“Change takes collective effort”
Who We Are

The Anti-Racism Movement (ARM) is a grassroots movement created by young activists in Lebanon in collaboration with migrant community leaders. Together we work on documenting, investigating, exposing and fighting racist practices through multiple initiatives and campaigns.

ARM was launched in 2010 following an incident at one of Beirut’s most well-known private beach resorts (Sporting Club). ARM activists, using a hidden camera, filmed the administration’s blatant acts of discrimination and segregation. The video quickly spread online, and ARM’s efforts to bring this issue to light were lauded by many. Interest grew in this small volunteer-based movement, members increased, and our projects grew in scope and scale. In 2012, ARM became a registered NGO with full and part-time staff, in order to increase its capacity to carry out more projects.

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

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

MIGRANT VOICES FIRST
We privilege the voices of migrant workers in every aspect of our work.

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.
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

1. Advancing structural change against racism in Lebanon by developing a stronger and more political anti-racism movement in the country

2. Strengthening and supporting migrant worker communities, self-advocacy, and collective action in Lebanon, especially for women migrant domestic workers

3. Developing the capacities of our team and the sustainability of our work
What Do We Do

Our Programs
To achieve our strategic goals, we currently run five cross-cutting programs:

1. Sustaining Strong Communities for Migrant Domestic Workers through the Migrant Community Centers

In collaboration with migrant community organizers, ARM opened the first Migrant Community Center (MCC) in Nabaa, Beirut in 2011. The center quickly became a vibrant hub for community-building, social services, language classes, and diverse cultural activities. Through utilizing experience attained over the years and learning from new challenges, we successfully prioritized a plan to open and sustain more centers in different locations in Lebanon. As of 2019, ARM runs two community centers in Achrafieh and Jounieh as well as a community space in Hamra that opens on Sundays. Starting spring 2020, we will be opening a new center in Dora in partnership with Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), as a joint community center and primary healthcare clinic for migrant workers.

In a setting where migrant domestic workers (MDWs) have limited access to public spaces, the centers provide a free, safe, and dedicated haven for MDWs to meet, learn new skills, organize, and access information and assistance. The MCCs serve over 1,400 migrant domestic workers and migrant workers every year, many of whom are also refugees. The centers apply a membership system that allows migrant workers to become active members of the space. An elected Members Board was established in Beirut during 2018 in an effort to facilitate and enhance the involvement of members in the planning and coordination of the center and its activities. All members are encouraged to get involved in the management and governance of the center through the elected board and weekly members’ meetings.
The MCCs serve as the hub for most of ARM’s programs, meetings, and day-to-day operations, in addition to weekly community activities that include:

- Language classes in Arabic, English, and French as part of a full curriculum for beginner and intermediate proficiency levels. These were provided by over 40 volunteers in 2019.
- Computer classes
- Social and cultural events
- Community meetings
- Capacity-building workshops and information sessions
- Trips and excursions to different areas in Lebanon
- Outreach activities in different locations, allowing us to distribute over 1,000 flyers in 2019.

2. Supporting Migrant Domestic Workers’ Self-Advocacy & Self-Organizing

ARM recognizes the significance of self-organizing and collaboration, as we support migrant domestic workers’ activism in their fight for their rights. Our role as a Lebanese NGO is to offer capacity-building support and to help maintain their safety where needed, so that MDWs can assume a place of being central actors in their struggle, thus shifting their positionality from being only “beneficiaries” to agents and leaders of social change. We support migrant communities to design, lead and implement advocacy efforts to improve their living conditions and advance their socio-economic rights. We also provide legal advice and support to MDW community leaders who have increasingly become targets of arrests and deportations because of their organizing.

ARM currently runs a capacity-building program for MDWs which provides workshops and training sessions that focus on activism, self-advocacy and social change. These workshops have been expanded to cover topics and skills related to leadership, project planning, campaigning, soft skills, computer, languages, and human rights. More than 70 workshops and trainings were provided in 2019.

