

News from SAT-7
June 2022

INSIGHT

A young child with dark hair, wearing a red and green jacket and patterned pants, stands in the doorway of a makeshift shelter. The shelter is made of wood and blue tarp. In the background, there is a dirt area with other makeshift structures and a green bicycle lying on the ground.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Finding a Home in Him

Refugee voices | Hope for displaced children
| Lives changed online

CHRISTIAN MEDIA
FOR THE MIDDLE EAST
AND NORTH AFRICA



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LETTER FROM SAT-7'S CEO

Dear friends,

As we continue to watch the suffering of the numerous people forced to leave Ukraine, our hearts are heavy. In our region, we understand all too well what it means for families and communities when war tears through our homelands.

People continue to be on the move all over the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Millions affected by the conflicts in Iraq and Syria are still displaced in their own countries or sheltering abroad. Migration from Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover last year has driven more refugees to Iran and elsewhere. Host countries face grave social and economic challenges as they try to accommodate huge numbers of very needy people. And tragically, some of those who are trying to flee from poverty or violence perish in the attempt. Almost certainly the impact of the conflict in Europe on global food supplies will drive more migration and create more refugees here too.

Many of these migrants are our brothers and sisters in Christ, and God's people in this region are also on the move in the Bible. From the journey of Abraham from Ur to Canaan, through Israel's exodus from Egypt and exile to Babylon, to the scattering of the first Christians with the Gospel message, they often have to pull up their roots and build new lives elsewhere. In Matthew's Gospel, even our Lord Himself becomes a refugee, as His parents take Him to Egypt away from the murderous Herod. Yet when His people are scattered among the nations, our God proves to be a sanctuary for them where they have gone (Ezekiel 11:16).

In SAT-7's programs, people today can find this God who is Himself a home for the homeless, offering them comfort in their distress, fellowship in their isolation, provision in their need, and security in their danger. They can also make connections with Christians who have walked the same lonely and painful road before and can testify to God's faithfulness in their darkest times. In this edition of *INSIGHT*, you can read about how God is using SAT-7 to transform the lives of people on the move through the love and hope held out to them in the Gospel of Christ.

Thank you so much for your support for our work. Please keep in your prayers the countless families in the MENA who have no choice but to leave their homes, and pray for us too as we share God's love with them.

Yours in Christ,

Rita El-Mounayer
SAT-7 CEO



Front cover image: A refugee child at a camp in Lebanon

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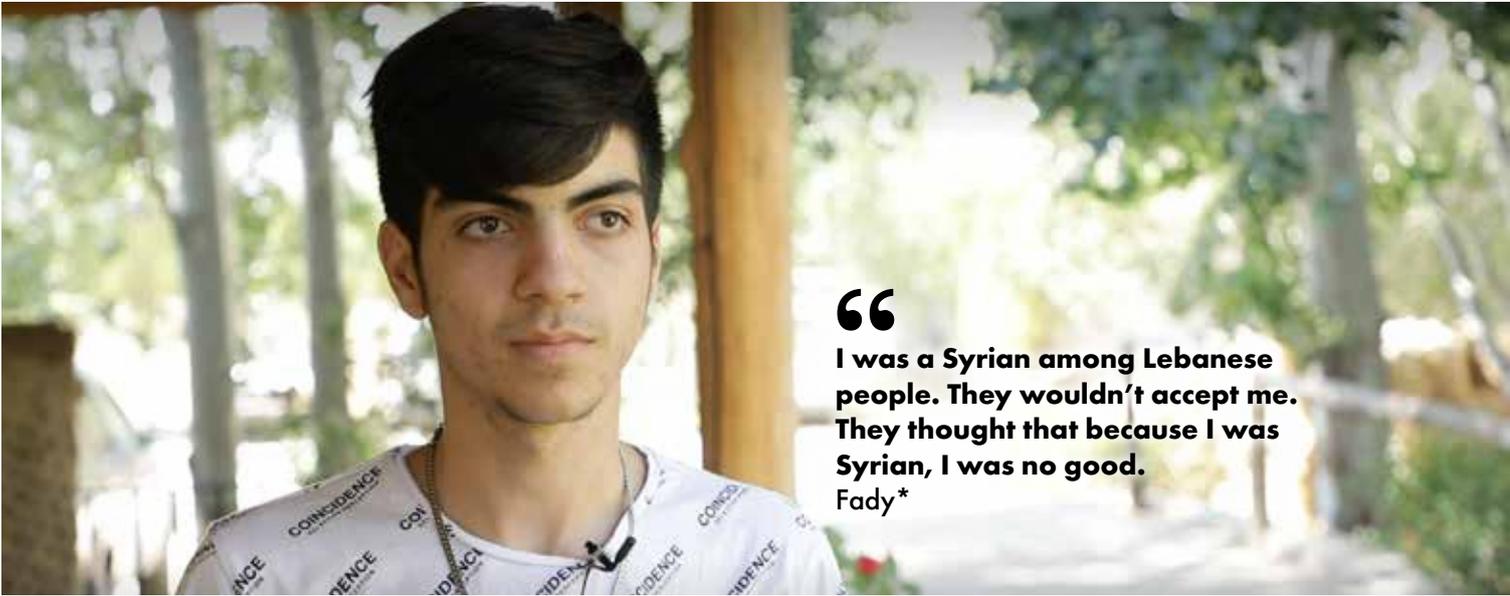
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All viewer names have been changed to protect their identities, and all images used with viewer stories are representative.

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“LOVE THEM AS YOURSELF, FOR YOU WERE FOREIGNERS IN EGYPT” (LEVITICUS 19:34)



“

I was a Syrian among Lebanese people. They wouldn't accept me. They thought that because I was Syrian, I was no good.

Fady*

Fady is part of the SAT-7-led project *Lebanon: Our Story*. Now a teenager, he shares how he and his family, who are Christians, fled to Lebanon as conditions deteriorated in their homeland.

“When I was in Syria, and I was six years old, an accident happened to me,” he says. “I was leaving school, and there was an army bus outside. Bombs had been planted in it, and it exploded.”

Witnessing the brutal deaths of the people on the bus left Fady with a psychological condition, for which help was hard to find in war-torn Syria. “I found a doctor to help me, but he was also killed in a bomb attack,” he explains. Although Fady finally found the right care, his family eventually decided to leave the country.

