

# Let love flow.

Week of  
**Compassion**

Week of Compassion Special Offering  
**FEBRUARY 21-28**



## *Action Update- Feb 2*

### Warmth and Refuge: Empowering Women Through Economic Development



On a cold morning, a group of women sit sharing coffee and conversation together. Times have been tough, but as the women share their stories and challenges, an idea emerges. Inspired by their shared experience, and their common love of handmade crafts, they begin planning a project that will generate income for their families.

This gathering could have taken place in any

neighborhood around the world where women meet to share morning coffee and life in general. But as it happens, this group of women are refugees living in Jordan. And the unique set of challenges that they share, and that their families face, was the catalyst for a new business venture. As one of the women shares, "we began brainstorming ideas, as to how we would combine our talents, to bring together a project to support our families for a better life. We all shared the skills of knitting and crochet."

They took their idea to The Orthodox Initiative, a Week of Compassion partner through Global Ministries. Week of Compassion has participated in the refugee response through OI for several years, which includes support for Syrian and Iraqi refugees. When the women shared their idea, they received support and encouragement to grow their project. It is now a thriving business called "**RapsiMo:**" a Greek word that means sewing.

Support for **RapsiMo**, which primarily serves young Iraqi women, is part of a wider response to meet a range of needs. Many of the Iraqi refugees served by the OI arrived

there in the years following the 2003 invasion of Iraq; even more came as a result of ISIS, and have been there since 2014. With the impact of COVID-19, and the suspension of international aid, refugees face compounded challenges of difficult living conditions, limited healthcare access, and economic insecurity. Winter conditions in Jordan can be especially harsh, with frequent snow and freezing sub-zero temperatures. The spending required to cover heating, water, food and hygiene can double for refugee families during this season. Week of Compassion has helped meet needs including clothes, boots, mittens, hats, and basic food supplies every winter since refugees have been settled in Jordan. This year, that support is even more critical.

Recently, Week of Compassion shared how our [support benefits refugees in Jordan](#)—currently host to the second-largest number of refugees per capita in the world, with approximately 750,000— and how partners have responded to the needs of COVID-19. Another aspect of that ongoing response is vocational growth and women’s empowerment programs.

Week of Compassion partners in Jordan work to balance meeting basic needs while also focusing on long-term development. With the economic slowdown that has occurred with the pandemic, programs like RapsiMo will be even more of a priority moving forward, to help prepare people for their lives beyond their present circumstances.

The work that the women of RapsiMo are engaging in right now helps provide warmth in many ways. Not only do they craft hats, blankets and hot water bottles to help weather the harsh winter, but the skills they are learning and the income they generate will help build a future for their families and entire community as well. This multiplier effect is how economies grow, even in challenging times.

Peter Makari, Global Ministries’ Executive for the Middle East and Europe, says “Week of Compassion support for this particular winter appeal is an extension of Disciples’ solidarity with the Orthodox Initiative and with refugees in the region over the last 10 years. We are in it for the long haul—we are accompanying families and people in need, people who are displaced, not on a ‘helicopter’ basis, not just putting money towards something... It’s a relationship. That’s part of who we are.”

Thank you for putting your compassion to work all over the world, especially in places like Jordan, helping refugees keep warm—and find hope for the future—through the long winter.

Week of Compassion  
Responses Since January 26



Indiana,  
COVID-19 Relief



West Virginia,  
COVID-19 Relief



Kentucky,  
COVID-19 Relief



Alabama,  
COVID-19 Relief



Guatemala,  
Food Security

For an interactive map of responses, [visit our website](#).

*Week of Compassion is the relief, refugee and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.*

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