



Healing, Resilience and Non Violent Empowerment for Children Affected by Armed Conflict in Jordan and Lebanon



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One year into the activities, this project has been implemented largely according to schedule with very positive results and is well underway to reach its objectives.

In **Jordan** 2/3 of the project plan has already been implemented. IAHV's core programs to heal and empower children have been fully implemented in the Summer of 2017, benefiting 196 THRH participants and 68 YAVAP graduates. Through regular follow up sessions, the children deepen the effects of the training, reducing aggression and improving self-esteem and outlook. They also developed their own peacebuilding projects to strengthen human values, improve social cohesion and raise awareness about violence and stress in their schools, camps and communities, which they will implement in the coming months. In addition, 1872 children have learned basic stress relief techniques during the short SRR workshops and 185 parents and caregivers have learned to increase their resilience and stress management. Faced with the immense demand for professional care and stress management trainings among service providers, IAHV has also catered its PC programs to 235 professionals from various local and international organisations. To ensure sustainability and multiplication, 9 PC graduates have already been trained as SRR trainers in the first ToT in Irbid.

The positive feedback by partnering organisations on IAHV programs and their sustained effects on the beneficiaries, has led to numerous referrals and new requests for trainings. As a result, IAHV Jordan has now solid partnerships with Islamic Charity Center Society, IRD, SOS Villages, Norwegian Refugee Council, Relief International, Save the Children, Jordanian River Foundation, Kufur3anna, Child Care and Jordan Medical Association.

In **Lebanon** 1/3 of the project plan has been implemented. The activities in Lebanon have focused till now on SRR workshops, of which 1769 Syrian and vulnerable Lebanese children have benefited, as well as HRE programs for 332 parents. In addition, 47 very vulnerable children living in a shelter close to Tripoli have undergone the intensive THRH program, with very positive results as remarked by their supervisors.

Following one THRH training in a shelter for children around Tripoli that surpassed the expectations of the staff, the management invited us to provide three more THRH trainings for the other children. The children in the shelter are coming from very poor backgrounds with big families (some have 12 brothers and sisters). Some children are totally abandoned by their families, many of them have been physically abused by family members or exposed to other kinds of violence and abuse, including sexual. Before coming to the shelter, most of them dropped out of school and worked at a very early age. In general, the children lack trust and love, and have tendencies of paranoia that everyone is conspiring against them to keep them away from their

families. They display strong tendencies of aggression and isolation. The strict and sometimes harsh treatment of adults inhibits the children to open up to their supervisors or teachers, but after the training many children were able to open up a bit more. The testimonies of the children and the staff speak about the strong impact of THRH on their wellbeing and behaviour.



Some selected cases:

M., 10 year old child of a Lebanese father and Syrian mother: According to his story he lost a sister in front of him and his father abused him and his mother. His mother ran away and remarried but her new husband threw him on the street to go back to his father, who continued abusing him, so he escaped back to the street.

M. was having paranoia tendencies. He believed that if others are talking they are talking bad about him, if others are laughing, they are making fun of him, he also believed that nobody cares about him except his mother and that everyone is conspiring to keep him away from her. He tried to escape from the institution to go look for his mother.

During the training he wouldn't participate unless he was sitting next to the teacher and he wasn't able to trust anyone. He would tend to be violent to others but would stop only for the sake of a caring adult.

The last day he participated well. He says that he is doing the exercises daily now. His teacher shared that it was only after the training the boy's behavior started to change. This was also a surprise for the social assistant at school.

A., a 10 year old Lebanese boy from a poor neighborhood in Qobbeh, was beaten by family members and tried to run away from home and school. He wasn't much interested at the beginning of the training and wasn't willing to participate. His concentration span is very short, he gets bored fast, he is very shy and had problems with his peers and teacher. But on the last day of the course he started participating and joined a theatre sketch. A. is doing the exercises he learnt after the training. His elder brothers shared that he is improving academically now according to the results of the last 2 tests.

F., 12 year old Lebanese boy who is mentally retarded, says that he was sexually abused by family members. He was always uncomfortable with touch when playing with his peers. His concentration improved during the training and on the last day he came to hug the teachers, which is a big step for him to trust a physical contact

K., 10 year old Syrian child who was abandoned by his family. According to his teachers the family even refuses to see him. He was having violent tendencies and creating trouble with his peers. He wasn't able to trust much. His teacher shared that he opened up after the training much more than he did in more than 7 months and that he started to be more disciplined and behaving better with his peers, avoiding fights more.

U. a 13 year old Lebanese boy who lost his mother recently, which affected him much. It seems that his father kicked him and his younger brother out. He had very low self-esteem and felt he wasn't able to achieve anything. In the training he was able to express much and to dig in for his potential. He shared that it's his first time to believe in himself and to feel he is able to achieve. He actually got the highest points in the training and was able to walk away from fights for the whole week.

