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TEACH FOR LEBANON: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR

Mohamad Alameh wrote this case under the supervision of Dr. Alain Daou solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

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Not-for-profit entities committed to providing quality education find it very strenuous to sustain financially given Lebanon’s political instability and bad economy, and at the same time to support the 250,000 out-of-school children who perceive education to be a luxury as they struggle to secure food and shelter.

Salyne El-Samarany

On November 13, 2017, Salyne El-Samarany, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Teach For Lebanon (TFL) not-for-profit organization (NFP), was just leaving her office at 7 p.m., two hours after her regular work schedule. “It was darker than usual,” El-Samarany recalled, but she was not referring just to the darkness of the night. El-Samarany was worried about Lebanon’s political turmoil: the prime minister had resigned from his position a few days before.[[1]](#endnote-1) Given the political instability, many multi-year individual donors had ceased their financial contributions to TFL and left the country. The loss of contributions would significantly impact TFL, a member of the 48-nation Teach For All network,[[2]](#endnote-2) devoted to a world where “. . . all children have access to quality education while fostering youth leadership and promoting civic engagement.”[[3]](#endnote-3)

On her way home that evening, El-Samarany thought about the day’s dramatic events and tried to come to terms with her executive team’s intense emotions after they were told that their salaries would not be paid on time that month. “Informing employees,” El-Samarany noted, “who had been doing a fantastic job pushing for quality education, that their salaries—their very basic right—would be cut, was just unacceptable by all means.” El-Samarany had also met with the team members privately to discuss any mandatory payments they would have to make, such as car loans or rent. Those meetings were intensely emotional, the news met with anger, tears, hugs, and support. El-Samarany knew it was one of those times again—when the entire country held its breath, crippled by the political and financial uncertainty.

El-Samarany was trying hard to keep the organization financially solvent, but she could not help worrying about how to keep TFL afloat in the long run. She had also been considering a business idea that could generate additional income for TFL—an online platform called EduCruiter. When she came up with the business model for EduCruiter, El-Samarany wondered whether she had properly validated the business idea.

LEBANON

Established in 1945, the Republic of Lebanon was a sovereign state of the eastern Mediterranean region. Covering a total area of 10,452 square kilometres and hosting 18 officially recognized religious sects, Lebanon was the smallest country in the Asian mainland, and it suffered from limited resources. In 2016, over 28 per cent of Lebanese were living below the poverty line, and five per cent were considered extremely poor and not fulfilling their nutritional needs.[[4]](#endnote-4)

Lebanon had a reputation for the high quality of its education, with over 40 higher education institutions and the top-ranked university in the Arab world, the American University of Beirut.[[5]](#endnote-5) However, the country’s illiteracy rate in 2015 ranked seventh in the region. In 2017, 10.4 per cent of children aged 15 and below—69.4 percent of whom were female—were illiterate.[[6]](#endnote-6) The population overall had only 7.9 mean years of schooling,[[7]](#endnote-7) and the Lebanese government spent only 5.7 per cent of its total expenditure on education.[[8]](#endnote-8)

Lebanon was also home to 450,000 Palestinian refugees, settled mostly in eight camps. Advocating the Palestinian right to return to Palestine someday, the Lebanese government did not naturalize Palestinians and allowed them to work in only a limited number of professions, leading to dependency on foreign aid for the refugees. For instance, in 2013 alone, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) dedicated US$675 million[[9]](#endnote-9) to support Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.[[10]](#endnote-10) Most Palestinians in Lebanon received elementary education, with only 46 per cent proceeding to intermediate education and 18.9 per cent to secondary education.[[11]](#endnote-11) Over five million Palestinians in five regions had become even more vulnerable when, in December 2018, the U.S. government cut funding to the UNRWA.[[12]](#endnote-12)

Since 2011, Lebanon had also been hosting approximately two million Syrian refugees who fled the war, making Lebanon the country with the highest number of refugees per capita in the world. This put further strain on the country’s weak infrastructure, negatively affecting security and increasing poverty. Around 90 per cent of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon lacked basic financial resources, and many households sent their children to work or to beg on the streets instead of sending them to school. Up to 2017, the European Commission had given over €439 million[[13]](#endnote-13) in aid to alleviate this crisis, while U.S. funding reached more than $167 million.[[14]](#endnote-14) Despite efforts to provide Syrian refugees with the necessary education, Lebanon was able to accommodate only 150,000 Syrian refugee children in the 350 public schools with a special curriculum, where two teaching sessions were combined into one.[[15]](#endnote-15) Over 280,000 Syrian refugees still did not attend school.[[16]](#endnote-16)

INTERVENTIONS

Lebanon hosted over 8,500 NFPs, 200 of which were branches of global organizations. All of them were governed by a number of laws and supervised by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities.[[17]](#endnote-17) Many of the NFPs operated in the education sector, but additional efforts were needed to support the vision of educational equality.

