

# Annual Report 2023



**A good start in life for the Deaf, for a better future**

Prepared by Dr. Hussein Ismail, Director



**The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD)**  
**Baabda – Lebanon**

**Annual Report 2023**

**Prepared by Hussein Ismail, Ed.D.**  
Director



## Mission Statement

The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD) is a representative organization of persons with disabilities (OPD), focusing on issues related to the Deaf, where the Deaf constitute a majority of the Board and the General Assembly. It offers services in parallel to advocacy work.

It is located in Baabda, which provides essential services for the Deaf, which were not available in the country before, in order to complement existing programs and services, and thus provide better opportunities for the Deaf and their family members.

The main activities of the LCD is educational and empowerment. The essential programs are the Early Intervention Program (supporting families members of deaf children), Educational Activities for the Deaf (learning Sign Language for any interested participants), Integrated Nursery and Preschool (deaf and hearing children together), High School Program (to prepare deaf students for universities), among others.

## Motto of the LCD

***“Do for others as you would like them to do for you”***

Matthew 7:12

# The Annual Report 2023

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## *1. The Mission Statement of the LCD*

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The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD) is a representative organization of persons with disabilities (OPD), focusing on issues related to the Deaf, where the Deaf constitute a majority of the Board and the General Assembly (besides director and staff members being Deaf). It is an organization that offers services in parallel to advocacy work.

The purpose of the “Learning Center for the Deaf” (LCD), which is a non-profit, non-political, and non-sectarian association, located in Baabda-Brasilia, Lebanon, is to provide quality services to respond to the urgent needs of deaf persons in Lebanon, with emphasis on education, in its broad meaning, as a tool for change and advancement of the deaf community.

The team (management and teachers) of the LCD fervently believes in the empowerment of the Deaf in general, including the family of the deaf person, and reaches out to the world of the hearing with information that helps spread awareness about the Deaf and deafness. The focus is to promote deaf persons’ rights, especially the right for accessibility and inclusion in society. This is done with an eye seeking justice, equal opportunities, and especially respect for human dignity.

Consequently, the LCD has initiated challenging services and programs which were not available in the country before, in order to complement existing programs and services, and thus provide better opportunities for the Deaf and their family members, whether directly or indirectly. One of the most recent pursuits focuses on the provision of Sign Language interpretation, among others.

All LCD services are meant to create change. Equally, the LCD undertakes many important right-based initiatives, by means of seeking change at the level of legislation and policies; often in partnership with other OPDs.

These services and initiatives were added to the two major and unique programs which were consecutively initiated by the LCD in 2001 and 2003, being the family-based Early Intervention Program and the High School Program.

The High School aims successfully at providing deaf young people the choice of passing the official Baccalaureate (High School) exams and heading to University, like their hearing peers.

The Early Intervention Program is a rich comprehensive program prior to school-age (0-3yrs). It is a stepping stone that empowers the family and provides them tools to surround the child with a rich environment, supportive to his/her general healthy development and well-being, with a great emphasis on communication and language. This stepping stone preemptively determines the quality of the future life of many deaf children.

For the further details of the LCD’s programs and activities, please go to the website page [www.lcd-lebanon.org](http://www.lcd-lebanon.org)

And for the continuous updated information, please visit to our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/Learning.Center.Deaf.Lebanon](https://www.facebook.com/Learning.Center.Deaf.Lebanon)

## 2. The Programs Offered at the LCD

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To respond the needs of the Deaf, there are programs offered at the LCD, which are incorporating as follows:

1. **The Early Intervention Program (birth to six years)**, which assists families of deaf children from babyhood, to prevent delay in development and mainly language, and especially to restore the relationship between the child and parents, as well as to empower the family to provide the child a healthy, nurturing and loving environment.

Other components of the Early Intervention Program are incorporated as follows:

- a. the **Support Group** for parents of deaf children
  - b. the **Course** related to deafness for parents of deaf children
  - c. the **Integrated Nursery** for deaf and hearing children
  - d. the **Resource Room** for parents, students, and professionals
  - e. the **John Tracy Clinic sequential lessons** for parents of deaf children
2. **The High School Education for the Deaf**, which provides the only secondary program in Lebanon, and allows the deaf to have the same right to enter University of their choice, thus promoting the image of the Deaf.
  3. **The Preschool Section (3 to six years)**, which is a regular school setting from KG 1 till KG 3, in preparation to enter the first grade level. This program that has been initiated beginning of October 2017 incorporate for deaf and hearing children.
  4. **Educational Activities for the Deaf**, which designs to promote adult deaf people to learn and improve specific subject matters, such as English language and computer literacy, as well as socialization and a chance to empower the deaf. Also, Sign Language courses for all interested concerned are provided in this program.
  5. **Advocacy**, which involves in pursuing with the stakeholders to provide the minimum rights of Deaf persons across different domains.
  6. **Awareness programs about deafness and deaf people**, which has as an objective to promote the image of deaf people incorporates activities through media, brochures, and books. Activities in regular nursery settings as well as activities in school and university settings (experiment, telling a story interacting with a deaf puppet and introducing a deaf adult teaching some signs) are provided.
  7. **Consultation**, which provides consultations and advice for families of deaf children, as well as to deaf adults.
  8. **Sign Language Courses**, which provide courses for teachers of the deaf, specialists, students of the universities, interested persons, among others, mainly for communication access for deaf persons.

