أبعاد
abʿad

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



“Change is never made by one thread alone. It is woven through every action, every voice, and every connection we create together.”

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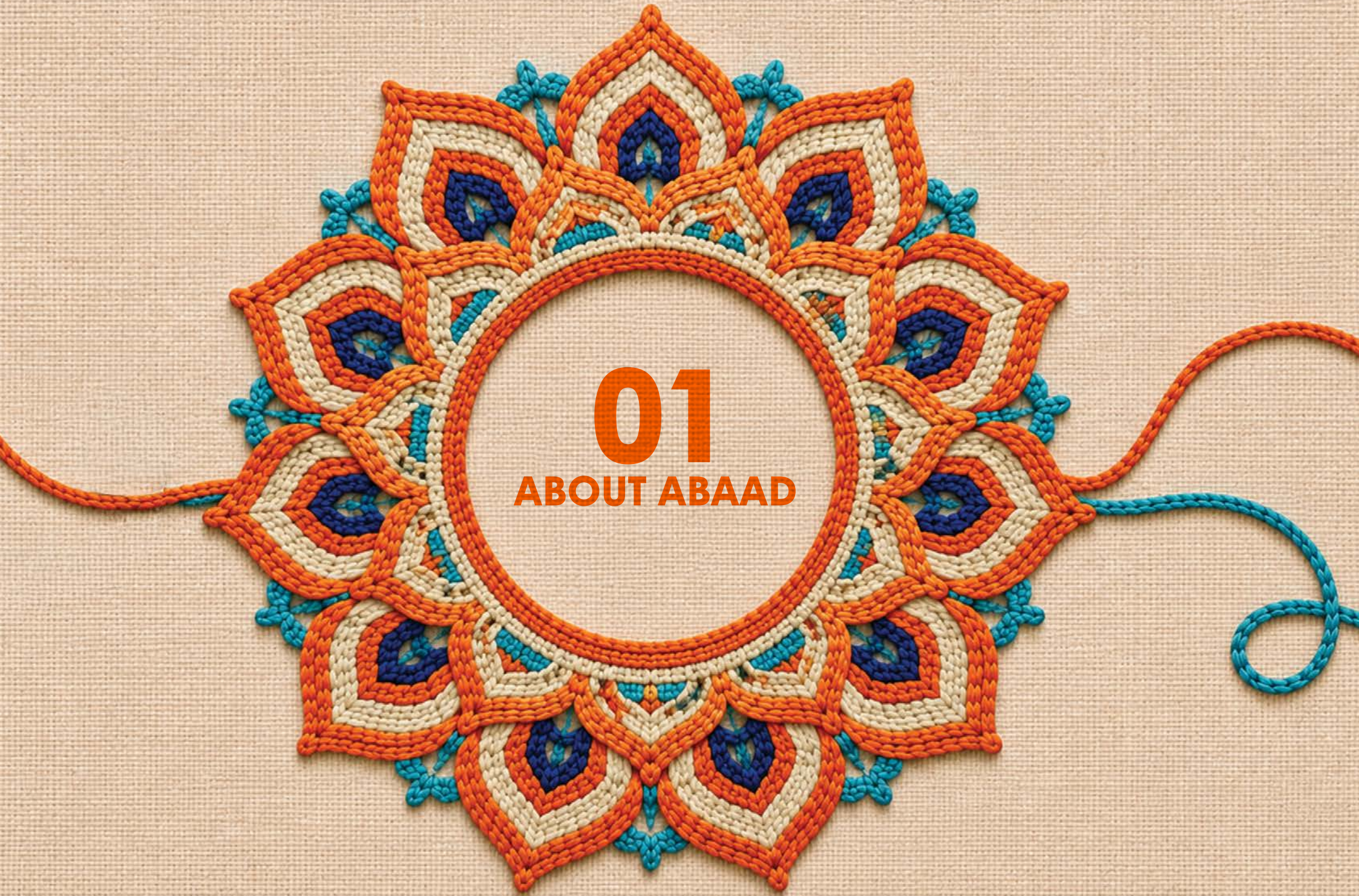
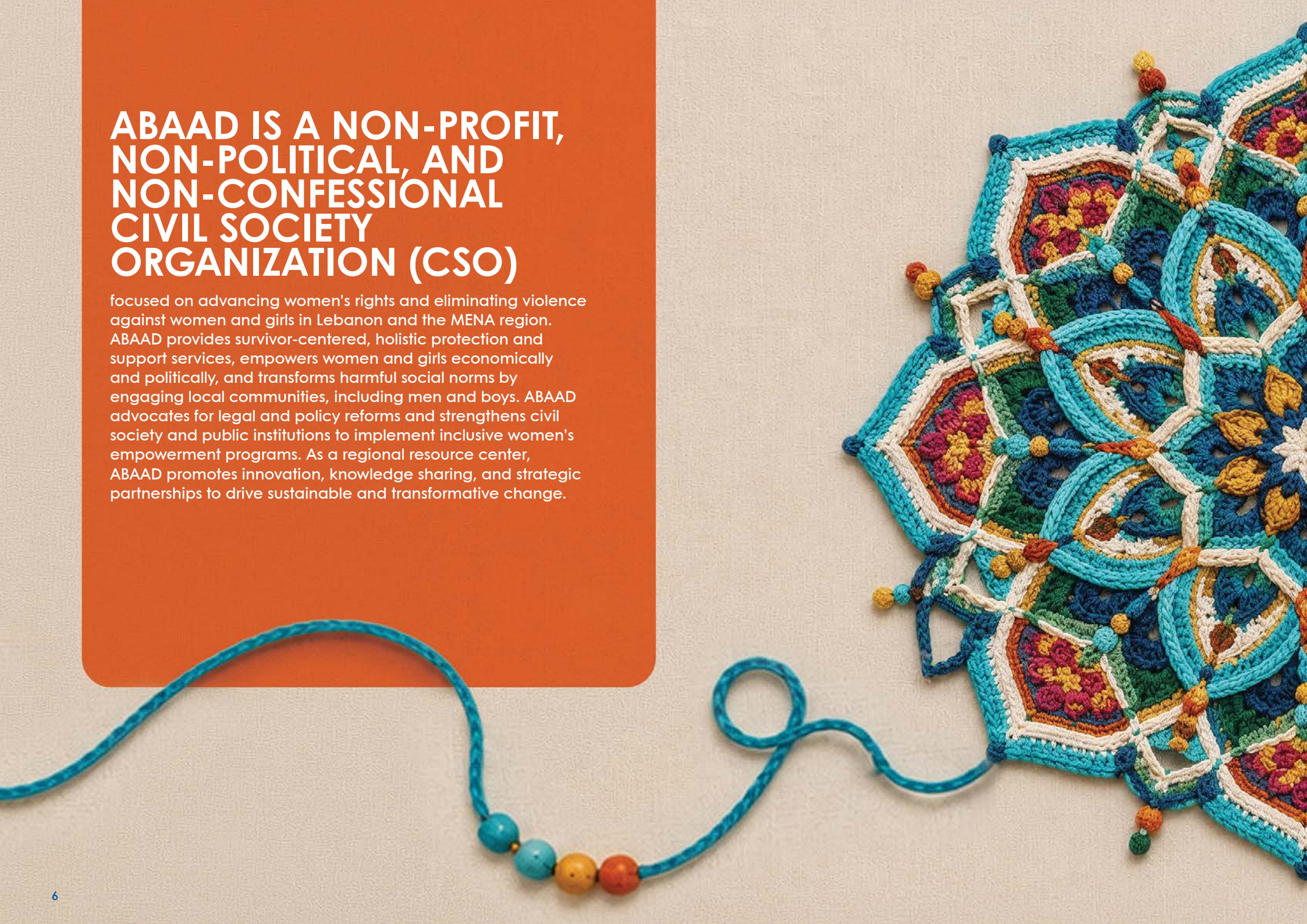
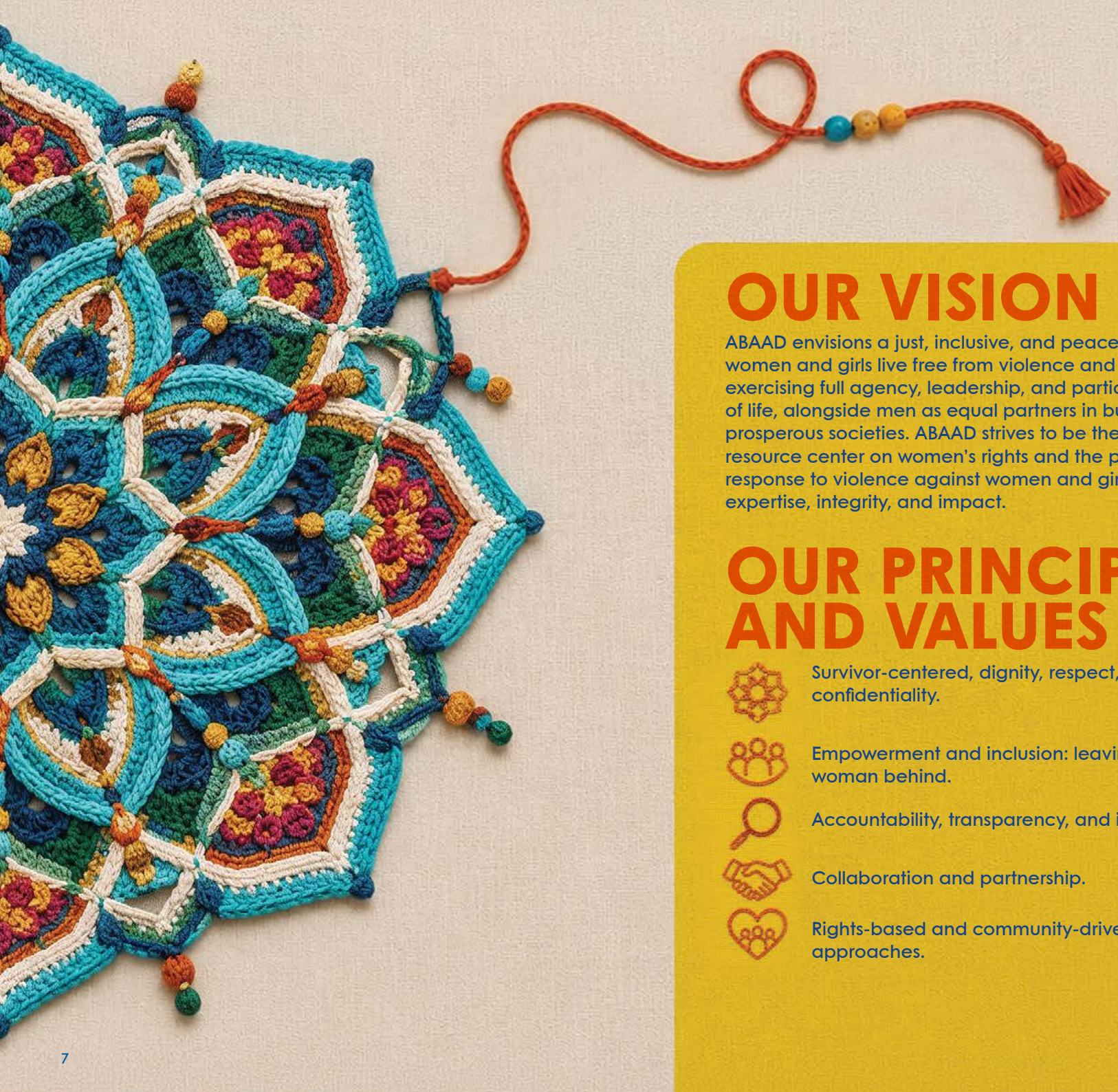