Sonbola[[18]](#endnote-18)

The Sonbola Group for Education and Development (Sonbola) was launched in the fall of 2014 and officially registered with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities in October 2015. The NFP was a grassroots organization that originated in response to the poor quality of education offered to Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Sonbola stated that “. . . every single child has the right to an inclusive and high-quality education irrespective of his socio-economic, religious or ethnic background.”[[19]](#endnote-19) They consequently established three programs: Taleem (education), Tamkeen (empowerment), and Tadreeb (training).

During the academic year 2015–2016, over 1,300 children benefited from the Taleem program. Taleem provided refugee children with transport to and from schools, and it worked on removing the various barriers that restricted refugee children’s access to education. For instance, Taleem instituted awareness campaigns and provided social work support to refugee parents to ensure that the children would not be forced to drop out of school.

Sonbola’s signature program, Tamkeen, was operated by the Sonbola Learning Centre. Two hundred children were enrolled every two months in the Tamkeen program, which benefited 2,200 children in less than two years. In addition to offering classes in the four major subjects—science, math, English, and Arabic—Tamkeen included educational activities such as computer education and robotics, along with psychological support through art, music, theatre, and so on.

Attempting to create sustainable impacts and believing in the power of teachers, Sonbola founded the program Tadreeb, which focused on training former and new Syrian teachers to help them provide sufficient education to the Syrian refugee communities. Tadreeb offered a series of capacity building activities and provided up-to-date material. It focused on building homeroom teacher skills so that Syrian refugee teachers could teach more than just one subject. The subjects of the teacher education curriculum included STEM education—science, technology, engineering, and math—along with laboratories and creative writing, arts and music classes, and various forms of assessments. Approximately 45–50 teachers benefited from the Tadreeb program during the academic year 2015–2016.

Sonbola was one of many NFPs that received donations from the global community to work with the Syrian refugees; it also collected individual donations and contributions from domestic NFPs. For exposure and fundraising purposes, Sonbola organized refugee choir performances that were held at the American University in Beirut, the UNESCO Palace, and other venues. As a result, Sonbola was featured in a number of news outlets, such as the *Huffington Post* and CNN Arabia, and in local media, such as *As-Safir* and *Sada Al-Balad* newspapers, the National News Agency, and Al Jadeed TV.

School Development Consultants[[20]](#endnote-20)

Registered in 1999 as a limited liability company, School Development Consultants (SDC) became a private commercial business “. . . committed to bringing learner-centred international education to children, educators and institutions across the Middle East and the developing world.”[[21]](#endnote-21) SDC was directed by a diverse board of trustees, all of whom realized that numerous domestic academic establishments could benefit from improving the quality of education provided by the establishment. SDC’s clients included schools and centres, ministries, investor groups, and NFPs working in the education sector in 13 countries across the Middle East.

SDC’s most popular program was the Pre-Operational Services Program. It spanned 9–12 months and was typically requested prior to launching a new academic institution. In this program, SDC created business plans by analyzing opportunities, defining target customers, addressing legal requirements and licensing, finding initial investments, and so on. SDC also suggested marketing plans, designed websites, handled social media content, and considered audience attention metrics. Moreover, SDC outlined the characteristics of a proper working environment and reviewed the institution’s culture, recruitment process, training, and vision and mission statements. Academically, SDC designed curricula and reviewed teaching methods and evaluation systems.

At a later stage, SDC could be contracted under the Management Services Program to manage an institution for a set period of time. Under this program, SDC made decisions on behalf of the academic establishment while reporting back to the school’s upper management on a quarterly basis. SDC also had the right during the initial period to re-design the mission and vision statements and the objectives and strategy behind those statements. SDC could refine work policies and manuals and communicate the results to teachers, students, parents, and management. In addition, the Management Services Program allowed SDC to tailor programs for screening, recruiting, renewing, terminating, and training all of the organization’s personnel.

The organization also worked with schools to implement international standards when meeting security and safety needs along with maintenance plans. Financial planning and budget control were also fundamental services SDC offered, in addition to financing, accreditation, and self-assessment of the education management team, and suggestions for the improvement of existing strategies.

In addition, SDC launched the Teacher Academy, a training centre where SDC organized a number of workshops. In 2018, the academy focused on “21st century learning”—integrating technology with languages, providing STEM education, and teaching communication strategies. Under consultancy and individual services, SDC did not make decisions on the topics addressed, but made suggestions and recommendations based on the needs of the client.

TEACH FOR LEBANON

TFL was founded in 2009 by Ali Demashkieh, a former staff member of the U.S. embassy in Lebanon and TFL’s first CEO. A local NFP in Lebanon, TFL’s vision was to provide “. . . all children with access to quality education while fostering youth leadership and promoting civic engagement.”[[22]](#endnote-22) In creating TFL, Demashkieh hoped to improve the quality of education delivered to underprivileged children. TFL was registered with the Lebanese Ministry of Interior and Municipalities under the number 1518 and with the Lebanese Ministry of Finance under the number 2703441.