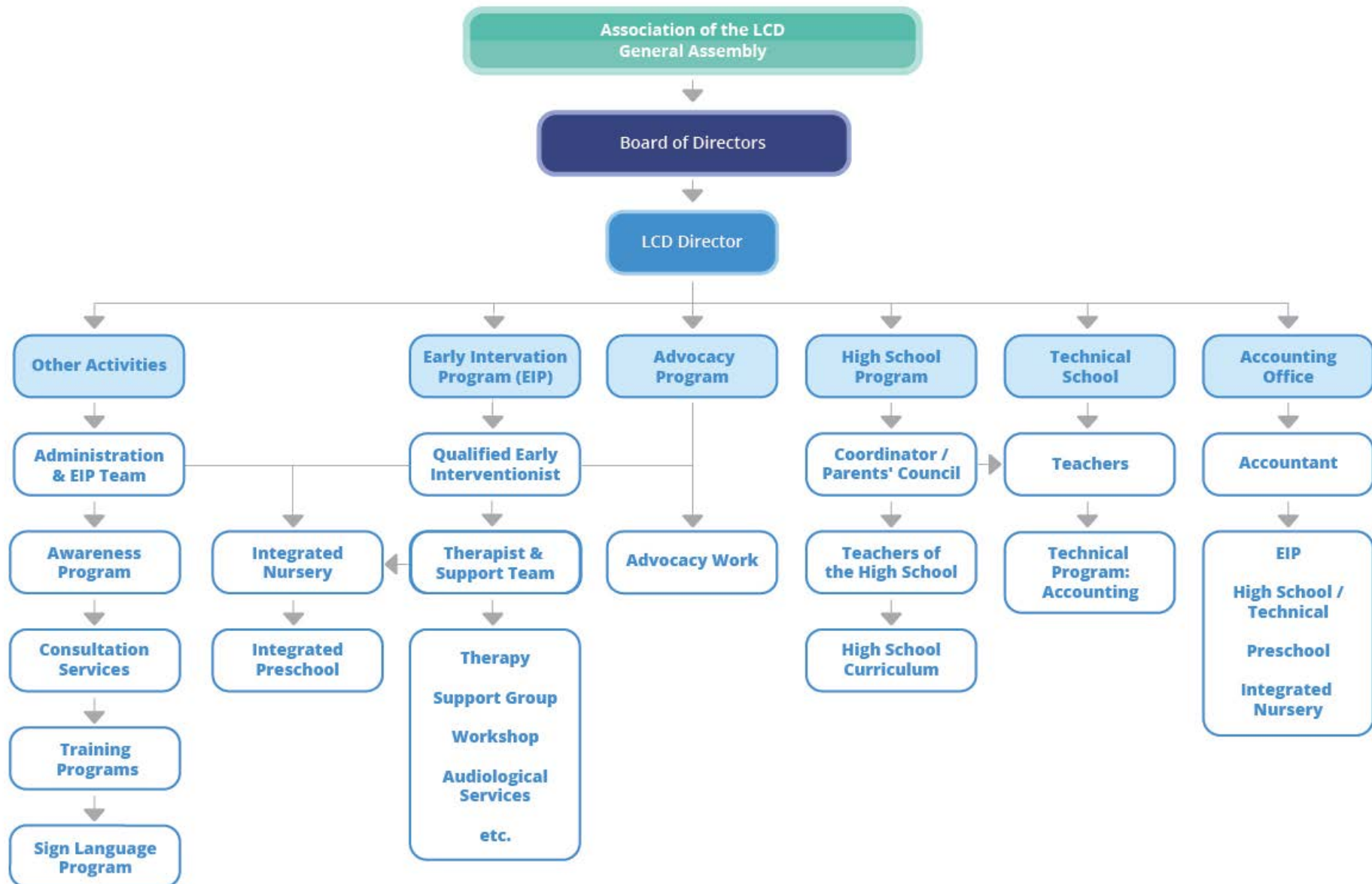




### 3. The Basic Data about the LCD

<b>Name</b>	<b>The Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD)</b>
<b>Date established</b>	January 2002
<b>Legal status</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Charity Registration Number: <b>AD 89</b>, established 2002 with the Lebanese Government</li> <li>2. <b>Presidential Decree No.: 15798</b>, established 2005</li> <li>3. <b>License # 2/294</b>, 2023 (the Integrated Nursery)</li> </ol>
<b>Visiting address</b>	Sacre Coeur Hospital Crossing, Presidential Palace Road, Near Evangelical Church, Brasilia – Baabda
<b>Contact person</b>	Hussein Ismail, Ed.D. Director
<b>Telephone numbers</b>	00961-5-954584 / 00961-76-128433
<b>Fax number</b>	00961-5-954584
<b>E-mail address</b>	<a href="mailto:lcd@lcd-lebanon.org">lcd@lcd-lebanon.org</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lcd-lebanon.org">www.lcd-lebanon.org</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/Learning.Center.Deaf.Lebanon">www.facebook.com/Learning.Center.Deaf.Lebanon</a>
<b>Type of organization</b>	The LCD is a non-profit Charitable Service Organization, non-secretarian, and non-governmental association established to promote, facilitate, and empower Deaf men and women through education throughout Lebanon
<b>LCD's Motto</b>	Based on the Lord Jesus's essential statement: <b><i>“Do for others what you would like them to do for you”.</i></b> Matthew 7:12
<b>Main areas of activity</b>	Education, Rehabilitation, Consultations, and Advocacy

#### 4. The Organization Chart of the Learning Center for the Deaf (LCD)









## 5. The Structure of the Learning Center for the Deaf (2023)

Board of Administration	
<b>Chairman of the Board</b>	Ms. Caroline Haykal (deaf)
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ms. Najah El Hamad (deaf)
<b>Secretary</b>	Dr. Hussein Ismail (deaf)
<b>Accountant</b>	Dr. Raed Mohsen
<b>Members of the Board</b>	Mrs. Charlotte Khalil Mr. Habib Fawaz (deaf) Dr. Assadour Khanjian

Staff List	
<b>1. Director / Instructor</b>	Dr. Hussein Ismail (deaf)
<b>2. Head of the Early Intervention Program</b>	Mrs. Nadine Badreddine
<b>3. Accountant / Auditing Office</b>	Mr. Antoine Faddoul
<b>4. Office Manager / Secretary</b>	Mrs. Christine Jarrouje
<b>5. Speech Therapist / Early Interventionist</b>	Mrs. Wafa Nawar
<b>6. Coordinator</b>	Mrs. Carine Momdjian
<b>7. Assistant Speech Therapist</b>	Ms. Nadine El Khalil
<b>8. Occupational Therapist</b>	Ms. Laura Tawk
<b>9. Domestic Helper</b>	Mr. Elias Bou Mansour (deaf) Mr. Abdallah Al Hakim
<b>10. House Mother – Handicraft Teacher</b>	Ms. Najah El Hamad
<b>11. Nursery Teacher for Deaf Children</b>	Mrs. Waddad Daher
<b>12. Nursery Teacher Assistant Teacher</b>	Ms. Vana Makarian
<b>13. Nursery Teacher</b>	Mrs. Marwa Kansa
<b>14. Preschool Teacher - English</b>	Ms. Cosette Melko
<b>15. Preschool Teacher</b>	Mrs. Roula Farhat
<b>16. Preschool Teacher – Arabic</b>	Mrs. Darine Nakour
<b>17. Specialist/Teacher for the Deaf</b>	Ms. Hanna Tahan
<b>18. Cook</b>	Mrs. Sabine Nakour
<b>19. Biology &amp; Chemistry Teacher</b>	Mrs. Lama Sleiman / Hiba Najjar
<b>20. Socials, Arabic Literature Teacher</b>	Mrs. Rozana Zaklit
<b>21. English Teacher</b>	Mrs. Judy O'Carroll / Zeena Barghout
<b>22. Math and Physics Teacher</b>	Mr. Mohammad Kansa / Nerimane Wehbe
<b>23. P.E. Teacher</b>	Ms. Nour Zgheib (deaf)
<b>24. Advocacy</b>	Mrs. Malak Reslan (deaf)
<b>25. Coordinator for Afternoon Sessions</b>	Dr. Assadour Khanjian

Volunteers	
<b>26. Advocacy</b>	Mr. Saeed Shaaban
<b>27. LCD's legal advisor</b>	Mt. Rayan Kouatly
<b>28. Psychologist – Family Counselor</b>	Mrs. Charlotte Khalil
<b>29. Hearing-Aid Technician</b>	Different settings
<b>30. Family Counselor</b>	Dr. Raed Mohsen



## 6. Statistical Data of the number of beneficiaries during 2023

Programs offered at the LCD	Number of Beneficiaries
<b>Early Intervention Program</b>	
Rehabilitation for Deaf Children with their Parents	33 (average - in house children) 55 approx.
The Support Group	6 - 8 families
Integrated Nursery	25 (average)
The Preschool Section	16 (average)
The Outreach Program	Unspecified
The Resource Room	Unspecified; open for all professionals
<b>Advocacy</b>	
	National Level
<b>Educational Activities for the Deaf</b>	
Sign Language Class	81 participants
<b>High School Education for the Deaf</b>	
Third Year	5 students
Preparatory	1 Student
<b>Consultations</b>	
	120+
<b>Hearing Aids</b>	
	178 (119 beneficiaries)
<b>Awareness Programs about Deafness</b>	
	Unspecified; National level

# **The Learning Center for the Deaf**

## **Beirut – Lebanon**



## **News & Activities of the LCD during 2023**

## 7. News of the Learning Center for the Deaf

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### Introduction

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We are pleased to present you the report about the activities of the LCD during 2023, and its mission and services for the concerned persons, especially deaf children and their family members. This year was indeed a blessing experience, despite some challenges we faced. The report will first discuss the situation in Lebanon, mainly to give readers a general impression of how the Lebanese people encounter and live daily, and then the report will give extensive information about the work and activities of the LCD.

