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# Dining for Women

## Interim Report August 2017

**Organization:** iACT

1732 Aviation Blvd. #138  
Redondo Beach, CA 90278

**Project Title:** Little Ripples Leadership Training

**Grant amount:** \$49,320

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In March and May 2017, iACT staff traveled to eastern Chad to implement the newly developed **LEAD with EMPATHY** leadership development curriculum with women participants in refugee camp Goz Amer, and conduct a baseline survey to measure the level of leadership knowledge, confidence, skills, and experience of women participating in the leadership training project. This interim report provides an overview of our proposed beneficiaries and outcomes and an update on progress, results, challenges, and impact since implementation.

### Beneficiaries

iACT proposed to directly serve a total of 62 women: 21 Little Ripples employed early childhood educators and 41 prospective early childhood educators; and indirectly serve 240 female students out of 535 total students (approximately 45%), 535 female caregivers, and 3 Pond refugee host families in refugee camp Goz Amer, eastern Chad.

### Outcomes

With support from Dining For Women, iACT is developing, implementing, and evaluating a new leadership training curriculum for all Little Ripples early childhood educators and prospective female early childhood educators in refugee camp Goz Amer, eastern Chad, to increase educators' agency over school resources and management. Our proposed project outcomes include:

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Objective 1: *After one year of project implementation, increase the number of refugee female early childhood educators and prospective educators in camp Goz Amer who participate in leadership training from 0 to 62.*

Objective 2: *After one year of project implementation, increase the knowledge and leadership skills of 62 refugee female early childhood educators and prospective educators in camp Goz Amer, from baseline to follow-up.*

Objective 3: *After one year of project implementation, increase the active participation of refugee female early childhood educators in camp Goz Amer in education management meetings, from baseline to follow-up.*

## Changes

Since submitting our proposal, there has been a minor change in the number of women classified as either early childhood educators and prospective women early childhood educators. Prior to implementation in March, iACT received funding from other sources to open three new Little Ripples preschool Ponds in camp Goz Amer—employing six new educators and reaching 135 more children. The six educators were selected from the group of 41 "prospective early childhood educators." As a result, those women have shifted roles and internal classification from prospective to employed, and we now have **27** Little Ripples employed early childhood educators (21 + 6) and **35** prospective early childhood educators (41 - 6).

Due to the implementation of three additional Little Ripples Pond in camp Goz Amer, the total number of children enrolled has increased by 135, from 535 to 670. Therefore, the updated number of girls indirectly served by our leadership training project is approximately 45% of 670 enrolled in Little Ripples, 670 caregivers, and six refugee families hosting the six in-home Little Ripples Ponds.

In March, three additional women who were not previously accounted for as "prospective early childhood educators" attended the survey and leadership training meeting in camp Goz Amer. During our implementation meeting, the entire group of 62 women agreed to include the three new female prospective early childhood educators, and organized a solution to share the

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curricula and work in small groups in order to accommodate the additional women. The total number of women who are participating in the leadership training is 65.

## Progress

### *Curriculum development*

iACT program staff, with input from iACT Board Member and Little Ripples Expert Teacher Advisor Stacey Martino and women refugee beneficiaries in camp Goz Amer, eastern Chad, designed the **LEAD with EMPATHY** curriculum and the “Facilitation Guide” for peer-leadership training and development of refugee women.

Before implementing the curriculum and training, we tested our initial curriculum design and content to garner some feedback from Little Ripples women educators in camp Goz Amer. Overall, there were three key points of feedback that we then incorporated into the final curriculum design:

- **Modules:** Overall, the teachers interviewed liked and were excited about each module and lesson topic and felt it addressed their needs. Women were particularly interested in the human rights modules.
- **Simplify:** Teachers reported that the content per module was too long, too difficult, and too advanced for women in the camp. So, we simplified and shortened each module’s content and language, and lengthened the curriculum over all, to allow more time to focus on and learn each lesson and topic.
- **Stories:** The initial curriculum included stories about fictional refugee characters within the the first five lessons of the curriculum to exemplify the lessons and help the women relate to



Lead with Empathy curriculum in Arabic, refugee camp Goz Amer, eastern Chad. Photo Cred: Dallain/iACT, 2017

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the topics. The teachers stated that these stories were very helpful and, in fact, their favorite part of the entire curriculum. They suggested we have stories for every module of the curriculum to exemplify each main topic.

