

ANNUAL REPORT

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Opening Letter

“ *2021 topped 2020 in its incredibly difficult toll on us as individuals, a movement and an organization. We had to carry the excruciating weight and complexities of the year before it and then some.* ”

I have been working for the Anti-Racism Movement for a decade now.

2021 was the hardest year in my whole journey, which means that it was even harder than 2020, the same year when reality completely exploded in our faces, and the Lebanon uprising paralleled a global pandemic, economic meltdown and the Beirut deadly blast all at once, each further fueling the other in infinite directions. It seems absurd to say that, but 2021 topped 2020 in its incredibly difficult toll on us as individuals, a movement and an organization. We had to carry the excruciating weight and complexities of the year before it and then some. That being said, we swept through 2021 and we continued to do all that we can at ARM, all hands and hearts in, as best as we know and can, because you have to do what you have to do, and the only way is forward.

The amount of challenges were innumerable. How do you work in such constantly degrading, dysfunctional and inhumane conditions and a crumbling context? How do you set priorities and stick to them undistracted by the daily shifts and changes? How do you build up the strength to actually say no to things, really important things, when you know they are absolutely needed and no one else is working towards them? What do you keep, what do you pause, what do you drop; do you provide more services and humanitarian assistance or do you focus all efforts on the parallel advocacy tracks of necessity of inclusion of Migrant Workers in the Covid-19 vaccine rollout (regardless of status or documentation), voluntary evacuation of stranded domestic workers, serious and fast processing of paperwork for those in unjust administrative and arbitrary detention at General Security Office (GSO)? How do you manage burnout across all teams and staff members who are on auto-pilot mode jumping from one emergency to the other, with no time to pause, breathe, reflect and evaluate? How do you find new ways of cultivating strong and stronger bonds with the communities at times when workers become more distant and disconnected islands striving to make ends meet on the basic necessities? How do you continue supporting ripple-effect grassroots work of advocating for survivor and Migrant-led voices and leadership when activism and organizing collectively for decent labor conditions seems like a luxury very few can afford?

How do you prioritize the interests of Migrant women, in all their diversities, with minimal to completely diminishing social safety nets, those who are affected by the multiple layers of oppressions in Kafala-centered Lebanon? How do you hold big, representative meetings in the middle of a pandemic, with multiple languages spoken, masks on, and extremely high transportation and communication costs incurred? How do you reach people you have been organizing with for years, when they lose their phone numbers and change their addresses, or even risk homelessness due to forced eviction and sky-rocketing housing costs?

Opening Letter

How do you continue highlighting structural racism, gender discrimination, and inhumane governmental policies and regimes when everyone is busy with their own traumas and struggles, and few care to listen and actively engage? How do you address wage theft under crisis when it was already normalized long before and really difficult/ uncommon to hold relevant parties accountable? How do you move from temporary solutions to permanent ones? How do you keep focused, engaged and giving your best with all these rivers of frustrations, exhaustion, hurdles and sadness engulfing you from all sides? And most importantly, how do you keep your clarity and compass as an organization and continue working with kindness and compassion at such extremely distressing and upsetting times?

2021 did feel like a constant drain, and a mission impossible too many times and at far too many crossroads, and it cost us an extreme lot. But here we are, it's 2022, and the organizing must continue. In this report, we hope to set out a short brief on last year's journey. It will not capture it all, nor will it cover the extremely difficult discussions and debates, strategizing, routing and rerouting and all what has happened behind the scenes, but this can hopefully shed some light on what we were busy with. We are always open to sit and chat with anyone interested in learning more and joining the movement from your different places and positions. The only way out of the horrors of present day Lebanon and its modern day slavery track record, past and present, is a stronger and more seriously rooted and entrenched movement and that succeeds in pushing for a new social contract that is inclusive of everyone and that champions the narratives of those forever sidelined by this country: its people and policies. We all have a place and a role to play, the movement needs us, and we need it, there is no fresh tomorrow for Lebanon without an uprising that is seriously invested in liberating and freeing us all, from the ugly Kafala system, but also from our racist societal practices, from our double standards, from our inability to all be as one, see each other and treat each other as human beings with equal value and worth. Our liberation depends on this, join us please.

Farah Salka
Executive Director



Who We Are

OUR MISSION

ARM works to achieve social, economic, and gender justice for all Migrant Workers and racialized groups in Lebanon

OUR VISION

A just society where all Migrants enjoy decent living and working conditions

OUR VALUES



MIGRANT VOICES FIRST

We privilege the voices of Migrant Workers in every aspect of our work.



CARE AT THE CORE

We adopt feminist ethics of care in our work, where we value attentiveness, responsibility, responsiveness, and compassion.



JUSTICE

We employ the social justice framework as the basis towards upholding fundamental human rights for everyone in our communities.



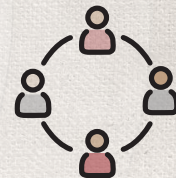
SOLIDARITY

We value the expression and practice of solidarity among all marginalized communities as a necessary alliance against oppressive and unjust systems.



POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

We view our everyday work as political and seek to always address the larger social, cultural, and economic structures that enable discrimination, abuse, and rights violations.



COMMUNITY

We value the importance of building safe and strong communities that sustain activism and offer supportive social networks for Migrants and their allies.

Who We Are

ARM'S THEORY OF CHANGE

Our theory of change is rooted in working with women, Migrant Domestic Workers, and other racialized groups in Lebanon to build a movement against the systems that exploit them.

Our aim is to build social justice systems that respect workers' rights and freedoms with no exceptions.

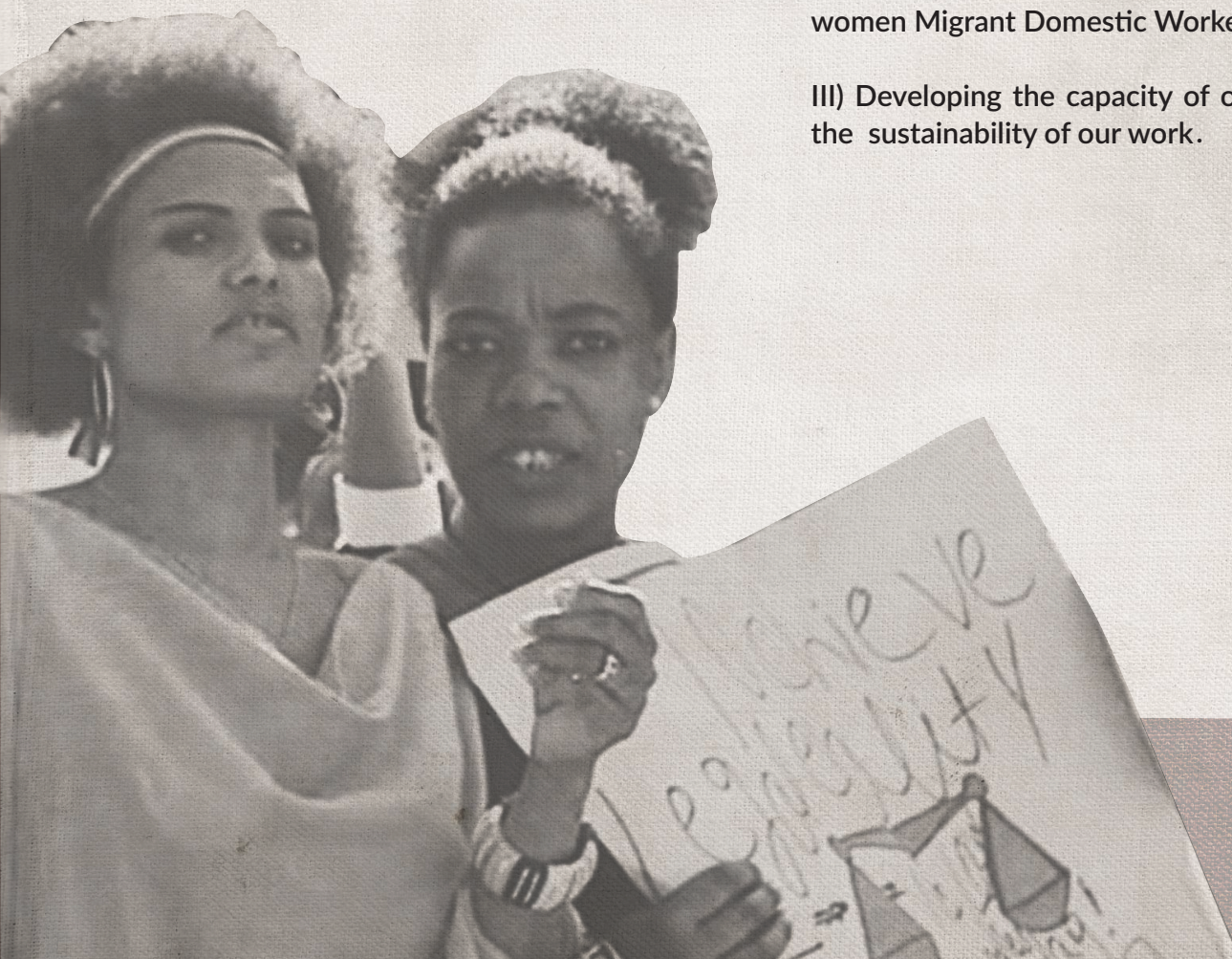
We believe this political change is possible through building strong and supportive communities for Migrant Workers against an environment that often only treats them as cheap labor or "beneficiaries" of aid.

CURRENT STRATEGIC GOALS

With its grassroots history and experience, ARM occupies a unique and exciting position as an organization that is committed to supporting and maintaining strong community bonds for Migrant Domestic Workers and racialized groups in Lebanon. In addition, we work on advancing structural change against racism in Lebanon.

As such, the strategic objectives we've adopted to this end are:

- I) Advancing structural change against racism in Lebanon by developing a stronger and more political anti-racism movement in the country.
- II) Strengthening and supporting Migrant Worker communities, self-advocacy, and collective action in Lebanon, especially for women Migrant Domestic Workers.
- III) Developing the capacity of our team and the sustainability of our work.



Context

The context in 2021 was riddled with uncertainties, lockdowns, and fuel and electricity shortages which imposed countless restrictions on our ability to carry out our most basic tasks. 2021 started with one of the strictest national Covid-19 lockdowns globally, with an around-the-clock curfew imposed on all “non-essential” workers. We deemed our work to be more essential now than ever, since Migrant Domestic Workers around the country were struggling to make ends meet, whether these ends were the most basic needs for survival, to find a job and/or a house, or escape an abusive one, or to secure a flight ticket and a passport to go back home.

