

2017 A YEAR IN REVIEW



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WELCOME LETTER



Dear Friends and Partners,

Looking back on 2017, we can easily find cause for both joy and sorrow. Our world — and especially the Middle East — is a difficult place and we witness injustice, greed and selfish interests flourishing all around us. Yet, we are an Easter people. We are a people who refuse to lose our hope for a better world — a world which is founded on peace and justice, where our communities are rooted in God’s love for us and our love for one another.

As members of the one body of Christ, we each have a special role to play in turning this vision into reality. The gift of diversity, lovingly bestowed upon us by God, is a strength of immeasurable value. Yet, our challenge is this: To witness to our unity in faith within the diversity of our ecclesial expressions.

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work... Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good... distributed to each one, just as the Spirit determines.”

(1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

Inside these pages, we present an overview of the work the Council undertook during 2017 using the gifts endowed by the Holy Spirit.

As we move forward into an uncertain future — one full of challenges and opportunities alike — we are strengthened in the knowledge that God has imparted us the necessary gifts and courage to live out our mission and bring change to our region and our world.

May your own lives and work be infused with the gifts of the Holy Spirit as you endeavor to serve in your unique capacity for the realization of our common mission.

Sincerely,

Dr. Souraya Bechealany

Acting Secretary General | Middle East Council of Churches



ABOUT MECC

THE MECC IS A FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES WHICH ENDEAVOR TOGETHER TO FULFILL THEIR COMMON MISSION AND REALIZE THEIR DESIRED UNITY FOR THE GLORY OF THE ONE GOD. HENCE, THE VISION OF THE COUNCIL IS TO DEEPEN THE SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP AND SERVICE PARTNERSHIP AMONG THE CHURCHES OF THE MIDDLE EAST, AND TO UNITE THEM IN WORD AND DEED AS THEY STRIVE TO ACHIEVE UNITY AMONG CHURCHES AND BEAR A LIVING, EVANGELICAL WITNESS TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL OF SALVATION AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST THROUGH LOVE, PEACE AND JUSTICE THROUGHOUT THE REGION AND AMONG THE PEOPLE INHABITING IT.

+ Mission

Being the tangible expression of the Christian presence in the region, the Council's mission is to work towards the unification of visions, perspectives and attitudes among the Churches, especially on issues related to Christian presence and witness in the Middle East, and Christian-Muslim dialogue.

The Council's mission is seen today as being a bridge that facilitates this communion:

- A bridge between Middle Eastern Churches
- A bridge between Christians and peoples of other religions in the region, especially with Muslims
- A bridge between Middle Eastern Churches and Churches around the world

+ Purpose

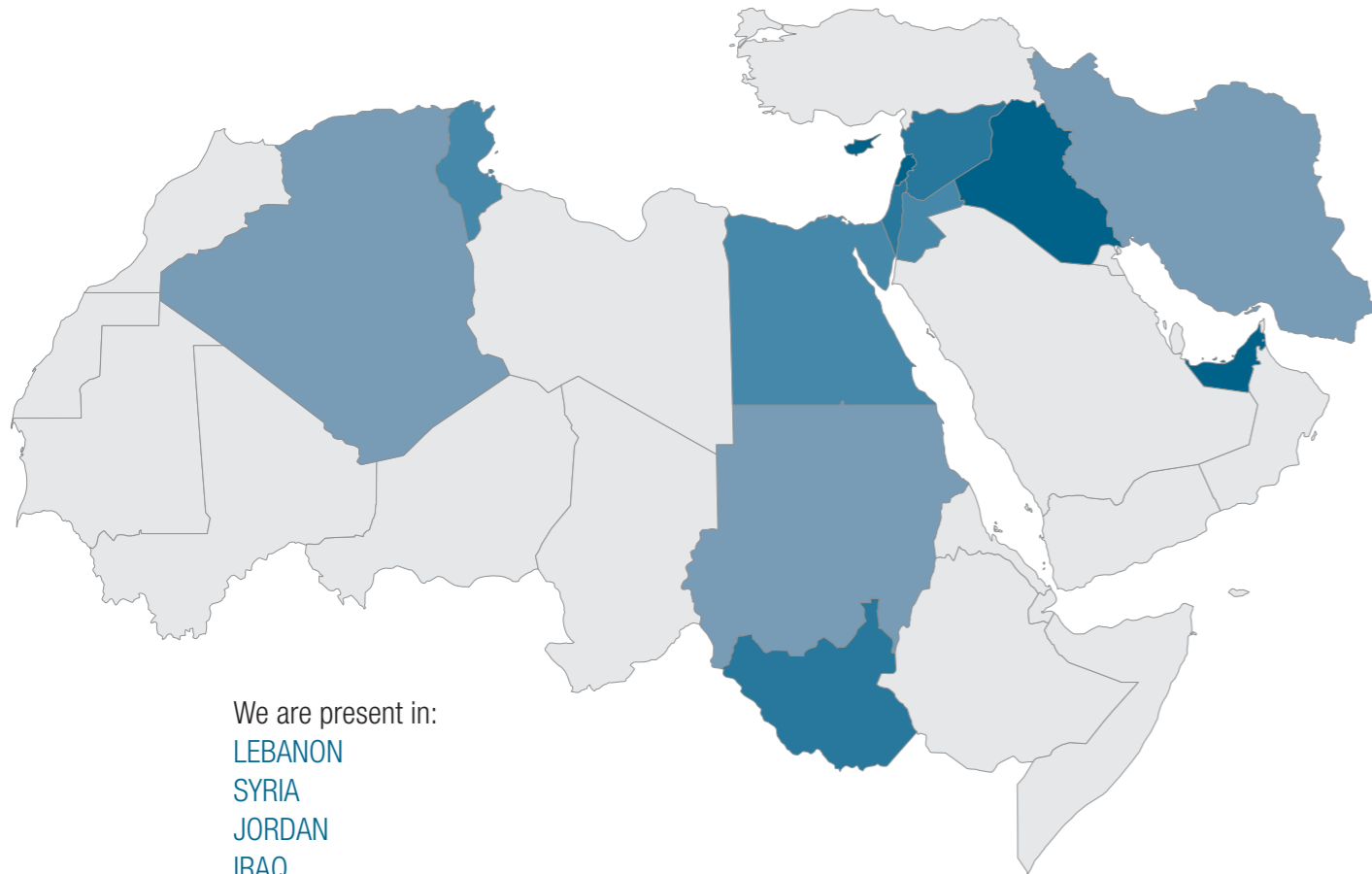
Through its agencies and activities, MECC works to:

- Facilitate dialogue among churches (locally, regionally, and internationally);
- Strengthen the spirit of partnership and ecumenical awareness;
- Provide a means for common study and research aimed at understanding the traditions and history of member churches, mutual enrichment, ways to activate the Christian presence in the region, and to consolidate the role of Christians in their communities and nations;
- Support the ecumenical upbringing of people at various ages in order to develop their spirituality and encourage prayer and action for the sake of unity;
- Develop and organize interfaith dialogue aimed at discovering common values and reciprocal understanding in order to strengthen the spirit of citizenship and full partnership within and among nations;
- Undertake collaborative humanitarian endeavors in accordance with Christian and humanitarian principles in order to achieve justice, relieve the suffering of the poor and vulnerable communities, uphold human rights and strengthen Christian presence and witness in order to secure freedom, peace and equity in citizenship for all peoples in all nations.





MEMBER CHURCHES



We are present in:

LEBANON
SYRIA
JORDAN
IRAQ
PALESTINE
CYPRUS
EGYPT
KUWAIT
IRAN
SUDAN
SOUTH SUDAN
TUNISIA
ALGERIA
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

MECC IS COMPOSED OF 27 MEMBER CHURCHES FROM 14 COUNTRIES ACROSS THE MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA (MENA) REGION.

ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES (3):

- Coptic Orthodox Church
- Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch and all the East
- Armenian Apostolic Church - Catholicosate of Cilicia

ORTHODOX (CHALCEDONIAN) CHURCHES (4):

- Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa
- Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East
- Greek Orthodox Church of Jerusalem
- Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus

PROTESTANT CHURCHES (13):

- Evangelical Synod of the Nile
- Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East
- National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
- National Evangelical Union of Lebanon
- Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land
- National Evangelical Church in Kuwait
- The Synod of the Evangelical Church in Iran
- Evangelical Church in Sudan
- Episcopal Church in Sudan
- Presbyterian Church in Sudan
- Protestant Church in Algeria
- Methodist Church in Tunisia

CATHOLIC CHURCHES (7):

- Syriac Maronite Church of Antioch
- Greek Catholic Melkite Church
- Syrian Catholic Church of Antioch
- Coptic Catholic Church
- Armenian Catholic Church
- Chaldean Catholic Church of Babylon
- Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem



MECC PROGRAMS

The Middle East Council of Churches is a bridge builder in a fragmented region. We serve out our mission to heal divisions in two ways that are central to the Christian faith — through *koinonia* (communion) and *diakonia* (service). These fundamental concepts for living out our faith provide a framework for all of MECC's activities.

+ Core Programs

- Ecumenical Programs
- Interfaith Programs
- Communications
- Youth Programs

+ Relief & Development Programs

- Education
- Livelihood
- Social Cohesion
- Health & Nutrition
- Psychosocial Support
- WASH
- Humanitarian Relief