Governed by the values of empathy, commitment to equality, mutual responsibility, reflection, and a sense of possibility, TFL aimed to “. . . recruit, train, and place young leaders into the classrooms for two years to equip children with lifelong learning skills.”[[23]](#endnote-23) The two-year life cycle of the recruited leaders, who were called fellows, was TFL’s main program. Fellows were placed in schools in rural areas in Lebanon to work with underprivileged children who suffered a range of psychological, cognitive, and financial problems that limited their access to education. This demanded much time, effort, and patience. Some fellows also worked with local municipalities in an attempt to resolve some of the challenges the community struggled with, such as domestic violence. Fellows were paid $1,000 per month and received benefits such as mentoring, university scholarships, and ongoing support.

TFL was acknowledged for its impact with a number of awards. In 2016, TFL received the Arab Creativity Award from the Arab Thought Foundation, received the U.S.-Middle East Partnership (MEPI) Appreciation Award, and was recognized by the Lebanese American University in the NFP fairs. In supervising TFL’s work, El-Samarany had received the Youth Courage Award in 2014 from the Office of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education. El-Samarany was also shortlisted from 600 applicants from around the world, and was then selected as the only Lebanese among 100 leaders across the world, to join the Facebook Community Leadership Program for 2018–2019 in recognition of her work with the TFL community.

Teach For All[[24]](#endnote-24)

TFL shared a common mission and vision with other organizations around the world that were connected by Teach For All. In September 2007, Wendy Kopp and Brett Wigdortz announced the initiation of Teach For All during the Clinton Global Initiative. By encouraging the creation of grassroots organizations in countries that aimed to recruit leaders committed to providing two years of quality education, Teach For All hoped to create a ripple effect through influencing young scholars and their families and wider communities.

Since 2007, Teach For All had supported sister “Teach For” non-profit organizations in several countries. As of 2017, Teach For All connected 48 partner NFPs in 40 countries with six global hubs in New York, Washington, London, Doha, Pune, and Hong Kong. Even though the Teach For NFPs around the globe were “independent, locally-led and locally-governed organizations,”[[25]](#endnote-25) they held summits in various countries, where they shared their struggles and progress and their vision toward mutual learning and co-operation. El-Samarany acknowledged the importance of the network:

We will maintain our good relationships with Teach For All and the other Teach For NFPs, for we benefit a lot from the workshops and conferences they organize. Recently, Teach For All and TFL submitted a joint proposal to USAID [the United States Agency for International Development], and Teach For All got the grant with TFL as the sub-grantee.

El-Samarany also accompanied one of TFL’s education mentors at a summit in Nepal where many of the Teach For NFPs gathered to discuss the theme “A Community at the Centre.”

Staffing

As an organization that provided educational services, TFL’s impact was based on the efficiency and capability of its human capital. Starting as a small organization with only five staff members operating from one office, TFL’s team grew to scale-up its impact (see Exhibit 1). According to El-Samarany, TFL’s members were excited “. . . when the executives, board members, and fellows came together.”

TFL’s 15-member board of trustees in Lebanon and the U.S. were responsible for establishing connections, fundraising, and voting on major decisions within the organization. TFL diversified its board of trustees, many of whom held prestigious positions outside TFL’s walls. For instance, the board included the senior director of the financial operations department at Lebanon’s central bank, CEOs of companies such as Specified Technologies Inc. and Abyco Company Holding S.A.L., and presidents of top regional universities such as the American University of Beirut and the Lebanese American University (see Exhibit 2).

“It is not easy to become a Fellow,” El-Samarany explained, “as we provide competitive offers, lots of training, and ongoing alumnus follow-up and benefits.” Given the six phases of the recruitment process (see Exhibit 3), only 2.3 per cent of the applicants were qualified in 2015 to attend the Summer Institute, a six-week intensive workshop that provided fundamental theories in education along with hands-on application. Only after passing the final examination was the applicant granted the title “fellow” and offered a contract.

Fellows were placed mostly in rural areas for two years. They taught subjects in the Lebanese curriculum along with 10 hours per week of extracurricular activities. “Fellows are the main pillars of our organization,” El-Samarany said. “They are doing the direct impact while we, the executive team, attempt to keep them empowered, fund their salaries, and advertise their work.” When accepted, fellows received daily support from the education department at TFL and attended monthly professional development intensive workshops. While fellows committed to exert their ultimate effort during their two-year mission, the executive team guided them to make the most out of the opportunity and prepare for the future.