Although it did not seem like it at the time, changes to the context were fast and severe. Following the collapse of the Lebanese economy and the remarkable increase in the violations of Migrant Worker rights, tens of thousands of Migrant Workers fled the country in 2020. Though the need and demand for care work remained high, most households were no longer able to afford full-time live-in domestic work. Many recruitment agencies closed, and more and more employers started resorting to hiring live-out domestic workers, also known as freelancers. Though this practice is illegal under the Kafala system, it became more widespread than ever. This shift from live-in to live-out domestic work weakened the Kafala system considerably on the ground, despite the unchanging policy framework.

Legislative changes during 2021 were highly unlikely due to the political climate. There was no stable government in place and there were many urgent priorities in the country as a result of the ongoing economic crisis and Pandemic, which chronically deprioritized changes to long-term policy, especially those related to Migrant Workers. And so after years of campaigning for the abolishment of Kafala, we had to think of alternative ways and adapt our work and vision to meet this end.

Finally, we grappled with what is possibly the hardest strategic decision we had to make to date; phasing out of the Solidarity Response relief project a year after its inception, following months of consultations, planning, and working through ethical dilemmas. The difficulty of this decision came from our comprehension of the reality that Migrant Workers are, as usual, paying the highest price for the state and its institutions' failure to protect them. And while we were also aware of the importance of meeting material needs as a core part of community organizing, the organization was not built for keeping up with the increasing needs and demands, from the needed structures, security, information management systems, to our managerial capacity, and space. And so, we decided to reprioritize our work on advocacy, case management and community building to focus on long-term change, as the crises also proved it is needed now more than ever before.

Corona is not
THE VIRUS
KAFALA SYSTEM IS!

المطربسات (العالمية)
تحمي التصديقات



Woolworths
LITTONIA
Baking Div.
1852

What We Do

Our Programs

To achieve its strategic goals and live out its values, ARM ran six cross-cutting programs in 2021:

1 BUILDING AND SUSTAINING STRONG COMMUNITIES FOR MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS THROUGH THE MIGRANT COMMUNITY CENTER (MCC)

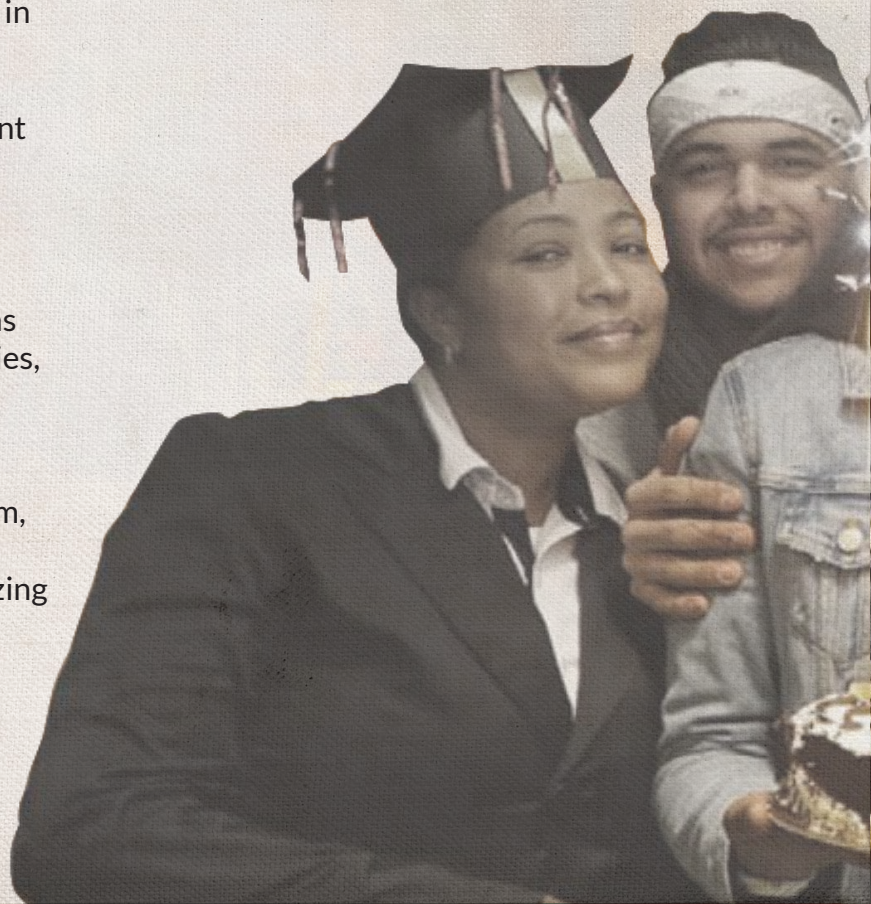
MCC is an anti-racist, feminist, and alternative social space built around the interests, initiatives, and needs of mainly women Migrant Domestic Workers living under the sponsorship system (Kafala) in Lebanon. MCC's purpose is to support, strengthen, and to facilitate political activism among Migrant communities. Since 2011, MCC has been a safer space for Migrant communities to meet, make friends, share resources, learn languages, build skills, produce knowledge, self-organize, and advocate for their rights as leaders of change. Following the year-long closure of the centers due to Covid-19, MCC reopened in Beirut early 2021, hosting 546 Migrants representing 26 nationalities, who continue to meet, lead initiatives, and participate in different programs until today.

Following the unfolding crises that peaked in 2021, among the impacts reported to MCC, was an increased isolation from Migrant communities, support systems, and spaces to socialize in. And so MCC worked on developing a community-centered psychosocial support program, delivering a capacity-building program, establishing a Migrant Workers newsroom, facilitating community discussions, and organizing community-building activities.

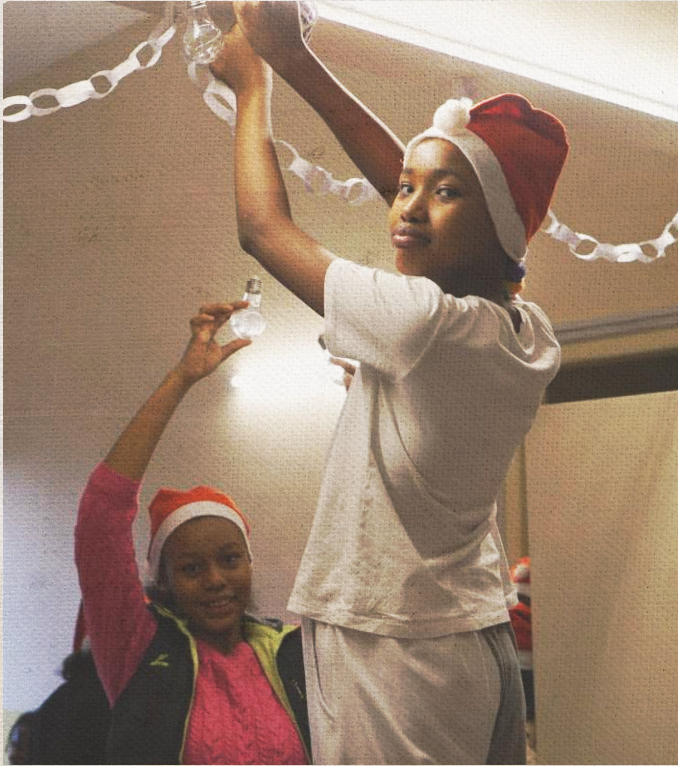


We also resumed the migrant-led initiatives program, through which various community fundraisers were piloted.

As always, community-building activities were among the most popular programs at the center. They included children's events, art-based activities, theater workshops, storytelling nights, film nights, game nights, holiday celebrations, birthdays, trips, and more.



What We Do



What We Do

When we speak of supporting the wellbeing of Migrant communities, it is vital to note that MCC's approach to psychosocial support rejects the neoliberal approach, in which mental health is depoliticized, commodified, pathologized, and decollectified, and in which programs are parachuted onto communities in isolation from cultural, sociopolitical, and economic factors.

The community-centered approach promotes a differential focus on the collective struggle, in which communities are active agents who act as each other's therapeutic unit instead of being dismissed as passive recipients of services.

The program consisted of:

- Information sessions: e.g.: common problem behaviors in children with discussion among parents.
- Focus group discussions: e.g.: discussion on identity-based bullying children face in schools.
- Creative arts program: e.g.: social therapy, playback theater, somatic movement.
- Counseling groups: guided talking sessions.
- ARM staff trainings on topics such as Emergency Intervention & Psychological First Aid, Mental Health Screening, Stress Management, and Suicide Prevention.



What We Do



What We Do

2 SUPPORTING MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS' SELF-ADVOCACY & SELF-ORGANIZING

Migrant Workers have been trying to organize themselves and advocate for their causes for years. ARM recognizes the significance of self organizing and tries to act as a vessel to push, facilitate and reinforce these efforts while helping maintain the communities' safety and wellbeing. We support Migrant communities to design, lead and implement advocacy campaigns to improve their living conditions and advance their socio-economic rights. ARM does this by sensitizing workers on the different organizing and campaigning tools that can be used by directly providing this knowledge, or directing them towards external training and networking opportunities.

We also coach groups and individuals on practical skills, such as public speaking and creating media presences, that can equip them to be the central actors in their fight. ARM also plays a role in bringing different Migrant communities together to advocate for common goals, by opening spaces for political debates and discussions. Our goal with these interventions is to support Migrant Domestic Workers to gain the skills needed to self organize under the multi-layered crisis in a system designed to pit workers against each other. ARM conducted 3 political retreats over 8 days attended by over 50 workers in 2021 aiming to provide a constructive environment where workers are encouraged to debate, practice collective bargaining politics, and reach consensus on contentious issues. In these sessions issues of concern were discussed in light of the findings of the research ARM carried out, in order to brainstorm on ways to plan upcoming campaigns that better the living and working conditions in the country.



What We Do



This work was done in parallel to MCC's capacity-building program, which is built around a culture of mutual learning and support, and is at the intersection of community-building, migrant-led advocacy, and mutual support efforts. It serves to nurture networks among Migrant communities and to extend the grounds for collective action and activism. In 2021, the program was centered around the themes of Solidarity, Sustainability, & Media Reclamation - with an emphasis on confronting the collective realities of Migrant women in Lebanon. The discussions addressed the topic of stereotypes within migrant communities, that the Kafala system invents and propagates.

The topic was deemed relevant after encountering different intercommunity stereotypes which were thought to hinder efforts of community organizing.