Through this program, we’ve also provided direct funding to several MDW-led activities and initiatives, including social media campaigns and MDW-led awareness sessions at schools, universities, and public events in addition to connecting several MDW-led groups to external sources of funding. So far, 11 MW-led activist groups were formed or supported through MCC. Most of these groups continue to be active in their communities until today.

In addition, we’ve been organizing workers’ day protests with MDWs demanding labor and migrant justice on a yearly basis in collaboration with other organizations since 2011.
3. Advocating and Mobilizing for Racial Justice in Lebanon

ARM actively campaigns for the rights of racialized groups in Lebanon, with a particular emphasis on the rights of MDWs. We work, first and foremost, towards the abolishment of the Kafala system, the primary legal framework propagating the oppression of MDWs in Lebanon. We also collaborate with migrant community groups, local activist groups, and local and international rights organizations to denounce and dismantle other racist policies and practices, on institutional and social levels. Our advocacy efforts are informed by and prioritized according to patterns and urgencies observed by our casework team, as well as deliberation meetings with migrant activist groups.

In reaction to the rise of a populist discourse that scapegoats refugees and migrant workers for the lack of economic justice and workers’ rights in Lebanon, we focused most of our advocacy efforts in 2019 on exposing this narrative as illusory and on mobilizing a class-based understanding of social struggle instead. Despite our limited resources, we were able to publish social media videos, organize public talks, and engage in more long-term collaborations with labor organizations in local networks.

Our advocacy work was facilitated by the establishment of a dedicated Advocacy & Communications position in our core team during 2019. Since December 2019, ARM started dedicating more resources to writing position papers on pressing issues, compiling reports on racist incidents and rights violations, publishing testimonies, and denouncing exploitative practices of governmental institutions and other organizations.

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

In the past two and a half years of us doing more formal types of casework, we’ve witnessed the repercussions of the Kafala system on every aspect of migrant workers’ lives, including their basic rights, jobs, and families. Our casework team works to expand access to information and resources in order to mediate the often violent effects the Kafala system has on the lives of the people it governs in Lebanon. We focus our efforts on cases of labor violations and violence encountered by migrant domestic workers - but also provide support for migrant workers, asylum seekers, and refugees who are wronged in other ways by this unjust system. This includes working on medical and mental health needs, detention, deportation, barriers to repatriation, asylum claims, birth registration, school registration, and beyond.

Annually, we receive over 650 reports, impacting many more people. These cases include passport confiscation, unpaid wages, labor and physical abuses, paperwork issues such as birth registration, detention, hate crimes and racist violence, medical needs, repatriation, and sponsorship releases (tanazol). In 2019, we expanded our casework team from three to four caseworkers, allowing us to provide urgent and emergency assistance to more than 600 migrant workers.
5. Knowledge Production & Research

We believe that investing in knowledge production can mobilize action that better addresses the root causes of structural inequality against racialized groups in Lebanon. For knowledge-production to be useful, it also has to be shared with others who can utilize and build on it. To this end, we dedicate time and effort to narrating and analyzing our context and experiences to ourselves and to others. Our team members support research projects and discussion circles run by other students, academics, organizations, and activists. In addition, "sharing space" meetings are organized monthly to discuss different political analyses that can help us better conceptualize our local context, experiences, and potential action.

In 2019, we were able to finalize and publish a feminist participatory action research project that we started in 2018 with Mesewat, a grassroots organization of Ethiopian migrant domestic workers who work together to provide support to other migrant domestic workers in emergency situations. The project resulted in a published report and a fundraising event for Mesewat. It also motivated critical conversations with other activists interested in grassroots community organizing in Lebanon. You can access the published research report "Migrant Domestic Workers’ Community Organizing Within the Lebanese Socio-Legal Context" on our website.

The research we conduct also informs our internal systems and movement-building strategies. This year, we were able to conduct an internal study on our casework impact and feminist casework strategies where 430 case reports were analyzed. This resulted in improved internal casework systems and provided key insights that fed into our advocacy activities, particularly when it comes to recognizing the limits to what any form of casework assistance can achieve under the Kafala system.

