGO presence in the early 21st century. The mode for the Lebanon mission start year was 2006 which could be a consequence of the war between Israel and Hezbollah and the devastating effects for Lebanon.

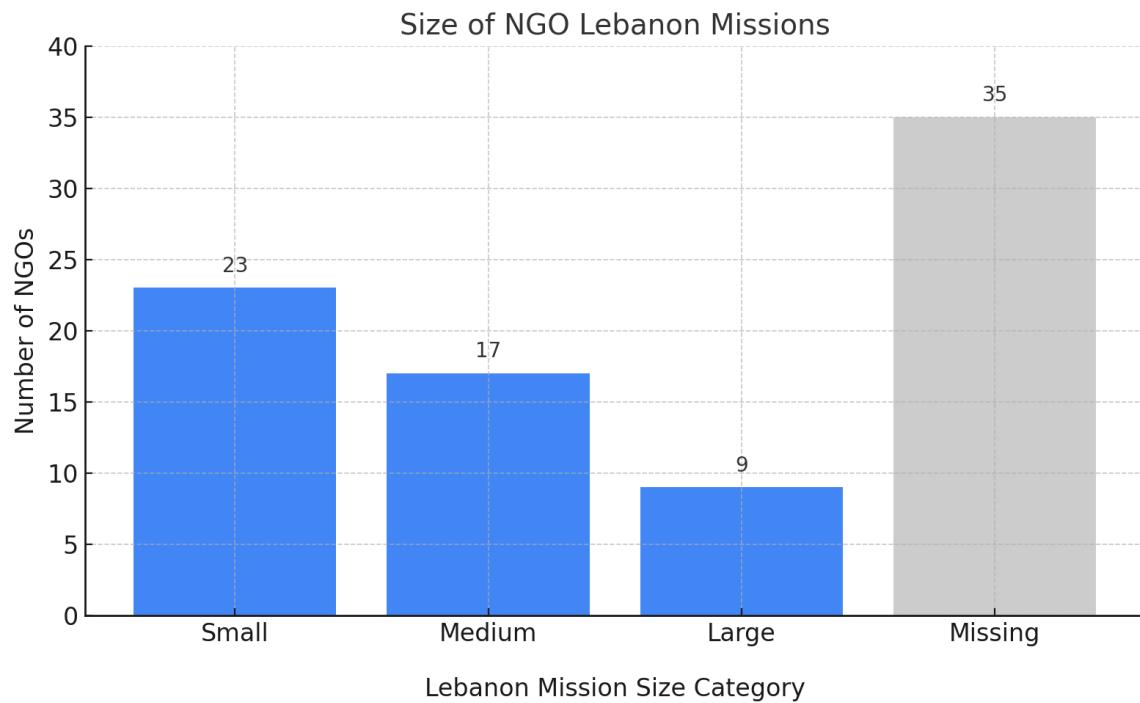


Figure 4. Histogram representing the size of Lebanese missions of the NGOs.

Figure 3 presents the distribution of NGOs according to the size of their Lebanon missions (or the whole NGO if they only operate in Lebanon) categorized as small, medium, or large. Small was coded for the Lebanese missions of more than 50 employees, medium for missions with 50–200 employees and large for missions with more than 200 employees. Volunteers were not included as employees. Among the organizations with available data, the most common size classification was small (23 NGOs), followed by medium (17 NGOs) and large (9 NGOs). Notably, 35 NGOs did not report the size of their Lebanon operations which represents a significant portion of the sample. The predominance of small and medium-sized missions suggests that many NGOs operate with relatively limited resources or a focused scope within the Lebanese context.

Comparison of religious and secular NGOs

The mean Track II diplomacy score (out of 3) for religious NGOs is $0,43 \pm 0,32$ as opposed to $0,42 \pm 0,16$ for secular NGOs. This finding is surprising as according to my first hypothesis, I had expected religious NGOs to score much higher than secular NGOs regarding Track II diplomacy. The 95% confidence intervals are fairly high, especially for religious NGOs indicating that a larger sample would be needed. My hypothesis 1 that religious NGOs are more actively engaged in Track II diplomacy was disproven. To test the first hypothesis further, I first conducted a chi-square test to examine differences in the distribution of scores across categories, followed by an independent-samples t-test to compare mean scores. This dual approach allowed for the assessment of both overall distributional differences and the differences in central tendency.

Table 2: *Observed Frequencies of Track II Scores among Secular and Religious NGOs*

Track II diplomacy score	Secular	Religious	Total
0	82	15	97
1	16	4	20
2	5	1	6
3	4	1	5
Total	107	21	122

$\text{Chi}^2 (3, N=122) = 0.30, p=0.96$

Source : Author

The Chi-sqaure test with 3 degrees of freedom was not significant since $p>0.05$. This indicated there is no difference in Track II diplomacy score distributions between religious and secular NGOs. This suggests that religious and secular NGOs engage in Track II diplomacy at similar levels, they are not differently ditributed so religious NGOs are not more actively engaged in Track II diplomacy. Therefore, my H1 is disproven. Next, I decided to conduct a t-test comparing the mean Track II diplomacy scores between secular and religious NGOs in order to assess the potential differences in the average level of engagement. The t-test allows the scores to be interpreted as a continued index ranging from 0 to 3. Combining the two tests offers a more complete picture of potential differences between religious and secular NGOs.

Before conducting a t-test I conducted a f-test to determine if the variance from the secular NGOs and religious NGOs are equal. I found the F-statistic to be 1,003 and the p value to be 0.93 hence demonstrating that there is no statistical significant difference in variance between secular and religious NGOs. Hence, both secular and religious NGOs demonstrate comparable variability in their Track II engagement levels.

Conducting the f-test enabled me to conduct the two sample t-test assuming equal variance. For the Track II diplomacy score, I found $p= 0,98$ and since $p>0,05$ there is no significance between the mean Track II diplomacy score of secular and religious NGOs. The f-test and t-test show that religious and secular NGOs engage in Track II diplomacy at similar average levels and with similar variability. This disproves my hypothesis (H1) that religious NGOs are more actively engaged in Track II diplomacy.

I then conducted an f-test and t-test for the second dimension: peacebuilding. I found the p value to be 0,014 demonstrating that the variation between religious and secular NGOs is not equal for peacebuilding. This indicates that religious NGOs in the dataset are less homogeneous in their approach to peacebuilding activities since some score higher than the average, while others score much lower. In contrast, secular NGOs appear to cluster more tightly around their mean score, showing more consistency in peacebuilding engagement. I conducted the t-test assuming no equal variance and found that $p= 0,25$. Since $p>0,05$ there is no statistical difference between the mean peacebuilding score of religious and secular NGOs. Religious NGOs recorded a mean score of $1.29 \pm 0,48$, while secular NGOs recorded a mean of $1.00 \pm 0,14$. The higher mean for religious NGOs is not large enough to reach statistical significance (Welch's t-test, $p=0,25$), suggesting that the observed difference may be due to sampling variability rather than a systematic distinction between the two groups.

Lastly, I conducted a f-test for the third dimension: preventive diplomacy. I found the p value to be 0,78 demonstrating that the variation between religious and secular NGOs is equal for preventive diplomacy. Therefore, I assumed equal variance for the t-test and found that $p= 0,67$. Since $p> 0,05$, the mean preventive diplomacy score between religious and secular NGOs is not statistically different. These results suggest that religious affiliation is not a key factor in explaining preventive diplomacy engagement in the sampled NGOs. Both religious and secular organizations tend to

operate at similar average levels, with neither group exhibiting significantly broader or narrower score distributions. These tests are summarized in table 3.

Table 3: *t*-test results comparing Track II diplomacy, Peacebuilding and Preventive diplomacy score of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon

	Religious NGOs			Secular NGOs			t-test
	M	SD	Confidence value	M	SD	Confidence value	
Track II diplomacy	0,43	0,81	0,32	0,42	0,81	0,16	0,98
Peacebuilding	1,29	1,06	0,48	1,00	0,72	0,14	0,25
Preventive diplomacy	0,76	0,83	0,38	0,68	0,80	0,16	0,67

Note. M= mean. SD= standard deviation

Source : author

When comparing religious and secular NGOs across the three dimensions, the results consistently show no statistically significant differences in mean scores between the two groups.

For Track II diplomacy, the means were nearly identical (0.43 for religious NGOs vs. 0.42 for secular NGOs; $p = 0.98$), and variances were statistically equivalent. This suggests that both types of NGOs engage in Track II-related activities at similarly modest levels, with comparable consistency across organizations. For Peacebuilding, religious NGOs had a slightly higher average score (1.29 for religious NGOs as opposed to 1.00 for secular NGOs), but the difference was not statistically significant ($p = 0.25$). Importantly, the variance was significantly greater among religious NGOs ($p = 0.014$), indicating a wider range of engagement so some religious NGOs are deeply involved in peacebuilding, while others show minimal engagement. Secular NGOs, by contrast, appear more uniform in their peacebuilding practices. For preventive diplomacy, mean scores were again close (0.76 for religious NGOs and 0.68 for secular NGOs and $p = 0.67$), with no significant difference in variances ($p = 0.78$). This indicates that both secular and religious NGOs operate at similar levels of preventive diplomacy and display comparable variability in these activities. Overall, these findings suggest that religious affiliation, in itself, does not determine the level of engagement in any of the three dimensions.

To analyse the spread of the data, I present the Track II diplomacy score, peacebuilding score and preventive diplomacy scores into three separate box plot graphs. This was done by calculating the quartile ranges of each dimension. Conducting a boxplot graph allows us to see the outliers of the data. I found scores to be outliers if they were more than the interquartile range (IQR) multiplied by 1.5 and added to the upper quartile or less than the lower quartile subtracted by the IQR multiplied by 1.5.

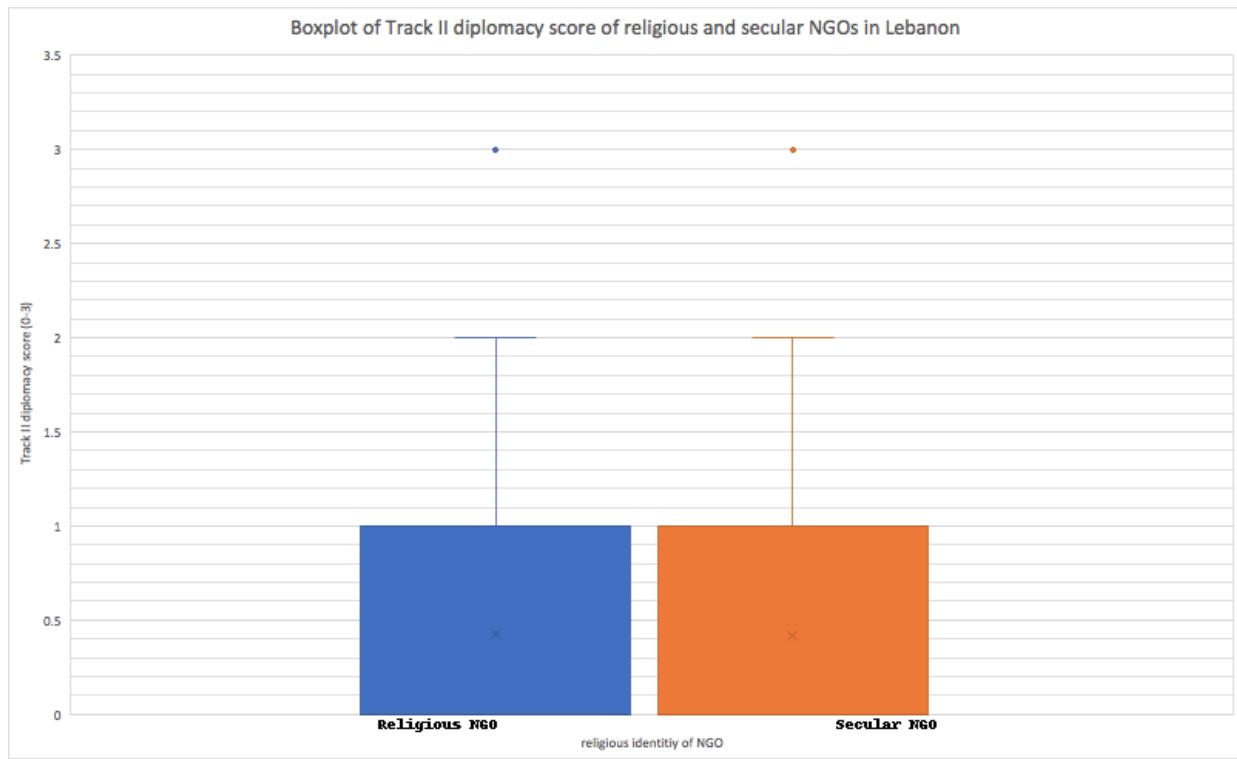


Figure 5. Box plot representing the track II diplomacy score of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon

Figure 5 comparing Track II diplomacy scores of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon shows strikingly similar distributions between the two groups. Both religious and secular NGOs have a median score of 1, with most NGOs scoring between 0 and 1, showing that there is a low engagement in Track II diplomacy. The interquartile ranges are identical, and with a narrow concentration of scores. Both groups have outliers, NGOs scoring above 2.5 so NGOs scoring 3. These NGOs exhibit exceptionally high levels of Track II diplomacy engagement. Overall, the near-identical shapes and spreads of the distributions reinforce the statistical findings that there is no significant difference between the two groups. This suggests that religious affiliation does not appear to influence the level of Track II engagement among NGOs in Lebanon, and that high engagement in Track II diplomacy is rare and not tied to religious identity.

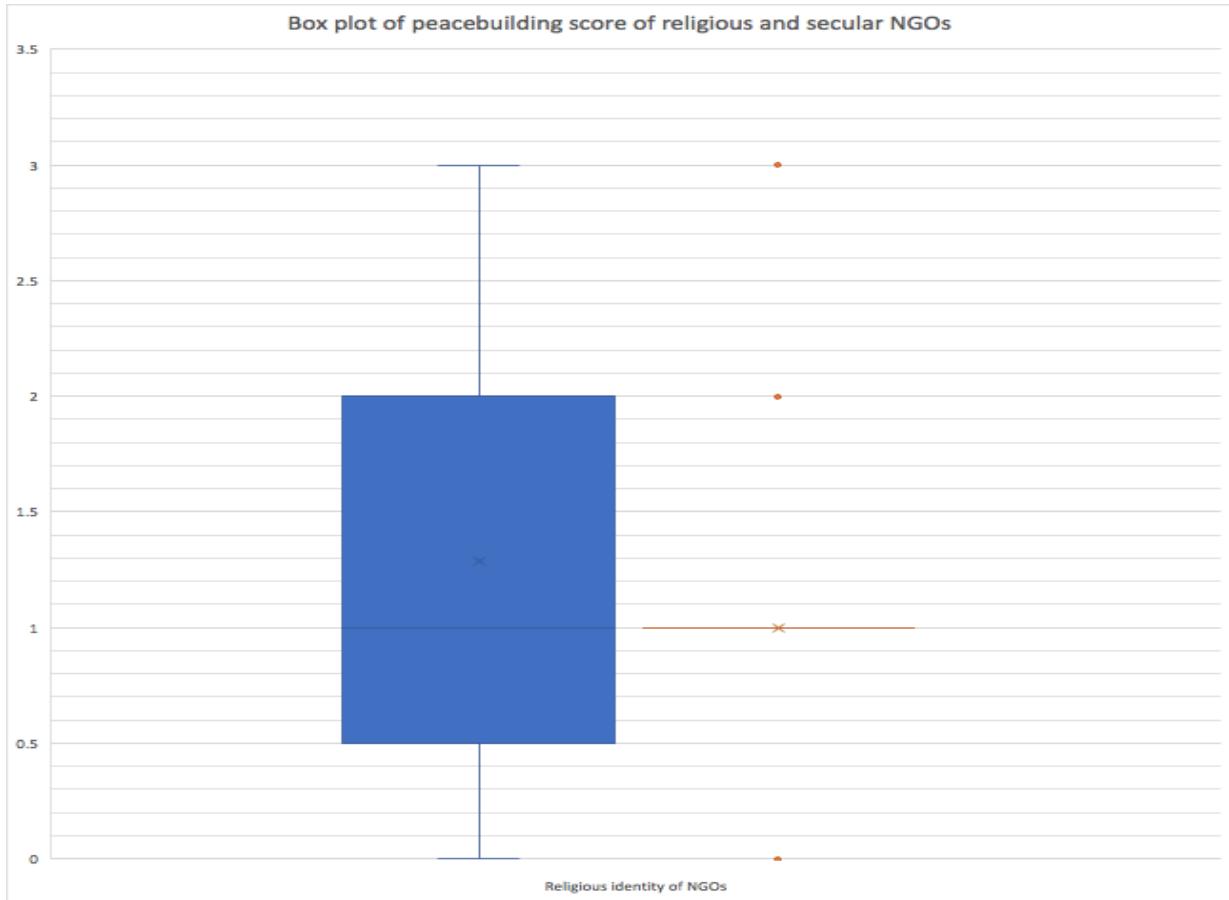


Figure 6. Box plot representing the peacebuilding score of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon

Figure 6, comparing the peacebuilding score of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon, reveals both similarities and subtle differences in their engagement levels. For religious NGOs, the distribution of scores spans the full range from 0 to 3, with a median of 1.5 and a relatively broad interquartile range (IQR), indicating variability in peacebuilding involvement. So while some religious NGOs have low engagement in peacebuilding activities, others have highly engagement. For secular NGOs, peacebuilding scores are more tightly clustered with a median of 1 and an IQR of 0. For secular NGOs it is evident that there is less variation regarding the peacebuilding score as most score between 1 and 2. The outlier for both groups is a score of 3. Overall, the box-plot graph (figure 5) suggests that although both groups are involved in peacebuilding, religious NGOs display a broader range of engagement levels, whereas secular NGOs have more uniform, moderate participation.