A big component of our capacity building work in 2021 was focused on establishing the newsroom in order to facilitate access of Migrant communities to media equipment, education, and production, as a form of resistance against mainstream media misrepresentation and reclamation of the discourse around labor, migration, and racism in Lebanon. The newsroom is fully functional with editing computers as well as studio set-up for live broadcast, videography, and podcast production.

Newsroom training included strategic communication campaigns, social media, photography, videography, podcasting, editing softwares, multimedia journalism, and storytelling workshops, totaling 81 sessions. The citizen-journalism component of the newsroom consisted of: (1) the production of a best-practices ethical-guidelines manual for media makers; (2) the production of multimedia content that is currently archived online; (3) the creation of a strategic communication campaign strategy that is representative of Migrant women's daily lives, discourse, and demands; and (4) the production of the first media monitoring report analyzing bias in mainstream archives around Migrant Workers and Kafala in Lebanon. The project participants were 50 Migrant women and 19 men representing over 10 nationalities.

Finally, with the increasing needs and decreasing venues of support, the need for active community organizers was becoming more and more visible. And so we started working on an internal community organizing document to act as a guide that aims to collect ideas of experienced and old community organizers from their regular work with Migrant Domestic Workers. The guide gives some tips to interested Migrant Women on how to be active and give different possibilities, based on experiences of actual community organizers, to support their communities.

What We Do

3 **ADVOCATING AND MOBILIZING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE IN LEBANON**

For years, ARM has been working along with Migrant communities in the country to advance both structural and social change against racism in Lebanon, with a particular emphasis on the rights of Migrant Domestic Workers. We work, first and foremost, towards the abolishment of the Kafala system, the primary legal framework propagating the oppression of Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon.

Our advocacy efforts are informed and prioritized according to our research, patterns observed by our advocacy and casework teams, and deliberation meetings with Migrant activists and groups.

ARM's advocacy plays an important role in shifting and strengthening the discourse in Lebanon around Migrant Domestic Workers in particular. Our campaigns aim to raise the bar of policy proposals and demands presented by civil society to the Lebanese government. Our advocacy campaigns can also be for certain individual cases or specific communities with specific needs.

We also collaborate with Migrant community groups, activist groups, and local and international rights organizations to document and dismantle racist narratives, policies, and practices on institutional and social levels. In the past years the advocacy team has been monitoring the media for news related to Migrants and Refugees, supporting media outlets and journalists covering, researching or advocating for Migrant Workers' issues.

VACCINATION CAMPAIGN : NO HERD IMMUNITY WITHOUT VACCINES FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

With the pandemic hitting its worst, a lot of ambiguity surrounded the inclusion of Migrant Workers in the national vaccination program. Many barriers faced Migrants, especially undocumented workers wishing to access this basic health right. ARM led on a campaign, both publicly and through direct pressure on decision makers and stakeholders demanding full inclusion of Migrant Workers in the vaccination program. We also joined forces with other organizations and agencies, to further push the advocacy, and collaborated on outreach, sensibilization, and making the information available for all.

Migrant Workers were ultimately included in the vaccination program. While there was, and still is, a lot of ambiguity on the policies and many undocumented workers still reported issues with the vaccination, most Migrant Workers seeking vaccination through ARM were able to receive it. In parallel, we carried out 5 info sessions to sensibilize more than 60 MCC members on Covid-19 and the different available vaccines.



What We Do



HANDBOOK ON SERVING MIGRANT WORKERS: TOWARDS MORE INCLUSIVE SERVICES BY ORGANIZATIONS IN LEBANON

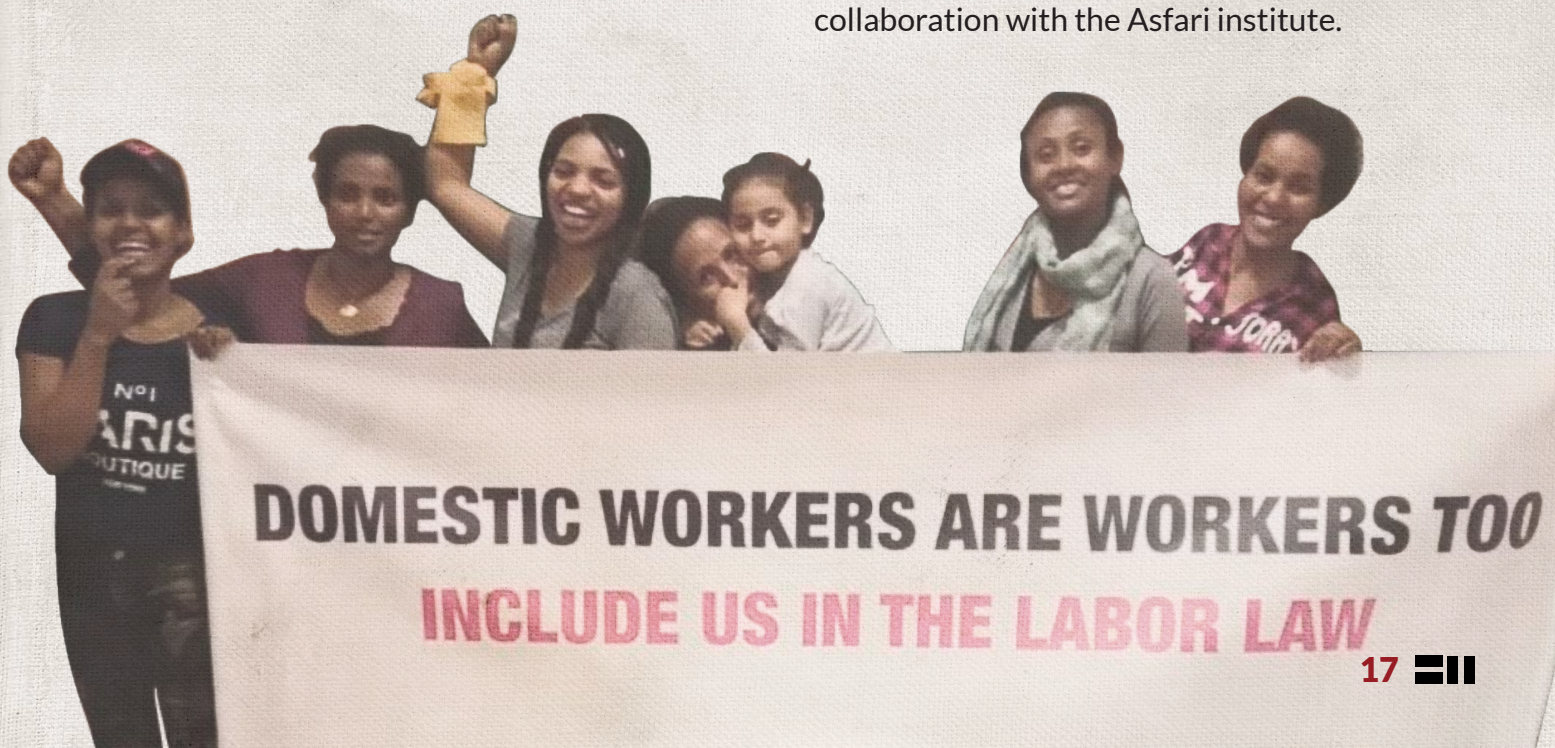
In light of the unfolding crisis, the local and international interest in inclusion of Migrant Workers in services increased, and the UN launched the Emergency Response Plan, targeting Migrants among other groups, but challenges when accessing services are not limited to inclusion criteria itself, rather than the specificity of Migrant Domestic Workers realities and needs.

With the relief program coming to an end, we decided to focus our efforts on ensuring true inclusion of Migrant Workers in the services provided by humanitarian NGOs who have more resources, systems and expertise to deliver humanitarian aid.

The advocacy team created a handbook to highlight the different barriers Migrant Workers face when accessing services, and give recommendations for organizations on how to overcome them. It also delves into the specific needs of the Migrant community and suggests modalities of interventions and specific recommendations for each. ARM widely shared the document with over 50 organizations and led on two launching events both online and offline, to train different stakeholders on the content, which were attended by representatives from 21 NGO, INGOs, UN and donor agencies.

DOMESTIC WORK IN LEBANON POST - 2019 : REFLECTIONS ON EMERGING TRENDS

Given the changing context and its effects on the market of domestic work, ARM flagged the need to better understand the emerging changes and form a clearer image of the reality on the ground in order to inform upcoming advocacy efforts, for both potential policy changes and on the ground activism. ARM led on a research paper focusing on understanding of the reality of domestic workers, both locals and Migrants, through focus group discussions and surveys, analyzing the public and official discourse around Domestic Work post crisis, and understanding the job market by analyzing online job offers and surveying cleaning companies. The research was published in collaboration with the Asfari institute.



