

A group of children, with a girl in the foreground having blue face paint.

بسمه و Zeitooneh

**BASMEH & ZEITONEH**  
RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT

**Basmeh & Zeitooneh**  
**Annual Report 2022**



**Basmeh & Zeitooneh**  
Annual Report 2022

# Content

Statement By CEO	6
About Basmeh & Zeitooneh	8
Our Impact	9
Areas We Work In	10
Our Target Groups	12
Our Programmatic Structure	13
Our Funds	14
Our Team	15
<b>Advocacy &amp; Research</b>	<b>18</b>
Protracted Displacement Economies	19
<b>Education Program</b>	<b>20</b>
Non-Formal Education for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon	21
<i>Igniting the Flame of Learning: Jana's Inspiring Journey</i>	22
 <i>Unyielding Spirit: Amal's Inspiring Quest for Change</i>	 26
<b>Protection Program</b>	<b>28</b>
Humanitarian Program Plan	29
Legal Empowerment	30
Breaking Down Barriers: Legal Empowerment for Vulnerable Communities to Navigate Legal Systems	31

**Food Security & Livelihoods Program** \_\_\_\_\_ **34**

Promoting Socio-economic Recovery in Beirut and Mount Lebanon \_\_\_\_\_ 35

Farming to Empower: Increasing livelihood through urban hydroponic agro-production in North Lebanon \_\_\_\_\_ 37

*Finding Purpose in Unexpected Places: The Journey of Rayan Osman, Project Manager at Basmeh & Zeitooneh* \_\_\_\_\_ 40

**Peacebuilding Program** \_\_\_\_\_ **42**

Strengthening Local Capacities for Social Stability in Tripoli and Bekaa \_\_\_\_\_ 43

**Civil Society Enablement Program** \_\_\_\_\_ **46**

Fostering Refugee Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ 47

**Our Donors & Partners** \_\_\_\_\_ **56**

# Statement By CEO

Dear friends and partners,

Reporting on the activities of Basmeh & Zeitooneh for the year 2020 was not an easy task. The emotional baggage we had to carry with us all the way into 2021 made rehashing the year's events and milestones a painful exercise to undertake. As much as we wish to wipe away 2020 and its atrocities, we marched on, found solutions, and built stamina for what's to come. We owe it to the people we serve and to the heroes in our organization, who despite all the obstacles the year had unleashed, were up to the challenge and achieved incredible results.

As a pandemic year, 2020 will be remembered for generations to come, even more so by those who navigated through it while in Lebanon. The bitterness of the events that befell the country, though the past tense shouldn't be used just yet, is a taste no one can shake off. This small Levantine nation had to battle unprecedented financial collapse and inflation that left no sector untouched. Life's most basic necessities are till this day a luxury more than half the population can't afford. The pandemic that ravaged the country left people more vulnerable, with months-long lockdowns that forced everyone into a standstill. With the arrival of summer, a hope for a breather was witnessed by the reopening of businesses and tourist attractions, until the Beirut Port explosion left the world speechless.

Looking back at the year, I kept wondering where the heroes of Basmeh & Zeitooneh got their energy and determination from. Throughout the pages of this report, you will read about the boundless Covid-19 campaign that supported households of all nationalities, whose livelihood was affected by the lockdowns. By the end of the year, with immense gratitude to our donors and staff, who despite everything hit the ground running during lockdowns and when Beirut was destroyed, more than 14,000 families received basic food and cash assistance.

You will also read about the unbelievable efforts of our education team, both in Shatila camp and Bar Elias, who refused to surrender to the lockdowns and rushed to learn how to use an online platform to create educational material for their students. Each of the 1,150 households we supported received a tablet and free internet connection to facilitate their connectivity so that the scholastic year wouldn't be halted.

When the Beirut Port blast hit, I was once again overwhelmed with the steadfastness and generosity of Basmeh & Zeitooneh staff and volunteers, who rushed to help in any way possible. For two weeks, we had a station in Mar Mikhael through which we organized the activities of the volunteers who wished to help.

Your unprecedented response to our online fundraiser allowed us to support affected families as well as distribute food, water, and cleaning tools to hundreds of volunteers who worked relentlessly to remove glass and debris from the streets and homes. While staff and volunteers were coming in from Bekaa, Tripoli, and Shatila to work on the ground, our dedicated team back at the office managed to raise more than \$2 million. With this sum, we launched an impactful initiative to repair flats, provided psychosocial support to the victims, aided affected small businesses, as well as food and cash distribution to the most vulnerable who were touched by the blast.

Sure, looking back at the extensive efforts of 2020 allows us some moments of pride, but it's not the time yet to pat ourselves on the back. The Basmeh & Zeitooneh team in Lebanon managed to do all of the aforementioned in a single year, on top of all its regular programs, and I'm filled with pride thinking about it. They forged ahead, undeterred by the multitude of stress and anxiety forced on them because of Lebanon's situation. And yet, more is to be done. With your continuous support and belief in what we do, we are sure that 2021 will be even busier for Basmeh & Zeitooneh, and we look forward to it.

Sincerely,

Fadi Hallisso  
Co-founder and CEO

# About Basmeh & Zeitooneh

## Vision

A Constructive Society that Lives with Dignity.

## Mission

Basmeh & Zeitooneh is a refugee-led relief and development organization responding to the acute needs of displaced and host communities to help people reclaim dignity and agency over their lives.

We've aligned our efforts under five programmatic pillars: education, protection, food security and livelihood, and civil society enablement. While each pillar offers distinct impact for both individuals and communities, they are intimately connected.

## About B&Z

Basmeh & Zeitooneh started as a grassroots organization in 2012 when a group of volunteers in Lebanon – driven by the plight of Syrian refugees – began a small relief operation. Today, Basmeh & Zeitooneh has grown into one of the largest and most established refugee-led relief organizations in the world, responding to the acute needs of both the displaced and their host communities.

We're proud to be founded by refugees, for refugees. It's what sets us and our work apart, and gives us a deeper understanding of the community we serve. As part of the community, we understand its unique, ever-evolving, needs and challenges. We're also positioned close enough to respond swiftly when new challenges arise. Our interventions are co-designed alongside participants and adapted with their input. And the trust and credibility we've built over eleven years gives us access few others have.