The final **LEAD with EMPATHY** curriculum consists of 30 modules and stories. The first six modules of the curriculum build the foundation for the entire curriculum, focusing on mindfulness, nonviolent communication, and story-telling. The 30th module is an “Action Project” for which women identify a problem in their community and begin to outline steps for solving the problem, based on the tools they learned throughout the curriculum. The curriculum has been translated into Arabic, and printed and bound into notebooks for use.



Participants of the leadership training, refugee camp Goz Amer, eastern Chad. Photo Cred: Dallain/iACT,2017

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## **Implementation**

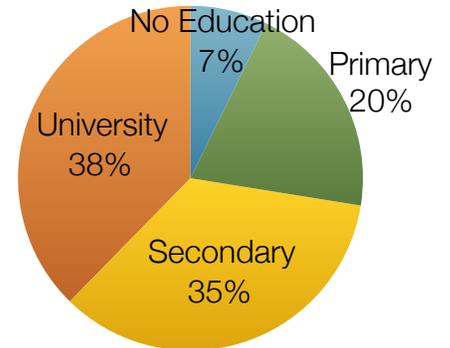
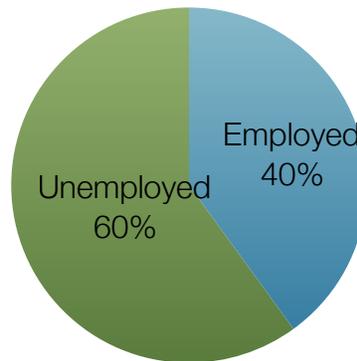
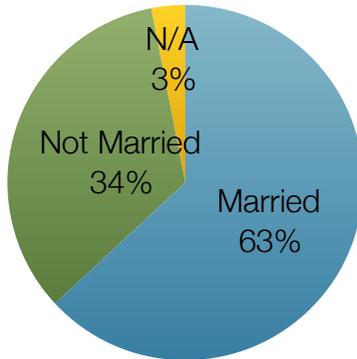
Sixty-five women are currently participating in the leadership training project and completing the iACT **LEAD with EMPATHY** leadership development curriculum, supported by Dining for Women. iACT staff met with existing Little Ripples early childhood educators and a group of prospective early childhood educators in camp Goz Amer to introduce the training and curriculum, conduct a baseline survey, and work with the participating women to organize and plan the completion of the year-long training and curriculum. The Little Ripples teachers decided the best time to complete the curriculum was during their weekly teacher meeting. The prospective educators decided they would meet once a week, in small groups in each other's homes.

In May 2017, Joslyn Hitter, an iACT Technical Advisor in Mindfulness, traveled with the iACT staff to eastern Chad to train the Little Ripples Education Directors in mindfulness practice and in how to lead basic mindfulness exercises that are incorporated into the **LEAD with EMPATHY** curriculum. Hitter completed mindfulness training sessions over the duration of five days. Following training, the Education Directors were able to successfully demonstrate and lead mindfulness exercises.

The same survey completed at baseline will be conducted again with the same group of women to measure whether there are any changes and improvements in leadership knowledge, confidence, skills and/or experience among the participants one year after receiving the leadership training and curriculum. iACT will also hold focus groups and interviews with the participating women to collect feedback on the curriculum and to give further explanation and context to survey results. We will implement the follow-up survey in early 2018 and produce a final report and analysis for DFW by March 2018. We do not anticipate any difficulties in attaining our stated objectives within our timeline. The following are key results and insights from the baseline surveys:

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## Participant Demographics



## Leadership

Baseline results demonstrated a low level of knowledge concerning the broad definitions of leadership.

- 40% of participants did not agree with the statement that “leadership can be learned.”
- 50% of participants agreed with or did not know if “only people with a title, high status, or authority can be leaders in their community.”
- 55% correctly identified what makes somebody a good leader based on definition presented in the survey and in reference to the curriculum content.

## Human Rights

There was a mix of results concerning knowledge of human rights.

- 60% agreed that human rights are held by all people, equally and forever, while 20% responded ‘False’ and 20% responded ‘I don’t know’ or left the question blank.
- 46% agreed that “Men, women, and children do not have the same equal rights.” This question could have been misinterpreted. Women responding might have agreed and responded based on their experiences in their society—and not as a definition of human rights.

