



**Resilience Beyond Displacement: Education and Empowerment for
Refugee Women and Girls in Jordan**
Interim Report

Organization: Collateral Repair Project (CRP)

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Project Name: Resilience Beyond Displacement: Education and Empowerment for Refugee Women and Girls in Jordan

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Brief Note on COVID-19 in the Jordanian Context

The first cases of coronavirus in Jordan were reported in early March 2020, and the government rapidly put the entire country into lockdown. Non-essential businesses and all schools and universities were forced to close in mid-March. During March and April, a nationwide curfew was introduced, and people could only go outside to visit local grocery stores and bakeries, and all use of cars was prohibited without a special license. Although some measures were lifted over the summer, a very significant increase in case numbers has been seen since September and we expect there to be periodic lockdowns throughout the winter of 2020/21.

CRP's community center operations were temporarily suspended in March this year in compliance with government regulations. However, staff have worked tirelessly to adapt our programs to be delivered remotely and to ensure that we continue to reach the most vulnerable people in our community. We are pleased to report that, through these efforts, CRP is delivering the vast majority of our programs online and we have been able to re-start some limited outdoor activities in the late summer. However, due to rising local cases and the changing weather making outdoor meetings less possible, most programming will likely continue online over the winter months.

We wish to thank Dining for Women for your continued support during these difficult and uncertain times. So far, Dining for Women Sustained Grant funds have helped nearly 1500 men, women and children to access education, develop their skills and become advocates in their communities.

1. Recap briefly what outcomes the project was designed to achieve

The Resilience Beyond Displacement project aims to support and empower women and girls from refugee and vulnerable Jordanian households by providing them with the resources, education, and skills they need to build sustainable futures. As is so often the case, times of crisis disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in our society. Unable to generate income, even from informal work, the current pandemic and periodic lockdowns have pushed many refugee and low-income families into an economic crisis. Children are mostly now enrolled in online schooling which, without access to home computers or a familiarity with the Jordanian education system, is extremely challenging for refugee parents to navigate. Often siblings have to share a parent's mobile phone to complete their schooling and take exams, which is enormously stressful and risks this group falling behind their more affluent peers. Families are coming under enormous pressure and, tragically, this is resulting in increased cases of domestic violence and abuse across the Kingdom¹.

¹ *Daring to ask, listen and act: a snapshot of the impacts of COVID on women's and girl's rights and sexual and reproductive health*, UNFPA, April/May 2020, <https://jordan.unfpa.org/en/node/48389>.

Dining for Women's support for women and girls has never been more crucial in addressing the challenges faced by refugees in Amman. By building the capacity of CRP's Women's and Youth programming, Dining for Women is enabling us to provide families with the services they need to get through this period and rebuild their lives in Jordan. These services include educational programs for younger children, psychosocial support programs for women and girls to help them cope with the traumas they have experienced in their past, and livelihoods programming to help women access a sustainable source of income. CRP also has a long-standing program in Gender-Based Violence Awareness and Prevention for both women and men, raising awareness of violence towards women and girls and giving members of the community the skills they need to become advocates for women's rights at home and in society.

2. Has funding changed for this project? For example, have you received unexpected funding from another source?

Building on the success of DfW supported projects in 2018 and early 2019, CRP has successfully secured additional funding from the Blossom Hill Foundation (\$20,000), Schüler Helfen Leben (\$21,000) and the Children of Haiti and Refugee Projects (\$79,4500) to support youth programming during 2020. In addition we have secured funding through the Julia Taft Refugee Fund (\$25,000) for our Hope Workshop and Beauty School projects, and from the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (\$15,200) supporting our Women's Empowerment and GBV Awareness and Prevention programs in the second half of 2020.

3. Is your organization or project situation different that presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant project staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding or other significant changes?

The funding landscape since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic has become more challenging. Although CRP has secured a number of grants this year for programming and basic needs assistance, we are facing challenges in direct fundraising which makes up a significant portion of our annual income. We also need to put this into context of the much greater need in the community for CRP's services. Many families we serve have seen their income reduced and have been increasingly turning to CRP for support with their basic needs.

