



Refuge Egypt Bulletin



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A Celebration of Hope

Ahlan wa Sahlan

Welcome to the second edition of our bi-monthly Bulletin, where you'll find the latest news and updates from across Refuge Egypt's programming.

The last two months have seen

greater insecurity in Egypt, with multiple bombings in central Cairo and fighting in Sinai. It's a tense time for Egyptians and refugees alike.

Yet despite the tension and insecurity,

there is much to celebrate.

Featured in this edition, in pride of place, is our Adult Education program, which graduated an astounding 85 students this term. These proud gradu-



Ahlan wa Sahlan (ctd.)

ates are now better equipped for life in Egypt—now more qualified for work and higher education—and for future resettlement.

Also celebrating in this edition are the women of the jewellery-making project in Zamalek, mostly from Darfur. All greatly enjoyed this pilot course and its opportunity for devel-

oping skills and building-community, but the story of one woman who has made over LE 1,500 (\$200) from her crafts stands out in particular.

Also outstanding is the story of a man and his daughter from our clinic in Alexandria, which is worth reading in full. Not only is it an incredible story, but its a stark reminder. Among

the hope and celebration and successes, refugees in Egypt face unbelievable difficulty.

It's our prayer as you read this Bulletin that you will be moved—to action, and to stand with us.

--The Editor

Story from the Clinics

A miracle in Arba wa Nous

The following story came from a doctor in our Well Baby / Well Child Clinic in Arba Wa Nous:

A Sudanese man brought his nine-month old daughter to our Arba wa Nous clinic. She was feverish and was in a very bad general condition. She had a severe chest infection and admission to the hospital was mandatory. The man refused admission. His wife died in an accident this past winter., and it was a tragic story: She was burned with other members of his family when they were trying to stay warm with an open fire.

The man has 7 children and no-

one to help take care of them. The oldest daughter, who is 12 years old, is the only assistance he has; he explained that if he left her to stay with the baby at hospital, no one would be around to care for the other children, and he couldn't stay with the baby as he relies on his income from work to support the family; leaving work to access our clinic would also result in a decreased salary for the month.

We advised that the baby should start medical care before the condition worsens. After suggesting he call a neighbour or friend, we learned he has no one in Egypt

except his elderly mother, who is ill and in need of care. We co-operated with the father and allowed his daughter to care for the 9-month-old. The 12-year-old daughter bought in her baby sister every day so that we could follow the case. We advised her what to do and revised treatment daily.

Thank God: the baby was completely cured—given the seriousness of the case and the need for constant attention, this was miraculous. What seemed impossible and difficult to put in the hands of a young girl ended well for everyone.



Handcraft Course

Crafting a Future



This month, we graduated our first class of the year in our revamped crafts project. The ladies, mostly from Sudan, learnt beading techniques and business skills. Our Head of Capacity & Livelihoods shares their stories below.



Aisha

Aisha started coming from the first class and hasn't missed a single one. She even showed up on one day we had cancelled just to show us what she'd been making!

She'd never done anything with beading, handcrafts, or jewelry making prior to taking the class.

After three lessons, she started selling what she was making. So far, she has spent about 500 LE on supplies—and has made 1,200 LE, with plenty left.

She's taken what she's learned and is making her own versions of the designs. She said that necklaces are what sell the best—and she can't wait for the next session.

Zahara

Zahara is a soft-spoken Sudanese woman and told us that this course has been very useful for her, and she loves it so much. She said that the teachers are very professional and that they are helping make the women professionals in accessory making.

She invested 45 LE to buy supplies and was able to sell many over Eid. She said people really love the styles, and that she let them pick the colors and types of beads they wanted and she has been able to make them to order. So far, she has made 102 LE.

Mandera

Mandera is a South Sudanese lady who has worked in our office

for many years. As prices have increased in the last two years, she was looking for ways to supplement her income to help cover school fees and other expenses.

She loved each course and eagerly learned each new technique. She proudly wore the earrings and necklaces she made to the office. She has been able to sell 22 items, and smiled and said she was even paid in dollars for some!

She praised the course for helping those women who are too old or too weak for domestic work. Training women in something that they can do from home (while minding children) allows them to contribute to their households without physically demanding work.

Adult Education

A CELEBRATION OF HOPE





As the sun began to set on a scorching August evening, groups of refugees from across Cairo clustered around the courtyard of All Saint's Cathedral. Over the next hour, more and more of their fellow students joined them in the nervous, excited energy of the evening; the square outside the cathedral offices filling with laughter, ringing phones, while crates of soda led the march upstairs.

This was the second graduation of our Adult Education program this year, which has been running in various forms for over a decade. More to the point, it was the largest intake of students in recent memory: 145 students started one of our 6 English Language Classes this term, based on the Interchange curriculum, ranged from preparation classes to level 2A.

As a result, we had to hold our graduation ceremony in a larger hall than we have done before; with more chairs put out than we could've imagined at the start of the year.

