

# JORDAN INGO FORUM NEWSLETTER



JORDAN  
INGO  
FORUM



## December Update JIF SECRETARIAT

### THIS ISSUE:

Mercy Corps.....	2
La Chaîne de l'Espoir-France ICDE-F	3
IRC.....	4
EFE Jordan.....	5
Blumont.....	5
CARE.....	7
Humanity & Inclusion.....	8
IOCC.....	9
JRS.....	10
UMR.....	11
Medair.....	12
SAMS.....	13
Jusoor.....	14
LWF JORDAN.....	15
Habitat for Humanity.....	16

The Jordan INGO Forum is pleased to share the latest edition of our newsletter.

You will find inspirational stories of work some of our 59 members are doing in Jordan that provide granularity to a common thread that motivates our members: responding to humanitarian needs of refugees and vulnerable Jordanians while contributing to long term resilience pathways in coordination with the Government of Jordan, local civil society actors, UN agencies, donors and others in the aid community.

Jordan is facing significant challenges with high levels of youth unemployment coupled with increasing humanitarian needs in the background of dwindling humanitarian assistance. The war in Gaza continues with a rising number of civilian casualties as ceasefire remains elusive and concerns on regional instability loom menacingly.

Jordan continues to demonstrate leadership in these difficult times while it grapples with its domestic worries. We hope that these stories provide a beacon of hope and further deepen our commitment to serve those most in need – now and in the future!

# MERCY CORPS

*Mercy Corps closes its Inclusive Education Program after more than a decade of service*



*a joyful -6year-old with Down syndrome, enjoying playtime with her classmates at Mercy Corps-supported inclusive school*

After a transformative -12year journey, Mercy Corps' Inclusive Education Program has come to an end. On a new ["Pathway to Possibility"](#), and in alignment with a revised Country Strategy and global direction, Mercy Corps has concluded the process of phasing out direct implementation in the Education sector.

In pursuit of a responsible transition and exit strategy, Mercy Corps conducted meetings with key stakeholders - including partners, donors, and the Ministry of Education. These meetings served the dual purpose of communicating the phased conclusion of the Inclusive Education program and underscoring the paramount significance of sustaining Inclusive Education services in the years to come.

Over the course of the last quarter, Mercy Corps dedicated its efforts to maintaining service continuity while ensuring all programmatic targets were achieved at the highest standards. This commitment was exemplified by the organization's readiness to share over a decade of accumulated experience and learning with partner organizations, fostering a sense of ownership and mutual benefit.

On October 25th, a final closeout workshop took place with the notable presence of the Ministry of Education, as well as other NGOs, and donors associated with Inclusive Education programming. The workshop commenced with a deeply moving speech from the Ministry of Education expressing gratitude to Mercy Corps for their unwavering efforts. Following this, the Inclusive Education Project Manager presented a comprehensive overview of the remarkable journey undertaken by Mercy Corps' Inclusive Education program - helping 6,000 children with disabilities and more than 2,000 teachers across 121 schools in all governorates, including Azraq and Zaatari Camps.

A significant aspect of the workshop involved various members of Mercy Corps' technical team sharing their experiences, accompanied by the distribution of tools and manuals stored on flash memory cards to all participants. This collaborative event instilled great optimism, fostering the belief that stakeholders and partners would embrace and carry forward the initiatives pioneered by Mercy Corps and ensure the continued and sustained provision of Inclusive Education services to those most in need.

Working in the Inclusive Education Sector and serving people living with disabilities has been an honor and an unforgettable experience for Mercy Corps. The organization would like to express its sincerest gratitude to all those who have been part of this journey. Our success would not have been possible without the hard work, collaboration, partnership, and generosity experienced along the way.

With direct implementation in the Education Sector drawing to a close, our dedication to the prosperity of the communities we serve persists. We are confident that the foundation laid by the Inclusive Education program will continue to thrive through the continued collaborative efforts among those stakeholders remaining in the sector.

## LA CHAÎNE DE L'ESPOIR – FRANCE ICDE-F

### *Journey of Hope and Resilience: Sarah's and her family story*

In a world where hope is a flicker in the darkness, Sarah's journey stands as a testament to resilience, compassion, and the transformative power of unwavering support. A 5-year-old Syrian girl, her story begins in the heart of Jordan, where her family navigates the challenging landscapes of life. Living in a humble tent near their workplace, they traverse various governorates, seeking work and clinging to hope amidst their precarious reality.