# Our Impact

Impact to date

Since 2015

**5037** Students  
Education Program

2018 till 2022

**39** CSOs  
Since 2018

2018 till 2022

**255** SMEs supported  
Food Security and Livelihoods Program

2019 end of 2022

**527** Cash for Work Participants  
Food Security and Livelihoods Program

Till end of 2022

**27320** People Reached  
Legal Protection Services

Till end of 2022

**29700** Households Reached  
Basic Needs Assistance

# We Work In Lebanon

## Mount Lebanon

Nabaa  
Shatila



## North Lebanon

Abi Samraa



## Bekaa

Bar Elias

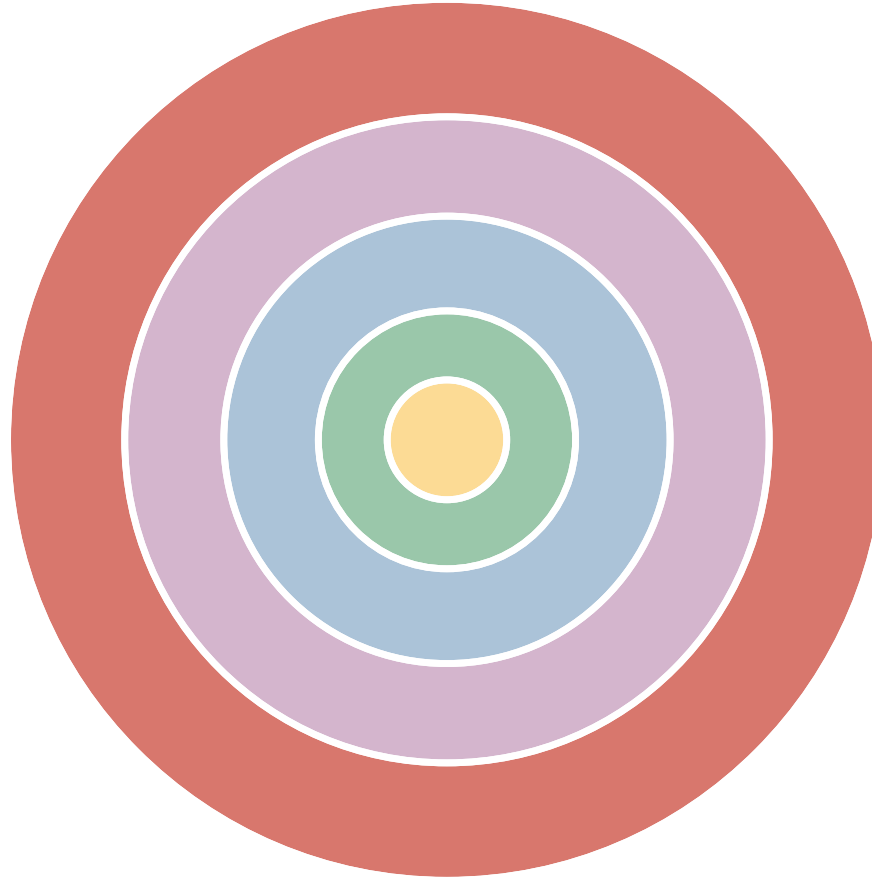


# Turkey


## Gaziantep




# Our Target Groups



 Children

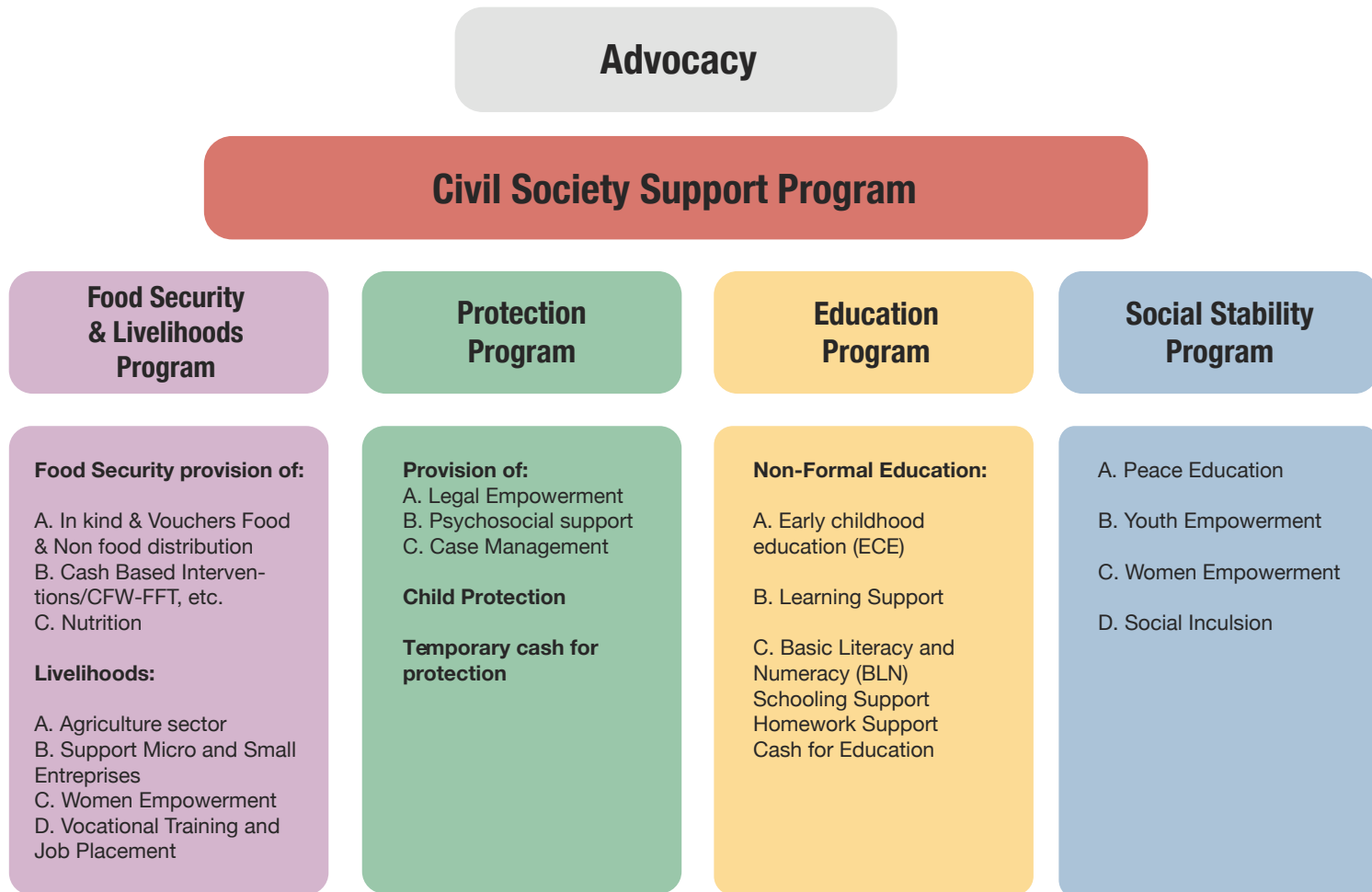
 Adolescents/  
Youth

 Caregivers,  
Men and Women

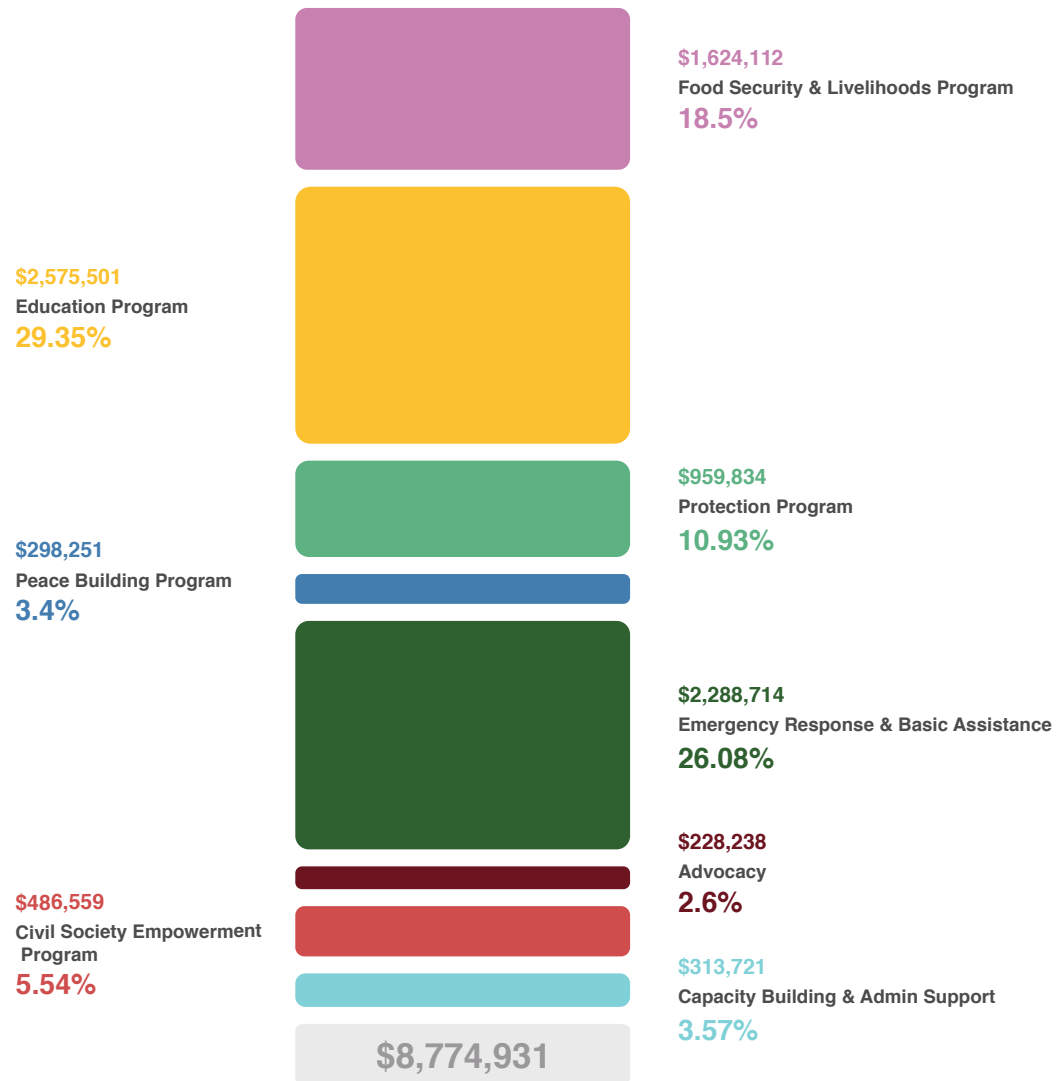
 Households

 Community/  
Society

# Our Programmatic Structure



# Our Funds

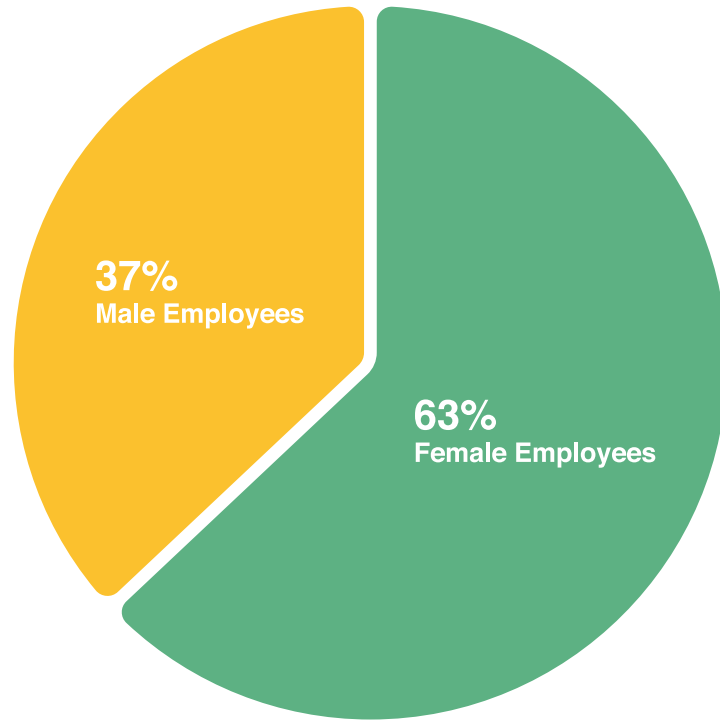


# Our Team

In 2022, the HR unit primarily focused on training and capacity building, which is one of the essential HR functions. The plan was to conduct Safeguarding, PSEA (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse), and Child Protection Policy training sessions for all B&Z staff as part of the HR induction, orientation, and onboarding processes, aligning with B&Z's mission, vision, and values. We successfully trained over 150 staff members, and the plan is to continue providing these training sessions to all staff in 2023 due to the high demand. One of our objectives for 2022 was to organize a Protection Lens workshop for the Support Services staff. The workshop aimed to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to identify potential protection risks and effectively mitigate them, ensuring the safety and protection of the communities we serve.

The management team at B&Z recognizes the value of a diverse team in promoting efficiency, innovation, creativity, and achieving superior results. We are committed to fostering an inclusive, safe, supportive, and respectful working environment where all individuals are equally valued. To cultivate a highly diverse team, we have made revisions to our internal policies, rules, and regulations. This includes updates to Terms of Reference (TORs), announcements, interview questions, reference checks, consent forms, inductions, and contracts.

To ensure adherence to and respect for all our policies, we have updated and integrated the Whistleblowing/Malpractice Policy. Additionally, we have provided staff training to encourage employees to speak up and raise concerns. These efforts have resulted in the creation of a more positive work environment, fostered an open culture, and prevented negative behaviors, ultimately raising staff awareness.