A total of 85 students graduated their classes—the drop-off rate in

large part due to the interruption of Ramadan mid-way through the semester, despite changes made in the schedule. But there was still plenty to celebrate, and the graduates packed out the room with friends, families, and loved ones who came to celebrate the achievement of hope beyond the odds.

The students who came to celebrate with us on Saturday night come from a range of backgrounds.

'WE NEED TO HELP EACH OTHER THE WAY THESE CHRISTIANS AND FOREIGNERS ARE HELPING US.'

For the most part, they come from Sudan—around 87% of students this year have been Sudanese. Among these are families, single parents, and young men, who have escaped everything from war to raids to famine.

In addition, others have come from South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Syria. One mother and daughter from Iraq studied together in the same place. This shows the beauty of the program.

Adult Education is a cornerstone of our Capacity and Livelihoods Department, which aims to give refugees who stay in a kind of limbo in Cairo—without the options of going home or being resettled—a better hope at work or further education, through skills training and education. Its mission is the improvement of refugee's capacity for self-sufficiency.

Yet an incredible offshoot of this program has been in how it has fostered real community among its disparate constituents. Students come from widely different backgrounds, living on opposite sides of

the city—and find common hopes, dreams, struggles, and failures, and work together to overcome.

Soon, the evening got off to a start. Mr. Bouquet, one of the founders of the program and the current program administrator gave a few words of welcome and congratulations, as well as the new Head of Capacity and Livelihoods, Beth Watkins.

Heather, our Headteacher, then started inviting the teachers up to





FALL 2015 GRADUATES





give out the certificates class-by-class. There were lots of smiles and applause, high-fives and hugs, and one or two tears, as each of the 6 classes (see the photos on the next page) came up to receive their certificates and a firm handshake, and stood together for photos.

After the certificates were handed out, the staff took a few minutes to thank the excellent teachers and volunteers who give freely of their time, for dedication to the students.

In addition, we said goodbye to two teachers who will not be

who came to share in the joy.

Another student got up and spoke in English for a few minutes. He thanked the teachers for their time and hard work, and for working to give the students improved skills and better opportunities for their future. He asked for permission to speak in Arabic, so he could say a few words to be understood by the guests of the students, as well as the students in lower levels.

He summarized the same points, but then added a short section only in the Arabic speech. He

all the way through and cleaning up the refreshment table when everyone left.

After the evening's festivities, Beth Watkins, the Head of Capacity and Livelihoods, reflected. 'It is exciting to see the progress the students are making and watch the confidence they get with improving their English overflow into other areas. We are excited for the upcoming term

2015 (SO FAR) IN NUMBERS

150

GRADUATES

450

IN AT LEAST 1 CLASS

87%

FROM SUDAN

finishing the next term. One of the teachers, an Eritrean, is being resettled in Europe. As one of the teachers said, 'This is good news for you, and bad news for us!'

Before the evening could draw to a close, several students stood up and gave words of thanks on behalf of their class.

One Sudanese man began to give a short speech in excellent English. A guest in the front row overhead the Headteacher turn and whisper her neighbor, 'Just last year I taught him to read!' She was smiling from ear-to-ear—just like her students and the families

said, 'These teachers, they are from other countries, they are Christians, and look at everything they are doing for us. And we, when we see each other struggling just say, "Hi. How are you? You're fine? Bye!" We need to help each other the way these Christians and foreigners are helping us!'

After a few classes presented gifts to their teachers and some announcements about the new term beginning, the feasting began. There were dates, cookies, cakes (some baked at home by some of the volunteer teachers!), and soda.

One of the students, a very kind Sudanese woman, took it upon herself to make trays of the various cakes to hand around to everyone, and insisted on staying

and are working so we can accommodate as many students as possible.'

Many students see learning English as the only hope they have for a better life. This program is one of a small handful in Cairo that meets the needs of refugees directly.

This, then, was more than a celebration of achievement, of skills gained and grades reached. This was a celebration of hope.

Interested in volunteering with our Adult Education program? E-mail info@refuge-egypt.org, or visit <http://www.refuge-egypt.org> for more information.



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Refuge Egypt serves refugees, migrants and asylum seekers living in Egypt who have fled their original country of nationality due to war or disaster, and who have well founded fears of return due to persecution or loss of rights. We seek to provide humanitarian assistance, spiritual guidance and encouragement to help build self-sufficiency and self-respect in preparation for repatriation, resettlement or integration into Egyptian society.

Refuge-Egypt is a ministry of the Anglican Episcopal Diocese of Egypt with North Africa.

Our work relies on the prayers and generosity of our local and worldwide supporters like you.

If you wish to make a one-off or regular donation, our international banking details can be found on our website (www.refuge-egypt.org/index.php/support).

You can also support us through our international partners in the USA (www.friendsanglicandioceseegypt.org) or the UK (www.eda-egypt.org.uk).

Thank you for your continued support.