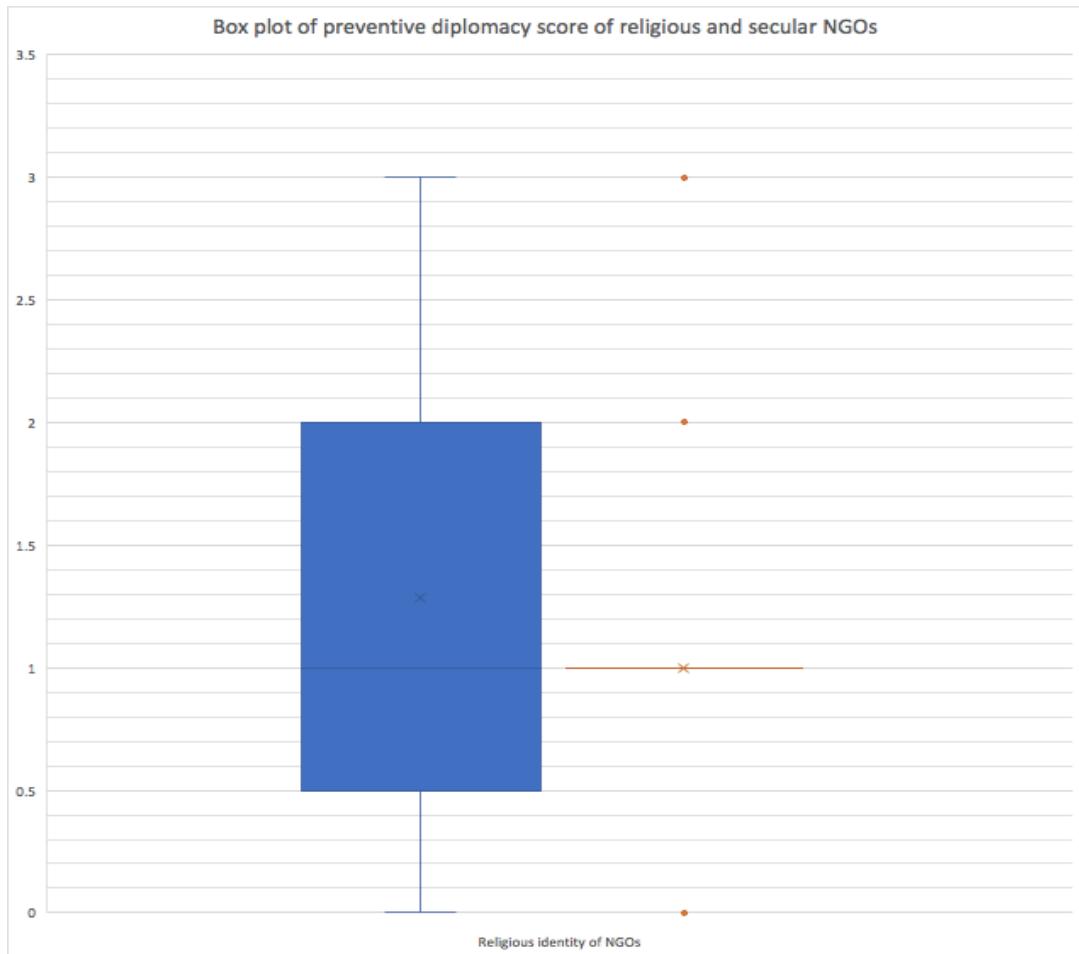


Figure 7. Box plot representing the preventive diplomacy score of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon

Figure 7, comparing preventive diplomacy scores of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon, reveals similarities in statistical spread but differences in distribution patterns. Both groups share the same interquartile range of 1.0, with the 1st quartile at 0.0 and the third quartile at 1.0, showing that the middle 50% of NGOs in both categories have scores within a narrow one-point range. However, the shape of the distributions differs. Religious NGOs show a range of scores from 0 to 3, with more extreme high values, suggesting that while many have low or moderate engagement in peacebuilding, a notable minority reach the highest levels of activity. Secular NGOs, by contrast, display a tighter clustering of values and fewer low-end scores, although their maximum values also reach 3. Outliers are present in both groups, representing highly engaged organizations. This pattern indicates that while the central tendency and statistical spread are the same, religious NGOs demonstrate greater variability at the extremes, whereas secular NGOs show a more consistent mid-range involvement in peacebuilding initiatives.

I then decided to conduct an ordinal logistic regression including NGO size (small, medium, large) and Lebanon mission size (small, medium, large) as control variables. For NGO size, large NGOs were set as the reference category so odds ratios for medium and small NGOs are interpreted relative to large NGOs. For Lebanon mission size, small Lebanon missions were used as the reference so odds ratios for medium, large, and missing values are interpreted relative to small missions.

Table 4: Ordinal Logistic Regression Predicting Track II Diplomacy Scores (0–3) with NGO size and Lebanon mission size as control variables.

Predictor	Odds Ratio	95% CI	p-value
Religious Affiliation	1.31	0.42- 4.12	0.642
NGO size: Medium	4.88	1.05 – 22.71	0.044*
NGO size: Small	6.83	1.46 – 32.03	0.015*
Mission size: Medium	12.19	1.98 – 75.29	0.007**
Mission size: Large	9.42	1.19 – 74.36	0.033*

Source: Author

Note: Odds Ratios (OR) > 1 indicate higher odds of being in a higher Track II score category.

Reference categories: NGO size = Large; Mission size = Small. Significance levels: * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001. N = 121 NGOs.

The ordinal logistic regression results are presented in Table 3. Religious affiliation was not significantly associated with higher Track II scores (OR = 1.31, 95% CI = 0.42–4.12, p = 0.642). This is consistent with the results found above which disproved my H1 that religious NGOS engage more frequently in track II diplomacy. Table 3 shows that both NGO size and Lebanon mission size are significant predictors of Track II diplomacy scores. Compared to large NGOs, medium NGOs were 4.88 times more likely to score higher in Track II diplomacy and small NGOs were 6.83 times more likely. Similarly, compared to small Lebanon missions, medium missions were 12.19 times more likely to have a higher Track II diplomacy score and large missions 9.42 times more likely.

These results presented in table 3 suggest that religious affiliation does not predict higher Track II engagement once size is controlled for. This is consistent with

the previous findings. Table 3 shows that NGO size and mission size do have an effect on the probability of engaging in track II diplomacy activities. Smaller NGOs and those with larger Lebanon missions in Lebanon appear more oriented towards Track II diplomacy activities.

Testing the second hypothesis

Engagement in Conflict-Resolution Dimensions Among Non-CR secular and religious NGOs

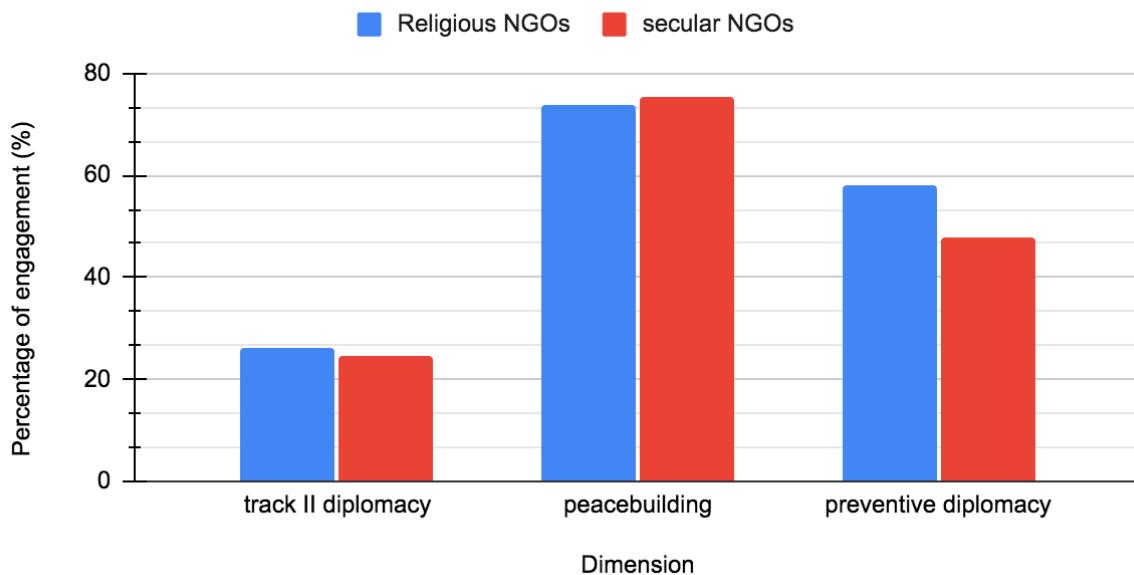


Figure 8. Bar chart representing the percentage of engagement in track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy of religious and secular NGOs in Lebanon

Figure 8 compares the percentage of NGOs not formally classified as conflict resolution NGOs that nonetheless engage in the three dimensions Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. From the graph it is evident that both religious and secular NGOs, regardless of their formal classification of field of activity, take part in track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. These organizations are classified as health, education and research, development and housing, social services, philanthropic intermediaries and voluntarism promotion, law advocacy and politics and environment NGOs. So, as is evident on figure 7, even NGOs that are not specifically focused on conflict resolution are involved in initiatives that contribute to peacebuilding.

Engagement in Track II diplomacy is the least common of the three domains. 26,31% of religious NGOs and 24.49% of secular NGOs have a score of at least 1 in this

category. Peacebuilding emerges as the most prevalent activity as 73,68% of religious NGOs and 75,51% of secular NGOs score at least 1. This indicates that post-conflict reconciliation, education, reintegration, and community-building efforts are mainstream activities even for NGOs without a formal conflict-resolution mandate. Both religious and secular NGOs have very high peacebuilding scores meaning that peacebuilding might be viewed as essential for development or humanitarian rather than formal peace intervention. This would explain why even NGOs that do not focus specifically on peace still engage a lot in peacebuilding activities. Regarding the third dimension, 57,89% of religious NGOs and 47,96% of secular NGOs engage in preventive diplomacy. While the gap is modest, the slightly higher rate among religious organizations could reflect the role of faith-based networks in gathering community-level intelligence or in mobilising responses before tensions escalate. The descriptive patterns are consistent with my Hypothesis 2: even without a formal classification as “conflict resolution” organizations, NGOs still participate in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy.

I then conducted a one-sample proportion test to see whether the proportion observed above in the sample is significantly different from the baseline proportion of 10%. In order to do so, I first calculated the standard error then the z-score and finally the p value. For Track II diplomacy the p-value was 0,018. Since $p < 0.05$, we can confirm that engagement rates in Track II diplomacy are significantly higher than the “rare engagement” baseline. The p-value for peacebuilding was 0 hence again confirming that non-conflict resolution NGOs’ level of engagement is statistically different from 10%. The p-value for preventive diplomacy was 3.43×10^{-12} again showing evidence against the null hypothesis of rare engagement as $p < 0.05$. All three p-values fall well below the 0.05 threshold, indicating that engagement rates in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy are each significantly higher than the “rare engagement” baseline. The largest statistical deviations from the baseline occur in peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. These findings are summarized in table 2.

Table 5: Engagement in track II diplomacy, Peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy for religious NGOs not classified as conflict-resolution NGOs

	Religious NGOs			
	NGO with a score ≥ 1	% of NGO with a score ≥ 1	z-score	p-value (two-tailed vs $p_0=0.10$)
Track II diplomacy	5	26,31	2,371	0,018*
Peacebuilding	14	73,68	9,25	0***
Preventive diplomacy	11	57,89	6,95	$3,43 \times 10^{-12} ***$

Source: Author

Note: p-values are from two-tailed binomial tests against the null proportion $p_0 = 0.10$.

Significance levels: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

I then calculated the z score and two-tailed p value for secular NGOs. The observed proportions, 95% Wilson confidence intervals, Z-scores, and two-tailed p-values are shown in Table 3.

Table 6: Engagement (score ≥ 1) in track II diplomacy, Peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy for secular NGOs not classified as conflict-resolution NGOs

	Secular NGOs			
	NGO with a score ≥ 1	% of NGO with a score ≥ 1	z-score	p-value (two-tailed vs $p_0=0.10$)
Track II diplomacy	24	24,48%	4.78	1.74088E-06
Peacebuilding	74	75,55%	21.62	0
Preventive diplomacy	47	47,86%	12.53	0

Source: Author

The two-tailed p-value for track II diplomacy of secular NGOs was $p = 1.74 \times 10^{-6}$, which shows that this proportion is significantly higher than the 10% benchmark. While the effect is statistically robust due to the large sample size, Track II diplomacy remains the least prevalent of the three dimensions among secular NGOs. The two-tailed p-value for peacebuilding was 0 with a high Z-score of 21,62

demonstrating strong statistical evidence that secular NGOs not classified as conflict resolution NGO take part in peacebuilding. For preventive diplomacy, the two-tailed p-value of 0 again strongly rejects the null hypothesis, showing that preventive measures are substantially more common than the baseline would suggest.

All three dimensions show statistically significant engagement rates above the 10% baseline, indicating that conflict-resolution activities are widely embedded in the work of secular NGOs. Peacebuilding emerges as the most prevalent dimension for secular and religious NGOs and track II diplomacy emerges as the least common for secular and religious NGOs. The large sample size in this subgroup yields narrow confidence intervals, reflecting high precision in the estimates.

The results provide strong statistical support for H2: NGOs without a formal conflict-resolution mandate nonetheless engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy at rates far exceeding a 10% ‘rare engagement’ benchmark.

In order to assess the robustness of these findings, I repeated the analysis using a stricter threshold for engagement. I defined engagement as any score of two or higher (as opposed to one or higher in table 3). This test captures only moderate to high levels of engagement in Track II, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy.

Table 7: Engagement (score ≥ 2) in track II diplomacy, Peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy for religious NGOs not classified as conflict-resolution NGOs

	Religious NGOs				
	NGO with a score ≥ 1	% of NGO with a score ≥ 2	confidence value	z-score	p-value (two-tailed vs $p_0=0.10$)
Track II diplomacy	1	5.00	± 9.6	-0.75	0.456
Peacebuilding	6	30.00	± 20.0	2.98	0.003**
Preventive diplomacy	2	10.00	± 13.2	0.00	1.000

Source: Author

Note: two-tailed one-sample proportion tests against baseline $p_0=0.10$. Significance: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Using this stricter threshold (≥ 2) for engagement in track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy (table 4) for religious non-conflict NGOs we see that only peacebuilding is statistically significant. 30% report moderate/high activity, significantly above the 10% baseline ($z = 2.98$, $p = 0.003$). The results for Track II diplomacy and preventive diplomacy are not significant.

Table 8: Engagement (score ≥ 2) in track II diplomacy, Peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy for secular NGOs not classified as conflict-resolution NGOs

	Secular NGOs				
	NGO with a score ≥ 1	% of NGO with a score ≥ 2	confidence value (%)	z-score	p-value (two-tailed vs $p_0=0.10$)
Track II diplomacy	8	8.16	± 5.3	-0.64	0.524
Peacebuilding	20	20.41	± 8	3.38	0.001***
Preventive diplomacy	13	13.27	± 6.6	1.04	0.299

Source : Author

Note: two-tailed one-sample proportion tests against baseline $p_0=0.10$. Significance: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Using this stricter threshold (≥ 2) for engagement in track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy (table 5) for secular NGOs we see different results compared to the smaller threshold (≥ 1). Non-conflict secular NGOs are active in peacebuilding but not in Track II diplomacy or preventive diplomacy. These findings refine the initial results: although secular NGOs do participate in conflict-related activities, their involvement is concentrated in peacebuilding rather than Track II diplomacy activities or preventive diplomacy.

These results support the hypothesis (H2) that non-conflict resolution NGOs still engage in peacebuilding activities, but they show that this engagement is not evenly distributed across the three dimensions. Peacebuilding emerges as the dominant domain where non-conflict focused NGOs contribute the most.

When using the stricter threshold, score ≥ 2 , it is clear that the results differ from the ones using the threshold score ≥ 1 . With the stricter threshold (≥ 1), both religious and secular NGOs appeared broadly active across the three dimensions: Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. With the stricter threshold (≥ 2), these high rates in all three dimensions are not sustained. For both secular and religious

non-conflict NGOs, peacebuilding is the only dimension where engagement remains above minimal level. By contrast, engagement in Track II diplomacy (8.16% secular; 5.00% religious) and preventive diplomacy (13.27% secular; 10.00% religious) falls to levels statistically indistinguishable from the baseline.

These results highlight two important trends. Firstly, the engagement among non-conflict resolution NGOs is largely driven by low-intensity activities, which drop out once stricter criteria are applied. Secondly, peacebuilding is the primary tool of NGOs (both religious and secular) to contribute to conflict resolution. This is evident as when the stricter criteria is used only peacebuilding activities remain significant. Overall, by using the stricter threshold for engagement in the three dimensions the interpretation of H2 becomes more refined. Although non-conflict resolution NGOs do engage in conflict resolution, this engagement is mainly concentrated in peacebuilding rather than in Track II diplomacy or preventive diplomacy as we had previously predicted. It was essential to conduct the robustness test in order to see that the support of H2 is only partial. NGOs not formally dedicated to conflict resolution do participate significantly in peacebuilding efforts but not in Track II diplomacy or preventive diplomacy.

Section 2 : Qualitative analysis, Sant'Egidio's role in Lebanon

Introduction

The quantitative section of this thesis tested two hypotheses. The first (H1) religious NGOs are more actively engaged in Track II diplomacy than secular NGOs, while the second (H2) was that NGOs not formally dedicated to conflict resolution still participate in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy. The findings offered a nuanced picture. Although H2 was supported, confirming that conflict resolution activities, especially peacebuilding, extend beyond formally classified conflict resolution organizations, H1 was disproven. Religious NGOs did not emerge as consistently more active in Track II diplomacy compared to secular NGOs, challenging a common assumption in the literature.

These results, which have shown that religious NGOs are not statistically more engaged in Track II diplomacy than secular NGOs, make us wonder how religious NGOs participate across the three dimensions. What kinds of mechanisms, practices,

and strategies characterize their involvement? To address these questions, the thesis turns from broad quantitative patterns to a focused qualitative case study.

The Community of Sant’Egidio provides an ideal case through which to examine these dynamics. It is a Catholic lay movement with a well-established religious identity and a strong reputation for international peacemaking, earning high scores across all three dimensions (Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy) in the quantitative dataset. Beyond its prominence in the domain of NGOs and conflict resolution, the choice of Sant’Egidio also reflects pragmatic considerations. It is headquartered in Rome, where this research was conducted and the organization’s activities are well documented and accessible, allowing for a richer analysis.

The following qualitative section therefore investigates Sant’Egidio’s engagement in Lebanon, a country where sectarian diversity, conflict legacies, and refugee pressures create fertile ground for religious NGOs to act. The aim is to uncover the mechanisms and practices through which a religious NGO contributes to Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, and preventive diplomacy, and to situate these findings within the broader quantitative framework. In doing so, the analysis bridges statistical trends with lived practice, offering a deeper understanding of the multifaceted role of religious NGOs in conflict resolution.

2.1 Overview of the Sant’Egidio Community

Historical background of Sant’Egidio

The Sant’Egidio Community is a catholic humanitarian non-governmental NGO created by Andrea Riccardi in 1968 (Riccardi was later Minister for International Cooperation and Integration in Italy from 2011-2013).¹²² The Sant’Egidio Community started as a Roman Catholic youth-driven movement in the high-school Virgilio in the centre of Rome. It was initially part of the Gioventù Studentesca (GS) movement (founded in 1954 by the priest Luigi Giussani) and its aim was to provide help for people in need around the city of Rome.¹²³

¹²² Flora Penot, ‘Aux Origines Des Couloirs Humanitaires de La Comunità Di Sant’Egidio’, December 2023, <https://hal.science/hal-04361365>.

¹²³ Marie Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique : La Construction de La Communauté de Sant’Egidio Dans Le « long 1968 » Italien (1967-1978)’, *Archives de Sciences Sociales Des Religions*, no. 202 (June 2023): 202, All rights reserved, <https://doi.org/10.4000/assr.70375>.

The Community of Sant'Egidio soon expanded its focus and nowadays covers 70 countries around the world. The Sant'Egidio Community currently has an estimated 30,000 active members.¹²⁴ Although the group has spread out like a network with many connections across different countries, there still is, at its centre, a committed core of active members who form the main foundation of the movement.¹²⁵ The president of the Community is elected for a term of 5 years, currently Marco Impagliazzo holds this position as he was reelected in January 2025.¹²⁶ The Community of Sant'Egidio is an International Public Association of Lay People recognized by many international institutions such the United Nations and the African Union. Despite the fact that the Community to Sant'Egidio is recognized by the Holy See and shares many elements with religious organizations, the members of the Community are lay people and hence not part of the clergy.¹²⁷ In this thesis, the Sant'Egidio Community is understood as a religious NGO although some authors argue it is rather a community, an association, or a movement.¹²⁸

The Community of Sant'Egidio is built on three main values: “communal authenticity through prayer; solidarity with the poor and oppressed; and advocacy of nonviolence and dialogue between peoples, regardless of context or identity”.¹²⁹ In other words, the work of the Community, as cited on their website, is rooted in: prayer, the poor and peace.¹³⁰ The work of the Community can be separated into two types: spiritual work and social action.¹³¹ These two types of work are often intertwined.