Despite the challenges, we are grateful to the Almighty God for His constant guidance and protection, and especially for His blessings. He knows the needs of the LCD and the needs of the beneficiaries and has always responded at the right time.

According to Psalm 46:10, the Lord says: *"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."* So, we have complete trust in Him, as He is mighty and is under control when He cares for our lives, situations, and services.

### General Situation in Lebanon

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The general situation in Lebanon during 2023 hasn't much changed from the previous year (2022 and earlier). The Beirut port explosion, the COVID-19 pandemic, deteriorating economic conditions, and political instability have all together caused failures in both the economy and stability. As of 2023, the World Health Organization reports that 2.3 million people need humanitarian assistance, and 1.3 million require health assistance, considerably impacting life and infrastructure in Lebanon. We are still experiencing challenges due to the



loss of more than 96% of the Lebanese currency, therefore everything (food, gas, electricity, etc.) has gone up by more than 3 or 4 times.

Nearly 50% of the population in Lebanon is Syrians and other nationalities. This creates more economic crises, and politicians somehow hinder the Lebanese Parliament from addressing this crisis to reform, therefore this causes the Lebanese people to experience a sense of resentment towards Syrians.

The Lebanese president stepped down from office in October 2022, and to date, no new president has been elected. Once again, politicians have been fighting over the selection of a new president. Many countries have urged Lebanon to elect a president and perform essential

legislation that caters to the needs of vulnerable communities.

Since October 8<sup>th</sup>, tensions along Lebanon's southern border with Israel have continued, by exchanges of fire between Israel and Hezbollah. Clashes strengthened, causing evacuations and heightened fears among Lebanese civilians. Anxiety about a potential escalation of conflict worsens the already dire economic crisis, in addition to the effects of the 2020 Beirut port explosion.

The escalation in violence has forced tens of thousands of Lebanese from the South of Lebanon to flee to the southern suburbs of Beirut and other parts of Lebanon. Lebanon's Ministry of Public Health reports at least 101 killed and 409 injured since the clashes began from October to December 2023. Hussein's extended family members have already left their village which is near the border of Israel and have learned that many of their houses have been unfortunately targeted and damaged.

Many Lebanese don't see hope on the horizon as they closely follow the news, especially in the American media, which is generally not positive. They fear that the war may expand in Lebanon after the Gaza conflict.



Living in Lebanon is not easy. Still, young people were trying to leave the country, for other countries where they seek a better future.

## Effect of the Situation on the LCD

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The LCD has been affected by the situation especially in the areas of finances and staffing, as some staff members have left due to the situation.

The situation in the South has forced many parents who are foreigners and/or have double nationalities to leave Lebanon. In the Integrated Nursery, before the crisis, we had at least 18 children, but towards the end of December, we only had 7 children. In the Preschool section, 2 children left Lebanon. This is majorly affecting finances. Many parents informed us that they hoped to return once the situation in the South was settled.

An English Teacher for the High School Program left the country, and we had to look for weeks for someone to replace her, to resume teaching this subject to the high school students.

This is the general situation that we live in day to day. However, we try our best to provide support, care, and education for the concerned persons, whether at the LCD or beyond.

## Early Intervention Program

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The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is dedicated to supporting families of deaf children through various means, emphasizing the involvement of parents and caregivers. This includes moral support, information provision, rehabilitation sessions, home visits, and support groups.

In 2023, the program served 33 children and their families in various ways, including habilitation/rehabilitation sessions, group sessions, occupational therapy, and long-distance follow-ups. Parents (and other family members or close acquaintances are also encouraged to

attend sometimes) actively participated in their children's sessions, contributing to the program's effectiveness.

While there are many benefits to one-on-one speech and language therapy, group therapy can offer a different set of advantages. So this year, 8 of our EIP children who are enrolled in our Integrated Nursery and Preschool also benefited from group sessions. Our children are always thrilled to participate in these sessions.

The LCD has observed a rise in referrals for EIP children, especially at a younger age, reflecting ongoing awareness and advocacy efforts.

Throughout the year, numerous support groups, gatherings, and events positively impact EIP families

Consultation sessions are also offered for families seeking appropriate programs for children with different disabilities. Consultation sessions for external cases, both in-person and through phone calls, have reached approximately 140 cases in 2023, with 178 second-hand hearing aids provided, with follow-up support to ensure proper fitting.

The demand for used hearing aids remains high due to economic challenges. Consultations have become a crucial component of the EIP, generating positive outcomes and feedback, and showcasing the program's effectiveness

## Story of a Deaf Family

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Mohammad, a father to Celine and Ali, faced different challenges when both his children were born deaf. In his earlier years, Mohammad was a high school student at the LCD. Celine, a cheerful 3-year-old, was diagnosed with moderate hearing loss in her left ear and profound hearing loss in her right. Being both deaf, Mohammad and his wife noticed Celine's hearing loss early on. Taking prompt action, Celine now uses a hearing aid in her left ear and joined the Early Intervention Program (EIP) in March 2023 and the integrated preschool in September.



Ali, an active 2-year-old, has bilateral profound hearing loss diagnosed since birth. In February 2023, Ali underwent a cochlear implant procedure and joined the EIP in April. The integrated nursery awaits him when he's ready.



The EIP team is a valuable support for Mohammad and his family, guiding them in developing Celine and Ali's auditory and spoken language skills. Communication at home involves a mix of sign language and lip reading, strategies used by Mohammad and his wife to reinforce intervention goals. Happily, hearing family members, including grandparents, actively support the children's activities and goals.

While financial constraints make it challenging to afford necessary fees, Mohammad is grateful for the LCD's support and provision of essential services.

Mohammad's simple hope is that Celine and Ali make the most of their hearing technology and develop age-appropriate spoken language skills among other skills in their own time.

## Jip & Janneke Nursery and Preschool

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In the year 2023, we had around 35 children in the Jip & Janneke Integrated Nursery and Preschool; 7 of the children had some hearing loss.

However, the number of children in the Nursery Section has dramatically reduced due to the October 2023 event, which forced many families, especially foreigners and those who have a second passport, to leave Lebanon. From October till the end of the year, we had only 7 children in the Nursery. In the Preschool section, 2 children left Lebanon.



In the Nursery, children learn and develop in many aspects—academically, socially, and emotionally. It is good to see them grow. We can observe especially how the children have developed their language and communication skills

and are now able to express their emotions and thoughts as well as share the new knowledge they acquire with their friends, teachers, and family.