What We Do

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY

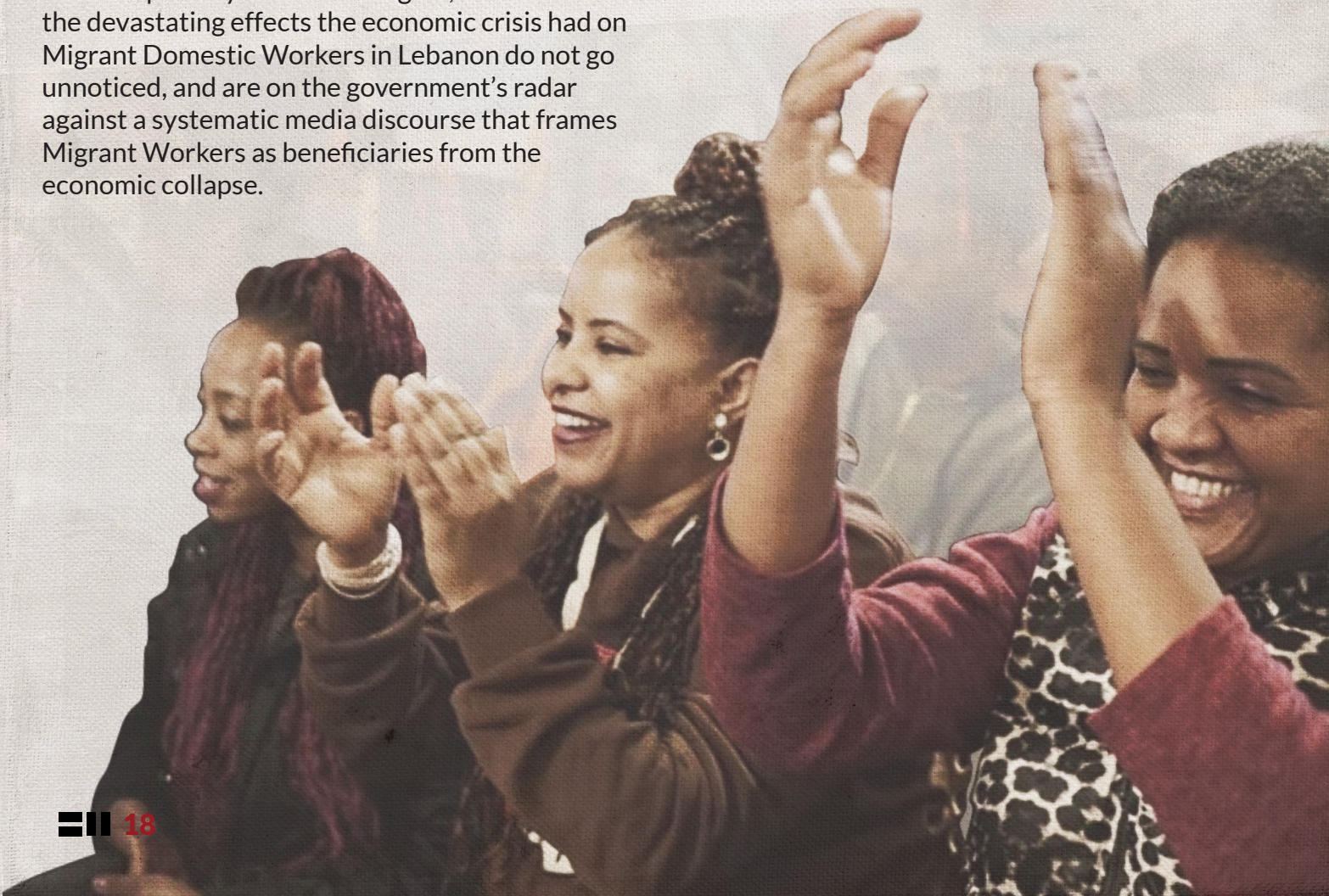
While 2021 in Lebanon made any discussions around meaningful policy change seem obsolete, we thought there might be some avenues to pressure for accountability that we can pursue on an international level. And so we decided to engage with UN review mechanisms that Lebanon is signatory to, starting with the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). ARM submitted a shadow report to the Committee for its periodic review of Lebanon, endorsed by 6 other NGOs. We primarily focused on discriminatory policies and practices learnt about during our work with members of Migrant and refugee communities living and working in Lebanon, thus providing a glimpses of the racism exhibited and perpetuated by Lebanese authorities in order to increase the UN pressure on the issues of Migrants and Refugees in the country. Later in the year, we also provided a brief report and met with the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, to ensure that the devastating effects the economic crisis had on Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon do not go unnoticed, and are on the government's radar against a systematic media discourse that frames Migrant Workers as beneficiaries from the economic collapse.

COUNTERING MISCONCEPTIONS AND RACIST DISCOURSES

Given the crisis and the increasing deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Lebanon the interest of the media in the plea of Migrant Domestic Workers was on the rise.

ARM gave interviews and information to 47 local and international media outlets, and facilitated a stronger presence of Migrant Workers' voices in the media and the public sphere through media interviews and panel discussions.

Those were covering different issues in order to raise the public's attention, and bust misconceptions and the scapegoating of Migrant women.



4 IMPROVING ACCESS TO SOCIAL, LEGAL, AND MEDICAL SUPPORT FOR MIGRANT WORKERS IN LEBANON

Since 2018, we have witnessed through casework the repercussions of the Kafala system on every aspect of Migrant Workers' lives, including their basic rights, jobs, and families. Our casework team provides case management to Workers facing labor violations (unpaid wages, exploitative working conditions, violence from employer/sponsor/agency), forced labor, trafficking, legal status issues and asylum claims, in order to mediate the often violent effects the Kafala system has on the lives of the people it governs in Lebanon.

Our primary role is to expand access to necessary information and resources, offer direct legal interventions (administrative, filing complaints before relevant entities, trial) or provide legal counseling and information. For other types of needs, ARM works in collaboration with a number of NGOs that provide GBV, health, mental health, shelter and legal support to Migrant Workers. When needed, referrals to embassies, consulates and governmental institutions are facilitated.

Our approach is Migrant centered, which means caseleaders decide on the path that their case will take and we believe that our role in supporting Migrant Workers in accessing vital information is crucial to achieve that.

The casework team has witnessed a major increase in their caseload in 2020 due to the unfolding of the Covid-19 and economic crises in Lebanon and its deteriorating impact on Migrant populations. Many of the requests did not necessarily fit the criteria of our work, and were centered around basic needs. This continued in the first half of 2021, and it was easier to respond to these needs through referrals to support services provided by ARM's relief project, including food and shelter.

The casework team extended their support to a total of 383 Migrant Workers whether through direct counseling and information sharing, legal support and representation and/or referrals to other organizations for the services not provided by ARM. Similar to 2020, we received cases through our helplines, which were the only means of contact due to the Covid-19 lockdowns and the closure of our spaces. The most recurrent legal cases were related to forced labor, unpaid wages and repatriation, which highlights how the crisis opened spaces for further exploitation of Migrant Workers from their employers/sponsors and recruitment agencies. The team adapted quickly to the challenges imposed by the crisis from power and fuel shortage, to bad internet and network problems, to ensure remote case management remains possible, especially considering the increase in the price of public transportation and the inability of many Migrant Workers to afford it. To address this issue, caseworkers made sure to have 2 sim cards from different telecommunication agencies, that usually have different quality of networks, depending on the geographical areas, to ensure the access of Migrant Workers to vital information and support in times of crisis.

Due to the emergency nature of the work we were doing in the last two years, little time has been put into reassessing our casework activities and approaches. In July 2021, the team expanded through hiring an additional caseworker to support the team in responding to the high number of cases, and an additional casework manager, whose responsibilities revolved around organizing the work of the team, and focusing more on the macro level of our work, instead of looking at the day to day tasks solely. The team met in October 2021 to reflect on the achievements and improvements needed to provide a better quality work and support to Migrant Workers and came up with a short-term plan to help us organize and prioritize our tasks at the level of team, but also at the level of each person working as part of the casework team. This was one of many conversations that helped us clarify our ways of working, internal processes, our roles and responsibilities, and how we see the casework team moving forward.

What We Do

5 SOLIDARITY RESPONSE: THE RELIEF PROJECT

In 2020, ARM launched a relief program which included three components:

- Food Distribution
- Housing Support
- Evacuation

The objective was to answer to the immediate needs of the Migrant communities struggling in face of exacerbating hardships due to Covid-19, hyperinflation and finally the Beirut blast.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

As operations could not be halted abruptly in respect of the communities we were supporting, in 2021, we downscaled our relief program by limiting the implementation areas, reducing the number of recipients and consequently the relief team. The implementation area was agreed to be Beirut, supporting approximately 450 fixed households who received food kits on a monthly basis. Households placed in the 2020 database that never had the chance to receive support or received only one round of distribution were prioritized and appointed as 2021 recipients. According to the household size, we calculated the number of kits needed on a monthly basis corresponding to 700 kits, our monthly target. However, 300 kits were kept aside for emergency cases flagged by other teams, individuals or community organizers.



What We Do



The latter have been fundamental channels as they have acted as gateways to the communities, allowing us to intercept emergency cases that otherwise would have passed undetected. Since the support we could provide the communities with for emergency cases was far more limited than in 2020, the relief team decided to set criteria that would help in identifying and prioritizing vulnerable cases avoiding the risk of being completely overwhelmed by requests that could not be responded to. The criteria agreed on were households with babies/children, pregnant women, and/or single mothers.

Relief food interventions continued until May 2021. Whilst approaching the end of the program, voice notes were drafted to inform the communities of relief's termination and were customized and translated in Arabic, French, English, Bengali, Sinhala and Amharic according to the person's status and nationality.

In May 2021, ARM supported Concern Worldwide in a humanitarian response project proposal by sharing knowledge on relief interventions with Migrant Workers (lessons learnt, best practices, outreach strategies etc) and sharing its database of more than 450 Migrant households with them in order to promote a continuation of the relief operations through a more experienced organization. Concern was able to begin implementation halfway through 2023 and prioritized the inclusion of ARM's distribution list.



What We Do

EVACUATION

The multiple crises in Lebanon since October 2019 have sparked protests led by Migrants at the doors of their consulates and embassies in summer 2020. The main demand of protesters from different Migrant communities was to be evacuated back to their home countries, given the loss of employment, the devaluation of the Lebanese Lira, and the limited access to basic needs. Countries of Origin have a responsibility to evacuate their citizens promptly and at their own cost. At the same time, the Lebanese government in crisis also has a responsibility to facilitate the exit of those who wish to leave by reducing bureaucratic barriers and waiving all penalties and fees that could prevent the Migrant Workers' return to their home country.



ARM's first response was centered around advocacy through the "Evacuate Now" campaign, urging embassies and consulates in Lebanon to immediately evacuate all Migrant Workers wishing to go back home for free, as well as asking the General Security to speed up the process of providing exit clearances to all Migrant Workers, and waive all penalty fees for undocumented workers. Given the delays and reluctance of some countries of origin to organize and fund the evacuation of their citizens, as well as the increase in the numbers of Migrant Workers demanding urgent evacuation due to the worsening of the impact of the crisis on them, ARM set up the Evacuation Project to couple its advocacy efforts with a temporary and rapid emergency response that provided an opportunity for a "faster" exit to Migrant Workers stranded in Lebanon with no alternative means of a safe return. This included support in processing necessary documents at the General Security and their consulates/embassies, buying a one-way flight ticket to their home country and taking care of other travel logistics and addressing other issues that are specific to each case.

Based on feedback we collected from the community and people assisted, there was a clear need for people to be well informed of the process itself as well as the situation in their country of origin before making their decision to go back or to stay.



What We Do

As a result of the feedback sessions, we launched our evacuation counseling program in May 2021, through hiring two counselors. Individual counseling was provided to all Migrant Workers wishing to go back to their countries. Whenever possible, we conducted counseling in person, but also via phone calls when there were in-person restrictions due to Covid-19, or when it was not possible for someone to meet.

More than one counseling session was provided for individuals in need of more information to make their decision. This included a screening process to understand why they wanted to leave, what challenges they were facing in Lebanon, and accordingly guide the person to think about different ways to address these challenges, and the support needed from our side to do so. This resulted in some individuals deciding to stay in Lebanon because they were not ready to face and meet the expectations of their families back



home, or because they felt that staying in Lebanon at the moment would be a better option in terms of finding employment opportunities rather than the inevitable unemployment back in their hometown.