Founding values and identity

The Sant'Egidio Community has a clear, strong religious identity. It was founded with the idea of breaking away from the traditional Catholic charitable organizations but also breaking away from the Catholic Church as a whole. Andrea Riccardi, the founder,

¹²⁴ Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique’; AAron Tyler, ‘Religion, Politics, and Peacebuilding: “The Method of Sant’ Egidio”’, *Kultura i Polityka*, no. 6 (2009): 78–94.

¹²⁵ Marie Balas, ‘« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', *Les Champs de Mars* 26, no. 1 (2015): 122.

¹²⁶ The Community of Sant'Egidio. ‘Marco Impagliazzo eletto presidente della Comunità di Sant’Egidio. A lui gli auguri di buon lavoro! - NEWS - COMUNITÀ DI SANT’EGIDIO’, accessed 9 June 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/it/itemID/59957/Marco-Impagliazzo-eletto-presidente-della-Comunit%C3%A0-di-Sant-Egidio-A-lui-gli-auguri-di-buon-lavoro.html>.

¹²⁷ David R. Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace* (United States Institute of Peace, 2001).

¹²⁸ Balas, ‘« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio’, 124.

¹²⁹ Tyler, ‘Religion, Politics, and Peacebuilding’, 84.

¹³⁰ ‘THE COMMUNITY - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO’, accessed 7 June 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30008/langID/en/THE-COMMUNITY.html>.

¹³¹ Penot, ‘Aux Origines Des Couloirs Humanitaires de La Comunità Di Sant’Egidio’.

stated that at the time of the creation of the Community of Sant’Egidio, he believed the Catholic Church, as an institution, was too involved with the political power in Italy. There was hence a will for a ‘radical change’.¹³² 1968, the year of the Community’s foundation, is also relevant when addressing the founding values of the Community of Sant’Egidio. This decade, known as the *Sessantotto* in Italy, was marked by the spread of communist ideas and student protests which greatly contributed to the creation and the vision of the Sant’Egidio Community. Sant’Egidio was also influenced by revolutionary ideas and became more politically active during these years.

The first years of Sant’Egidio can be described as militant coexistence, where different forms of activism were coexisting within the Community.¹³³ During the 1960s and 1970s, ‘religious collective memory’ was also under threat. Economic development and rural exodus led to religious detachment, families no longer transmitted religious traditions and understandings to their children.¹³⁴ In addition, the Second Vatican Council which started in 1962 and ended in 1965 led to a changing collective understanding of the role of the Church and the role of priests. The legitimacy of the Church was put into question.¹³⁵ All these factors were relevant in shaping the founding values of the Community of Sant’Egidio.

During the protest movement of 1977, the Community deepened its experience in activism while moving away from strict ideological commitments.¹³⁶ The armed violence that was witnessed during these years led the group to focus on mediation and conflict resolution. Although at the end of the 70s, Sant’Egidio focused its activities back to charity, the group spread internationally through its humanitarian work and ecumenical initiatives. This allowed Sant’Egidio to specialise in international mediation.¹³⁷ As Balas elucidates, “The long ’68 was, among other experiences, a moment of developing a “taste” for politics, whose legacy still has an impact today.”¹³⁸

¹³² Charles Mercier, ‘Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul: Essai de mise en parallèle’, *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 149 (2010): 57, <https://doi.org/10.4000/assr.22009>.

¹³³ Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique’, 172.

¹³⁴ Charles Mercier, ‘Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul: Essai de mise en parallèle’, *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 149 (2010): 58, <https://doi.org/10.4000/assr.22009>.

¹³⁵ Mercier, ‘Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul’, 58.

¹³⁶ Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique’.

¹³⁷ Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique’.

¹³⁸ Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique’, 186.

The religious identity of the Community has always been central to its work. When he created the Community, Riccardi wanted to educate himself religiously.¹³⁹ He chose to do this personally by reading books and hence he was not in formal contact with the Catholic Church. As Mercier explains, it was an “auto-construction of his religious culture”.¹⁴⁰ In its early stages, the Community did not have institutional authority per se, the students, mostly from the middle-class, saw themselves more as a family. In addition, the Community was not initially associated with a religious or spiritual affiliation. While the group was founded by Catholic students, at this early stage the Community was not focused on religion or faith. The name Sant’Egidio was only chosen in 1974, it was previously referred to simply as ‘The Community’. The name Sant’Egidio was chosen for practical rather than religious reasons. It was not so much chosen because of the Saint but simply because of the name of the church on the square when the Community is based in the neighbourhood of Trastevere in Rome.¹⁴¹

Although the Community showed some disagreements with the official Catholic Church, there still was a strong desire from the beginning to improve their relationship with local churches and collaborate with them.¹⁴² This is how Sant’Egidio differentiated itself from other religious organizations by being an ‘ecclesial community’ meaning it remained loyal to the official Church hierarchy. Around the middle of the 80s the bylaws of the Community were adopted stating the clear Catholic basis of the Sant’Egidio Community.¹⁴³ During the 2000s, as the Community secured its institutional position and the strong expectations for commitment and loyalty of its members were relaxed.¹⁴⁴

Approach to peace and mediation

While the roots of the mediation efforts of Sant’Egidio can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s, it was in the 1980s, alongside more traditional Western diplomatic efforts, that the Community’s mediation efforts really started.¹⁴⁵ This involvement grew

¹³⁹ Mercier, ‘Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul’.

¹⁴⁰ Mercier, ‘Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul’, 60.

¹⁴¹ Mercier, ‘Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul’, 61.

¹⁴² Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique’, 173–74.

¹⁴³ Mercier, ‘Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul’, 68.

¹⁴⁴ Balas, ‘« C’est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs” Genese et Institutionnalisation d’un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant’Egidio’.

¹⁴⁵ Balas, ‘Prendre Goût à La Politique’.

significantly after the end of the Cold War.¹⁴⁶ The Community's diplomatic origins were deeply rooted in the commitment to the protection of Christian minorities and religious liberties.¹⁴⁷ Hence, although Sant'Egidio's mediation is secular, their origins and motivations are closely linked to protecting religious groups and more specifically Christians.

The first time Sant'Egidio was involved in negotiation and war was in Lebanon in 1982 and then in Iraq 1986. In the development of Sant'Egidio as a mediator in conflict, two main areas of intervention emerged: the defense of Christian minority population in conflicts with a religious dimension and the protection of Catholic interests in communist countries.¹⁴⁸ By the end of the 1980s, Sant'Egidio benefitted from a solid reputation in Rome and gained support from the Pope, John-Paul II.¹⁴⁹ The Community fostered relationships with political and religious elites in Rome. In addition, during this time, the Community built strong connections with Eastern Christian Churches which played an important role in starting Sant'Egidio's work in diplomacy.¹⁵⁰

The Community of Sant'Egidio closely follows the Catholic vision of peace. The Catholic vision of peace has been explicitly explained in many Catholic teachings: "peace is not the mere absence of war, nor even the avoidance of war. Peace is the positive realization of the dignity of the whole human family".¹⁵¹ According to the Catholic vision, peace has four elements: (1) human rights, (2) development, (3) solidarity, and (4) world order.¹⁵² Peace is very strongly linked to justice and therefore peace is not worthy if there is no justice attached to it. It is safe to say that Sant'Egidio follows this understanding of peace when conducting conflict resolution. This is not to say however that all Catholic organizations adopt the same approach to peacekeeping.¹⁵³ Some organizations are more focused on inter-religious dialogue while others are more focused on treaty negotiations. Nonetheless, all Catholic peacekeeping efforts seem to

¹⁴⁶ Balas, 'Prendre Goût à La Politique'.

¹⁴⁷ Balas, "« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio'.

¹⁴⁸ Balas, "« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', 125.

¹⁴⁹ Balas, "« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', 127.

¹⁵⁰ Balas, "« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio'.

¹⁵¹ Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*.

¹⁵² Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*.

focus on high-level mediation. This is the case even for organizations such as Sant'Egidio which focuses on person-to-person aid to the poor but still focuses its peacekeeping efforts on high-level official peace agreements.¹⁵⁴ The central guiding authority of the Vatican means that Catholic peacekeeping efforts have a solid theoretical framework to work with creating coherence and uniformity.¹⁵⁵

Sant'Egidio philosophy for peace making is similar to its general philosophy which is described by Andrea Bartoli, a vice president of the Community by using the four Latin words: *communio*, *traditio*, *romanitas*, and *pietas*.¹⁵⁶ As part of a *communio*, sant'Egidio recognizes it is “part of a large family that stretches across the world” and peace is needed across this family. *Traditio* means that while the Community is “an integral component of Catholic tradition”, it proves that Catholicism can adapt and incorporate change. *Romanitas* is in reference to its strong attachment to the headquarters in Rome while *pietas* refers to the piety and love of the poor which is essential in the Community’s peace building.¹⁵⁷ What is notable about the Sant'Egidio’s peacekeeping efforts is that the Community is aware of its weaknesses and is consistently open to turn to other organizations for help and assistance. The Community is prepared “to risk failure in pursuit of peace”.¹⁵⁸

Sant'Egidio's work in Mozambique

The work conducted by Sant'Egidio in Mozambique during the 1980s and 1990s is often cited as an example of how NGOs can play a decisive role in conflict resolution and model of Track II diplomacy. Sant'Egidio is sometimes nicknamed the ‘United Nations of Trastevere’.¹⁵⁹ Some also consider Sant'Egidio to be an example of the change in the world order at the end of the Cold War. Since states were more focused on the Cold War tensions rather than conducting diplomacy, non-governmental

¹⁵³ Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*.

¹⁵⁴ Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*.

¹⁵⁵ David R. Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace* (United States Institute of Peace, 2001), 11.

¹⁵⁶ Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*, 10.

¹⁵⁷ Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*, 8–10.

¹⁵⁸ Smock, *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*.

¹⁵⁹ Pat Ashworth, ‘Religious Life: The “United Nations of Trastevere”’, *Church Times*, 2018, <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2018/21-september/features/features/religious-life-the-united-nations-of-trastevere>.

organizations took on this role.¹⁶⁰ Sant'Egidio is considered by many scholars as an “international mediator expert in conflict resolution”.¹⁶¹

The Civil War in Mozambique lasted from 1977 to 1992 and the negotiations that led to its end took place in the Community of Sant'Egidio's headquarters in Rome.¹⁶² Several governments had made previous attempts to reach a ceasefire, but their efforts were unsuccessful. Sant'Egidio managed to bring together the opposing sides of the conflict for a meeting in Rome which led to the end of hostilities in 1992.

The large number of civil wars that took place during the Cold War led to an increasing presence of NGOs in the world. Many states did not want to intervene humanitarily in areas of crisis to prevent being seen as picking sides between the East and the West. This is how Sant'Egidio originally arrived in Mozambique.¹⁶³ Sant'Egidio's role in the Mozambican peace process started in 1977 when Jaime Pedro Gonçalves became archbishop of Beira in Mozambique and decided to visit Sant'Egidio's headquarters in Rome.¹⁶⁴ Having studied in Rome, Gonçalves, explained to the Community the religious persecutions faced by Mozambicans due to the Civil War. Sant'Egidio hence decided to intervene to help release Catholic nuns and priests.¹⁶⁵

Sant'Egidio's direct involvement in Mozambique started in the summer of 1984 when a ‘Committee of Friends of Mozambique’ was created within the Community. In August 1984, Andrea Riccardi (founder of Sant'Egidio) and Matteo Zuppi escorted two planes of humanitarian aid sent by Sant'Egidio to Mozambique.¹⁶⁶ Several Mozambican ministers were present at the arrival of the planes which strengthened the friendship between the Community and the FRELIMO (Front de libération du Mozambique) government. Progressively, Sant'Egidio became a humanitarian lobby establishing

¹⁶⁰ Víctor Fernández Soriano, ‘La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)’, *Forum Romanum Belgicum. Belgisch Historisch Instituut te Rome-Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 10 (2015).

¹⁶¹ Soriano, ‘La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)’

¹⁶² Soriano, ‘La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)’

¹⁶³ Soriano, ‘La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)’

¹⁶⁴ Luis Benjamim Serapiao, ‘The Catholic Church and Conflict Resolution in Mozambique’s Post-Colonial Conflict, 1977-1992’, *Journal of Church and State* 46, no. 2 (2004): 385.

¹⁶⁵ Serapiao, ‘The Catholic Church and Conflict Resolution in Mozambique’s Post-Colonial Conflict, 1977-1992’.

¹⁶⁶ Soriano, ‘La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)’

cooperation between FRELIMO, the Italian government and religious institutions.¹⁶⁷ The Community sent additional planes and boats carrying humanitarian aid to Mozambique, strengthening its reputation and deepening its local networks on the ground.¹⁶⁸ The Vatican was also very much included in peace discussions concerning Mozambique. When Pope John-Paul II visited Mozambique in 1987, the forces of RENAMO (Résistance nationale du Mozambique) temporarily ceased fire in the regions that the Pope would visit.¹⁶⁹

Sant'Egidio was able to successfully launch peace talks thanks to its well-established relationships with key actors, including FRELIMO (the ruling party in Mozambique), the Ministry of Italian foreign affairs and the Vatican diplomacy. These connections provided the Community with legitimacy and credibility. The first negotiation meeting was held in Sant'Egidio's headquarters in Rome from 8-10 July 1990.¹⁷⁰ The FRELIMO (Front de libération du Mozambique) delegation was led by Armando Emílio Guebuza and the RENAMO (Résistance nationale du Mozambique) delegation was led by Raul Domingos.¹⁷¹ Ten rounds of negotiations took place in Rome ending with the signing of the Peace Accords on 4th October 1992.

2.2 Sant'Egidio and the Middle East

History of Sant'Egidio presence in the Middle East and North Africa

The arrival of Sant'Egidio in the Middle East coincided with a period of rapid expansion and increased internationalization of the Community and its work. The Community's first formal engagement in war negotiations and structured peace talks took place in the Middle East, specifically in Lebanon marking a significant turning point in the Community's diplomatic evolution.¹⁷² In 1982, the Community organized an important meeting in its headquarters in Rome between the Melkite Patriarch of Antioch, Maximus V, and Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, head of the Progressive

¹⁶⁷ Soriano, 'La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)'

¹⁶⁸ Soriano, 'La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)'

¹⁶⁹ Soriano, 'La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?)'

¹⁷⁰ Serapiao, 'The Catholic Church and Conflict Resolution in Mozambique's Post-Colonial Conflict, 1977-1992'.

¹⁷¹ Serapiao, 'The Catholic Church and Conflict Resolution in Mozambique's Post-Colonial Conflict, 1977-1992', 386.

¹⁷² Marie Balas, 'Un pluralisme sans conflits', *Terrain. Anthropologie & sciences humaines*, no. 51 (September 2008): 51, <https://doi.org/10.4000/terrain.11043>.

Socialist Party.¹⁷³ The meeting took place in the midst of the Chouf War during which the fighters of the Progressive Socialist Party were surrounding Deir el-Qamar, a Christian village.¹⁷⁴ As a result of the meeting in which Sant'Egidio was a dialogue facilitator, the two leaders were able to reach an agreement in order to cease the fighting and evacuate civilians. 3,000 Christians were evacuated from the war zone.¹⁷⁵

In 1986, the Community of Sant'Egidio was involved in an initiative in Iraq. The Community helped the Chaldean and Assyrian Christian minorities to flee the Iran-Iraq war. Sant'Egidio negotiated with both Turkish authorities and leaders in Iraqi Kurdistan, fostered contacts with local churches and dispatched a mission to the country.¹⁷⁶ As a result of the Community's work, 1000 Christian refugees were able to come to Europe.¹⁷⁷

The Community of Sant'Egidio has also been present in North Africa. During the 1980s, the Community established tight links with Algerian dioceses. Many members of Sant'Egidio regularly went to Algeria in order to foster Islamic-Christian relations and friendship.¹⁷⁸ In January 1995, the Community of Sant'Egidio organized an encounter between the opposing political parties of Algeria. After the elections of 1992 and the dissolution of the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) party, a civil war broke out. During the January 1995 meeting, the participants adopted what became known as the "National Contract" or "Platform for a Political Solution".¹⁷⁹ The signatories committed to work together with state authorities in order to achieve free and competitive elections. The proposal was completely dismissed by the Algerian government who condemned it as outside interference.¹⁸⁰ As a result, repression intensified especially against the Islamic Salvation Front. This repression fueled further radicalization amongst the fighters.

¹⁷³ Balas, '« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', 126.

¹⁷⁴ Balas, '« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', 126.

¹⁷⁵ Balas, '« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', 126.

¹⁷⁶ Balas, '« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', 126.

¹⁷⁷ Balas, '« C'est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs" Genese et Institutionnalisation d'un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant'Egidio', 126.

¹⁷⁸ Balas, 'Un pluralisme sans conflits'.

¹⁷⁹ Marie Balas, 'Les médiations internationales de la Communauté de Sant'Egidio : histoire, ressources, limites', Observatoire International du Religieux, *Notes de l'Observatoire international du religieux*, 2017, <https://obsreligion.cnrs.fr/note/les-mediations-internationales-de-la-communaute-de-santegidio-histoire-ressources-limites/>.

¹⁸⁰ Balas, 'Les médiations internationales de la Communauté de Sant'Egidio'.

Catholic actors in Algeria also faced negative repercussions although they had opposed the process.¹⁸¹

While the talks managed to bring together a fragmented opposition and temporarily reintegrate the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) into political dialogue, the process ultimately exposed the limits of such interventions.¹⁸² The urgency with which the initiative was initiated, the high publicity surrounding it, the absence of prior consultation with the Algerian authorities and the choice of Rome as the venue weakened its chances of success.¹⁸³ This case highlighted that when a central actor is unwilling to participate and when neighbouring countries withhold support, peace is difficult to pursue. After the failure of the Algerian peace process, Sant'Egidio decided to move back to methods similar to the Mozambican case, notably focusing on fostering long term relationships.

The cases outlined above are not the only ones in which Sant'Egidio was involved in the Middle East. They do however provide an overview of how the Community of Sant'Egidio started working in the Middle East and North Africa. Not all the interventions were successful and this shows that what works in one country may not work in another.

Lebanon political and economic situation

Since this thesis focuses on Lebanon, it is essential to provide a contextualization of the current political and economic situation in the country. Some archaeological findings suggest human settlement in the area dating back 7000 years.¹⁸⁴ Throughout its long history, Lebanon has been influenced by a succession of civilizations, including the Phoenicians, Romans, Byzantines, and Ottomans, each of which has left a lasting imprint on the country's cultural, religious, and political identity. After the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire at the end of WWI, Lebanon was placed under French mandate or what "Edmond Rabbath referred to as a French-imposed 'regime of direct rule'".¹⁸⁵ Sectarian quotas were already established with a specific number of members from each religion needed in the Administrative Commission (Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Greek

¹⁸¹ Balas, 'Les médiations internationales de la Communauté de Sant'Egidio'.

¹⁸² Balas, 'Les médiations internationales de la Communauté de Sant'Egidio'.

¹⁸³ Balas, 'Les médiations internationales de la Communauté de Sant'Egidio'.

¹⁸⁴ Étienne F. Augé, 'Chapitre 1. Histoire et géographie', *Monde arabe / Monde musulman* 2 (2018): 9, <https://doi.org/10.3917/dbu.auge.2018.01.0009>.

¹⁸⁵ Fauwāz Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, Second Edition (Pluto Press, 2012), 88.

