

2023

Books for Peace: Blessings of Storytelling Executed in: Refugee Community Schools in Cairo, Egypt.



Nahla ElShall

Urban Cairo, Egypt

July 15th, 2023, till October 31st, 2023

Abstract

The "Books for Peace" initiative endeavors to instill a culture of literacy, empathy, and peace within Horn of Africa refugee community schools in Egypt. This report encapsulates the journey, findings, and strategies of a social change initiative designed to promote acceptance and tolerance through the power of storytelling. Through teacher training and the establishment of a school library, the initiative seeks not only to fill the educational resource gap but also to address tolerance and empathy and foster a love for stories among students. The report outlines key achievements, impact, recommendations, and a sustainability plan, emphasizing the enduring power of collective action for transformative education.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Background

Egypt's location at the North of Africa, western gate to the middle east, and southern gate to Europe has made it a host for a diverse population of refugees, particularly those seeking asylum from African nations. As of 31 October 2023, the refugee population registered with UNHCR in Egypt comprised 152,236 Sudanese, 151,721 Syrians, 34,583 South Sudanese, 29,874 Eritreans, 17,145 Ethiopians, 7,878 Yemenis, 7,017 Somalis, 5,519 Iraqis, and refugees of more than 50 other nationalities. (UNHCR, 2023)

Refugee populations reside in urban settings in Egypt, closely integrated with the host community. The complexity of this integration presents both opportunities and challenges, with a need for specialized attention to the education of refugee children. Since 2011, the majority of African refugee families prefer to enroll their children in refugee community schools rather than Egyptian schools. This choice is influenced by multiple factors, including financial constraints and instances of discrimination within the broader education system. These community schools – often referred to as African or Sudanese community schools- are neither affiliated nor monitored by the Egyptian ministry of education in anyway. There are built and governed completely by the refugee community; with the majority of teachers being volunteers. Students from all nationalities study the Sudanese curriculum in these schools, then they sit for the Sudanese primary and preparatory exam at the Sudanese embassy in Cairo. It's important to note that while these schools receive some support from UNHCR and its partners, yet they operate with minimal resources and remain significantly in need of additional support, especially that they serve as vital hubs for education catering to students of various nationalities.

The "Books for Peace" initiative responds to the pressing need for improved educational resources in these refugee community schools. The initiative recognizes the importance of early exposure to books and stories for children's cognitive development. By providing reading materials, specifically books and stories, the aim is to bridge the resource gap and ensure that young minds have access to literary experiences. Moreover, the initiative seeks to empower refugee teachers by offering training in the art of storytelling as a teaching methodology.

The philosophy underpinning this initiative rests on the belief that books can be agents of social change and peace. Through knowledge dissemination and the power of fiction, children are not

only equipped with essential skills but are also provided with a platform for discussions, empathy-building, and exposure to diverse narratives. By fostering an environment where young minds engage with stories of different cultures and struggles, the "Books for Peace" initiative aspires to contribute to the promotion of peace, acceptance, and understanding among refugee communities, and between the refugee community and the host community.

This report outlines the journey, challenges, and impact of the "Books for Peace" initiative.

Problem Statement

Refugee children from the Horn of Africa residing in Egypt do not have access to reading material to aid their education and development.

In the bustling urban landscape of Egypt, the vulnerable demographic seeking refuge and stability, faces a critical void in their educational journey—access to essential reading materials that are paramount for holistic development.

The refugee children, grappling with the aftermath of displacement and cultural dislocation, find themselves navigating unfamiliar classrooms without the fundamental tools necessary for their education. Unlike their counterparts in more fortunate circumstances, these children lack a basic yet transformative resource: a library of books that not only serves as a channel for acquiring knowledge but also acts as a gateway to imagination, empathy, and cognitive growth.

The absence of reading materials is particularly pronounced in the refugee community schools, which cater to the diverse nationalities of the displaced youth. Limited resources, compounded by the financial constraints faced by refugee families, have perpetuated a cycle where the most vulnerable members of society are denied the very keys to unlock their potential.

As these young minds grapple with the challenges of acculturation and identity, the absence of literary engagement further exacerbates their sense of isolation. In a world increasingly connected through stories, the refugee children find themselves on the periphery, unable to partake in the universal language of narratives that transcends borders.