ECUMENISM

FOUR OF MECC'S SIX POINTS OF PURPOSE ARE FOCUSED ON ECUMENICAL COMMUNION AND DIALOGUE. WE ARE AN INTRINSICALLY ECUMENICAL ORGANIZATION AND EMBED THIS PRINCIPLE IN EVERYTHING WE DO. IN 2017, MECC BROUGHT TOGETHER CHRISTIANS FROM THE REGION AND AROUND THE WORLD FOR A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES, LARGE AND SMALL.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Received more than 30 ecumenical delegations & representatives from churches, councils and FBOs at MECC General Secretariat headquarters in Lebanon.
- In Syria, MECC organized and conducted three capacity building trainings for 84 staff from local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and faith-based organizations (FBOs) on humanitarian principles and policies.
- Filmed, produced and published the *Bridges to Bethlehem* christmas documentary series. This project was filmed in six countries across the Middle East and highlighted the rich diversity of tradition in eastern churches around the coming of the Christ child. 12 MECC member churches were profiled in the series of short documentaries.
- MECC Secretary General and Council representatives participated in global and regional ecumenical events, such as the 500th Celebration of the Protestant Reformation event organized by the Protestant Churches of Egypt and the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Strategic Forum on Diakonia and Sustainable Development.
- MECC co-organized the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Lebanon
- Hosted the MECC Executive Committee Meeting and MECC Partners Meeting
- MECC issued statements of support and calls for action on matters of Christian Presence and Witness in the Middle East
- Secretary General Emeritus, Fr. Dr. Michel Jalakh, participated in the Churches for Middle East Peace "Choosing Hope" Webinar alongside Rev. Dr. Najla Kassab (National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon; World Communion of Reformed Churches), Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb (Dar al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem) and Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon (Churches for Middle East Peace).





INTERFAITH

IN FOURTEEN CENTURIES OF CO-EXISTENCE, THERE ARE MANY EXAMPLES OF CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS LIVING SIDE-BY-SIDE IN HARMONY DESPITE TUMULTUOUS PERIODS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM.

The Council seeks to maintain dialogue and joint-initiatives around common values which are shared by Christians and Muslims alike. Our Interfaith Program works toward the peaceful co-existence of two critical components of society in the Middle East. We work at multiple levels — from high level dialogue among religious and political leaders, to grassroots efforts among youth that are aimed at breaking down barriers and increasing social integration across religious lines.



+ Participation in High-Level Dialogue

The Secretary General, Representatives of the Council and its Member Churches regularly participate in high-level conferences among religious and political leaders. In 2017, MECC Secretary General Emeritus, Fr. Dr. Michel Jalakh, participated in the following notable interfaith events: the Al-Azhar Conference on Diversity, Citizenship and Co-Existence; an interfaith meeting organised by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Iraq during a delegation to the country; and a WCC follow-up meeting of Iraqi religious leaders in Beirut where ways to rebuild Iraq were discussed by attendees.

+ Joint Initiative

MECC was also involved in an innovative initiative by the Adyan Foundation to create an inter-religious curriculum focused on inclusive citizenship and co-existence for the Lebanese education system.



+ Inter-Religious Social Cohesion & Integration

MECC is spearheading an interfaith youth initiative in Lebanon aimed at increasing social cohesion, healing historical divisions and bringing youth together for inter-religious dialogue and social integration. This project brings 200 Christian, Shia, Sunni and Druze youth from non-urban communities in Lebanon together regularly over the course of a year for joint-dialogue and activities. The multi-phase project assists the four youth groups in building communication and leadership skills, provides them with opportunities to socialize and develop relationships with youth from different religious backgrounds, and cultivates trust among a generation of Lebanese coming into adulthood.





EDUCATION

AS A RESULT OF THE SEVEN-YEAR-LONG CONFLICT IN SYRIA, MORE THAN 12.2 MILLION SYRIANS HAVE BEEN DISPLACED AND 13.1 MILLION REMAIN IN NEED OF HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT. AS OF APRIL 2018, THERE ARE 6.6 MILLION PEOPLE DISPLACED WITHIN SYRIA AND 5.6 MILLION REGISTERED AS REFUGEES IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES ALONE. EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN SYRIA AND HOST COUNTRIES, AS WELL AS THE CHILDREN WHO RELY ON THEM, HAVE SUFFERED GREATLY FROM THIS MASS DISPLACEMENT.

In Syria, one in three schools are damaged or destroyed and an estimated 1.75 million children aged 5 to 17 are out of school. Many families are in economically vulnerable situations and cannot afford to keep their kids in school. The schools that remain open are struggling to support the ballooning populations of students in their halls. This over-crowding brings with it educational as well as health challenges.

In Lebanon, there are almost 550,000 registered Syrian refugee children in the country and an estimated 76% of their families are living below the poverty line. The Lebanese education system is unable to keep up with the significant (and growing) demand.

This dire situation brings enormous risks for the future of millions of Syrian children who will suffer the life-long consequences of not having received a solid education during their childhood. It lowers their ability to secure safe and dignified work at living wages in adulthood, and it is also a contributing factor to incidents of child abuse and human trafficking.

MECC believes it is the human right of every child to receive a high-quality education to build their life upon, and that education is a fundamental key to personal and community development. MECC offers three types of education support in hopes of making a contribution towards avoiding a "lost generation" of Syrians who received little or no education during their formative years.



