



نحن نحب القراءة WE LOVE READING





Letter From The Founder

As we grow inside and outside of Jordan and within our organization we have come to realize that the secret to success is building on human nature, harnessing what makes us human for the benefit of humanity...

Compassion and empathy, discipline and order to bring about creativity and innovation, peace and prosperity whether through our face to face program or our license program or our online training and our children books.....We Love Reading embodies all of these values and concepts. I hope that together as a community we can create ripples of change that spread throughout the world where everyone and every action counts.

They say: "What is a drop in the ocean?"
I say: "What is an ocean but a multitude of drops?"

Dr. Rana Dajani
Founder of We Love Reading

About We Love Reading

Taghyeer organization, under the patronage of We Love Reading Program, is an independent nonprofit organization that aims to foster the love of reading for pleasure among children, by implementing the We Love Reading program which constitutes training local men, women and youth to hold read aloud sessions in public spaces in their neighbourhoods where books are routinely read aloud to children. We Love Reading was founded in 2006 by Dr. Rana Dajani in Jordan, and has spread to 33 countries around the world, where thousands of We Love Reading libraries have been established.

Our Vision

To foster the love of reading for pleasure among children.

Our Mission

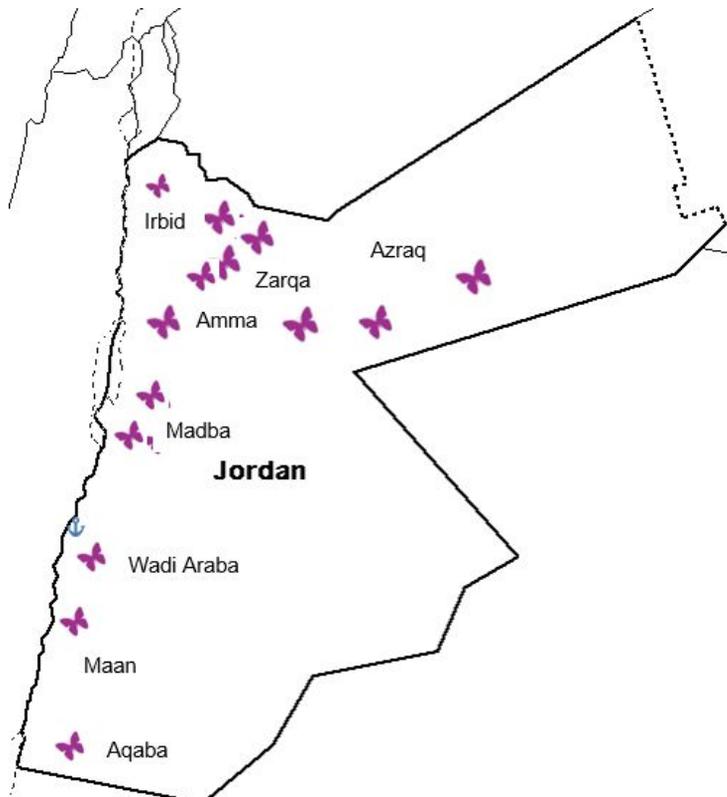
To provide a complete, sustainable, accessible, cost efficient, grassroots, flexible, “Read Aloud Program” to foster love of reading among children, empowering communities through activism of local volunteers from the Middle East, Africa and the rest of the developing world. We will realize this goal by engaging our workforce, creating partnerships, optimizing our program and model, utilizing technology, and continuous research.

Our Values

Interest of the community, Well-being of our workforce, Quality, Approaching the whole world irrelevant of gender, religion, social status, Integrity, Impacting future generations, Respect, Ownership, Human-centered approach.