WE WANT TO GO HOME BUT WE CAN'T

Many of us



have been dismissed without salary or ticket

Many of us



don't have valid papers and can't afford fines

Many of us



have our passports confiscated by employers

Many of us



cannot afford PCR tests and quarantine

What We Do

A feedback system was added in March 2021 to collect feedback on how the repatriation process facilitated by ARM went, and the situation in their home country, as well as the challenges they are facing, their quality of life, their relationships with their community members. This helped ARM adapt its approach and evacuation process accordingly and make strategic decisions regarding if/how to move forward with this project through better understanding the impact of repatriation on people who left. Unfortunately, due to limited capacity and time, only 7 feedback calls took place in 2021.

The Evacuation Project continued until July 2021. The direct impact of our work was limited because of the small number of people we supported in evacuation. ARM secured the evacuation of 255 Migrant Workers in 2021. These people were stranded in Lebanon with no alternative to go back to their countries. When the project was coming to an end, it was important to stop looking at evacuation as a one-time logistical intervention aiming to cover tickets for people who wish to leave, and start thinking about it as one option, among others, to increase agency and freedom of mobility of Migrant Workers in Lebanon. This is why repatriation was incorporated within casework, as one option that a case leader might want to resort to.



HOUSING

In times of total crisis, we were able to continue our support to Migrant Workers being threatened with eviction and/or homelessness. Our work in 2021 was mostly dedicated to improving processes, through collecting feedback and adapting the program accordingly. This was followed by segregation of tasks to allow the team to be efficient and avoid burnout, and to also maximize the efficiency of our intervention. We started off by enhancing our team's questionnaire and data collection tools, documenting our resources to share with other teams, especially casework, before phasing out. The team took the time to internally reflect on and document the project including lessons learned and challenges.

In April 2021, the team downscaled to 1 person instead of 3, and the cases that we were able to support also decreased. We dedicated time to train our partner, the Housing Monitor, on how their helplines can receive cases of Migrant Workers, and establish a referral mechanism while phasing out. Afterwards, we were only receiving urgent referrals from the casework and evacuation teams until the end of December when the project was concluded.

In 2021, we received and processed cases for 131 households covering 340 individuals. Out of which, we were able to successfully support 90 cases consisting of 226 individuals (115 women, 96 children, 15 men) with rent and/or negotiation with the landlord. The support usually ranged from one month to five for each case.

6

PROGRAMMATIC WORK

We started the Programs team in 2021, with the goal of acting as a support system to ARM's implementing teams. The team works on resources for implementing teams to creatively brainstorm, strategize, implement, collect data, report on, fundraise for and learn from our work. We also work to share knowledge and tools with everyone in the organization to improve participation in programmatic planning and staff professional development. 2021 was a foundational year for Programs, in which the Programs Manager joined and both Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) and Fundraising were integrated into the team with oversight from the Programs Director.

Our main areas of focus in 2021 included the following:

- Reviewing ARM's strategic framework based on contextual shifts and the way that teams had developed since its inception in 2018. The review helped us prepare for all-organizational strategy work we focused on in the first quarter of 2022.
- Setting up a MEAL framework coherent with ARM's strategic framework: with the support of a consultant, we built a process for teams to go through to improve understanding of the way that team activities had evolved since the crisis, MEAL tools, terminology and purpose and have a written document owned jointly by teams and programs. The final result was a written structure of all activities, organized in terms of ARM's Theory of Change, and all targets and indicators teams would like to add to improve our monitoring and future learning. Towards the end of the year, the MEAL team worked to integrate current plans with plans contracted before the crisis to create a coherent reporting tool.
- Designing an annual planning cycle: Based on gaps identified throughout ARM in terms of participatory planning and donor requirements to improve processes, we designed a model of annual planning and presented it to teams and the Advisory Board for review before trialing all stages in 2022.
- Supporting ARM teams with new activities: Once in place, the programs manager focused on new or recently tried activities to support with setup.

Key Achievements and Challenges

CHALLENGES

The context we worked in during 2021 imposed on us a multitude of challenges that directly affected our day to day operations, and put on the table an array of existential questions and moral dilemmas, some of which we are still grappling with to date.

Starting with the 24/7 national lockdown declared at the beginning of the year that caused a decrease in visits to the MCC. This was compounded with inflated transportation fees, increased racial and classist tensions with the neighborhood which also limited our capacity to carry out community building activities. These are all factors that made an already marginalized group even more isolated. To add to that, campaigns of mass repatriation of Migrant Workers caused a turnover of members (including activists) which had drastic effects on the fabric of the community space as we knew it pre-crisis. To finish off, the lack of electricity and internet in August caused an indefinite hold of all activities until we could access available mitigation strategies.

Our relief work was also severely impacted by the lockdown. However, knowing that Migrant Workers were most in need during lockdowns due to the impossibility to move and the security issues faced in challenging checkpoints due to documentation status, we called for allies to gather at the stock center to pack kits and collaborated with a group of volunteers belonging to the civil defense to distribute the kits to the Migrant households. In addition to the prolonged lockdowns, there were challenges related to the shortage of products on the market, specifically baby milk, diapers and pads. In some cases we were able to find alternative brands, in other cases we had to reduce the amounts distributed to make sure that the stocks would last longer and give everyone the possibility to receive the products.

The legal team has faced particular challenges in processing legal cases at the level of public administrations such as the General Security and the court. On the one hand, civil servants were working on rotational basis due to the fuel crisis that limited the movement of the majority of the population in summer 2021. On the other hand, the devaluation of the salaries have pushed lawyers and judges to go on extended strikes that lasted between 3 and 5 months, which completely stopped any progress in court cases that we were taking on. The most stagnating cases remain unpaid wages because of the delays caused by the Arbitration Council in deciding on an official rate at which these salaries would be paid to workers. Although these challenges are external and outside of our control, they still cause major frustrations for case leaders who end up waiting continually without concrete updates on their cases where no alternatives are possible to address the issues that they first came to seek our support for. This particular challenge was amplified by working within limited legal and social options available for Migrant Workers to meet their basic needs and desires, especially with the crisis' impact on entire populations' access to food, shelter and employment. We can provide full-on support, our best advocacy, and all of our resources, yet still fail to address the underlying needs resulting from the limited inclusion of Migrant Workers as a population group in any governmental or non-governmental service provision.

Our evacuation work faced major delays in the cases we were processing at the level of the General Security and the consulates/embassies. What made the situation worse is that civil servants were operating on a rotational basis because of the increase in price of fuel and the power cuts, causing further delays to issuing exit clearances for the people we were supporting.

Key Achievements and Challenges

Some individuals were no longer able to pay their rents and had to relocate to their friend's house or seek our support for shelter, whether through direct rent payment, negotiation with the landlord or a referral to a temporary shelter, that used to be handled by the housing team.

We also grappled with where advocacy work falls for long term and structural change at a time when entire communities are struggling to meet their basic needs, and having their rights violated on a daily basis. The most pressing question was how do we empower and activate Migrant Workers at a time where they are physically and emotionally drained because of the situation, while taking into account their wellbeing and safety? At a time where the country was collapsing, and the crisis was taking its toll on every aspect of our daily lives, ARM was planning the political debate workshops with a group of Migrant Workers. Trying to organize in this context brought a set of challenges on multiple levels.

On one hand we had to deal with the logistics related to the lack of basic amenities including

electricity and gas for transportation, which translated into more difficulty outreach to workers and communicating with them, the pandemic which made it harder to have a big group of people to safely organize, so we had to provide PCR tests to all participants. ARM resorted to supporting community organizing efforts around a campaign, and the workshop focused on finding realistic demands, strategies and campaigns that we can lead despite the deprioritization of the issues of Migrant Workers given the rampant crisis, and a context that many workers felt was hopeless.

Last but not least, our operations were vastly affected by our ability to fill the needed positions in our teams, especially in terms of finding candidates with the necessary technical experience combined with an understanding of the political position and feminist ethics of ARM. The situation in Lebanon has caused a 'brain drain in the country', and many people who are able to have left to find opportunities and safety abroad. We are mitigating this by leaving long advertising periods and planning timelines accordingly, but it remains a challenge across the whole of ARM.



Key Achievements and Challenges

ACHIEVEMENTS

Maybe one of the biggest challenges was seeing the achievements of our work amidst a constantly deteriorating reality. However, we believe that 2021 fundamentally reframed our understanding of the word. In a time of heightened nationalist discourse, we managed to ensure availability of Covid-19 vaccination for Migrant Workers without any needed documentation.

This is an important precedent in the rights to health for undocumented people in Lebanon. We also managed to initiate community organizing efforts among Migrant Domestic Workers from different nationalities to improve their working and living conditions. While this was the most challenging work we did in 2021, we believe it paves the way for a more organized labor movement for Migrant Domestic Workers in the country during the crisis.