SYRIA:
1 in 3 SCHOOLS IN SYRIA IS DAMAGED OR DESTROYED

1.75 MILLION CHILDREN AGED 5 TO 17 ARE OUT OF SCHOOL IN SYRIA



LEBANON:
550,000 REGISTERED SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN

40% OF SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN ARE OUT OF SCHOOL

PRIMARY EDUCATION

In Lebanon, there are around 550,000 Syrian children registered as refugees and in need of education. But, as of January 31, 2018, only 221,000 non-Lebanese children were registered in the Lebanese education system. In partnership with the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, MECC is supporting an educational project with five sites across Lebanon which aims to give Syrian kids living in Lebanon a firm educational foundation. This informal education project serves children from the most vulnerable refugee families and focuses on the fundamentals: reading and writing, math, science, English and developing social skills. The curriculum used is the Syrian curriculum in order to facilitate ease of return should a political peace and sufficient security be established. Over 400 children are enrolled in five educational centers located in: Qab Elias, Riyaq, Tripoli, Minyara, and Tyre.

5
EDUCATIONAL
CENTERS
IN LEBANON

410
STUDENTS
ENROLLED

REMEDIAL EDUCATION

Syrian children in both Syria and Lebanon face major challenges in securing their education. In Syria, mass displacement and widespread school closures have left millions of children with gaps in their learning. MECC supports remedial classes in order to close these gaps and increase children's ability to succeed in the classroom and later in life.

90
STUDENTS
IN SYRIA

175
STUDENTS
WERE
OFFERED
TUITION
VOUCHERS

TUITION VOUCHERS

With many families struggling economically due to the war, affording to send children to school has become very difficult. An estimated 1.35 million children are at risk of dropping out of school within Syria. Due to the large number of damaged or destroyed schools, and the lower capacity of public schools to offer adequate quality education, many families are faced with difficult choices when it comes to securing an education for their children. In Syria, MECC is supporting families that have economic vulnerability and have been adversely affected by conflict by providing educational vouchers that help pay for tuition and keep children in school.



KIVORK | 10 YEARS, ALEPPO, SYRIA



Like many Syrians, Kivork and his family have endured significant losses during the conflict, which recently entered its seventh year. His father was killed in the street by a stray bullet and his family's home was destroyed. The family's story is tragically not rare — loss of the main income earner, loss of the family home, a child with a serious medical condition in need of treatment, and the ongoing physical and emotional effects of psychological trauma brought on by war.

"I lost my husband, and then my mother-in-law," said Kivork's mother, Hikanoush. "My son Kivork couldn't bear these losses... it caused him sorrow and sadness. Kivork is an intelligent and hardworking student. Since his early childhood he liked his school, but the difficult security situation has affected his psychology and made him nervous. We lived in the Al-Midan area, which has witnessed a lot of mortar shells, and our house was totally destroyed due to these shells. Miraculously, my two sons and I survived."

Yet, in moving across town to live with relatives after their home was destroyed, another major change was coming Kivork's way. With her other son suffering from epilepsy and in need of expensive treatments, Hikanoush couldn't afford to keep Kivork in the school he was attending.

"Due to the hard circumstances we've experienced, I didn't want Kivork to have more losses. If he moved from his school, he would miss his classmates and going to the school that he loves; this motivated me to seek help."

Hoping to find a way to keep him at the school among his friends, she discovered MECC's tuition assistance program. Through this support, Kivork has been able to remain at his school, and he continues to work towards his dream of becoming a pharmacist — a promise Kivork made to his father before his death and is determined to keep.



PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT



PSYCHOSOCIAL PROGRAMS PROVIDE A NORMALIZING EXPERIENCE WHERE PARTICIPANTS ARE ALLOWED TO INTERACT, BE CREATIVE, EXPRESS THEMSELVES, AND BE LISTENED TO (OR WITNESSED) IN A SAFE NON-JUDGMENTAL SETTING.

While many refugees, displaced persons or those adversely affected by conflict live in an environment full of uncontrollable events, participants in this program have the time and space to express their anger, pain, worries and fears. Recognizing their shared experiences with other group members offers a fundamental form of relief for every individual. This shared experience is often not limited to issues around displacement, but may also include bullying, domestic violence, and even sexual abuse.

MECC psychosocial sessions utilize drama therapy, art therapy and trauma healing methods to support stress management, self-expression and emotional regulation. Our participants also

engage in recreational activities, health and human rights awareness sessions.

Our goal is to see women who participate empowered to: cope with their current situation in better ways, get the necessary help required to overcome their trauma, engage in better parenting with their children, and express themselves freely and safely.

For children, we aim to help them express themselves without fear, talk about their hidden problems, interact with their peers, develop positive views of their future, identify their own personal strengths, and build emotional resiliency.



LEBANON
People who have participated in psychosocial support programs.