A Library in Every Neighborhood

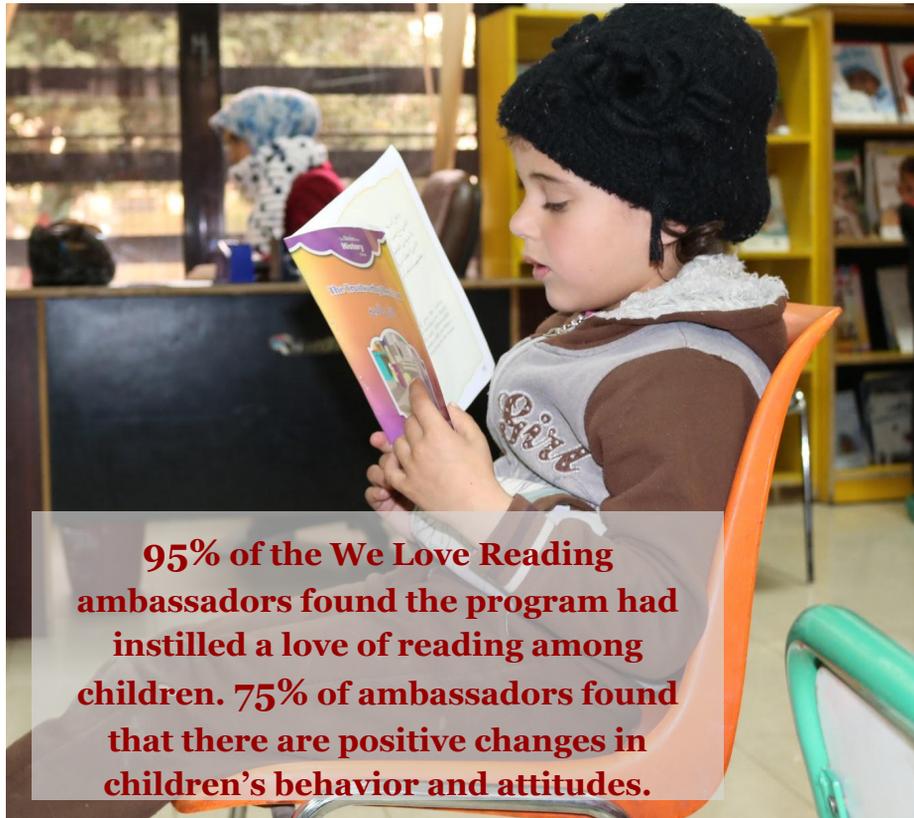


- Up to 2016, We Love Reading has launched **1569 libraries** all over Jordan.
- We have established libraries all through Jordan in the following governorates: **Amman, Zarqa'a, Karak, Jerash, Ajloun, Irbid, Aqaba, Tafeleh, Madaba, Balqa, Ma'an, Mafraq, Azraq and Wadi Araba.**
- In 2016, we have newly opened **1010** libraries in Jordan.
- Up to 2016, We Love Reading has expanded to **33 countries** around the world.



- | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|------------|----------|----------|---------|--------------|----------|--------|-------|
| Algeria | Bangladesh | Egypt | Greece | Mali | Pakistan | Somalia | U.A.E. | Yemen |
| Argentina | Bolivia | Ethiopia | Jordan | Mexico | Palestine | Thailand | Uganda | |
| Australia | Canada | France | Kenya | Morocco | Qatar | Tunisia | U.K. | |
| Azerbaijan | Congo | Germany | Malaysia | Oman | Saudi Arabia | Turkey | U.S.A. | |

Make a Child Read Forever



Children Spreading the Love for Reading

One day I was late to the reading session, and when I got there, I found one of the kids holding a storybook and trying to act like he is the reading ambassador. He was mimicking the techniques of the ambassadors by changing his voice and facial expressions, and the kids around him were engaged and listening carefully to his reading. And when I asked him what he was doing he replied: “You were late, and we are so excited for you to read stories to us.”

- Reem Shukri (Reading Ambassador, Irbid)