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## **Empowerment**

When asked if “[r]ight now in your life, do you feel empowered?” only 29% (19) of women answered ‘Yes,’ 47% (31) answered ‘No’ and the remaining answered ‘I don’t know’ or left the question blank. However, in the previous question, when asked about the definition of “empowerment,” only 15 women identified the correct definition.

## **Community Organizing**

Overall, all respondents were able to identify actions they could take to work with their community to fix a problem.

When asked how often the respondent attends camp management and leadership meetings, only 6 women responded ‘All the time’ and ‘Often’ with the remaining responding ‘Never’ or ‘Sometimes.’ The majority of women cited ‘I do not have time to attend meetings’ as the primary reason for not attending meetings.



Leadership training participants completing the baseline survey.  
Photo Cred: Dallain/IACT, 2017

## **Speaking out**

The majority of women—65%—responded feeling ‘Very’ or ‘Fairly’ comfortable in speaking out at a meeting with other women to talk about common issues. However, when asked about their level of confidence in speaking out at a meeting with women and men present, the number of respondents who felt ‘Very’ and ‘Fairly’ confident dropped to 50%, with the remaining 50% ‘Not comfortable at all’ or ‘Comfortable with some difficulty.’

The **LEAD with EMPATHY** curriculum culminates with an Action Project that has the women work in small groups to identify and begin to plan and map how they will go about solving a problem in their community. The baseline survey asked women to identify, from their

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perspective, some of the pressing problems in their community. Here are some of the problems identified by participants:

- “The first problem is education, child rights, women rights, and in higher education like university education there are a lot of difficulties.”
- Early marriage
- “A problem in my society is not giving women their rights; right now there is little women's education and there are no jobs. How will [a woman] teach herself and become a leader? People need to see that women’s education is important in social and cultural life.”
- “Differences between families, two houses, two married couples, and problems in education of elders and boys and girls.”
- “Marriage—the marriage is not right when the man is much older than the woman because I think society is more biased to men.”
- “First problem is between husband and wife. Men don't know the value of a household and he does not know how to deal with marriage or fix the problem.”

In our final report to Dining For Women, iACT will compare all baseline results with results from our one-year follow-up survey.

## Challenges

The **LEAD with EMPATHY** curriculum and training is designed to be refugee-led and adaptable to contextual challenges of working in isolated and under-resourced refugee camps in eastern Chad, but there were two implementation challenges.

1) **Selecting Participants:** In applying for support from Dining for Women, we had already identified a group of 62 women who would participate in the leadership training. However, in March, when our staff was in camp Goz Amer implementing the curriculum and conducting a baseline assessment, we had the problem of having too many women wanting to participate. In an under-resourced setting, it is always difficult to select program participants and whom to offer opportunities to. However, iACT’s model across all our programs is to focus on starting small and with high quality, and then expanding a program or solution once we have tested and further developed the program with refugee beneficiaries. In order to address this problem, we held

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meetings with women and community leaders to explain the leadership training, the goal of the training, and the expected outcomes, as well as long-term plans to offer the leadership training to more women and men.

**2) Survey completion:** Upon reviewing the survey results, we identified that some participants likely have a low level of literacy and likely had difficulty in reading, understanding, and completing the survey. Our team will review the survey questions and make changes as needed, as well as work with our refugee colleagues to address the needs of women with low levels of literacy in order to assist these women in completing the survey.

However, we did account for this issue during implementation. We asked that women who may have difficulty reading the curriculum work in partnership or in small groups with other women who have higher levels of education and who can assist them. As a result, during our implementation and training meeting, several women volunteered to help others read and complete the curriculum. We want to ensure that all women, despite levels of education and literacy, have equal access to our leadership training and curriculum.

## Meet a Beneficiary

### Education Director, Souad

Souad is nineteen years old. She fled her home Darfur, Sudan, as a little girl and has been living in refugee camp Goz Amer for fourteen years. She still remembers the terrible journey on foot to the border of Chad.

In camp Goz Amer, she lives with her father, mother, three brothers, and five sisters. She is the second oldest in her family and one of the best students in her camp. She completed



Education Directors, Souad (left) and Zaineb (right), refugee camp Goz Amer. Photo Cred: Dallain/iACT, 2017

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secondary school and received the highest marks of all her peers—male and female.