932
CHILDREN

508
WOMEN



NAREN | FROM SYRIA, LIVING IN MOUNT LEBANON

"I had never been to a psychologist before. I used to think that if someone went to a psychologist they must have something wrong with them. But now I know better. I know what is right and what is wrong and how to better treat my children. Now I give my children tenderness and they give it back to me as well. I have benefited a lot. I don't get angry at my children like I used to. I take better care of them now. No matter how many mistakes they make, I can calmly explain to them what is right and what is wrong."



GARDENIA | 12 YEARS OLD, DAUGHTER OF NAREN

"When I came to this clinic, it made me very happy...we got to play and I'm always happy here and love to keep coming back. I come here to play with my friends and we have fun together. My favorite day is when I get to come here. When I grow up, I want to become a doctor. I want to help sick people and hope they get to go back to their home country."



MARIA | ALEPPO, SYRIA

"The effects of the training were more psychological than physical. When we came together for this workshop we were able to exchange a lot of expertise. Whether in communicating with one another or learning about each other's problems. We share each other's problems. It was suggested we visit 10 houses as a pair or five houses alone. We were able to pass on the things we had learned to the families we visited. Even in simple ways — even by just listening to them. That doesn't mean we've become psychiatrists and we can cure people, but by visiting families like we did, we helped them by listening to their sufferings and concerns."



HANAA' | FROM ALEPPO, SYRIA, LIVING IN LEBANON

"If I was walking down the street and felt hungry, my sister was the one to go buy me a snack. I was scared to talk to the salesman. I was like this since I lived in Aleppo, since I was a child. My fears only got worse with the war. The psychotherapy sessions and drama therapy sessions [at Our Lady Dispensary] really helped me be able to open my heart. When I saw my own life story performed in front of me, I started crying. And this, this opening really helped me a lot."



LIVELIHOOD



SYRIA:

85% OF SYRIANS LIVE BELOW THE POVERTY LINE



LEBANON:

76% OF SYRIAN REFUGEES LIVE BELOW THE POVERTY LINE;

1.5 MILLION ECONOMICALLY VULNERABLE LEBANESE IN NEED;

312,000 PALESTINIAN REFUGEES AND

THOUSANDS OF IRAQI REFUGEES ARE ALSO STRUGGLING TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES IN A RESTRICTIVE ECONOMIC CLIMATE.



In Syria, the collapse of the economy — coupled with the loss of homes, businesses, and heads of household due to violence and bombings — and mass displacement have led to deep economic vulnerability for millions of families. Many young Syrians have seen their professional education interrupted, which can lead to diminished career prospects in the future. While humanitarian aid has filled in short term gaps, the foundational need for families is to have the ability to generate steady and sufficient income for themselves again.

For refugees in particular, the economic situation in Lebanon is very difficult as their ability to maintain legal status is costly and complicated, and the jobs they are allowed to take are very few (mainly restricted to cleaning and construction) and do not pay well. Vulnerable Lebanese families encounter similar poor job and educational prospects, even without the restrictive limits, due to a weak economy and an estimated 2 million refugees seeking education, housing and work in a population of approximately 4 million.



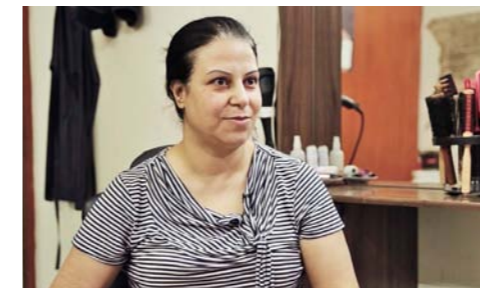
In Syria, MECC has been working on building economic resilience and extending opportunities to begin working again through a wide variety of vocational skills trainings, investments in micro-enterprises (Small Business Start-Up Course & Grants), and cash-for-work opportunities connected to our Waste Management Project.

SYRIA: 77 WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING COURSES; 18 WOMEN RECEIVED VOCATIONAL GRANTS; 483 YOUTH RECEIVED VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND 529 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN A SMALL BUSINESS TRAINING COURSE; 433 YOUTH RECEIVED STARTUP KITS; 17 YOUTH RECEIVED STARTUP GRANTS



In Lebanon, we work primarily with women to impart skills that can give them a potential way to earn extra income in the informal economy. We often connect these vocational trainings to psychosocial support sessions. The trainings target Syrian, Iraqi and Lebanese women and have included cooking classes; embroidery, beading and knitting; food safety, canning & food preservation; pottery as well as home care & nursing.

LEBANON: 325 WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSES



RAGHADA | DAMASCUS, SYRIA

"I started thinking about hair-dressing as a career when the crisis started in Syria, because my husband's job ended and he's hardly ever able to get work now. In the workshop, we learned how to deal with the customer and how to organize our daily life — not only our work. Spending all day working in the home doesn't help anyone. It doesn't bring you anything and you don't feel useful. That's what changed in my life when I started working."



AHMAD | DAMASCUS, SYRIA

"Before the war there was a sawmill in Hamorri [outside of Damascus] and I worked there from 2004 until the war. We're frustrated by the war, professionally. I even thought of leaving the carpentry profession. Attending the [small business] workshop helped me start working again. I had the determination, but I needed some encouragement. I needed someone to give me a little push upwards. I thank God, this was the push."