Sarah's birth was a moment of both joy and heartache. Her mother, who had a relatively smooth pregnancy, went through the turmoil of a C-section birth only to receive the shocking news that her precious daughter had clubbed hands. It was a silent blow, and each knock on doors seeking aid echoed with emptiness. The family found themselves caught in a relentless storm of despair, the weight of helplessness pressing on their hearts.

Yet, within this turbulence, a glimmer of hope emerged. A beacon shone in the form of a

Facebook post announcing an opportunity for Sarah, a chance at a brighter tomorrow. The year was 2020, and it marked the beginning of a journey for Sarah. The CDE Surgical Mission for Clubbed Hands offered her a consultation, igniting a spark of healing in her young life.

Supported by the compassionate wings of La Chaîne de l'Espoir - France, co-funded by the AFD - Agence Française de Développement, Sarah found herself in the capable hands of Professor and Surgeon Dr. Philippe Valenti. His skills and expertise helped Sarah through 2 phases of surgeries; in June 2020 and May 2022, marking crucial moments in Sarah's quest to regain functionality in her hands.

However, Sarah's struggle was not merely physical. The limitations her condition imposed on her social life and education left her feeling isolated and lacking in confidence. Her mother, too, faced overwhelming anxiety and sleepless nights, burdened with worry and uncertainty about her daughter's future.



### Building our Strength: Sarah's family Journey

*"When I received the call from CDE I felt like there is still hope in our life, when we did the first surgery, I felt more relaxed and happier as my daughter will have the ability, to use her hands, for eating, playing, and being more independent"*

*Sarah's fathers' said*



## *When Communities fuse into one*

IRC East Amman Center— For women in East Amman’s underserved communities, safe spaces are scarce. As protection funding is dwindling, finding a space for women and girls to seek help, escape the routine and socialize becomes quite challenging.

IRC’s East Amman center remains one of the few -if not the only- safe space exclusively attending to the needs of women and girls in the entirety of East Amman. This transformed the space from a place of solace to also become a supporting community of women from different nationalities with common needs.

IRC sat down with a handful of women who are community members, to reflect on their experiences in the space, how they became an active member of this all women community, and the sense of solidarity that grew within its members.

“A single hand can’t clap,” said Namariq, a Sudanese woman residing in Jordan. “We are from different nationalities, we come from different places, but we went through the same experiences, we are all here fleeing something, some of us lost their properties, loved ones, or fell into poverty, so we understand each other’s struggle,” she added.

The women agreed that the space is the main pillar for establishing this community. Through the women group sessions, the

participants learned new skills, built relations and friendships, and found an understanding community that can help in times of distress.

“I met many people here, we developed a relation, and even started projects together. We got to know each other in the sessions, and shortly after we realized that we have so much in common, that is when we developed a relationship and started exploring ways to support one another,” added Namariq.

Namariq’s approach proved beneficial. Shortly after she met Fawzya, an Iraqi female refugee while attending sessions in the center, they realized that they could start a micro business making and selling chocolate.

“It’s a different culture here in Jordan compared to Sudan, for instance people here offer chocolates, or sweets during celebrations, so Fawzya and I saw an opportunity to start a home-based business making and selling chocolates, and we will utilize our network to market and sell, and I am sure the women here will support us,” concluded Namariq.

The women realized that behind the differences lies similarities that bring women closer to support one another, making this space and similar ones a platform for women from different communities to find solidarity and support.





# EFE JORDAN

## *Dalia's Story*

23 years-old Dalia is a hard-working and bright young woman.

She graduated with a degree in Nuclear Engineering in 2022. After graduating she wanted to join the workforce and thus, she wasted no time and began searching for jobs and training opportunities.

During her search, she came across an opportunity: the 'Basics of Management in the Garment Production Sector' training program under the Uni-Match project.



This training offered her a training experience which would equip her with new skills and prepare her to work in high and middle management positions. Dalia felt this was a suitable chance which fit her ambitions, she

quickly registered through the training ad posted by EFE-Jordan and enrolled.

During the -6months training program, Dalia was provided with theoretical and practical trainings.

“The theoretical classes prepared me for the technical part, during which we interned in different sections of the factories based on our skills. I gained a lot of knowledge and experienced working in the garment management sector, how detail-oriented the work is and how the smallest numbers can have a big effect.” Dalia said.