**Total staff increased to 300**  
20% increase from 2021

**97 job vacancies were announced**

Amidst the backdrop of soaring food and energy prices and an ongoing financial crisis in Lebanon, we take pride in creating job opportunities that have had a positive impact on the lives of the country's residents. Through providing meaningful employment, we have helped individuals and their families alleviate the financial burden they face and supported their livelihoods during these challenging times. Despite the economic instability of the country, our HR team has worked proactively to attract and select candidates who were well-suited for the available vacancies. We remain steadfast in our commitment to invest in Lebanon's future and support our fellow residents in building a stronger and more resilient community. We firmly believe that our efforts will contribute to the long-term sustainability of Lebanon, and we eagerly look forward to continuing to make a positive impact in the years ahead.



**Our Work**

# Advocacy & Research

The Advocacy and Research unit at Basmeh & Zeitooneh is currently focused on three primary pillars:

- Unlocking sustainable and direct funding for Refugee-led Organizations (RLOs) in Lebanon.
- Conducting research to identify and understand the barriers that hinder Syrian refugees from achieving lasting solutions.
- Developing a theoretical framework for localizing aid to Syrian refugees within the Lebanese context.

In recent times, our advocacy efforts have primarily centered around monitoring the accountability mechanisms related to Syrian refugees in our specific context. We advocate for the establishment of a monitoring mechanism that ensures safe, dignified, informed, and truly voluntary returns to Syria. Additionally, our work aims to promote an accessible funding mechanism for donors to directly support Refugee-led Organizations (RLOs) in our context, particularly at the EU level.

## Research Highlight

# Protracted Displacement Economies

Basmeh & Zeitooneh is actively participating in a collaborative research project on the Protracted Displacement Economy (PDE). The project was initiated in 2020 by the Center for Migration Research at the University of Sussex. It is set to continue for a duration of three years, concluding in August 2023. The research spans five countries concurrently: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Myanmar, and Pakistan.

The main objective of this research project is to examine the developmental trajectory of the economy and support systems for refugees and host communities. This will be accomplished through a longitudinal study that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The research design includes group discussions, key informant interviews, and oral history interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the economic circumstances, support systems, and perspectives of refugees.

To collect accurate data, a survey was conducted in three regions: Nabaa, Tripoli, and Bar Elias. The survey involved 4,500 participants and was implemented after conducting a thorough literature review to establish the research objectives.

In 2022, the project focused on the creation of three films that portray the day-to-day experiences of refugees. These films were developed, filmed, and directed by three teams of young refugees who received guidance from academic experts. The films, which showcased remarkable quality, were submitted to various competitions. By participating in this project, these aspiring filmmakers gained valuable skills in the field of film production, opening doors for potential career development opportunities in the future.

Furthermore, the project conducted approximately 150 oral history interviews, which were carried out by refugee volunteers. These volunteers received training from B&Z to become field researchers. This endeavor not only enabled the researchers to gather authentic data and real-life stories but also equipped the interviewers with valuable research and communication skills.

Our mission is to continue to monitor Syrian refugees' access to durable solutions, as well as their short, medium and long-term needs while they are in Lebanon and might not be able to return to their areas of origin in Syria.

# Education Program

We aim to serve refugee children in a safe and inclusive learning environment where their well-being is of utmost importance. To this end, our Education Program is structured to provide:

- Early childhood education
- Basic literacy & numeracy
- Remedial & homework support

We understand the challenges and hurdles faced by families and their children. We help by removing obstacles to education platform access by providing cash for education, transportation, CP, and extracurricular activities.

Our first learning center was in Shatila Camp. Beirut. The second in Bekaa. From 2021 to 2022, 1,619 girls and 1,607 boys were enrolled, Syrian students.

Our education system is non-violent and interactive. Subjects include Arabic, English, Maths, Science, Sports, and Music. We also teach Geography and Civic Education for some classes. And there is a public library.

In Lebanon, we follow the Lebanese Curriculum to help children continue their education. We are also accredited by the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (LMEHE).



**3,226** Students

**1,607** Boys

**1,619** Girls

## Project Highlight

# Non-Formal Education for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

At Basmeh & Zeitooneh, we are committed to providing non-formal education to Syrian refugees in Lebanon who face significant challenges in accessing formal education. Our education program in the Shatila and Bekaa Learning Centers aims to offer a second chance for education to vulnerable refugee children. Our program is aligned with the national curriculum and is designed to provide a pathway towards formal education.

We focus on student development and transitioning, and our education program includes three components: Early Childhood Education (ECE) for out-of-school children aged 4-5, Basic Literacy and Numeracy (BLN) for out-of-school children aged 8 to 14, and Learning Support classes for students who are at risk of dropping out or have dropped out of formal education.

In the academic year 2021-2022, our educational program successfully reached a total of 3,276 students, both in-person and online through our Tabshoura Platform and WhatsApp groups. Our hybrid model allowed students to access new technologies and resources embedded within the lessons on the platform, despite the deteriorating socio-political situation. We are proud to say that our ECE program distributed 330 MEHE-certified certificates to those who successfully completed the previous academic year.

Our BLN program has successfully referred students who completed the three BLN cycles to formal education, and we provide caregivers with the necessary information and assistance to support the transition process. We are continually working to increase the number of successful transitions through service mapping, collaborations with active organizations in the educational sector, and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

We are dedicated to providing quality education to vulnerable refugee children, and we will continue to work towards ensuring that they have access to education even in the most challenging circumstances.



## Igniting the Flame of Learning: Jana's Inspiring Journey

Jana, a bright and determined 10-year-old girl, living with her mother Arij and four siblings in a small village nestled in the beautiful Bekaa Valley of Lebanon. Since their arrival in 2014, they had faced the daily struggles of living in a conflict-ridden area and navigating through economic hardships. Both Arij and Jana understood the importance of education in shaping Jana's future, but they were faced with numerous obstacles that stood in their path.

As the economic crisis loomed over their lives, it was increasingly challenging for Jana to go to a public school due to the scarcity of resources and the difficulty of transportation. Determined to ensure her daughter's education, Arij made a pivotal decision: she enrolled Jana in the education program offered by Basmeh & Zeitooneh at their learning center in Bekaa.

Despite these challenges that Jana was facing, she had big dreams for her future. She attended the Basmeh & Zeitooneh learning center, where she received an education that would help her achieve her dreams.

When asked about her aspirations, Jana's eyes gleamed with determination and excitement as she confidently proclaimed, "I want to become a doctor to help other children." The passion in her voice was evident as she

expressed her deep desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

Jana's mother, Arij, was proud of her daughter's ambition. She had seen firsthand how much Jana had learned at the learning center. "My daughter learned a lot from the school," Arij said. "She is now confident to teach her brother and sister."

Jana's love for learning extended beyond the walls of the Basmeh & Zeitooneh learning center. At home, she acted like a teacher, sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm for math, Arabic, and English with her younger brother and sister. Jana's interest in teaching was evident in the way she explained concepts to her siblings, using real-life examples and making sure they understood before moving on. She was patient and kind, and her brother and sister looked up to her as a role model. Jana's passion for education was contagious, and it inspired her family to make it a priority in their lives.

