



The War

The world has been riveted over the outbreak of war in Israel and many have been asking about the safety of our Lebanese school, family, and friends. With Beirut less than 65 miles from the northern border of Israel, and Hezbollah concentrated mainly in southern Lebanon, the likelihood the war impacting the school is increasing.

Hezbollah is an armed political group backed by Iran that was formed in 1982 to fight Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon. Its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, claims it has over 100,000 fighters. They also have members in the Lebanese government and parliament. The group is often called "a state within a state" due to its vast political and military clout within Lebanon. Hezbollah and Hamas are separate entities, one Lebanese and one Palestinian. They both share the objective of armed resistance against Israel.

Over the last month, periodic bombings have been lobbed over the border between Lebanon and Israel, some close enough to Amine's family to make the ground shake. They live only 12 miles from the border and are constantly in our thoughts. A grandmother and her three grandchildren were killed in southern Lebanon, as well as couple journalist and many dozens of Hezbollah fighters.

So far there has been no direct impact on Noor El-Salam Academy other than continued shortages of goods and inflation. However, there were several children who left the school because their families returned to Syria due to the conflict.



The School

School is a refuge for the children and a safe place to learn and grow. We are lucky to have Amira as our lead teacher because she creates the warm environment. Our monthly meetings with her reveal her strengths not only as a teacher and administrator, but the depth of her genuine concern for her colleagues and students. When asked about the challenges they face (like lice or absenteeism), she pivots to the positives. Recently she held a meeting on a Saturday with the parents to outline expectations for proper hygiene, timeliness, and support for homework assignments. Not only are the children receiving a basic education, but they are feeling valued and loved by their teachers. Teachers are hosting Friday night games and even some activities on the weekends just because the kids want to be together at school. It is really lovely to watch the school and children flourish and it gives us HOPE in this tragic time in the Middle East.



The Future

We determined our plan to rent another floor of the building and add three classes is not financially possible. However, our classes are held from 8:00 am - 1:00 pm, leaving the space open the rest of the day. We are now focused on adding an afternoon school from 2:00 - 7:00 pm in the current location and bringing in another 60 children. Some, if not all, of the teachers will teach both morning and afternoon sessions. We will need to pay rent for the additional hours of use and teacher's salaries, plus books and supplies for another group of students. Amira is waiting to send out an invitation for applications to parents until we give her the "green light" on our ability to finance this planned expansion beginning in January 2024.



Amira meeting with the parents. Note the man in the doorway in the photo above. Yes! Dads were welcome!



Students using modeling clay to learn how to write in Arabic



How You Can Help

Your contributions will be used to fund on-going needs for hygiene and school supplies as well as expand our program to include another 60 students who have never had an opportunity to go to school. Can you imagine being 8 -- or 14 -- *never having attended class or learned to read*? Our teachers are "all-in" for the students. Will you be too?

[Donate Online](#)

Or donate by mail:

Noor El-Salam
1237 Purdue Drive
Longmont, CO 80503

We will continue to work for peace and to give children hope.

Amine and the Board of Noor El-Salam

Please feel free to share with your friends and colleagues.