Dalia felt she truly benefited from this training, “I advise anyone looking to learn about management to join this training program.”

Throughout the training, the participants were graded based on various exams and presentations, and Dalia graduated from the program as the top student with the highest marks.

Now, Dalia has begun her career with Classic and is making an income for herself after being employed in one of the many Classic factories located in Al-Hassan Industrial Estate in Ramtha. She's very grateful for this opportunity and the doors it has opened in her life.

# BLUMONT

## *Refugee Women Empowered with Solar Energy Skills*

Ibtisam and Eman arrived at the Za'atari Camp in Jordan in 2013 as refugees from Dara'a in southwest Syria. Both women had to end their formal education early in life (6th grade and high school, respectively), and both came to the camp with their families and a sense of uncertainty about the future.

The two women took on different jobs over the years to earn an income or contribute to their community, but always found themselves wanting to do more. Earlier this year, courses for camp residents in “Domestic Electricity and Solar Energy Systems” sparked an interest

and new ideas for Ibtisam and Eman.

The electricity and solar course at the camp's Innovation Lab was organized by the Innovation Committee (comprised of residents representative of the community's gender, age, and abilities) to help people build the skills they need to maximize the effectiveness of solar power systems. Camp residents are heavily reliant on solar power to meet their daily electricity needs, but maintenance, the cost of batteries, and inefficiencies can create costly challenges.

In signing up for the course, Eman said: “My primary goal was to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to handle electrical issues in my home independently, as I felt uncomfortable inviting an electrician over.”

Funded by UNHCR and implemented by Blumont and the Innovation Committee, the courses covered content ranging from the basics of electricity to the intricacies of solar energy systems.

“Trainers facilitated hands-on learning, and this significantly enhanced my understanding in the course,” said Eman. “In the past, I was apprehensive about electricity and connections, but now I am confident in my abilities.”

Ibtisam immersed herself in learning about the components of systems and remembers when she first saw the knowledge translate into practice.

“I vividly recall the moment when I pressed the power button and saw the lightbulb illuminate,” she said. “This was an unforgettable achievement for me.”

“Currently, there are around 200 graduates from this course and new cohorts are still ongoing,” said Emran Abu Murshid, the Innovation Lab lead. “We hope the impact of this training will be reflected in the reduction of fire incidents caused by faulty electric connections inside the camp and that this will offer new job opportunities for those who completed the course.”

Since the course, Ibtisam has fine-tuned her home’s solar energy system so her family can have a reliable daily power supply. Her skills are lighting up the homes of those around her as well. Ibtisam reprogrammed her neighbor’s system, providing the family with extended power each day. Her friend is thrilled as electricity helps her complete household tasks and work with her children on educational activities.

“I take pride in offering my expertise for free,” Ibtisam said. “I help people save on the expense of hiring a technician for maintenance.”

Eman hopes to continue her education in the electricity field, looking for more advanced training and further practical application.

“My aspiration is to provide guidance and advice to women in my community and establish a career in the field of electricity,” she said. “I want to challenge societal norms and customs that discourage women from pursuing certain professions.”

Ibtisam is also encouraging other women to join future workshops, both for what it can do for their households and for what it can do for themselves.



*“This experience taught me that life isn’t as challenging as it may seem,” she said. “We are capable of accomplishing tasks we never thought possible.”*

## *Resilient Roots: A Mother's Hope*

In a world torn by conflict, there existed a story of love, bravery, and resilience. It was the story of Farah\*, a refugee who had left her beloved Syria and found herself in Jordan, along with her husband. Their journey began with a heavy heart and a silver of hope, driven by the desire for a safer and better life for their unborn children.

Farah's homeland had once been a place of warmth, laughter, and the comforting embrace of family. "It was a place where children played freely in the streets, and the sound of laughter filled in the air during warm summer evenings," she expressed. In year 2014, as the tides of war swept through their homeland, Farah and husband made the hard decision to leave, fearing for the safety of their family.

Their life in Jordan was filled with uncertainty, hardship, and countless challenges. Farah and her husband were determined to rebuild their lives, and they held to the love that had brought them together. Her husband struggled to find work, often relying on irregular jobs in Tile Production and Installation. Farah, who had only completed school up to the sixth grade, found herself taking on various roles just to make ends meet, while he did whatever he could to secure their family's future.