We also collaborated with other groups in "My Work, My Rights", a local workers’ rights NGO network, to produce the first study on the history of Article 7 of the Lebanese labor law. This article specifically excludes domestic workers, among other groups, from the labor law. The purpose of this project was to inform labor rights activists how and why this exclusion was maintained, thus expanding the possible strategies we can use as we call for the abolishment of this article.
Improving Access to Social, Legal, and Medical Support for Migrant Workers in Lebanon

△ On the legal front:
We were successful in providing direct legal support to more than 40 migrant domestic workers.
We revised our system to offer open counseling hours 2-3 times per week at the MCC in Beirut, in addition to providing access to information and advice for workers through phone calls, individual and group consultations, and other means.
Since knowledge about the Kafala system and labor rights can sometimes help people better navigate and address the challenges they are facing, we ran a successful series of legal awareness sessions where more than 80 migrant workers received training on the Kafala system, contract, tanazol processes, and more.

△ On the social front:
In addition to our regular casework followup and "checking-in", we launched a pilot project to identify out-of-school children of migrant workers and successfully matched around 40 with educational opportunities.

△ On the medical front:
We continued two key medical partnerships that provided secondary and tertiary medical care to more than 50 people in 2019, in addition to arranging access to primary health care for 146 migrant workers this year.
We continued providing facilitated referrals to numerous other medical service providers, and advocated for expanded access to care and coverage.

Our casework informs advocacy efforts that target embassies, employers, recruitment agencies, governmental entities, and other organizations:

This year, we launched advocacy campaigns in response to UNHCR’s treatment of African refugees and asylum seekers, the detention and threatened deportation of a Sri Lankan-Sudanese family of 7, in addition to publishing joint press releases and statements by groups such as Women Human Rights Defenders, Amnesty, and Human Rights Watch.

We also advocated for more services and support to be available from different organizations to migrant workers and witnessed our efforts resulting in major international organizations launching projects and interventions focused on addressing the needs of migrant workers.
Key Achievements and Challenges

Our greater capacity to provide support to different communities

With our growing number of staff this year, ARM was better able to provide assistance to additional groups and individuals.

In 2019, ARM supported the establishment of the Migrant Workers Coalition, which consists of 9 MDW-led groups working on casework, community-building, and activism. We provided mentorship and training to two migrant domestic worker groups, Mesewat and Egna Legna, which organize discussions around key issues facing migrant workers (MWs) and provide immediate support for women in emergency situations.

We also supported a group of African asylum seekers and refugees in making their stories and demands heard after years of facing silencing and injustice. We compiled evidence of their grievances, sent an open letter to UNHCR offices in Beirut and Geneva, and held a solidarity protest echoing their demands. Our campaign resulted in greater visibility for their struggle in activist circles and in the media, as more content was published about their struggle during the two months of our campaign than over the ten years during which they have been protesting.

We continue to provide essential casework support to migrant workers in emergency situations despite the limits of casework support under the Kafala system. Migrant workers use these services in an environment of mutual trust and shared responsibility. Our experience in casework constantly informs our advocacy action plans and priorities since it tracks and reflects the types and patterns of racist exploitation month-by-month.

The limited effectiveness of all forms of legal and social support within the sponsorship system

A key challenge we face is working with the limited legal and social options available for MDWs and MWs to meet their basic needs and desires. We can provide full-on support, our best advocacy, and all of our resources, yet still fail to address the underlying needs because of external forces. This points to the limits of all forms of potential NGO support in the face of structural inequalities, which push towards alternative ways of organizing for liberationist politics.

For example, an Ethiopian migrant domestic worker and registered refugee was detained in February 2019 for not having a valid residency permit, as the Lebanese General Security does not consider refugee status as proof of legal residency. Her detention separated her from her Sudanese husband and their two children. Furthermore, her refugee status was revoked while she was in detention. Even after advocacy pressure with other NGOs and international bodies, appeals to General Security, and legal consultations, she was still deported back to Ethiopia after spending more than 9 months in detention. Her husband was also forced to pay for the ticket back. Her family has not heard from her since she was deported.