This problem statement underscores not only a deficiency in educational resources but also illuminates a broader societal challenge: the marginalization of young minds in their formative years. Addressing this disparity is not just an educational imperative; it is a commitment to

cultivating an inclusive, empowered generation capable of navigating the complexities of their new reality and contributing meaningfully to the tapestry of their adopted communities.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the initiative is for refugee children from the Horn of Africa residing in Cairo Egypt to use books and stories to enhance their literacy, knowledge and tolerance.

To achieve this goal, the intended outcomes are:

- 1- Teachers at the refugee community school use storytelling as a creative tool for teaching.
- 2- Students use the school library to borrow books to read.
- 3- Teachers use the school library to teach students using relevant stories and books.

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Challenge 1: Financial Means for Acquiring Books

To overcome the financial challenge of acquiring books, a strategic partnership was formed with Book Shuffle company (a company that buys and sells used books). Book Shuffle called out for a book donation campaign targeted at the host community. Egyptians generously contributed their own books, not only providing an abundance of material but also fostering a sense of solidarity. Leveraging community resources not only addressed the financial constraints but also created a bridge of shared goodwill between the host community and the refugee population.

Challenge 2: Encouraging Library Usage and Reading

Addressing the challenge of encouraging students to use the library involved a multifaceted approach. We conducted teacher training sessions on effective storytelling methodologies. This not only enhanced the teachers' ability to integrate storytelling into their teaching but also aimed at instilling a love for reading and stories among students. By empowering teachers with creative tools, the initiative influenced a cultural shift towards a more literature-oriented educational environment.

Challenge 3: Accessibility and Sustainability of Books

To ensure the longevity and accessibility of the acquired books, a sustainable system was implemented. We agreed with the school management to designate a responsible teacher to

oversee the distribution of books to both teachers and students. This strategic move not only guaranteed the efficient utilization of resources but also ensured that books remain in good condition, contributing to the long-term success of the initiative.

Challenge 4: Time Constraints for Reading

The challenge of finding dedicated time for students to read was addressed by incorporating library activities into the school schedule. The school management assigned two of the monthly activity lessons to focus on library engagement—such as collective reading, book discussions, or creating book summaries—the initiative ensured that students had designated time for literary activities. This integration into the existing schedule maximized participation and mitigated time constraints.

Challenge 5: Financial Constraints for Teacher Training

The financial constraints for conducting teacher training were overcome through a combination of crowdfunding, non-paid collaboration with the teacher's training company, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) contributions from Book Shuffle. This collaborative effort not only provided the necessary financial resources but also emphasized the importance of community involvement and corporate responsibility in educational initiatives.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The power of literature to shape perspectives and influence values is undeniable, particularly in the formative years of young children and youth. This review explores the multifaceted impact of reading, with a specific focus on literature, on fostering peace, tolerance, and acceptance within societies characterized by diversity. This examination extends to host communities and refugee populations from various nationalities, emphasizing the role of literature in building bridges and promoting understanding.

The cultivation of empathy through literature is a recurring theme in research examining the impact of reading on young minds. Johnson (2019) suggests that exposure to diverse characters and narratives in literature enhances readers' ability to understand and relate to different perspectives. For young readers, this heightened empathy serves as a foundational element for positive intergroup relationships.

Smith and Wilhelm's (2020) study delves into literature-based discussions among children, revealing that such engagements lead to higher levels of empathy and understanding towards characters from diverse cultural backgrounds. This heightened capacity for connection with fictional characters acts as a gateway to understanding real-world diversity, making literature an effective tool for fostering tolerance and acceptance.

Literature serves as a conduit for exploring and comprehending diverse cultures. By presenting narratives deeply rooted in various traditions, customs, and histories, literature enables readers to gain profound insights into the experiences of others. Garcia and Evans (2018) argue that exposure to culturally rich literature contributes to breaking down stereotypes, fostering a more nuanced understanding of different communities.

In the context of diversified populations, such as host communities and refugees from different nationalities, literature becomes a vital instrument in bridging cultural gaps. Patel et al. (2021) conducted a study demonstrating that literature-based interventions significantly improved cultural understanding and acceptance among young readers, particularly in environments with high cultural diversity.

The thematic exploration of conflict and resolution in literature equips young minds with valuable tools for peaceful problem-solving. This holds particular relevance in societies with diversified populations where conflicts may arise due to cultural differences. Turner and Parish (2017) argue that literature provides a platform for exploring alternative perspectives and peaceful resolutions to conflicts.