Partnerships

A local pioneer in education, TFL secured partnerships with Lebanese academic institutions. According to El-Samarany,

Universities not only provide us with freshly graduating employable talent and up-to-date theories in education, universities also provide our alumni with full-ride scholarships, which is a crucial element of attraction to prospective fellows as we aim to motivate our alumni, the same way we do with the students we teach, to pursue higher education.

In addition to receiving monetary donations from banks like BLOM Bank and Banque Du Liban, TFL sought corporate social responsibility (CSR) donations from corporations. For two years, Deutsche Post DHL Group, the international postal service company, funded a portion of the salaries of the TFL fellows working with Syrian refugees. “DHL Postal Service, a German company, came across many Syrian refugees in Germany, and so they sympathized with the refugee crisis that Lebanon was going through,” said El-Samarany.

Touch, the Lebanese telecommunications company, funded computer labs in five of the schools TFL worked with. “Touch wanted to make sure that the labs they funded were utilized,” El-Samarany said, “and so they trusted that TFL fellows used them regularly throughout the year.” TFL also took pride in its partnerships with local organizations, such as the Orphan Welfare Society in Saida, the Ana Aqra Association, Himaya Foundation, and ABAAD–Resource Center for Gender Equality, because they complemented TFL’s efforts and provided a collective approach in dealing with local education inequity challenges.

Financing

“I always reminded my colleagues that TFL’s financial sustainability cannot be compared to that of other Teach For NFPs,” El-Samarany noted, commenting during one of TFA’s annual summits. Based in a country with political instability, a poor economy, a refugee crisis, and a lack of local support for NFPs operating in the country, El-Samarany found it extremely challenging to sustain TFL financially.

“One time, we were promised a $40,000 grant from a donor by June, only when the time came, the donor apologized and gave us nothing,” EL-Samarany recounted. Many donors failed to honour their promises of donations, not just for TFL but for all the NFPs they supported in Lebanon. Consequently, TFL struggled to tally potential contributions because one donor would promise $20,000 in June, another might promise $30,000 in November, and another would promise $50,000 in March, with a high possibility that all promises would be cancelled. As a result, El-Samarany had to consider a more project-based approach, where TFL would employ fellows on a project-by-project basis. That way, TFL could apply for proposals, get funds for a certain project, and rest assured that this grant would not be cancelled as long as TFL complied with the grantees’ rules. Grants required more reporting on TFL’s side, but El-Samarany considered project-based funding to be more stable.

El-Samarany worked closely with TFL’s public relations and development manager to raise the necessary funds (see Exhibit 4). They met with local donors and sponsors personally to raise awareness about the organization’s mission and impact. El-Samarany confirmed that if TFL had diverse sources of local individual donations (see Exhibits 5 and 6), then TFL could “. . . start focusing on donors living abroad, such as prominent members of the Lebanese diaspora.” During fund-raising meetings, TFL introduced potential donors to the six funding programs posted on the organization’s website (see Exhibit 7). TFL adopted the concept of accountability and transparency, publishing their annual reports and presening them for approval to the Lebanese government, which then gave TFL a certificate of clearance.

Similar to Teach For India, Teach For Qatar, Teach For Peru, or any other Teach For network, TFL was created as a locally-funded NFP. Teach For All would assist in educating the executive team on how to fund their endeavour but expected each organization to fund itself through its own initiatives. In order to obtain funding from U.S. donors, El-Samarany worked with the board of trustees to start TFL-US, a tax-deductible organization with a 501(c)(3) public charity NFP tax status. TFL had adjusted all of its financial, human resources, recruiting, accountability, and other policies to comply with international standards, which gave El-Samarany hope for larger international grants.

Based in a developing country with economic struggles, TFL faced two main challenges. First, the Lebanese Ministry of Finance did not reduce individual or corporate taxes when Lebanese individuals or corporations donated money to NFPs. However, corporations were motivated to contribute to NFPs to diminish their net profits to levels where the percentage paid on their taxable income dropped. The second challenge was that NFPs in Lebanon were prohibited from investing their donations in commercial activities as a means to sustain their programs, even if the generated profit was to be fully reinvested in the social cause. As a result, many social enterprises in Lebanon were mandated to register their organization as a for-profit entity and pay 17 per cent taxes on any profits.

Moreover, many registered NFPs in Lebanon did not receive funding from the Ministry of Social Affairs. In June 2017, the Lebanese Institution for the Blind (LIB) posted on their website:

Yet, despite all the efforts put behind the support of LIB, the financial campaigns were insufficient to cover the growing needs and expenses of the institution given that all the services the institution offers are free of charge. To be noted that LIB did not receive yet any support from the Lebanese government.[[26]](#endnote-26)

When TFL was permitted by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to take over a few classes in public schools, school principals were glad to pay the fellows’ wages to TFL because the fellows provided higher quality education than typical local teachers. “Municipalities and principals were on board on paying us the fellows’ wages,” El-Samarany mentioned, “but shortly after, the Ministry of Education decreed that public schools were not allowed to pay TFL a single dime.”