Jana's resolute commitment remained steadfast as she diligently pursued her education at the learning center, eagerly absorbing knowledge with an insatiable thirst. Fueled by her unwavering determination to succeed, she fearlessly confronted every obstacle that came her way. Supported wholeheartedly by her family and guided by the dedicated education team at the center, Jana held an unyielding belief in her capacity to achieve any goal she set her mind to.

Jana is a shining example of what can be accomplished with the right support and resources. It is a reminder that education is a fundamental right that should be accessible to everyone, regardless of any circumstances.











## Unyielding Spirit: Amal's Inspiring Quest for Change

Amal Al-Rai, a remarkable individual at the heart of our organization, is an example of dedication and compassion. At the age of 56, Amal, embraces her role as a loving mother to three children and grandmother to five grandchildren, eagerly awaiting the arrival of her sixth.

Amal's roots trace back to the Shatila camp, where she was born, married, and raised her own children. Her formative years were marred by the hardships endured during the civil war and the devastating Sabra and Shatila massacre. Witnessing the suffering and loss firsthand instilled in Amal a deep sense of empathy and a strong desire to help others. "I witnessed the war when I was just 12 years old. It was really tough for me as a little girl, and this is what made me want to help people and provide assistance to those who are in need." She expressed.

In 2011, Amal's path intersected with the founding members of Basmeh & Zaitooneh, and she was immediately captivated by their tireless efforts. Recognizing her passion for humanitarian work and her unwavering belief in supporting those in need, she eagerly volunteered with the organization. Amal firmly believes that all people, regardless of their circumstances, deserve equal care and attention, even in a world where some enjoy more comfortable conditions than others.

While Amal's aspirations for further education were interrupted by marriage, her commitment to Basmeh & Zaitooneh remains strong and resolute. Her role within the organization primarily involves conducting home visits, assessing the situations of families in the camp, and prioritizing their needs. Working within the limitations of the particular camp settings poses numerous challenges for Amal, with the most notable one being maintaining composure while striving to take the best course of action. "At times, I feel tired and drained. It's hard not to feel compassion or be shocked by certain situations. This kind of work truly requires a steadfast and resilient heart." Amal said.

Amal's dedication is boundless, and she feels a profound sense of frustration when bureaucratic processes hinder immediate assistance. However, her resolve remains unshaken, and she tirelessly strives to support individuals amidst the economic crisis in Lebanon and the ongoing war in Syria. Witnessing the transformative impact her efforts have on the lives of those she serves evokes a profound mix of sadness and determination to provide as much help as possible.

Among the many rewards Amal experiences while working with Basmeh & Zaitooneh, her greatest joy stems from supporting the children. She finds immense fulfillment in nurturing and empowering the younger generation, recognizing the pivotal role they play in shaping a brighter future. "Nothing brings me greater satisfaction than guiding children towards a brighter future." She said.

Through her involvement with Basmeh & Zaitooneh, Amal has honed her interpersonal skills, becoming adept at effective communication, understanding, and acceptance. She has learned when to be resolute and when to exercise diplomacy, leaving an indelible mark on her character. Despite having other opportunities, Amal's connection with Basmeh & Zaitooneh remains profound, as the organization has shaped her perspective and purpose in life. "I've gained invaluable lessons while working at Basmeh & Zeitooneh. It taught me the importance of strength and tenderness at different times. I genuinely wish the best for our organization."

Amal's story serves as a powerful reminder that each person has the capacity to make a profound impact, regardless of their background or circumstances. Her unwavering dedication and selflessness are a testament to the human spirit's ability to rise above adversity and create meaningful change.

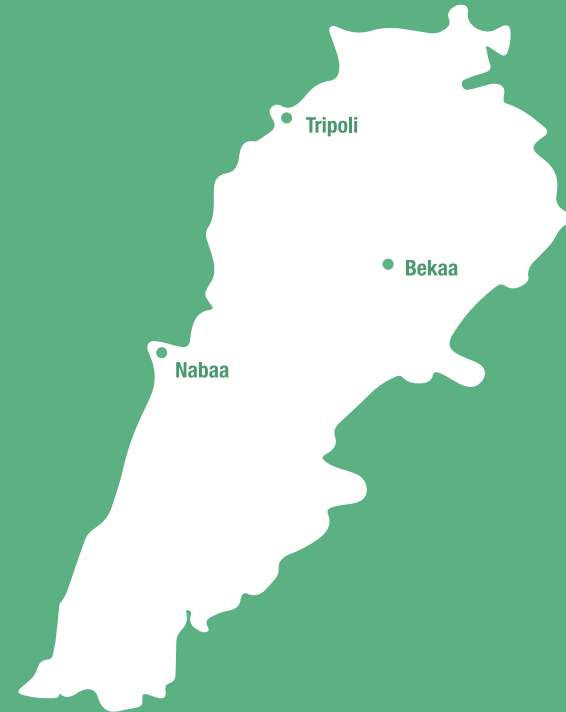
# Protection Program

Since 2015, we have focused on strengthening the resilience of vulnerable women and children by increasing their awareness of gender-based violence and child protection.

Through our Protection Program, we establish and support mechanisms that make homes, schools, and communities safer places for women and children. We also strive to raise awareness of laws and policies that protect women and children from violence and exploitation within our communities.

We do this by providing:

- Legal empowerment
- Psychosocial support
- Case management
- Temporary cash for protection



**1509** Men

**5532** Women

**501** Boys

**669** Girls



## Project Highlight

# Humanitarian Program Plan

We partnered with Trocaire to implement the Humanitarian Program Plan (HPP) project in Shatila Camp as part of our ongoing protection program. The objective of the HPP project was to deliver prevention and protection services against all forms of violence and exploitation while ensuring equitable and secure access to specialized protection services. The project specifically targeted the issues of violence against women and girls, child abuse, and child labor by offering essential services to households at risk. These services included psychosocial support group sessions, individual counseling, and gender-based violence (GBV) case management.

Additionally, the project provided Emergency Cash Assistance (ECA) and Recurrent Cash Assistance (RCA) to households in need. It also organized awareness-raising sessions on various protection topics, including drug abuse, COVID-19, and other disease outbreaks, as well as community concerns.

The HPP model placed a strong emphasis on community ownership and responsibility in protecting women, children, and their caregivers. It aimed to empower them to take the lead in their own self-protection and drive sustainable change through appropriate approaches. The project design was informed by the feedback of the affected individuals and was tailored to address their immediate needs. Following a community-based approach, the project team collaborated with children, caregivers, community-based organizations (CBOs), and other stakeholders engaged in the protection of children and caregivers. These efforts contributed to fostering resilience within the community.