W.A.S.H.



SYRIA:

13.1 MILLION PEOPLE IN NEED OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

35% OF HOUSEHOLDS RELY ON UNSAFE WATER SOURCES TO MEET THEIR WATER SUPPLY NEEDS

Large populations of displaced persons and rising instances of families living in informal settlements or inadequate housing are creating increased pressure on water and sanitation systems in Syria. Schools are a vital resource of WASH facilities, but many have been damaged over the course of seven years of violence. Waste management systems are likewise damaged or only partially functioning.

In order to prevent the spread of disease in areas where WASH systems and infrastructure are not fully functioning, MECC is working at several levels, from behavior change (WASH trainings and health awareness), systems support (waste management cash-for-work program and distribution of neighborhood garbage containers) and infrastructure rehabilitation (repair of WASH facilities in schools and hospitals).



MASOUD | SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, DAMASCUS SUBURBS, SYRIA



“Before the war, we had around 280 students at this school. But, with displaced people that number is up to 620 students. In each class, I have up to 50 students. At the beginning of the school year, there was a huge lice epidemic and we had to work hard to eradicate it. We've had a lot of other diseases circulating here too. At one point, we had 7 or 8 students with hepatitis.”

“All of these issues because of what? Because of overcrowding and pressure on infrastructure. Because of not caring for the washrooms. After rehabilitating the washrooms, there are less health and hygiene issues. The Middle East Council of Churches also supported us with personal hygiene kits and training, which also helped us limit disease in the school.”

WASH facilities rehabilitated in Damascus and Aleppo

10
SCHOOLS

1
HOSPITAL

1608

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS RECEIVED WASH TRAINING (AND HYGIENE KITS)

64

GARBAGE CONTAINERS DISTRIBUTED

397

MEN PARTICIPATED IN CASH-FOR-WORK WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM





HEALTH & NUTRITION



ONE OF THE BIGGEST NEEDS FOR FAMILIES DISPLACED BECAUSE OF THE WARS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA IS ADEQUATE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE. FAMILIES ARE SUFFERING DUE TO WAR-RELATED PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL AILMENTS, LIVING IN UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS, AND LACK KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HOW TO EAT HEALTHILY ON A VERY TIGHT BUDGET.

MECC is responding to this need in Lebanon by providing medical consultations, medication, dignity/hygiene kits as well as health awareness, nutrition and first aid sessions. This is to help Iraqi, Syrian and vulnerable Lebanese families prevent illness and also manage on-going conditions such as heart disease & diabetes.

LEBANON: 1187 SYRIANS, IRAQIS AND LEBANESE RECEIVED MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS AND MEDICATION; **500 WOMEN** RECEIVED DIGNITY KITS; **549 STUDENTS** RECEIVED HYGIENE KITS; **156 WOMEN** TOOK PART IN A HEALTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



KIFAH | FROM ALEPPO, LIVING IN MOUNT LEBANON



“The health awareness program is inevitably ‘healthy’; medically, mentally, socially and psychologically. Medically, by expanding the little information I had about breast cancer, hepatitis, and nutrition, especially with the illness of my husband; the first aid session was excellent having three children at home. Mentally and psychologically, by meeting other women with cases similar to mine and sometimes even worse. It made me feel so much better to talk to them, share my problems and views freely and with no shame. Socially, by again meeting women from my hometown and other places in Syria, getting out of the house, and breathing some freedom. And, being presented with an official certificate of participation at the end lifted up my morale considerably.”



In Syria, MECC’s sessions on first aid are important for families still at risk from active violent conflict, and our health awareness trainings empower women to share their knowledge through home visits to other families in their communities.

SYRIA: 180 WOMEN IN DARAA, ALEPPO AND DAMASCUS COMPLETED A HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING PROGRAM THESE WOMEN VISITED **845 FAMILIES** TO SHARE WHAT THEY LEARNED; MECC SECURED CANCER MEDICATIONS FOR **31 SYRIANS** ACROSS THE COUNTRY



RAWA | ALEPPO, SYRIA



“The conditions of war have caused great suffering and one of the biggest issues is people’s health. Because of pollution in the environment and water, no one is breathing fresh air. Sometimes we wake up in the morning to the smell of gunpowder. Gunpowder is in the air from the missiles and the gas grinders.”

“People’s physical health has worsened — that’s on top of their emotional grief for the people they’ve lost. So, we’ve seen how important it is to raise awareness about health; how important it is to know what to do in such situations. When an explosion happens and people are injured, what do we do? This knowledge is very important to us.”



HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

IN 2017, MECC DISTRIBUTED FOOD AND NON-FOOD ITEMS IN THREE COUNTRIES: SYRIA, LEBANON AND JORDAN. THIS DIRECT MATERIAL RELIEF IS FOCUSED ON SUPPORTING SYRIAN AND IRAQI REFUGEE FAMILIES WITH BASIC GOODS NEEDED TO LIVE IN DIGNITY, GOOD HEALTH AND COMFORT.