01
ABOUT ABAAD

ABAAD IS A NON-PROFIT, NON-POLITICAL, AND NON-CONFESSIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION (CSO)

focused on advancing women's rights and eliminating violence against women and girls in Lebanon and the MENA region. ABAAD provides survivor-centered, holistic protection and support services, empowers women and girls economically and politically, and transforms harmful social norms by engaging local communities, including men and boys. ABAAD advocates for legal and policy reforms and strengthens civil society and public institutions to implement inclusive women's empowerment programs. As a regional resource center, ABAAD promotes innovation, knowledge sharing, and strategic partnerships to drive sustainable and transformative change.



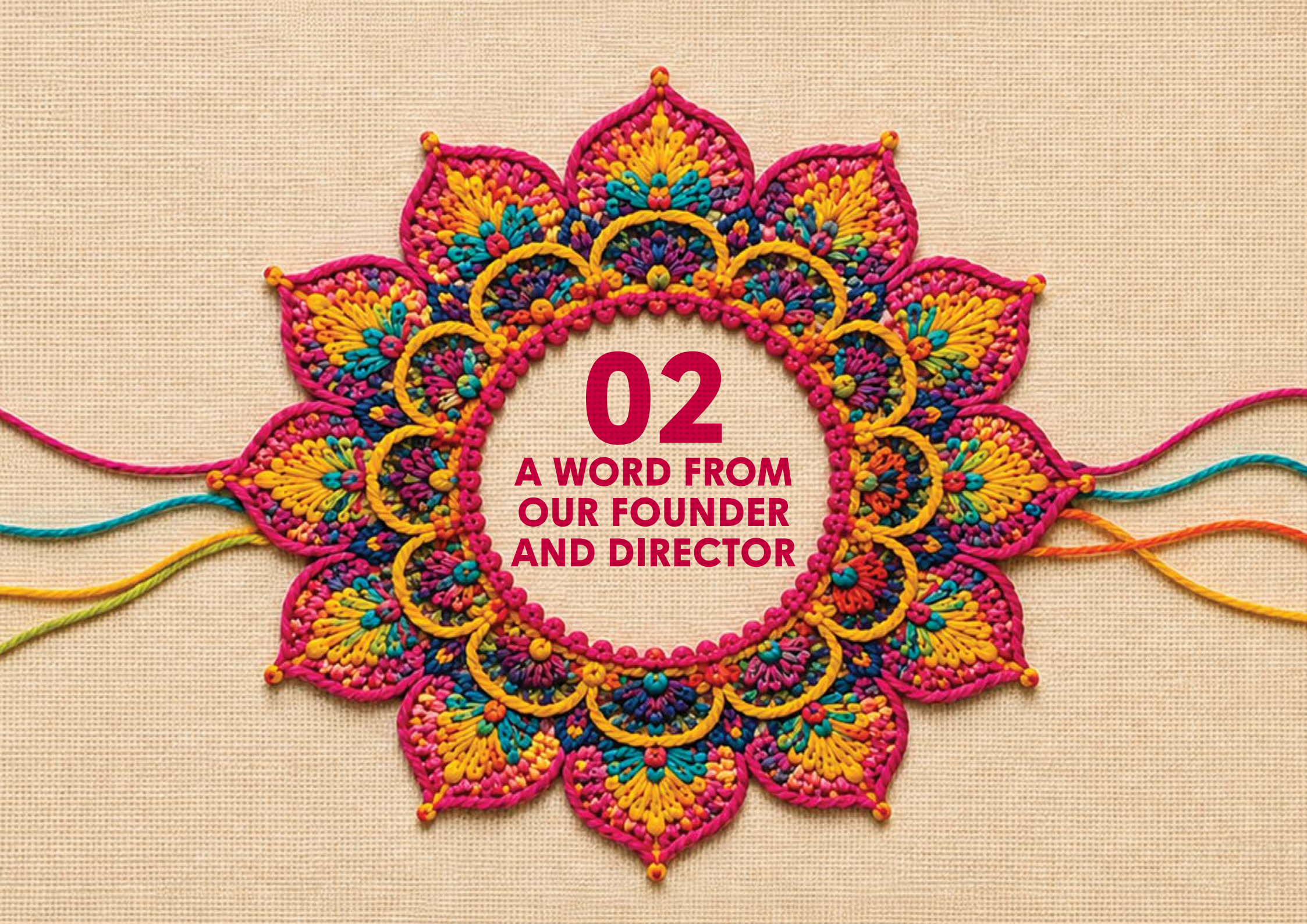


OUR VISION

ABAAD envisions a just, inclusive, and peaceful world where women and girls live free from violence and discrimination, exercising full agency, leadership, and participation in all areas of life, alongside men as equal partners in building resilient and prosperous societies. ABAAD strives to be the leading regional resource center on women's rights and the prevention and response to violence against women and girls, recognized for its expertise, integrity, and impact.

OUR PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- Survivor-centered, dignity, respect, and confidentiality.
- Empowerment and inclusion: leaving no woman behind.
- Accountability, transparency, and integrity.
- Collaboration and partnership.
- Rights-based and community-driven approaches.


02
A WORD FROM
OUR FOUNDER
AND DIRECTOR



DEAR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS,

We entered 2024 already stretched thin before the year had even found its rhythm. Lebanon's economic crisis had left families struggling to meet basic needs, while our centers were responding to growing and increasingly complex demand.

When the armed conflict escalated in the final quarter of the year, the impact was devastating. Communities were displaced overnight and collective shelters filled beyond capacity. Women and girls who had been accessing our services were suddenly on the move, cut off from support at the very moment they needed it most.

We had to adapt quickly. We deployed to collective shelters, kept our 24/7 safe lines open throughout the conflict, continued admitting high-risk survivors into our safe shelters, and delivered Psychological First Aid (PFA), dignity kits, and case management to thousands of displaced individuals. We stayed close to the communities we serve, even when conditions on the ground made that incredibly difficult. Many of our own staff were personally affected by the conflict, and their dedication throughout that period is something I will not forget.

What kept us going was also the knowledge that 2024 brought real achievements. We launched national standards for temporary safe shelters in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW), a milestone year in the making. We reactivated the MenEngage Lebanon Network and finalized its three-year plan. We also launched Program ABB with Equimundo, bringing positive parenting and masculinities programming to more families. No matter how difficult 2024 was, we look forward to 2025 and beyond as we adapt, rebuild, and continue standing with women and girls across Lebanon.

None of this would have been possible without our partners, donors, and the communities who placed their trust in us. Thank you to each and every one of you for standing by ABAAD.

Ghida Anani
Founder and Director, ABAAD



03

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND GENDER EQUALITY IN LEBANON

In 2024, gender-based violence (GBV) in Lebanon unfolded against a backdrop of prolonged economic decline, political instability, displacement, and weakened public services. Before the escalation of armed conflict in the final quarter of the year, households were already under severe pressure, with nearly half of the population living in poverty. As the conflict intensified, mass displacement, overcrowded collective shelters, income loss, and disrupted services further increased protection risks for women and girls. According to the 2024 GBVIMS Annual Report, reported GBV incidents decreased by 38% between the second and third quarters of the year. In areas directly affected by conflict, reporting fell by as much as 68%. This decrease should not be interpreted as a reduction in violence. Rather, it reflects reduced access to services, restricted movement, displacement-related barriers, fear of reporting, and the prioritization of immediate survival needs during crisis.

Women and girls remained the overwhelming majority of recorded GBV survivors, representing 98% of reported cases. The most commonly reported forms of violence were physical assault, psychological and emotional abuse, and forced marriage. Children represented 26% of reported incidents, with adolescent girls facing heightened exposure to early and forced marriage as economic hardship and displacement increased harmful coping mechanisms. The data also confirms the continued prevalence of intimate partner and domestic violence. Intimate partners and former partners were responsible for 49% of reported incidents, while the survivor's home remained the most common location of violence at 63%. This reinforces the need for confidential, survivor-centered services that can support women and girls facing violence within private and family settings, where risks are often hidden and reporting remains difficult.

Barriers to accessing support remained significant throughout the year. Survivors continued to face stigma, fear of retaliation, distrust in legal systems, economic dependency, limited transportation, and lack of information about available services. Syrian and migrant survivors faced additional barriers related to legal residency, documentation, discrimination, and fear of approaching authorities. These trends highlight the need for sustained investment in GBV prevention and response as an essential component of both humanitarian action and longer-term recovery. In crisis settings, violence against women and girls can intensify while reporting decreases, making community-based outreach, safe referrals, mobile services, case management, psychosocial support, and safe shelter critical to maintaining access to protection.

For ABAAD, the 2024 context reinforced the importance of an integrated response model: one that combines direct survivor support, prevention, community engagement, institutional coordination, and advocacy to address both immediate protection risks and the structural inequalities that sustain violence.

KEY TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS



Reduced reporting during crisis signals access constraints, not reduced protection needs.