The children in the Jip and Janneke Integrated Nursery and the Preschool bring a lot of joy to the LCD; having them around is a blessing. Despite the economic crisis, these children still come to the LCD and can benefit from our services. Parents have expressed their joy and satisfaction with these programs.



To give a brief introduction to these programs, Jip & Janneke is a Montessori-oriented Nursery and preschool. By following the Montessori Method all children are respected according to their readiness, abilities, and differences at all levels. We emphasize the student-centered method, where individual differences are taken into consideration; thus, children are not pressured and can learn according to their readiness.

Consequently, a large portion of the time is dedicated to individual work, where children choose a material and work at it by themselves; meanwhile, the teachers' role is to observe the children and guide them if they need any help. The children learn life skills such as: buttoning, zipping, pouring, and wrapping their sandwiches, which aims to help children gain more autonomy and thus more self-confidence. The preschool is inclusive especially for children with hearing loss but also for children with different challenges.

We are grateful that we are making a difference in their lives.

## Montessori Material

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We are very pleased that we still use the selections use plenty of Montessori materials, in the Nursery and the Preschool, as part of the children's learning process. The Nursery and the Preschool don't follow strictly the Montessori philosophy and approach to teaching. To give a pure Montessori approach requires teachers to be fully trained. However, some teachers in



our sections receive on-the-job training intervention, and the sections are primarily Montessori-oriented as they use a large range of Montessori materials in the classroom. Children love these materials and they are highly beneficial for enhancing concentration span, hand and eye coordination, and language skills, among others.

## Montessori Approach, by Carine

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Montessori education emphasizes independence, freedom within limits, and respect for a child's natural psychological, physical, and social development. My personal experiences with both the children and parents are likely rich and diverse. Here are some potential aspects of my experiences:

**Children's Development:** I have observed firsthand how the Montessori approach fosters children's independence, creativity, and self-confidence. I have seen children engaging in activities that cater to their individual interests and learning styles, whether it's practical life skills, sensorial exploration, language development, or mathematical concepts.

**Parent Involvement:** As a coordinator, I have interacted closely with parents, providing them with insights into their child's progress, discussing Montessori principles and practices, and addressing any concerns they may have had. Building a strong partnership with parents is crucial in Montessori education, as it involves a collaborative effort between educators and families to support the child's holistic development.

**Professional Growth:** Working in a Montessori environment offers continuous opportunities for professional development and growth. I have attended training workshops, conferences, and pursued further education to deepen my understanding of the philosophy and refine my teaching practices.

**Challenges and Rewards:** Like any educational setting, I have encountered challenges along the way, whether it's managing diverse learning needs within the classroom, navigating parent expectations, or adapting to changes in curriculum or regulations. However, the rewards of seeing children thrive and witnessing their joy in learning make it all worthwhile.



Overall, my experiences as a coordinator in a Montessori nursery and preschool likely involve a mix of nurturing children's growth, fostering strong partnerships with parents, and continually refining my skills as an educator committed to Montessori principles.

## **Sama in a Regular School**

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One of our EIP children, Sama, who has some challenges besides her deafness, is integrated into a regular school. Wafa, a speech therapist, visited Sama's school and taught her classmates and teachers 350 basic signs for the children in the class to communicate with Sama.

Children were overjoyed to practice some signs and learn about hearing loss. Teachers in that class were also instructed.

Raising awareness about hearing loss and sign language at this age will promote better inclusion.



## **Report by the Speech Therapist, Nadine**

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I am Nadine Al Khalil, a speech and language pathologist (SLP) at the Learning Center for the Deaf. In my role as an SLP, I support individuals with hearing impairments to enhance their communication abilities and quality of life.

My responsibilities include various tasks, such as assessing and evaluating the communication abilities and challenges of deaf individuals, considering factors such as lip-reading and auditory processing abilities. Additionally, I provide individualized interventions to address specific communication needs, such as speech production, language comprehension, and social communication skills, for individuals with hearing impairments, communication difficulties, and oral language delays.

Due to the relatively small number of children and high number of educators at our center, we can provide exceptional care and meet the needs of each child effectively. Our center operates within a family-like atmosphere where everyone is valued and supported.

## Hearing Aids and Batteries

Providing hearing aids and batteries to give to needy persons in Lebanon, through the LCD, has been carried out for many years. For this purpose, we are extremely grateful for the kind efforts conducted by our friends in Switzerland who support us — board members of the “Friends of the LCD-Switzerland (FK-LCD)” — for collecting and sending second-hand hearing aids, in excellent condition, to the LCD. In turn, these will be given to persons with hearing loss, including refugees, who are unable to afford the costs of the hearing aids, free of charge.



It is amazing how our Swiss friends have sent hundreds of hearing aids, during this past year, and previous years. Whenever we have needed a specific device for testing hearing aids, etc., our friends have spared no effort in searching for the required item.

Gender	Number of Beneficiaries	Hearing Aids Quantity
Children	25	50
Women	58	77
Men	36	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>178</b>

Of the 119 persons receiving hearing aids, 27 refugees received hearing aids.

We are so grateful for the wonderful support of our friends in Switzerland, who understood the need and acted promptly to campaign to raise these hearing aids and batteries.

## High School Program

The purpose of the High School Program is to prepare deaf students to sit for the official examination set by the Ministry of Education after they have studied for 3 years at the LCD. When passed, they will obtain a high school diploma (Baccalaureate Part 2), issued by the Ministry, for them to continue their education towards the university level, thus allowing these young deaf men/women to fulfill their dreams to study majors of their choice, whether in Lebanon or abroad.

This year we had hoped to open a new class for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, a first-year high school program, but it was not the case as only 2 schools for the deaf in Lebanon had presented the





Official 9<sup>th</sup> grade examination and the deaf students who passed the exams preferred to enroll at technical and vocational programs. This is quite understandable especially due to the current economic situation in Lebanon.

Only one student who wanted to continue for further education has been admitted to our afternoon sessions to improve his subject matters. We thought not to deprive him of his wishes to maintain his education and we have therefore established afternoon sessions. These sessions are open for deaf and hearing students alike who want to improve some specific subject matters and who are preparing for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

Presently we had 5 high school students who were moved to the 3<sup>rd</sup> year high school program. We have noticed that they had improved dramatically across different subjects, and they had faced some educational challenges in previous years. We hope that they will do well at the official examination which will be due during June 2024.

### One of our Graduated students

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Ali, a vibrant 20-year-old, has journeyed through bilateral profound sensorineural hearing loss since its discovery in August 2006. Embracing hearing aids that December, he embarked on an educational journey marked by growth. From February 2007 to June 2014, Ali, alongside his devoted parents, participated in our Early Intervention Program at the Learning Center for the Deaf, where they found invaluable support and guidance. Alongside him, Ali's younger brother, who also has a hearing impairment, followed a similar path.

After years of intervention at the LCD, Ali went to a school for the deaf from Grade 1 till Grade 9 and then he returned to our High School Program to finish up his high school studies.

Having graduated from our High School two years ago (July 2022), Ali seamlessly transitioned into his current pursuit: studying graphic design at a reputable university, where he excels



and finds fulfillment in his chosen field. We are proud of him and wish him much success.