Robinson and Roberts (2019) substantiate this claim in their study, demonstrating that literature-focused educational programs in schools contribute to the development of conflict resolution skills among students. These skills are transferable to real-world situations, fostering an environment of tolerance and acceptance even in culturally heterogeneous settings.

In host communities with refugee populations, literature becomes a linchpin in education and integration efforts. Refugee children often grapple with challenges related to trauma and displacement, making literature a therapeutic tool for coping and healing (Harris et al., 2018). Literature provides a sense of belonging and normalization, assisting refugee youth in navigating their new cultural context.

Furthermore, literature facilitates cross-cultural communication, allowing host community children and refugee children to connect through shared stories. This shared reading experience can promote mutual understanding and acceptance, contributing to the overall harmony within these diverse communities (Smith, 2022).

While the impact of literature on fostering peace, tolerance, and acceptance is evident, challenges exist. One such challenge is the need for diverse and representative literature that accurately reflects the experiences of different cultures. Critics argue that the current literary canon may not adequately represent the richness and diversity of global cultures (Garcia & Evans, 2018). Therefore, efforts should be made to curate literature that authentically portrays the multifaceted nature of human experiences.

Moreover, access to literature remains a critical consideration. In marginalized communities, including refugee settings, limited access to books may hinder the potential benefits of literature-based interventions. Initiatives to improve access to diverse literature, including partnerships with libraries, NGOs, and community organizations, are essential to ensure that the transformative power of literature reaches all segments of society (Patel et al., 2021).

Literary ethicists like Dorothy J Hale and narratologists like James Phelan have argued that the reading process makes literary novels worthy of ethical investigation. That is, it's not just a book's content – which may debate norms and values – but the process of reading that inspires the reader to consider. Other points of view. This alterity, new ethicists argue, can lead to increased empathy and thus more thoughtful decision-making within the 'actual' world. In fact, Hale (2007: 189) says empathetic literary training is a 'pre-condition for positive social change'. This may work well theoretically, but what practical issues does it hold for social activists? How useful can literature actually be in the face of dire social issues? Can we 'read' our way out of poverty and aggressive military intervention? And what would it mean to develop an activism based on reading and empathy? This paper will examine these questions using a framework based on the work of Hale and Phelan. (Hale, 2007)

In conclusion, the literature reviewed underscores the profound impact of reading, particularly literature, on young children and youth in fostering peace, tolerance, and acceptance. From promoting empathy development to facilitating cultural understanding and conflict resolution, literature emerges as a powerful tool in shaping positive intergroup relationships. This impact is especially significant in societies with diversified populations, including host communities and refugees from different nationalities. Integrating literature into educational programs and interventions is crucial for building inclusive and harmonious societies, but attention must also be given to addressing challenges related to representation and access.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The exploration of literature's impact on fostering peace, tolerance, and acceptance is enriched by the inclusion of two significant psychological theories: Social Identity Theory (SIT) and the Contact Hypothesis. These theories provide a theoretical framework for understanding the psychological processes that underlie intergroup relations and the potential for literature-based interventions to contribute to positive outcomes.

Social Identity Theory, proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), posits that individuals possess a natural inclination to categorize themselves and others into social groups. This categorization can lead to the development of in-group favoritism and, in some cases, discrimination against out-groups. However, SIT also suggests that individuals have the capacity to challenge their own prejudices and actively engage in processes that foster understanding and acceptance of other groups. In the context of literature, exposure to diverse characters and narratives can provide individuals, especially young readers, with the opportunity to explore and identify with characters from different social groups. This identification has the potential to challenge pre-existing biases and contribute to the development of empathy, ultimately paving the way for peace and harmony within diverse societies.

The Contact Hypothesis, introduced by Allport (1954), posits that increased contact and interaction between different social groups can lead to reduced prejudice and increased acceptance and tolerance. The key to the Contact Hypothesis is positive and meaningful interaction that goes beyond mere exposure. In the context of literature, the shared experience of reading and discussing diverse narratives serves as a powerful form of contact. This contact is not only limited to the fictional characters within the stories but extends to the real-world interactions among readers. Book clubs, for instance, provide a structured platform for individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage in discussions, share perspectives, and build connections. This shared literary experience, akin to other forms of positive contact such as sports teams, has the potential to break down stereotypes and foster a sense of commonality, contributing to increased acceptance and tolerance among individuals from different social groups.