In another case, ARM supported an Ethiopian migrant domestic worker who filed a legal case against a man who raped her in her apartment building. She had a police report, a forensic doctor's report, the support of a lawyer, and an overall strong case, but her sponsor - who knew the rapist - pressured her into dropping the complaint by threatening her and her sister, who also worked in Lebanon, with deportation. She eventually accepted to take an amount of money from her sponsor and withdrew the case to be able to financially support her family sooner than later. ARM was able to continue litigating the case in her absence, but the judge's verdict was to release the rapist.

Many women we work with are confined inside houses, have their documents and phones confiscated, and experience major intimidation. As a result, planning actions and interventions is often made more difficult. We sometimes end up waiting weeks or months before being able to establish any direct contact with the person, and often have to hold off on full direct action before this contact is made. When we do establish contact, inaccessible justice mechanisms, the lack of access to information, and fear prevent many survivors of violence from securing any form of justice.
Key Facts & Figures - 2019

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

- 2 Migrant Community Centers (MCC) in Lebanon
- 48 Students attended 6 computer classes organized in 2019
- 18 Various classes (including mosaic, drawing, zumba, yoga, clowning, self-defense, guitar, and voguing) took place, attended by 55 migrant workers
- 370 Migrant workers are active members of the MCC
- 1200 Outreach flyers were distributed
- 160 Members elected the MCC Members Board
- 56 Members meetings conducted
- 103 Community events and activities were organized (e.g. birthdays, parties, Christmas, New year's, mother's day, etc.)
- 10 Field trips were organized, attended by 367 migrant domestic workers
- 380 Students attended 36 language classes organized in 2019
- 1 Weekend community space in Beirut
Advocating for Racial Justice in Lebanon & Supporting Migrant Domestic Workers’ Self-Organizing

- “End Kafala: Justice for Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon” (link) - (with Amnesty International), calling on Lebanese authorities to end the Kafala system and extend labor protections to migrant domestic workers in Lebanon.
- “All Rights for All Workers” (link), a series of short videos about the rights of all workers in Lebanon regardless of nationality, race, or labor sector.
- “Release 5-year-old girl and her Family from Detention and Stop Deportation” (link), calling against the deportation of a migrant refugee family by the Lebanese General Security
- “Anti-Racist Revolution” (link 1 & link 2), a series of discussions and online articles recognizing anti-racism as part of the October 17 revolution in Lebanon.
- “Solidarity with African Asylum Seekers and Refugees Against Unjust UNHCR Practices” (link 1 & link 2), a series of protests and an online campaign supporting African refugees against practices and regulations that deny them resettlement and socioeconomic rights.
- 3 private campaigns for the release of migrant workers and refugees from detention.
- 2 efforts to support migrant communities call for reform of their embassies, consulates, and immigration ministries (such as this letter).

- 2: Protests were organized with over 130 migrant workers
- 9: Statements and press releases were published
- 74: Capacity building workshops were conducted, attended by 235 migrant domestic workers
- 7: Awareness videos were produced by ARM
## Improving Access to Social, Legal, and Medical Support for Migrant Workers in Lebanon

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<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migrant workers accessed legal, medical, or social support through MCC in 2019</td>
<td>650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out-of-school children of migrant workers were matched with educational opportunities</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal cases were represented by ARM’s lawyer in 2019, not including many other cases represented by our caseworkers</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers were involved in our casework team</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>New medical partnerships were established</td>
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## Knowledge Production and Research

<table>
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<td>Research projects were conducted</td>
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<td>Research partnership was established</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor rights conference was organized with local networks</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public talks or awareness sessions led</td>
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<tr>
<td>People were reached through Facebook per month</td>
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<td>Unique website visits in 2019</td>
<td>8,583</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness sessions and discussions were organized at schools and universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journalists published articles on our campaigns in 20 local &amp; international media platforms</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor rights conference was organized with local networks</td>
<td>1</td>
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Stories of Change