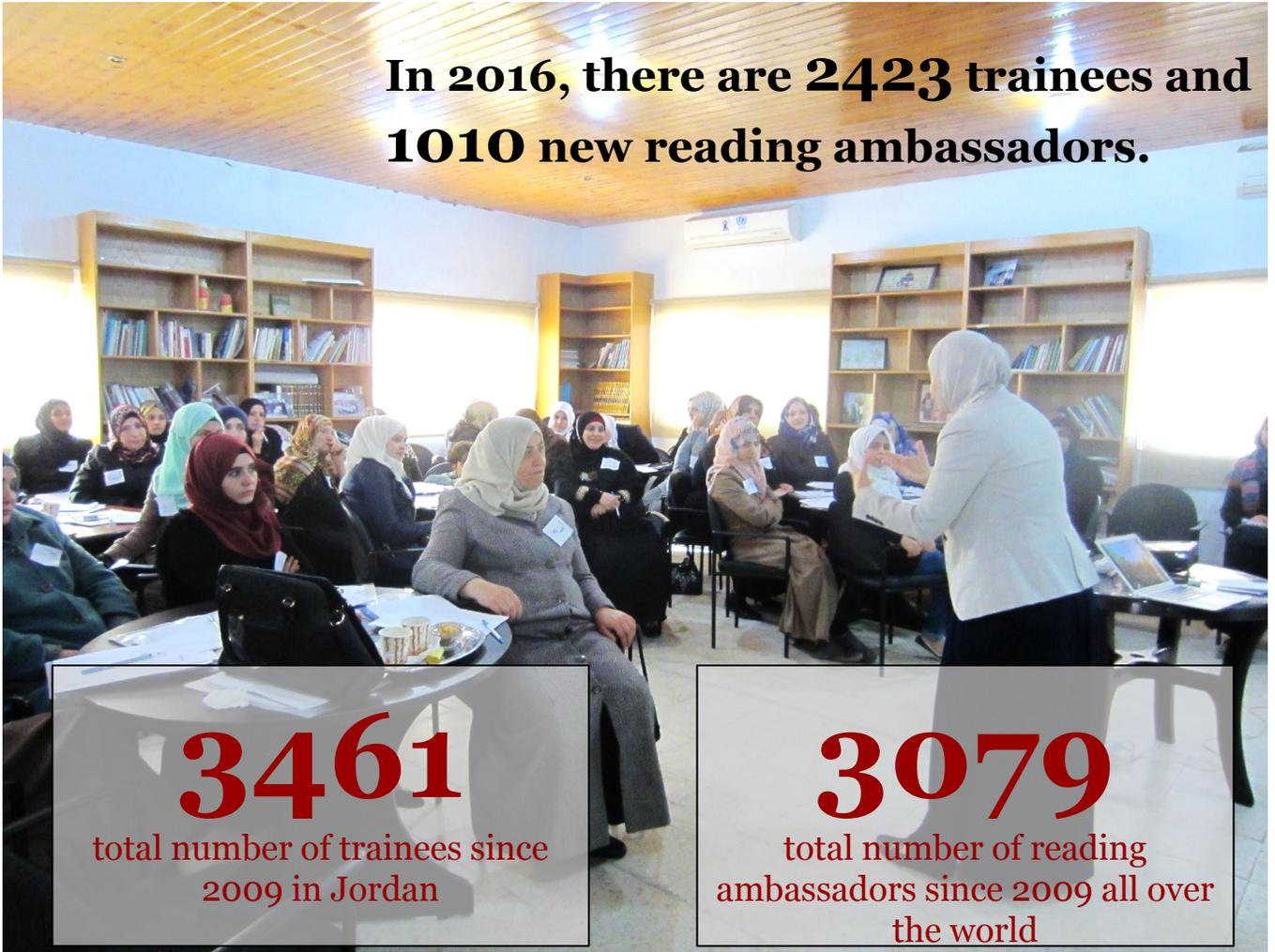
95% of the We Love Reading ambassadors found the program had instilled a love of reading among children. 75% of ambassadors found that there are positive changes in children’s behavior and attitudes.



In 2016, we held 13,355 reading sessions and read to 15,520 children in Jordan. Since 2009, we have read to 183,921 children.

Our Reading Ambassadors

In 2016, there are 2423 trainees and 1010 new reading ambassadors.



3461

total number of trainees since 2009 in Jordan

3079

total number of reading ambassadors since 2009 all over the world

Lifelong Learning, Story of Ahmad Alhwaimel

“I am a 64 years old man from Al-Kark. Since my retirement, I have always hoped to learn new skills and joined many organizations to invest my time into something valuable. We Love Reading is one of these organizations, and it was about to hold a training. When I heard about the training, I signed up. I loved the idea that I was going to learn a new skill: reading aloud to children. During the training, I was among the most excited and committed participants. I always came before the time of the session and waited for them to start. And when the training finished I opened a library in my house right away. I trained some of my family members to read for children too. We are now a family of reading ambassadors. I hope to become an example for those who want to change their societies for better.”



Women Empowerment



Here at We Love Reading, one of our core values is women empowerment. We aspire to support a gradual and natural development of women leadership within the community. We challenge them to critically examine their environment, identify problems and come up with solutions. We train women reading ambassadors and encourage them to make an impact in their community. They develop social entrepreneurship skills by opening libraries. Our women ambassadors come from all kinds of background, and here is the powerful story of Eman Saiori.

