

Association S4S

2019 Annual Report

Dear Swiss 4 Syria Donors, Members and Friends,

The Syrian conflict in its eighth year dropped into the background as Lebanon entered a very difficult phase on civil unrest, with schools, banks and government shut down for several months at the end of year. The government resigned and an interim government was agreed, but not to the satisfaction of a broad range of civil society groups, and the average citizen who has seen the economy go from bad to worse, with now some 40% of Lebanese themselves living in poverty or extreme poverty.

As such, while our focus is and continues to be our school and helping the vulnerable Syrian community, we also began a campaign of delivering emergency food assistance to Lebanon's urban poor as part of our Swiss4Lebanon program.

The two programs are run separately and independently and help us remain committed to protecting those most in need, as well as taking into the consideration of the host communities which are themselves very much now in need as well.

In a final note, there has been a massive strain on the Lebanese banking system. Large sums were withdrawn, and this has led to a run on the banks. The Central Bank has decreed that not more than \$300 per week could be withdrawn from any account, and this only in Lebanese Lira at the official 1500LL/USD exchange rate. Meanwhile black-market rates reached 2500 by year end, which has led to major price inflation.

While banks were closed, we were reduced to physically delivering cash for the operating budget in the last quarter of the year. Meanwhile the banking restrictions are being applied only to money already in the banks, and fresh cash is being allowed to be withdrawn. Needless to say, we monitor the situation daily, and only wire one month's operating expenses at a time, meaning our "risk" remains capped at the USD Balance of 14'000 we had with BBJ at year end, being drawn down 300 dollar per week, and making sure our monthly payments of USD 10'000 get in and out.

The School

- Our staffing level remains at 7, including our program director and driver
 - o Teacher training programs continue to improve our teachers' skills, particularly in regard to handling the difficulties of PTSD children.
 - o We averaged 140 students, with our peak capacity remaining at 170. Due to the influx of new refugees we are considering expanding.
 - o One of the highlights of the year for the children was the short film created by the children with Anastasija Bräuninger entitled The Interview.

Existing Programs

- Women's Literacy: Our women's literacy program reached 250 Women during the year but was not able to be continued due to both the difficulty in withdrawing money, as well as the closure of main roads during the last quarter of the year.
- Vocational Training: We repurpose our classrooms in the afternoons for teenagers to develop digital skills on laptops we have received as donations and refurbished. Currently we have 100, exclusively female, students
- Sister Schools
We continued our relationship with the Lycée Francais in New York and the Lipp School in Zürich, working with teachers and students to exchange experiences with our teachers and students, giving both a window onto the world of the other.

New Programs

- School for Special Needs Students
We are very proud to have finalised with Swiss charity Oberwallis für Kinder unserer Welt, a program to train teachers and open a school for special needs students, particularly those suffering from PTSD, whom we are unable to handle in our regular school program. This project is being funded in 2020 directly by Oberwallis für Kinder unserer Welt.
- Swiss4Lebanon
As the political and banking crisis grew in Q4, and with our school closed, we focused our activity on delivering weekly food boxes to Lebanese urban poor. Each box has a value of \$25 and contains basic food items. This project was under \$10'000 in 2019 and is likely to increase in the coming year.
- The Tamina Project
As a separate fundraising initiative, we are also supporting 8 needy Lebanese students to pursue college level studies or advanced vocational training programs and amounted to some \$9'000.

Finances

Our 2019 financials as well as our 2020 budget are attached. A few key figures are below:

- Community Centre School	CHF 118'320
- Vocational Training	CHF 14'380 (teacher salaries allocated)
- Other Program and Costs	CHF 22'800

Of the total 220'000 in expenses, 155'500, or 70% went to Lebanon, the remainder covering the administration costs in Switzerland.

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In terms of fundraising, we were able to raise CHF 206'618 , which was enough to cover operations, and we are now moving in 2020 to actively expand our activities in the area of Emergency Food Support as well as opening the new Special Needs School.

Our fundraising sources continued to be split about 50% from institutional support (foundations, churches, local govt.) and 50% from private individuals and events.

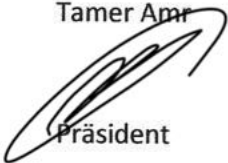
While this report reflects year end 2019, it is being written from Covid Quarantine in April 2020. Lebanon is now on top of its political and financial crisis, suffering from a Covid Lockdown, and while the medical system is holding up and has even been ranked with regards to Covid as being #23 in the world, it is further deepening the economic crisis, with all flights shut down, hotels restaurants and schools closed. And unlike Switzerland or the United States, there is no relevant government support being offered. The situation is rather dire.

End Note:

We thank you all for your support during this year in what we believe is as important a mission as ever, as now the host community cannot sustain itself let alone its Syrian refugee population, and we will be redoubling our efforts to help those in need, Syrian and Lebanese, in the year to come.

We would love to hear from you and happy to share with you our stories and experiences and discuss how we can address any needs you may have. We are partners in bringing hope to very needy people, first and foremost children, and we thank you for your support.

Tamer Amr



Präsident

Jessica Mor-Camenzind



Geschäftsführerin