This story is a common one among people on the move in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), which hosts the world's largest refugee population. Violence. Trauma. A desperate lack of the basics of life, such as medical care. And in the country of refuge? Rejection and a pervasive sense of being “less than.”

You will read in the following pages that care for displaced people is an important part of SAT-7's media ministry. Why? Because God sees no-one as “less than.”

The Bible is full of stories of people who faced similar challenges and who were beloved by God. Naomi and

her family fled starvation, like many of today's economic migrants. God's people lived in exile for generations, much like today's Iranian and Afghan Christians, who cannot return to their homelands.

The Old Testament laws mandate protection for sojourners as well as ways for them to become part of the community. But perhaps no example is more tangible than Jesus' attitude to the Samaritans, a group of despised “others” whom He treated as worthy and beloved.

All people are made in God's image, and therefore all are valued and carry the potential to contribute to society. This message must be communicated to people on the move and the communities that host them. It must also be lived out by believers around the world.

SAT-7 amplifies voices like Fady's to keep the needs of refugees, including the young adults who fled Syria as children, in the public eye and to counter discrimination with common humanity. Our ministry to people on the move in Arabic-, Persian-, and Turkish-speaking countries also includes discipleship for believers, education for children, and projects to improve refugees' integration in society.

We hope you are encouraged as you read about the resilience of refugees, and how barriers are being broken down through SAT-7's ministry of love, hope, and renewal.



BEING HEARD, FINDING HOPE

MIGRATION IN THE ARAB WORLD



Mohammad and Youssef Al Jamal, who survived the 'boat of death'

Lebanon: Spring 2022...

A recent episode of the SAT-7 ARABIC program *You Are Not Alone* focused on the tragic "Boat of Death." In April, a small vessel sank off Tripoli in Lebanon while carrying

people, mostly Lebanese but including some Syrians, who were trying to flee the country. At least six people died, including the family of Youssef and Mohammad Al Jamal. Youssef told the presenter, "If there was another boat available now, I would get back on as soon as I have buried my family."

Lebanon is currently mired in a deep crisis in which rampant inflation makes even basic survival difficult. A young Lebanese woman in Beirut told SAT-7, "Two or three years ago, with a 100,000-lira bill, I could have filled a shopping cart at the supermarket. With the same bill I can now only buy a coffee and maybe a small snack." Her aunt added, "Lebanon used to be the hospital of the Middle East, but the doctors have all migrated due to inflation, and the medical system has collapsed." "The main reason we got on the 'boat of death' is a lack of medicine," said Mohammad.

[CLICK HERE](#) TO READ THE ARTICLE

A regional crisis

The desperate choices faced by the Lebanese people today are an example of the acute migration crisis afflicting much of the Arab World. Years of conflict and humanitarian catastrophes are

prompting millions of people across the region to flee for their lives or to seek better economic opportunities that would allow them to live with dignity.

The statistics alone are truly shocking:

- **10 million** migrants from North Africa in 2020¹
- **6.7 million** Syrian refugees in 2021, most below the poverty line²
- **4 million** people displaced by civil war in Yemen since 2015³
- **1.2 million** Iraqis internally displaced⁴
- **410 people** reported missing in the Mediterranean in January-March 2022⁵

Behind these cold figures are heart-wrenching human experiences of scarcity, homelessness, and denial of basic services.

Nashwan from Iraq owned a flourishing business and a house, but when so-called Islamic State overran his area, the jihadists threatened to kill him and his family. Having fled their home, the family later moved to Egypt but have been unable to secure residential papers that would allow Nashwan's daughters to enroll in school. He also cannot obtain a work permit and find suitable employment.



Nashwan and his family fled persecution in Iraq

Yet, Nashwan and many other migrants are not crushed by their hardships, and often they have impressive and inspiring stories to tell....

¹ <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/african-migration-trends-to-watch-in-2022/>

² <https://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html>; <https://gho.unocha.org/appeals/middle-east-and-north-africa>

³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-humanitarian-needs-overview-2022-april-2022>

⁴ <https://gho.unocha.org/appeals/middle-east-and-north-africa>

⁵ https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/225_QMMU_Q1_2022_NA.pdf





Refugee Tales

As crises have deepened across the Arab World, forcing more and more people from their homes and countries, SAT-7's Arabic channels have developed programming to support migrants in their various needs. *My School*, which is currently recording its fifth season, is based on the Syrian national curriculum of Arabic, English, French, math, and science, and was designed to meet the needs of Syrian children who have missed years of schooling.

But SAT-7 wants not only to speak to refugees, but also to hear from them, and to amplify their muted voices so their stories can help challenge the discrimination they often face in the places where they seek refuge. SAT-7 has recently broadcast a powerful new series of short, personal documentaries, *Refugee Tales*, which both relates the struggles of refugees in Egypt and showcases their tenacity and resilience. The program is part of a wider SAT-7 project, funded by the Norwegian Mission Society, to promote the rights of migrants and other marginalized people in the Arab World by strengthening integration and peaceful coexistence. The series achieved remarkable viewing figures; some 227,000 people watched a full eight-minute episode on social media.

One episode featured Shefaa El-Rifai, a Syrian who fled to Egypt in 2012, and showed how she is supporting and upskilling other refugee and local women through the social development center she founded in Alexandria. Many of the women have gone on to train others.

Another featured refugee is Ashwaq, a young graduate from Sudan, who came to Egypt in search of employment but could find it only as a home help. The money she earns is barely enough to pay the rent and make ends meet, and people in the street harass her because she is a single mother. But Ashwaq faces these challenges and difficulties bravely. "I try not to focus on what I do not have, but rather on the beautiful things that I

have, such as my child and the blessing of being in good health. I try to show care to all those around me as much as I can."

Other episodes featured a Syrian musician who has begun choirs, opened a café, and provides music therapy, and a young Syrian woman who became involved in running integration workshops for fellow refugees when she was just 15.

Jannat, a famous Egyptian singer, also recorded a song about accepting refugees; the video was interspersed with images and clips from the programs.



Jannat, a famous Egyptian singer, recorded a song for *Refugee Tales*

The stories have prompted an outpouring of supportive and loving comments from viewers. One viewer in Algeria encouraged Ashwaq: "Don't despair, sister. Trust God and draw close to Him in prayer, and you will be released, God willing, very soon." Another viewer said, "You are the bravest woman I have ever seen and the most optimistic; God bless." A third said, "You are a hero; God is with you, and He will never abandon you."