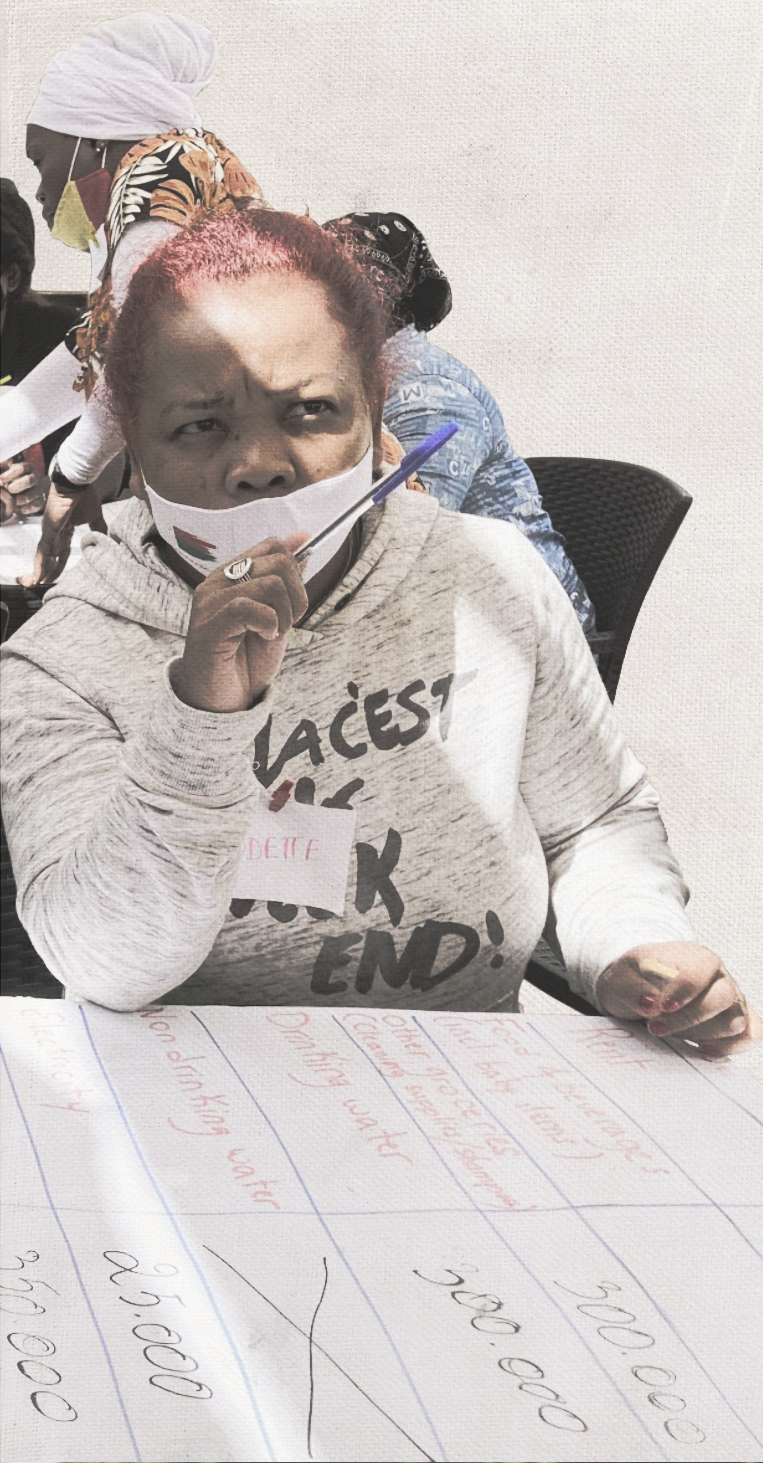
Key Achievements and Challenges

In a time when we struggled to find meaningful ways to hold the main actors of the crisis accountable for their actions, we managed to hold the Lebanese government accountable for its racist practices against refugees and Migrants in the country in an International Forum. This is a key achievement because we provided the only counter-narrative to the Lebanese state on the topic of racial discrimination.

Despite the multiple restrictions on MCC, the team still managed to organize monthly discussions with Migrant Domestic Workers as part of the global Women Workers Forum. The knowledge-sharing forum connects organizations working with Migrant Women and revolves around the themes of the rights to health, decent wage, community organizing, and violence.

At MCC, topics of interests were directed more towards the experiences of working mothers, experiences of discrimination and stereotypes within Migrant communities, community health, reproductive justice, and the recent amendments to the Standard Unified Contract.

On the side of our relief work, maintaining the communication both with the recipients and the community organizers has been a challenge throughout 2020 due to the high numbers of Migrant households that we were supporting, the overwhelming workload and the lack of quality time. In 2021, since we were reaching out to a fixed number of households and receiving less external calls, it was easier to develop and maintain the communication with them as well as to follow up with feedback. The quality of the communication also improved, the helpline operators soon became familiar voices with whom the callers felt they had enough acquaintance to open up or vent. Although the feeling of powerlessness and frustration in not being able to respond to all the tangible aid requests, we knew that it was equally important to support by creating a space where Migrant Workers knew they would find someone listening. We developed an element of counseling that allowed us also to identify extremely distressed cases, at risk of suicide, that we were able to refer to the right people.



Key Achievements and Challenges

In a context where most of Migrant Workers have been struggling to meet their most basic needs or to experience freedom of mobility, ARM's food assistance has resulted very helpful in relieving some of the households' burdens and has allowed them to manage their other expenses better (bills, rent, debts, daily expenses) as well as to provide them with the time and energy to focus on other needs such as searching for a job. Although the food kits were not life changing due to the multiplicity of needs and the struggle in securing them, according to the feedback received, they were of great support to remain afloat. We believe this can be considered to be our greatest impact.

Even though stopping our relief work had serious consequences, we managed to consolidate and disseminate our lessons learnt to other groups and organizations, and advocate for more service provision across local and international humanitarian actors.

After several internal conversations, the casework team succeeded in reviewing the team organogram, clarifying and re-assigning roles and responsibilities within the team, to make sure communication and work flow smoothly and clearly.

The new structure is essential because it helps separate the case management process from the legal interventions that we usually do, because not every case requires a legal intervention. Finally, and within the blockage and delays in the legal pathways, the new structure will help us think about alternatives to legal interventions that could help us address cases through advocacy campaigns and direct actions.

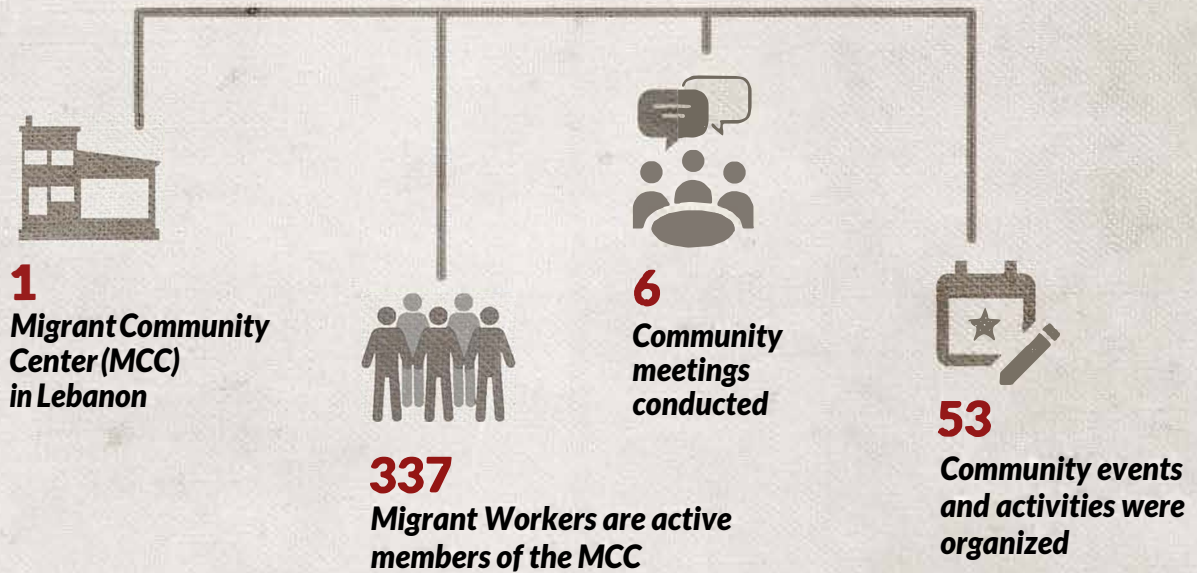
Finally, one of the caseworkers spent 3 months looking into our data to identify patterns of violations perpetrated by recruitment agencies in Lebanon, documenting testimonies of people we could still have access to who reported these violations to ARM in the past, in the objective of submitting complaints against them before the Ministry of Labor, urging to investigate these violations and close down the agencies. This is important because today, we have a list of what we called "Tracked agencies" that has become a reference to the casework team that will help us track violations and link them to recruitment agencies, identify trends and coordinate with other organizations that receive information on agencies involved in trafficking or other type of violations, in the aim of taking collective action to stop these violation and hold the agencies accountable.



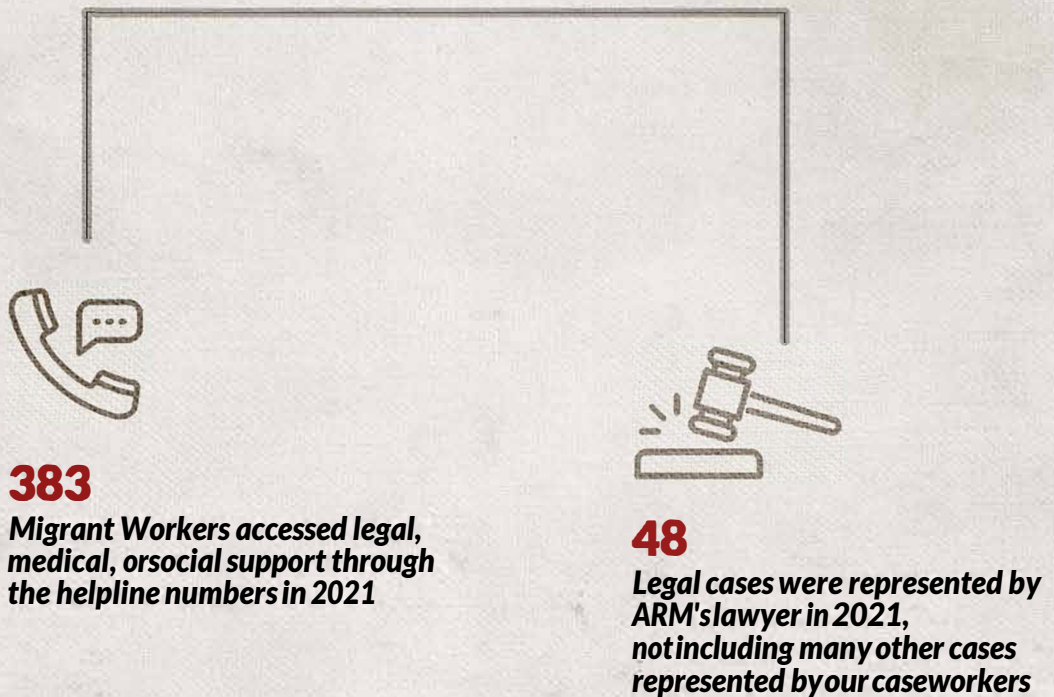


Key Facts and Figures

Building and Sustaining Strong Communities for Migrant Domestic Workers through the Migrant Community Center



Improving Access to Social, Legal, and Medical Support for Migrant Workers in Lebanon



Key Facts and Figures

Advocating for Racial Justice in Lebanon & Supporting Migrant Domestic Workers' Self-Organizing



527

Migrant Workers (non unique) participated in advocacy development meetings

39

Advocacy meetings conducted with Migrant Workers

476

Migrant workers involved in Migrant-led advocacy campaigns and activities

9

Advocacy events and activities were organized

4

Retreats for community organizing campaign

2

Launch events for the handbook for inclusive services

1

Meeting with a consulate/embassy for evacuation advocacy

2

Meetings with NGOs in Countries of origin to coordinate advocacy actions



2

Awareness videos/materials were produced by ARM (1 on May day and 1 on IDWD)