EDUCRUITER

After committing years to the organization, El-Samarany realized that donations on their own would not ensure TFL’s long-term financial sustainability and scaling-up. She therefore considered a business idea that would secure a recurring stable income for TFL and assist the organization in sustaining itself financially. El-Samarany was also aware of the need to scale-up TFL’s impact to achieve its vision of eliminating educational inequality: “TFL alone would probably not be able to eliminate educational inequality in the country. We could only reduce it at certain geographical locations, which is the reason that having a social enterprise that could achieve our vision on a wider scale would be great.”

El-Samarany also recalled that the recruitment of the fellows was an expensive and very lengthy process, and so having a business that would eliminate some of these expenses would be a plus. The recruitment phase included costs of reservations, marketing material, housing, transportation, food, training, mentorship, celebrations, and so on, which added up to over $60,000 every year. The Summer Institute, the last phase of new fellow recruitment, cost over $2,000 per fellow. “We get countless applications every year, which is great as it helps us recruit quality educators,” El-Samarany noted. “But not all applicants are ready to go the extra mile and live in rural and risky regions such as those close to the international borders.” In addition, matching fellows to the profiles of the schools was a major challenge, something that required the dedication of the selection manager for the entire year.

Initially, El-Samarany intended to use her portfolio of thousands of applicant profiles stored in her data files as a resource to hire teachers for other schools for a charge. Although El-Samarany’s approach did not require much money to initiate the business, many limitations arose. For instance, some applicants were seeking TFL’s benefits or experience only and were not interested in a permanent teaching job; others were already employed by the time they were shortlisted; and yet others had completely changed their career path by the time they would be contacted. TFL also hired fresh graduates, while most schools sought experienced teachers.

El-Samarany also had to consider the time and resource constraints of scaling-up the company and attempting to match hundreds of schools with potential employees. To tackle these concerns, El-Samarany thought of creating an online platform that connected schools with teachers and educators with recruiters, and she decided to call it EduCruiter. Carrying the values of “. . . respect, sense of possibility, mutual responsibility, members first, and transparency,” EduCruiter would be an online platform that sought to contribute to a world where “. . . all children have access to quality education.” After registering the copyright for $150, EduCruiter’s mission was to “. . . connect members of the educational system for better teaching quality for all.”

After signing in to EduCruiter’s online system, users would be directed to the homepage of their EduCruiter account, where they could read articles or blogs, share experiences, check achievements, post videos, and read topics of interest. Users could also save posts and articles and receive recommendations, which motivated them to keep up with innovation in the education sector. Traditionally, schools depended on mere word of mouth to learn about teachers’ achievements; EduCruiter was designed to highlight and promote those achievements for all to see. Moreover, every user would have a profile page where they could include their personal information. Feedback, endorsements, recommendations, certifications, and other information would be available for both recruiters and teachers before any agreement came into action. EduCruiter would allow individuals to recommend one another or a certain academic institution, and to endorse, rate, or share their experiences. Trainers and accrediting agencies would have the option to certify individuals or institutions through the platform. Abuses could also be posted, along with supporting evidence, if teachers physically or verbally abused students, or principals abused their authority over teachers. El-Samarany stressed the need for such a feature because “. . . recruiters struggled to confirm some of the information teachers mentioned in their resumés at times or couldn’t conduct a background check.” Users could also direct-message individuals and organizations at a special page and check their notifications at another.

EduCruiter’s main objective was to connect schools and teachers in the hope of alleviating and optimizing the recruitment process. “We wanted to encourage other stakeholders in the education sector to sign up to EduCruiter,” El-Samarany stated, “but we still needed to maintain the focus of EduCruiter on the recruitment process as we believed this would be the biggest motivation for teachers and schools, and it also maintained our brand recognition.” El-Samarany’s intimate knowledge of the Lebanese educational ecosystem was sufficient to ascertain the feasibility of EduCruiter and justify the demand for it:

If you review the websites of most Lebanese schools, such as the prestigious American Community School Beirut, International College, SABIS International School, or Deutsche Internationale Schule Beirut, you would realize that there’s a continuous need for teachers. Many underprivileged schools in rural areas, including those we partnered with, also request fellows every year.

She also believed EduCruiter could start with 750 users and double that amount each year. Generally, schools underwent difficulties when recruiting educators. Human resource managers posted job descriptions on their websites and marketed their vacancies over Facebook pages, newspapers, LinkedIn, NFP websites, or university career centres, hoping to create word of mouth that a vacancy was available. Often, schools would merely post job announcements next to their main gates, hoping to spread the word about the vacancy. Schools sometimes received few applications, mandating recruiters to make quick selections that may not have matched the expertise the schools were looking for. If recruiters were lucky, they received a large number of applications, but going through all of them was time consuming because most applications were hard copies.

