



# TENT SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2023



## Change is coming.

Thanks to you, new refugee camps will have schools in 2023.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: [Ramen's Story](#) | [Sewing Program in Lebanon](#) | [Ukrainian Teachers Persevere](#)

# You did it: Wheels of Change will launch in 2023!

Our year-end campaign in 2022 raised over \$100,000 for mobile schools in the Middle East, enabling us to reach new refugee children in Lebanon and soon, Jordan.

This past fall, we brought you an opportunity: your support of the Wheels of Change campaign would fund a project in Lebanon reaching hundreds of new refugee students in Bekaa Valley. This campaign would solve three key problems that were slowing impact for our innovative partner there: a lack of vocational training for girls, mobile-school classes reducing in winter, and a limited reach due to staff shortages.

Until recently, girls had no opportunity for vocational training to match the boys' classes in electrical skills. This was a disparity that had to be addressed quickly. In the Middle East, as in many parts of the world, gender norms are still in place around vocations; knowledge of sewing guarantees a girl a way to provide for her family in the future.

"There is nothing to do for girls in the camps," said TSI's Rawan Haddad, who lived outside the Zaatari camp in Jordan for four years ministering to Syrian refugees. "The sewing program gives them purpose and dignity."

"There is nothing to do for girls in the camps. The sewing program gives them **purpose and dignity.**" - Rawan Haddad

The sewing program began serving 150 women and girls the day it launched. Funding from Wheels of Change will be used to keep classes running and to purchase tools and materials. "Wherever we go [with the mobile school] we can launch the program," said project leader Pastor Joseph Milan.

Another problem: weather was limiting the number of students reached. The mobile school functions as one heated indoor classroom and two outdoor classrooms under tarps flanking the truck. Winters are cold in the mountains, and student numbers drop as the weather shifts. The school's new heated basecamp tent will allow our partner to continue instruction throughout the year. Wheels of Change funding will also allow the mobile school to reach more camps in warmer weather as they hire additional staff for morning, afternoon and evening shifts.

Thanks to you, we are also closing in on funding a school bus for our partner school in Jordan, the final campaign goal. We look forward to updating you in 2023! •

Thank you for partnering with us in this important work! Follow us on our blog and on social media for photo and video updates on Wheels of Change.

## IMPACT AT A GLANCE:

**LEBANON: \$51,500** will fund:

- a heated basecamp tent for winter classes
- a vocational sewing program for over 150 Syrian girls and women, increasing daily
- new classes for unreached refugee camps in Lebanon, reaching 100 new students on average per camp with the mobile school

**JORDAN: \$49,000** has been raised so far toward the purchase of a school bus totaling \$60,000 - transportation for newly-arrived Iraqi students in Jordan who live in a distant neighborhood of Amman.

COVER IMAGE: Bekaa Valley, Lebanon



Fatima is a Syrian student at the mobile school in Lebanon

# Ukrainian teachers persevere despite ongoing attacks

Thanks to you, we raised almost \$6,000 to ensure Ukrainian students can access their teachers remotely or in person through the winter, despite Russia's onslaught.

Academy of Wisdom, a TSI partner school, continues to teach all but its youngest students remotely as they struggle to return to normalcy after the Russian invasion almost a year ago.

"The kids dream of going to school, but so far it is impossible," said director Alina Tolbas. "We took that risk only for the youngest students since it is difficult to teach them remotely. We have shelters for them and they go there from time to time during rocket attacks."

Staff and students who remain in Bucha meet regularly for games, food, and spiritual enrichment to help kids cope with the chaos around them. Teachers meet each morning to pray for peace and for the students and their families.

Last spring, TSI sent funds to purchase laptops for teachers to use for remote instruction after their devices were stolen or destroyed. Now, \$6,000 will ensure both remote and in-person instruction continues through winter.



An Academy teacher with her students on the school campus in Bucha this fall

"We are grateful that, because of people like you, our students can continue studying at our school in such a difficult time for Ukraine," said Tolbas. •

## RAMEN'S STORY | IRAQI BOY GETS A FRESH START

A report from the staff at Good Shepherd Center, our partner in Jordan.

Ramen joined Good Shepherd Center in April, when his family arrived in Jordan after fleeing Iraq. They were forced to leave their home for security reasons, as Christians living in a region where they are targeted by ISIS for their faith. Our staff began visiting the family weekly, and we invited Ramen and his sisters to join us at our school.

Ramen is a diligent, curious student who loves science, despite being denied the opportunity to be taught well before he came to our school. At first he was frustrated with his new life and having to leave his school and friends, but after two weeks at Good Shepherd Center, his sisters began noticing changes

in his mood, his progress in science, and how the administration and staff were connecting with him, and they decided to come to school, too. We've invited Ramen's family to join our prayer meetings and we continue with home visits, encouraging them in every way we can.

Ramen is a **diligent, curious student** despite being denied opportunities in Iraq.

The church associated with the school is also helping the family with household supplies: a fan, heater, pillows, bedding and food coupons. They gave Ramen's mother an opportunity to work in the church kitchen preparing meals for congregants. Now

she has income to meet her family's needs!

In the past five months, we as a church and school were able to help a family in dire need of support, and their children with an educational sanctuary where they are progressing academically, spiritually and psychologically. We urge them to persevere despite difficult circumstances, and we will continue to support them as they settle in their new country. •



Ramen, third from left, with new school friends at Good Shepherd Center in Amman, Jordan



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**INSIDE: YOU DID IT. CHANGE IS COMING!**



## A PEEK INTO 2023

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 for your support of this important work as we begin a new year!

@TentSchoolsInt   

**CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!** TentSchoolsInt.org got a makeover. Take a look and let us know what you think!



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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 ECFA, the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA.org).