[CLICK HERE ►](#) TO WATCH ASHWAQ'S STORY

[CLICK HERE ►](#) TO LISTEN TO THE SONG

“
I try not to focus on what I do not have, but rather on the beautiful things that I have, such as my child and the blessing of being in good health. I try to show care to all those around me as much as I can.
Ashwaq, a Sudanese refugee in Egypt





COMFORT IN EXILE

MIGRATION IN THE PERSIAN AND TURKISH WORLDS

Conflict, persecution, and socio-economic challenges have forced hundreds of thousands of Persian-speaking people to seek refuge across borders, while millions of refugees from here and elsewhere are now living in Turkey. Through its programming and Viewer Support activities, SAT-7 is speaking God's hope into their hopelessness.

The Persian World

Over one million people have fled Afghanistan since August 2021, due to conflict, the resulting economic collapse, and increased oppression of women and minorities under the Taliban. The total number of registered Afghan refugees is now 2.6 million.¹ Thousands of people continue to

Amid a deepening humanitarian crisis, 95% of Afghan households are experiencing food insecurity, with Afghan children starving to death every day
(Human Rights Watch)

cross the border every day, but without documents and often work, they are struggling to rebuild their lives elsewhere.

Among those who flee Afghanistan are Christians who are afraid for their lives. "About a month ago, the Taliban started doing house to house searches and they were even confiscating people's smartphones," shared Elham in April this year. "I had a few articles about Christianity on my phone which I have had to delete as a precaution."

Responding to the spiritual and emotional needs of Afghans displaced or in exile, SAT-7 PARS stepped

An additional 3.5 million people are internally displaced within Afghanistan

up its Dari programming, producing two seasons of a new teaching series *Following Christ*, in partnership with Media Mission the Messengers, to help Afghan believers grow in their walk with Christ. "I thoroughly enjoy your programs," said Rademan, a man still living in Afghanistan. "I have more than two billion brothers and sisters whose prayers strengthen me so that I can overcome my problems."

Furthermore, broadcasts of SAT-7 partner productions by Pamir Ministries of ongoing Dari language programs *Secret of Life* and *Window of Light* address current affairs and social challenges in the region, providing scriptural insights to help viewers apply God's Word to their daily lives.

In Tajikistan, high rates of corruption, food and water insecurity, poverty, and conflict on its borders lead many people to migrate in search of better work, often leaving their families behind. The needs of Tajik viewers are unique to their circumstances, and high suicide rates in Tajikistan speak to the pressures they face. This year, SAT-7 is producing three programs in Tajik, *Mental & Spiritual Health*, *In the World of Women's Thoughts*, and *Christian Youth in Modern Life*, to meet the needs of Tajik men, women, and youth.

Iran provides asylum to millions of people, especially refugees from Afghanistan. Unfortunately, however, refugees are often treated very poorly, forced to work long and difficult hours for low wages. Challenging such social norms, SAT-7 PARS' live programs *Insiders* and *Signal* discuss current affairs and social challenges with a special emphasis on Iran. The topics encourage viewers to look at people of all backgrounds and stations in life with love and through Christ's eyes.

Iranian Christians too are often forced to make the difficult decision to flee persecution for an uncertain future elsewhere. Shida* and her daughter left Iran four years ago. Since then, they have been living in Turkey with no resolution to their refugee status, which has taken a toll on Shida's mental health.

Speaking to the SAT-7 PARS Viewer Support Team and hearing God speak into her situation, however, had a powerful impact on Shida, as she began to cry and was filled with joy and peace. Giving thanks that God had not abandoned her, Shida shared that her faith had been restored and she had been built up.

SAT-7 PARS' Viewer Support Teams accompany viewers like Shida on their spiritual and emotional journeys. Speaking hope and

“I am moved when I see messages from viewers, because I can see people's struggles and how God is bringing new life and hope in the midst of their struggles.
Omeed Jouyandé,
Viewer Support

¹ <https://www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/2022%20Factsheet%20-%20Refugees%20Fleeing%20Religious%20Persecution%20Globally.pdf>



SAT-7 TÜRK News is broadcast every weekday



Secret of Life Presenters and crew



Iranian refugee Christians worshipping in a home



SAT-7 TÜRK Worldview Presenters on set



SAT-7 PARS Signal Presenters Hamid M and Niloufar Raisi

light into the lives of people in exile and isolated, the teams provide counseling, encouragement, prayer, and biblical guidance, while also sharing resources, devotionals, and worship songs that help viewers feel connected and heard.

Turkey

Today, Turkey hosts over four million refugees, and it has hosted the world's largest refugee population for the past seven years.² Unfortunately, this influx of refugees is putting additional strain on a country that is facing major political and economic challenges, and attitudes towards refugees have started to harden in Turkey.

The mass exodus from Afghanistan has spurred concerns that the flow of refugees into Turkey will continue to increase. SAT-7 TÜRK, however, is trying to counter this anxiety.

There are over 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey, and several hundred thousand refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran
(Asylum Information Database)

The ethical news talk show *Worldview* has highlighted the traumatic journeys that refugees undergo, emphasized their value as people loved by God, and stressed the benefits of helping them integrate and contribute positively to society.

A Turkish Christian woman contacted the channel to say, "I have been praying for refugees and those who help them for a very long time. I have learned just how much they suffer and how much prayer and help they really need."

SAT-7 TÜRK News, the channel's live news program, also highlights the events and circumstances affecting Christians in Turkey and around the world, with a special focus on conflict and persecution in the Middle East and North Africa.

² <https://reporting.unhcr.org/turkey#loc-narratives>

SONGWRITING BORN OF SUFFERING

A SAT-7 series is producing new worship songs for the suffering Iranian Church, written by a martyr's son in collaboration with Iranian Christian refugees in Turkey.

Gilbert Hovsepian was only 17 when his father, Rev. Haik Hovsepian Mehr, the President of the Council of Protestant Churches in Iran and a courageous spokesman for freedom of religion, was kidnapped and murdered in 1994. Gilbert's uncle, Rev. Edward Hovsepian, took over leadership of the churches, but persecution continued. Five years later, the family left Iran and found refuge in the West: Gilbert's family in the USA and his uncle's in the UK.

