



ADULT LITERACY FOR REFUGEE WOMEN

SUPPORTING WOMEN AT RISK OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Within the last years of crisis in Lebanon, all types of gender-based violence - early marriage, domestic violence, sexual harassment, or exploitation - have been on the rise, and refugee women are at disproportionate risk of suffering from it. To help support women better, MERATH significantly scaled up the services provided to them through church partners.

This year, 230 refugee women were enrolled in adult literacy classes. These women, from different stages of life, have been given an opportunity they thought they would never have to learn to read and write and are proving to themselves, and to their families, that they are smart and capable.

In parallel, these women receive professional counselling and psychosocial support. They learn to better understand their emotions, those of people around them, and how to deal with them in a healthier way, in safe spaces where they can be open about their struggles without judgement and where they receive a compassionate, Christian response.



“Meet Hala

I have been teaching adult literacy to Syrian refugee women for years. For many, it is the first time someone thinks of them as individuals and gives them something that is just for them. It makes them feel special and gives them their dignity back.

After they reach a certain level of literacy, they can also teach their own children or follow up on their homework, and their children can reach their full potential. Educating women brings the entire family together.

In the time I have with the women, I also use every opportunity to raise awareness on social issues that they face in their community, such as early marriage or domestic violence. They ask me for advice, on how to raise their children for example. In everything, I try to teach them the Christian perspective, and to make them understand how much God values women.



FULL ARTICLE AND STORY

FROM SAFE SPACES TO HEALING PLACES

To make our learning centers in Lebanon even more healing, MERATH provided training in trauma-informed care to all the teachers in the adult literacy classes. The training focused on understanding trauma, its effect on the brain, and how to properly administer assistance according to Do No Harm principles while being trauma-informed. It was a great time of team-building and sharing experiences.

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HELPING WOMEN BY EDUCATING THEIR CHILDREN



After being displaced, Kamala's children spent three years without school. She shared: "I spent so many nights crying, worried about their future. I was very frustrated that my son was not able to read or write. Until one day, as an answer to prayer, I heard about the center. That discovery changed our life. The children love it and are so happy. I am myself more relaxed, and I have more alone time to take care of the house and the cooking and do everything I have to do."

[Full story](#)

STANDING BY WOMEN INSIDE SYRIA

Amina was pulled out of school at age 12 and sent to work, shortly before being married off to a man who treated her horribly for many years. She shared: "Previously, all I saw in myself was a broken woman feeling trapped, with nowhere safe and no door to salvation. But after attending the church's women's center, I discovered in me abilities that I did not know existed. The perception of those around me changed too. For the first time, I feel my voice is heard, and people even seek my advice. Today, I am a skilled seamstress, I have ambition, friends, and great hope."

[Full story](#)



MERATH comes alongside local churches and faith-based organizations to implement relief and development projects for vulnerable families in the Middle East



MERATH is the relief and development arm of Thimar (previously known as LSED). MERATH and Thimar benefit from the support of MEBO, a 501(c)(3) corporation that coordinates efforts among our US friends.