## **Incident in the Nursery Setting**

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On Saturday morning in June, there was an incident in the nursery, so we called the fire brigade to come immediately, and they came and handled the situation. The guy told us that there was an electric short circuit that vaporized the lamp ceiling in the 3<sup>rd</sup> room of the nursery and produced a heavy black substance (dust and some sort of black ashes). The black-powered substance covered the entire 3 nursery rooms, toilet, kitchen, and even educational materials which were placed on the shelves and in the cupboards.



Fortunately, no one was hurt, as it happened on a weekend. The staff members and volunteers cleaned the educational material, which took them 3 days, and a company came to do the restoration work, which took nearly a week to complete.

We had to change the ceiling lamps from a conventional lighting system to new LED lamps which were safer and economical.

## **Project: Expansion of the Nursery Setting**

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In 2022, we presented a project proposal to our faithful organization Wilde Ganzen (WG) of the Netherlands, in conjunction with the supporting organization in the Netherlands—AMT-NL. These organizations have previously supported the LCD in many different ways, especially by the purchase of the LCD's premises. The proposal we submitted was related to

the construction of a new setting annexed to the existing nursery site to accommodate more children, which can accommodate at least 35 children as the current site can only have 22 children.



The proposal was accepted by the WG and the AMT-NL. Therefore, to achieve the project work, we will need a permit issued by the Lebanese Authorities to build the nursery extension. We had hoped that the formal work to obtain the construction permit would be completed by June 2023, allowing us to start the project work at the beginning of the school holidays, which would be on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

When we proceeded with the permit work for the nursery extension, in 2022, we discovered that the LCD's fourth floor was built illegally, which was built during the civil war (1975-1990) by the previous owners, and that the process of obtaining a special paper "Settlement of a Premises Violation" was necessary before the construction permit work.

Due to the country's acute economic situation that occurred, in 2022, almost all Government departments, such as the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate of Urban Planning, and town municipality, among others, have suspended their work for many months, primarily due to the strike conducted by the staff members. Just to give an example, each staff working at different Government departments used to get a salary (before the crises), of average, \$2,000 per month. Due to the devaluation of the Lebanese currency, which lost beyond 95%, the salaries of the staff in various Government departments have dropped to below \$100 per month. That was the main reason the staff refused to go to the offices as the pay fuel for their cars was beyond their salaries.

Months later, in 2023, the offices in various Government departments started to gradually open for 2 days a week, then 3 days a week, as the Lebanese Government raised their salaries, but still unsatisfactorily. This is mainly done to allow the civilians to finish up their formal work.

The LCD had tried its best to pursue and persuade different departments, during these challenging times, to obtain the permit license before summer 2023, but it had gone in vain.





Naturally, Summer 2023 was already over, and the LCD was forced to delay the project work for one year. We hope and feel confident to implement the Nursery Extension work in the summer of 2024.

Since the offices at various Governments have operated for a few days a week, we needed to work and obtain the construction permit, given the history of the building, in the 2 phases:

**Phase 1** was to update the old construction permit (for the existing building), including clearing the building violation (4<sup>th</sup> floor and some extension works which were made at later stages).

**Phase 2** was to submit the new project of the Nursery Extension to the Lebanese Authorities and to obtain a new construction permit.

We couldn't work first on Phase 2 until we needed to solve the problem of Phase 1.

A few months ago, as indicated above, some Government departments resumed their work on a part-time basis, which allowed us to proceed with the work on Phase 1—clearing building violations.

We presented the work of Phase 1, which happened in 2022, and it was suspended for many months. Fortunately, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September 2023, we successfully obtained a certificate from the Lebanese Government showing that the LCD Building was legally intact.

Immediately, the engineers commenced the work for the Phase 2.

If the Government offices operate regularly 3 days a week, as it happens these days, we hope to get the Construction Permit by March 2024, whereupon we can start implementing the construction of the Nursery Extension in July 2024.

So there is a light at the end of the tunnel, despite some challenges.

## Intensive Trainings

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Several intensive training for other centers, professionals, etc., were conducted at the LCD during 2023. We will highlight some of the events that took place as shown below.

### Training Social Development Centers (SDC)'s Team

Burj Hammoud's SDC team reported that Jad, a 4-year-old boy, has communication difficulties. So on May, Nadine (Teacher of the Deaf and Early Interventionist) and Wafa (Early Interventionist and Speech Therapist) met Jad's family for the first time to do an initial child and family assessment and consultation while coaching Laurette (social worker) and Lauranda (nurse) from the Burj Hammoud SDC.



Language and communication delays were confirmed and the parents received guidance, recommendations, and carry-on targets.

### Training for Social Development Centers (SDC), Second Phase

On October 25th, The LCD provided an intensive training day for all staff members of the 3 Social Development Centers (SDC), which was conducted at the LCD's premises, despite the project being officially concluded.



While awaiting potential funding and the opportunity for the project to resume, the LCD ensured that crucial information and tools for working with deaf children and their family members were given, equipping the team as much as possible to incorporate these elements into their services.

Despite all the challenges, the LCD will strive to continue this project as much as possible, even if funding is not available, to provide the utmost support to deaf children nationwide, within our capabilities.



The LCD is grateful for the excellent work performed by the LCD's team members, including Nadine.

### **Training for Iraqi people**



Training for 2 groups of people from Iraq on the Early Intervention Program, in 2 consecutive days, took place at the LCD.

### **Training for SDC at the Ministry of Social Affairs**



Despite a lack of funding, and having to present workshops with other expert partners without light, except electricity provided to the projector from another room and where we needed to get toilet paper with us, it was an amazing experience.

Participants from SDCs being trained in Early Intervention are a great pleasure to work with. They go through such challenging conditions daily and still serve people with a big heart and great

devotion and are ready to get more expertise in other fields to serve more people. High respect!

That is in addition to the great harmony among the training team, as well as with project management, which makes this project a true delight so far.

## Workshop, Seminars, etc.

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Over the year, the LCD participated in several workshops, seminars, etc., either in person or via Zoom. Not to mention everything, some meetings were held as such:

1. Catalyst Fund for Relief and Response
2. Municipalities' Elections
3. Awareness guidelines for integrating the Deaf into the work environment
4. Driving licences for the Deaf
5. From Voices to Actions: Mobilizing for Inclusive Municipal Elections 2023
6. USAID Civil Society Sustainability Index for Lebanon
7. Accessibility and Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Lebanese Cultural, Heritage, and Natural Sites
8. Towards Inclusive Social Protection – Lebanon
9. Tourism Accessibility for the Deaf
10. Among others

## Workshop for the Deaf

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The LCD, in collaboration with the Lebanese Federation of the Deaf, has performed training workshops solely for adult deaf persons for them to work on advocacy and campaigns that were and are relevant for the deaf. 25 deaf persons, of different ages and backgrounds, were selected. They carried out 6 training workshops that were related to the Social Protection Policy in Lebanon, advocacy, and Persons with Disabilities. The facilitators were Nadine, Hussein, and some experts from other organizations who were given at different times, depending on the subject.



The impact of this training for the participants was great, as they started to understand basic human rights and social protection so that they know when and what to ask and fight for.



## First Aid Workshop

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Nursery and Preschool teachers and staff members have undergone whole-day first aid workshop, with CPR intervention for young children and adults, conducted by the Lebanese Red Cross, at the LCD.