At no point, however, did persecution or migration diminish the family's passionate commitment to Christ or to the Iranian Church. Edward oversaw a network of churches in the UK and Europe, and he used media and visited the Middle East to continue teaching believers from Iran. Rozita, one of his daughters, presents live programs on SAT-7 PARS, where other family members have also played key roles. Gilbert's brother, Joseph, produces teaching

and worship programs, many of which air on SAT-7, as does Gilbert, who is a musician, Bible teacher, and author of over 100 Persian worship songs.

Fruitful collaboration

Gilbert's latest program, now in a second season, is *Songwriting with Gilbert*. During each half-hour episode, Gilbert joins Iranian musician co-writers to discuss the topic of a new worship song and develop it together. Over the two seasons, around 30 Iranian Christians have joined him in the creative process of writing new songs for a Christian community that has been largely forced underground by the authorities.

The Iranian Church is crying out for good worship songs, Gilbert says. Its historic songbook is limited to translations of Western songs introduced before the 1979 Iranian revolution, and those written by the first generation of Iranian church leaders, including Gilbert's father.



“The Iranian Church is desperate for more songs; songs that are their own and not borrowed or copied,” says Gilbert. In the last 20 years or so, Gilbert and others have been writing new songs to reflect the style of Persian music, with its minor keys, as well as the experience of Iranian believers.

Christian converts in Iran are forbidden to meet, and the few authorized Armenian and Assyrian Christian congregations are barred from worshiping in the Persian language. Christians who meet or share their faith face losing their jobs, punitive fines, jail sentences, and exile. The Iranian Church truly knows what it is to participate in Christ’s sufferings (Philippians 3:10).

Gilbert says, “These songs will minister to Iranians in a very deep way, as most Iranian Christians live in such circumstances in Iran, or abroad in Turkey, or even parts of Europe or Australia. For some, the hardship is financial, and for others it’s being far from family.”

Hard circumstances

All those who worked with Gilbert in the second season have fled their homeland recently and are living as refugees in Turkey.

“All of the co-writers were refugees in hard circumstances,” he explains. “So when we talked about the topic to write a song about, all were related to hardship and troubles. Thirteen

beautiful songs were written, highlighting how there are troubles in the world but we fix our eyes upon Jesus and worship Him regardless of our circumstances.”

Many of the songwriters have undergone powerful transformations. Five or six were “fanatical” in their previous faith, Gilbert says. One had been a sorcerer for ten years, and another had to leave Iran or be killed. He bears the scars of severe beating by his father-in-law because of his new faith and has not seen his daughter for six years. The two co-writers in another episode are children of Pastor Hossein Soodmand, who in 1990 was the last church leader to be executed for “apostasy” in Iran.

Scripture and experience

The starting point for the songs in the series are personal experience seen through the lens of Scripture. Gilbert describes them as “melodized teachings for church”, and says that Middle Easterners find them better than sermons as a source of learning and encouragement.

The series has also had a deep impact on Gilbert himself. “I have done TV ministry for 20 years or so, but this songwriting program has become my favorite,” he confides. “The reasons are passion, need, and time. I have a passion for writing songs, and new good songs are the need of the Iranian Church. Other programs will fade after a year or so, but the songs we write will last far longer.” ■

“**All of the co-writers were refugees in hard circumstances. Thirteen beautiful songs were written, highlighting how there are troubles in the world but we fix our eyes upon Jesus and worship Him regardless of our circumstances.**”



1



2



3



4

1 & 2. *Songwriting with Gilbert* draws on the inspiration of Iranian worship leaders
 3. With one of the musicians who participated in the series
 4. Writing the song together
 5. Gilbert discusses a song with young Iranian Christians



5

HOPE AND EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

SAT-7's partnership with the local non-profit and faith-based organization Heart for Lebanon has now been running for over six months. The HOPE schools use Arabic, English, and math lessons from SAT-7's popular educational program *My School* with more than 100 Syrian refugee children, at two centers. Already the project is changing their lives.

The children's learning is being assessed after they finish each season of *My School*. Every group has showed significant improvements in all three subjects. In Arabic and English, grades are based on recognizing letters and their sounds and writing one's name, and in math on identifying and drawing shapes and counting from one to ten. The classes, which almost all scored under 1.0 on a scale from 0 to 4 at the start of the series, were rated between 2.1 and 3.7 after it.

But the impact of the schools extends well beyond the academic. Teachers have also evaluated the children's social development according to a wide range of indicators, including participation in lessons, following classroom rules, and standing in line for the bus! In every area, they showed progress since their initial assessment.

"They are standing in line! We can see them coming down from the bus and standing in line by themselves without even being asked. Being in an educational program has changed their behavior."
– Raymonda, a teacher at HOPE school.