Eman Saiori, a 16-year-old girl, suffers from 75% hearing impairment but can speak properly. She came with her mother, who nurses people with special needs, to the center. While we were explaining to the manager of the center about the training, she showed a great deal of enthusiasm. She wanted to know every single detail about the training, and wanted to participate in the training. And to convince us that she is good enough, she took a storybook and started reading to us and used sign language while narrating the story. We were surprised, because we did not ask her to read us a story but she was excited enough to do so and she is very good with vocals and sign language. When she completed the training she said: “Now, I feel like I have a responsibility towards my community! And I feel how important my role is.”



Girl Empowerment



A Story of a Picture Project at the Za'atari Camp

Photography has historically been abused by Western media to subject the Syrian refugees to an imperialist lens that takes away their agency. WLR implemented “A Story of a Picture” project for 11 girls aged between 12-17 inside the Za’atari refugee camp this year. This project aims to give the girls a chance to depict their lives and stories through their own photos. The girls took photos around them and wrote short stories to describe the photos. All photos and stories were collected in a book and handed to the girls at the end of the project.

The girls actively participated in the sessions and shared their stories with each other and felt more comfortable among themselves after the project. Borooj, a 14-year-old participant of the project said: “When we first came to Za’atari it was a desert and we implanted it with different types of plants. So the same as we transformed the desert to green lands, we make Jordan our home. With this book we can show the world how the impossible became possible.” She was referring to Marwa’s photo where she took a picture of flowers in front of her caravan, shown here on the right.



Laila and Dr. Rana

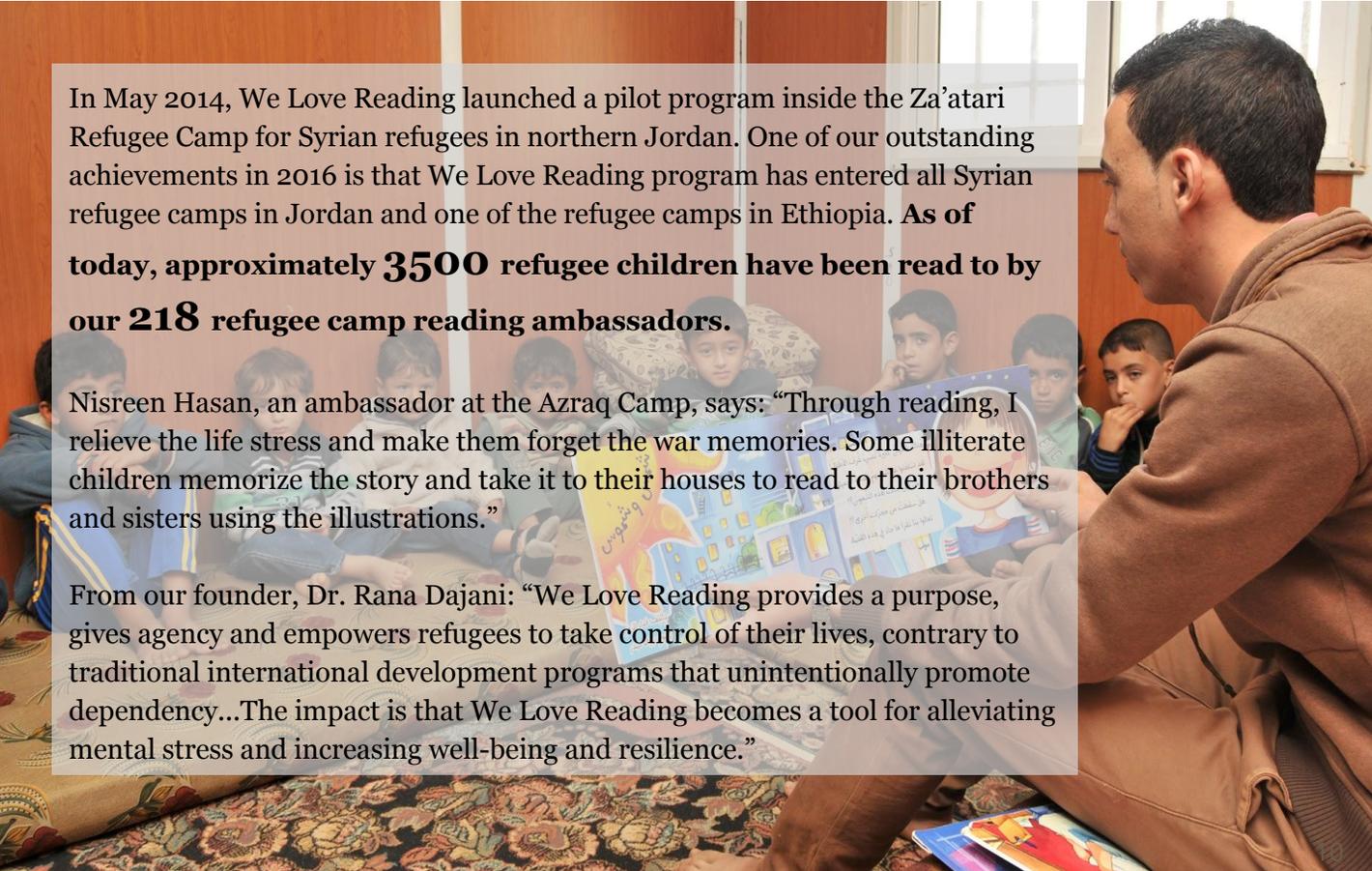
We Love Reading launched the **Be You Project** to empower teenage girls and teach important lessons on personal identities. With instruction from professional writers, the project provided a unique opportunity for teenage girls to express themselves. They used their writing and drawing skills to compose short stories that express their own definitions of some main aspects of life such as success, happiness, and family.