## Marathon

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A 42km Marathon was held during November 2023. Some staff members and their children, as well as the students of the LCD high school, participated in the 5km or 10km run. Thanks to the beautiful weather, the day was fabulous, filled with joy and laughter. Everyone was pleased with their accomplishment.



Furthermore, Hussein ran the full marathon, and everyone waited for him at the finish line, which was a great joy and encouragement. Some of the high school students were inspired and decided to run either the 21km or the full marathon next year. Hussein was indeed pleased with his performance, especially since some of his deaf friends participated alongside him in the full marathon.



## PV Panels

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As indicated earlier, Lebanon still faces shortages of electricity which provides a few hours a day. It has indeed been a big problem for the work of the LCD which needs constant electricity during the day. This is especially the case during the hot summers when we need to turn on the air conditioners in the Early Intervention rooms, as well as in the nursery and preschool classes.

We are so grateful to our supporting and partner organization in England, Embrace the Middle East, that provided the funding for a project to install a PV solar system to generate electricity for the LCD. Not only does this mean the LCD has electricity full time, but this system will also save a lot of money that would have been spent on paying expensive electricity bills, whether from the state or the communal generator.

We are extremely grateful for this successful project implementation.



## Trip to the National Museum

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During the month June, the boys of the High School students went on a trip to Greece to participate in a basketball tournament. So the girls had to stay, unfortunately. Instead of having these girls be in the classroom at all times, we had them have some outdoor activities. One of the activities was to take them to the National Museum of Beirut, where



they had enjoyed the trip as it was an educational journey for them. They had the opportunity to visit the Museum to see antiquities, as well as the history of Lebanon, the Phoenicians, etc.

Afterward, they visited another museum, located underneath the Orthodox Cathedral, where they could observe the city of Beirut in prehistoric times and could see the evidence that Beirut was destroyed 7 times by heavy earthquakes.

Before returning to the LCD, they visited the waterfront of Beirut's Boulevard, where they also saw the famous Beirut's Pigeon, Rocks, as some of these students have never been in these areas.

Another event was to take the girls on a whole-day hike in the mountains, specifically to the Cedars' Reserve of Bomhaley. We had to walk through the Cedar forest and walk to the mountain top so that we had the opportunity to overlook a scenic view of Beqaa Valley, other side of the mountain, which was a fantastic experience.



## Bazaar at the LCD

A bazaar for pre-Mother's Day for 2 consecutive days, in March, was conducted by Deaf ladies and was held in the garden of the LCD. All items on display were proudly made by the Deaf. The idea of this bazaar was to support Deaf ladies who made various items and to encourage visitors to buy them. It was a great success.



Because of this successful intervention, another Bazaar took place at the LCD on June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 4 to 10 pm, and on June 4<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 6 pm, and the bazaar was run by deaf exhibitors. There were food, drinks, ice cream, garage sales, clothes, as well as some items made by the deaf such as silver necklaces and earrings, leathers, pieces of jewelry, purses, and embroideries.

The idea was to support sellers and a small percentage of the sale was to go to the LCD.

The advantage of the event was to allow hearing people to have a chance to communicate with deaf persons to improve their sign language. In general, the event was a great experience and a lot of fun.

## Sign Language Courses

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More participants completed courses in sign languages at the LCD. Sometimes we give courses in different settings in Beirut.



In one setting, participants were from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) who completed Level 1 and Level 2 of the sign language course with distinction, which was conducted at their headquarters in Beirut. The specializations of the participants are Forensic Specialist, Field Officer, Protection, Economic Security, Human Resources Manager, and the Head of the ICRC Delegation in Lebanon.

We are proud of these participants in the prestigious setting in learning sign language to be able to effectively communicate with deaf or hard-of-hearing persons.

The Head of the ICRC indicated: “We are very happy to have had the privilege of teachers Hisham and Malak for this course. As humanitarians, we think that we all should make an effort and bridge gaps in society and learn how to communicate better. This course has been an amazing experience for us and we thank Hisham and Malak for their kindness, humor, professionalism, and all the teachings.”

Another setting was made in an international organization for human rights, as participants were more than 11. They have enjoyed learning this language.



At the LCD, courses were offered regularly. Participants who joined the courses were from different backgrounds, professions, and nationalities. Some of the participants were medical doctors, soldiers, social workers, and teachers, among others, and some were simply interested in learning the language of the deaf.



The main purpose of these courses was obviously to learn to effectively communicate with deaf people.

### Sign Language in the Nursery/Preschool

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Sign Language sessions are also provided for the children in the preschool section. The instructors of these sessions were deaf themselves—Malak and Najah—who have talents in teaching these lessons to young children. The children found these lessons great fun and were affected by the learning experience of communicating with deaf adults. Some of their parents were inspired and wanted to register for the course.

### Staff Members

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The LCD has thankfully good team members. Changes in the staff members happened during that year, which are outlined as follows:

Our faithful domestic deaf helper, **Elias**, has unfortunately left us after his care and services for the LCD for more than 19 years. It was indeed sad for us to see him leaving as his wish was understandable due to the transportation reasons. He lives with his wife, which is quite far from the LCD.

Due to the situation, some teachers left us as well. But we have new members joining our big family.

**Najah** known by many was accepted to work with us as a house mother and as a handicraft/art teacher for the nursery and the preschool children. The LCD has also hired a young deaf man, **Abdallah**, to be Najah's assistant, in making sure that everything at the LCD is in order.

A new Occupational Therapist, **Laura**, has also joined the team. She is a good person, with a big heart for vulnerable persons.

**Nadine**, not our Nadine, a Speech Therapist, also joined the team. She is working with Wafa who is an Early Interventionist, in the Department of Early Intervention Program, supporting her whenever and wherever she can.

3 high school teachers joined the team as well. **Narimane** and **Hiba**, who teach scientific subjects for the high school program, are part of the educational team members. **Zeena** an English teacher, replacing **Judy** who left the country due to the situation, is also part of the team.

## Happy Women's Day

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On the occasions of Women's Day and Teacher's Day, many staff members of the LCD (15 out of 24) celebrated together in a cafe with bites in Beirut, a lovely fellowship and experience, with blessings.



## Annual School Trip

In May 2023, staff members and high school students spent a day on a school trip. They had the chance to visit the ruins of Baalbek which is located in the Bekaa Valley, more than 2 hours driving away from the LCD, as well as visiting the winery in Zahleh, to learn about the production of wine.



The trip was made possible thanks to the support of our Swiss friends, one of whom is the President of the “Friends of the LCD-Lebanon”, along with his son and a friend, who joined us on that day.

## Visit of our Swiss Friends

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The LCD has received several visitors during that year, as usually happened. Some of our visitors were from Switzerland—Rainer, Jonas, and Ertan—who were and are great supports of the LCD. They brought educational materials, and hearing devices, as well as some money to cover the school trip to Baalbek.



We were happy with their visit, as it was not the first time. They had made the same visit in the previous year (2022).