Catholic, Druze, Sunnis and Shi`ites). The constitutional text was adopted on 23rd May 1926.¹⁸⁶ The Christian and Muslim divide was reinforced and to a certain extent encouraged during the time that Lebanon was under mandate.

The Treaty of Friendship and Alliance was signed on 13th November 1936 by France and Lebanon. France recognized Lebanon as an independent country and in return Lebanon had to guarantee French interests in the country and be an ally of France.¹⁸⁷ As a result of World War II, Lebanon gained independence in 1943. An electoral law was decreed in 1943 setting up a Parliament of 55 seats with 30 Christians and 25 Muslims. This ratio remained in place until 1990 and was then replaced by parity.¹⁸⁸

Lebanon was fragilized notably due to the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 when Israeli forces launched a counteroffensive occupying 14 villages in Lebanon.¹⁸⁹ Lebanon faced different consequences as a result of the Israeli victory of 1948, the Palestinian Nakba and the creation of the state of Israel. The Lebanese economy benefitted from the Arab boycott of Israel as Beirut became “the main port of the Arab hinterland and as an international communication centre between Europe, Asia and some parts of Africa”.¹⁹⁰ Palestinian capital flowed into Lebanon as rich Palestinians arrived. Nonetheless, the Lebanese industry was affected as exports to Palestine greatly decreased and the economies of areas neighbouring Palestine were severely affected.¹⁹¹ Over 100 000 Palestinians fled to Lebanon.¹⁹² During the 1960s, Lebanon benefitted from a period of calm and stability and was even nicknamed the “Switzerland of the Middle East”.¹⁹³ The Lebanese economy was boosted by tourism and the expansion of the financial sector. This calm and prosperity did not last long as the Six-Day War of 1967 led to a new large arrival of Palestinians to Lebanon and created huge refugee camps. The Six-Day War also marked the entry of Palestinians fighters into Southern Lebanon leading to Israeli retaliation.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁶ Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 88–90.

¹⁸⁷ Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 101.

¹⁸⁸ Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 107.

¹⁸⁹ Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 114.

¹⁹⁰ Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 114.

¹⁹¹ Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 114.

¹⁹² Augé, ‘Chapitre 1. Histoire et géographie’, 18.

¹⁹³ Augé, ‘Chapitre 1. Histoire et géographie’.

¹⁹⁴ Tarābulusī, *A History of Modern Lebanon*, 153.

The Lebanese Civil War started on 13th April 1975 after four phalangistes were killed in an attempt to murder the Christian political leader Pierre Gemayel and on the same day, 26 Palestinians were killed on a bus as they crossed a Christian neighbourhood.¹⁹⁵ The conflict rapidly spread to the whole of Lebanon and affected all communities. The Lebanese state was incapable of stopping the conflict. In 1976, when Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) joined the progressive camp, these forces came to control much of Lebanon, prompting the Syrian army to intervene in order to prevent the collapse of Maronite power. The conflict quickly took on a regional dimension and on 6 June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon with the goal of destroying the PLO.¹⁹⁶ In 2006, the Second Lebanese War took place between Israel and Hezbollah creating more long-lasting effects for the country. The history of Lebanon has always been deeply marked by the religious plurality of the country.

The Lebanese economy has been under crisis for many years. Public trust in the government has been on sharp decline for many years leading to a number of protests and notably the large 2019 protests.¹⁹⁷ The COVID-19 pandemic further weakened the economy of the country due to the disruption of global supply chains and the lack of tourists.¹⁹⁸ In August 2020, a powerful explosion destroyed a large part of Beirut not only causing loss of life but also further weakening public trust in the government. The high inflation that followed the explosion intensified the economic pressure on households, making basic living standards difficult to meet.¹⁹⁹ Since October 2019, the Lebanese pound has lost its value by 80% and the GDP has suffered a 40% decline.²⁰⁰ Corruption and the mismanagement of public resources has led to public debt. Lebanon has a 152% debt to GDP ratio.²⁰¹ The Israel war on Gaza in October 2023 also had huge effects on Lebanon due to the role Hezbollah plays in Lebanese society.

Lebanon hosts a large number of refugees. The Lebanese government estimates that 1.5 million Syrian refugees live in the country. In 2023, 12,100 refugees from other

¹⁹⁵ Augé, 'Chapitre 1. Histoire et géographie', 18.

¹⁹⁶ Augé, 'Chapitre 1. Histoire et géographie', 19.

¹⁹⁷ Walid Marrouch, 'What's Happening with Lebanon's Economy and Will It Recover?', Al Jazeera, 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/10/whats-happening-with-lebanons-economy-and-will-it-recover>.

¹⁹⁸ Walid Marrouch, 'What's Happening with Lebanon's Economy and Will It Recover?', Al Jazeera, 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/10/whats-happening-with-lebanons-economy-and-will-it-recover>.

¹⁹⁹ Marrouch, 'What's Happening with Lebanon's Economy and Will It Recover?'

²⁰⁰ The World Bank, *Lebanon Systemic Country Diagnostic* (The World Bank, 2024).

countries than Syria were registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.²⁰² Other than Syrians there are many Iraqi, Sudanese and Ethiopian refugees. Refugees in Lebanon face countless hardships including food insecurity and extreme poverty.²⁰³

Lebanon has always been known for its large religious diversity. There are currently 18 officially recognized sects, most belonging to either Muslim or Christian clusters. The three main sects in Lebanon are Maronite Christians, Sunni Muslims, and Shiite Muslims.²⁰⁴ The numbers are difficult to estimate as “Lebanon is the only member state in the United Nations that has not conducted a population census since the end of the Second World War.”²⁰⁵

2.3 Findings per dimension

This following chapter will now look at the three dimensions used in the quantitative analysis: Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. This sub-section aims to look at the activities of the Community of Sant’Egidio for each dimension in order to see how a religious NGO engages in each dimension.

Through an in-depth exploration of Sant’Egidio’s activities, the chapter seeks to understand how a religious NGO operates within each of these dimensions: how it contributes to Track II diplomacy through informal, non-governmental dialogue processes; how it participates in broader peacebuilding efforts by addressing structural causes of conflict and supporting social cohesion; and how it engages in preventive diplomacy by working to defuse tensions and prevent the outbreak or escalation of violence. By mapping Sant’Egidio’s initiatives onto these three analytical categories, the chapter will shed light on the role that religious NGOs can play in conflict resolution. Furthermore, this analysis will contribute to the broader objectives of the thesis by offering empirical insights into how religious affiliation may shape the strategies and effectiveness of religious NGOs.

²⁰¹ Ichraq Guechati and Mustapha Chami, ‘Lebanon, Economic and Financial Crises, Reasons for Collapse’, *Revue Française d’Economie et de Gestion* 3, no. 6 (2022), <https://www.revuefreg.fr/index.php/home/article/view/704/520>.

²⁰² United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Lebanon - Needs at a Glance 2024* (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2023).

²⁰³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Lebanon - Needs at a Glance 2024*.

²⁰⁴ Muhammad A. Faour, ‘Religion, Demography, and Politics in Lebanon’, *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 6 (2007): 909–21.

²⁰⁵ Faour, ‘Religion, Demography, and Politics in Lebanon’.

Track II diplomacy dimension

In the quantitative part of this thesis, we saw that Sant'Egidio scored 3 out of 3 regarding Track II diplomacy. In this section we will seek to understand how this NGO engages in Track II diplomacy. As we have seen, the Community is famous for being a Track II diplomacy facilitator. The Community plays a role in mediating conflicts as it wants to prevent its humanitarian aid projects from “being ruined by the fighting”.²⁰⁶ One clear example in Lebanon is the Deir el-Qamar case that we outlined above (Chapter 4, Section 2.2) regarding the Lebanese Civil War. The meeting organized by Sant'Egidio in its headquarters in Rome between the Patriarch Maximos V (Melkite Greek Catholic Church) and Walid Jumblatt (Druze leader) ultimately led to the suspension of fighting and the evacuation of civilians. This is a clear example of Sant'Egidio’s role in mediation and the ability to provide a neutral venue in order for peace to be discussed, which is Track II diplomacy facilitation.

The Community of Sant'Egidio, in its track II diplomacy efforts, benefits from its position outside the balance of power of the actors it brings together. The Community has no financial resources to spend or an army to mobilize and hence can be seen as an actor with no other interest apart from peace. Therefore, the Community is able to gain the trust of the interlocutors. This is one point of view, as others may argue that the Catholic nature of the Community is a strong factor that may prove its hidden interests in a certain country.²⁰⁷ The Community of Sant'Egidio argues that it does not have a one-size fits all method for diplomatic encounters. It rather argues that it bases its track II diplomacy techniques on political, religious and economic context and the specificity of the conflict.²⁰⁸

In addition, the Community regularly organizes informal reconciliation encounters with Lebanese leaders allowing them to meet in a neutral environment. In March 2025 a meeting took place between Joseph Aoun, the new president of the Lebanese Republic and a delegation of the Community of Sant'Egidio.²⁰⁹ During this

²⁰⁶ Philippe Leymarie, ‘Les Bâtisseurs de Paix de Sant’Egidio’, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 2000, <https://institutions-mondediplo-com.proxy.sciencespobordeaux.fr/2000/09/LEYMARIE/2434>.

²⁰⁷ Mario Giro, ‘Une Grammaire de La Réconciliation’, *Le Courier de L’UNESCO*, 2000, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000118502_fre/PDF/118482fre.pdf.multi.nameddest=118502.

²⁰⁸ Leymarie, ‘Les Bâtisseurs de Paix de Sant’Egidio’.

²⁰⁹ ‘A Beyrouth, une délégation de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio rencontre le Président de la République libanaise nouvellement élu, Joseph Aoun - NEWS - COMMUNAUTÉ DE SANT’EGIDIO’, accessed 29 August 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/fr/itemID/60493/A-Beyrouth-une-d%C3%A9legation-de-la-Communaut%C3%A9-Sant-Egidio-rencontre-le-Pr%C3%A9sident-de-la-R%C3%C3%A9publique-libanaise-nouvellement-%C3%A9lu-Joseph-Aoun.html>.

meeting the political situation of the Middle East was discussed as well as the importance of peace in Lebanon. Although President Aoun holds a formal political position, the Community itself is a non-state, religiously affiliated NGO, and the encounter was not part of any official diplomatic negotiation or bilateral treaty process. Instead, it served as a platform for informal dialogue and confidence-building, where broader regional concerns and the importance of peace in Lebanon were discussed in an unstructured setting. This is hence a clear example of Track II diplomacy. According to some researchers, Sant'Egidio is able “to cultivate a central, religiously imbued vision that, while sensitive to the exigencies of local context, is not limited to a particular culture, language, or state”.²¹⁰

The mediation role of Sant'Egidio was made explicit when the Community was awarded the Hani Fahs Prize for Pluralism and Conflict Resolution in December 2018. This event which took place in Beirut was attended by Lebanese and Iraqi Members of Parliament as well as religious leaders from different denominations.²¹¹ The Community was awarded the prize for its role in defending pluralism of religion in Lebanon and its positive role in conflict resolution.²¹² This shows that the Community of Sant'Egidio plays a role in promoting and diffusing Track II diplomacy in Lebanon and is recognized for its efforts. The Community is a sustained facilitator of reconciliation dialogue. Receiving this award is significant because it proves that the Community's involvement is not just self-declared, but also supported by external recognition.

One specificity of the Community is its extensive international network. This means that the Community can draw on its network to operate as its “envoys, facilitators or simply as entry points for communicating with the parties and mediating” especially in areas where official diplomatic channels are blocked.²¹³ Such flexibility is a distinctive feature of Track II diplomacy as non-state actors are able to establish communication and mediate between parties without the constraints of protocol. The religious and ecumenical nature of the Community further enhances this role allowing it to build strong relations with other religious leaders which also adds to its large

²¹⁰ Tyler, ‘Religion, Politics, and Peacebuilding’, 84.

²¹¹ “‘Hani Fahs’ Prize for the Defense of Pluralism and Conflict Resolution to Sant’Egidio - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO”, accessed 29 August 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/28568/Hani-Fahs-Prize-for-the-Defense-of-Pluralism-and-Conflict-Resolution-to-Sant-Egidio.html>.

²¹² “‘Hani Fahs’ Prize for the Defense of Pluralism and Conflict Resolution to Sant’Egidio - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO’.

²¹³ Rolandsen et al., ‘Peace Facilitation Organizations (PFOs) Mapping Dataset’.

network.²¹⁴ These peace envoys or facilitators which are involved in the Community's projects are key elements of Track II diplomacy. The religious legitimacy of the Community of Sant'Egidio provides it with an advantage in contexts such as Lebanon where identity and faith are central to the conflict. In addition, the Community regularly holds interfaith gatherings and peace conferences such as the yearly International Meetings for Prayer and Peace. These have been included in the subsection on preventive diplomacy rather than Track II diplomacy as they aim to foster long-term trust and interreligious understanding rather than direct mediation.

Many of Sant'Egidio's communications clearly mention "dialogue", "facilitation" and "mediation" showing the importance of such concepts for the organization. Throughout its official website the Community stresses the importance of peace through dialogue and mediation among different religions and cultures. Communication, debate and dialogue are essential according to the Community in order to make sure that there is contact between communities. This is especially relevant for Lebanon where a number of different religions are living together in the country. This proves that the Community of Sant'Egidio is aware that it can play a role in facilitating Track II diplomacy and tries to do so.

To conclude, Sant'Egidio's Lebanese interventions clearly satisfy the indicators of Track II diplomacy. It has facilitated dialogue in moments of acute conflict such as in the 1982 Deir el-Qamar conflict, convened reconciliation workshops, organized cross-sectarian platforms where adversaries could articulate coexistence and deployed trusted peace envoys with local ties. Its discourse and practice consistently emphasize dialogue, facilitation, and mediation. While Sant'Egidio's Track II diplomacy does not always produce binding political settlements, it plays a crucial role in sustaining cross-sectarian communication, mitigating mistrust, and symbolically affirming pluralism in Lebanon.

Peacebuilding dimension

The second dimension I analyze is peacebuilding to see how the Community of Sant'Egidio engages in the dimension. Sant'Egidio is involved in education and trauma-healing which is a key element of peacebuilding. In 2012, the School of Peace of Al Fakiha was opened by the Community.²¹⁵ The school is located near the border with

²¹⁴ Rolandsen et al., 'Peace Facilitation Organizations (PFOs) Mapping Dataset'.

²¹⁵ The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'Syrian Children Fleeing from War in the School of Peace in Al Fakiha, in Northern Bekaa, Lebanon, 30 December 2014,

Syria where many Syrian refugees arrived to flee the Yabrud region. In 2015, 557 students attended the school and 11 Lebanese and Syrian teachers worked there.²¹⁶ This school provides a safe space in an area of high tension. The name of the school is also relevant ‘School of Peace’ which suggests that peace values and ideas are taught fostering coexistence. The school is essential in order for children affected by conflict to be able to continue with their education. Exclusion from education can lead to resentment and fuel more violence hence addressing the issue of refugee education is extremely important. The Sant’Egidio website has not communicated about the school since 2015 making it unclear if it is still operational.

The Community of Sant’Egidio regularly organizes prayers for peace, which have become an important and symbolic act in their broader peacebuilding efforts. One of the most prominent examples is the monthly prayer event held every third Monday of the month at a church in the Trastevere district of Rome.²¹⁷ This prayer gathering, open to the public and broadcasted live, acts as a public call for peace and solidarity. During these sessions, candles are lit in memory of the victims of ongoing wars, and specific regions affected by conflict are highlighted, including Lebanon. Peace and stability are often mentioned as key points of focus.²¹⁸ While these prayers are not directly part of Sant’Egidio’s more formal peacebuilding initiatives, their significance lies in their ability to raise awareness about global conflicts. By bringing attention to the situation in Lebanon these prayers may contribute to a broader public understanding of the situation. In addition, by maintaining a visible and ongoing presence of solidarity with Lebanon, the Community may help mobilize interest, foster empathy, and inspire further action. This could result in increased support for projects in Lebanon, or potentially greater funding directed toward humanitarian efforts or peacebuilding initiatives.

Peacebuilding is not only about formal negotiations or institutional changes; it also encompasses efforts to create a culture of peace, foster public awareness, and engage communities. In this sense, the prayers for peace organized by Sant’Egidio can be seen as part of a peace movement. These prayers contribute to the building of a

<http://archive.santegidio.org/pageID/3/langID/en/itemID/10507/Syrian-children-fleeing-from-war-in-the-school-of-peace-in-Al-Fakiha-in-northern-Bekaa-Lebanon.html>.

²¹⁶ The Community of Sant’Egidio. ‘Syrian Children Fleeing from War in the School of Peace in Al Fakiha, in Northern Bekaa, Lebanon,

²¹⁷ The Community of Sant’Egidio. ‘Prayer for Peace - Countries at war’, accessed 2 August 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/34052/langID/en/PRAYER-FOR-PEACE--COUNTRIES-AT-WAR.html>.

²¹⁸ ‘PRAYER FOR PEACE - COUNTRIES AT WAR - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO’.ayer for Peace - Countries at war’.

culture of peace by providing a platform for individuals to come together, reflect on global conflicts, and reaffirm their collective responsibility for fostering peace. Although these prayer events do not directly address the political or military aspects of the conflict, they contribute to the moral and spiritual foundations of peacebuilding. The direct impact of these prayers on the Community's operational activities in Lebanon is uncertain as there is no clear evidence to suggest that these monthly prayer sessions have led to an increase in specific actions or projects carried out by the Community within Lebanon. There is also no proof of a direct link between these prayers and an increase in financial resources allocated to Lebanese initiatives. It remains unclear whether the awareness raised during these events actually leads to concrete, long-term outcomes in the country.

Concerning peacebuilding in Lebanon, the Community of Sant'Egidio is mostly focused on direct humanitarian aid for all communities in need rather than on reconciliation or trauma-healing programs. Sant'Egidio cooperates with grassroots organizations but it is difficult to access information about the specific programs and missions put in place.

Preventive diplomacy

The last dimension is preventive diplomacy, in the quantitative section we saw that the Community of Sant'Egidio scored 3 out 3 for this dimension, we will hence try to understand what actions the Community takes. The Community of Sant'Egidio engages with political and religious actors through the annual meetings as a result of the 1986 World Day of Prayer for Peace.²¹⁹ These meetings are aimed at promoting dialogue and understanding in the hope of achieving peace among different religions.²²⁰ The aim is to manage tensions between different religious institutions.²²¹ Peace and de-escalation of tensions is the main driving force of the Community. These sessions bring together religious representatives, non-profit organizations and political figures in order to promote dialogue and understanding between different religions.²²² The International Meetings for Prayer and Peace take place every year in September or October and last three days. In 2025, the meeting will take place in Rome from 26 to 28th October and is

²¹⁹ Balas, 'Un pluralisme sans conflits'.

²²⁰ Anna Baldwin, 'Examining the Role of Interfaith Dialogue Initiatives Towards Peacebuilding: A Case Study of the Community of Sant'Egidio' (Massey University, 2015).

²²¹ Marie Balas, 'Dire la pace per farla: il dialogo interreligioso a Sant'Egidio', *Etnografia e ricerca qualitativa* 1, no. 1 (2008): 21.

²²² Balas, 'Un pluralisme sans conflits'.

entitled “Daring Peace”.²²³ The meetings are divided into three sequences. The first sequence is the inauguration of the meeting which is a round table with different institutional and religious actors. The second sequence consists of a panel of round tables, around thirty, in which the guests debate on various political and religious issues.²²⁴ The general public is invited for this sequence. The last sequence is the closing ceremony. The different religions each gather in a place of prayer and then all meet together. A procession then takes place with all the guests of the meeting with the media often present.²²⁵ An “Appeal for Peace” is then signed making the ceremony very symbolic.