In terms of organizational changes, CRP hired a new staff member specifically to oversee work on our women's programs, including our pioneer income-generation program, Hope Workshop. Katharine Harris has also joined our team, replacing our former Community Center Programs Director, Lilly Crown.

4. Have the number of beneficiaries changed? To report this refer to the original numbers in your grant proposal under *Number of women and girls directly impacted and population indirectly impacted.*

Overall, CRP reached 1472 individuals through our programs to support women and girls between September 2019 – August 2020. The majority of these participants were reached during the first 6 months of the program before a strict lockdown was imposed throughout Jordan in March. Since that time, CRP staff have quickly adapted a number of programs to be delivered remotely or, in some limited circumstances, to be delivered to small groups in our Hashemi Community Center. The following table breaks down the number of community members reached per type of program.

Program Name	Target Beneficiaries	Number of Beneficiaries
Educational Support*	Children aged 3-13	955
Parents Awareness Sessions*	Men and Women	140
Women’s livelihoods*	Women	156
GBV Prevention and Awareness training*	Men	40
Women’s Empowerment 101*	Women	39
Leadership Training	Girls aged 6-12	30
Psychosocial Support*	Women and Girls	112
Total		1476

**Programs which have continued remotely since March 2020.*

Note that the vast majority of programs were implemented remotely despite the lockdowns. Many of our programs for adults take place through video conferencing (Skype, Zoom, Google Meet, etc) once or twice a week. Programs for younger children, especially those for those participating in Early Childhood activities, usually include some video conferencing sessions combined with prepared activities which parents do at home with their children. Given the restrictions in place, we are very proud to report that we have fallen short of the target by only 40 individuals. Our success is partially due to the tremendous efforts of CRP’s staff and their years of experience working with the community. It is also thanks to Dining for Women’s trust and flexibility as a donor which allowed us to quickly make the adaptations necessary to continue providing support.

5. What challenges are you facing as you move forward with this project? How are you approaching these challenges?

The biggest challenges we face at the moment is how to continue making our programming accessible to vulnerable women and girls. Online learning is a great way to keep providing opportunities and support to the community when face-to-face sessions are not possible, however, the cost of mobile data places a financial burden on families who are already struggling to make ends meet. In addition, most families in our community do not have a home computer and rely on one or two mobile devices for all their internet access. In practice, this means that a family's mobile phone is being used not only for communication with family and friends, but also as the main device through which children complete their schooling, and for any online opportunities available to parents, such as livelihoods programs or support groups.

In order to address some of these challenges, CRP is increasingly incorporating resources for mobile data top-ups into our proposals for funding. We have also successfully negotiated the reallocation of funds intended for classroom expenses to the provision of these top-ups for individuals or families participating in CRP's programs. We are currently also seeking larger grants to cover the purchase of inexpensive laptops or tablets which may be loaned out to participants.

6. Have you revised your original objectives since the project began? If so, why? What are your new objectives?

The main priorities outlined by the community at the beginning of this project were:

- 1) ensuring better educational support for their children,
- 2) accessing a source of income,
- 3) better managing the threat of violence in their families, and
- 4) finding concrete opportunities to develop and learn leadership and advocacy skills.

These objectives remain unchanged. Indeed, the loss of income and opportunity due to lockdowns, the transition from in-person to online schooling for most children, plus the rise in incidents of domestic violence make the work which Dining for Women supports more crucial than ever.

7. What progress have you made toward achieving your objectives? Please address each stated objective?

- 1) Ensuring better educational support for children

During this reporting period CRP has reached 945 vulnerable children from refugee and vulnerable Jordanian households as part of this project. In September 2019, CRP provided 1121 (552 girls) of the most vulnerable children with essential school supplies such as backpacks, school uniforms, notebooks and stationary to help ease the financial burden of sending children to school. One parent, Noor, says that “every year, before the start of the school term, I worry we won’t be able to afford all the school supplies we need for the children. With CRP’s Back to School Assistance, I don’t need to worry anymore. My children are very smart! I have high hopes for them — maybe they will go on to study medicine, or to be teachers.” Since the start of remote schooling, CRP youth staff have also worked tirelessly to understand the government’s online learning platform in order to support parents to navigate the system and support their children’s studies from home.