Leila Jamal, a participant of the Be You Project, talks about her experience: “I am in 10th grade, my participation in Be You Project was amazing. I met new people and one of my dreams became true, which is meeting a professional writer. I learned how to talk properly, and during other sessions I learned and improved my drawing and writing skills. I became capable of drawing better and writing without having to change my ideas.”

Refugee Literacy



We read for ourselves, our children, our community, our future....



In May 2014, We Love Reading launched a pilot program inside the Za'atari Refugee Camp for Syrian refugees in northern Jordan. One of our outstanding achievements in 2016 is that We Love Reading program has entered all Syrian refugee camps in Jordan and one of the refugee camps in Ethiopia. **As of today, approximately 3500 refugee children have been read to by our 218 refugee camp reading ambassadors.**

Nisreen Hasan, an ambassador at the Azraq Camp, says: "Through reading, I relieve the life stress and make them forget the war memories. Some illiterate children memorize the story and take it to their houses to read to their brothers and sisters using the illustrations."

From our founder, Dr. Rana Dajani: "We Love Reading provides a purpose, gives agency and empowers refugees to take control of their lives, contrary to traditional international development programs that unintentionally promote dependency...The impact is that We Love Reading becomes a tool for alleviating mental stress and increasing well-being and resilience."

Refugee Literacy in Africa



In collaboration with UNHCR, We Love Reading has been developing a culture of literacy among refugee children through reading aloud. Initiated in Jordan and through a four-month testing phase to ascertain its scalability, We Love Reading is implemented with Plan International in Gambella refugee camp, where over 332,000 South Sudanese refugees are hosted and school enrollment rate is low.

40 trained reading ambassadors have established libraries in different locations throughout the camp, from partner-run child-friendly spaces to shaded gardens in front of their homes. By the second week of the project, over 1,000 children were attending reading circles. Two months later, **the project was serving 2,000 children.** In the long run, the aim is for We Love Reading to provide a much-needed space to preserve traditional stories from their homelands.



“We started reading under trees, children saw the books and started coming, we need to read in our own language, We Love Reading helps our children.” - Shambool (young refugee man, Gambella Refugee Camp)

Book Development

Our core belief is the ability of reading to change behavior and develop critical thinking skills. We are also aware of the lack of Arabic content in books that are in line with our Arab identity and traditions. We have developed a new, high-quality series of children's books and worked with talented Jordanian writers, illustrators, designers, editors, and education consultants. So far, We Love Reading has developed over 30 stories for children for ages 4-6 and 7-10. The themes of our books include: environment protection, social cohesion, disabilities, gender equality, non-violence, and refugee crisis.