Over the years, they were blessed with three beautiful daughters. "They are my hope, my dream and the reason I keep moving forward despite all the overwhelming odds". Farah strongly believed that education was the key to a better future for their children, a chance to break free from the uncertainty they faced. However, destiny had other plans for their family. One fateful day, her husband left for work as usual, but he never returned. He disappeared without a trace, leaving Farah and their three daughters in a state of suffering. The weight of responsibility fell entirely on Farah's fragile shoulders. She had to take the full charge of caring for her family, all while carrying the heavy burden of her husband's absence.

With tears welling up in her eyes, she uttered,

"One day, I got an unusual call from him. He informed me that he had traveled to another country and could not reveal its name over the phone. He expressed his desire to secure a stable job and establish a better life for us before we join him. Its been half a year since that call," she continued, "it worries me because I am well aware of the debt he's accumulated. Otherwise, how could he afford to make the journey?"

Life became an endless struggle. Farah, with the little knowledge and skills she possessed, tried her best to provide for her children. "I rely completely on humanitarian aid to pay rent, feed my daughters, buy their needs and put them through school."

One day, Farah's neighbor informed her about CARE International in Jordan, encouraging her to visit the nearest community center in Hashemi Shamali, East Amman, to enroll herself. A few days later, the staff reach out to Farah, and she benefitted from the multiple payments, funded by the Ministry of Germany. Over time, she received three payments, "Whenever I receive a payment, I allocate a part of it to cover the house rent and then immediately head to the market to buy food and clothing to my children."

Farah's dreams were simple, yet profound. She wanted her daughters to receive the education she never had the opportunity to complete. She saw in them the potential to fulfill their dreams, to become doctors, teachers, or engineers. She held onto the hope that one day, her daughters would stand on their own feet, unburdened by the hardships that she had endured. "My heart is filled with pride and joy as she I watch my daughters grow into intelligent and ambitious young women."

She is a mother who sacrificed her own dreams to ensure a brighter future for her daughters. Farah's love, resilience, and hope are a reminder that, even in the darkest of times, the flame of hope can burn brightly, lighting the path to a better tomorrow.



# HUMANITY & INCLUSION

## *Rebuilding Lives: Madiha's Journey*

Madiha, a 53-year-old Syrian woman, found herself facing a multitude of challenges when she sought help at the Community Rehabilitation Center in Al-Baqa'a Camp, one of HI's partners. Her life was marked by physical difficulties, emotional distress, and the burdens of daily existence in a foreign land. Madiha's journey towards recovery and well-being showcases the importance of comprehensive support for refugees in Jordan.

Madiha's physical health was in a state of confusion, with back and knee pain adding to her already complex medical history, which included hypertension, diabetes, poor eyesight, and high cholesterol levels. These conditions made even the simplest tasks a struggle. However, through a series of physical therapy sessions, her life took a turn for the better. Her mobility improved, her pain lessened, and she could perform daily activities with newfound ease.



But the challenges Madiha faced extended beyond her physical health. The psychological scars of war had left her with post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic anxiety, and nightmares. She felt isolated and overwhelmed. The intervention didn't stop at physical therapy; it included deep psychological support. Madiha engaged in relaxation exercises, group therapy, and women's empowerment activities, gradually shedding the emotional burdens that had weighed her down for so long.

Madiha's transformation was a testament to her determination and the unwavering support she received. Her self-confidence soared, and her social interactions improved as she learned to manage stress and anxiety. Her family relationships also noticed a positive shift. The process wasn't just about healing physical ailments; it was a holistic journey towards reclaiming her life.

Madiha's hopes extend beyond her own well-being. She dreams of more psychosocial support sessions, a testament to the ongoing journey toward self-discovery and emotional healing. She also aspires to improve her financial situation, which continues to be a source of stress in her life. With the proper support and resources, Madiha and others like her can continue to rebuild their lives and create a brighter future, both for themselves and their communities.



## *Cash-for-Rent Support Enables Sudanese Refugee to Afford Other Basic Need*



*Abdel Azim is pictured here, signing the trilateral agreement with IOCC and his landlord, prior to receiving cash-for-rent assistance.*

Abdel Azim is a 40-year-old refugee from Sudan, residing in Amman. Prior to fleeing conflict in Sudan, Abdel Azim was a primary school teacher. He and his family had to leave home in 2018 after receiving death threats, and they ultimately settled in Jordan.