Through the HPP project, we successfully delivered essential protection services to 1458 vulnerable households in Shatila Camp, resulting in notable enhancements to their safety and overall well-being. Additionally, the project facilitated the development of community-led solutions to address protection concerns, empowering the community to take charge of their own protection and enhance their resilience in the face of ongoing challenges.

## Project Highlight

# Legal Empowerment

This project aimed to provide legal assistance and support to Syrian refugees and other vulnerable groups living in Mount Lebanon and North Lebanon. It successfully reached and provided assistance to a total of 4,783 individuals, fulfilling its objective of delivering crucial support to those in need. These individuals encounter significant barriers when attempting to access legal services and exercise their rights. These barriers include limited awareness and information regarding their legal rights, as well as challenges related to civil documentation, such as birth, marriage, and death registration, legal status, and employment rights.

To tackle these challenges, the project implemented a two-fold intervention strategy. First, it sought to enhance access to legal rights and services by providing legal counseling, mediation, and referrals. Second, it aimed to raise awareness and promote engagement on legal protection issues through advocacy efforts.

The project spanned one year and consisted of a legal team comprising seven staff members with a legal background, supported by a consultant lawyer. Geographically, it covered Beirut, including Shatila camp, Akkar, and Tripoli, with a specific focus on providing support to 90% Syrian refugees and 10% individuals from other nationalities, including Palestinians.

By providing much-needed legal assistance and documentation support, the project addressed the significant risks faced by vulnerable communities in these areas.

## Project Highlight

# Breaking Down Barriers: Legal Empowerment for Vulnerable Communities to Navigate Legal Systems

Mahmoud, a Syrian refugee residing in Tripoli, lives with his wife and five children. His wife is a stay-at-home mom, and they have a young son with retinal hypertension. Mahmoud worked as a tailor and upholsterer, but two hand injuries left him reliant on UNHCR aid to support his family's livelihood. The family faced challenges in registering their children's births, which prevented them from obtaining the necessary legal documents for travel or enrollment in school.

During a visit to the hospital to obtain a birth certificate for his fifth child, a staff member recommended that Mahmoud reach out to Basmeh & Zeitooneh (B&Z). They provided him with a Facebook post containing contact information to contact the legal aid team. Mahmoud followed the recommendation and contacted B&Z.

"I was unable to officially register all of my children, which prevented us from moving or traveling together. Three of my children were born in the doctor's office, but my daughter was delivered at home by a midwife who has since passed away, making it challenging to verify her birth," Mahmoud shared with the B&Z team.

B&Z's legal aid team promptly contacted the head of the obstetrics division at the hospital, who agreed to assist. The team then worked with the relevant government offices to formalize the birth certificates, ultimately securing legal documentation for the three children.

"Now, I can enroll my children in school, allowing them to receive an education, and we can travel wherever we want. This service was incredibly important to me. I struggled to navigate this process on my own," Mahmoud explained.

The success of Mahmoud's case underscores the significance of B&Z's Legal Aid Services for Vulnerable Groups in Lebanon project. By helping refugees and other vulnerable communities navigate complex legal systems, B&Z provides vital assistance to families like Mahmoud's, enabling them to access essential services and establish stable lives.

At B&Z, we remain steadfast in our mission to support refugees and other vulnerable communities in Lebanon. We take pride in our partnership with the NRC to provide legal aid services for vulnerable groups. We will continue working tirelessly to ensure that all individuals have access to the legal assistance they need to build a better future for themselves and their families.







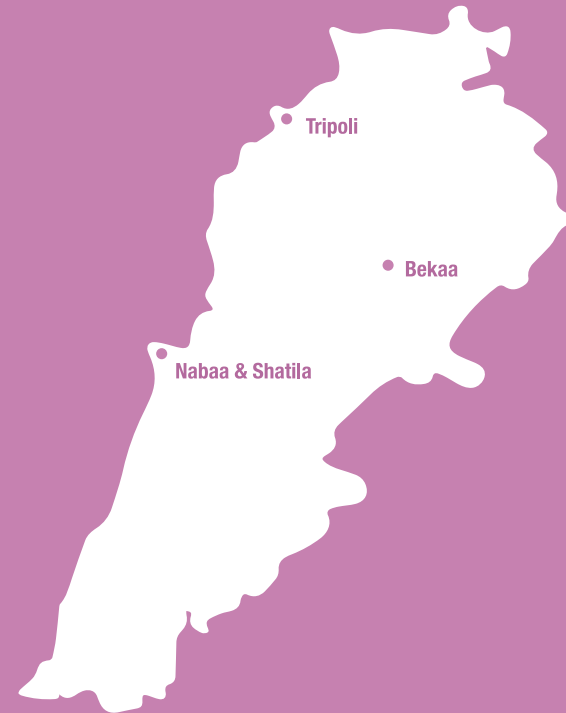
# Food Security & Livelihoods Program

Providing hope for a future within a refugee community begins with getting the basics right. We know that without meeting basic human needs, even the best developmental programs can't take root and flourish.

Our Food Security and Livelihoods program provides temporary provision of food, cash, and non-food items. Since inception, it has grown into an integrated approach, delivering components such as cash for work, asset replacement, and access to capital, as well as support for people to find employment and develop their skills.

These are all designed to provide the training, skills, and knowledge for our communities to grow independently. Plus the opportunity to sustain themselves and their families now and into the future. All aspects of the program ensure the inclusion and empowerment of women and other vulnerable groups.

Our activities encompass a range of initiatives. In Tripoli, we engage in vertical farming with 30 participants. In the Bekaa region, we collaborate with 181 farmers. We support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with 140 owners. Additionally, we implement cash-for-work acti. Lastly, we work with 60 women involved in dairy production.



**140** SMEs  
SMEs Support

**30** Participants  
Vertical Farming Project

**181** Farmers  
Farmer's Support

**60** Women  
Dairy Project

## Project Highlight

# Promoting Socio-economic Recovery in Beirut and Mount Lebanon

The project aimed to provide support to micro and small enterprises affected by the economic crisis in the Beirut and Mount Lebanon area. This assistance was provided for a duration of six months, from June to December 2022, with a specific focus on communities and localities impacted by the Beirut Blast. The areas covered included Dekwaneh, Sin el Fil, Sad el Bouchrieh, Jisr el Bacha, Hamra, Mar Elias, Cola district, and their surrounding areas. The average value of each grant was around 2,500 USD, making a total budget of 140,000 USD, with 97,500 USD allocated as in-kind grants.

Basmeh & Zeitooneh prioritized the support of women-led enterprises, offering in-kind grant assistance to 36 micro and 16 small businesses. These grants were dedicated to addressing the needs of the MSMEs, including the procurement of necessary materials (such as raw materials and equipment) and/or rehabilitation, based on each business's continuity plan. Additionally, all enterprises received marketing support, allowing them to develop a marketing strategy and allocate a portion of the grant for marketing purposes under the guidance of the project's marketing officer.

In conclusion, the project successfully achieved its intended outcome of stimulating local economic development and market systems to create income-generating opportunities and employment.