The International Meetings for Prayer and Peace are sometimes specifically focused on Lebanon. The 2015 meeting in Tirana, Albania was focused on the conflicts in Syria and in Lebanon. Various figures from Lebanon were invited to participate such as Mohammad Sammak, the Special Advisor to the Grand Mufti of Lebanon, who debated in the panel entitled “Scenarios of War: Peace is Put to the Test”.²²⁶ The 2006 meeting in Assisi, Italy had a panel entitled “The Future of Lebanon” where members of parliament, ministers and religious leaders debated on various issues concerning Lebanon.²²⁷ These discussions can be considered a form of preventive diplomacy as they anticipate conflict escalation and try to manage tensions. These meetings also allow the Community of Sant’Egidio to foster relations with local actors and engage with various different influential people which may prove essential in the future. Giro argues that these meetings are also essential because they create a culture of inter-religious peace which normalizes the bringing together of different religions.²²⁸ This culture of inter-religious peace is essential for future reconciliation encounters or when adversaries meet in Rome to discuss peace. Hence, the International Meetings for Prayer and Peace can have broader implications than just the bringing together of opposing actors at the time of the meeting.

²²³ ““Daring Peace” in Rome. The International Meeting of Dialogue and Prayer for Peace from 26 to 28 October 2025 - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO’, accessed 29 August 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/62045/Daring-Peace-in-Rome-The-International-Meeting-of-Dialogue-and-Prayer-for-Peace-from-26-to-28-October-2025.html>.

²²⁴ Balas, ‘Dire la pace per farla: il dialogo interreligioso a Sant’Egidio’, 27.

²²⁵ Balas, ‘Dire la pace per farla: il dialogo interreligioso a Sant’Egidio’, 31.

²²⁶ The Community of Sant’Egidio. ‘Tirana 2015 - Peace Is Always Possible’, accessed 29 August 2025, <http://archive.santegidio.org/pageID/7712/langID/en/Tirana-2015--Peace-is-Always-Possible.html>.

²²⁷ ‘Community of Sant’Egidio - Assisi 2006 - For a World of Peace: Religions and Cultures in Dialogue’, accessed 3 September 2025, <https://archive.santegidio.org/en/ecumenismo/uer/2006/assisi/index20060905p.htm>.

²²⁸ Giro, ‘Une Grammaire de La Réconciliation’.

The Community of Sant'Egidio also conducts humanitarian corridors, aerial bridges allowing for the legal arrival of refugees in Europe, as a method to prevent tensions. The first humanitarian corridors were created during the Lebanese Civil War in September 1983. This first corridor allowed thirty three sick or elderly to flee the war and arrive in Italy.²²⁹ These previous humanitarian corridors allowed for the institutionalization of the process. The corridors are based on the participation of the civil society of the host country who partake in welcoming the refugees.²³⁰ Since 2016, 8344 refugees arrived in Europe through these humanitarian corridors and Lebanon remains the main country of departure with 3059 departures.²³¹ The refugees arriving from Lebanon are majoritarily Syrian. In October 2024, one hundred people fleeing war arrived from Lebanon to Italy and France.²³² Humanitarian corridors reduce irregular migration from Lebanon which helps reduce host-refugee tensions present in Lebanon. The number of refugees benefitting from such procedures remains low and hence it is difficult to measure the effect on preventing tensions.

The programs of Sant'Egidio are designed with conflict sensitive approaches. In order to help in Lebanon, the Community seeks to work with local grassroots organizations. After the 2020 Beirut explosion, the Community worked with marginalized communities to respond to local needs. The inclusivity of the aid ensured that tensions were not exacerbated on the site. Although Sant'Egidio has a history of focusing on the needs of Christian populations, when providing humanitarian aid they help everyone in an effort to keep tensions low; this was the case when distributing medicine in 2023 for example.²³³

Nonetheless, one major element of preventive diplomacy is early warning systems, risk monitoring and research on conflict risks. The Community of Sant'Egidio

²²⁹ Penot, 'Aux Origines Des Couloirs Humanitaires de La Comunità Di Sant'Egidio'.

²³⁰ Penot, 'Aux Origines Des Couloirs Humanitaires de La Comunità Di Sant'Egidio'.

²³¹ The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'CORRIDOI UMANITARI - COMUNITÀ DI SANT'EGIDIO', accessed 29 August 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30112/langID/it/CORRIDOI-UMANITARI.html>.

²³² 'A Gesture of Peace: Humanitarian Corridors Arrive from Lebanon. Nearly 100 People Fleeing the War Have Been Welcomed Today in Italy and France. Many of Them Are Children. - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT'EGIDIO', accessed 29 August 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/59021/A-gesture-of-peace-humanitarian-corridors-arrive-from-Lebanon-Nearly-100-people-fleeing-the-war-have-been-welcomed-today-in-Italy-and-France-Many-of-them-are-children.html>.

²³³ 'Lebanon, Medicines and Healthcare Supplies: Sant'Egidio in Support of a Population Coping with an Acute Crisis - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT'EGIDIO', accessed 29 August 2025, <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/53641/Lebanon-medicines-and-healthcare-supplies-Sant-Egidio-in-support-of-a-population-coping-with-an-acute-crisis.html>.

does not clearly and formally engage in such institutionalized actions in Lebanon. The Community rather participates in preventive diplomacy in a more practical and relational form through their organization of yearly International Meetings for Prayer and Peace. These meetings provide a platform where different influential political and religious actors can interact in an informal setting to discuss and debate. This can help de-escalate tensions and reduce mutual mistrust. In addition, Sant'Egidio's humanitarian corridors can be considered a form of preventive diplomacy as the reduction of irregular migration from Lebanon contributes to reducing the structural tensions between host communities and refugees. This highlights the Community's distinctive approach to preventive diplomacy. Rather than focusing on formal monitoring mechanisms, the Community emphasizes relationship-building, moral authority and humanitarian initiatives.

2.4 Comparing quantitative and qualitative findings

This qualitative section has brought some interesting insights concerning the role of one specific religious NGO in peacekeeping efforts in Lebanon for the three dimensions. Firstly, we have seen that the Community of Sant'Egidio is a Track II diplomacy facilitator evidently with its work on the Deir El-Qamar case where it helped organize meetings with Lebanese actors of the Civil War in order to stop fighting in the region. The Community also organizes informal reconciliation meetings in order for opposing actors to meet and discuss issues in a neutral environment. The Community, thanks to its large network, has peace envoys and facilitators. Sant'Egidio was awarded a prize in Lebanon for its role in pluralism and conflict resolution proving that it engages in Track II diplomacy and is recognized for its work. Hence, the qualitative analysis of Sant'Egidio's work aligns with the score of 3 out 3 that was given in the quantitative section. Although these findings cannot help confirm the hypothesis (H1) Religious NGOs are more actively engaged in track II diplomacy than secular NGOs, they do help show the ways in which one specific religious NGO engages in track II diplomacy.

Secondly, this qualitative section showed that Sant'Egidio participates actively in peacebuilding. The quantitative section provided a score of 3 out of 3 for the Community's actions in peacebuilding. However, when conducting an in-depth analysis of peacebuilding efforts in this qualitative section we have found that the actions of the Community are not always up to date. For example, the Community opened a School of Peace in the area of Al-Fakiha which is a clear example of peacebuilding but it is

unclear if the school is still open. The Community also organizes large prayers for peace with Lebanon as a focal point. Although this cannot be considered as a peacebuilding activity, it may help increase peacebuilding activities by raising awareness. Many of the activities of the Community in Lebanon were described in the other two dimensions but could be considered as peacebuilding such as the humanitarian corridors for example. Although the information was limited regarding peacebuilding actions of the Community, this is not to say they do not engage in this dimension.

Lastly, we have seen that in accordance with our findings in the quantitative section, the Community of Sant'Egidio is very engaged in preventive diplomacy. Although the Community does not conduct formal research or advocacy on conflict, they do take part in various preventive diplomacy actions. The Community organizes an International Meeting for Prayer and Peace every year in different locations. These meetings offer the possibility to debate and discuss on various issues and bring together many different relevant actors. Lebanon has been at the centre of such discussions various times. The Community of Sant'Egidio also organizes humanitarian corridors allowing refugees to safely arrive in Europe from Lebanon. These corridors help reduce tensions in many ways and hence are an example of preventive diplomacy.

Combined with the quantitative analysis provided and diving deeper into the actions of the Community of Sant'Egidio, it is clear that the three dimensions: Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy are intrinsically linked. Although we have seen in the qualitative section that an NGO (religious or secular) can engage in one dimension without engaging in the other, some actions considered as part of one dimension could be considered part of another.

In conclusion, this qualitative section has helped bring some invaluable insights to understand the ways in which a religious NGO engages in track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. The findings were in accordance with the findings of the quantitative section. The Community of Sant'Egidio scores 3 out of 3 in all three dimensions. The in depth analysis helped explore the first hypothesis (religious NGOs engage more actively in track II diplomacy than secular NGOs) which had been disproven in the quantitative section. We were able to understand the ways in which a religious NGO engages in track II diplomacy and we have seen that the religious element of the NGO did play a role in the case of Lebanon. This may be explained by the fact that religion plays a key role in the conflict.

CONCLUSION

Summary of findings

This thesis has examined the role of religious NGOs in conflict resolution in Lebanon by combining a quantitative analysis of NGO activity with a case study of the Community of Sant'Egidio. The central research question was *How do religious NGOs contribute to conflict resolution in Lebanon?* In order to address this question, a mixed-method design was adopted. Firstly, a quantitative section mapped the activities of 122 NGOs operating in Lebanon across three dimensions: Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. For each dimension, a score out of 3 was given to each NGO. The NGOs were also coded according to their religious affiliation and categorized according to their main activities. This allowed for a statistical analysis to be conducted in order to test whether the religious affiliation of an NGO have an effect on its peacekeeping activities and whether NGOs not specialized in conflict resolution still take part in such activities. The quantitative analysis was complemented by a qualitative section which provided an in-depth analysis of the activities done by one religious NGO in Lebanon, the Community of Sant'Egidio.

Both the quantitative and the qualitative section yielded some important findings. Two hypotheses were formulated and tested: H1 suggested that religious NGOs engage more frequently in informal, dialogue-based conflict resolution strategies (Track II diplomacy) than secular NGO and H2 explored whether NGOs that are not formally classified as conflict resolution organizations still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding, or preventive diplomacy. Firstly, the quantitative section showed that religious NGOs do not engage more in Track II diplomacy. This was evident from the mean scores of Track II diplomacy: $0,43 \pm 0,32$ for religious NGOs as opposed to $0,42 \pm 0,16$ for secular NGOs. The difference between the two is very small proving that religious NGOs do not take part in Track II diplomacy more than secular ones. The hypothesis was tested further and the Chi-sqaure test with 3 degrees of freedom was not significant indicating there is no difference in Track II diplomacy score distributions between religious and secular NGOs. An f-test and t-test showed that religious and secular NGOs engage in Track II diplomacy at similar average levels and with similar variability. Therefore, the results clearly show that religious NGOs do not engage in Track II diplomacy more than secular NGOs in Lebanon. The tests conducted for the

other two dimensions: peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy also show that there are no statistical differences between engagement in religious and secular NGOs.

Secondly, the results showed that non-conflict resolution specialized NGOs still engage in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. Among non-conflict resolution specialized NGOs, engagement in Track II diplomacy is the least prevalent dimension of the three and peacebuilding is the most prevalent activity. The results prove that even NGOs that do not focus specifically on peace still engage a lot in peacebuilding activities. The tests were repeated using a stricter threshold for engagement, a score of 2 or more. The findings showed that both religious and secular NGOs not categorized as conflict resolution NGOs do participate in conflict-related activities, but they focus on peacebuilding rather than Track II diplomacy activities or preventive diplomacy.

The qualitative section, the case study of the Community of Sant'Egidio provided deeper insights into the mechanisms that underpin religious NGOs' involvement in conflict resolution. The Community's role in Lebanon was analyzed using the three dimensions : Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy. Sant'Egidio clearly takes part in Track II diplomacy in Lebanon as proven by its role in facilitating dialogue in the Deir el-Qamar conflict, its organization of reconciliation workshops and its peace envoys. Even though Sant'Egidio's Track II diplomacy does not always lead to formal political settlements, it nonetheless plays a pivotal role in sustaining inter-sectarian communication, alleviating distrust, and affirming Lebanon's pluralist fabric.

Regarding peacebuilding in Lebanon, the findings showed that the Community is mostly focused on direct humanitarian aid for all communities in need and humanitarian corridors rather than on reconciliation or trauma-healing programs. It was found that Sant'Egidio cooperates with grassroot organizations but it was difficult to access information about the specific programs and missions put in place. Concerning preventive diplomacy, the findings highlight the Community's distinctive approach to preventive diplomacy: it emphasizes relationship-building, moral authority and humanitarian initiatives instead of focusing on formal monitoring mechanisms. This is done, for example, through the Community's International Meetings for Prayer and Peace and humanitarian corridors.

Theoretical, methodological and empirical contribution

Theoretically, the thesis contributes to debates about the role of non-state actors in International Relations and Conflict Resolution by highlighting the specificities of religious NGOs. This thesis challenges the assumption that religion is solely a conflict generator and underscores its potential role in peacebuilding. The analysis also nuances the secular bias of traditional peacebuilding literature, which has often marginalized religious actors or treated them as secondary to state or international institutions. By showing how religious NGOs operate the thesis adds depth to our understanding of how religious affiliation can effect and NGOs' participation in Track II diplomacy, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy.

The adoption of a mixed-method approach in this thesis contributes to the study of NGOs and conflict management from a methodological perspective. Existing research on faith-based organizations tends to rely heavily on qualitative case studies, often focusing on one specific NGO. Although these studies do provide valuable insights, they do not allow for systematic comparisons between religious and secular NGOs which this thesis aimed to do. By combining a quantitative mapping of 122 NGOs in Lebanon with a qualitative case study of Sant'Egidio, this thesis offers both breadth and depth. A replicable tool for future research was developed with the scoring system to code NGO activities across Track II diplomacy, preventive diplomacy, and peacebuilding.

This thesis make two empirical contributions. Firstly, it offers a dataset of NGOs in Lebanon, a context that is both religiously plural and politically unstable. It has disproven the general understanding that religious NGOs participate more in Track II diplomacy. Secondly, the case study of Sant'Egidio enriches the limited scholarship on religious NGOs in Lebanon. Together, these contributions provide a more comprehensive understanding of how religious identity shapes NGO involvement in conflict resolution.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this thesis can have several implications for scholarship and policymakers. This thesis has highlighted the importance of integrating religion into analyses of peacebuilding and conflict resolution. By showing that religious NGOs engage differently from secular NGOs, this research challenges the assumption that NGOs engage in the same way regardless of their religious affiliations. It also underscores the need to move beyond binary framings of religion as either inherently conflictual or inherently peaceful. Instead, religion should be seen as a variable that can play different roles depending on context, actors, and strategies.

For policymakers and practitioners, the findings suggest that religious NGOs play a strong role in conflict resolution and need to be included. International Organizations, governments, and donors need to engage with religious NGOs carefully, recognizing both their potential advantages and their limitations. Religious NGOs are valuable partners in peacebuilding. Nonetheless, the specificities of religious NGOs need to be taken into account and they cannot be treated interchangeably with secular NGOs.

Possible Future Research

This thesis opens several avenues for further research. Firstly, future research could explore how different faith traditions of NGOs shape their strategies regarding conflict resolution. Such a research would allow an understanding not only of the religious element of an NGO but it would also shed light on the theological differences. It would help understand if it is the religious affiliation that has an effect on strategies or if it is the specificities of a faith tradition. Secondly, in order to understand the mechanisms of NGO engagement, in-depth interviews with NGO staff and beneficiaries would be helpful. Analyzing in-depth interviews could help understand the specific differences between secular and religious NGOs.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

‘A Beyrouth, une délégation de la Communauté de Sant’Egidio rencontre le Président de la République libanaise nouvellement élu, Joseph Aoun - NEWS - COMMUNAUTÉ DE SANT’EGIDIO’. Accessed 29 August 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/fr/itemID/60493/A-Beyrouth-une-d%C3%A9l%C3%A9gation-de-la-Communaut%C3%A9%C3%A9-de-Sant-Egidio-rencontre-le-Pr%C3%A9sident-de-la-R%C3%9C%C3%A9publique-libanaise-nouvellement-%C3%A9lu-Joseph-Aoun.html>.

“A Gesture of Peace: Humanitarian Corridors Arrive from Lebanon. Nearly 100 People Fleeing the War Have Been Welcomed Today in Italy and France. Many of Them Are Children. - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO’. Accessed 29 August 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/59021/A-gesture-of-peace-humanitarian-corridors-arrive-from-Lebanon-Nearly-100-people-fleeing-the-war-have-been-welcomed-today-in-Italy-and-France-Many-of-them-are-children.html>.

Aall, Pamela. ‘NGOs, Conflict Management and Peacekeeping’. *International Peacekeeping* 7, no. 1 (2000): 121–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533310008413822>.

Alston, Philip. ‘The ‘Not-a-Cat’ Syndrome: Can the International Human Rights Regime Accommodate Non-State Actors?’ In *Non-State Actors and Human Rights*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

Ashworth, Pat. ‘Religious Life: The “United Nations of Trastevere”’. Church Times, 2018. <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2018/21-september/features/features/religious-life-the-united-nations-of-trastevere>.

Augé, Étienne F. ‘Chapitre 1. Histoire et géographie’. *Monde arabe / Monde musulman* 2 (2018): 9–34. <https://doi.org/10.3917/dbu.auge.2018.01.0009>.

Babbitt, Eileen F. ‘Preventive Diplomacy by Intergovernmental Organizations: Learning from Practice’. *International Negotiation* 17, no. 3 (2012): 349–88. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718069-12341236>.

Balas, Marie. ‘« C’est Different Des Diplomates et Chercheurs ” Genese et Institutionnalisation d’un Hybride: Les Médiations de Sant’Egidio’. *Les Champs de Mars* 26, no. 1 (2015): 123–35.

Balas, Marie. 'Dire la pace per farla: il dialogo interreligioso a Sant'Egidio'. *Etnografia e ricerca qualitativa* 1, no. 1 (2008).

Balas, Marie. 'Les médiations internationales de la Communauté de Sant'Egidio : histoire, ressources, limites'. Observatoire International du Religieux. *Notes de l'Observatoire international du religieux*, 2017. <https://obsreligion.cnrs.fr/note/les-mediations-internationales-de-la-communaute-de-santegidio-histoire-ressources-limites/>.

Balas, Marie. 'Prendre goût à la politique : la construction de la communauté de Sant'Egidio dans le « long 1968 » italien (1967-1978)'. *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 202 (2023): 167–90. <https://doi.org/10.4000/assr.70375>.

Balas, Marie. 'Un pluralisme sans conflits'. *Terrain. Anthropologie & sciences humaines*, no. 51 (September 2008): 51. <https://doi.org/10.4000/terrain.11043>.

Baldwin, Anna. 'Examining the Role of Interfaith Dialogue Initiatives Towards Peacebuilding: A Case Study of the Community of Sant'Egidio'. Massey University, 2015.

Bercovitch, Jacob, and S. Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana. 'Religion and Mediation: The Role of Faith-Based Actors in International Conflict Resolution'. *International Negotiation* 14, no. 1 (2009): 175–204. <https://doi.org/10.1163/157180609X406562>.