20 Years of Unpaid Wages for an Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Worker

Betty (pseudonym) is an Ethiopian domestic worker who came to Lebanon in the early 1990s. Since then, she worked without pay in her Lebanese sponsor’s house for approximately 20 years and was never allowed to visit her family in Ethiopia. ARM’s cases team learned of Betty’s situation through another migrant domestic worker employed by a friend of Betty’s employer. Betty’s abuse had resulted in major emotional and psychological distress for both her and her family. We were able to contact her younger brother in Ethiopia who had not heard from her in years. Her family had no idea about her whereabouts and whether she was still alive. We gathered needed evidence, directly reported her situation to the Ethiopian consulate, and worked with our lawyer to report the case to General Security. We were able to successfully push General Security to open an investigation, which resulted in Betty being released from the house, and in forcing her employer to pay her withheld wages, return her belongings, pay the penalty fees he owed for not fixing her residency papers, and purchase her return ticket. She traveled back to Ethiopia after almost twenty years to reunite with her family after getting paid the wages she was owed, which totaled to $41,461 in unpaid salaries.

Advocating Against Refugee and Migrant Detentions and Deportations

ARM’s advocacy efforts were successful in achieving the release of dozens of detained refugees and asylum seekers, along with their family members, from General Security administrative detention. Because the Lebanese authorities do not recognize refugee status as basis for residency in Lebanon, there is a common practice of detaining refugees and asylum seekers on the pretense of lacking residency permits. This practice separates families, intensifies economic hardships and emotional trauma, exposes refugees to practices of torture in General Security detention, and sometimes results in deportations in violation of international principles of non-refoulement. In November 2018, we partnered with the Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH), Insan Association, Human Rights Watch, and others to publicize this unlawful and prolonged detention and to stop the government from proceeding with its planned deportation of 3 Sudanese refugees. As a result of both direct and indirect advocacy, General Security granted a temporary release to 35 detained refugees and asylum seekers, from Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iraq, Somalia, and Yemen, in an unprecedented act. This included the 3 refugees that were set for deportation, along with an Ethiopian mother who had given birth in detention where she was locked for 1.5 years. Since then, the temporary release permits expired, but most of the detained refugees were not re-arrested according to the information we were able to secure by the end of 2019. We continue to advocate for numerous cases of administrative detention and threats of deportation behind-the-scenes.
Testimonials

Agare is an Ethiopian migrant domestic worker who came to Lebanon more than 11 years ago. In 2018, she contacted ARM’s casework team for medical support and requested advocacy assistance against her sponsor. Even though she had a sponsor and proper residency papers, she still could not get access to the gynecological consultations and treatments she needed. Over several months, we supported her in securing the necessary medical care and surgical procedures she needed. After seeing how our casework team operates, Agare approached us saying she was inspired to start another MCC or shelter in Ethiopia. Over about 9 months, we helped her develop her project plans, arranged for her advisory meetings with other organizations involved in sheltering migrant women, and helped her develop her communication skills to be better able to introduce herself, her story, and her project. She returned to Ethiopia in September 2019 and is currently looking for work in local community organizations and shelters as she works towards her long term goal of starting her own initiative.

Abdel Karim is a 38 year-old Sudanese worker who has been in Lebanon for 12 years. Abdel Karim has faced many difficulties and challenges living in Lebanon as a migrant worker. His experience has been bittersweet, as he describes it. Abdel Karim joined MCC four years ago, and he has been attending creative writing workshops over the past year, working on his writing and reading skills. Abdel Karim shared his writing on different occasions, including storytelling events, International Migrants Day celebration and HEAL annual anniversary celebration. He is also a writer in the book project: a community-building initiative led by MCC members to be launched in 2020. In this project, migrant workers and migrant domestic workers will share stories and personal experiences in forms of poetry, stories and drawings.