Children and adolescent girls faced **increased risks**, especially **early and forced marriage.**



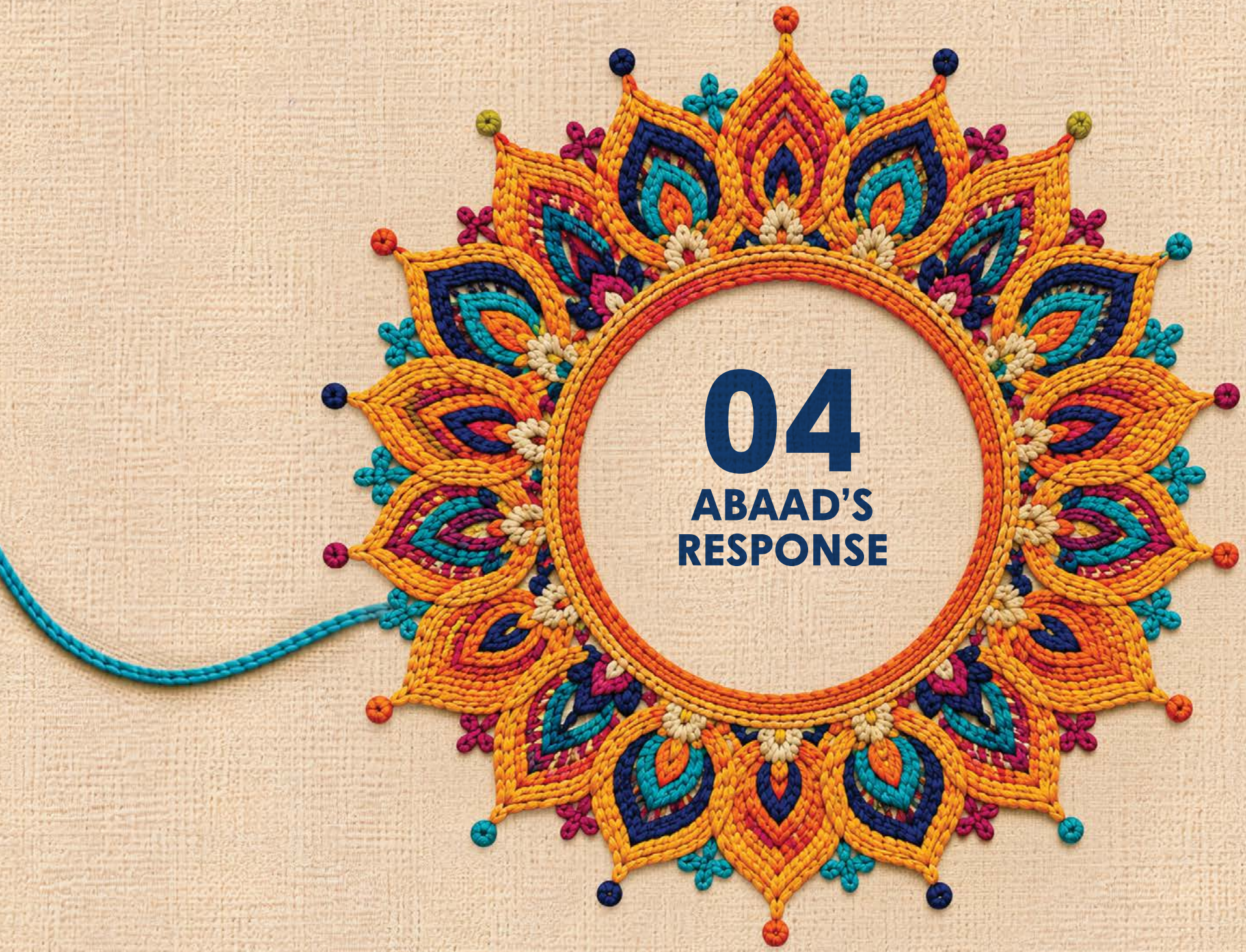
GBV remained overwhelmingly gendered, with women and girls representing 98% of recorded survivors.



GBV prevention and response must be integrated from the earliest stages of emergency response.



Violence continued to happen largely inside the home, making **confidential** and **survivor-centered** services essential.



04
ABAAD'S RESPONSE



OVERALL REACH

In 2024, ABAAD's services reached **22,960 unique beneficiaries** through its model centers, men's center, safe shelters, and Jina Al Dar mobile unit. The majority of beneficiaries were women aged 18 to 59, with 63% of Lebanese nationality.

BREAKDOWN OF SERVICES

Individuals who participated in awareness activities	**Strengthened community knowledge of GBV, harmful norms, legal rights, available services, and safer help-seeking pathways.**	**16,141**
Individuals who received psychosocial support	**Supported psychosocial wellbeing, stress management, social connection, and coping capacities among women, girls, men, and boys.**	**6,090**
Individuals reached through Jina Al Dar	**Expanded access to awareness, psychosocial support, and referral pathways for marginalized and crisis-affected communities.**	**1,992**
Individuals who received case management services	**Connected survivors to coordinated protection pathways, including assessment, safety planning, referrals, follow-up, and specialized services.**	**2,385**
Survivors hosted in safe shelters	**Provided confidential accommodation and specialized support for high-risk survivors and their dependents.**	**86**
Men who accessed psychotherapy support	**Provided accountability-focused psychosocial support addressing harmful behaviors, emotional distress, family conflict, and violence prevention.**	**96**

AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

ABAAD's awareness activities contributed to community-based prevention by strengthening knowledge of GBV, legal rights, available services, and safer help-seeking pathways. Sessions addressed gender equality, protection, and wellbeing, including anger and stress management, coping during crises, early and forced marriage, GBV core concepts, legal rights, menstrual hygiene, positive parenting, sexual harassment, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

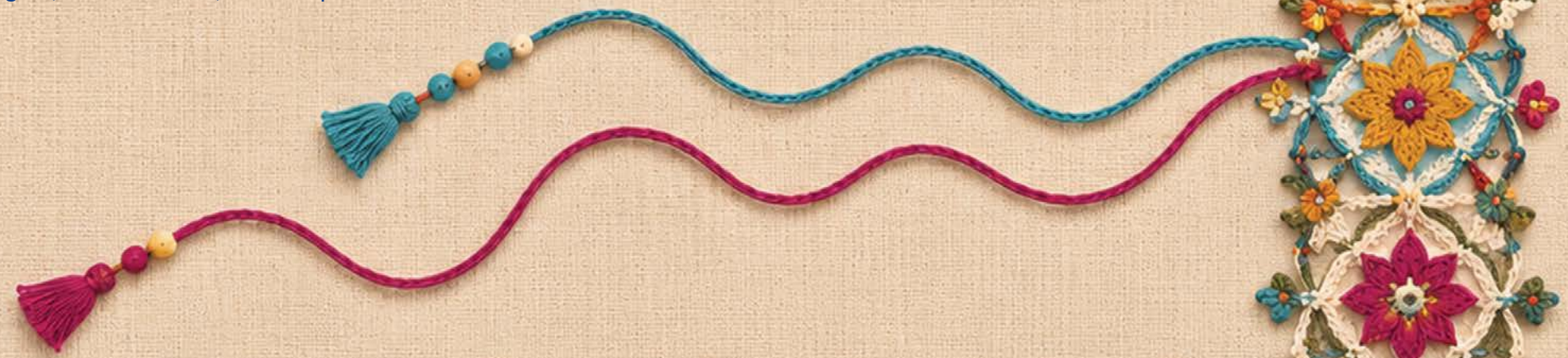
The sessions used participatory and community-based approaches designed to support reflection, discussion, practical understanding, healthier coping mechanisms, and the questioning of harmful social norms. This approach helped participants identify forms of violence, understand available support options, and engage with topics that are often affected by stigma, misinformation, or social pressure.

EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH JINA AL DAR

Jina Al Dar, ABAAD's mobile community-based prevention and outreach model, extended integrated awareness, psychosocial support, referral pathways, and community engagement activities to marginalized and crisis-affected communities. By operating beyond fixed service points, the model reduced access barriers linked to distance, transportation, insecurity, stigma, and limited knowledge of available services.

Through nine mobile rounds across Lebanon, Jina Al Dar reached 1,992 individuals, including 1,071 women, 612 girls, 77 men, and 232 boys.

This mobile approach strengthened ABAAD's capacity to reach communities that may otherwise remain outside center-based services, while creating entry points into protection, psychosocial support, and referral systems.





PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

In 2024, 6,090 women, girls, men, and boys participated in focused psychosocial support and gender-transformative sessions. These included basic life skills, masculinities programming, positive parenting through Program ABB and Program Rajol, anger and stress management, and emotional support groups.

The sessions supported emotional wellbeing, stress management, social connection, and non-violent communication. In a context of economic pressure, displacement, insecurity, and family stress, these activities contributed to strengthening coping capacities and promoting safer family and community dynamics.

Together, these interventions helped strengthen resilience, encourage positive behavioral change, improve emotional wellbeing, and promote more equitable and non-violent relationships within families and communities.

FROM REACH TO INTEGRATED RESPONSE

ABAAD's 2024 response demonstrates the value of an integrated GBV model. Awareness activities strengthened prevention and service knowledge. Mobile outreach expanded access. Psychosocial support addressed emotional wellbeing and social isolation. Case management connected survivors to coordinated protection pathways. Safe shelters provided confidential accommodation for high-risk cases.

The Men's Center contributed to prevention by addressing harmful behaviors, emotional distress, and accountability among men.

Together, these services helped maintain access to GBV prevention and response during one of Lebanon's most difficult years, while reinforcing ABAAD's role as a national protection actor, technical resource, and implementation partner for gender equality programming.



WHAT PARTICIPANTS TOLD US

Participant feedback across awareness, group, and emotional support sessions indicated strong relevance, usefulness, and responsiveness to community needs.

Respondents reported improved understanding of the topics discussed, increased knowledge of available services, and greater confidence in accessing support when needed. Feedback from group and emotional support sessions also indicated improvements in stress management and social connection.

Participant recommendations also identified areas for program adaptation, including longer sessions, larger spaces, additional topics such as first aid and psychological support, sessions for children, and increased support for individuals facing economic hardship. These findings will inform future programming and help ABAAD continue adapting its services to community needs.

FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

Nearly all respondents found the sessions useful, engaging, and relevant to their needs.

95%
of group session participants reported improved stress management and stronger social connections.

97%
of emotional support group participants said they now know where to access services.