Berger, Julia. 'Religious Organizations'. In *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance*, edited by Ali Farazmand. Springer International Publishing, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_2514-1.

Boutros-Ghali, Boutros. 'An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping'. *International Relations* 11, no. 3 (1992): 201–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004711789201100302>.

Boutros-Ghali, Boutros and UN. Secretary-General, eds. *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping: Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to the Statement Adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992*. UN Department of Public Information, 1992. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/145749>.

Brett, Rachel. 'The Role and Limits of Human Rights NGOs at the United Nations'. *Political Studies* 43, no. 1 (1995): 96–110. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1995.tb01738.x>.

Burton, John W., and Dennis J.D. Sandole. 'Generic Theory: The Basis of Conflict Resolution'. *Negotiation Journal* 2, no. 4 (1986): 333–44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.1986.tb00373.x>.

Chaaban, Jad, and Karin Seyfert. *Faith-Based NGOs in Multi-Confessional Society: Evidence from Lebanon*. Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies, 2012. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep12659>.

Charnovitz, Steve. ‘Nongovernmental Organizations and International Law’. *The American Journal of International Law* 100, no. 2 (2006): 348–72.

Chataway, Cynthia J. ‘Track II Diplomacy: From a Track I Perspective’. *Negotiation Journal* 14, no. 3 (1998): 269–87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.1998.tb00165.x>.

Chelini-Pont, Blandine, Roland Dubertrand, and Valentine Zuber. ‘Réseaux religieux, sociétés civiles et relations internationales’. In *Géopolitique des religions* Le Cavalier Bleu, 2019. <https://shs.cairn.info/geopolitique-des-religions--9791031803708-page-69>.

Clarke, Gerard. ‘Faith Matters: Development and the Complex World of Faith-Based Organizations’. In *Poverty: Malaise of Development*, by Anne Boran. Chester Academic Press, 2010.

Clarke, Gerard, and Michael Jennings, eds. *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*. International Political Economy Series (Palgrave Macmillan (Firm)). Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Clarke, Matthew, and Vicki-Anne Ware. ‘Understanding Faith-Based Organizations: How FBOs Are Contrasted with NGOs in International Development Literature’. *Progress in Development Studies* 15, no. 1 (2015): 37–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993414546979>.

‘Community of Sant’Egidio - Assisi 2006 - For a World of Peace: Religions and Cultures in Dialogue’. Accessed 29 August 2025. <https://archive.santegidio.org/en/ecumenismo/uer/2006/assisi/index20060905p.htm>.

““Daring Peace” in Rome. The International Meeting of Dialogue and Prayer for Peace from 26 to 28 October 2025 - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO’. Accessed 29 August 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/62045/Daring-Peace-in-Rome-The-International-Meeting-of-Dialogue-and-Prayer-for-Peace-from-26-to-28-October-2025.html>.

Doyle, Michael W, and Nicholas Sambanis. *Making War and Building Peace: The United Nations since the 1990’s*. 2005.

Faour, Muhammad A. ‘Religion, Demography, and Politics in Lebanon’. *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 6 (2007): 909–21.

Fisher, William F. ‘Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices’. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1997): 439–64.

Galtung, Johan. ‘Violence, Peace, and Peace Research’. *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167–91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336900600301>.

Giro, Mario. ‘Une Grammaire de La Réconciliation’. *Le Courier de L’UNESCO*, 2000.
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000118502_fre/PDF/118482fre.pdf. multi.nameddest=118502.

Guechati, Ichraq, and Mustapha Chami. ‘Lebanon, Economic and Financial Crises, Reasons for Collapse’. *Revue Française d’Economie et de Gestion* 3, no. 6 (2022). <https://www.revuefreg.fr/index.php/home/article/view/704/520>.

“‘Hani Fahs’ Prize for the Defense of Pluralism and Conflict Resolution to Sant’Egidio - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT’EGIDIO”. Accessed 29 August 2025.
<https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/28568/Hani-Fahs-Prize-for-the-Defense-of-Pluralism-and-Conflict-Resolution-to-Sant-Egidio.html>.

Jaffrelot, C. ‘Hindu Nationalism and the Social Welfare Strategy’. In *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organisations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular.*, edited by G Clarke and M Jennings. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230371262_11.

James, Rick. ‘What Is Distinctive About FBOs?’ *International NGO Training and Research Centre*, Praxis Paper, vol. 22 (2009): 3–22.

Karampini, Eleni. ‘The Role of NGOs in Conflict Management’. *International Journal of Non-Profit Sector Empowerment* 2, no. 1 (2023): e34182. <https://doi.org/10.12681/npse.34182>.

Koehrsen, Jens, and Andreas Heuser. *Faith-Based Organizations in Development Discourses and Practice*. 1st edn. Routledge, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429351211>.

‘Lebanon NGO Directory | Arab.Org’. Accessed 2 September 2025. <https://arab.org/countries/lebanon/>.

Lederach, John Paul. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. 9. printing. United States Inst. of Peace Press, 1997.

Lefranc, Sandrine. 'Du droit à la paix: La circulation des techniques internationales de pacification par le bas'. *Sociologie. Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 174, no. 4 (2008): 48–67. <https://doi.org/10.3917/arss.174.0048>.

Leguey-Feilleux, Jean-Robert. *The Dynamics of Diplomacy*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2009.

Leverty, Sally. 'NGOs, the UN and APA'. *APA Office of International Affairs*, n.d.

Leymarie, Philippe. 'Les Bâtisseurs de Paix de Sant'Egidio'. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 2000. <https://institutions-mondediplome.com.proxy.sciencespobordeaux.fr/2000/09/LEYMARIE/2434>.

Lynch, Cecelia, and Tanya B. Schwarz. 'Humanitarianism's Proselytism Problem'. *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2016): 636–46.

Mapendere, Jeffrey. 'Defining Track One and a Half Diplomacy: Its Complementarity and the Analysis of Factors That Facilitate Its Success.' Royal Roads University, 2002. <https://library-archives.canada.ca/eng/services/services-libraries/theses/Pages/item.aspx?idNumber=1006814427>.

Marrouch, Walid. 'What's Happening with Lebanon's Economy and Will It Recover?' Al Jazeera, 2025. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/10/whats-happening-with-lebanons-economy-and-will-it-recover>.

Martens, Kerstin. 'Mission Impossible? Defining Nongovernmental Organizations'. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 13, no. 3 (2002): 271–85.

Mercier, Charles. 'Les fondations de la Communauté de Sant'Egidio et de la Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul: Essai de mise en parallèle'. *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 149 (2010). <https://doi.org/10.4000/assr.22009>.

Montville, J. 'The Arrow and the Olive Branch: A Case for Track Two Diplomacy'. In *The Psychodynamics of International Relationships*, Lexington Books, edited by V. D. Volkan, J Montville, and J Demetrios. Lexington, 1990.

OCHA Lebanon. 'Who Does What Where (3W) Lebanon'. 2025. <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/lebanon-operational-presence>.

Paffenholz, Thania, and Christoph Spurk. 'Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding'. *Social Development Papers: Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction* 36 (2006).

Palmiano Federer, Julia. 'Toward a Normative Turn in Track Two Diplomacy? A Review of the Literature'. *Negotiation Journal* 37, no. 4 (2021): 427–50. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nejo.12376>.

Paris, Roland. *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*. 1st edn. Cambridge University Press, 2004. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511790836>.

Penot, Flora. 'Aux Origines Des Couloirs Humanitaires de La Comunità Di Sant'Egidio'. December 2023. <https://hal.science/hal-04361365>.

Perry, John. 'Reconciliation and Healing as the Ultimate Reality and Meaning of Peacebuilding in the Thought of John Paul Lederach with Special Reference to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia'. *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* 35, nos 3–4 (2012): 317–31. <https://doi.org/10.3138/uram.35.3-4.317>.

'ReliefWeb - Informing Humanitarians Worldwide'. 2 September 2025. <https://reliefweb.int/>.

Rolandsen, Øystein, Antoni Sastre Bel, Simone Tholens, and Jenny J. Boine. 'Peace Facilitation Organizations (PFOs) Mapping Dataset'. Peace Research Institute Oslo. Version 1.0. 10 December 2024.

Salamon, Lester M., and Helmuth K coaut Anheir. *The International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations ICNPO-Revision 1, 1996*. The Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, 1996.

Serapiao, Luis Benjamim. 'The Catholic Church and Conflict Resolution in Mozambique's Post-Colonial Conflict, 1977-1992'. *Journal of Church and State* 46, no. 2 (2004): 365–90.

Smock, David R. *Catholic Contributions to International Peace*. United States Institute of Peace, 2001.

Soriano, Víctor Fernández. 'La Communauté de Sant'Egidio et le Mozambique (1980-1990. Une diplomatie parallèle à la fin de la guerre froide?' *Forum Romanum Belgicum. Belgisch Historisch Instituut te Rome-Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 10 (2015).

Stensvold dell, Anne. 'Religious NGOs: The New Face of Religion in Civil Society'. In *The Routledge Handbook of Transregional Studies*, 1st edn, edited by Matthias Middell. Routledge, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438233-1>.

Ṭarābulusī, Fauwāz. *A History of Modern Lebanon*. Second Edition. Pluto Press, 2012.

The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'Corridoi umanitari - Communita di Sant'Egidio'. Accessed 29 August 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30112/langID/it/CORRIDOI-UMANITARI.html>.

The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'Lebanon, Medicines and Healthcare Supplies: Sant'Egidio in Support of a Population Coping with an Acute Crisis - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT'EGIDIO'. Accessed 29 August 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/53641/Lebanon-medicines-and-healthcare-supplies-Sant-Egidio-in-support-of-a-population-coping-with-an-acute-crisis.html>.

The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'LIBYA - NEWS - COMMUNITY OF SANT'EGIDIO'. Accessed 14 April 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/stringToFind/LIBYA/NEWS.html>.

The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'Marco Impagliazzo eletto presidente della Comunità di Sant'Egidio. A lui gli auguri di buon lavoro!'. Accessed 9 June 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/it/itemID/59957/Marco-Impagliazzo-eletto-presidente-della-Comunit%C3%A0-di-Sant-Egidio-A-lui-gli-auguri-di-buon-lavoro.html>.

The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'Prayer for Peace - Countries at war'. Accessed 2 August 2025. <https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/34052/langID/en/PRAAYER-FOR-PEACE--COUNTRIES-AT-WAR.html>.

The Community of San'Egidio. 'Syrian Children Fleeing from War in the School of Peace in Al Fakika, in Northern Bekaa, Lebanon.' 30 December 2014. <http://archive.santegidio.org/pageID/3/langID/en/itemID/10507/Syrian-children-fleeing-from-war-in-the-school-of-peace-in-Al-Fakika-in-northern-Bekaa-Lebanon.html>.

The Community of Sant'Egidio. 'Tirana 2015 - Peace Is Always Possible, Community of Sant'Egidio'. Accessed 29 August 2025. <https://archive.santegidio.org/pageID/7712/langID/en/Tirana-2015--Peace-is-Always-Possible.html>

The World Bank. *Lebanon Systemic Country Diagnostic*. The World Bank, 2024.

Tyler, AArion. 'Religion, Politics, and Peacebuilding: "The Method of Sant' Egidio"'. *Kultura i Polityka*, no. 6 (2009): 78–94.

'UCDP Definitions - Uppsala University'. Text. 29 May 2024.

<https://www.uu.se/en/department/peace-and-conflict-research/research/ucdp/ucdp-definitions>.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *Lebanon - Needs at a Glance 2024*.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2023.

Wehrenfennig, Daniel. 'Multi-Track Diplomacy and Human Security'. *Journal of Human Security* 7 (2008).

Werker, Eric, and Faisal Z Ahmed. 'What Do Nongovernmental Organizations Do?' *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 22, no. 2 (2008): 73–92.
<https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.22.2.73>.

Zyck, Steven A., and Robert Muggah. 'Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention: Obstacles and Opportunities'. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* 1, no. 1 (2012): 68. <https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.ac>

APPENDIX**Appendix A**

Dataset of NGO attributes in Lebanon

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
ACF Spain	Spain	Health; Development and Housing	0	-	1979	1990	large	large
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	France	Development and Housing; Social Services	0	-	1993	2006	large	medium
The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)	United States of America	Health; Education and Research; Social Services	1	Christian	1956	1981	small	small
Alawite Islamic Charity Association (AICA)	Lebanon	Health; Social Services	1	Islamic	1950	1950	small	-
AMEL	Lebanon	Social Services; Health; Education and Research	0	-	1979	1979		
American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA)	United States of America	Development and Housing; Education and Research; Health	0	-	1968	1968	medium	medium
Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale (AVSI)	Italy	Education and Research; Social Services; Development and Housing	1	Christian	1972	1996	large	
ARCS (Associazione Ricerca e	Italy	Development and Housing; Education and	0	-	1985	1985		

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
Cooperazione)		Research; Health						
CARE	Switzerland	Development and Housing; Health; Social Services	0	-	1945	2013	large	medium
Caritas Lebanon	Lebanon	Social Services; Health; Education and Research	1	Catholic	1897	1951	large	medium
WeWorld-GVC (WW-GVC)	Italy	Social services; Development and housing	0	-	1971	2006	large	small
Human Aid and Development (HAND)	Lebanon	Social services	0	-	2012	-		
Handicap International	France and Belgium	Social services	0	-	1982	1992	large	medium
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	United States of America	Social services, Development and housing	0	-	1933	2012	large	large
Islamic Relief	United Kingdom	Social services, Development and housing	1	Islamic	2006	1984	large	small
Lebanese organization for studies and training (LOST)	Lebanon	Education and research, Social services	0	-	1998	1998	small	-
MEDAIR	Switzerland	Social services	1	Christian	1988	1988	large	medium
Makhzoumi Foundation	Lebanon	Health, Social services	0	-	1997	1997		

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
Mercy Corps	United States of America	Development and housing, Social services	0	-	1979	1993	large	medium
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	Norway	Social services, Development and housing	0	-	1946	2006	large	large
OXFAM	Kenya	Development and housing, Social services	0	-	1942	1993	large	medium
Plan International	United Kingdom	Education and research, Social services	0	-	1937	1937		
Relief International (RI)	United States of America	Social services, Health	0	-	1990	2006	large	
SHEILD	Lebanon	Social services	0	-	2010	2010		
DanChurchAid (DCA)	Denmark	Social services, Development and housing	1	Christian	1922	2007	medium	medium
Development for People and Nature Association (DPNA)	Lebanon	Environment, Social services	0	-	2003	-	small	small
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Denmark	Social services	0	-	1956	2004	medium	large
Imam Sadr Foundation	Lebanon	Social services	1	Islamic	1963	1963	small	-
International Association for Relief and Development (Onsur)	Turkey	Social services	1	Islamic				

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
Intersos	Italy	Social services	0	-	1992	2006	large	
Key of Life	Lebanon	Social services	0	-				
World Vision International (WVI)	United Kingdom	Education and research, Social services	1	Christian			large	
Lebanese Red Cross (LRC)	Lebanon	Social services, Health	0	-	1945	1945	large	large
La Guilde		Philanthropic intermediaries and voluntourism promotion	0	-	1967	1988		
Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)	Canada and United States of America	Social services, Development and housing	1	Christian	1920	1920		
Himaya	Lebanon	Social services	0	-	2008	2008		
KAFA	Lebanon	Law advocacy and politics, Social services	0	-	2005	2005		
Real Medecine foundation (RMF)	United States of America	Health, Social services			2005	2005		
SAWA Group	Lebanon	Social services	0	-	2006	2006	small	-
Terre des Hommes Italy	Italy	Social services	0	-	1989	2006	large	small

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
First Step together Association (FISTA)	Lebanon	Social services	0	-	1993	1993		
Mouvement Social	Lebanon	Education and research, Social services	0	-	1960	1960		
Al Ribat Association	Lebanon	Social services	0	-	2007	2007		
Seenaryo	United Kingdom	Education and Research, Social Services	0	-	2017	2017	small	-
Teach for Lebanon	Lebanon	Education and Research	0	-	2008	2008	small	-
Al Majmouaa	Lebanon	Social Services, Development and Housing	0	-	1997	1997		
MERATH Lebanon	Lebanon	Development and Housing, Environment	1	Christian	1998	1998	small	-
Médecins Sans Frontières OCB (MSF-OCB)	Belgium	Health, Social services	0	-	1971	2008	large	medium
Lebanese Social Responsibility LSR	Lebanon	Social Services, Development and Housing	0	-	2013	2013	small	-
Nusaned	Lebanon	Social Services, Development and Housing	0	-	2011	2011		
Polish Center for International Aid Foundation (PCPM)	Poland	Social Services; Development and Housing	0	-	2006	2012		

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
RESTART Lebanon	Lebanon	Social Services; Health	0	-	1996	1996		medium
ShareQ	Lebanon	Social Services; Health	0	-	2012	2012		
Solidarités internationale	France	Social Services; Health	0	-	1980	2013	large	medium
Nabad	France	Social Services	0	-	2013	2013	small	-
Tabitha-Dorcas	Lebanon	Social Services, Development and Housing	1	Christian	2016	2016	small	small
Naba'a	Lebanon	Social Services; Development and Housing	0	-	2001	2001	medium	-
Right to Play	Canada	Education and Research; Social Services	0	-	2000	2006	large	small
Secours Islamique France (SIF)	France	Social Services; Health	1	Islamic	1991	2012	large	small
International Medical Corps (IMC)	United States of America	Health; social Services	0	-	1984	2006	large	large
The Lebanese Council To Resist Violence Against Woman (LECORVAW)	Lebanon	Law Advocacy and Politics, Social Services	0	-	1997	1997		
Medecins du monde (MDM)	France	Health; social Services	0	-	1979	1990	large	medium

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering (RDFL)	Lebanon	Law Advocacy and Politics, Social Services	0	-	1976	1976		
Union of Relief and Development Associations (URDA)	Lebanon	Social Services; Development and Housing	0	-	2012	2012	small	-
International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)	United States of America	Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion; Social Services	1	Christian	1992	2001	large	medium
Premiere Urgence - Aide Medicale Internationale (PU-AMI)	France	Health; Social Services	0	-	1992	1996	large	large
Michel Daher Social Foundation - MDSF	Lebanon	Social Services; Development and Housing	0	-	2014	2014	small	small
Lebanese center for human rights (CLDH)	Lebanon	Law Advocacy and Politics	0	-	2006	2006	small	small
CONCERN	Ireland	Social Services; Development and Housing	0	-	1968	2013	large	small
Common Space Initiative	Lebanon	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services	0	-	2013	2013		
Embrace	Lebanon	Social Services; Health	0	-	2017	2017	small	small
War Child Holland - WCH	Netherlands	Social Services; Education and Research	0	-	1993	2004	large	medium

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
Alpha	Lebanon	Health; Social Services	0	-	1993	1993	small	-
Ana Aqra	Lebanon	Education and Research; Social Services	0	-	1998	1998	medium	-
Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy and Applied Care (IDRAAC)	Lebanon	Education and Research; Health; Social Services	0	-	1997	1997	small	small
MMKN	Lebanon	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services	0	-	2000	2000	small	small
Ahla Fawda	Lebanon	Social Services; Law Advocacy and Politics	0	-	2014	2014	small	-
Al-Shouf Cedar Society	Lebanon	Environment; Development and Housing	0	-	1996	1996	small	-
Arcenciel	Lebanon	Social Services; Development and Housing	0	-	1985	1985	medium	-
MADA	Lebanon	Health; Social Services	0	-	2000	2000	small	-
Association Libanaise des chevaliers de Malte	lebanon	Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion	1	Catholic	1984	1984	medium	-
BASSMA	lebanon	Social Services; Development and Housing	0	-	2002	2002	small	-
Bedayati	lebanon	Social Services	0	-	2020	2020	small	-