57

Media interviews conducted + facilitated 3 interviews for Migrant Workers



2

Reports produced

2

UN-level advocacy submissions



14

Public talks or awareness sessions led (but not organized)

Key Facts and Figures

Solidarity Response: The Relief Project



450
Migrant households
supported in 2021

3.5
Average people per
household in 2021



1295
Emergency deliveries
made in 2021



4700
Food kits
distributed

1240
Baby kits
distributed

5768
Number of
pad packs
distributed

2492
Baby diaper
packs distributed

4454
400g milk
tins distributed



Testimonials



Viany, Cameroon
(Translated from French)

I have plans to create an organization that will bring together Migrants from “Black Africa” (Afrique Noire). The acronym of this organization will be REMAN (Regroupement des Migrants de l’Afrique Noire) or MAN (Migrants de l’Afrique Noire) with the following objectives:

- To sensitize Migrants in host countries and also in countries of origin.
- To be able to identify each person's situation
- To assess the skills of Migrants and find reintegration possibilities once they return to the country of origin.
- To assist and support every Migrant

In fact, the photoshop training at MCC allowed me to develop my creativity and the possibilities of mounting different posters for the promotion of this organization. The video editing training has allowed me to improve my video editing skills and this makes me more confident going forward with the launching of this organization. The training in journalism, communication strategy and social media allowed me to increase my online visibility and have more followers, but above all it helped the creation of the identity of my organization. For instance how to identify its objectives. The greatest motivation that these trainings have given me is the assurance of the assistance of MCC members for the creation of this organization, by their availability and their seriousness during the sessions. And it also allowed me to come into contact with Migrants from other communities. This will be useful as they can now also become a member of the organization



Millicent, Kenya

MCC is present to support domestic workers, especially Kenyans. They have been fighting for us for a long time and they never turn their back on us. Even if other organizations have turned their back, ARM has been there. They have never shown us something bad. They have been supporting us everywhere. I just want to say thank you for your kindness and for your support. We never asked you for something where you rejected us. ARM has been fighting for many cases for us. ARM was always ready to react and to show up. Sometimes I say, do not say all people are bad, all fingers are not equal. You people are Lebanese but they have been fighting for foreigners, to fight for their rights. When we know that most Migrant Workers, sometimes they know their rights but they don't know how to stand for their rights. People can beat us and put us down. We saw how our former consulate has been treating Kenyans. ARM was there to support. They have been there for us. Today, we are able to stand with ARM because they stood with us beforehand, and until we know things are working out. And we don't let each other work alone. We are going to work together, we are going to fight this battle together until we reach our goals. Anything MCC or ARM is doing they can always count me in, I am there to stand behind them because they were there to support us. Thank you so much on the behalf of the Kenyans. We did appreciate what you did and we will continue appreciating what ARM is doing.



Testimonials



Noel, Kenya

I am proud of who I am becoming through the people I have met since last year in 2021. They have been an integral part of my life. Thanks to MCC and ARM. They both brought a big difference in my life and something that I will leave to remember the rest of my life. Just when I thought that there is nothing to smile about in life and just when I was thinking of giving up, they offered me a platform where I can meet people from different nationalities, get to know about them and especially what I am grateful for is about the classes they are offering to Migrant Workers. They had changed something in my life, the workshops that took place there like videography, photography, video editing and about media, etc, and the advocacy campaigns and so many other things that we learnt. They helped us to realize who we are, and realize our potential in life and to appreciate who we are. This brought smiles to people's faces. You just have to be ready to learn, exchange, interact, that's all you need. And this service is being offered for free. One thing I am really grateful about ARM is that they gave me a lawyer, I never knew him in person, I never met him in person before but I used to complain to ARM about my passport which was held by my employer. They heard my cries and gave me a lawyer who helped me to get back my passport. I am so happy after 7 years of struggle, 7 years of crying. The lawyer knocking on the door of my boss and bringing this passport back, it was like a miracle to me. Even today, I hold it into my hands and I cry tears of joy. Through ARM I was able to get my passport back. I will always remember the call of my lawyer - the first time I met him - to announce to me that he got my passport back. Now I have it and I am so happy about this! What you are doing for Migrant Workers is beyond imagination, it is beyond what any other person can do for us. I don't think for granted, not at all and I encourage anyone who didn't join any group of ARM or MCC yet, they should do this fast without looking back because they will never regret it. For me, I call that place "home". You will get out of that place with a smile on your face. I am proud and happy as well. Thank you ARM and MCC, may God richly bless you and empower you, enlighten you, lift you up, so that you will help more people who are in need of your services.



Testimonials

“

Lillie, Madagascar
(Translated from French)

My name is Lillie. I arrived in Lebanon in 2009 as a Migrant Domestic Worker. From 2014 until now, I enjoyed going to MCC and ARM. I used the space and the center. I could benefit from their services as several workshops, info sessions and training for Women Migrant Workers, as well as group outings. This is also a good thing that I could use the space/center during our own Migrant Workers celebrations. A big experience of culinary demonstration to represent my country and my cuisine. From 2021, with the economic crisis and the Covid-19 Pandemic in Lebanon MCC supported us by doing relief work. I also wanted to add that I am participating in an advocacy campaign to better know how to negotiate with our employers and ask for a better wage based on our hard work. To sum up, the Migrant Community Center is the only place I can express myself and say freely what I am really thinking of, without any judgment and backlash. I really want to thank the staff at the center and ARM to accept us as human being and without discrimination, and welcome all Migrant Workers from different nationalities.

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Rahel, Ethiopia

My name is Rahel Teshome and I am a MCC member. I love MCC so much, I don't know how to describe it. I have so much love and respect for the community, the center, and ARM because they're some of the people in Lebanon who truly understand us. Besides that, they're the only ones who offer us the psychological and financial support that we need, ever since the Covid-19 pandemic. This support made us feel like we're one and the same, united by our struggle and ideas, something that really enhances our mood and mental health. My son, for example, loves going to activities in MCC and playing with other children. Before that, I used to worry that he was a loner, but when he is in MCC, he is active and he feels at home with his family, his people. MCC does not differentiate based on nationality, we all have the same rights, in other words, we don't experience racism in MCC, which is why the center is so important. It's my refuge and my comfort. It's where I can speak from my heart, and the staff would listen to me and support me. They encourage our ideas, give us useful advice. As for ARM, we, as domestic workers, participate in activities that give us ideas about our rights, specifically, our work rights. Before the activities, we worked without getting our rights. They helped us demand for our rights from our employers and how to negotiate with them. I wanna express my gratitude to MCC and my content with them. I feel proud to be part of the community of MCC, and I wish for our only refuge to grow and continue.

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Testimonials



Meriam, Sierra Leone

My name is Mariam and I have been using the center for a couple of years. The center is really useful for Migrant Workers. We attend so many classes there and also we do podcasts. With ARM, I had a situation where I had a case and I talked to them and the cases team was very strong. They helped me out and I was able to come out of that depression and they handled the case with their heart and with a professional manner. I just want to say that the MCC center is very helpful for us, Migrant Workers and especially me. They have been there for me for so many times. I attend the community organizing campaign and the panel discussion and other activities there. The center is a place where I go and I am able to learn and also achieve knowledge and they teach us many things that we are able to teach to other people at the end of the day. MCC impacts us in a great way where they show us how to be leaders, they teach us how to lead and be a leader in the future. I think the MCC has an impact on most of the Migrant Workers to know who they are and also to give them the strength to cope with the situation here. I think as a Migrant Worker being among MCC staff is a great pleasure where we are able to go and interact with them and they don't discriminate but they help us whenever we have a problem. And whenever we go there, there is food stuff to cook and we are able to use the center to cook. If you want to learn computer class or you want to

Whenever there is something you want to do, they will encourage you to follow your dreams. The center has been a great place for Migrant Workers. if MCC will be gone, - I don't wish them that - but I think we learnt a lot from the center and we will be able to use the knowledge they gave us but I don't want MCC to go, I want them to be there and continue supporting us because we still need them and advice, and use the center for classes (editing, videos, photography, podcast). We need like them to implement these things, we need the material, the space and the room where we can do the podcast. They have been a great pillar for us in Lebanon and impacting things in our lives. I never know what a podcast is and through MCC they teach me. I was able to do podcasts and I took video classes and editing.



Mary Angel, Cameroon
(Translated from French)

I want people to know what REMAN, the organization we are building through a Migrant-led initiatives at ARM, had a big impact on me in Lebanon. Building this organization is a big step for me. It has been 3 years since I came to Lebanon. It is the first time I decided to be active within my community. Why? Because I saw a glimmer of hope. Because we are away from our families, we often feel abandoned, we cry and nobody is here to support us. But building REMAN gave me back the hope. It shows me we are not alone and that we can always find people to support us and to meet. I really feel interested in knowing more about community building and women Migrant-led initiatives.



Highlights

RELIEF

At the end of December 2020, the relief project launched a pilot project in collaboration with Dikkan Coop with the objective of exploring the possibility of switching part of the operations from in-kind distribution to vouchers. In fact, the latter can empower recipients, giving them more control of how to respond to the crisis: it allows them to have more agency over their purchases, to select what they most need, broaden the diversity of items/products and gain more ownership over their financial situation.

Dikkan Coop is a consumers' cooperative owned by its members. Anyone can subscribe to the cooperative without any discrimination and the monthly subscription fee starts at 5,000 LBP (and gradually increases according to financial capacity). Monthly subscriptions cover Dikkan's running costs (rent, working hours, bills, etc.), and this allows them to secure all items at the wholesale price.

As a pilot project, we selected 25 households based in Basta and Ras al Nabaa to ensure accessibility to the structure. We gave priority to households composed of women and children/babies. The voucher value was decided to be 320,000 LBP (approximately \$40 at the market exchange rate at the time), regardless of the household composition, calculating an average amount that could respect each household's needs. Fortunately, most of the households that were directed to Dikkan were able to benefit from the vouchers just before the lockdown's implementation in January 2021.

A month after the launch of the pilot project, Dikkan and ARM thought it was still relevant to conduct a feedback questionnaire with the objective of evaluating the experience in terms of satisfaction, impact and accountability in order to program future improvements.

As a first trial, the experience at Dikkan can be considered as a positive one, especially considering the experimental nature of the project. The voucher resulted to be a good way to give beneficiaries the freedom to assess their own needs and priorities and to buy their food and essentials accordingly. It also gave the possibility to purchase items that would not be included in the pre-packaged kits that ARM was distributing like cleaning and hygiene products. Most of the complaints were due to the lack of items available on the market which was due to the degenerating economic situation over which was difficult to have any control on.