WHILE THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THE SYRIAN AND IRAQI CRISES ARE GENERALLY SHIFTING TOWARDS "DEVELOPMENT" INTERVENTIONS (EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL SKILLS, ETC.), THE CONTINUANCE OF DISPLACEMENTS AND UNABATED ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY OF REFUGEE FAMILIES ACROSS THE REGION MAKE HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AN ONGOING NECESSITY IN THE COUNCIL'S DIAKONIA RESPONSE TO THESE CHALLENGES.



MUSTAFA | ALEPPO, SYRIA



"The winter clothes which [MECC] provided for my family were very helpful. My wife and children were very happy when they saw them and I'm especially glad that they were able to keep warm. They really came just in time, because, to be honest, without these clothes we would have suffered tremendously."



SYRIA

After a new wave of displacement, MECC distributed 3744 winter clothes kits for children, adult jackets, blankets and family hygiene kits to help families in the Aleppo area survive the winter.

1294
BLANKETS

1002
ADULT
JACKETS

821
WINTER
CLOTHES
KIT

627
FAMILY
HYGIENE
KITS



LEBANON

During the winter holidays, MECC distributed over 1000 dignity and hygiene kits to Iraqi and Syrian women living in the Beirut/Mount Lebanon region, as well as school children across Lebanon.

500
DIGNITY
KITS FOR
WOMEN

549
HYGIENE
KITS FOR
CHILDREN



JORDAN

Registered Syrian Refugees in Jordan: 657,628
Child Refugees: 333,102
Vulnerable population of 48,700 Syrians living in informal settlements along the Jordanian/Syrian border, of which 80% are women and children.

MECC continues to support a vulnerable Syrian refugee community living in an informal settlement on the Jordanian/Syrian border at Al-Badia Al-Shamalia through distribution of food and non-food items. Members of this community - which is isolated from humanitarian support due to the location of the settlement - often work as laborers for surrounding farms.