Name of NGO	Headquaters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
Beit el Baraka	lebanon	Social Services	0 -		2019	2019	small	-
Fair Trade Lebanon	lebanon	Development and Housing; Business and Professional Associations	0 -		2006	2006	small	-
Farah Social Foundation	lebanon	Social Services	0 -		1988	1988	small	-
FoodBlessed	lebanon	Social Services	0 -		2012	2012	small	-
Georges N. Frem Foundation (GNFF)	lebanon	Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion	0 -		2002	2002	small	-
INITIATE	lebanon	Development and Housing	0 -		2011	2011	small	-
John Paul II Foundation	Italy	Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion	1	Catholic	2007	2007		
Migration Services and Development - MSD		Social Services; Development and Housing	0 -		2014	2014		
Mercy USA	United States of America	Social Services; Development and Housing	0 -		1988	1988		
People in Need Slovakia	Slovakia	Social Services; Development and Housing	0 -		1999	2006	small	small
Substance Use treatmenet center (SKOUN)	lebanon	Health; Social Services	0 -		2001	2001	small	

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
Utopia	lebanon	Social Services; Development and Housing	0 -		2010	2010		
Comitato Internazionale Per Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli (CISP)	Italy	Development and Housing	0 -		1983	1996	large	
Norwegian Church Aid - NCA	Norway	Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion; Social Services	1	Christian	1947	2012	large	small
Reaching across Borders	USA	Social Services; Development and Housing	0 -		2020	2020	small	-
Himaya Daeem Aataa (HDA) Association	lebanon	Social Services; Law Advocacy and Politics	0 -		2015	2015	medium	-
Nawaya network	lebanon	Education and Research; Social Services	0 -		2012	2012	small	-
Ghawth	lebanon	Social Services	0 -		2009	2009	medium	-
Medical and Global Nutrition Aid (Magna)	Slovakia	Health; Social Services	0 -		2002	2016	medium	
Medglobal	United States of America	Health; Social Services	0 -		2017	2018	large	small
Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC)	Lebanon	Environment; Development and Housing	0 -		1995	1995	medium	-

Name of NGO	Headquarters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
Borderless	Lebanon	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services	0	-	2015	2015		
Hariri Foundation for Sustainable Human Development	Lebanon	Development and Housing; Social Services	0	-	1979	1979		
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)	Italy	Social Services; Health; Peacemaking	1	Catholic	1980	1981	large	medium
SAFADI Foundation	Lebanon	Development and Housing	0	-	2001	2001	medium	-
Salam LADC (Lebanese Association for Development and Communication)	Lebanon	Development and Housing; Social Services	0	-	2006	2006	small	-
YMCA	Switzerland	Social Services; Education and Research	1	Christian	1855	1931	large	small
Humedica	Germany	Health; Social Services	0	-	1979	2012	small	small
Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)	United Kingdom	Health; Social Services	0	-	1984	1984	medium	small
World Rehabilitation fund (WRF)	United States of America	Health; Social Services	0	-	1955	1970	small	small
CESVI	Italy	Development and Housing; Social Services	0	-	1985	2001	medium	small
Zero tolerance to Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (ABAAD)	Lebanon	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services	0	-	2011	2011	medium	-

Name of NGO	Headquaters	classification	Religious Affiliation (0=Secular, 1=Religious)	Religion type	year founded	year work in Lebanon started	Size (Small/Medium/Large)	size Lebanon mission (Small/Medium/large)
I'm possible	Lebanon	Social Services	0	-	2017	2017	small	-
Lebanese Union for People with Disabilities (LUPD)	Lebanon	Social Services	0	-	1981	1981		
Berghof Foundation	Germany	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services; Peacemaking	0	-	1971	2008		medium
Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD)	Switzerland	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services; conflict resolution	0	-	1999	1999		large
Forward Thinking	United Kingdom	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services	0	-	2004	2004		small
Sant' Egidio	Italy	Philanthropic Intermediaries and Voluntarism Promotion; Social Services; conflict resolution	1	Catholic	1968	1968		
Search for Common Ground	United States	Law Advocacy and Politics; Social Services; conflict resolution	0	-	1982	1982		large

Appendix B

Religious and secular NGOs involvement in Track II diplomacy in Lebanon

Name of NGO	Track II Score (0-3)	Justification
ACF Spain	0	no evidence
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	1	Peace, Stability and Justice programme mentions “supporting dialogue and peaceful interactions between communities in conflict”
The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)	0	no evidence
Alawite Islamic Charity Association (AICA)	2	explicitly includes dialogue and peacebuilding. onboards legal mediators” funded by AICA to support conflict cases
AMEL	1	actively promotes community-led mediation
American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA)	1	trains community members in mediation
Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale (AVSI)	0	no evidence
ARCS (Associazione Ricerca e Cooperazione)	1	“promotes...peace and intercultural and intergenerational dialogue”
CARE	0	no evidence
Caritas Lebanon	1	actively facilitates cross-sectarian dialogue and mediation
WeWorld-GVC (WW-GVC)	0	no evidence
Human Aid and Development (HAND)	0	no evidence
Handicap International	0	no evidence
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	0	no evidence
Islamic Relief	0	no evidence
Lebanese organization for studies and training (LOST)	2	Organizes community meetings between Syrian refugees and Lebanese residents in Bekaa to address tensions over resources, security, and cultural differences. Youth programs include mediation training
MEDAIR	0	no evidence
Makhzoumi Foundation	0	no evidence
Mercy Corps	2	Facilitates youth-led community service projects that bring together members of divided communities, community dispute resolution training.
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	0	no evidence
OXFAM	1	Facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogues
Plan International	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Track II Score (0–3)	Justification
Relief International (RI)	0	no evidence
SHEILD	1	engages in community dialogue meetings
DanChurchAid (DCA)	1	create spaces where Lebanese and Syrian community members jointly plan and implement livelihood and environmental projects. trained community facilitators lead local discussions on needs and project planning
Development for People and Nature Association (DPNA)	2	community dialogue sessions as part of its “Youth for Peace” and “Conflict Transformation” programs. Facilitates structured workshops where youth leaders are trained in mediation techniques and then lead sessions in their own communities. Youth leaders trained by DPNA act as local facilitators for dialogue and conflict resolution activitie
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	1	Caseworkers mediate conflicts between refugees and hosts. Protection staff are trained in facilitation and conflict resolution
Imam Sadr Foundation	0	promotes national unity through community events
International Association for Relief and Development (Onsur)	0	no evidence
Intersos	1	Community-based activities in mixed areas. Field staff trained in facilitation and conflict resolution methods
Key of Life	1	Organizes joint cultural and educational event. Conducts workshops on conflict resolution skills
World Vision International (WVI)	0	social cohesion programs
Lebanese Red Cross (LRI)	0	no evidence
La Guilde	0	no evidence
Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)	0	supports local partners and church networks to foster understanding and reconciliation at the community level
Himaya	0	no evidence
KAFA	0	no evidence
Real Medecine foundation (RMF)	0	no evidence
SAWA Group	0	no evidence
Terre des Hommes Italy	0	no evidence
First Step together Association (FISTA)	0	no evidence
Mouvement Social	0	no evidence
Al Ribat Association	0	no evidence
Seenaryo	0	no evidence
Teach for Lebanon	0	no evidence
Al Majmouaa	0	no evidence
MERATH Lebanon	0	no evidence
Médecins Sans Frontières OCB (MSF-OCB)	0	no evidence
Lebanese Social Responsibility - LSR	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Track II Score (0–3)	Justification
Nusaned	0	no evidence
Polish Center for International Aid Foundation (PCPM)	0	no evidence
RESTART Lebanon	0	no evidence
ShareQ	0	no evidence
Solidarités international	0	no evidence
Nabad	0	no evidence
Tabitha-Dorcas	0	no evidence
Naba'a	0	no evidence
Right to Play	0	no evidence
Secours Islamique France (SIF)	0	no evidence
International Medical Corps (IMC)	0	no evidence
The Lebanese Council To Resist Violence Against Woman (LECORVAW)	0	no evidence
Medecins du monde (MDM)	0	no evidence
The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering (RDFL)	0	no evidence
Union of Relief and Development Associations (URDA)	0	no evidence
International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)	0	no evidence
Premiere Urgence - Aide Medicale Internationale (PU-AMI)	0	no evidence
Michel Daher Social Foundation - MDSF	0	no evidence
Lebanese center for human rights (CLDH)	0	no evidence
CONCERN	0	no evidence
Common Space Initiative	3	support consensus-building dialogues, convened high-level and grassroots dialogue forum. Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Forum since 2011. “dialogue,” “facilitation,” and “stakeholder dialogues” are central to CSI’s publicly stated mission
Embrace	0	no evidence
War Child Holland - WCH	1	facilitate grassroots dialogue and mutual understanding
Association Libanaise pour la Promotion Humaine et l’Alphabétisation (Alpha)	0	no evidence
Ana Aqra	0	no evidence
Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy and Applied Care (IDRAAC)	0	no evidence
MMKN	0	no evidence
Ahla Fawda	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Track II Score (0–3)	Justification
Al-Shouf Cedar Society	0	no evidence
Arcenciel	1	facilitates constant dialogue and understanding among ordinary citizens.promotion of “living together”
MADA	1	community dialogue & conflict-management activities
Association Libanaise des chevaliers de Malte	1	Hosted/partnered workshops on solidarity and dialogue
BASSMA	0	no evidence
Bedayati	0	no evidence
Beit el Baraka	0	no evidence
Fair Trade Lebanon	0	no evidence
Farah Social Foundation	0	no evidence
FoodBlessed	0	no evidence
Georges N. Frem Foundation (GNFF)	0	no evidence
INITIATE	1	youth dialogue gatherings
John Paul II Foundation	0	no evidence
Migration Services and Development - MSD	0	no evidence
Mercy USA	0	no evidence
People in Need Slovakia	0	no evidence
Substance Use treatmenet center (SKOUN)	0	no evidence
Utopia	1	joint Syrian–Lebanese community committees.
Comitato Internazionale Per Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli (CISP)	0	no evidence
Norwegian Church Aid - NCA	0	no evidence
Reaching across Borders	1	facilitates person-to-person dialogue and reduces mistrust.
Himaya Daeem Aataa (HDA) Association	0	no evidence
Nawaya network	0	no evidence
Ghawth	0	no evidence
Medical and Global Nutrition Aid (Magna)	0	no evidence
Medglobal	0	no evidence
Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC)	0	no evidence
Borderless	0	no evidence
Hariri Foundation for Sustainable Human Development	2	runs national and local dialogue platforms. organised Lebanon's First Forum for Preventing Violent Extremism
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)	0	no evidence
SAFADI Foundation	0	no evidence
Name of NGO	1	justification

Name of NGO	Track II Score (0-3)	Justification
Salam LADC (Lebanese Association for Development and Communication)	1	strengthen inter-community dialogue and build bridges.
YMCA	0	dialogue sessions
Humedica	0	no evidence
Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)	0	no evidence
World Rehabilitation fund (WRF)	0	no evidence
CESVI	1	no evidence
Zero tolerance to Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (ABAAD)	0	initiated dialogue with media outlets, humanitarian organizations, and donor agencies.convened religious leaders from various communities to discuss ending violence against women
I'm possible	2	no evidence
Lebanese Union for People with Disabilities (LUPD)	3	engages in track II
Berghof Foundation	3	extensive dialogue initiatives in Lebanon. Multi level dialogue process. facilitates high-level expert dialogues (Track 1) to discuss political and economic reforms, while simultaneously supporting local-level dialogue forums (Track 2)
Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD)	3	unofficial dialogue platforms. created a platform for dialogue with a wide range of political stakeholders and civil society groups
Forward Thinking	3	high-level roundtable workshop in Byblos (November 2017). engaged Lebanese community leaders in its regional initiatives. striving to "create spaces for inclusive dialogue among the different factions"
Sant' Egidio	3	renowned for mediation. acted as an unofficial intermediary at critical moments. remained involved through inter-religious dialogue initiatives. International Prayer for Peace conferences
Search for Common Ground		unofficial roundtables and forums. "Religious Freedom Roundtables". "Youth Platforms" project. produced Lebanese TV and radio programs. community peace committees

Appendix C

Religious and secular NGOs involvement in Peacebuilding in Lebanon

Name of NGO	Peacebuilding Score (0–3)	justification
ACF Spain	1	integrates conflict-sensitive approaches that contribute to social cohesion, mental health and psychosocial support
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	2	facilitates community dialogue and social cohesion, ACTED supports local civil society and uses participatory governance to “enhance spaces for dialogue and knowledge sharing” among community members. ACTED’s 2022 global report notes peace-building and conflict resolution efforts as part of its work
The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)	1	ADRA addresses trauma and integration needs of refugee children
Alawite Islamic Charity Association (AICA)	3	explicitly aims to “build bridges through culture and dialogue”. runs community development programs that include education and awareness to “mitigate all forms of discrimination”. promote social cohesion. association’s mission statement includes “advocacy & peace-building” as key pillars
AMEL	3	On International Youth Day, Amel brought together Syrian refugee youth and Lebanese youth to perform a play about war and hope, concluding that “peace is the key to rebuilding their dreams”. In another event, mixed groups of refugee and local youth handed out roses and flyers touting the benefits of peace to strangers on the street. provides psychological support to conflict-affected populations. explicitly embraced the theme “Youth Building Peace” in 2017 celebrations. showcased stories of Lebanese women mediators working to reconcile disputes and promote coexistence at the grassroots level. first Lebanese NGO nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize (2016). peacebuilding as part of its mission
American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA)	2	ran a “Sports for Peace” program in northern Lebanon. Anera invests heavily in education for marginalized communities in Lebanon. “promote dialogue and social integration among Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese youth.”
Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale (AVSI)	1	contributes to peace by revitalizing war-torn communities, helping residents return, rebuilding infrastructure, and restoring livelihoods. community hub fosters coexistence across religious or social lines in southern villages. one of AVSI’s listed sectors is “Human rights, democracy and peace.”
ARCS (Associazione Ricerca e Cooperazione)	1	efforts assist with reintegration of traumatized children into normal educational paths and foster emotional healing. explicitly integrated Peace Education into its community center programming in Lebanon. ARCS identifies “Peace and Rights” as one of its thematic areas of work
CARE	2	“One Neighbourhood” project in Tripoli’s Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen quarters – two communities that had experienced recurring armed clashes along sectarian lines. it is cited as a case study in navigating urban conflict complexity
Caritas Lebanon	3	partner in the Rondine “Mediterranean Frontier of Peace” initiative (2023-2024), which explicitly focuses on peace education and reconciliation. Caritas runs migrant centers and safe houses that shelter and rehabilitate victims of war trauma and human trafficking. Caritas Youth network (1,625

Name of NGO	Peacebuilding Score (0–3)	justification
		youth volunteers strong) carries out community projects that often bring together youths from different regions and confessions, instilling unity. frequently uses the slogan “Peace begins with a smile”. Caritas Internationalis celebrated “70 years... contributing to peace and reconciliation” and cited Caritas Lebanon’s impartial aid during the civil war as exemplary
WeWorld-GVC (WW-GVC)	2	WeWorld created Child-Friendly Spaces and “Peace Clubs” in schools as part of an EU-funded program. WeWorld’s “We Play for Peace!” project (with UNAOC) which trained community coaches to lead sports-based peacebuilding. published a Conflict Sensitivity Operational Toolkit, reflecting a commitment to integrating peacebuilding principles.refers to operating along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. signatory to peace advocacy letters and a member of coalitions like the Peace Education Consortium
Human Aid and Development (HAND)	1	psychosocial support for conflict-affected children, tailored materials to address trauma
Handicap International	1	provides rehabilitation and psychosocial support to people injured in the Beirut blast, Syrian refugees, and vulnerable Lebanese.
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	1	mental health and psychosocial support, especially for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV).
Islamic Relief	0	projects include psychosocial support for war-affected children
Lebanese organization for studies and training (LOST)	2	“Peaceful Coexistence” initiative in Baalbek engaged 150 youth in theatre and sports to break down stereotypes. Explicit reconciliation aims
MEDAIR	1	Shelter rehabilitation in Bekaa included joint refugee-Lebanese households to improve neighborhood relations., Trauma healing
Makhzoumi Foundation	1	Joint Lebanese-Syrian vocational program in Beirut trained 200 women in catering and sewing, fostering shared economic benefit.. Integrated development services
Mercy Corps	1	Multiple projects aimed at improving relations between host and refugee youth
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	1	Information, Counselling, and Legal Assistance (ICLA) program helps mediate housing, land, and property disputes between refugees and landlords. Joint vocational training for mixed groups
OXFAM	1	projects are framed as “social cohesion” initiatives
Plan International	1	Education and child protection programs target refugee and host children together. explicitly integrates Lebanese and refugee girls in empowerment programs
Relief International (RI)	1	programs to encourage interaction between youth of different nationalities
SHEILD	1	Offers psychosocial support through community centers, runs joint community projects
DanChurchAid (DCA)	2	Supports joint livelihood cooperatives and shared public space rehabilitation Community events (environmental campaigns, agricultural fairs) are structured to include mixed groups, encouraging sustained contact. “Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus” strategy
Development for People and Nature Association (DPNA)	2	reconciliation-oriented community service initiatives in mixed municipalities. Implements leadership programs where youth from different communities collaborate on problem-solving and advocacy campaigns. explicitly uses “peacebuilding” in its mission, describing itself as dedicated to “building peace through non-violence and democratic participation”
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	1	social cohesion programs address community tensions through joint livelihood projects. psychosocial support for both Lebanese and Syrian beneficiaries
Imam Sadr Foundation	0	Youth programs emphasize civic responsibility, volunteerism, and service to all communities
International Association for Relief and	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Peacebuilding Score (0–3)	justification
Development (Onsur)		
Intersos	0	no evidence
Key of Life	0	no evidence
World Vision International (WVI)	1	strong youth peace education component through life skills and civic engagement programs/ Mention of peacebuilding
Lebanese Red Cross (LRI)	0	no evidence
La Guilde	0	no evidence
Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)	2	MCC was involved in post-war recovery efforts after the civil war. supported trauma recovery for war-affected populations. sponsored peace camps and school clubs that bring together youths from different religious communities. MCC describes itself as a “relief, development and peace” organization
Himaya	0	psychosocial support for children
KAFA	1	helps reintegration of abused women in society. specialized unit for trauma counseling
Real Medecine foundation (RMF)	1	psychological support. peacebuilding outcomes like social cohesion in describing the projects
SAWA Group	2	SAWA has organized community dialogues on practical issues. educational programs in refugee settlements. provides psychosocial support. youth empowerment workshops
Terre des Hommes Italy	1	psychosocial support. joint activities. “strengthen social cohesion and peaceful coexistence through child-centered activities”
First Step together Association (FISTA)	1	integrate children with disabilities. addressing the needs of a potentially marginalized group
Mouvement Social	2	cross-community youth exchanges, summer camps and clubs for war-traumatized kids. organizes forums and discussions on citizenship,
Al Ribat Association	0	no evidence
Seenaryo	1	theatre project bringing together residents from opposing sides. form of psychosocial support
Teach for Lebanon	1	explicitly targets marginalized areas including post-conflict zones. promotes coexistence
Al Majmouaa	1	reintegrating individuals into productive economic life, plays a role in mitigating conflict drivers
MERATH Lebanon	1	supports non-formal education programs, states values of reconciliation and peace
Médecins Sans Frontières OCB (MSF-OCB)	0	mental health programs
Lebanese Social Responsibility - LSR	0	youth volunteering, education and protection activities that bring communities together
Nusaned	0	no evidence
Polish Center for International Aid Foundation (PCPM)	1	post crisis support
RESTART Lebanon	1	Trauma-healing/rehabilitation. Reconciliation and advocacy on torture
ShareQ	0	reintegration of people with disabilities or having difficulties to enter the job market
Solidarités international	1	services in displacement settlements to reduce tensions
Nabad	0	no evidence
Tabitha-Dorcas	1	Community centers that host refugees and host communities together create safe spaces for dialogue
Naba'a	1	Child protection, inclusive education and community empowerment