EduCruiter would allow school recruiters to list all teachers in their regions and to use filters and sorting options based on subjects taught, diplomas received, salary requested, years of experience, and recognitions received, and so on. Recruiters could shortlist applicants in a few minutes and send direct messages or notifications, or even make an offer. For the purpose of creating trust and security, each academic institution would be allowed to create a private profile when including a registration number. Only after EduCruiter confirmed the true representation of the profile would schools be allowed to connect with teachers, subject coordinators, and librarians.

Acknowledging the first-mover advantage EduCruiter would possess in Lebanon, the Middle East, and North Africa, El-Samarany sought to lock the stakeholders of the academic sector in EduCruiter by involving as many users as possible and as fast as possible. “Signing up as many users as possible in the platform, like what Facebook did, would make it difficult to compete with or duplicate us,” El-Samarany claimed. Given that, El-Samarany would allow educational accreditation agencies, trainers and coaches, social workers, NFPs operating in the education sector that may want to connect with other members of the education system, donors and sponsors, ministries and governmental agencies, education researchers, or even other staff members such as janitors and security guards, to sign up free of charge.

EduCruiter would make revenues through two methods: advertisements and premium accounts. “We want our advertisements to be of interest to the users and to focus on the education sector,” El-Samarany said. “We involve metrics and targeted customers when doing marketing.” For instance, a $1.99 ad for a workshop on “21st century learning” could be targeted to teachers who have not yet taken such a workshop. Ministries, for instance, may want to send messages to teachers operating in certain schools, such as announcements about unexpected holidays, dates for official exams, or an increase in teachers’ minimum wages. El-Samarany believed that ads could be effective and that 25 per cent of the total members would use them 15 times a year on average. Other forms of revenue generation would be to charge premium accounts $4.99 per month, where El-Samarany projected that 20 per cent of the users would upgrade their subscription. Premium accounts would allow members to get additional features like search engines, filters, and a report of “who viewed my profile.”

El-Samarany would use social media, word of mouth, and universities to market EduCruiter. In addition, she considered hiring salespersons to reach out to schools and negotiate deals with them. El-Samarany intended to use online attention metrics, such as Google Analytics, to measure progress. According to her, the number of created accounts would not be a sufficient indicator of the platform’s success because users may not be benefiting from EduCruiter. Instead, El-Samarany would focus on metrics like completed recruitments, number of premium accounts, and level of interaction, such as the average and median access times to the account and the time spent on the account.

EducCruiter’s fixed and recurring expenses would pose a challenge. Initiation cost included two employees—web and app developers—each for a salary of $1,000 per month and a laptop value of $600. EduCruiter would also have to pay annual salaries of an average $13,200 per person to a team comprising of a human resources manager, secretary, market researcher, executive assistant, and salesperson. Other expenses would be rent for $800 per month, supplies for $600, and miscellaneous for $300. Maintenance would be an annual expense of $650.

THE WAY FORWARD

El-Samarany knew that depending on individual and corporate donations was crucial to the everyday survival of TFL. Nevertheless, donations could never sustain the organization financially when considering scaling-up options and long-term impact. Attempting to come up with ideas so TFL could sustain itself financially, El-Samarany considered launching EduCruiter, but she was concerned about the validity of her business idea.

El-Samarany was undecided whether or not to create and launch EduCruiter, but she also needed to come up with a business plan to generate sustainable income and she had to understand the possible risks in order to mitigate them. Despite being managed by the CEO of both EduCuriter and TFL, EduCruiter would be separated from TFL to maintain TFL’s high quality of service. EduCruiter would merely support TFL through monetary and non-monetary CSR programs such as free premium accounts for TFL and annual donations. El-Samarany hoped that after starting locally, EduCruiter could scale-up regionally in the near future. If launched in 2019, EduCruiter would take a year of planning, designing, and mapping. By 2023, EduCruiter should prove profitable before it could expand regionally to include the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