## An Article Published by our Supporting Organization

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An article written by our supporting organization—Embrace the Middle East—was published in their magazine, which depicted as follows:

*“Three-year-old Wasim received a cochlear implant after being diagnosed with profound hearing loss. After initial speech therapy lessons only brought limited improvement, Wasim’s audiology recommended the family try the Learning Centre for the Deaf in Beirut, which Embrace helped to fund.*



*Thanks to the Early Intervention Programme at the centre, which provided him with speech therapy sessions tailored to his needs as well as a home therapy plan, Wasim’s spoken language skills are now rapidly improving and he is gaining confidence. He is also able to attend the integrated nursery at the centre, mixing with other children his age, some of whom also have hearing loss.*

*His parents are overjoyed at his progress and believe Wasim now has a bright future ahead of him.”*

*“On Deaf Awareness Week we’re celebrating our partner, the Learning Centre for the Deaf, in Lebanon. They advocate for the rights of deaf*

*people in Lebanon, as well as directly supporting hearing-impaired children and young people.*

*Children like 4-year-old Rania, who has been given hearing aids and attends communication sessions at the Centre. She has made amazing progress: “Rania is now more self-confident and enjoying new friendships!” her mother said.*

## Advocacy Work

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During the year 2023, like in earlier years, the LCD still worked with other Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) in Lebanon that work for people with disabilities (PwD), mainly on human rights issues, fighting with the Lebanese Government to provide minimum rights for PwD. Partnership with DPOs was necessary as this strengthened the work of the LCD.

The LCD, in collaboration with the Lebanese Federation of the Deaf (LFD), has been carrying on its work with the advocacy program.

Several workshops, awareness seminars, and meetings have taken place with stakeholders of different government departments in attendance. These meetings and workshops focused on the rights of Persons with Disabilities, including deaf persons. Some were conducted by the LCD alone, and other works were jointly organized with other national NGOs and Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs).

Besides this, the LCD and the LFD have continued lobbying with stakeholders at the government level to provide minimum rights for the Deaf.

## Launch of Sign Language Interpretation on TV

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After a long time of lobbying with the stakeholders asking to have sign language interpretation on local television for deaf people to understand the news. The Minister of Information promised to find a solution. A few months later, fortunately, the Minister invited Hussein to attend the conference to announce important news for the Deaf in Lebanon, who announced that sign language would be provided during the evening news on the local TV station—Tele Liban. Thanks to his support and the financial support by the Islamic Al Makassed Association who will cover technical and financial expenses for providing sign language interpreters during the news. The Minister indicated that the service would be launched during the beginning of 2024.

## Working on a Platform

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Several deaf persons in Lebanon didn't understand the issues related to human rights, especially the Social Protection for Persons with Disabilities. The LCD, together with the Lebanese Federation of the Deaf, has created a page under the LCD's website, entitled "Social Protection and Advocacy". On this page, videos including subtitles explaining the National Disability Allowance, Social Protection, Disability Card, etc., were provided. This project was funded by the International Labor Organization and UNICEF.

If interested, please see the site: <http://www.lcd-lebanon.org/> and then select the "Social Protection and Advocacy" icon.

## Hussein's Trip to South Korea

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Hussein participated in the XIX World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf which was organized by the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD), and Korea Association of the Deaf (KAD) and was held in Jeju Island, South Korea. The theme of the congress was Securing Human Rights in Times of Crises. The trip was made possible thanks to the support of the AMT-NL.



## A Palm of Honor

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The director of the LCD, Hussein, was very pleased as he received a palm of honor in recognition of his outstanding services and support to deaf children and their families, as well as to Deaf communities in Lebanon. The award ceremony, held on December 14th, 2023, was conducted at the St. Joseph University, in Beirut, which was organized by the Association of Graduates of German-Speaking Universities and Institutes in Lebanon (VADUL).

Hussein gave a 15-minute presentation about the work at the Learning Center for the Deaf, since its inception, his services for the Deaf, and the work of the Lebanese Federation of the Deaf, before he received this honor. Hussein expressed his gratitude and appreciation for such a nomination.

4 members of the LCD attended the ceremony as well. Hussein conducted his services for God's glory.



## Our Faithful Partners and Sponsors

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As always, the LCD is ever grateful for the faithfulness and support of various organizations, associations, individuals, and friends, both locally and internationally. Without their support, the LCD would be unable to continue its work.

To name a few, here is a list of some of our faithful supporters:

1. **Embrace the Middle East—UK:** Embrace is one of our main partners, and has been supporting our services and programs for many years. It covers a substantial amount of the salaries for many staff members. Not only do they support the LCD financially, but they are also keen to follow our work closely with a true sense of partnership and encourage us. We highly esteem their support, and especially their prayers for us, and they are always ready to listen whenever we come to them with a specific problem.
2. **Friends of the LCD-Lebanon, Switzerland:** The LCD has a long and strong relationship with the Swiss foundation “Friends of the LCD-Lebanon (FK-LCD)”, on many different levels. This foundation was among the first partners to support the LCD in its inception, and they have continuously supported our work in helping with different needs, with good substantial amount of money. Whenever we require a particular item, our Swiss friends don’t stop until they have found what we need. A



true friend in need. They are not only supporting us financially but also by sending hearing aids, batteries, etc. We are very grateful for their support.

3. **AMT-NL:** AMT-NL is a small foundation, located in the Netherlands, which supports us when a specific project is needed. This foundation was the first to support the LCD during its initiation (founding) phase. They have greatly helped us.
4. **Wilde Ganzen-NL:** Wilde Ganzen (WG) has supported the LCD with various projects. The biggest one was the purchase of the LCD's premises and its expansion work. They have supported renovation work of the LCD's building, not once, but twice. During COVID-19 and the Beirut port explosion, WG supported the LCD financially to ensure the continuity of the work. In 2022, WG accepted our proposal for the construction of a new setting for the Integrated Nursery with new playground facilities. We hope to start working on this project in the summer of 2024.
5. **Johanne van Dijk**, who used to work at Wilde Ganzen, still supports our work in many different ways. She is a lady of great heart, and who feels that the LCD belongs to her. Johanne together with our very dear Dutch friends **Frits and Marjolijn van der Hoeven** have worked very hard to find ways for the construction project of the Integrated Nursery to be realized; with the efforts of **Hans Wareman** of the AMT-NL. We are grateful for Johanne's and our friends' perseverance.
6. **Hans Silberschmidt** is a treasurer for the "Friends of the LCD-Lebanon" foundation. Regularly, he has continually communicated with the LCD, either through email, WhatsApp, or telephone conversation with us, sharing his ideas and work for the LCD. Due to his health condition and limited time, he managed to find an assistant to his position, a Swiss financial specialist, Peter. Hussein and Nadine consider Hans a very good friend. In addition to Hans, the president of the FK-LCD, **Rainer Nobs**, holds the LCD in their hearts, and are great supporters.
7. **Josephine Marriage** is an English audiologist who always supports the LCD within her capacity, both financially and in technical matters. In the past, Josephine used to come once a year to give training and workshops for the LCD's staff members, along with other specialists at the LCD. Josephine is a person with a great heart.
8. **Herbert Klein** is an English-deaf man who continually prays and supports us within his capacity. Much appreciated Herbert.
9. **Manije Ford and her son Chris**, long English friends of the LCD, and who have big hearts for the LCD, like other friends.
10. **German Speaking Church in Beirut** for supporting stationary costs.
11. And not to forget so many other **individuals and friends** who still support our work within their capacities for which we are very grateful.