99%
of awareness session respondents rated facilitators highly on knowledge, clarity, and respect.

Participants recommended longer sessions, additional topics, larger spaces, sessions for children, and more support for people facing economic hardship.



"I used to hesitate to express my feelings, but I was wrong. I learned that anger is something that can be controlled, and it does not have to turn into violence."
Participant, awareness session with adolescent boys, aged 15 to 17



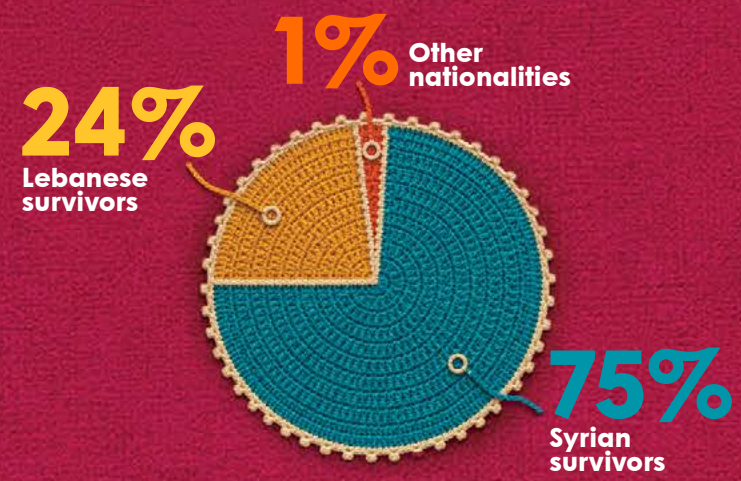
CASE MANGEMENT

Case management served as a central entry point into survivor-centered protection. Through confidential assessment, safety planning, referrals, follow-up, and coordination with specialized service providers, ABAAD supported survivors to identify available options and access services according to their needs, priorities, level of risk, and informed consent.

ABAAD's case management approach is designed to respond to the complexity of GBV cases in Lebanon, where survivors often face overlapping protection, legal, psychosocial, health, shelter, documentation, and economic needs. The model helps ensure that survivors are not left to navigate fragmented services alone and that support is coordinated around their safety and decision-making.

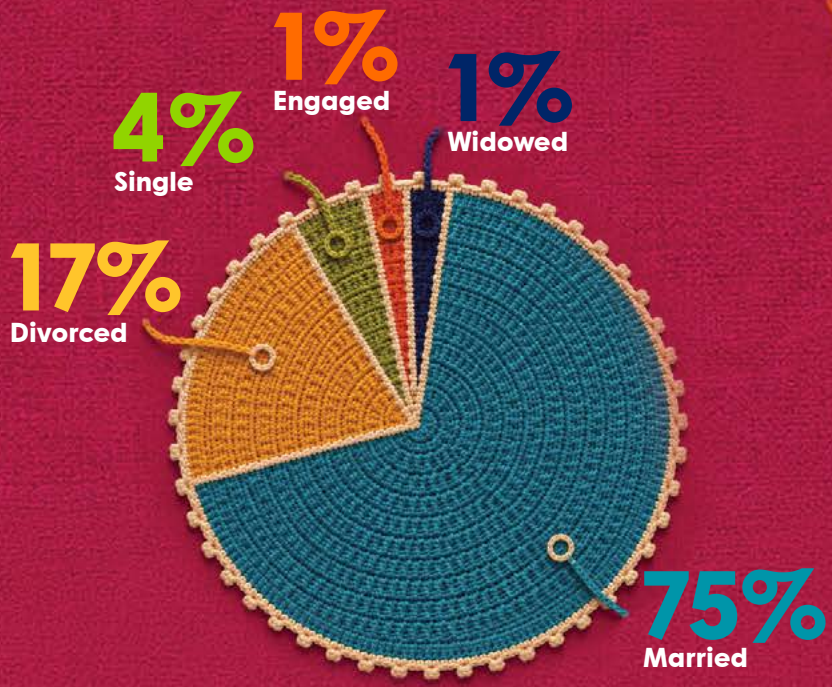
The majority of survivors supported through case management in 2024 were Syrian women and girls, followed by Lebanese and other nationalities. This reflects the continued exposure of displaced communities to protection risks, as well as ABAAD's role in serving both refugee and host communities through accessible GBV services.

WHO ABBAD SUPPORTED



Women and girls supported through case management had diverse marital statuses, with married and divorced women representing the largest shares of cases. This profile is consistent with the high prevalence of intimate partner and domestic violence reported nationally and reinforces the need for confidential pathways that can support survivors within complex family, legal, and economic circumstances.

MARITAL STATUS



COORDINATED SUPPORT AROUND THE SURVIVOR

Through case management, survivors were connected to services based on assessed needs, risk level, availability of services, and informed consent, including:

- Psychosocial support services
- Safe shelter services
- Legal counselling and representation through referral
- Cash assistance and emergency support
- Health and reproductive health services through referral
- Child protection and specialized support services through referral

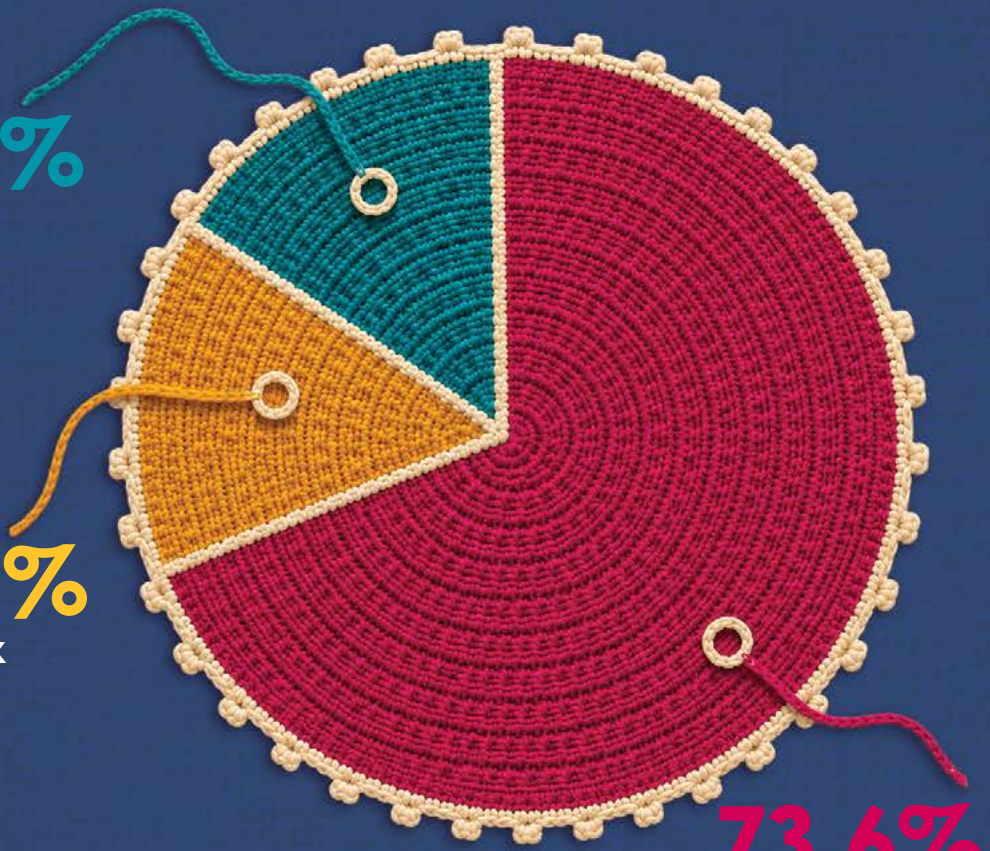




This coordination is critical in GBV response. Survivors may require several forms of support at the same time, particularly when violence is linked to displacement, economic dependency, threats, custody concerns, legal insecurity, or limited family and community support. ABAAD's caseworkers helped link survivors to appropriate services while maintaining confidentiality, safety, and survivor choice.

RISK LEVELS

The majority of cases supported in 2024 were assessed as medium or high risk, indicating the seriousness and complexity of the protection needs addressed through ABAAD's case management services.



13.6%
Low Risk

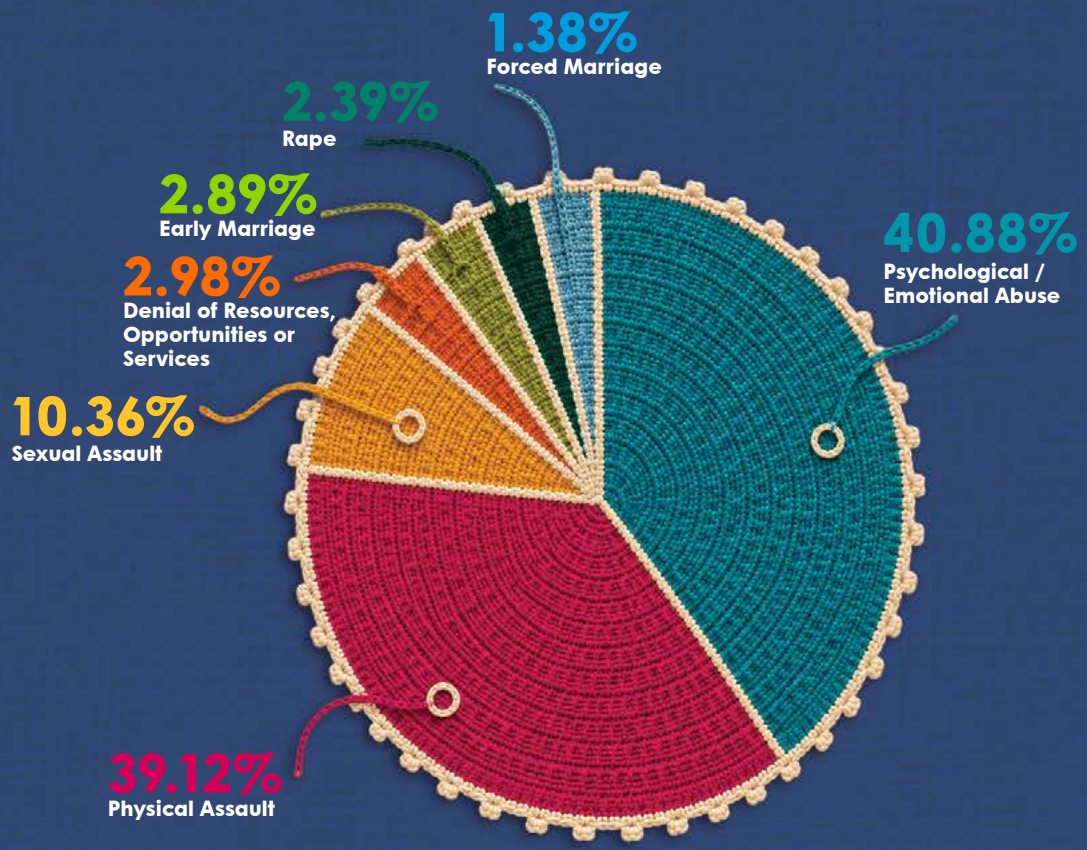
12.8%
High Risk

73.6%
Medium Risk

These figures show that ABAAD was not only responding to general requests for assistance. It was supporting survivors facing significant protection concerns, where timely assessment, safety planning, coordinated referrals, and follow-up are essential to reducing risk and maintaining access to support.

