We are proud to support some of the most vulnerable Syrian Refugees overcome the traumas and invisible wounds of war through our art-therapy and vocational training courses in the Middle East.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED IN 2017

In December, 2016, Art of Hope opened its doors to 100 Syrian refugee beneficiaries in Hay Al Gharbie—one of the poorest slums of Beirut that’s home to some of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees living side by side the disenfranchised Lebanese and Palestinians—with little to no access to education, jobs, and health-care. AOH hired 6 local employees to run a 5-days-a week operation for women, teens, and children in the areas of sewing, arts, crafts, English classes and psycho-drama in parallel to therapy, aggression replacement, and trauma-relief. In our programming we also include members of the local Lebanese community to help better integrate the local community with that of the refugees.

In Our First Six Months Of Operation ART OF HOPE:
Six months of rent for our community center with two rooms; electricity, water, heat/cooler system.
Bought material needed for daily arts, craft, sewing, glasswork, doll-making, mosaic classes and other educational activities.
Paid for food and snacks for the beneficiaries who visit the center.
Paid the salaries of six professionals (teachers, art-therapist, psychologist, and social workers).
Covered the transportation costs for any woman and child who needed transportation to get to our center.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GROUND

Our female beneficiaries have opened up about sexual violence, domestic abuse and other challenges in their home.
Our team has been able to conduct intervention to prevent violence against the women in the community and their homes.
Our beneficiaries have interacted with host community members in order to better assimilate within the Lebanese society.
The children’s depression, anxiety, and PTSD have improved dramatically—even in such short term. (Pre & Post Tests Available)
Children are less angry, they engage in group activities and suffer from less anxiety at home.
According to our social workers—even in such short period—the children and teens who are out of school have shown strong interest in learning and have demonstrated strong improvement in their communication skills.
The male teenagers in the center—those in danger of recruitment by extremist groups in the country—have demonstrated community engagement, anger reduction, reduction in hostile engagement and depression; and have developed a sense of belonging and motivation within the community.
On the 6th year anniversary of the Syrian Civil War, Save The Children released a report that revealed how that the majority of the Syrian refugee and IPD population suffers from trauma, aggression, depression, and PTSD that will not only impact the lives of the individual but will long-term cause tremendous burden on the host country.
We are one of the very few nonprofits that focuses on trauma-relief among the refugee population around the world.
Our efforts have also led to conflict-resolution, engagement, and exchange between refugee families and the host community.
Our efforts have reduced bullying among the refugee children and the local Lebanese.
We have held local art competition and classes between locals and the refugee students, which has built a spirit of team-making, local engagement, and friendship.

**BACK IN THE US WE HAVE:**

- Continued advocating on MHHPH challenges among the refugee population in the Middle East.
- Hosted panel conversations, round tables, and events to raise awareness on the refugee crisis and the mental health epidemic.
- Collaborated with TO THE MARKET in merchandising the artwork of our Syrian refugee students in an effort to share their stories with broader audiences in the US.
- Hosted private fundraising as well as public campaigns to raise funds for our programming on the ground.
- Met with members of the Congress and the US and discussed the dangers of ignoring the invisible wounds of refugees, in particular among the youth.