“MCC changed a lot for me and helped me change my mentality and thinking around a lot of issues. I used to feel very mistreated, and I blamed everyone for not being open minded, but the more I met people through MCC, the more I realized that people can indeed be kind and considerate towards others. Life is knowledge itself, and through MCC, I learned so much. At the center, there are people from all backgrounds and nationalities, different religions, skin colors, and ways of life. MCC was able to bring us all together, and make us all feel at home, which is not an easy thing to do. I didn’t receive proper education in my country, so the ability to further my education and gain different skills is extremely helpful. In other places in Lebanon, if I knock on someone’s door, they ask if I am a thief or a gatekeeper, but at MCC, I knock on the front door and I am immediately welcomed.”
Other Highlights

Rights in times of crisis

The economic crisis and rapidly worsening economic conditions are having a devastating effect on all residents in Lebanon. The cost of living is rising, along with the unemployment rate, while the local currency continues to lose value. Migrant workers are among the most vulnerable and most affected by the crisis. MDWs are losing their jobs, suffering from reductions in their salaries, late or no payments, and being paid in a currency that lost over 30% of its value by the end of 2019.

With money transfer companies refusing to take Lebanese pounds, MDWs have no way of transferring the little they have to their families abroad who depend on them for survival. Many workers who wish to leave the country find themselves trapped in Lebanon, either due to their inability to pay the airplane ticket and penalty fees for being undocumented, or because they are prevented from leaving by their kafeel. As a result of all of these sudden changes, migrant workers have greater needs for assistance on an individual as well as a collective level. Unfortunately, these greater needs are met with decreasing public interest in providing support in this context.

Because of this, ARM and MCC have intensified their work and engaged in direct actions and interventions to counter racist discourse and measures that jeopardise migrant workers’ livelihoods during the crisis and the Lebanese revolution. This includes speaking out against nationalist propaganda, delays in administrative processes, arbitrary deportations, restrictions on money transfers to home countries, labor violations and pay cuts, and the active exclusion of migrant workers and refugees engaging with the revolution.

Brave Children School Project: Educating Children Excluded by the Lebanese Education System

There are more than 250,000 migrant domestic workers in Lebanon, many of whom start families here. Migrant parents and children face severe challenges from the kafala system and racism in society, including difficulty registering their children’s births and limited access to healthcare and education. This means the majority of children of migrant workers are denied full access to schooling and legal residency.

The initial idea of the Brave Children School aimed to address this gap by both providing a safe learning space for primary school children, and raising awareness of the issue with government officials and the public. After exploring school registration requirements, funding, logistics, staffing and curriculum, we concluded that starting a primary school for the children of migrant domestic and domestic workers is beyond our capacity at this stage.

However, we organized a grassroots solution aimed at providing education advocacy to ensure that children of migrant domestic workers and migrant workers in Lebanon get equitable access to a range of education opportunities. We collaborated with parents to understand the challenges and barriers of access to education, and we advocated at the local level to help children get access to formal and non-formal education – depending on the status, age and level of education of the children. This was not without its challenges, which included the children’s legal status, lack of funds, and limited enrollment opportunities due to resistance from schools and school principals.

For the final phase, we aim to evaluate the impact of this initiative, and to develop detailed guidelines to successfully connect children education for the children of migrant and migrant domestic workers with schools and other educational opportunities in the future.
International Meetings

UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking
Consultation on Social Inclusion of Trafficking Survivors
UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking / OHCHR
January 2019
Addis Ababa

Annual Meeting
Arab Network for Migrant Rights
February 2019
Dubai

Global Consultation on Prevention of Trafficking and Unsafe Migration
Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women
April 2019
Bangkok

Empowering Women MWs from South Asia:
Multi-stakeholder dialogue on gender-responsive employment and recruitment
UN Women
April 2019
Bangkok

Regional Exchange on How to Support Feminist
Organizing in the MENA region
Kvinna Till Kvinna
October 2019
Cyprus

Young Feminists Meeting with Lopa Banerje (UN Women)
Collective for Research & Training on Development - Action
December 2019
Amman
Highlighted Media Clippings

“Employers often refer to a domestic worker as ‘part of our family,’ which serves to diminish both her rights as a worker and her ability to pursue justice afterwards. The reality is that this rhetoric is used to exploit migrant workers, especially women.” - Addis Standard, 2019.