TYPES OF ABUSE REPORTED

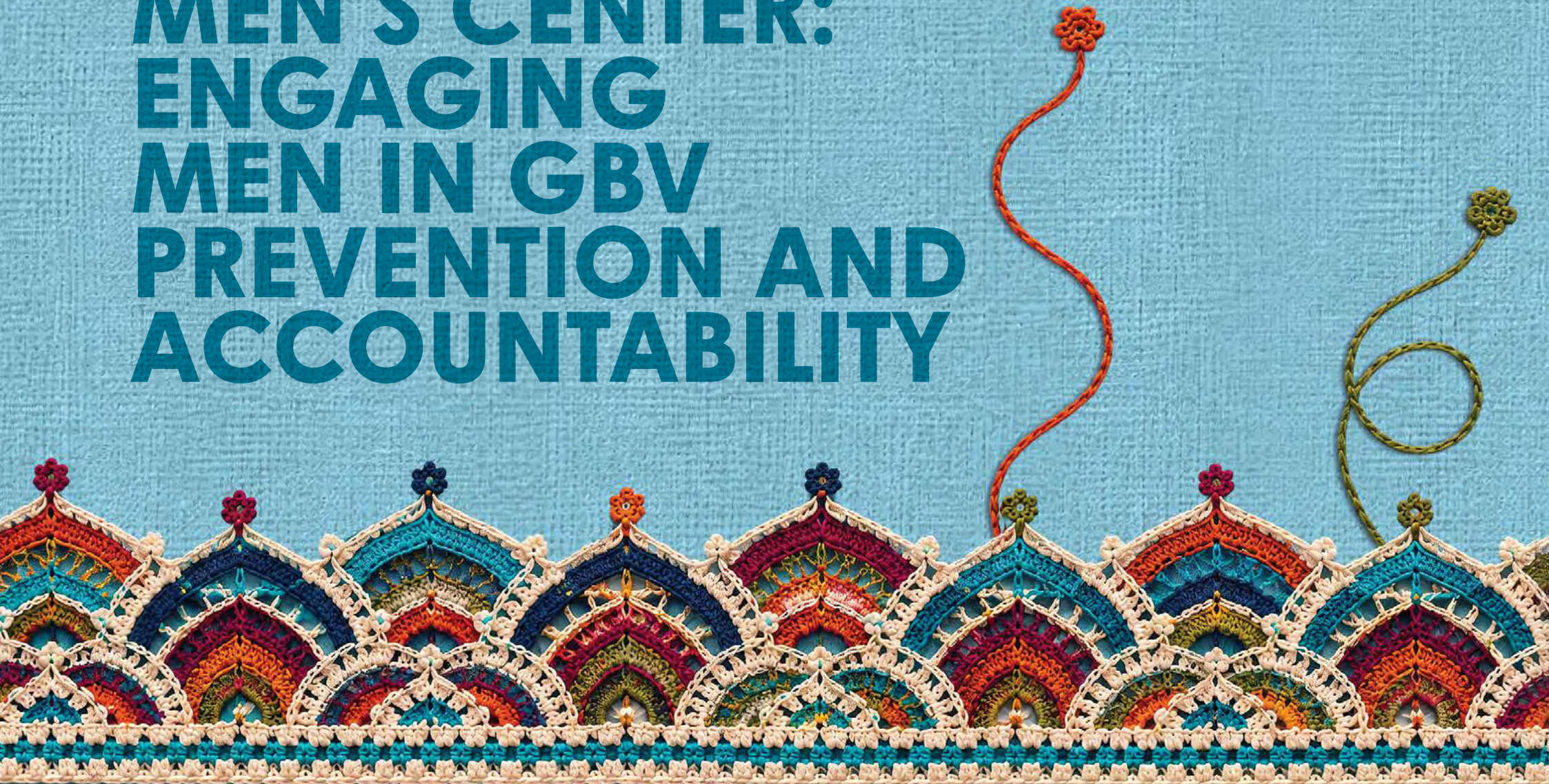
Many survivors reported more than one form of violence. Psychological and emotional abuse and physical assault were the most commonly reported forms, often occurring within intimate partner or family settings.



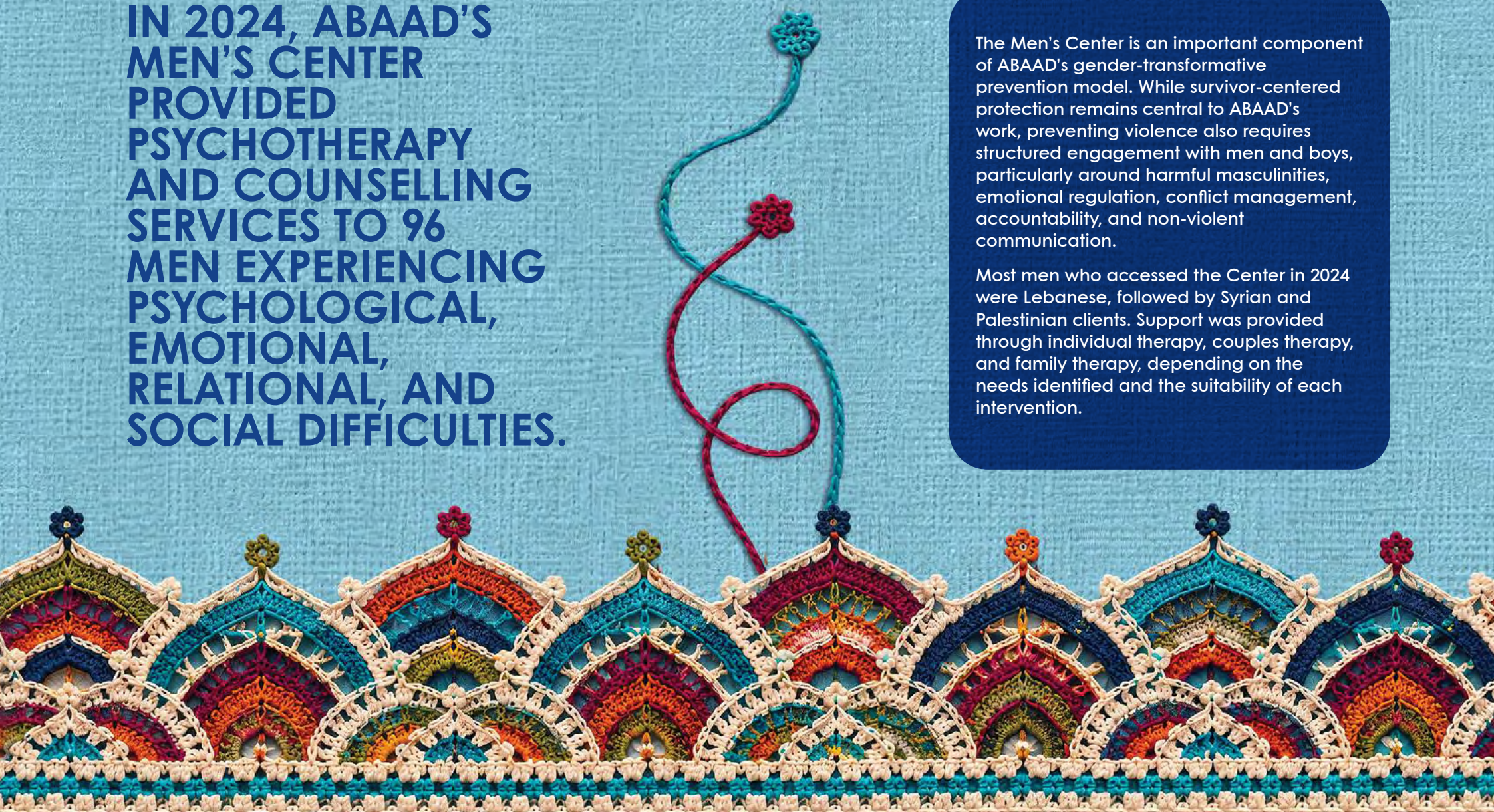
The data confirms that GBV cases are rarely isolated incidents. Survivors frequently face repeated or overlapping forms of violence, including emotional control, physical harm, sexual violence, economic deprivation, family pressure, and barriers to services.

In this context, case management is an essential protection function. It supports risk reduction, improves access to specialized services, strengthens coordination between actors, and helps survivors make informed decisions about their safety and next steps.

MEN'S CENTER: ENGAGING MEN IN GBV PREVENTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY



IN 2024, ABAAD'S MEN'S CENTER PROVIDED PSYCHOTHERAPY AND COUNSELLING SERVICES TO 96 MEN EXPERIENCING PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL, RELATIONAL, AND SOCIAL DIFFICULTIES.



The Men's Center is an important component of ABAAD's gender-transformative prevention model. While survivor-centered protection remains central to ABAAD's work, preventing violence also requires structured engagement with men and boys, particularly around harmful masculinities, emotional regulation, conflict management, accountability, and non-violent communication.

Most men who accessed the Center in 2024 were Lebanese, followed by Syrian and Palestinian clients. Support was provided through individual therapy, couples therapy, and family therapy, depending on the needs identified and the suitability of each intervention.