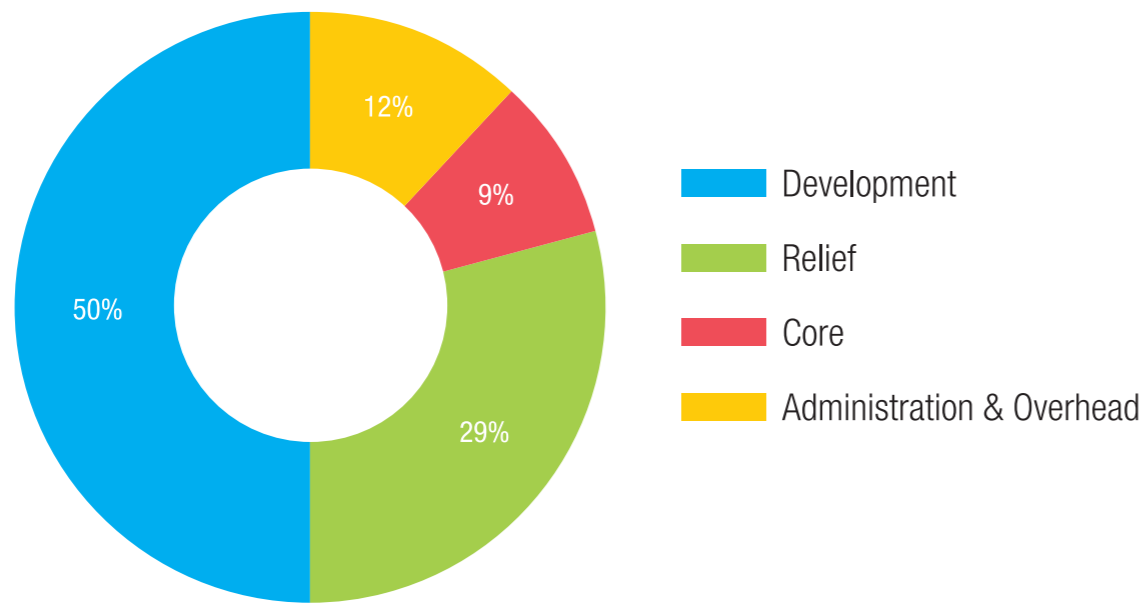
340
FAMILY
FOOD
PARCELS

260
HYGIENE
KITS

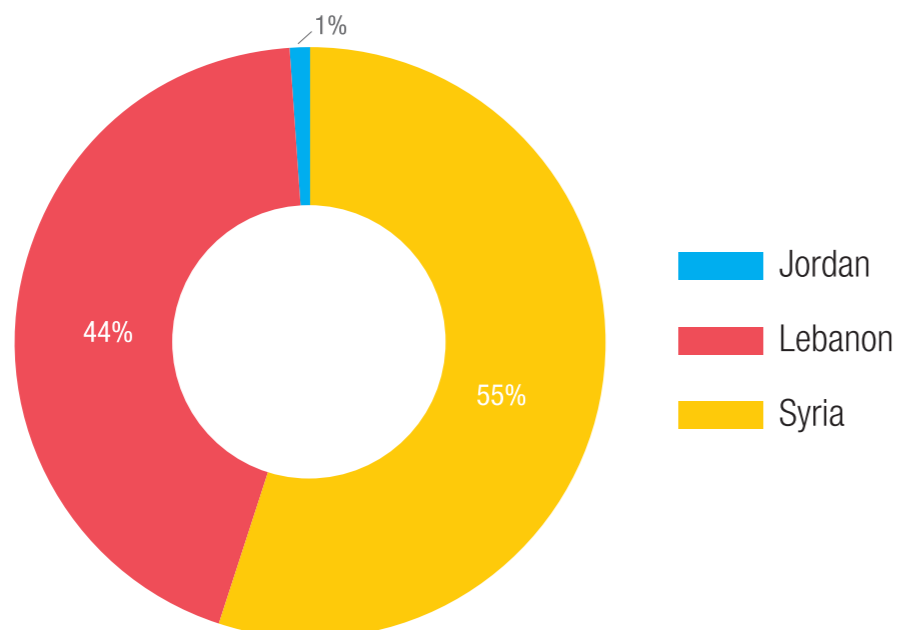


SPENDING BREAKDOWN

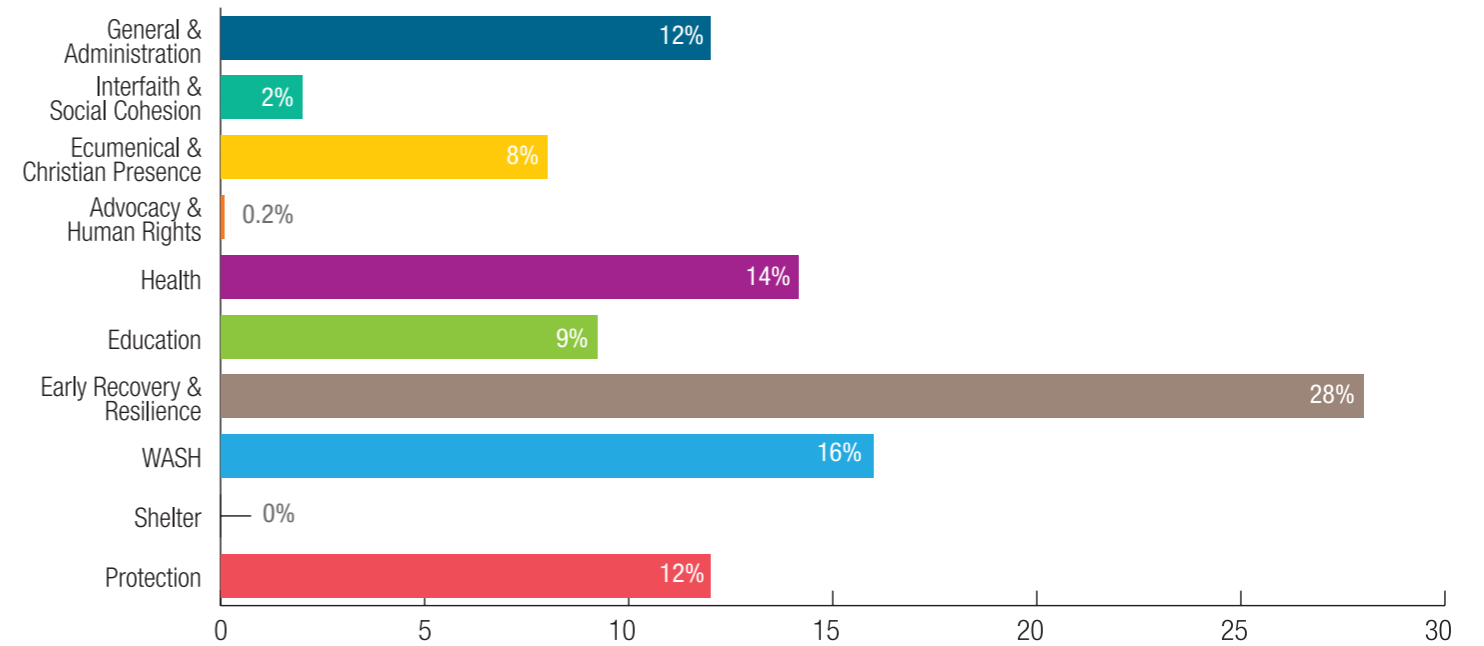
MECC 2017 SPENDING BREAKDOWN:



SPENDING BREAKDOWN BY COUNTRY



PROGRAM SPENDING BREAKDOWN BY SECTOR





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Brot für die Welt



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otto per mille CHIESA VALDESE



Kerk in Actie



« Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. **For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body** [...] The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. **But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it** ».

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