The integration of Social Identity Theory and the Contact Hypothesis into the existing literature review provides a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms at play in the relationship between literature and peacebuilding. Literature, as a medium, becomes not only a source of diverse narratives but a catalyst for challenging social categorizations and promoting positive intergroup contact. The reviewed studies, exploring the impact of literature on empathy development, cultural understanding, and conflict resolution, align with the principles outlined in SIT and the Contact Hypothesis, highlighting the potential of literature as a transformative tool in fostering harmonious relationships within diverse populations.

Theory of Change

If teachers at refugee community schools are trained on storytelling, and if community schools have access to reading material, **then** teachers will use storytelling as an active teaching methodology and students will be encouraged to listen to stories and read more books. **Then** children will be able to develop empathy for others, learn about each other's cultures and experiences, promote peaceful coexistence and acceptance among themselves and others. **Then** this will ultimately lead to a more knowledgeable and tolerant community, where children feel safe and accepted.

Methods and Design

The "Books for Peace" initiative employed a dual-pronged approach encompassing teacher training on storytelling and the establishment of a school library. These elements are designed to overcome resource constraints in refugee community schools while fostering a love for stories and reading among students.

1. Teacher Training on Storytelling:

The training was structured to address the minimal resources available in refugee community schools, choosing storytelling as a methodology that is resource-efficient, engaging, and conducive to empathy and critical thinking.

The sessions covered the following topics:

Importance of Storytelling for Self-Expression: Empowering teachers to use storytelling as a tool for fostering self-expression among students.

Empathy Through Stories: Exploring how narratives can instill empathy and understanding in young minds.

Interactive Storytelling Techniques: Teaching methods to actively engage students in the storytelling process, making them active agents rather than passive listeners.

Discussion and Critique of Stories: Equipping teachers with the skills to facilitate meaningful discussions around stories, encouraging students to think critically.

Elements of a Good Story: Identifying and incorporating essential elements to create compelling and impactful stories.

The training was conducted in collaboration with Super Abla, a company specializing in using storytelling to teach Arabic to children. This collaboration not only provided expertise but also exemplified cross-sector cooperation for the greater educational good. The active learning environment allowed participating teachers to experience the storytelling process, enhancing their ability to replicate it in their classrooms.

Super Abla volunteered to lead the training, whereas we -the SCI- funded logistics, including refreshments and necessary tools, ensuring a conducive learning environment.

2. Building the School Library:

Recognizing the pivotal role of a library in promoting reading, we collaborated with Book Shuffle to facilitate book donations from the host community.

Book Shuffle, a business specializing in buying and selling used books, spearheaded a book donation campaign within the host community. This approach not only provided a diverse collection of books at minimal cost but also fostered a sense of solidarity and awareness among Egyptians regarding the existence and challenges faced by these community schools.

The collaboration with Book Shuffle allowed us to obtain books without a minimal budget (mainly transporting them), and also efficiently using these books that laid dormant and unused on many bookshelves.

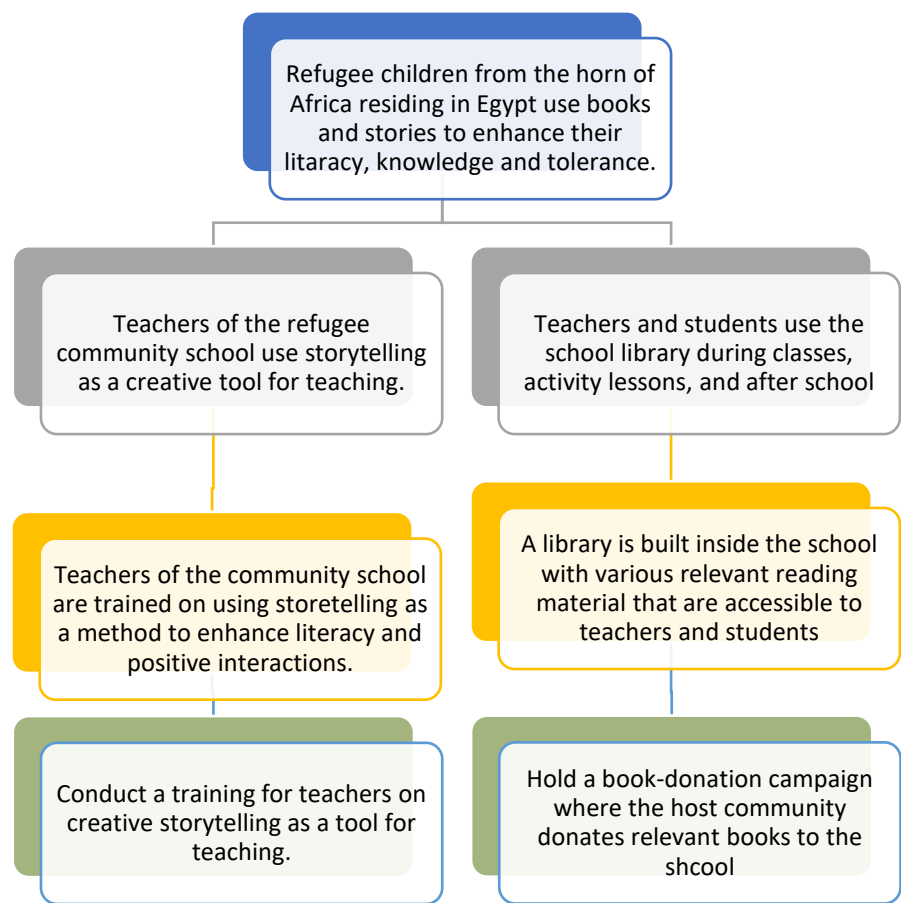
The book donation campaign served as a powerful awareness tool, enlightening Egyptians about the existence and struggles of community schools for refugees. This community engagement