Since relocating, Abdel Azim and his family—his wife and six children ages one to nine—have faced numerous challenges. They arrived in Amman without any money or belongings, making it extremely challenging to afford basic needs. Moreover, one of Abdel Azim’s children is anemic, and Abdel Azim has epilepsy, requiring medication that he receives through humanitarian assistance. In addition to these challenges, the family faces discrimination from neighbors and the wider community because of their race and ethnicity.

Abdel Azim is unable to legally work in Jordan because non-Syrian refugees cannot obtain work permits. Because of his situation, Abdel Azim relies on assistance from humanitarian

organizations, such as the World Food Programme, as well as from friends and acquaintances to cover his family’s basic needs, including food.

Abdel Azim was referred to IOCC’s cash-for-rent project, funded by Diakonie ACT Austria (DAA), based on his immense needs. IOCC conducted a vulnerability assessment and identified his family’s priority needs as rent and utilities. Because of the family’s inability to cover these costs, they were turning to negative coping mechanisms, such as limiting meals or not eating, not drinking water, living without electricity, and heavily relying on assistance from friends and neighbors to make ends meet.

With support from DAA, IOCC provided three months of cash-for-rent assistance for Abdel Azim. While their rent was covered, the family was able to use the little money they now had available for other needs, including clothing for their children and sufficient quantities of food. Abdel Azim thanked IOCC for the assistance; however, continuous, sustainable support is needed for non-Syrian refugees like Abdel Azim and his family to cover basic costs and continue living in a dignified way.

## *Dance of Life: a mural of dancers to celebrate diversity, belonging, community, and peace by Khulood A., from Yemen, participant to JRS mural project*

If you cross the heart of the vibrant capital of Jordan, Amman, specifically Al Ledd Street in Jabal Al-Hussein neighborhood, you will find a colorful mural decorating the wall of a building that was previously ordinary and has now turned into a testament to unity and inclusiveness. A visual symphony that beautifully embodies the values of diversity, belonging, community, and peace.

With the participation of volunteers of different nationalities, genders, and ages, the mural is the result of a participatory project organized by JRS Jordan and Al Balad Theater, as part of the annual Baladak Street Art Festival, sponsored by AFD and AGIAMONDO. The project aimed at highlighting the beauty of the multiple cultures in Jordan, through street art, by conveying this message through an urban, attention-grabbing, and unique method.

At first glance, the mural appears to be a mesmerizing celebration of movement. It captures the essence of diverse individuals engaged in a synchronized dance, their silhouettes flowing together seamlessly. Warm pastel colors bath the scene in a gentle, inviting glow, evoking feelings of comfort and acceptance.



The dancers' poses reflect the rich diversity of the refugee and local communities in Jordan, made of people coming from different countries, such as Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Syria and many more. Some characters spin gracefully. Others reach out in welcoming gestures, as if they would invite the passer-byes to join them. These dancers represent many backgrounds, cultures, and identities. Each dancer, though unique in appearance and expression, is an integral part of the whole. Their interconnectedness forms the heart of the mural, demonstrating that we all have a place in this collective dance of life.

Peace is not just the absence of conflict. It is the presence of understanding, compassion, and respect! This is a message that the participants were keen to highlight through this artwork.

The mural stands as a visual testament to the idea that diversity is not a challenge to be overcome but a gift to be celebrated. As myself a participant in this mural, together with the other volunteers, I felt grace in every moment we have filled with our laughter, jokes, and in joining our hands, helping each other and painting together. The mural message challenges us to embrace our differences, foster a sense of belonging, and actively contribute to building a society in which everyone can thrive. It invites us to pause, reflect, and acknowledge the beauty that emerges when we come together in the spirit of unity and peace. The words on the mural tell to the passer-byes: "Dance with life", "In diversity we complete each other", "Build bridges of peace, instead of the walls of division".

As the sun sets, the mural's warm pastels take on a soft, ethereal glow, casting a calming spell on those who pass by. It is a beacon of hope and inspiration, encouraging us to continue working towards a world where diversity is cherished, everyone feels they belong, communities thrive, and peace prevails.

The "Dance of Life" is a shining testimony to our shared human experience and our collective journey toward a brighter, more inclusive future. It is a call to action, urging us to dance through life with open hearts and reach out with friendship, acceptance, and love. In the end, all of this won't happen if it's not for our desire for change, and for our personal and collective contribution to it.