Name of NGO	Peacebuilding Score (0–3)	justification
Right to Play	1	Psychosocial support and social-emotional learning for conflict-affected children
Secours Islamique France (SIF)	0	no evidence
International Medical Corps (IMC)	0	mental health & psychosocial support
The Lebanese Council To Resist Violence Against Woman (LECORVAW)	1	Listening and counselling Centers. GBV legal awareness. dialogue seminar
Medecins du monde (MDM)	1	trauma programs
The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering (RDFL)	1	listening centers; social/psychological/legal counseling for GBV survivors.
Union of Relief and Development Associations (URDA)	0	Community convenings
International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)	1	Post-crisis recovery aid
Premiere Urgence - Aide Medicale Internationale (PU-AMI)	0	no evidence
Michel Daher Social Foundation - MDSF	0	Education/trauma-support elements
Lebanese center for human rights (CLDH)	1	rehabilitation services for victims of torture and families
CONCERN	0	psychosocial support
Common Space Initiative	2	explicitly aims to promote sustainable civil peace. engages in “action research” and comparative learning to inform peacebuilding strategies
Embrace	1	addresses the psychological wounds of war, violence, and instability
War Child Holland - WCH	1	provide psychosocial support, education, and child protection, inter-community engagement
Association Libanaise pour la Promotion Humaine et l'Alphabétisation (Alpha)	2	alternative education methods that instill tolerance and civic values, emphasizes social cohesion and justice, youth in civic activities that foster a culture of peace
Ana Aqra	1	educational, cultural, and psychosocial needs
Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy and Applied Care (IDRAAC)	2	studied the mental health impact of Lebanon's wars and designed interventions for those affected. trained public school teachers to act as mediators and promote tolerance. psychosocial support
MMKN	1	empowering youth with education and personal development as a way to foster a more peaceful, civically engaged generation. emphasis on “socially responsible citizens”
Ahla Fawda	2	aims to “empower individuals in vulnerable situations” with empathy and inclusivity. engage youth and community groups collaboratively
Al-Shouf Cedar Society	1	promoting community cohesion through a shared love of the environment
Arcenciel	2	bridging of differences, bringing together of different faiths, driver of post-war reconciliation
MADA	1	youth social cohesion/local development focus
Association Libanaise des chevaliers de Malte	1	camps promote solidarity and inclusion
BASSMA	1	trauma-adjacent social rehabilitation.
Bedayati	1	Youth skills, employability and inclusion programs
Beit el Baraka	0	no evidence
Fair Trade Lebanon	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Peacebuilding Score (0–3)	justification
Farah Social Foundation	1	Psychosocial support services for children/youth/families
FoodBlessed	1	Volunteer-driven soup kitchens and food-rescue that foster community solidarity
Georges N. Frem Foundation (GNFF)	0	no evidence
INITIATE	1	supporting inclusion and community solidarity
John Paul II Foundation	1	inclusion projects
Migration Services and Development - MSD	1	trauma-healing
Mercy USA	0	no evidence
People in Need Slovakia	0	no evidence
Substance Use treatment center (SKOUN)	1	trauma-healing
Utopia	2	conflict resolution training and teamwork workshops.reconciliation-oriented projects
Comitato Internazionale Per Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli (CISP)	0	no evidence
Norwegian Church Aid - NCA	0	no evidence
Reaching across Borders	1	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
Himaya Daeem Aataa (HDA) Association	1	programs for social cohesion and civic participation. women's leadership in recovery and reconciliation
Nawaya network	1	Nawaya addresses grievances. builds leadership and soft skills by involving youth in community projects, essentially training young people as positive change-makers in their communities
Ghawth	1	no evidence
Medical and Global Nutrition Aid (Magna)	1	post-conflict recovery and healing. aids in rebuilding local health systems
Medglobal	1	restoring human security and hope. psychosocial support
Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC)	2	helped war-torn villages replant forests and orchards. marginalized communities across Lebanon and empowers local groups to preserve natural resource
Borderless	1	centers promote social cohesion and tolerance from a young age.cultivates values of coexistence, empathy, and mutual aid. direct aid initiatives to families impacted by war
Hariri Foundation for Sustainable Human Development	1	Programs and local networks explicitly aim at social stability
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)	2	reconciliation as central. psychosocial programmes
SAFADI Foundation	1	objective is social cohesion and reducing sectarian mistrust
Salam LADC (Lebanese Association for Development and Communication)	2	projects aimed for social cohesion
YMCA	3	Peacebuilding program explicitly teaches life skills, conflict resolution and financial education to restore social cohesion
Humedica	0	no evidence
Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)	1	psychosocial care
World Rehabilitation fund (WRF)	1	rehabilitation and economic reintegration for war survivors
CESVI	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Peacebuilding Score (0–3)	justification
Zero tolerance to Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (ABAAD)	1	projects linking gender equality to peacebuilding. collective consciousness-raising
I'm possible	1	identifies peacebuilding as part of its mission. projects that bring together youth from different backgrounds to address local issues
Lebanese Union for People with Disabilities (LUPD)	2	pushed for a peace process at the crossing points dividing Beirut in 1985. Launched “Great Peace Process” in 1987/ ensure every part of Lebanese society is inclusive of all people with disabilities.
Berghof Foundation	3	publicly campaigning for peace and direct relief in war-time Lebanon, projects address root causes of conflict and build local capacity for peace. supports community initiatives on service delivery, transparency, and good governance. “cultural and dialogue activities” that deal with the past
Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD)	2	organized local consultations on implementing the National Anti-Corruption Plan. connecting Lebanese civil society with international peace efforts. has assisted behind the scenes in ensuring aid delivery across sectarian lines
Forward Thinking	2	engagements with Lebanese youth and community figures (often in London or regional workshops) equip them with conflict resolution skills and broaden their perspectives. mediated dialogues between Lebanese Sunni and Shia community representatives
Sant' Egidio	3	Sant'Egidio has focused on interfaith peacebuilding. organizes joint prayer services and community meals for Christians and Muslims. School of Peace program in Lebanon brings youth of different religions together for educational and recreational activities. Humanitarian Corridors project in Lebanon
Search for Common Ground	2	“Dialogue and Local Response Mechanisms to Conflict between Host Communities and Syrian Refugees”. introduced conflict resolution curricula and peace clubs in schools. women’s mediation networks

Appendix D

Religious and secular NGOs involvement in preventive dimplomacy in Lebanon

Name of NGO	Preventive Diplomacy Score (0-3)	justification
ACF Spain	1	engages in advocacy that aligns with preventive aims. urgent call for a ceasefire
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	1	Conflict-Sensitive Programming: Yes – ACTED's programming is designed with a conflict-sensitive approach. They “closely engage local communities and key stakeholders, including local governance bodies” to ensure aid delivery is inclusive. ACTED actively works with local authorities and community leaders. It adopts a “participatory-governance approach”
The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)	0	no evidence
Alawite Islamic Charity Association (AICA)	2	addresses underlying grievances that could lead to conflict AICA has participated in roundtables on the impact of the Syrian crisis on social cohesionworks across sectarian lines in Tripoli, encouraging community participation and “partnerships & community initiatives” that include different faith groups. being a local faith-based NGO, naturally interacts with religious leaders, community elders, and local authorities. It has worked alongside entities like the Lebanese Muslim-Christian Dialogue Network in Tripoli
AMEL	2	engages in advocacy on human rights and social issues which intersect with conflict risks.conflict-sensitivity mode. Amel's local credibility allows it to liaise between communities and authorities
American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA)	1	Anera frequently partners with local organizations, youth clubs, and community leaders to implement its projects. Anera's programs are designed to be inclusive and mitigate potential tensions
Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale (AVSI)	1	coordinates with local authorities, maintains good relations with community leaders in areas of operation
ARCS (Associazione Ricerca e Cooperazione)	1	engagement with community leaders and local civil society (including faith-based charities in other projects) contributes to easing local tensions and creating networks that can respond to disputes before they escalate.
CARE	1	CARE Lebanon hired a Conflict Sensitivity Consultant in 2020 to improve its understanding of community conflict settings and dynamics highly conflict-sensitive in Lebanon. CARE effectively engaged local political and community actors – for example, persuading them to maintain ceasefires while rehabilitation work was ongoing, or enlisting religious leaders' support to encourage community participation
Caritas Lebanon	2	Caritas Lebanon by nature works through local structures: it is connected to Catholic parishes across Lebanon and often partners with Islamic charities and municipal authorities on humanitarian projects. send a message of inter-faith solidarity. Caritas Lebanon's officials (and the Maronite Church to which it's linked) periodically call for dialogue and reconciliation in the country.
WeWorld-GVC (WW-GVC)	2	GVC helped set up early warning systems for floods and droughts. WeWorld participates in

Name of NGO	Preventive Diplomacy Score (0-3)	justification
ACF Spain	1	engages in advocacy that aligns with preventive aims. urgent call for a ceasefire
		the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan's Social Stability sector working group, which monitors tension indicators countrywide (led by UNDP). WeWorld invests in operational research on conflict sensitivity. Conflict sensitivity is at the core of WeWorld/GVC's methodology in Lebanon. organization's Safety, Prevention and Security Policy explicitly includes an early warning and preparedness component
Human Aid and Development (HAND)	0	nothing mentioned
Handicap International	0	no evidence
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	0	no evidence
Islamic Relief	0	Works via local religious leaders and mosques to distribute aid and identify vulnerable households, fostering trust
Lebanese organization for studies and training (LOST)	1	Works with municipalities to jointly plan infrastructure and service delivery.
MEDAIR	1	Conflict-sensitive programming: Yes — employs "Do No Harm" assessments to avoid inflaming local tensions before starting projects, Coordinates with municipal councils
Makhzoumi Foundation	1	Collaborates with municipal and national ministries
Mercy Corps	2	Works with local municipalities to implement youth projects and public infrastructure improvements, Participates in inter-agency coordination on community tension monitoring.
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	1	NRC applies "Do No Harm" principles and coordinates closely with municipalities to avoid inflaming tensions
OXFAM	1	Works with municipalities. Designs aid targeting to reduce competition over jobs and services
Plan International	0	no evidence
Relief International (RI)	1	Conducts needs assessments to target interventions without exacerbating tensions
SHEILD	1	active role in diffusing tensions through municipal partnerships
DanChurchAid (DCA)	1	Engages in advocacy for refugee protection and social cohesion. Coordinates projects with municipalities and local cooperatives
Development for People and Nature Association (DPNA)	2	Produces local studies on governance, participation, and social cohesion that inform policy and advocacy. Works directly with municipal councils, school administrations, and civil society networks to mediate tensions and coordinate community project. Participates in municipal-level needs and tension assessments, providing early indicators of potential conflict to local authorities and UN partners
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	2	Participates in Lebanon's inter-agency tension monitoring mechanism, Publishes policy briefs on eviction prevention, refugee rights, and equitable service access to mitigate conflict risks. Applies "Do No Harm" and conflict sensitivity approaches
Imam Sadr Foundation	1	Publicly calls for unity and dialogue during periods of national tension. Works through religious institutions and municipalities to coordinate programs
International Association for Relief and Development (Onsur)	0	Coordinates with local municipalities for aid distribution
Intersos	1	Applies "Do No Harm" principles in all programming. Works with municipalities and community leaders

Name of NGO	Preventive Diplomacy Score (0-3)	justification
ACF Spain	1	engages in advocacy that aligns with preventive aims. urgent call for a ceasefire
Key of Life	0	no evidence
World Vision International (WVI)	1	Participates in inter-agency monitoring of social tensionsCoordinates with municipalities, schools, and religious institutions to promote inclusive participation
Lebanese Red Cross (LRC)		LRC plays a role in disaster preparedness. Works closely with all segments of Lebanese society
La Guilde	0	no evidence
Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)	1	conflict-sensitive approach. engaging churches, community leaders, and sometimes Islamic charities or municipal authorities
Himaya	0	Himaya works closely with local actors like schools, municipalities, police, and religious leaders
KAFA	1	monitor trends in gender-based violence. cultural sensitivity. actively engages religious and political figures to achieve its goals
Real Medecine foundation (RMF)	1	designs programs to be conflict-sensitive. engages a wide array of local actors
SAWA Group	2	contributed to research reports by NGOs on refugee-host community relations. conflict sensitivity. establish community committees
Terre des Hommes Italy	1	Conflict-Sensitive Programming. Do not harm. actively engages local actors as part of its work
First Step together Association (FISTA)	0	engages a variety of local actors
Mouvement Social	2	advocate on socio-economic issues that intersect with conflict risk. highly conflict-sensitive by design. engages local actors at every level
Al Ribat Association	0	no evidence
Seenaryo	1	cultural sensitivities. engages local actors
Teach for Lebanon	0	no evidence
Al Majmouaa	0	no evidence
MERATH Lebanon	1	conflict sensitivity, works almost exclusively through local churches and faith-based organizations
Médecins Sans Frontières OCB (MSF-OCB)	0	conflict-sensitive operations, Engagement with Local Actors
Lebanese Social Responsibility - LSR	0	engagement with local actors
Nusaned	0	no evidence
Polish Center for International Aid Foundation (PCPM)	0	no evidence
RESTART Lebanon	1	Research/advocacy on risks of torture and detention; capacity-building and prevention programs
ShareQ	0	no evidence
Solidarités international	0	no evidence
Nabad	0	no evidence
Tabitha-Dorcas	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Preventive Diplomacy Score (0-3)	justification
ACF Spain	1	engages in advocacy that aligns with preventive aims. urgent call for a ceasefire
Naba'a	0	no evidence
Right to Play	0	no evidence
Secours Islamique France (SIF)	0	no evidence
International Medical Corps (IMC)	0	no evidence
The Lebanese Council To Resist Violence Against Woman (LECORVAW)	1	legal awareness and GBV prevention, engagement with local actors
Medecins du monde (MDM)	1	Research/advocacy on health risks
The Lebanese Women Democratic Gathering (RDFL)	0	no evidence
Union of Relief and Development Associations (URDA)	1	advocacy statements urging authorities/donors to keep schools open amid conflict
International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)	0	no evidence
Premiere Urgence - Aide Medicale Internationale (PU-AMI)	1	Conflict-sensitive design: explicitly aims to reduce inter-community tensions
Michel Daher Social Foundation - MDSF	0	no evidence
Lebanese center for human rights (CLDH)	0	no evidence
CONCERN	0	no evidence
Common Space Initiative	2	undertakes conflict mapping and stakeholder analyses to identify riskssupport. political dialogues
Embrace	0	no evidence
War Child Holland - WCH	1	War Child contributes to violence prevention by addressing root causes (trauma, lack of education) and by fostering trust and hope in communities torn by war
Association Libanaise pour la Promotion Humaine et l'Alphabétisation (Alpha)	1	building social fabrics that are resilient to conflict and responding to risk factors (like poverty, trauma, illiteracy) that can otherwise kindle unrest
Ana Aqra	1	By implementing conflict-sensitive education programs, the association helps prevent school-based tensions from escalating. vigilant attention to school dynamics plays a similar role on a micro scale.
Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy and Applied Care (IDRAAC)	2	addressing sources of friction early. xtensive research on war trauma, PTSD, and risk factors provides early warnings about the societal impacts of conflict
MMKN	1	preventing conflict by addressing basic needs
Ahla Fawda	1	helps alleviate sources of tension that could lead to conflict
Al-Shouf Cedar Society	0	no evidence
Arcenciel	2	“with interfaith understanding... conflict is less likely”
MADA	0	no evidence
Association Libanaise des chevaliers de Malte	1	“Sensitivity and Conflict Analysis” consultant. Advocacy/debate on Lebanon's stability at international level
BASSMA	0	no evidence
Bedayati	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Preventive Diplomacy Score (0-3)	justification
ACF Spain	1	engages in advocacy that aligns with preventive aims. urgent call for a ceasefire
Beit el Baraka	0	no evidence
Fair Trade Lebanon	0	no evidence
Farah Social Foundation	0	no evidence
FoodBlessed	0	no evidence
Georges N. Frem Foundation (GNFF)	0	no evidence
INITIATE	0	no evidence
John Paul II Foundation	0	no evidence
Migration Services and Development - MSD	1	advocacy for migrants
Mercy USA	0	no evidence
People in Need Slovakia	1	Humanitarian assessments and crisis reporting
Substance Use treatmenet center (SKOUN)	0	no evidence
Utopia	1	emphasis on pre-emptive social cohesion
Comitato Internazionale Per Lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli (CISP)	0	no evidence
Norwegian Church Aid - NCA	1	conflict-sensitive planning and advocacy. monitors conflict dynamics and adjusts its aid to prevent exacerbating tensions
Reaching across Borders	0	no evidence
Himaya Daeem Aataa (HDA) Association	1	delivered statements at international humanitarian forums
Nawaya network	0	no evidence
Ghawth	0	conflict-sensitive programming, coordinates with local authorities and other NGOs in humanitarian working groups
Medical and Global Nutrition Aid (Magna)	1	advocates for humanitarian pauses
Medglobal	1	advocacy and crisis response
Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC)	0	no evidence
Borderless	0	no evidence
Hariri Foundation for Sustainable Human Development	2	convened the national forum on preventing violent extremism. Uses dialogue platforms that function to identify and address tensions before escalation.
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)	0	no evidence
SAFADI Foundation	0	no evidence
Salam LADC (Lebanese Association for Development and Communication)	0	No evidence
YMCA	0	no evidence
Humedica	0	no evidence

Name of NGO	Preventive Diplomacy Score (0-3)	justification
ACF Spain	1	engages in advocacy that aligns with preventive aims. urgent call for a ceasefire
Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)	0	no evidence
World Rehabilitation fund (WRF)	0	no evidence
CESVI	0	no evidence
Zero tolerance to Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (ABAAD)	1	equip local actors and shelters for crisis response. Engages with religious leaders to addresses root cultural norms
I'm possible	1	equips its staff and volunteers with skills to identify risks. confidential reporting channels
Lebanese Union for People with Disabilities (LUPD)	2	actively promoted peace during the war years, organized public campaigns and petitions calling for ceasefires and safe passage.
Berghof Foundation	3	develops early warning and mediation capacities at the community level. trained and supported faith-based insider mediators. risk monitoring elements
Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD)	2	mission is explicitly to “prevent and resolve armed conflicts” through dialogue. local mediation in hotspots
Forward Thinking	3	gathering first-hand information and engaging local stakeholders on both sides of the border, Forward Thinking could feed insights to international diplomats and recommend de-escalation steps, helping to avert a wider war. convened an urgent online meeting of experts to discuss rising Israel–Hezbollah tensions
Sant' Egidio	3	commitment to inter-religious communication. Muslim-Christian dialogue conferences . public appeal for unity
Search for Common Ground	3	early warning network.produces periodic Conflict Analysis Reports for Lebanon. inter-religious rapid response activities