## Project Highlight

# Farming to Empower: Increasing livelihood through urban hydroponic agro-production in North Lebanon

The project aimed to pilot an alternative solution for vulnerable host communities and refugees who lack access to land for agricultural production. It focused on implementing water-saving agriculture technologies, specifically hydroponics. Hydroponics is an innovative, efficient, and climate-resilient technology that allows for the production of safe and nutritious food using minimal water (at least 80 percent less). Certified hybrid seeds were utilized to ensure high productivity rates.

The project had a significant impact on the long-term well-being and living standards of 30 direct participants and 150 indirect participants. These participants were divided into two producer groups in Tripoli, Northern Lebanon. They received training on hydroponics, enabling them to produce chemical and pesticide-free vegetables that are environmentally safe. The selection of marketable vegetable production was based on a market assessment, which served as a key component throughout the project. A collective marketing approach was adopted to reduce costs, increase income and efficiency, and market the vegetables to consumers at a 10% premium.













## **Finding Purpose in Unexpected Places: The Journey of Rayan Osman, Project Manager at Basmeh & Zeitooneh**

Rayan Osman's journey is a testament to the transformative power of determination, resilience, and finding purpose in unexpected places. At 30 years old, she serves as the center coordinator of the Tripoli center and is a Food Security and Livelihoods project manager at Basmeh & Zeitooneh. As a mother of a 2.5-year-old boy named Izzat and a true Tripolitan, Rayan understands and empathizes with the struggles that vulnerable communities face, particularly during times of crisis.

Although Rayan dreamed of becoming a doctor as a child, she encountered obstacles when she graduated from high school. The study of medicine was not offered in universities in Tripoli, and pursuing medical studies would have required her to move to Beirut and live independently, which was not feasible due to various constraints. As an alternative, she pursued a degree in Management Information Systems at the Lebanese University in her city.

During her master's degree, Rayan took on several internships and freelance projects with businesses of various types. However, in 2015, she discovered her passion for creating social impact. "I was assigned to build a database for a charity project in Tripoli, and during



the process, I gained profound insights into the community I lived in,” Rayan explains.

“I realized how vulnerable some people were and how privileged I was. I never imagined that there were children who couldn’t attend school or families struggling to meet their basic food needs. Witnessing these dire needs firsthand became a turning point for me.”

Rayan’s work on the project provided her with a glimpse into the world of humanitarian aid and inspired her to pursue a career in the field. She joined Basmeh & Zeitooneh in September 2016, and her commitment to the organization’s mission is evident in her accomplishments. One of her proudest moments was serving as the project manager for the hydroponic farming project, Farming to Empower, implemented by B&Z in Tripoli in partnership with Cafod. “It was a challenging endeavor, but witnessing the positive impact it had on both refugees and the host community was incredibly rewarding,” Rayan shares. The project created job opportunities and improved the economic situation for numerous families.

As a leader, Rayan brings a unique perspective to her work every day. “My experiences as a mother have instilled in me a deep sense of empathy and compassion,” Rayan emphasizes. “I understand the significance of providing support and hope to those who are struggling, and I incorporate this perspective into my work at Basmeh & Zeitooneh every day.”

Basmeh & Zeitooneh’s investment in Rayan’s professional development has been crucial to her growth as a leader.

“The organization has provided me with numerous opportunities to acquire new skills, gain valuable experience, and enhance my abilities as a project manager,” Rayan acknowledges. “I am grateful for the capacity-building initiatives the organization has provided me, and I remain committed to making a positive impact on the lives of vulnerable communities in Lebanon, particularly in my city, Tripoli.”

Rayan’s dedication to improving the lives of refugees and vulnerable communities in Lebanon is truly inspiring. Her story serves as a reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the importance of discovering purpose in unexpected places. “My work with Basmeh & Zeitooneh has allowed me to fulfill my purpose and make a difference in the lives of others,” Rayan concludes. “I am grateful for the opportunity to work with such a dedicated and passionate team and to continue supporting vulnerable communities in Lebanon.”

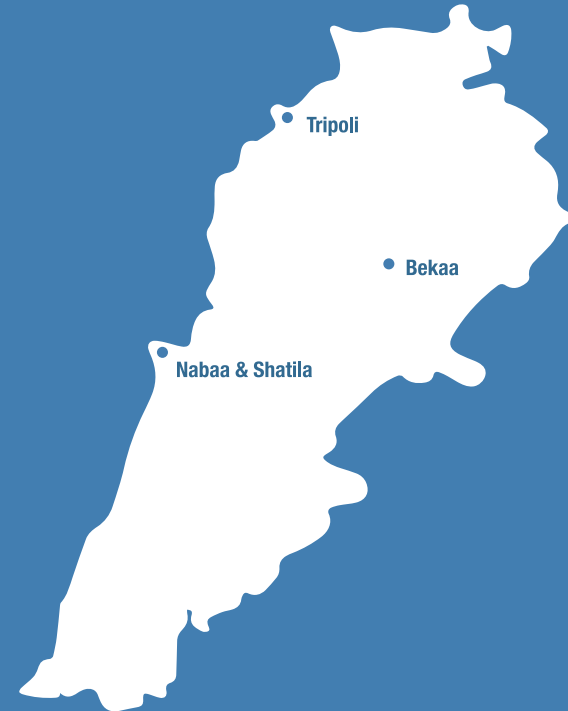
# Peacebuilding Program

Our Peace Education initiative works to improve the psychosocial well-being of children and youth. And our community-based social cohesion initiative, Strengthening Resilience, trains groups of youth and women on conflict and context analysis.

Strengthening Resilience also engages young people through activities that interest them, such as active citizens, sports, education, local governance, culture, and social enterprise.

The result is a 96% increase in psychological wellbeing and coping capacities.

60 youths actively participated in our Social Cohesion project. Additionally, our Peace Education project in 2022 witnessed enrollment from 495 children and youths.



**60** Youth  
Social Cohesion Project

**495** Children & Youth  
Peace Education Project

# Strengthening Local Capacities for Social Stability in Tripoli and Bekaa

This project, implemented in 2022 by a consortium led by International Alert, aimed to enhance community mechanisms for social stability in Bekaa and Tripoli. As a member of the consortium, Basmeh and Zeitooneh (B&Z) focused on three key activities.

Firstly, B&Z conducted peace education sessions for children, enabling them to express themselves artistically and verbally, share their experiences, and learn skills for self-protection and peaceful conflict resolution.

Secondly, B&Z organized positive parenting and psychosocial support (PSS) sessions for caregivers, promoting non-violent parenting practices and enhancing communication between caregivers and children.

Thirdly, B&Z collaborated with existing women and youth committees in Tripoli and Bekaa. They conducted brief peace education sessions followed by social peace workshops led by House of Peace, during which each committee generated various ideas for social initiatives aimed at reducing tensions within the community. The initiatives proposed by the women and youth committees included renovating a sports stadium and community center, organizing diverse activities involving other community members, and supporting the SADA organization in renovation projects.