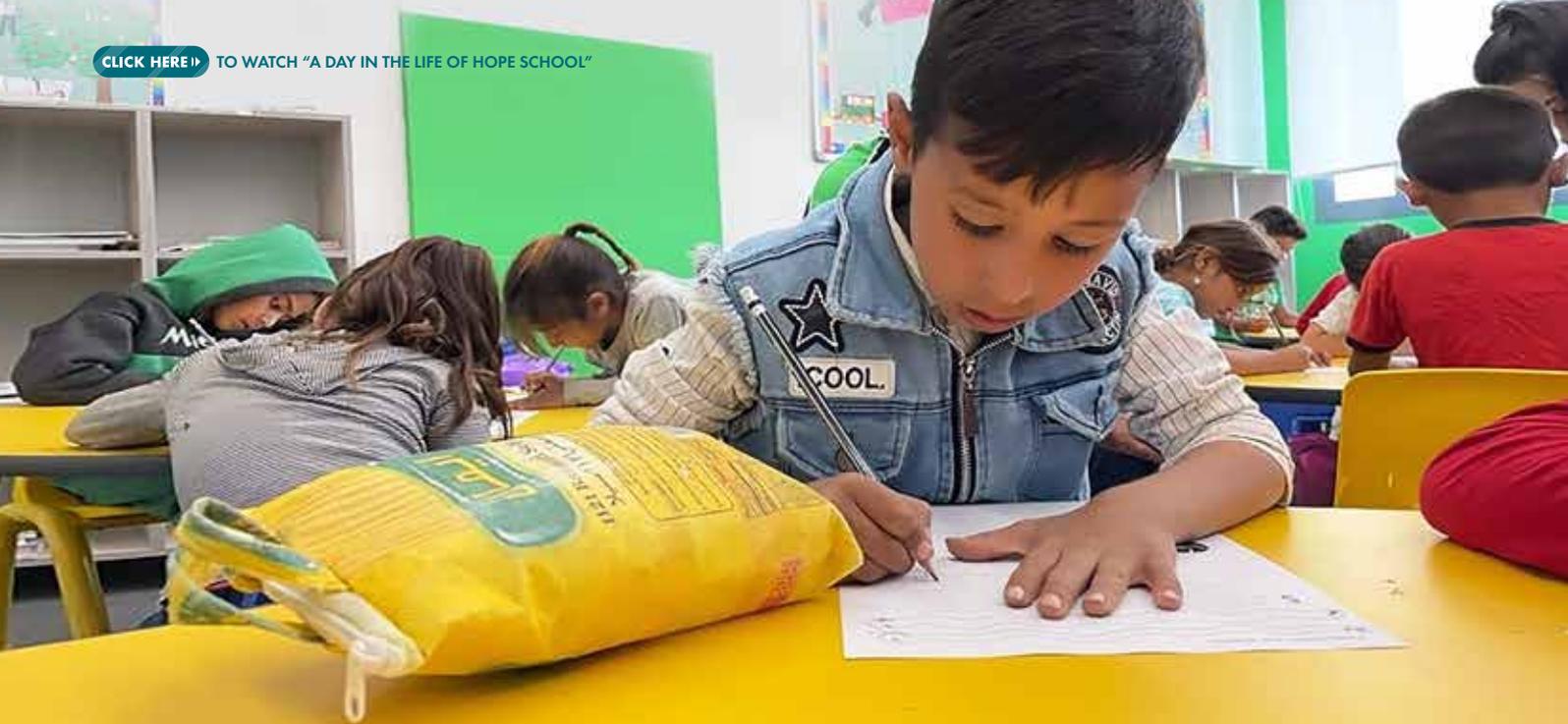
When 11-year-old Tawfeek started at HOPE school, he used to struggle with his work, misbehave in class, and fight with other children. But the teachers worked hard to help him adapt to his surroundings, recognize his faults, and learn from his mistakes, and in time he began to change. He became more committed to his studies; his behavior improved; and he started treating others with love and respect. His family have also noticed the difference!

Heart for Lebanon has observed that the children are very attached to the centers, their classroom teachers, and those they watch on screen. A highlight in March was a visit from Shams, their math teacher from *My School*, who surprised the children at one of the centers. She led them in making a card to give to their mothers on Mother's Day. ■

“
We can now use the fruitful assets of the *My School* episodes to give hope to so many children who have no access to education. Children living in camps are now receiving a basic human right.
Joanna Abou Rjeily,
Educational Program
Coordinator, Heart for
Lebanon

The family of this boy helped him by making a makeshift school bag from a rice bag

[CLICK HERE](#) TO WATCH "A DAY IN THE LIFE OF HOPE SCHOOL"



PROMOTING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR LEBANON

The second phase of SAT-7's exciting project *Lebanon – Our Story* is about to begin! Funded by the Danish Government, and administered in partnership with the Danish and Lebanese Bible Societies and the Centre for Church-based Development (CKU), this new initiative is aiming to reduce the vulnerability of Lebanon's refugee and host communities by encouraging 15-25-year-olds to develop a shared story of hope that will drive social cohesion and civic engagement.

After the success of last year's activities – including storytelling clubs for young people of different backgrounds and training for media professionals – the team in Lebanon is now preparing the media stage of the project. The first element of this will be a book featuring various stories and artwork produced by participants at the clubs. Moving accounts of their encounters with people from different ethnic and religious communities, and expressions of their hope for their country, point readers to a future beyond sectarian divisions. The book will be disseminated to promote transparency and accountability in local communities.

“Life is about dealing with people and living with them despite our differences. My advice, from a brother to every brother and sister who reads this story, is this: love life as it is and live it with each other and hold each other's hands, even if you do not know anything about each other. Because we need each other, regardless of our differences.

Ara (24), an Armenian-Syrian living in Beirut.

The team are also preparing materials for broadcast on SAT-7. Taking inspiration from the stories told at the clubs, a documentary unpacking the perspectives of a select number of participants is now in production. Seven out of 20 stories have been filmed so far. The program will then be broadcast on SAT-7 ARABIC, and made available on SAT-7's video-on-demand service SAT-7 PLUS and other online platforms.

A scriptwriter is also putting together a drama, assisted by a team of researchers. This too will draw on the stories from the clubs, supplemented by further narratives that capture the experience of both refugees and host communities in Lebanon. A workshop has been held for the writer to engage with young people representing several sections of Lebanese society. The purpose of the drama is to engage viewers' emotions as well as their minds, to help them reflect on characters and circumstances that are unfamiliar to them, and to broach sometimes difficult subjects in a creative and engaging way. This program too will be broadcast by SAT-7 both on satellite and online.

Future elements of this phase of the project will include a social media campaign and an online peer-support group for young people. ■



Participants in the *Lebanon – Our Story* project



THE PARTNERSHIP GATHERING 2022



The Partnership Gathering, SAT-7's first ministry-wide meeting of Partners, Christian ministries, broadcasters, and supporters for three years, took place in Cyprus in March 2022. Under the theme *Responding to Crisis, Building the Future*, participants learned how SAT-7 responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and other catastrophic events across the region during the last two years, and how the ministry is now focusing firmly on the future, using new means of attracting and engaging younger audiences.

"SAT-7 didn't have to re-invent itself. It didn't have to learn like the rest of us; it didn't have to redefine like the rest of us; it just was what it was and continued to be what it was," said Archbishop Angaelos, Chair of SAT-7's International Council, during his opening address.

SAT-7's four channels shared how they created 47 new programs, social media series, and special live episodes to address viewers' spiritual, physical, and psychological needs. SAT-7 TÜRK spoke of how they became a bridge to connect Christians in prayer, so that their viewership tripled in number. Videos from both SAT-7 KIDS and the SAT-7 ACADEMY educational stream demonstrated the breadth of their COVID responses, and clips from the program *City of Stars* on SAT-7 ARABIC underlined the importance of child protection in light of children's experiences during lockdown. SAT-7 PARS shared moving testimonies from Iran to Afghanistan, driving home the importance of viewer support during times of crisis.

