



TENT SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2023



Peace and Opportunity

Classrooms are havens for recovering kids



Mobile education in Bekaa Valley inches forward despite snowy conditions, earthquake, and strikes

Tensions are running high between Lebanese citizens and the Syrian families taking refuge in their nation. In the face of repeated crises in this small country bordering Syria, Lebanese feelings stem from the belief that refugees are taking up space, resources and jobs. "When problems are combined, that's when it gets tough," said Sayeed Milan, co-founder of TSI partner, Warm Heart Lebanon. "It's like, where do we start."

Despite the socio-economic climate, Warm Heart takes the job of representing Christ to underserved people seriously. They press on, delivering instruction and vocational classes to Syrian families through blizzard conditions that often swirl through the mountains surrounding Bekaa Valley, a region of Lebanon filled with refugee camps. On top of that, aid was slow in coming when Lebanese banks went on strike, and in February, a massive earthquake struck Turkey and Syria with far-reaching effects across the Middle East.

Families in Bekaa Valley spent the early hours after the quake outside their tents, afraid they would collapse. Joseph Milan of Warm Heart was on his way to the valley within half an hour. "It was 40 seconds of shaking and a [lower magnitude] in Lebanon," said Joseph. "On Sunday our mobile school was being used as a clinic, on Monday at dawn it was used to deliver supplies."

As Lebanon emerged relatively unscathed, the government sent a team to Syria to help with the damage there, including Sayeed. They retrieved 55 bodies and two survivors.

"I felt the protection of the Lord. Lebanon as a country was praying for US." - Sayeed Milan

Sayeed also traveled to Turkey with a second team to retrieve the bodies of two Lebanese citizens. The team drove for hours past collapsed buildings, completing their mission on a Sunday. One day later, a 6.6-magnitude aftershock collapsed the hotel where they had been staying.

"I felt the protection of the Lord," said Sayeed. "Lebanon was praying for us. The mobile-school children sent videos of encouragement saying, 'We love you, thank you.'"

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT:
1. Students at the mobile school in Bekaa Valley, Lebanon. 2. The team sent to Syria after February's earthquake affecting the Middle East. 3. Syrian boys enjoy lunch at the mobile school.

Sayeed says hurdles are nothing new to Warm Heart, or to Lebanon. "Since I was born Lebanon has always had crises of varying degrees. We don't have any challenges [we can't overcome], but what hinders us is when you have snow, students don't leave the tents as much. Their parents don't let them. They are not equipped with clothes to go back and forth between home and school."

Consistent attendance by students is an ongoing problem Sayeed hopes to remedy with funding from the Wheels of Change campaign, covering a heated basecamp tent and vocational training that some parents view as providing more value than academic instruction. "We know that without education, [Syrian children] cannot achieve much, but they don't have that perspective. Food, security, family, belonging all come first. Later, self-actualization." •

Follow us on social media for the latest on Lebanon: @TentSchoolsInt.





Laptops benefit refugee students from 11 nations

Technology is a leap forward for refugee students

One way our mission serves refugee families is through LEAP, a program of Tent Schools International and electronics-refurbishing company Comprenew (comprenew.org). LEAP grants devices primarily to resettled students in the United States who are taking online job training and language courses.

Leonie Umwariwera is a former refugee from Rwanda who spent years in a Ugandan

camp before coming to the U.S. in 2018. She secured her LEAP device as a client of Bethany Christian Services. "It has a lot of [capability]," she said. "I want to use it for my future schooling."

LEAP clients claim 11 countries of origin, and some are instructors or refugee students abroad. House of Ruth in Madaba, Jordan received three LEAP laptops in January for an after-school computer class serving 20 Syrian students. Twenty



Syrian girls use a LEAP device in Jordan

more are on a waiting list for the class due to a shortage of devices. "The three are a good start," said TSI's Rawan Haddad. •

Learn more at TentSchoolsInt.org/technology.

JORDAN | A BREAKTHROUGH FOR PATRICK

Good Shepherd Center is reaching 130 displaced Iraqi students in Jordan, 75 from the neighborhood of Al-Hashemi where new arrivals from Iraq are now settling.

One of the children is Patrick, a 7-year-old boy recently diagnosed with autism who was introduced to TSI supporters in our fall issue. At the time, Patrick was non-verbal and prone to outbursts in class. He struggled to connect with his teachers or make friends.

Patrick's mother asked Principal Dawlat Hijazeen and her staff to work with him intensively before she resorted to medication that could dull his personality. Tasked with the challenge, the staff got to work. After two months of focused instruction by the Good Shepherd team, Patrick is now making eye contact, remaining calm, and listening to instructions from his teacher.

"His behavior is changed 100%," said Hijazeen. "The only things

we're still working on are his speech and pronunciation. He can say letters, he can explain himself with sign language, and the teachers can understand him."

Patrick is making friends as well. Students were afraid of him at first, but now they are building relationships with Patrick. "This is amazing what has happened to him," said Hijazeen. "Every morning he hugs his friends." •

Thank you for praying for Patrick!

Patrick, center, with two of his school friends at Good Shepherd Center in Amman, Jordan

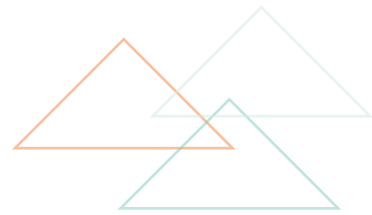
Inset: Patrick works on his numbers





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SCHOOLS DELIVER *peace + opportunity*

A BIG THANK YOU.

Your support gets refugee kids back in school. For them, this represents a return to safety, normalcy, and the chance for a bright future. Thank you!

LET TENTSCHOOLS COME TO YOU! Contact us to schedule a presentation for your school, church or Sunday School classroom to prepare for next fall's giving season. We would love to meet you!

@TentSchoolsInt   



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OUR MISSION

TENT SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL demonstrates the love of Jesus for displaced children through safe, compassionate schools.

TENT SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and a proud member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA.org).

