

Vocational training in Arsal, Lebanon – a pictorial report at July 2016



Arsal, Lebanon



One of the camps in the area, Dec 2013

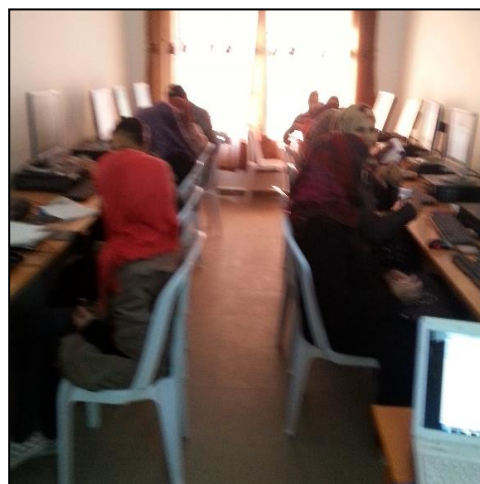
After a pilot course in electrical wiring in June 2015 for 20 students, a total of 106 men and 55 women took part in a full program of vocational training courses in Sept-Dec 2015. These were run by Syrian & Lebanese community groups, in partnership with Edinburgh Direct Aid.

Electricity and assembly of UPS (uninterrupted power supply) course, for 30 men in Sept 2015 - a practical session in one of the workshops.



The rug weaving course for 8 women, in Nov 2015. Looms were provided by a local trader. Some wool was sourced locally; some was donated in Scotland and sent in the shipping container of winter aid.

The basic computing course for 26 women in Oct 2015. Other computing courses run in Oct 2015 were a basic computing course for 16 men, and a more advanced computer graphics course for 18 men and 8 women.





The sewing course for 13 women & 1 man, in Nov 2015. 24 sewing machines used in the course were donated in Edinburgh and sent in the shipping container of winter aid.

The motorbike maintenance course, for 36 men, in Oct 2015. Lessons were both theoretical & practical, using a specially purchased motorbike.



In spring 2016, the rental of premises was secured from a member of the local council, providing space for workshops, with computers, sewing machines, and looms available for community use, as well as for training. Here another full cycle of vocational courses has been run from May, including new subjects – solar water heating, plumbing, and mobile phone maintenance.



Maggie Tookey, EDA's overseas projects director, visits a course in electricals in July 2016 in the new centre.



One of the new courses starting in 2016 - plumbing

The outcome from the training so far has been very encouraging. Several have got work around the town on plumbing and rewiring, most notably many have been taken on by the Qatari Red Crescent to assist with the refurbishment of local buildings. Others have started their own businesses, selling uninterrupted power supplies, or making transformers. One student has gained employment due to his computer graphics course. Many more have been able to share their skills, or work on a more informal basis, making repairs and producing useful household & personal items.

The women's groups using the new centre for knitting, sewing and weaving have been extremely productive. A total of 43 sewing machines have now been despatched from Edinburgh for their use, and the possibility of providing them with industrial machines is now being explored.



June 2016: Maggie is presented with a shawl and bag made in the workshop.



Other products from the workshops include knitted clothes, bags, quilts, and rugs. It is hoped that some will be brought back by EDA volunteers for sale in the UK, to provide some income for the refugees and to help fund the workshop.



The workshop is also producing goods for sale to local public services, minimizing the cost of production by using donated materials wherever possible.



Loading rolls of protective cloth donated by a Scottish manufacturer from the Edinburgh warehouse into a shipping container in April 2016



Hospital aprons and police jackets made in June-July 2016 from these materials



All these prospects have generated much enthusiasm for further training....



...evident from the numbers seeking to register for another sewing course in July 2016.