The feedback received was useful to Dikkan to assess their operations and take action in terms of availability and diversity of their products, transparency in the pricing and outreach strategies. What appeared homogenously agreed upon is that Dikkan was received as a safe space for Migrant Workers where to shop without experiencing racism and discrimination.

Highlights

CASEWORK

Another highlight is when one of ARM's case workers was contacted by a domestic worker requesting our support in going back to her home country and retrieving her unpaid wages that amounted to \$10,200. She had tried several times to talk to her sponsor but never got a straight answer and was met with violence and emotional abuse. We lost contact with her for a period of 2 months and found out later that she was locked inside the house of her employer without food or drinkable water for more than a month and had to drink water from the faucet to survive. Our lawyer moved fast and presented a complaint against the sponsor at the General Security and pressured them to act as fast as possible to help this worker. They were able to locate her and after an investigation that corroborated her story, the perpetrator was imprisoned for 4 days. The case leader did not want to pursue further legal actions and opted for getting the full amount of her unpaid salary and a ticket back to her country.

EVACUATION

One of the people we supported in our Evacuation work was a man who had a terrible incident during work in Lebanon, which left him paralyzed and unable to talk. After understanding the flight process of people with such conditions, we organized having him escorted with another member of his community who had reached out to us for support as well, to make sure he is safely escorted. We then contacted their embassy to issue them their laissez-passer as soon as possible, after which we contacted the GS, explained the situation and asked them to accelerate the exit clearance process for both, which they did. At the same time we contacted the Airline company and explained the situation and asked them to provide a wheelchair in the airport in Lebanon and in the airport of the country of arrival, which they also did. The Airline company also made sure to have a bed on the plane for the man because he was unable to sit. We also contacted an organization in the country of arrival and described the situation to them and asked them for support upon arrival. The organization was fully supportive and offered to meet the man in the airport and provide him with medical assistance free of charge.

Reflection on Migrant Workers in Media

The coverage of Migrant Workers in the media last year has varied by frequency as well as quality and scope. Similar to 2020, most coverage that ARM was part of or facilitated, was conducted mainly by international outlets; while traditional local outlets mainly focused their coverage on scapegoating Migrants and Refugees and oftentimes dehumanizing them.

In 2021, we gave and facilitated 58 media and research interviews that mainly centered around the overarching system of sponsorship, i.e. Kafala. Many of the outlets were not new and had a track record of covering Migrants and Kafala in a respectful and dignified way. However, there are still many areas to cover concerning the day-to-day lives and conditions of Migrants. Unfortunately, when that is the focus or the scope of the media report, more often than not the approach followed is a sensationalist one that categorizes all Migrants in one box and does not leave room for nuanced representation and portrayal.

For example, several reports would choose to portray Migrant Women only as domestic workers, and/or only as helpless victims of Kafala. And while that is not necessarily false, it does not capture the full picture of their living conditions even though it claims to. Migrant women often complain about being portrayed solely as workers and not also as women, mothers, and activists or organizers attempting to do something about their situation despite the precarity of resources to do so.



Reflection on Migrant Workers in Media

On the other hand, much of the good/positive coverage exaggerates in its depiction of Migrant Workers' activism in the sense that it gives away that the responsibility to abolish Kafala lies solely on them and not on the broader movement. Additionally, it also entails arguing that their situation is becoming/has become better after they finally started organizing for their rights. This lack of nuance was often present in both local and international media reports; often with resistance or hesitation to equally give weight to the politics and power dynamics inherent to Kafala.

With that said, it is equally important to highlight the good coverage that built on the 2020 momentum. In 2021, there was a promising increase in the media reports amplifying Migrants' voices and prioritizing their own suggestions and ideas for reports and documentaries. That applies to local, regional and international media outlets; both mainstream/traditional and new/alternative.

From extensively covering the exclusion of undocumented Migrants in the national vaccination plan and shaming officials for racist policies in times of a global health crisis, to reiterating the systemic and structural nature of the plight of Migrant Domestic Workers, and reminding the public that some unknown victims of the 2020 Port blast were Migrant Workers, several reports and outlets were keen on exposing or approaching certain aspects of Kafala that remain untouched. That included reporting on who is actually winning by pushing for supposed reforms to Kafala (recruitment agencies) and pushing for a narrative that advocates for its abolishment as opposed to simply reforming it at the expense of Migrant Women.



Our Team

ARM TEAM

Farah Salka	<i>Executive Director</i>
Rana Boukarim	<i>Programs Director</i>
Theresa Sahyoun	<i>Executive Assistant</i>
Zeina Ammar	<i>Advocacy & Communication Manager</i>
Salma Sakr	<i>Advocacy & Communication Manager</i>
Aname Gnanguenon	<i>Community Advocacy Coordinator</i>
Farah Baba	<i>Advocacy & Communication Officer</i>
Imane El Hayek	<i>Advocacy Officer</i>
Alli Finn	<i>Casework Manager</i>
Jamil Oueini	<i>Casework Manager</i>
Mira Bene	<i>Legal Services and Casework Coordinator</i>
Pamela Moussallem	<i>Helpline Operator</i>
Rahaf Dandash	<i>Caseworker</i>
Reema El Khatib	<i>Caseworker</i>
Sami Beshah	<i>Caseworker</i>
Joane Cremesty	<i>Evacuation Manager</i>
Hadi Nasreldine	<i>Evacuation Officer</i>
Laure Makarem	<i>MCC Operations Manager</i>
Bane Fakh	<i>MCC Newsroom Coordinator</i>
May Habib	<i>Relief Helpline Coordinator/Activities Officer</i>
Myriam Claire	<i>Procurement & Logistics Officer / Activities Officer</i>
Eleonora Gatto	<i>Relief Project Manager</i>
Nader Tabri	<i>Relief Helpline Operator / Evacuation Counselor</i>
Nicoletta Akiki	<i>Relief Helpline Operator</i>
Rim Trad	<i>Housing Project Officer</i>
Rim Zargouni	<i>Relief Helpline Operator</i>
Sara Wehbe	<i>Food Project Officer</i>
Manale Assaf	<i>Accounting Manager</i>
Rachelle Saber	<i>Accounting & Administrative Assistant</i>
Kelly O'Donovan	<i>Fundraising Manager</i>
Nada Sarbaji	<i>HR Coordinator</i>
Mahmoud Sharafeddine	<i>Procurement & Logistics Officer</i>
Ramy Shukr	<i>MEAL Officer</i>

ARM ADVISORY BOARD

Sawsan Abdul Rahim
Nadine Moawad
Rabi' Bashour

Finances

INCOME TOTAL:

1,248,000 USD.

Breakdown of income in USD:

ILO: International Labour Organization: 163,000

WKKF: W.K. Kellogg Foundation: 145,000

SDC: Swiss Development Cooperation: 120,000

Avaaz: 100,000

IMPACT Lebanon: 100,000

Medico: 91,000

NPA: Norwegian People's Aid: 72,000

KTK: Kvinna Till Kvinna: 63,000

GFW: Global Fund For Women: 57,000

TBHF: The Big Heart Foundation: 55,000

OSF: Open Society Foundation: 49,000

UN-VFCFS: United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery: 25,000.

GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit: 23,000

WACC: 18,000

FES: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: 17,000

FGHR: Fund for Global Human Rights UK: 15,000

Bertha Foundation: 10,000

Mediterranean Women's Fund: 6,000

AWDF: African Women's Development Fund: 3,000

LAW: Legal Action Worldwide: 3,000

GAATW: Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women: 1,000

Other contributions:

Individual contributions: 112,000 USD.

EXPENDITURES TOTAL:

1,248,000 USD.

Breakdown of expenditures in USD:

Exiting relief operations: food, evacuation and housing: 438,000

Staff, consultancies and legal services: 349,000

Running MCC and its services: activities, trips, initiatives: 115,000

Advocacy campaigns and costs: translation, interpretation, space: 90,000

Health insurance, NSSF and staff benefits: 49,000

Rent, utilities, maintenance and cleaning: 45,000

Accounting and auditing: 25,000

Casework support fees: 25,000

Evaluation & learning meetings and staff trainings: 25,000

Books, stationery, design & printing: 21,000

Transportation and communications: 19,000

In-house counselor and clinical supervision: 15,000

Furniture, equipment and computers: 14,000

Groceries, food and cleaning supplies: 12,000

Governmental taxes: 6,000

Partners and collaborators

We are grateful to have sustained strong relationships with several organizations and networks whose work we value. We have also started fruitful collaborations with several others during this year.

Organizations and groups we've collaborated with this year:

- *Asfari Institute* to publish the research on emerging trends in domestic work post 2019.
- Organizations endorsed our report to **CERD**:
Access Center for Human Rights (Wousoul), Lebanon,
Centre d'accès pour les droits de l'homme (ACHR), France,
Centre Libanais des Droits Humains (CLDH), Lebanon,
International Domestic Workers Federation,
Public Works Studio, Lebanon,
Women Human Rights Defenders, MENA.
- *ILO, IDWF, FES, UNRWA,* and *Jaleesa* when planning our community organizing campaign.
- Migrant Led groups (*Alliance and Mesawat*), *MSF, Kafa, GIZ,* and *Concern* who we consulted with when drafting the handbook on inclusive services.
- *United Diaspora Leb, UAF, Women in Migration Network,* who we co-hosted panel discussions with.
- MCC partners: *SHIFT* for psychosocial programs, *LAW* for legal info sessions, and *IMRT-LAU* for the media monitoring report and newsroom project.

Alliances and networks ARM is active in:

- *EuroMed Rights Network*
- *Global Alliance Against Trafficking of Women (GAATW)*
- *Regional Coalition of Women Human Rights Defenders in MENA (WHRD)*
- *My Work, My Rights local network*

Partners and collaborators

We are also extremely thankful for the support and guidance our team members constantly receive from:

- *Nermine Sibai, human rights lawyer*
- *ARM advisory board members*

Our casework partners:

- *Médecins Sans Frontières*
- *Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH)*
- *KAFA (enough) Violence and Exploitation*
- *Frontiers Ruwad Association*
- *Legal Action*

Anti-Racism Movement on Social Media



Facebook ARM:
fb.com/ARMLeb

Facebook MCC:
fb.com/MigrantCommunityCenter



Instagram ARM:
armlebanon

Instagram MCC:
mcc_lebanon



Website ARM:
armlebanon.org



Twitter ARM:
ARM_Leb



Givingloop online donations tool:
givingloop.org/mcc

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