aspect contributes to building bridges of understanding and support between the host and refugee communities.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Regular assessments of teacher integration of storytelling methodologies and library usage metrics will be conducted to gauge the success of the initiative. Continuous feedback loops from teachers, students, and the community will inform adaptive strategies to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the program.

The below chart summarizes the design of the initiative. And the below table depicts the log frame including targets, KPIs and means of verification.



	INDICATORS	BASELINE	TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
IMPACT* Refugee children from the horn of Africa residing use books and stories to enhance their literacy, knowledge and tolerance.				
OUTCOME 1- Teachers of the refugee community school use storytelling as a creative tool for teaching. 2- Teachers and students use the school library during classes, activity lessons, and after school	1- Number of teachers who reported storytelling as one of the methods they are willing to use while teaching. 2- Number of students who borrow books from the library on monthly basis 3- Number of teachers who use books from the library for teaching on monthly basis.	1-Results of the pretest 2- 0 3- 0	1-At least 5 refugee teachers (females) 2-At least 15 3- At least 5	1-Training pretest and posttest 2-School library records 3- School library records

<p>OUTPUT</p> <p>1- Teachers of the community school are trained on using storytelling as a method to enhance literacy and positive interactions.</p> <p>2- A library is build inside the school with various relevant reading material that are accessible to teachers and students</p>	<p>1- Number of teachers who perceived their skill level in storytelling after the training as "Skilled or Very skilled"</p> <p>2- Number of relevant books provided to the school</p>	<p>1-Based on pretest results</p> <p>2-0</p>	<p>1-At least 7</p> <p>2-At least 30</p>	<p>1-Pre and post test</p> <p>2- Book Shuffle donation records + pictures</p>
<p>ACTIVITY</p> <p>1- Conduct a training for teachers on creative storytelling as a tool for teaching.</p> <p>2- Hold a book-donation campaign where the host community donates relevant books to the school</p>	<p>1.1- Number of teachers trained</p> <p>2.1 Reach of donation campaign</p>	<p>1- zero</p> <p>2.1- NA</p>	<p>1- At least 8 refugee teachers</p> <p>2- At least 1k (reaching 1k accounts on social media)</p>	<p>1- Training attendance sheet + pictures</p> <p>2- Book Shuffle social media insights</p>

CHAPTER THREE

Interventions and Activities

1. Teacher Training on Storytelling:

The storytelling training unfolded over four days, with sessions lasting four hours each, resulting in a comprehensive 16-hour training program. This intensive training was conducted by Super Abla, a company with expertise in using storytelling to teach Arabic to children.

Nine dedicated female teachers, all refugees and volunteers in the community school, underwent the training. All participants were from Sudan, bringing a unique cultural richness to the learning experience.

The training delved into the significance of storytelling as a versatile teaching methodology. Teachers explored ways to leverage stories for self-expression, cultivate empathy in students, and make them active participants in the narratives. With a focus on discussions and critiques, teachers gained insights into crafting compelling stories and identifying the essential elements of engaging narratives.