International Alert and House of Peace provided conflict sensitivity training sessions to civil society organizations (CSOs) and granted them small funding to implement initiatives based on the knowledge acquired during the training sessions. International Alert also supported previous and new youth dialogue groups through their accessible and free course, which focuses on empowering youths with social, emotional, professional, and personal skills and strengthening their sense of community belonging.







# Civil Society Enablement Program

We have the knowledge. We have the experience. That's why we can help support other initiatives and grassroots NGOs and CSOs that share our journey.

In 2018, we initiated a Civil Society Enablement program – stemming from our belief in the crucial role of civil society in the advancement of communities in all social, economic, political, and environmental aspects.

We develop partnerships with local civil society organizations, based on our core values: non-violence, citizenship and gender equality.

Our capacity-strengthening projects target local civil society organizations and small community-based organizations, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to develop and ensure a sustainable future. We do this through tailored training, coaching and financial support.

We co-create learning journeys - mentoring our participants to design and implement projects that focus on human rights and democratization. We continuously improve our CSE program based on the lessons learned from these journeys - for increased impact.



**39 CSOs**  
Fostering Refugee Leadership Project

**78 Direct Beneficiaries**  
Fostering Refugee Leadership Project

## Project Highlight

# Fostering Refugee Leadership

The Fostering Refugee Leadership Project in Lebanon, in partnership with the Resourcing Refugee Leadership Initiative (rrli), aims to enhance the preparedness and sustainability of Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs). It does so by providing tailored technical and financial support, enabling them to become effective agents of change within their communities. The project's inclusive framework prioritizes refugee leadership in addressing community needs, implementing interventions, and improving social impact for both refugees and host communities.

The first cycle of the project was launched in 2022, focusing on supporting 40 RLOs through structural, technical, and capacity development assistance. This cycle culminated in each RLO presenting their written project proposal and budget to an expert jury, reflecting their vision and goals.

Following the evaluation process, 17 RLOs were selected to benefit from sub-granting support of up to \$20,000. Additionally, they received customized coaching and mentoring support. The sub-granting component enables the RLOs to design and implement interventions that bring their vision to life, contributing to their mission and generating meaningful impact.







## SHABABIC THEATER

Shababic Theater aims to create interactive theater performances and awareness videos, providing a safe space for the community to express their feelings and emotions. Their project focuses on implementing an interactive theater intervention with underserved women and youth in North Lebanon.



## Ana Hon

Ana Hon is a media platform operating in North Lebanon. They are set to implement digital media training courses and create daily news content specifically aimed at youth. The objective is to provide young individuals with a platform to share their accomplishments and showcase stories from underrepresented areas.



## Roaya cultural Corner center - RCCC

Roaya Corner Cultural Center, located in Nahr Al-Bared camp, focuses on working with children and young people in the area. Their project involves organizing regular lectures, courses, and workshops aimed at nurturing artistic and creative talents. Additionally, they provide psychological support sessions utilizing art therapy techniques.



نلتقي ونبادر



## Telescope

Telescope works towards a society that is aware of and enjoys its economic and social rights and is an active participant in the development and environmental issues for society in all its categories. Telescope's project will support human rights for the advancement of society, through training courses and activities.

## Naltaqi Wa Nubadir

Naltaqi Wa Nubadir will be implementing training courses for political awareness. They will train and empower youth with ideas within politics and strengthen their capacities.

## Our strength is our work

Our Strength is Our Work is a Tripoli-based initiative that provides training sessions on dessert-making, sewing, and clothes upcycling. Their project targets girls and women in North Lebanon in order to make environment-friendly products and support their livelihoods.



همة شباب

## Hemmet Shabab

Hemmet Shabab is an initiative that will be implementing a recycling plan within Bourj Hammoud in order to make the area environmentally friendly.



## Witness

Witness is a Palestinian Association for Human Rights in Beirut, which is concerned with the conditions of the Palestinian people throughout Lebanon. The association will be implementing training, education, and legal assistance to Palestinian refugees in the field of research and advocacy.



## OXYGEN

Oxygen works with Syrian refugee children in the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut. With their project they will continue their education journey, reducing illiteracy and teaching children of the camps.



## A Knitted Story

A Knitted Story is an initiative that was established and works in Bekaa. They will be targeting women and girls from the refugee and host communities in the region. By making knitted dolls and ornaments they aim at providing job opportunities and empowering the role of women.



خدمة المعلومات والاستشارات القانونية (LICS)

## Damnoon

Damnoon is a legal support team that works in the central Bekaa region (Saadnayel, Bar Elias, and Marj). They will be implementing their project supporting Syrian refugees by providing legal assistance, consultations, and awareness through their team of lawyers and their mobile phone application.



## RoboGeex Academy

Robogeex Academy is a team of professional engineers that will be implementing training sessions and courses on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Their goal is to enhance the skills of young people and all who are interested in the area of Bekaa in order to share knowledge and work on research and development in the science field.



**Basmt Amal**  
SMILE OF HOPE



## War Made Me Strong

War Made Me Strong is an initiative that works in the Bekaa region targeting all people affected by war. The project they will be engaging in will include varied workshops on montage, graphic design, and film screening, in addition to wool knitting and waste recycling.

## Basmt Amal (Smile of Hope)

Basmt Amal (Smile of Hope) is an initiative that works in Bar Elias and Deir Zenoun in the Bekaa Valley. Their main objective is to empower girls and women with knowledge, reduce the gender gap, and change the stereotypical role.

With their project, they will provide recreational activities such as dancing lessons and drawing and painting sessions to deliver psychosocial support and raise awareness on different issues.

## Together for Justice

Together for Justice is an initiative that targets women in Zahle. They are aiming to enable women's effective and influential role in society. Their project consists of providing them with literacy sessions and raising awareness on topics such as gender-based violence, women's health, and women's rights.



## Pathways School

Pathways School is an initiative that targets refugees and Lebanese children, between the ages of 5-15 years. With their project, they will continue improving the school and enhancing its education.



## Sawa Rabina Team

Sawa Rabina team operates in Arsal in Bekaa Valley. They will be working on spreading volunteerism culture among people in the region from all nationalities and ages through training and dialogue sessions.





# Our Donors & Partners



Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe



NORWEGIAN  
REFUGEE COUNCIL







 [www.basmeh-zeitooneh.org](http://www.basmeh-zeitooneh.org)

 [www.facebook.com/basmehzeitooneh](https://www.facebook.com/basmehzeitooneh)

 [www.instagram.com/basmehzeitooneh](https://www.instagram.com/basmehzeitooneh)

 [www.twitter.com/basmehzeitooneh](https://www.twitter.com/basmehzeitooneh)