Photo: 2019 Back to School Drive

CRP is also continuing a number of its educational and psychosocial support programs for children online. For children who are experiencing the trauma of displacement and who have past experiences of violence and conflict, stress can often manifest itself in aggressive behavior, inability to concentrate, or becoming withdrawn and uncommunicative. This behavior can be difficult for parents to manage alone and seriously impacts the ability of the child to fully participate in education. Therefore, all of CRP’s youth programming, such as SuperGirls and After School Club, employs a trauma-sensitive approach. Through mindfulness techniques, breathing exercises, routines, and listening circles these programs have equipped more than 300 children this year with the tools then need to navigate their emotions, build their confidence, and develop the necessary skills to successfully engage in their schooling.

2) Accessing a source of income

We are committed to providing women with opportunities to develop marketable skills and turn their passions and talents into ways of generating a sustainable income. During this grant period, 158 women participated in livelihoods programming. This includes 74 women who completed training in computing skills or coding classes. These classes provide women with the basics of using a computer, including using internet services such as search engines and desktop publishing applications such as word processors and spreadsheets. In the coding classes, women learned the basics of HTML (HyperText Markup Language) and CSS (Cascading Style Sheets), which are the foremost web development skills in today’s market. They are also two of the easiest programming languages to learn.

30 women also completed CRP Beauty School training, a program which provides women with the skills they need to begin working as freelance hairdressers and salon skills. These skills are much in demand in the community for weddings and other celebrations, and freelance work provides the flexibility that many women need in order to balance a career with their other responsibilities in the home. Dining for Women also supports CRP's Hope Workshop which comprises 54 women producing handicrafts and food products within our dedicated women-only workshop in our Hashemi Center. Profits made by the workshop are paid out to the members, providing a modest source of income.



Photo: Women from the Hope Workshop Kitchen

3) Better managing the threat of violence within the family

CRP has delivered Gender-Based Violence Awareness and Prevention (GBVAP) training to 40 men and our Women's Empowerment 101 class to 39 women so far during this grant period. These programs address key issues surrounding the rights of women and girls in a culturally sensitive way, and are geared towards providing men and women with the skills they need to become advocates for women at home and in their communities. Both male and female participants reported greater understanding of issues surrounding sex and gender and the causes of gender-based violence. During focus group sessions, all participants reported that the course gave them better communication and conflict resolution skills to help solve issues within their own families. Men, in particular, reported that the course had helped them to improve communication with their partners.

4) Finding concrete opportunities to develop and learn leadership and advocacy skills.

CRP is committed to providing opportunities for community members to grow personally and professionally. Our Leadership in Action training program takes graduates of the GBVAP and Women's Empowerment 101 programs and provides them with training to become course facilitators. The training consists of classes on key issues in leadership, such as advocacy, public speaking, and facilitation skills, plus practical sessions where participants have the opportunity to lead their own seminar for CRP community members. During this grant period, 30

community members (23 women and 7 men) participated in the training and all subsequent GBVAP and Women's Empowerment classes were led by community volunteers.

8. Do you anticipate any difficulties in completing your project in the timeframe outlined in your proposal?

CRP is very proud of the progress we have made this year, and we are encouraged that the majority of programs have been adapted into fully or partially online programs. We intend to continue to reach out to vulnerable women and girls through these online programs until it becomes safe to return to the community centers. Online programming has many advantages, although it does limit the number of community members we can reach because of the challenges many face in accessing reliable internet and internet-connected devices. This may limit the total number of beneficiaries we are able to reach in the coming year if restrictions remain in place. We will also not hold a Back to School drive in 2020, as widespread homeschooling has greatly diminished the need for backpacks and uniforms. Although funds intended for this program will be put to good use in implementing programs supporting education, it will likely reduce the total number of individuals we reach next year.

We wish to thank Dining for Women once again for your continued trust, patience, and support through these difficult times. Through our partnership we will continue to support women and girls in Amman to build a more secure and sustainable future for themselves and their families.