We are currently launching an international book campaign. We will be selling at local bookstores in Jordan, online, as well to educational institutions and other NGOs. All proceeds will be used towards the further development of We Love Reading program.

Support us and buy a book today!



Our Research

We Love Reading, in collaboration with other institutions, actively conducts research on the topics of early childhood development as well as women empowerment.

Published This Year

Randa Ali Mahasneh, Michael H. Romanowski & Rana Basem Dajani (2017). "Reading social stories in the community: A promising intervention for promoting children's environmental knowledge and behavior in Jordan." *The Journal of Environmental Education*.

Summary: This study reports findings from the We Love Reading Program that utilizes the reading of social stories in various Jordanian communities on the topic of environmental problems. Results indicated the effectiveness of this informal educational intervention, showing an increase in children's knowledge of environmental issues and a positive change in their behaviors.

Dajani, Rana, and Abdullah Awad. "We Love Reading—A Women Literacy Program in the Arab World." *Ohio ASCD Journal* (2016) p. 15-24.

Summary: The highly interactive We Love Reading training program covers a wide range of aspects from leadership and entrepreneurship to communication and building confidence. The program aims to empower women as leaders in their community to implement positive changes.



BROWN

Ongoing Research

Brown University

Assess the influence of We Love Reading program on children's cognitive and emotional development during the critical preschool years.



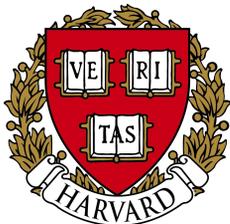
UNICEF and Qatar University

Evaluate the positive changes in attitudes and practices of children towards reading and evaluate the willingness of children and their parents to attend school



University of Chicago

Assess the positive behavior of children towards social inclusion by studying empathy



Harvard University

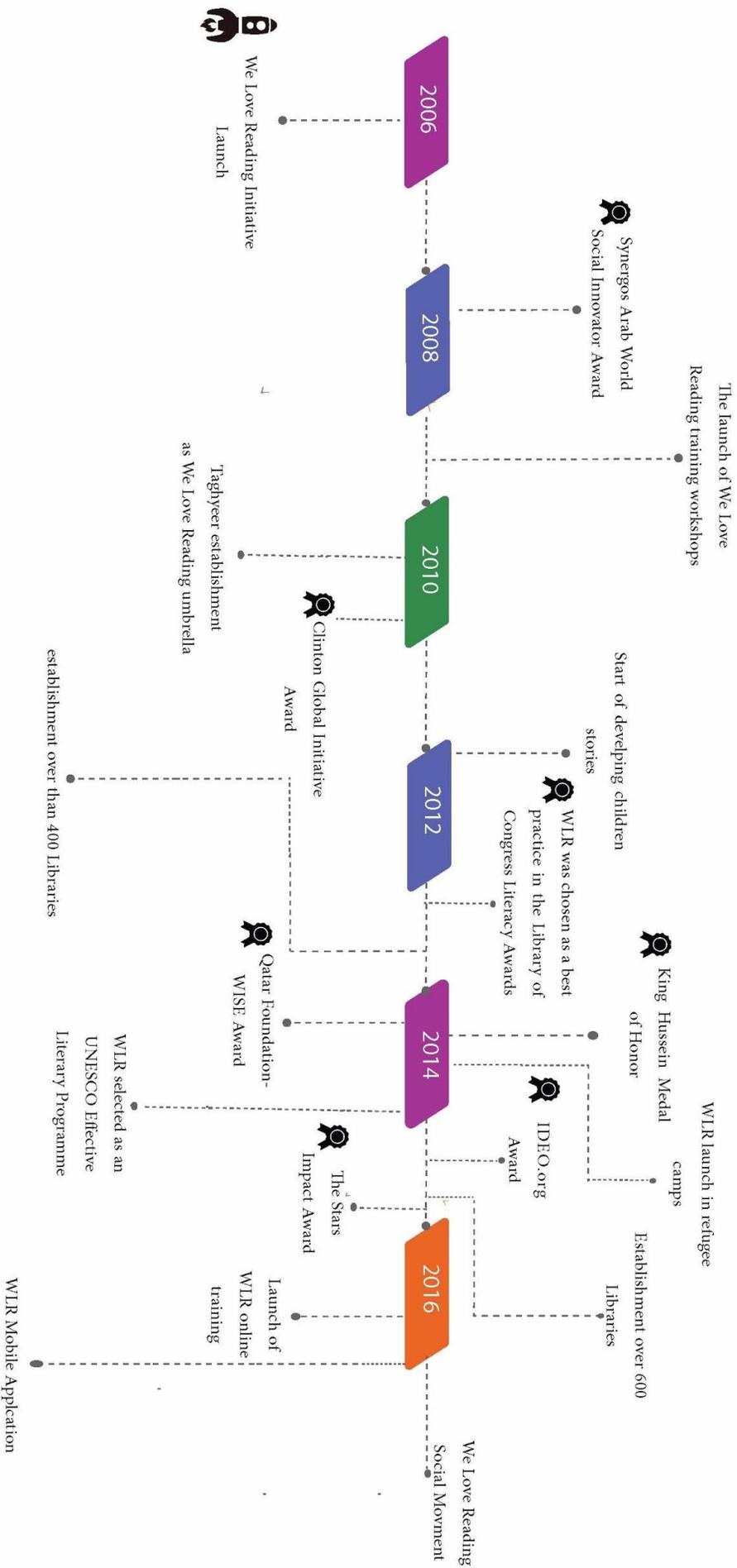
Assess the impact of We Love Reading on parent-child relationship