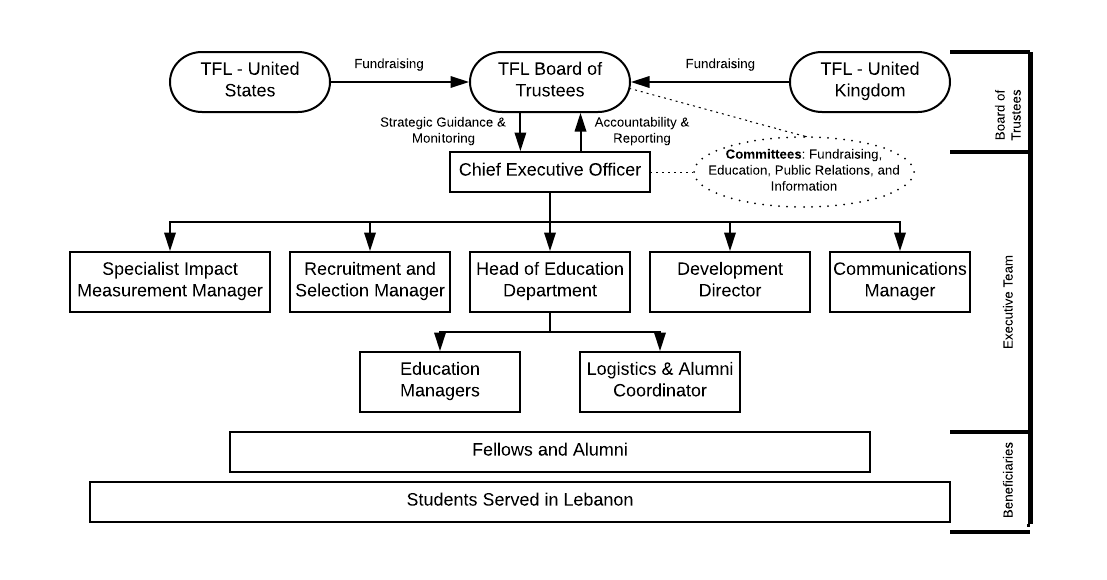
EXHIBIT 1: IMPACT, EMPLOYEES, AND PARTNERSHIP CHANGES AT TFL, 2014–2017

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| **Academic Year** | **2014**–**2015** | **2015**–**2016** | **2016**–**2017** | **Notes** |
| Fellows | 21 | 36 | 40 | Total fellows employed by TFL per academic year. |
| Applications to TFL | N/A | 1,427 | 1,132 | Applications were for the years 2014, 2015, and 2016 respectively. |
| Executive Team | 5 | 5 | 9 | Executive team included core management and excluded fellows and members of the board of trustees. |
| Students Impacted | 2,100 | 3,200 | 5,842 | Impact was directly related to the number of fellows. |
| Partner Schools | N/A | 19 | 26 | School types were private schools, public schools, orphanages, NFPs, and semi-private. |
| Partner Universities | 5 | 5 | 5 | Universities provided graduate scholarships, events hosting, advertisements, and talents recruitment. |
| Other Partnerships | N/A | N/A | 19 | Partnerships included banks, local and international NFPs, and for-profit companies. Partners provided monitory and/or non-monitory corporate social responsibility support. |

Note: NFPs = not-for-profit organizations; TFL= Teach For Lebanon.

Source: Compiled by the case authors from company files.

EXHIBIT 2: TFL’s ORGANIZATIONAL HIERARCHY STRUCTURE, 2017



Note: TFL= Teach For Lebanon.

Source: Company files.

EXHIBIT 3: PHASES OF FELLOWSHIP AT TFL, 2017

Phase 3: Fellowship Graduation

On-Going Alumnus Support

Phase 2: Employment

Step 1: Sign Contract

Step 2: Placement Assigned – First Year

Step 3: Placement Assigned –Second Year

Phase 1: Recruiting

Step 1: Submit On-Line Application

Step 2: Language Test

Step 3: Perform Mock Lesson

Step 4: Sit for an Oral Interview

Step 5: Attend Summer Institute

Note: TFL= Teach For Lebanon.

Source: Compiled by the case authors from company files.

EXHIBIT 4: TFL’S STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME, 2013–2016 (IN US$)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Comprehensive Income |  | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** |
| Donations | 584,323 | 746,646 | 1,124,408 | 1,307,247 |
| Other income | 88 | 6,332 | 15,076 | 31,225 |
| Cost of service | (427,683) | (537,945) | (702,860) | (843,075) |
| Other expenses | (98,922) | (100,825) | (154,583) | (314,227) |
| Personnel expenses | (96,089) | (117,936) | (177,455) | (250,668) |
| Profit (loss) for the year | (38,283) | (3,728) | 104,587 | (69,515) |

Note: This statement of comprehensive income was created for illustrative purposes and the purpose of academic discussion. It is not the actual statement of comprehensive income from Teach For Lebanon; TFL= Teach For Lebanon.

Source: Company files.