Teachers actively participated in the training, creating their own stories in a dynamic and collaborative learning environment. This approach aimed not only to impart theoretical knowledge but also to empower teachers to be storytellers themselves, fostering a love for stories among their students.

2. Building the Library:

Book Shuffle initiated a month-long campaign, utilizing their platforms to raise awareness about building a library and soliciting book donations. The call resonated with the public, resulting in a diverse collection of 205 books for children and youth. Personal interactions played a vital role



in collecting books, with direct engagement encouraging people to contribute to the initiative. Collaborating with the Egyptian public library and a publishing house for children's books further expanded the scope of the campaign.

In the spirit of resource optimization, the initiative meticulously allocated 150 books to the main community school targeted for the library. Recognizing the needs of another community school, 50 books were sent to enhance their existing library, fostering a ripple effect of literacy across different refugee communities.

Beyond the tangible outcomes of book acquisition, the campaign enhanced solidarity between the host and refugee communities. It also served as a poignant awareness campaign, educating Egyptians about the existence and challenges faced by community schools for refugees.

The "Books for Peace" initiative remains committed to the ongoing support of teachers and students. Regular check-ins, workshops, and adaptive strategies based on feedback ensure the sustainability and continual improvement of the storytelling methodologies and library engagement in the refugee community schools.



Key Findings/ Impact

1. Achievements of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

Teacher Training Reach: The training reached all targeted teachers, with **nine** participants benefiting from the storytelling training.

Teachers Embracing Storytelling: All **nine** teachers who participated in the training reported that they are now willing to integrate storytelling as a teaching method, showcasing a 100% success rate in achieving this KPI.

Enhanced Storytelling Skills: A significant number of teachers, precisely eight out of nine, perceived their skill level in storytelling as "Skilled" or "Very skilled" after the training, indicating a remarkable improvement in their confidence and capabilities.

Relevant Book Donation: A total of **205 books** were successfully provided to two schools, surpassing the initial target. This extensive collection is poised to significantly impact the literary landscape of these community schools.

Donation Campaign Outreach: The donation campaign achieved a broad reach, engaging **1,528 accounts**. This expansive outreach demonstrates the initiative's success in mobilizing community support.

Library Utilization by Students and Teachers: The school management reports students and teachers using the library, however records indicating exact numbers will be obtained by the end of the academic year.

2. Pre and Post-Training Assessments:

Shift in Teacher Beliefs: The pre and post-training assessments revealed a notable shift in teacher beliefs, particularly in their perception of the school's role in fostering peace and acceptance. This indicates a positive impact on the teachers' mindset, aligning more closely with the initiative's objectives.

Increased Confidence in Storytelling Skills: More teachers expressed confidence in their storytelling skills post-training, reflecting a positive change in their self-perception and capabilities.

Improved Knowledge of Story Elements: The assessments demonstrated that more teachers were able to answer questions about the main elements in a story after the training. This indicates an improvement in their understanding of narrative structures.

3. Teacher Well-being and Resource Needs:

Emotional Well-being: The findings underscore the need for a holistic approach to teacher well-being. Many teachers, affected by the trauma of war, expressed a desire for therapy and support. This highlights the importance of addressing the mental health of educators to enable them to better support their students.

Diversity in Teacher Backgrounds: The diverse backgrounds of teachers, some being newcomers from Sudan and others having been in Egypt for an extended period, necessitate tailored support and resources to accommodate varied experiences and needs.

Resource Requirements: A recurring theme from the feedback is the pressing need for additional resources for the schools. This includes not only books but also essential supplies and materials to create an enriching learning environment.

4. Overall Impact:

The "Books for Peace" initiative has not only achieved its stated goals but has also created a transformative impact on teachers, students, and the broader community. By instilling a love for storytelling and fostering a reading culture, the initiative is contributing to the intellectual and emotional well-being of the refugee community in Egypt. The findings indicate that the initiative is not merely providing books but is actively shaping a positive educational environment that goes beyond literacy, emphasizing peace, acceptance, and holistic development.

CHAPTER FOUR

General Conclusion

In the journey of the "Books for Peace" initiative, the resounding support from every corner has been both inspiring and affirming. From the dedicated school management and volunteer teachers, to the collaboration with companies like Super Abla and Book Shuffle, and the generosity of the host community that rallied to donate books, this collective effort illustrates the profound potential for unity and compassion. The initiative serves as a testament that the seeds of acceptance and peace are deeply rooted in the hearts of individuals, waiting to be nurtured and cultivated.