WHO ACCESSED THE MEN'S CENTER



5.21%
Syrian

3.13%
Palestinian

91.67%
Lebanese

MARITAL STATUS



10.42%
Divorced / Separated

31.25%
Married / Cohabiting

58.33%
Single

TYPE OF SUPPORT



6.25%
Family Therapy

15.63%
Couples Therapy

78.12%
Individual Therapy

ADDRESSING BEHAVIORAL AND RELATIONAL RISK FACTORS

Men sought support for a range of concerns, including communication difficulties, violent behaviors, anxiety, social isolation, emotional distress, family tensions, and issues related to masculinities and emotional expression.

In many cases, violence was not identified by clients as the primary reason for seeking support. However, clinical assessments often revealed underlying patterns linked to emotional control, interpersonal conflict, rigid gender norms, and patriarchal expectations. Through tailored therapeutic support, the Men's Center helped clients examine these patterns, understand the impact of their behavior, and develop healthier coping and communication strategies.

This work contributes to GBV prevention by addressing risk factors that can reinforce violence within intimate partner, family, and household dynamics.

STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH REFERRALS

A significant development in 2024 was the growing collaboration between ABAAD's Men's Center and judicial actors. The Center received referrals from judges requesting that men complete structured counselling sessions before divorce proceedings were finalized.

In several cases, men and couples continued therapy through individual, couples, and family sessions. This contributed to improved communication, reduced family tensions, and more informed decision-making in cases involving separation, divorce, or ongoing family conflict.

These referrals point to the Center's emerging role as a specialized resource for institutions seeking gender-sensitive, accountable, and structured interventions with men.

INCREASED SELF-REFERRALS

The Men's Center also recorded an increase in self-referrals from men seeking support for distress, emotional difficulties, and family-related challenges. Referrals came from across Lebanon, including Beirut, Mount Lebanon, the North, the South, and the Bekaa. The Center was also contacted by Lebanese men abroad who identified the service through online searches.

This increase suggests growing recognition of the need for specialized psychosocial support for men and reinforces ABAAD's position as a trusted actor in gender-transformative programming.

By combining clinical support, accountability-focused practice, and gender-transformative approaches, ABAAD's Men's Center contributes to violence prevention, improved family dynamics, and broader efforts to challenge harmful masculinities.



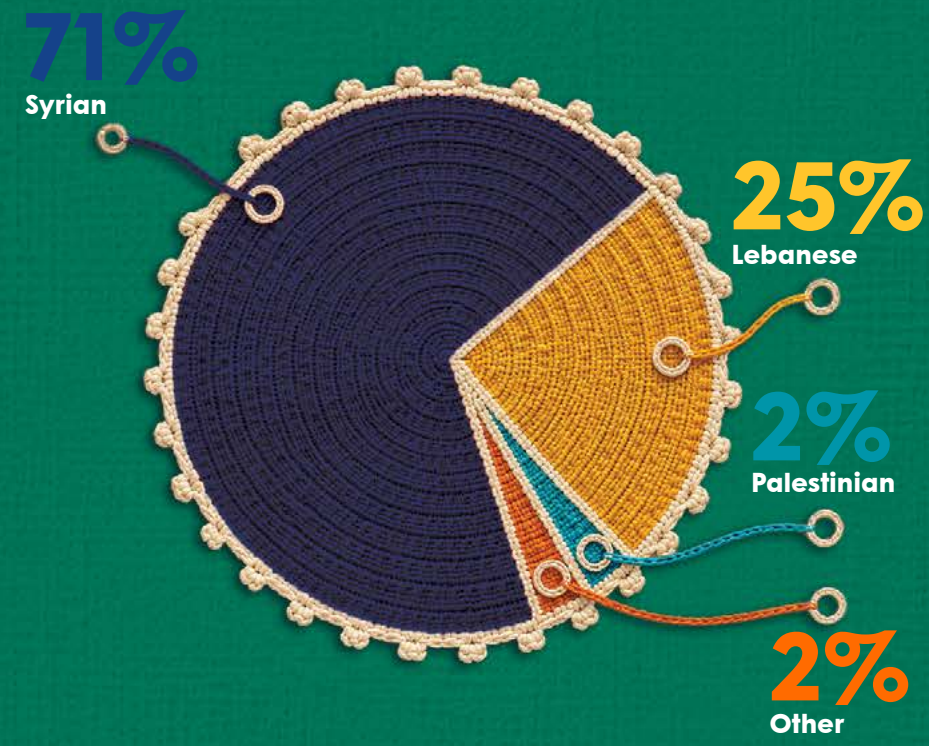
SAFE SHELTERS

In 2024, ABAAD's safe shelters hosted 157 residents, including 86 women survivors and 71 dependents, among them 39 girls and 32 boys.

ABAAD's shelters provide confidential, safe accommodation for women and children facing high-risk forms of violence. Shelter support is part of ABAAD's specialized GBV response model, designed to reduce immediate protection risks while connecting survivors to coordinated services that support stabilization, recovery, and informed decision-making.

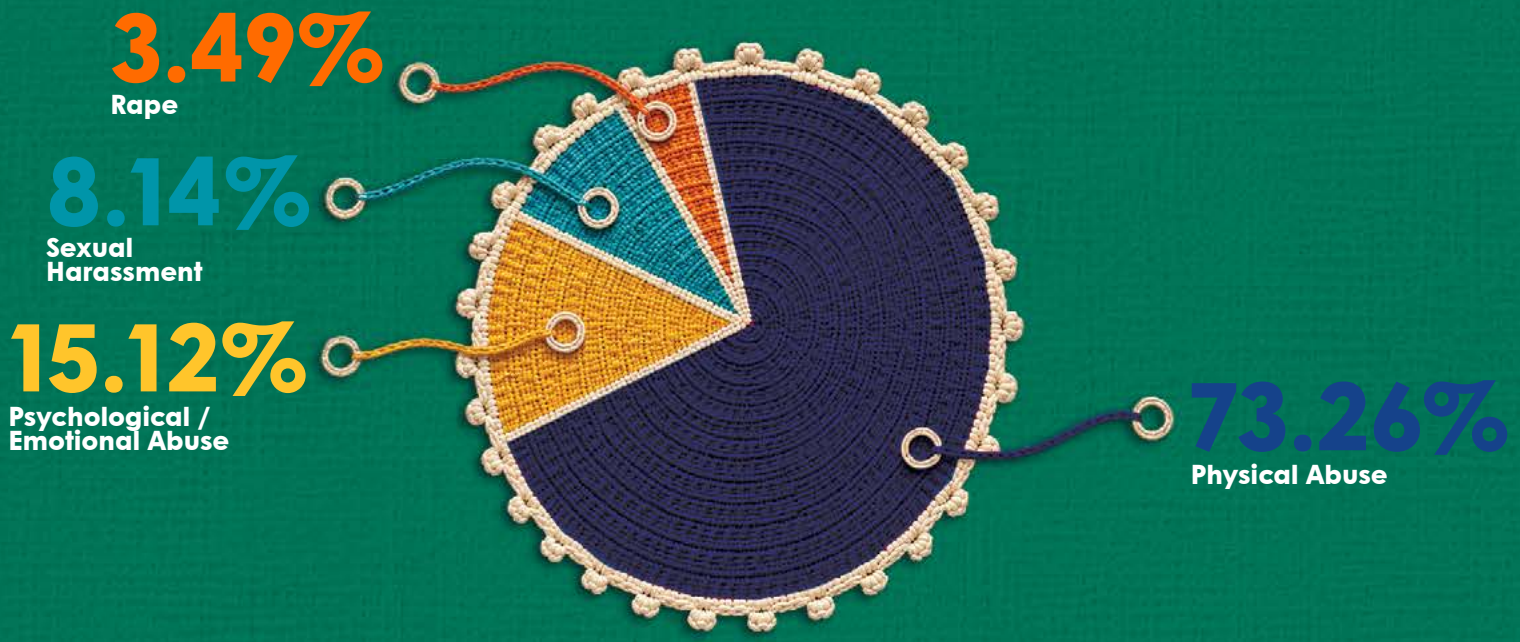
Women stayed in ABAAD's shelters for an average of 76 days. Length of stay varied according to risk level, safety considerations, legal and family circumstances, housing options, and access to support. In 2024, 25 residents stayed fewer than 10 days, while 8 residents stayed more than 200 days, reflecting the different levels of urgency and complexity among shelter cases.

NATIONALITIES



The majority of shelter residents were Syrian and Lebanese women and children, reflecting the overlapping protection risks affecting displaced and host communities in Lebanon. Survivors admitted to shelter often faced multiple barriers to safety, including economic dependency, limited housing options, family pressure, documentation challenges, custody concerns, and fear of retaliation.

TYPES OF GBV REPORTED



Physical abuse was the most commonly reported form of violence among shelter residents. However, many survivors experienced overlapping forms of harm, including psychological and emotional abuse, threats, intimidation, sexual violence, economic control, and risks affecting their children.

SHELTER SUPPORT

ABAAD's shelter model goes beyond emergency accommodation. Residents receive individualized support based on their needs, risks, and consent, including psychosocial counselling, case management, legal aid, medical referrals, child-focused support, and empowerment activities.

This integrated support helps reduce immediate risk, strengthen access to specialized services, address urgent legal or documentation needs, and support structured safety planning.

REFERRAL PATHWAYS AND SERVICE ACCESS

Referrals to ABAAD's shelters continued to come from NGOs, community actors, and survivors themselves. Some women also identified ABAAD's shelter services through online searches and digital platforms, reflecting the visibility of ABAAD's protection services and the level of trust placed in the organization by both communities and referral actors.

In a context where many survivors delay or avoid seeking help due to stigma, economic dependency, fear of retaliation, or limited trust in formal systems, maintaining accessible and confidential referral pathways remains essential.





SAFE SHELTER SERVICES

Safe shelter remains a core component of GBV response in Lebanon. For survivors facing immediate or escalating risk, counselling, referrals, or community-based support may not be sufficient without access to confidential accommodation.

ABAAD's shelters contribute to the national protection system by providing specialized, survivor-centered accommodation for high risk cases while linking women and children to coordinated psychosocial, legal and health referrals, and case management support.



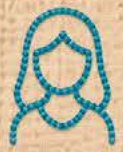
EMERGENCY RESPONSE: MAINTAINING GBV SERVICES DURING CRISIS

When the armed conflict escalated in the final quarter of 2024, displacement, insecurity, overcrowded collective shelters, and service disruption created immediate protection risks for women, girls, and families across Lebanon.