“We’ve recorded what amounts to ‘side deals’ between the consulate staff and employers when it comes to a case, we’re noticing what could be a ‘cover-up’ of the amounts of deaths in Lebanon, we’ve seen major delays in tackling urgent files in which a person in a dire situation waits months for a resolution, and we’ve seen that the Ethiopian consulate has passed on a lot of responsibilities and the burden on the Ethiopian community – the shelter is an example of that.” - OpenDemocracy, 2019.

Highlighted Statements

RELEASE 5-YEAR-OLD GIRL AND HER FAMILY FROM DETENTION AND STOP DEPORTATION

We call for the immediate release of Birgit, a 5-year-old girl born in Lebanon, and her Sri Lankan and Sudanese family, from administrative detention. General Security told the family they would be deported to Sudan and Sri Lanka, separating them permanently, and putting them at risk of violence and prosecution.

Share this press release below from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, CLDH, and AHRN and join us in calling for the family’s release and an end to their deportation.

A REVOLUTION AGAINST ALL FORMS OF INJUSTICE AND CORRUPTION | RACISM IS ONE OF THEM

On 1st November, 2019,
We declare that the people of 15 countries, including each of the Americas, fight together against the injustice, the systemic racism, and. By refusing to accept solutions that lack transparency, which continue to be implemented by the state, we are committing to defend the rights of the people, the majority of whom are women, and in the face of this, we reaffirm our fundamental values: Democracy, Social Justice, and Human Rights, as well as a profound commitment to the fight against racism and for social justice. This revolution does not only constitute a fight against the economic, social, and political processes, but also an expression of solidarity for a country with social justice for all. We cannot join to bring down the regime if we do not bring down the racism, the economic and social policies, and prostitution along with it.
Our Team

ARM Team

Farah Salka                    Executive Director
Rana Boukarim            Programs Director
Laure Makarem            Operations Manager
Alli Finn                  Casework Manager
Zeina Ammar            Advocacy & Communication Manager
Ramy Shukr               Programs Officer
Manale Assaf              Accounting and Human Resources Coordinator
Rahaf Dandash            MCC Beirut General Coordinator
Imane El Hayek             MCC Jounieh General Coordinator
Mira Bene                Legal Services and Casework Coordinator
Nermine Sibai            Lawyer
Jamil Oueini              Caseworker
Reema El Khatib           Education & Volunteers Coordinator
Aname Gnanguenon          MCC Beirut Membership Officer
Rim Trad                  MCC Beirut Administration & Logistics Officer
Sabrina Fawaz             MCC Jounieh Assistant Coordinator
Myriam Claire Baker      MCC Hamra Classes Coordinator
May Habib                 MCC Jounieh Teacher

Interns
Khaldoun Awar
Marya El Hindi
Rasha Salha
Theresa Sahyoun
Nicolette Akiki
Wael Murr
Sara Zeino

Along with over 50 volunteers who make our work possible!

ARM Advisory Board
Sawsan Abdul Rahim
Nadine Moawad
Rabi’ Bashour
Finances

1. Income total: 500,000 USD

- SDC: Swiss Development Cooperation 96,000
- OSF: Open Society Foundation 100,000
- ILO: International Labour Organization 170,000
- AWDF: African Women's Development Fund 50,000
- Helou Family Donation 25,000
- GFW: Global Fund for Women 20,000
- OXFAM 19,000
- MEDICO 12,000
- UAF 3,000
- GAATW: Global Alliance Against Trafficking of Women 1.000
- Other contributions
  - Online donations (4,000):
    - Giving Loop 3,500
    - Civicus 500

Total Income: 500,000 USD

2. Expenditures total: 500,000 USD

- Center coordination & services 11,815
- Monitoring & evaluation 8,457
- Workshops & capacity building for migrant workers 5,240
- Auditing 14,458
- Activities and trips 38,443
- Legal fees 7,407
- Research 8,896
- Staff training 18,357
- Media production, translation and online boosts 96,498
- Staff 32,390
- Consultants 35,546
- Stationery, design & printing 11,200
- Maintenance 10,705
- Taxes & staff benefits 3,765
- Tools, books & material 4,440
- Participation in international meetings 6,571
- Rent & utilities 16,900
- Computer equipment 19,000
- Groceries & food supplies 2,612
- Transportation & communication
- Furniture & equipment