After graduating, Souad sought employment as a teacher with Little Ripples. During training, it was apparent that she was a natural leader, and so she was selected as an Education Director of Little Ripples.

Souad has been an Education Director for two years now. She is the only person in her family with a formal job, receiving a consistent monthly salary. She uses her salary to support her family. A typical day for Souad begins at four o'clock in the morning to prepare a breakfast of porridge and sometimes dried fish for her younger siblings who go to primary school; then she prepares breakfast for herself. Following breakfast, she meets with her fellow Education Director and visits Ponds.

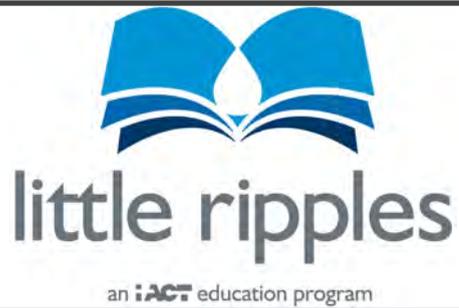
In speaking with Souad in March 2017, she said the most difficult part of her job as an Education Director has been “building relationships with the teachers and parents.” But she said that in time, with the help of Little Ripples leadership training, she will “improve this.” Souad also talked about the impact of Little Ripples on her life. “As an Education Director of Little Ripples, I have increased my knowledge of how to manage and administrate an education program. I feel like a leader. I lead our weekly teacher meetings and it gives me more confidence in being a leader.”

## **Budget**

Please see the updated January 2017 - December 2017 budget for a list of expenses.

## **Message to Donors**

Thank you to Dining for Women members and donors. Thanks to your support, refugee women in eastern Chad now have access to life-changing information and training. Upon receiving her a **LEAD with EMPATHY** notebook, Zainab, a participant, told iACT staff, “Before, I knew the title of Human Rights but I did not really understand all of the principles and what Human Rights means. Now, I will know this.”



## Dining for Women Leadership Training January 2017 - December 2017

	Amount	Qty	Units	DFW Total	Budgeted	Notes
<b>LITTLE RIPPLES SALARIES (IN CAMP)</b>						
Camp Coordinator	\$250	1	12	\$0	\$0	Previously titled "iACT Project Coordinator"
Teachers	\$90	18	6	\$9,720	\$14,580	18 teacher salaries (2 teachers per classroom) for 6 months
Education Directors	\$110	2	8	\$1,760	\$2,640	Previously titled "Lead Teachers" or "Mentors". Supervising teachers selected by their peers and guiding the LwE training.
After School Coordinator	\$90	1	8	\$0	\$0	
Guards	\$45	2	8	\$0	\$0	
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>\$11,480</b>	<b>\$17,220</b>	
<b>CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING</b>						
Weekly Peer Meetings	\$60	29	1	\$1,740	\$2,600	Each week participating women complete one module of the leadership curriculum
<i>Lead with Empathy</i> leadership curriculum and Facilitation Guide	\$2,500	1	1	\$2,500	\$2,500	Printing of leadership training book, peer education materials, and training materials for 62 women
Implementation of <i>Lead with Empathy</i> curriculum and leadership training	\$5,000	2	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	2 trips were completed in March and May to launch leadership training program
Mindfulness Curriculum	\$2,500	1	1	\$2,500	\$5,000	Mindfulness expert Joslyn Hitter joined in May 2017 and will join in December 2017
Health and Hygiene Materials	\$750	1	1	\$750	\$1,500	Coloring books and supplies for students, posters for kitchen and classrooms
Translation of <i>Lead with Empathy</i> curriculum and Facilitation Guide	\$750	1	1	\$750	\$1,000	iACT used Fiverr services for translation
Translation of Mindfulness Curriculum	\$250	1	1	\$250	\$1,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>\$18,490</b>	<b>\$23,600</b>	
<b>NUTRITION PROGRAM</b>						
Snack and Breakfast at Goz Amer LR School	\$4,000	1	1	\$4,000	\$4,000	Secured funds from another partner for Jan-Dec 2017 came in March 2017, so we used DFW funding to cover the gap
Local Cooks	\$50	10	8	\$4,000	\$4,500	
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>\$8,500</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$37,970</b>	<b>\$49,320</b>	