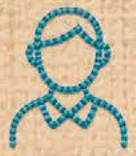
ABAAD adapted its programming to maintain access to GBV prevention, psychosocial support, dignity assistance, and case management in areas affected by displacement. The response focused on ensuring that protection pathways remained available despite movement restrictions, increased humanitarian needs, and pressure on local services.

RAPID OUTREACH IN COLLECTIVE SHELTERS

Participants reached through Psychological First Aid (PFA)



3,748
Women



696
Men



729
Children

5,173
Total

ABAAD delivered PFA sessions in collective shelters and displacement-affected communities, with a focus on crisis management, anger and stress regulation, coping strategies, and GBV awareness.

DIGNITY ASSISTANCE DURING DISPLACEMENT

ABAAD distributed dignity kits to 4,597 individuals reached through its emergency activities, including:



3,511
Women



442
Men



644
Children

4,597
Total

This support was particularly relevant for women and girls in overcrowded collective shelters, where access to basic hygiene items, privacy, and gender-sensitive assistance was limited.

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND CASE MANAGEMENT

Beyond PFA, ABAAD facilitated psychosocial support sessions addressing the impact of crisis on daily life, relationships with the surrounding environment, and non-violent communication. These sessions reached 293 women and 25 men.

ABAAD further strengthened its psychosocial support programming during the emergency response through the implementation and capacity building of its Expression Through Art methodology, an interactive art-based intervention designed to support children, adolescents, women, and men affected by crisis and displacement. Through drawing, colouring, storytelling, and creative expression activities, the methodology helped participants process emotions, reduce stress, strengthen coping mechanisms, and foster social connectedness. Implemented across several regions, it proved particularly effective in creating safe and inclusive spaces for emotional expression and community resilience during periods of conflict and uncertainty.





ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING FROM COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

ABAAD conducted post-distribution monitoring with dignity kit recipients to assess satisfaction, quality, use, and relevance of the assistance provided.

99%
Satisfied with the support received

79%
Used all kit items

85%
Found kit quality satisfactory

51%
Felt the assistance matched their needs

The findings showed high satisfaction with the support received and strong use of kit items. At the same time, the data indicated that nearly half of respondents would have preferred additional or alternative forms of assistance, including cash, food, medical supplies, clothing, and shelter support.

These findings will inform future emergency response planning, including the design of more flexible assistance packages and stronger alignment between urgent protection needs and the forms of support provided in displacement settings.

GBV SERVICES IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

ABAAD's emergency response demonstrated the importance of integrating GBV expertise from the earliest stages of humanitarian action. In displacement settings, risks of violence, exploitation, psychological distress, family separation, and service disruption can increase rapidly.

By maintaining outreach, psychosocial support, dignity assistance, and case management during the conflict, ABAAD helped preserve access to essential GBV services for women, girls, and displaced survivors at a time when protection pathways were most constrained.


05
COMMUNITY
EVENTS





ABAAD uses community-based events and outreach activities to strengthen GBV prevention, increase knowledge of available services, and expand engagement with communities across Lebanon.

These activities formed part of ABAAD's broader prevention and service dissemination approach. They created accessible entry points for discussing violence, sexual harassment, online exploitation, protection risks, psychosocial wellbeing, and help-seeking pathways in formats adapted to different audiences and local contexts.

Each year, ABAAD marks key international days, including International Women's Day, Menstrual Hygiene Day, Social Worker Day, Elderly Day, and other relevant global and national moments, as part of its community-based prevention and outreach strategy. These activities create structured opportunities to engage diverse groups, disseminate information on rights and available services, strengthen community dialogue, and reinforce shared responsibility for preventing violence against women and girls.

AWARENESS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND EXPLOITATION

Throughout 2024, ABAAD delivered awareness activities on sexual harassment, online exploitation, and protection risks across the Bekaa, North Lebanon, and Mount Lebanon.

These activities were implemented through diverse community formats, including community marathons, public festivals, and a football match. This allowed ABAAD to reach audiences who may not usually participate in center-based sessions, particularly young people and community members engaging in public spaces.

Several events led to an increase in calls to ABAAD's hotline, indicating that community outreach contributed not only to awareness, but also to improved knowledge of available services and increased willingness to seek support.





PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION

ABAAD also delivered community-based psychosocial support activities for displaced families and crisis-affected communities. These sessions focused on coping with displacement, stress, and the psychological impact of conflict.

Expression Through Art approaches were used to support participants in processing difficult experiences related to displacement and loss. These activities provided structured spaces for expression, social connection, and basic psychosocial support at a time when many families were dealing with uncertainty, overcrowding, and disruption to their daily lives.





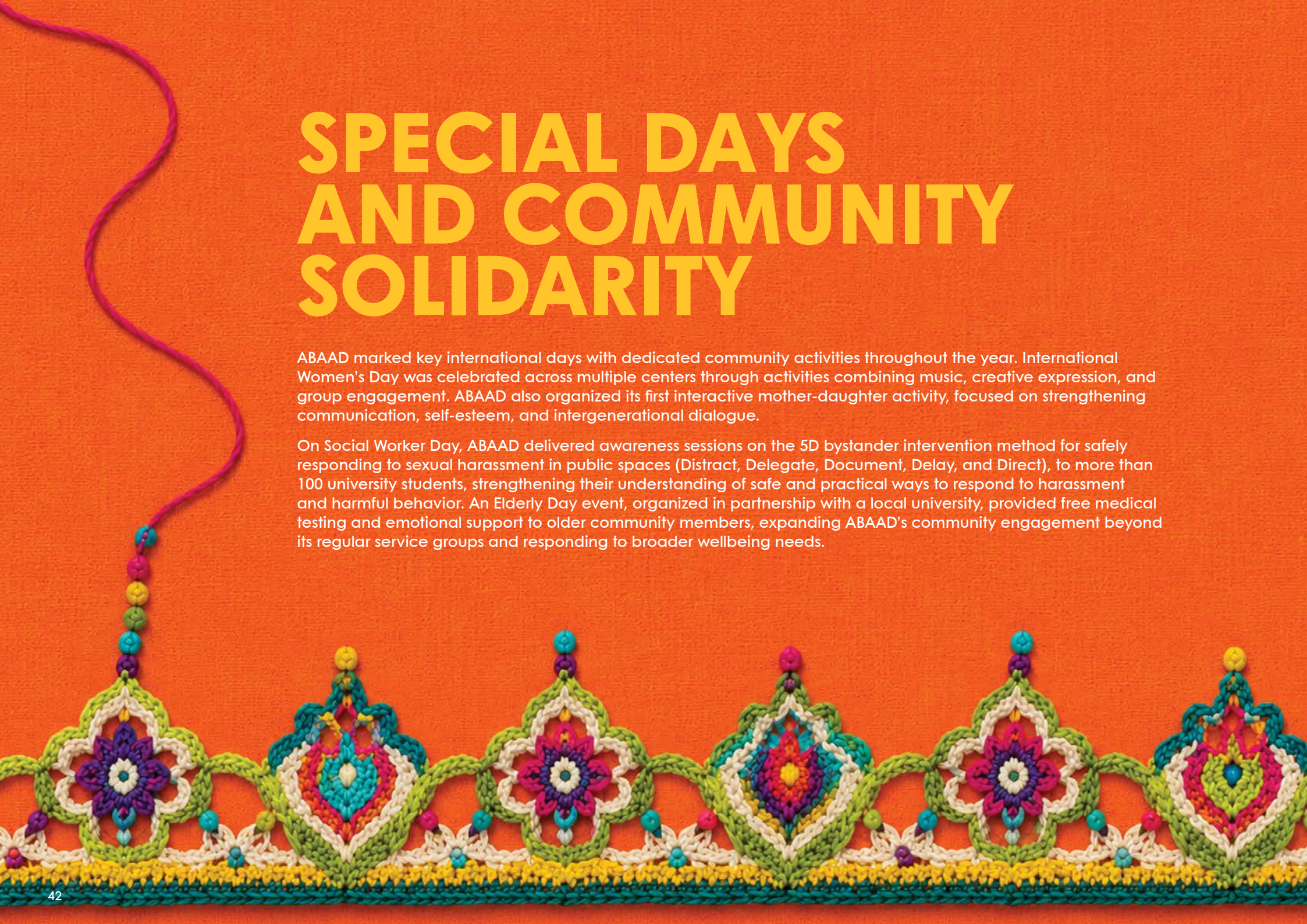


ABAAD also invested in strengthening child-centered prevention approaches through the development and rollout of its Puppetry Show Methodology, accompanied by dedicated capacity-building activities for facilitators and community practitioners. Using interactive storytelling, puppetry, and participatory discussions, the methodology raised awareness among children and caregivers on personal safety, child protection, sexual harassment prevention, safe disclosure, and help-seeking behaviors. Designed to be age-appropriate and engaging, the approach enabled ABAAD to deliver protection messages in accessible formats while fostering dialogue between children, caregivers, and communities.

SPECIAL DAYS AND COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY

ABAAD marked key international days with dedicated community activities throughout the year. International Women's Day was celebrated across multiple centers through activities combining music, creative expression, and group engagement. ABAAD also organized its first interactive mother-daughter activity, focused on strengthening communication, self-esteem, and intergenerational dialogue.

On Social Worker Day, ABAAD delivered awareness sessions on the 5D bystander intervention method for safely responding to sexual harassment in public spaces (Distract, Delegate, Document, Delay, and Direct), to more than 100 university students, strengthening their understanding of safe and practical ways to respond to harassment and harmful behavior. An Elderly Day event, organized in partnership with a local university, provided free medical testing and emotional support to older community members, expanding ABAAD's community engagement beyond its regular service groups and responding to broader wellbeing needs.



OUTREACH AND SERVICE DISSEMINATION

ABAAD expanded outreach to communities with limited access to services through Jina Al Dar mobile rounds and dissemination activities under the Makani project.

These activities introduced ABAAD's services to new communities and created opportunities for women, men, local business owners, and community members to engage directly with ABAAD's teams. The discussions helped increase knowledge of available services, identify local concerns, and strengthen direct communication between ABAAD and community members. Across the different areas reached, community members consistently expressed the need for ABAAD's continued presence and activities, particularly in the post-conflict period.

By combining awareness activities, public events, psychosocial support, mobile outreach, and service dissemination, ABAAD used community events as a practical prevention tool: increasing knowledge, strengthening trust, expanding access to services, and reinforcing community-level engagement on gender equality and protection.