The enthusiastic participation of school management and teachers underscores a shared belief in the transformative power of education. Through collaborative storytelling training, teachers not only embraced a new teaching methodology but found personal healing in the process. Their acknowledgment of the psychological impact of sharing their own stories highlights the therapeutic potential of narratives, emphasizing the profound interconnectedness of education and well-being.

The support extended by the host community through book donations is a poignant illustration of how communities can come together, transcending borders and backgrounds, to foster a culture of empathy and understanding. It reaffirms the idea that, when given the opportunity, people are eager to contribute to initiatives that promote peace and education.

Books, as evidenced by the success of the library campaign, are not mere repositories of knowledge but catalysts for change. The students' love for books and stories demonstrates the profound impact literature can have on young minds. Beyond academic enrichment, stories equip students with essential knowledge and nurture their humanity, fostering values of empathy, acceptance, and tolerance.

The "Books for Peace" initiative illuminates the potential for positive change when communities unite for a common goal. It affirms the belief that education, particularly through the medium of storytelling and literature, has the power to transform lives and sow the seeds of a more harmonious and understanding society. As we celebrate the success of this initiative, let it be a reminder that even in the face of inevitable challenges, the collective pursuit of knowledge and

compassion can overcome the seeds of violence and aggression, nurturing a future where the fruits of peace and acceptance flourish.

Recommendations and Implications for Policy

Investment in Teacher Well-being:

Recognizing the trauma and emotional needs of teachers, there is a critical need for the integration of mental health support systems. Initiatives should be developed to provide psychological resources and counseling services to help educators cope with the emotional toll of their experiences.

Sustaining Collaborative Partnerships:

The success of collaborative efforts with companies like Super Abla and Book Shuffle highlights the potential of private-public partnerships. It is recommended to nurture and expand such collaborations to ensure ongoing support and resource accessibility for community schools.

Educational policies should encourage and facilitate partnerships between educational institutions and private entities. Clear frameworks for collaboration and support mechanisms can be integrated into educational policy frameworks.

Expansion of Storytelling Training Programs:

Given the positive impact of storytelling training on teachers and students, there is a recommendation to expand such programs to reach more teachers in more community schools. This can be achieved through targeted training initiatives, workshops, and partnerships with organizations experienced in utilizing storytelling for educational purposes.

Education authorities can include provisions in policies to support and fund storytelling training programs for teachers, especially in marginalized communities. Incentives and recognition for schools actively participating in such training programs can further motivate their engagement.

Fostering Community Engagement:

Building on the success of the book donation campaign, there is a recommendation to continue and expand community engagement initiatives. This can include awareness campaigns, cultural exchange programs, and events that involve both the host and refugee communities.

Resource Allocation for Community Schools:

The expressed need for additional resources, both for teachers and schools, suggests a requirement for dedicated resource allocation. This includes financial support for materials, infrastructure improvement, and ongoing professional development opportunities.

Governmental policies should consider allocating some resources for community schools in cooperation with UNHCR and international organizations. Additionally, private Egyptian schools can donate some of its resources to community schools as a gesture of solidarity and support.

Integration of Storytelling in Curriculum:

Building on the positive response to storytelling, there is a recommendation to integrate storytelling methodologies into any formal curriculum. This can involve teacher training in curriculum development that incorporates storytelling across subjects.

Sustainability Plan

Sustainability is crucial for the long-term impact of the "Books for Peace" initiative. The following plan outlines strategies to ensure the continued success and growth of the program:

Peer Training: Establish a system where teachers who have excelled in storytelling can mentor their colleagues. This creates a sustainable model for skill dissemination within the community.

Library Management: Assigning a teacher for managing the library. This includes inventory management, organizing events, and ensuring a conducive reading environment.

Book Donation Drives: Regularly organize book donation drives, tapping into the success of the initial campaign. This not only replenishes the library but also keeps the community engaged in supporting the cause.

Corporate Partnerships: Renew partnerships with companies like Super Abla and Book Shuffle and explore new collaborations with other businesses and organizations interested in promoting literacy and education among the refugee community.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Regular Assessments: Implement regular assessments of teacher and student engagement, library usage, and the overall impact of the initiative. Use feedback to adapt and improve strategies.