Yale

Yale University

Assess the impact of We Love Reading on the psychosocial state of its reading ambassadors

Our Timeline



Looking Ahead

Thanks to your support, We Love Reading had a fruitful year. Looking ahead, we will continue reading to more children, training more reading ambassadors, and expanding our program both domestically and internationally.

Here are several additional programs/initiatives we are launching or continuing for 2017:

- **We Love Reading License:** The license is an indication that the individual or organization is accredited by WLR to access WLR resources and to implement the WLR program in different areas of the world. The licensed organizations are allowed to conduct the WLR training. The license needs to be renewed yearly.
- **We Love Reading Mobile Application:** The mobile app will create a network for communication among the ambassadors, allowing them to share their stories and to connect with each other around the world. And for us, it will allow for capacity building, collecting data and documentation as well as sharing of best practices in reading sessions.
- **We Love Reading Helping Other NGOs:** We Love Reading is setting a new standard for Jordan and the Arab world by offering its manual for NGOs to use in their program assessment. We are also developing a paper in collaboration with other NGOs titled “Advising New NGOs and the Donors Who Will Support Them: How Can We Create a Roadmap for NGOs to Develop a Sustainable Financial Model.”



Our Donors and Partners



Private Companies Supporting We Love Reading

This year, Shams Ma'an helped us conduct training on reading aloud at Prince Hussein Cultural Center in Ma'an for two days for 47 women from the local community in Ma'an.



Partnership Through The We Love Reading Licensing Program

As part of our licensing program, interested NGOs or private companies can purchase an annually renewable license to implement our program. This year, Plan International and the UN Refugee Agency purchased our license and brought our program to Africa.

We would also like to extend our deep appreciation to all our donors, including but not limited to the ones mentioned in this report.



Impact Assessment

This year, Integrated International conducted an impact assessment of We Love Reading. Here are some key findings and recommendations:

Relevance: WLR is aligned with its mission, fills the needs of children, volunteers, and communities in fostering reading culture. But we need a document that clearly outlines the thinking behind our model.

Effectiveness: WLR is very effective in cultivating the love of reading among children as well as delivering cost-effective training program. In order to improve organizational performance, WLR should consider a review of the organizational structure to increase communication, staff empowerment, and delegation of responsibilities.

Sustainability: The WLR model is sustainable to the extent that it is human-centered, community-based, and is relatively cost-free. The challenges to sustainability includes: finding locations, additional reading material, and dealing with children's behaviors.

Monitoring and Evaluation: WLR is developing a Quality Management System, but this system is not yet organized into an overarching M&E framework, reflecting a need to align current M&E processes with strategic planning objectives to capture change and measure impact.

Get Involved



Volunteer
with us



Donate books
for our libraries



Start to read
to children!



Spread the
word!

Choose Your Donation Amount:

- Buy one book for a child: 10 USD
- Train a volunteer to become a reading ambassador: 100 USD
- Sponsor the opening of a new library: 1000 USD
- Or any amount you like!

Donate at www.welovereading.org



The We Love Reading Team 2016



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