Total Expenditures: 500,000 USD
Looking Ahead

For ARM, 2019 was a year of learning, reevaluating, reassessing. We took a step back to more critically evaluate our work and our potential impact. We discovered some gaps, some overlaps, recognized our successes, and made peace with our shortcomings by finding ways to build on them in the future. We took a good long look at our strategies and approaches, clarified them, and rearranged and rewrote them. Now more than ever, what we do, what we seek, and who we are, is very clear to us, and hopefully to all of you.

We ended this year during the revolution; a time of excitement, uncertainty, and upheaval. A time for optimists to dream and for pessimists to grieve. We took advantage of the reclaimed public arenas to share and discuss our political imagination with others, albeit very delicately, since statements supporting the rights of migrant workers were not always welcome during what some saw as a "Lebanese" revolution.

We ended this year with a newfound sense of hope. A hope for changes that would allow our hard work and that of others to materialize in structural changes, both in governmental systems and social practices towards migrant workers.

In 2019, many spoke out loudly and in unison against unjust systems that continue to disadvantage us all. We all joined hands against exploitative systems that have brought our country to ruin. We finally saw how strong we could be together. We believe that there is no going back from here.

It is in this spirit that we step into 2020, a year of firsts, and hopefully a year of real change. We will continue to confront the social structures that perpetuate exploitation and suffering in the name of capitalist and neoliberal ideals. We trust that our efforts, along with those of many others, will foster an environment that is more conducive to political change for social justice.

We are counting on you, every single one of you, to be part of our movement and to continue to push for change, justice, and equality for all without discrimination. With your support, failure is no longer an option.

In solidarity,

Rana Boukarim, Programs Director
Partners and collaborators

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

Organizations and groups we've collaborated with this year:
- Dammeh Cooperative, feminist cooperative in Beirut
- Helem
- HEAL clinic (AUBMC medical students)
- Amnesty International
- Oxfam
- Mesewat, grassroots MDW-led group in Lebanon
- Egna Legna, grassroots MDW-led group in Lebanon
- Alliance of Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon, grassroots MDW-led group in Lebanon
- Sri Lankan Women's Society, grassroots MDW-led group in Lebanon
- Sri Lankan Women's Activity Community, grassroots MDW-led group in Lebanon
- Cameroonian Community, grassroots MDW-led group in Lebanon
- Lebanese Observatory of Workers and Employees' Rights (LOWER)
- African asylum seekers and refugees groups
- Sawt al Niswa
- The Feminist Bloc

Alliances and networks ARM is active in:
- EuroMed Rights Network
- Arab Network for Migrant Rights (ANMR)
- Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)
- Global Alliance Against Traffic of Women (GAATW)
- Regional Coalition of Women Human Rights Defenders in MENA (WHRD)
- Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana (ARCI)
- My Work, My Rights local network
- Local Migrant Domestic Workers NGOs Coordination Group

Our casework partners:
- Medical Hope and Mediterranean Hope
- Médecins Sans Frontières
- Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH)
- KAFA (enough) Violence and Exploitation
- Frontiers Ruwad Association
- Legal Action
- Legal Agenda
We are also thankful for the support and guidance many of our team members have received from many individuals and groups, including:

- Fuad Musallam, research fellow
- The A Project, non-governmental organization in Lebanon
- Samaya Mansour and Rana Sukarieh, our education project volunteers
- ARM advisory board members
Anti-Racism Movement on Social Media

Facebook ARM: fb.com/ARMLeb
Facebook MCC: fb.com/MigrantCommunityCenter

Instagram ARM: arm_lebanon
Instagram MCC: mcc_lebanon

Twitter ARM: @ARM_Leb

Website ARM: armlebanon.org
Donate online: givingloop.org/mcc

Contact information
Phone number: 01 788025
Email Address: contact@armlebanon.org