## Back to school camping

United Medical Relief (UMR) goes beyond conventional medical aid, demonstrating a multifaceted approach that transforms lives. Collaborating with the Ministry of Social Development, UMR distributed 200 school bags, stationery, and uniforms to underprivileged children, providing essential tools for learning and instilling hope. Their dedication to nurturing young talents highlights their commitment to holistic development.

## Winterization

As the colder months approach, UMR is gearing up for their upcoming winterization campaign, set to launch within a month. This initiative ensures vulnerable communities have the warmth they need to endure the harsh winter, showcasing UMR's anticipation and readiness to make a difference.

## Autism Advocacy

UMR reached a significant milestone by launching their first advocacy campaign for autistic children, sponsored by the Ministry of Social Development. This event brought together representatives from international organizations, the United Nations, government officials, and received extensive media coverage. Their advocacy campaign raises awareness and promotes inclusivity for autistic children, fostering a more compassionate society.

## Gaza Crisis

In the midst of global humanitarian crises, the brilliance of collaboration and compassion shines through. United Mission Relief (UMR) actively collaborates with the Jordan

Hashemite Charity Organization to deliver essential humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza. This partnership, born out of the current regional crisis, is dedicated to providing critical aid to the suffering population in Gaza.

## 5 days Free Medical camping

Collaboration can be a powerful force for positive change, as seen in United Mission Relief (UMR) and their partner, Imana's recent -5day free medical mission. They reached out to 1,400 beneficiaries from impoverished communities, offering healthcare services to those who may otherwise have none. This mission showcases the transformative power of their generosity, uplifting entire communities and providing a lifeline to better health and well-being.



## *Voices from Jordan*

Medair provides mobility aid assistance to elderly and persons with permanent and/or temporary disabilities. Since January 2023, Medair has distributed 1,109 devices (walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, beds etc) to 376 individuals in Amman, Irbid, Mafraq and Zarqa. Devices are customized according to individual needs.

Ahmad is 12 years old, a Syrian refugee, and a recipient of mobility aid assistance from Medair. Ahmad came to Jordan in 2014, and lives with his grandmother, who is his main caregiver. Ahmad was born with disabilities and has a spinal fracture which prevents him from walking or sitting. Prior to Medair's assistance, Ahmad was unable to leave his home, attend school or visit the hospital. Ahmad is required to visit the hospital every 3 months to have a brain X-ray taken, and every 6 months to have a spinal column X-ray.

After Ahmad received a wheelchair from Medair, he was able to go outside from time to time and play with other children. Ahmad can also attend school and go to the hospital when he needs necessary medical care. Ahmad's

grandmother shared: "I'm an elderly woman, and I can't physically assist him. The wheelchair was such a miracle for him, he is extremely happy to engage with other children outside. His attitude has transformed, I can feel how much happiness the chair brings him".

Ahmad's family commented that he used to be angry and violent, but after he received a wheelchair, his behaviour improved. The wheelchair allowed him to meet children and make friends, helping him to feel less confined in his home. Ahmad dreams of becoming a photographer and he wants to complete his education and enroll in university. Ahmad shared how he felt before Medair assisted him: "I couldn't bear staying at home all day, I felt so lonely, while other children played outside and went to the supermarket. I was stuck at home watching them doing nothing".



*Nawal, Social Protection Officer, with Ahmad in his new wheelchair*

## *Meral's Success Story: Turning Challenges into Triumph with SAMS*

“Thanks to the doctor, the SAMS clinic, and her therapists, Meral is now in great shape and can rely on herself. It's not just me who noticed the difference; everyone around her has observed this remarkable transformation,” says Meral's mother.

Meral, a 5-year-old, faced significant mobility challenges due to difficulties she encountered during her birth, resulting from oxygen deficiency. She struggled mightily during her attempts to move, unable to use her limbs naturally. Her daily life was entirely dependent on the support of others.

Meral's mother sought help at the SAMS Rehabilitation Clinic, located in the Comprehensive Health Center in Bayader Wadi Al-Seer, Jordan. There, Meral underwent a thorough examination by a rehabilitation doctor who developed a personalized treatment plan for her.

Meral's mother says, “We began the physical therapy and rehabilitation sessions with the therapists. After just three sessions, we began to notice a difference. As her mother, I started to see her relying on herself. And now, after ten treatment sessions, Meral can fully depend on herself.”