EXHIBIT 5: TFL’s MAJOR SPONSORS AND DONORS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Gold Sponsors** | Deutsche Post DHL Group | Courier Company |
| Al-Mawarid Bank | Financial Institution |
| Anthony R. Abraham Foundation | Foundation |
| **Platinum Sponsors** | Touch | Mobile Network Company |
| IBL Bank | Financial Institution |
| Banque Du Liban | Financial Institution |
| BLOM Bank | Financial Institution |
| SGBL Bank | Financial Institution |
| DHL UK Foundation | Foundation |
| MCN BUILD Foundation | Foundation |
| Mr. & Mrs. Ghassan Saab | Individual Donations |
| Khalil Kanaan | Individual Donations |
| Joumanna Nasr | Individual Donations |
| Aimee & Charles Kettaneh Foundation | Foundation |
| Joseph & Claude Audi Charitable Foundation | Foundation |
| **Bronze Sponsors** | Anis Adel | Individual Donations |
| Antoine & Raya Nahas | Individual Donations |
| Audi Bank | Financial Institution |
| Diamony | Luxury Company |
| Anonymous | N/A |
| Ted & Laufey Bustany | Individual Donations |
| Fuad Sawaya | Individual Donations |
| Tony Tamer | Individual Donations |
| Amira & Jim Luikart | Individual Donations |
| Sam & Salma Gibara | Individual Donations |
| Monir & Hayat Barakat | Individual Donations |
| Charles & Gabriela Shaw | Individual Donations |
| Rima Abushakra | Individual Donations |
| Charles & Karine Boorady | Individual Donations |
| Ramzi Dagher | Individual Donations |
| Camile Saba | Individual Donations |
| The Salaam Club | Company |
| Bud & Sylviane Zehil | Individual Donations |
| Habib Kairouz | Individual Donations |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fellowship Champions** | **Sponsors and Donors** | **Commitment** | **Starting Date** |
| Mr. Naji & Nada Abumrad | 1 Fellowship in honour of Rafik Aoun, for 5 years | 2017 |
| Mr. Ziad & Ghada Jebara | 1 Fellowship in honour of Ghada Jebara, for 3 years | 2017 |
| Mrs. Maryann Evans | 1 Fellowship in honour of Edwin Roos, 1 year | 2017 |
| Mr. Maher, Mr. Zafer & Mrs. Gida Achi | 1 Fellowship in honour of Georges & Colette Achi, 5 years | 2016 |
| Anonymous | 2 Fellowships for 5 years | 2014 |
| Mr. Charbel & Aida Tagher | 2 Fellowships: one in honour of Isabelle & Homere Tagher and another in honour of Salma and Sam Gibara, for 5 years | 2013 |
| Mr. George Zakhem | 2 Fellowships in honour of Hanne Zakhem, for 5 years. | 2013 |
| The Levant Foundation | 2 Fellowships, for 5 years. | 2013 |
| The Raymond Debbane Family Foundation | 2 Fellowships: one in the name of Francis Debbane and another for Hilda Debbane, for 5 years. | 2013 |

Note: TFL= Teach For Lebanon.

Source: Compiled by the case authors from company files.

EXHIBIT 6: TFL’S STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION, 2013–2016 (IN US$)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assets |  | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** |
| Total equipment | 27,584 | 23,277 | 31,722 | 34,405 |
| Total non-current assets | 27,584 | 23,277 | 31,722 | 34,405 |
| Other receivables | 22,703 | 22,701 | 33,997 | 2,625 |
| Prepayments | 0 | 0 | 28,280 | 42,000 |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 10,451 | 8,349 | 78,038 | 46,825 |
| Total current assets | 33,154 | 31,050 | 140,315 | 91,450 |
| **Total assets** | **60,737** | **54,327** | **172,037** | **125,855** |
| Equity | **Total equity** | **12,502** | **8,775** | **113,362** | **43,846** |
| Liabilities | Employee benefits | 142 | 1,552 | 2,944 | 6,410 |
| Total non-current liabilities | 142 | 1,552 | 2,944 | 6,410 |
| Other payables | 48,094 | 44,002 | 55,732 | 75,598 |
| Total current liabilities | 48,094 | 44,002 | 55,732 | 75,598 |
| **Total liabilities** | 48,235 | 45,554 | 58,676 | 82,009 |
|  | **Total equity and liabilities** | **60,737** | **54,329** | **172,037** | **125,855** |

Note: This statement of financial position was created merely for illustrative purposes and the purpose of academic discussion. It is not the actual statement of financial position from Teach For Lebanon; TFL= Teach For Lebanon.

Source: Company files.

EXHIBIT 7: SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMS AT TFL

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fund Name** | **Amount (USD)** | **Individuals Impacted** | **Type** |
| Summer Institute | 80,000 | 300 students and 30 fellows | Summer Institute recruiting phase. |
| Facility Fund | 40,000 | 30+ students | Creating a school library; setting up a computer room, a science lab, or an auditorium; equipping a playground; etc. |
| “In-Honour” Fellowship Fund | 20,000 | 135 students | Fully-funding a fellow for a year |
| Spark with Us Fund | 10,000 | 30+ fellows | Monthly professional development workshop for the fellows |
| Student Classroom Fund | 22 | 1 student | Education and supplies |
| 550 | 1 classroom of 25 students |
| Future Generation Fund | 15,000–45,000 | Undetermined | Entire recruiting phase |
| 5,000–10,999 | 25–70 students | Extra-curricular activities |

Note: TFL= Teach For Lebanon.

Source: Company files.

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