Participants were visibly moved by a video presentation from *You Are Not Alone*, a program created by SAT-7 ARABIC at the start of the pandemic. Despite covering the most challenging moments across the Arab-speaking world in the last two years, the program continued to send messages of hope and faith, exemplifying the role of SAT-7's ministry as a bearer of God's hope and light at the darkest of times.

External experts and representatives from the Church in the region shared moving personal stories and testimonies in dynamic presentations on various topics, including Freedom of Religion or Belief, peacebuilding, and reconciliation. Introducing a brand new projects supported by the Norwegian Mission Society, SAT-7's Maggie Morgan explained how her great-grandfather's choice not to circumcise the girls in his family and to make sure they were educated equally with the boys changed the lives of generations of women in her family.

Two other pioneering projects were also presented, showing how the crises of the last two years had given the ministry the opportunity further to explore its role. The presentations from *Lebanon Our Story*, a SAT-7 partnership with CKU, and HOPE schools, an inspiring collaboration between SAT-7 ACADEMY and Heart for Lebanon supporting education for refugee children, clearly illustrated what can be achieved in partnership.

An afternoon at the SAT-7 PARS studio in Limassol focused on

[CLICK HERE](#) TO WATCH THE VIDEO FROM SAT-7 KIDS

[CLICK HERE](#) TO WATCH A TESTIMONY FROM SAT-7 PARS

[CLICK HERE](#) TO WATCH A VIDEO FROM HOPE SCHOOL

[CLICK HERE](#) TO WATCH EXCERPTS FROM *YOU ARE NOT ALONE*

For further information on the other new programs please [click here](#)



1. Visiting the PARS studio | 2. Maggie Morgan tells her great-grandfather's story | 3. Worship with Marianne Awaraji Daou | 4. Staff from SAT-7 PARS and SAT-7 TÜRK | 5. A presentation on the HOPE schools | 6. Archbishop Angaelos

the how the crises had provided opportunities for innovation in SAT-7's social media and viewer support, and on SAT-7's audiences and their daily struggles as isolated Christians in the MENA. SAT-7's North Africa team spoke of the challenges and opportunities for Christians in Tunisia and Algeria. Participants heard on video from a viewer in a remote mountain village in Algeria, where the Christian community continues to grow through God's grace. They also learned about the challenges and opportunities of working as isolated Christians in a country that has seen further church closures in recent months.

On the final day, SAT-7 CEO Ms. Rita El-Mounayer introduced the new SAT-7 strategy for 2023-25, which focuses on increasing the relevance and accessibility of SAT-7 to those outside the church, deepening and broadening SAT-7's appeal to audiences beyond our established centers, creating more programming and content from particular cultures and contexts, and in particular, supporting youth across the region, helping them see that the Church is relevant to their lives and struggles.

Ms. El-Mounayer outlined how programming and social media content and viewer support will address all areas of human life by focusing on four integrated imperatives:

1. **Share the Gospel:** offer viewers an opportunity to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ and to make their own response to it
2. **Support the Church:** enable individual believers to deepen their discipleship and assist the local church to grow in breadth and depth
3. **Serve society:** promote holistic well-being among viewers from all backgrounds and equip them to be agents of positive change
4. **Steward creation:** encourage sustainable lifestyles and a harmonious relationship between humans and the natural world

"It is going to be a bright future," concluded Ms. El-Mounayer. "Especially after seeing what is happening across the region and the stories of hope, I have tears in my eyes seeing the pain of a lot of people, but yet the joy of so many transforming this pain to become something very beautiful, serving the Lord with all their heart and wanting to serve their community."

The Partnership Gathering followed two days of meetings for the SAT-7 Executive Board and International Council.

As he left The Partnership Gathering, Archbishop Angaelos summed up its energy and inspiration in a tweet. "This is a time for us to stand, speak, witness, and advocate together for our wounded world, while being a presence of hope," he said. "Blessed to serve alongside you all."

LIVES CHANGED BY GOD'S LOVE

God's love is changing lives in the Middle East and North Africa. Here are just a few of the many viewer stories that touched our hearts in the first three months of 2022.

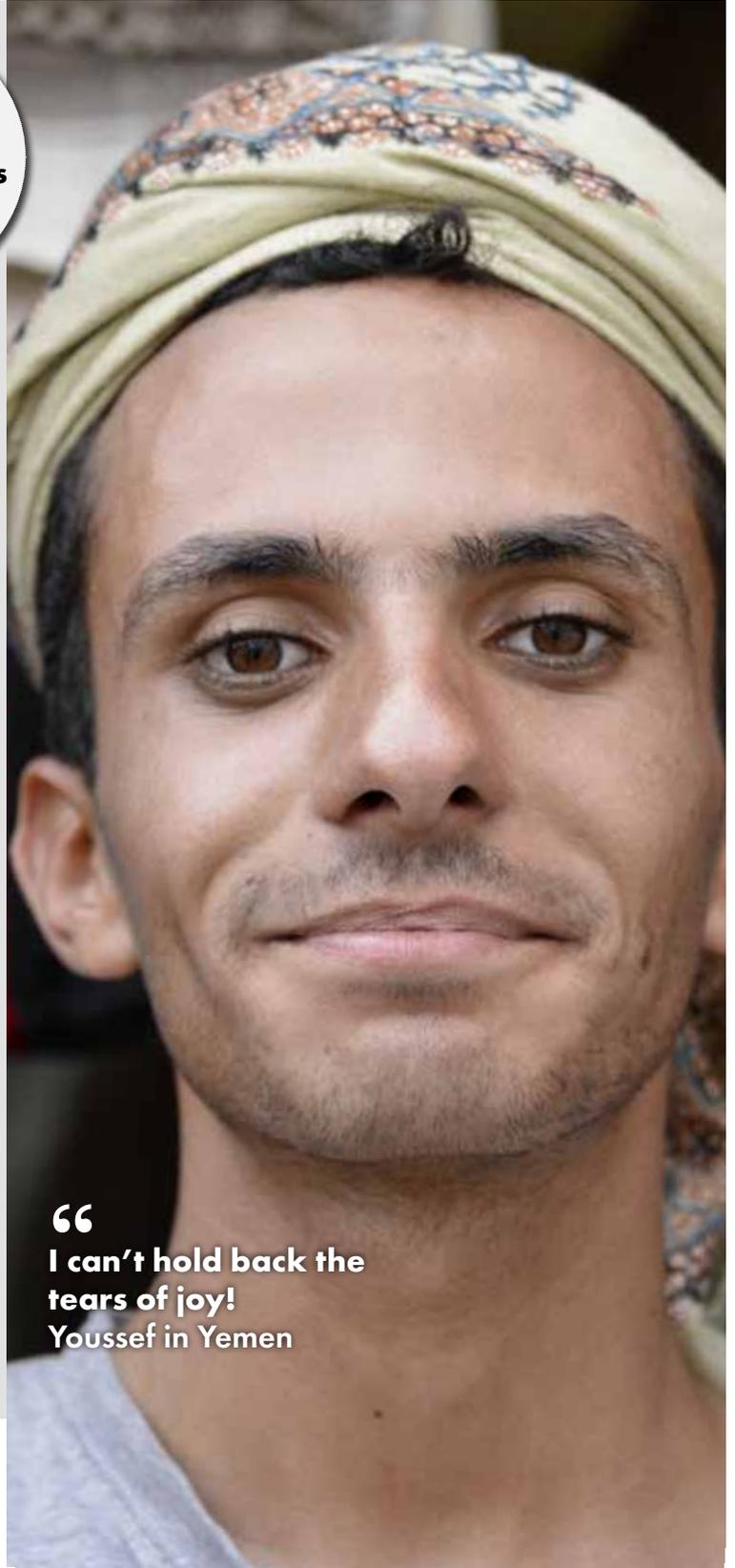
"I need to know the real God. I'm seeking to know the truth," was the first thing Youssef said to our Arabic Viewer Support Team. The 20-year-old student from Yemen had found the Facebook page SAT-7 Daily Bread, which shares discipleship content through video clips and posts. The posts that prompted Youssef to write offered teaching for believers on how to grow in one's prayer life.