## Conclusion

When looking back, we are indeed blessed to see how many organizations, individuals, and friends have believed in LCD's work in serving deaf children and their family members, and who have never wavered in their support. God has put the LCD in their hearts, as He knows the challenges that the LCD faced during that year. The challenges were great, but He has always responded to the problems in due time and helped the LCD to stand on its feet and serve its beneficiaries in the best way.

May God bless you all!





## 8. Master Account 2023

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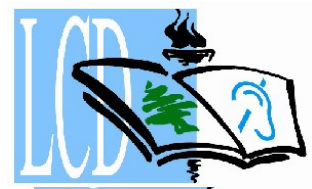
The Master Accounts are prepared by the Certified Auditors, which include:

- Financial Summary Sheet with the Pie Figures

Please see the following pages, depicting scanned copies of the accounts, with Auditors' stamp and signature



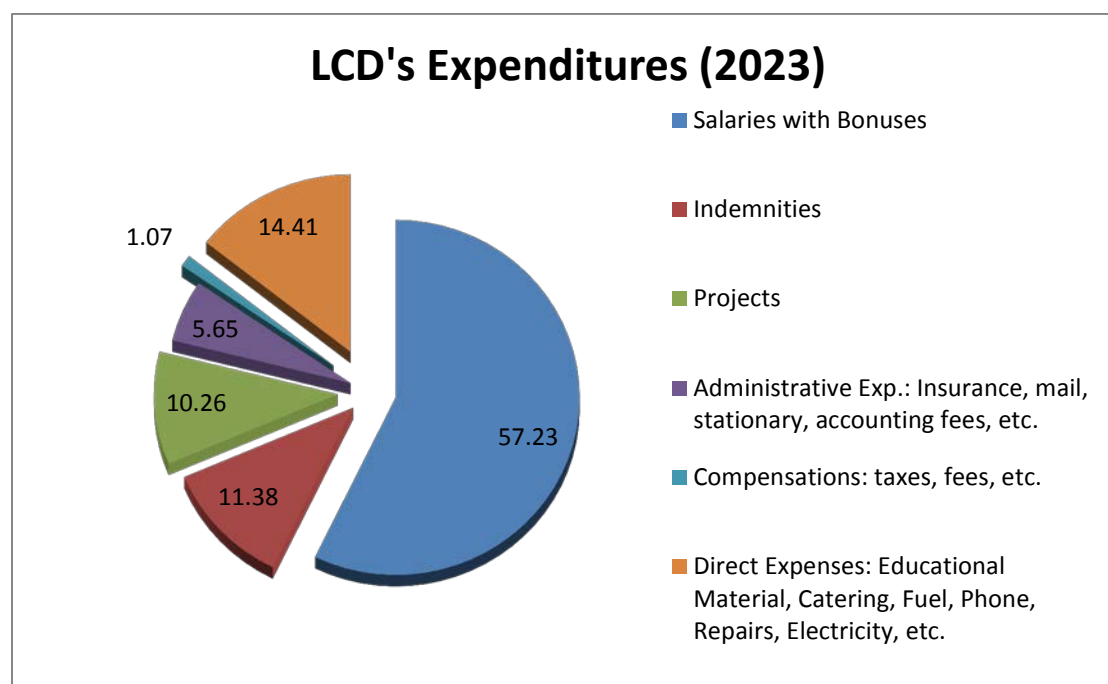
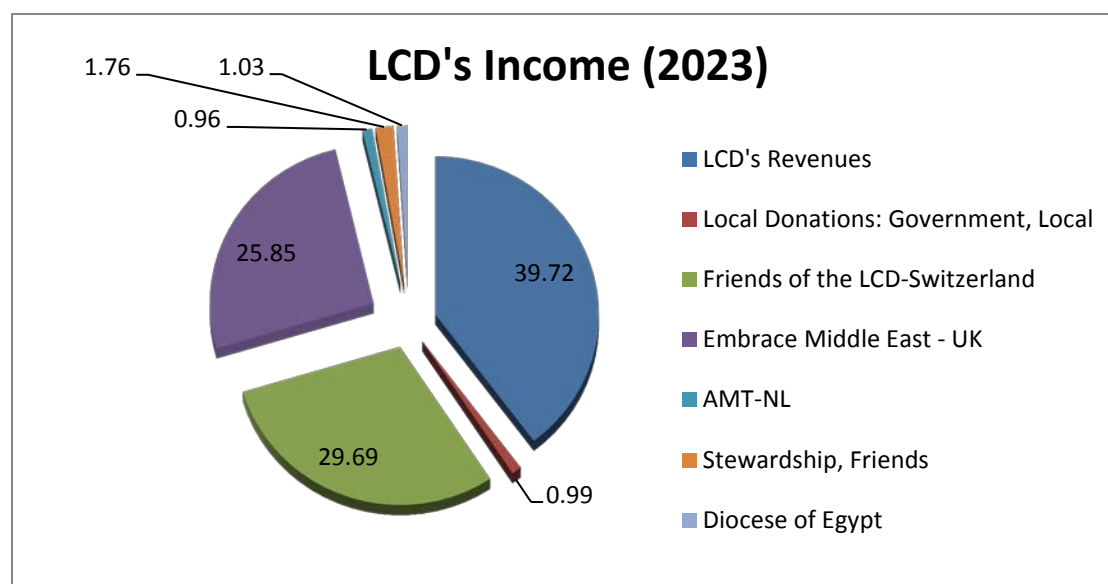




## Summary of the Financial Report 2023

Description	in US\$
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>193,694</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>167,514</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>26,180</b>

The Tables below showing the percentages of the income and expenditures during 2023



# **The Learning Center for the Deaf**

Baabda – Lebanon

## **Photos during 2023**



Nursery Children in the Playground



Outdoor story telling



High School Students doing their assignments



In one EIP session



Outdoor activities



In one training sessions



# **The Learning Center for the Deaf**

Baabda – Lebanon

## **Photos during 2023**



Outdoor activities



Sign Language Class in the Garden



People in Black; Great Staff members



Group Work in the Preschool



In one Bazaars



Foreseeable project: Nursery Extension



# The Learning Center for the Deaf

Baabda – Lebanon

## Photos during 2023



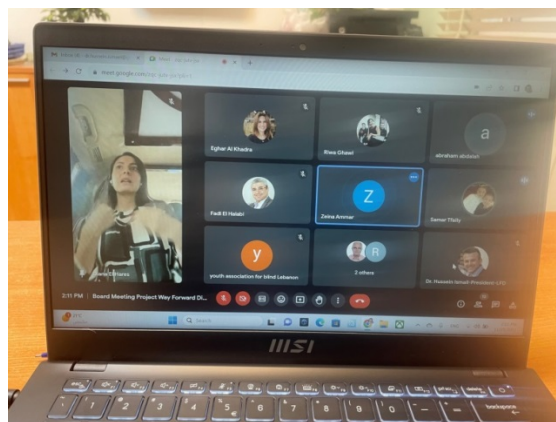
Practical Life Exercise; Self Care



Audiology Room for Testing Hearing Levels



Advocacy Work



Virtual Meeting, with Sign Language Interpreter



Cleaning the Nursery after the Fire



LCD's flowers



Please visit us at the [www.lcd-lebanon.org](http://www.lcd-lebanon.org), for detailed information about our services and activities.

**Thank you for your continuous prayers and support !!**

**God bless you.**