Meral's story embodies the spirit of determination and resilience. With the rehabilitation sessions and family support, she has developed her skills exceptionally. Today, you can see Meral running, playing, and exploring the world with joy and determination. She is achieving her dreams and overcoming challenges.

Meral's story serves as a reminder that, in the face of challenges, we can achieve success with determination and hard work. We are proud of her progress and believe she has a bright future ahead.

The SAMS clinic is overseen by a rehabilitation doctor and two therapists, providing rehabilitation and physical therapy services to Syrian refugees and the host community. In 2023, the clinic offered 3,963 medical services and 3,080 rehabilitation sessions benefiting 985 individuals.

We thank all the supporters and admirers of the SAMS organization for their ongoing support. Together, we provide hope and opportunities for children like Meral to build a better future.







Launched earlier this month, ‘Championing Women in Business Leadership’ by Jusoor is dedicated to tackling the distinct obstacles encountered by women entrepreneurs during the initial stages of launching their companies in the MENA region.

According to Forbes Middle East, women-led businesses make up less than %5 of the MENA’s total businesses, compared to a global average of 23% to 26% even though a study of 300 companies showed that investing in companies with at least one woman co-founder outperform all men founder teams by 63 %.

Women-only interventions occasionally face skepticism for the potential reinforcement of stereotypes of women needing special assistance; resistance to changing traditional gender norms; or misconceptions that such programs are ‘anti-men.’ However, Jusoor’s intervention responds to data that simultaneously indicate that women entrepreneurs have exceptional talent and market performance, while also facing unique barriers to establishing themselves as leaders in the current environment. Indeed, significantly more women are now engaged in entrepreneurship, however only a small proportion have had the opportunity and support to become full-fledged business leaders in the MENA region.

By building on women business leaders’ innovative ideas and technical expertise, Jusoor’s intervention will empower a critical

decision-making moment for many **Arab women founders** when growing from startups to ecosystem leaders. We will help bridge the opportunity and societal support gap by opening key doors to top-tier (1) leadership coaching, (2) business infrastructure experts, (3) role models and mentors, and (4) pre-seed funding.

As we finish the selection process in December after the applications closed, the selected participants will go through the program online over nine months, starting January 2024. Jusoor will provide support to women startup founders and co-founders through an in-depth 1:1 needs assessment, each leader will receive 20 hours of tailored 1:1 sessions with business experts and consultants; 16 leadership group coaching sessions; networking with other founders, and exclusive opportunities to meet and engage with well-known Arab women CEOs and Founders. Selected participants will also receive 10,000\$ in pre-seed grant money, to help grow their businesses and secure investments.

Our project’s distinctive trademark is Jusoor’s holistic approach and creation of the multiplier effect through peer support. The project’s ultimate goal is to strengthen women’s leadership skills, mindset, and network in business, and in doing so pipeline women-led businesses to the region’s accelerators and sustainable success in the MENA region and beyond.

## *Empowering Through Threads: A Tale of Resilience in Za'atari Camp*

In the heart of Za'atari Camp, where tales of resilience unfold daily, Maha Abdo Al-Assi, a 54-year-old woman from Daraa, Syria, weaves a compelling narrative of overcoming adversity. Maha, a mother of seven, embarked on a journey marked by societal norms that restricted her education. At 13, she enrolled in a sewing center, abandoning her passion due to cultural constraints on girls attending.

Maha's life took a turn at 16 when she married and relocated from the bustling city to the serene countryside of Daraa. The harsh realities of life with limited means to support her growing family led her back to sewing, a skill she honed to make ends meet. However, the ravages of war shattered the climax of 27 years of hard work as she and her husband tirelessly built a home.

In 2013, seeking refuge in Jordan, Maha confronted life's challenges in Za'atari Camp. The initial nights in a tent were fraught with fear, exposed to the elements without solid walls. After months of uncertainty, they found some stability in a caravan. Maha's resilience led her to secure employment at the UN Women's Oasis, providing a semblance of normalcy amid the upheaval.



Tragedy struck in 2015 when Maha's husband passed away, thrusting her into a five-year struggle to find employment. Isolation gripped her as her daughters got married, and she relied solely on monthly assistance from the UNHCR, a meager 15 dinars. With asthma requiring 22 dinars monthly for medication and facing a health issue requiring surgery, Maha found herself in a precarious situation, unable to cover the expenses.