SAT-7's videos
were watched
2 million times
on Facebook*

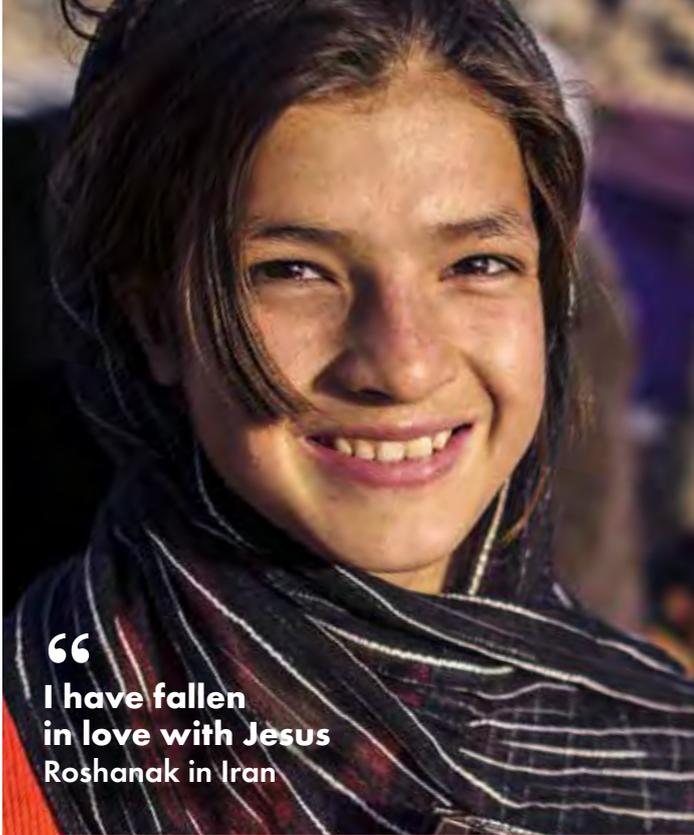
In response to Youssef's question, a Viewer Support team member shared who Jesus is, that God loves us, and how we can enter into relationship with Him through Jesus' sacrifice for us. As the conversation continued, Youssef asked many intelligent questions. "If Jesus is God, how could God die?" "How could He be fully human and fully God at the same time?" "What is the difference between the four Gospels?" The counselor gave as much time as Youssef needed to listen and provide answers. At the end of the conversation, they sent Youssef a digital Bible.

The next thing that Youssef shared was, "I am convinced that Jesus is God! He is the image of God incarnated and He died on the Cross to atone for our sins."

Youssef had a lot of fear about how his community would react if they saw him publicly practice his faith, and we reassured him that his relationship with God can be completely private if necessary. In tears, he shared that he wanted to accept God's love and salvation. He wanted to pray, but wasn't sure if it would be acceptable, since he had not ritually washed first. When the team member shared that it is the heart that must be pure, through Jesus, he said, "That scripture gave me goosebumps." He prayed with the team member, then excused himself, saying, "I can't hold back the tears of joy!"



“
I can't hold back the
tears of joy!
Youssef in Yemen



“
I have fallen
in love with Jesus
Roshanak in Iran

Roshanak in Iran first heard about Jesus through the SAT-7 PARS program *Golden Advice: Jungle of Golpand*, a Persian children's program that includes Christian teaching, games, and songs. She loved presenter Maryam, and so when Maryam launched *Church4Kids*, a discipleship project delivered through Instagram, she decided to take part.

Roshanak told Maryam: “I loved you when you were on [*Golpand*]. When I saw you and spoke with you, it made me so happy. Then I saw how much the program spoke about Jesus and about how the Lord is kind and loving. I fell in love with Jesus Christ and from then on, I put my faith in Him completely.”

Roshanak shared that a few days after this realization, she bravely told her mother that she wanted to become a Christian. To the young girl's surprise, her mother said, “I have really seen their [Christians'] kindness, and how Auntie Maryam speaks lovingly with the children, and I too have fallen in love with Jesus. So let's become Christians together, as I would love to be a Christian.’ So my mother came to faith in Jesus Christ and both of us became Christians.”