Impact Measurement: Collaborate with school management to conduct periodic impact assessments, measuring the long-term effects of the initiative on students' academic performance, attitudes, and community cohesion.

REFERENCES:

Cosgrove, Shady E. (2008). Reading for peace? Literature as activism – an investigation into new literary ethics and the novel. University of Wollongong.

<https://ro.uow.edu.au/creartspapers/82>

Garcia, E. E., & Evans, M. A. (2018). Multicultural literature for children and young adults: Reflections on critical issues. Routledge.

Harris, A., Swartz, L., & Lambert, H. (2018). Working therapeutically with children and young people: A review of literature on the impact of socio-economic factors. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(5), 1021.

Johnson, D. W. (2019). Children's literature: A guide to information sources. Libraries Unlimited.

Patel, N., Hussain, Z., & McKenna, C. (2021). Multicultural literature's impact on multicultural sensitivity in preservice teacher candidates. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, 16(2), 1-16.



Robinson, C. E., & Roberts, T. G. (2019). Conflict resolution and literary analysis: Using young adult literature to promote peace. *The ALAN Review*, 46(3), 15-23.


Smith, K. W. (2022). Literature as a bridge for refugee children: A case study of the impact of literature on refugee children's lives. *Children's Literature in Education*, 53(2), 162-178.

Smith, M. W., & Wilhelm, J. D. (2020). Reading unbound: Why kids need to read what they want—and why we should let them. Scholastic.

Turner, M. E., & Parish, T. S. (2017). Literature for social justice: Expanding the canon with young adult literature. *The ALAN Review*, 45(3), 64-71.

1- Attendance sheet for storytelling training

Rotary   SAKARYA UNIVERSITY
THE ROTARY PEACE CENTER



سجل تدريب الكشافة

الاسم	اليوم ١	اليوم ٢	اليوم ٣	اليوم ٤
أفراح ياسر	✓	✓	✓	✓
خديجة عبداللهم	✓	✓	✓	✓
رائد هبري	✓	✓	✓	✓
زهرة أحمد نور	✓	✓	✓	✓
فاطمة علي أحمد	✓	✓	✓	✓
أم سلمة اسحاق	✓	✓	✓	✓
آلاء فتاد	✓	✓	✓	✓
كوبدا آيسم	✓	✓	✓	✓
أرماف محمد	✓	✓	✓	✓

2- Letter to the Egypt's public library to request book donations



٥ أغسطس ٢٠٢٣

المدير العام لمكتبة مصر العامة السيدة رانيا شرعان

تحية طيبة وبعد،

نأمل أن يجدكم خطابنا في صحة جيدة وعافية. يُسعدنا بأن نقدم لكم خالص التحية والتقدير.

نحن نمثل مبادرة بوك شافل Book Shuffle لتداول الكتب المستعملة. جزء من رسالتنا هو توفير قراءات في متناول يد الجميع عن طريق توفير منصة لتداول الكتب. ولقد تعرفنا مؤخرًا على مركز النخبة السودانية وهو مركز تعليمي للاجئين في فيصل، والذي يعمل جاهداً لتقديم التعليم والدعم للأطفال اللاجئين السودانيين. يتألف المركز من مجموعة من متطوعين شغوفين يعملون من أجل مستقبل أفضل لهؤلاء الأطفال الذين واجهوا تحديات كبيرة في طفولتهم.

نرجو أن تساعدونا في مسعاونا لبناء مكتبة صغيرة في هذا المركز من خلال إهداء بعض الكتب من مجموعتكم القيمة. هذه الكتب ستكون قيمة جداً في تحسين بيئة التعلم للأطفال اللاجئين ومساعدتهم في بناء مستقبل أفضل.

نحن بحاجة إلى كتب مناسبة للأطفال الذين تتراوح أعمارهم بين ٤ سنوات وحتى ١٧ سنة. يمكن لهذه الكتب أن تساعد في إعداد أنشطة تعليمية وترفيهية ممتعة للأطفال وتعزز حبهم للقراءة والتعلم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، سنقوم ببناء مكتبة في المركز لتمكين الشباب من استعارة الكتب والاستفادة منها بشكل منتظم.

نقدر تفضلكم بالنظر في طلبنا ونتطلع إلى دعمكم الكريم.

نشكر لكم حسن تعاونكم وكرمكم.

مع خالص التقدير،

نهلة الشال

مبادرة بوك شافل

nahlaelshall@gmail.com

01114000511