A turning point came when Maha visited the LWF center a few months ago. Initially volunteering without compensation, she sought connection and a reprieve for her mental state. As opportunities for paid work surfaced in the sewing workshop, Maha became one of the selected volunteers. This provided her with income for sustenance and facilitated the much-needed surgery. Today, Maha sews with love, crafting baby kits and school uniforms, finding solace and productivity.

In her own words, Maha shares, "I've found comfort for my mind and body here. I feel productive and don't rely on anyone for work or support." She adds, "When women grow older in the camp, they are expected to stay home as if awaiting their fate." Discovering the art of sewing opened her eyes to a family legacy, a skill that requires new ideas and, with a positive mental state, yields even more beautiful outcomes. Maha has found herself in this newfound purpose and hopes to continue her journey of empowerment and creativity. Her story stands as a testament to the transformative impact of the LWF project, not just on individuals but on the collective resilience of the Za'atari community.



# HABITAT FOR HUMANITY



By 2020, the Palestinian population in Jordan had reached 2.4 million according to official statistics from UNRWA; the UN relief and works agency for Palestinian refugees. UNRWA established 10 Palestinian refugee camps on Jordanian territory, with lease contracts from the Jordanian government for a period of 99 years. The lease entitled residents the “right to use” the land in four governorates (Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, and Jerash).

The three parties (Jordanian government, CIC and UNRWA) cooperate to improve the camps’ infrastructure, including roads, pathways and water drainage networks.

There is a stark absence of social, health and educational resources and inadequacy in meeting the camps’ growing population’s needs. These inadequacies perpetuate poor standards of living. The camps often lack access to basic amenities depriving residents, especially vulnerable groups, of essential services. The shortage of decent building facilities for healthcare service providers and social service centers for example accentuates barriers to well-being and social and/or economic development. This deficiency highlights the urgent need for comprehensive building rehabilitation interventions that directly address fundamental gaps and

promote safer, healthier, and more empowering environment for camp residents.

Expansion and restoration efforts are imperative to meet the demands of the growing number of camp residents requiring support.

Habitat for Humanity in Jordan most recently granted two new projects. The first project, titled “Orphan and Vulnerable Group Fund: Camp Improvement and Community Empowerment,” is built around the concept of the implementation of expansion and rehabilitation works within the communal facilities that provide essential services to communities inside Palestinian camps in Jordan. Through these efforts, support will be provided to implementing partners to ensure effective and sustainable upgrades and rehabilitation works are implemented at selected communal facilities, ultimately improving safety, contributing to wellbeing, and creating healthier environments where these services are provided. Talking about the estimated number of beneficiaries, the project will support 8 communal facilities in the Hitten camp: 50% Palestinians, 25% Jordanians, and 25% Syrians. 12,000 individuals will benefit from the project. At least 10,000 individuals will directly benefit from the expansion and rehabilitation services provided at the communal



centers, and more than 35 job opportunities will open inside the camp (87 individuals) during construction.

The second project title, “Palestinian Refugee Residential Renewal (P3R): Building Dignified Lives,” is centered around a holistic home maintenance and improvement approach designed to respond to the housing needs of vulnerable Palestinian, Syrian, and Jordanian families residing in Palestinian refugee camps in the Kingdom. The project aims to renovate and enhance households and improve living conditions through interventions that directly address safety and contribute to healthier environments. It strives to contribute to dignity and stability among camp residents by encouraging and including local labor in maintenance and renovation work. The project will support 85 households (the average household size is 5 members) in the Palestinian camps, which will be divided as follows: 50% Palestinians, 25% Jordanians, and 25% Syrians.

It is worth mentioning that Habitat for Humanity also worked in the Talbiyah camp through the years 2020-2018 with wide interventions, we have done maintenance for 285 homes and improving numerous public facilities through communal projects in partnership with the Department of Palestinian Affairs, UNRWA, and a number of stakeholders in the camp, these projects include maintenance, expansion & upgrading works were carried out for public facilities that provide basic services to the camp residents, the most prominent of which is the maintenance of Talbieh Park and providing it with toys, the maintenance of kindergartens and the preparation of pedestrian sidewalks in front of schools and health centers affiliated with UNRWA. There were also environmentally friendly interventions, including the installation of solar panels for the community rehabilitation center for the PwDs.