Since becoming a believer, Roshanak has continued to take part in *Church4Kids* and has been a source of encouragement to others. “We must not be afraid, because we have God, we have Jesus Christ, and we have our Heavenly Father. Just as our verse for today, Joshua 1:9, says, ‘Be strong and bold because God will be with you.’ In truth, wherever we may be and whatever problems we may face, God is always with us.”

SAT-7's teams held
29,000
one-to-one
conversations
with viewers
like Roshanak*

Turkey
was the top location
of viewers of SAT-7 PLUS,
SAT-7's video-on-demand
and live-streaming
service*

Like many people in Turkey, Bahri had negative feelings towards Christians. Before he started watching SAT-7 TÜRK, he said, “I was biased.”

As he watched, though, Bahri was moved. “You have an honest and caring community,” he says. “My prejudice was completely destroyed. Your channel makes me see the truth.”

Bahri's is one of several stories the channel has witnessed recently in which viewers have shared that the channel has shown them they were wrong in their understanding of Christianity. This is an important objective for SAT-7 in Turkey, where Christians are in a tiny minority and face much hostility.

Now Bahri says, “I take joy in watching your channel. Because I am watching, my entire household has turned against me.” But even as the members of his household shun him, he is encouraging them to watch SAT-7 TÜRK too.

“No matter what happens, I will continue to watch,” he says.



“
My prejudice was
completely destroyed
Bahri in Turkey

Please pray for Youssef, Roshanak, Bahri, and the millions of others watching SAT-7's programming and digital content. Pray that they will grow in their knowledge of God and His love, and that their lives will continue to bear fruit.



MARIAM AND HER FRIENDS

Children love stories that inspire and fill their young imaginations. So SAT-7 KIDS has created a special story-telling children's program in which a young girl talks to her puppets before she goes to bed every night. Mariam's stories are inspired by the Bible and teach children about Christ. ■

"THE HEALING JESUS" CONFERENCE

SAT-7 ARABIC provided live coverage of a special spiritual gathering for Arab Christians in Kuwait. The three-day event focused on the topic of healing. Hundreds gathered to praise and worship the Lord, guided by the choir team "Light for Nations." Then, Christian apologist and psychiatrist Dr Maher Samuel preached about the healings of Jesus.

The conference ran from April 14-16. ■



Presented by three teenagers, the new program *Quality Time* reaches out to teenagers and young adults, guiding them in their spiritual journey. The program combines skits, worship music, Bible reading, and prayer to engage viewers in learning more about the Lord and how to live an active Christian life. It provides in-depth guidance for young people, in contrast to what they learn through social media, which is currently their main source of information and entertainment. It also gives them an opportunity to express their thoughts on biblical issues in light of their daily challenges. ■

I SAW GOD

SAT-7 ARABIC viewers get the opportunity to see how the hand of God touches people's lives on the special testimonies program *I Saw God*. The new program features personal stories and testimonies of faith and healing as a witness to the continuous work of the Lord.

Meritte Mahroos, a Christian woman in her thirties, was told by her doctor that she had weeks to live after undergoing a long series of medical tests in search of a diagnosis. But after she offered a heartfelt prayer in her deep distress, the Lord intervened at the eleventh hour and healed her completely.

"My outlook on life changed. I feel different on the inside and not just in my body. My priorities changed. I am a new creation," she says on *I Saw God*. ■



ONGOING RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS OF AFGHANS

SAT-7 PARS is responding to the growing need for emotional and spiritual support in Afghanistan through regular live broadcasts of *Secret of Life* and the pre-recorded program *Window of Light*, both produced by SAT-7's partner Pamir Ministries. The channel has produced two seasons of the Dari Scripture teaching program *Following Christ*, which will be broadcast later this year. It has also found new opportunities to share social media productions in Dari on its various social media pages.

Promising new connections with Dari-speakers have opened another door, as the channel makes plans to produce a program that will address the basics of the Christian faith. Given the title *God, I Want to Know You*, the program will be presented by Bilquis Zhobin, an

Afghan Christian living in the US who will explore who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for humanity and introduce viewers to what salvation in Christ means.

The needs of people in Afghanistan are continually increasing as their rights and freedoms are abused. The Taliban's promises of schools opening for girls in March were broken; women are being forced to cover their faces, anonymised in the public sphere; and the economy has collapsed, plunging the country into one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world.

Our main PARS production house is in Cyprus, and we have a studio in London. Please pray that God will continue to enable SAT-7 PARS to respond better to Afghan viewers' needs. ■



GIBBER-GABBER

SAT-7 TÜRK's new live program *Gibber-Gabber* is offering Christian youth in Turkey a platform on which they can freely express their ideas and faith. Speaking up against the increasing hopelessness and growing cynicism in their generation about religion and faith, the presenters and guest speakers on *Gibber-Gabber* share how their faith is intriguing, exciting, and full of hope and love.

The program features popular games, hymns, and current affairs, attracting viewers of various backgrounds with its engaging and dynamic content, while also introducing viewers to God's Good News. ■



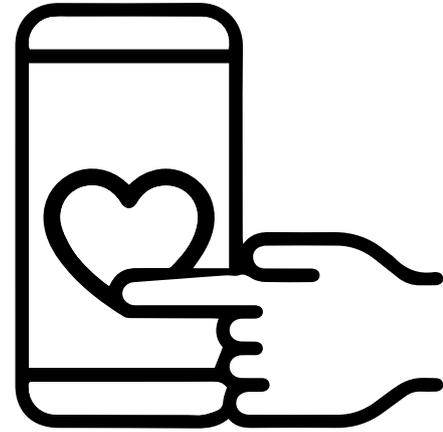
Joanna Abou Rjeily (left) from SAT-7's partner Heart for Lebanon, visiting a refugee family

WILL YOU HELP SAT-7 BRING HOPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

SAT-7's ministry is supporting vulnerable migrant communities across the Middle East and North Africa. It is bringing wise counsel, secure hope, and a chance to be heard to those who have lost their homes, and often their homelands too. But none of this vital work is possible without the generosity of our donors.

Please would you consider making a gift to sustain and expand SAT-7's help for people on the move, and for everyone in the region? With your support, however great or small, we can continue to shine the light of Christ into the lives of those you have read about here – and millions more.

To partner with SAT-7 today, please visit www.sat7usa.org/ways-to-give/ for different ways to give.



This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "Although I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them among the countries, yet for a little while I have been a sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone." Ezekiel 11:16



Iranian Christian refugees at prayer

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