06
SUCCESS
STORIES



The following stories illustrate how ABAAD's survivor-centered model supports women and children beyond immediate crisis response. Through safe shelter, case management, psychosocial support, legal pathways, referrals, and follow-up, survivors are supported to reduce risk, stabilize their situation, and make informed decisions about their next steps.

THE STORY OF MAYA:
REBUILDING A FUTURE

After 15 years of emotional and physical abuse by her husband and his family, Maya contacted ABAAD's helpline in the middle of the night. She was facing death threats and required urgent protection. In September 2024, she was admitted to one of ABAAD's safe shelters with her three children, where she remained until January 2025.

During her stay, ABAAD supported Maya through an integrated response plan tailored to her safety, psychosocial wellbeing, legal situation, and family needs. She accessed psychiatric support and worked with ABAAD's team on an action plan focused on stabilization, self-esteem, and longer-term independence.

With legal and case management support, Maya secured a divorce and began preparing for a custody hearing. She was also supported to obtain UNHCR documentation and access cash assistance, helping address some of the practical barriers affecting her safety and recovery.

Following her stay at the shelter, Maya was referred to an ABAAD model center for continued case management. She also secured safe accommodation in a different region, away from her abuser.

Maya's case reflects the importance of coordinated GBV services for high-risk survivors. Shelter provided immediate protection, while case management, psychosocial support, legal pathways, documentation support, and follow-up helped her move toward a safer and more stable situation.

THE STORY OF SARA:
USING KNOWLEDGE TO OVERCOME FEAR

Sara came to ABAAD's shelter after her husband evicted her and her children from their home. With no family support network and no safe alternative, she required immediate accommodation, case management, and emotional support.

At first, Sara was afraid to leave the shelter. She had difficulty reading street signs and directions, which made movement outside feel unsafe and overwhelming. Through emotional support sessions and regular work with her social worker, she began rebuilding confidence and identifying practical steps to regain independence. Unable to attend formal literacy classes while caring for her children, Sara developed her own learning routine. She began learning to read alongside her first-grade daughter, using ABAAD brochures and school materials. Over time, she made significant progress and became able to read independently.

This progress had practical consequences for her safety and autonomy. Sara began moving more confidently outside the shelter, reconnected with her own sense of self-worth, and became more active in planning for her future. After leaving the shelter, she was referred to an ABAAD model center for continued case management. With support from her caseworker, she enrolled her children in school, found employment, and set clear boundaries when her husband attempted to re-enter her life.

Sara's story demonstrates how survivor-centered support can strengthen more than immediate protection. It can improve confidence, mobility, access to services, parenting stability, and economic self-reliance, all of which are essential to reducing dependency and supporting longer-term safety.




07
CAPACITY
STRENGTHENING



Capacity building is central to ABAAD's role as a national and regional resource center on gender equality and GBV prevention and response. In 2024, ABAAD invested in the skills, systems, and practices of its own teams, civil society partners, frontline actors, and public institutions to improve the quality, safety, and sustainability of gender-responsive programming.

ABAAD's approach goes beyond one-off training. It supports critical reflection, technical skill development, peer exchange, and the institutionalization of safer and more accountable practices. This is particularly important in Lebanon's current context, where frontline actors are responding to increasingly complex protection risks with limited resources and under significant operational pressure.

EQUIPPING THE TEAM

ABAAD strengthened the technical capacity of its staff through a series of capacity-building initiatives and refresher trainings for both new and existing team members.

Training topics included GBV and gender core concepts, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), community engagement, facilitation of emotional support groups, advocacy and movement building, masculinities, gender analysis, gender-sensitive citizenship, PFA, expression through art, and key aspects of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security.

Staff were also supported with practical program delivery skills, including case documentation, safe referral pathways, and participatory approaches. Refresher trainings created space for peer exchange, reflection on field experience, and joint problem-solving, helping maintain consistent and high-quality service delivery across ABAAD's programs.

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY AND GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS



ABAAD worked with CSOs and grassroots initiatives to strengthen gender-sensitive and rights-based approaches in community programming. The focus was on helping organizations better integrate the needs, priorities, and rights of women and girls into their interventions, while improving their ability to identify and safely refer GBV cases.

Training topics included:

- Inclusive and gender-sensitive citizenship, with a focus on the unique challenges faced by women, girls, and marginalized groups
- Advocacy and mobilization strategies, including how to frame campaigns around gender justice from a human rights perspective
- Gender-responsive program design, monitoring, and evaluation with a focus on women and girls' access to and benefit from services
- Engaging men and boys as partners in protecting women and girls from violence and supporting women's leadership

Under the United Nations Democracy Fund project "Engaging Civil Society and Youth in Gender Inclusive Citizenship and Leadership in Lebanon," ABAAD conducted a three-day training on Gender Inclusive Citizenship for CSOs, including members of the MenEngage Lebanon Network.



STRENGTHENING SAFEGUARDING AND PSEA PRACTICE

ABAAD's PSEA unit led a roundtable and training for Primary Healthcare Center directors and staff in the Bekaa region. The training focused on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, safeguarding practices, and the roles and responsibilities of frontline staff.

More than 50 participants from PHCs and partner organizations were equipped with knowledge and tools to prevent, identify, and respond to PSEA violations. This work contributed to strengthening safer practice in frontline service settings where communities' access essential health and support services.





REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTION

ABAAD also contributed to regional capacity strengthening and knowledge exchange.

As part of a regional human rights training program organized by the Arab Institute for Human Rights in partnership with ABAAD and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ABAAD participated in the annual "Anbatawi 34" training in Tunisia. ABAAD's session addressed partnership and justice between men and women, the role of civil society in human rights advocacy, and ABAAD's experience in rights-based advocacy.

As part of the Strengthening Civil Courage Program, ABAAD validated the Masculinities and Militarism Toolkit with Yemeni partner organizations in Jordan. A second validation exercise was later conducted with Ethiopian partner organizations. These processes supported the adaptation and relevance of gender-transformative tools across different regional contexts.



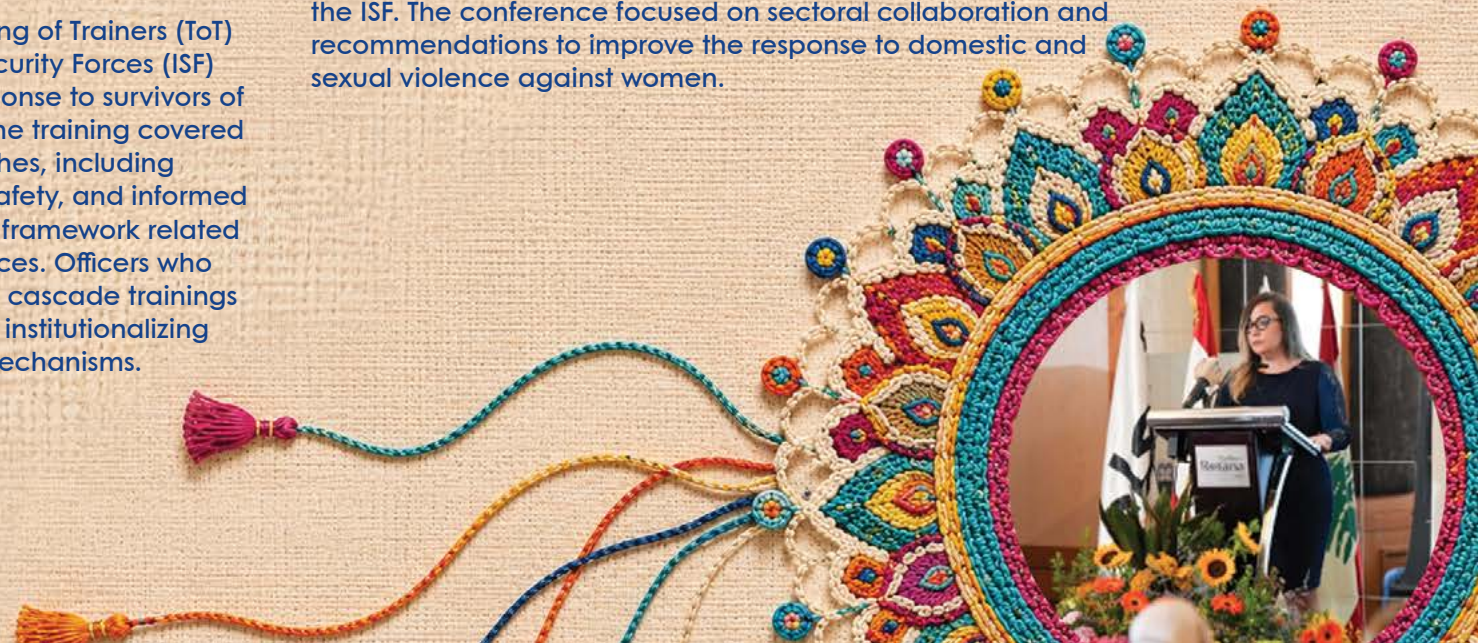


EQUIPPING GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

ABAAD continued strengthening the capacity of public institutions to respond more effectively and safely to violence against women and girls.

In September 2024, ABAAD delivered a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop for ten officers from the Internal Security Forces (ISF) academy, focused on strengthening the response to survivors of sexual harassment in line with Law No. 205. The training covered survivor-centered and rights-based approaches, including respect, confidentiality, non-discrimination, safety, and informed consent, as well as the legal and institutional framework related to sexual harassment and safe referral practices. Officers who completed the training are expected to lead cascade trainings for their peers within the ISF throughout 2025, institutionalizing good practices and reinforcing protection mechanisms.

Under a community policing project implemented by FIIAPP in partnership with CIVIPOL and funded by the European Union, ABAAD co-organized the second national conference with the ISF. The conference focused on sectoral collaboration and recommendations to improve the response to domestic and sexual violence against women.





DEVELOPING PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR CRISIS-AFFECTED WOMEN AND GIRLS

ABAAD launched a 60-session training package titled "Strengthening Life Skills for Women and Girls in Times of Crisis," developed in partnership with the Dutch and Norwegian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Norwegian Church Aid.

The package responds to the economic and social pressures affecting women and girls in Lebanon. It addresses practical life skills, economic challenges, and opportunities for women and girls to strengthen their capacities and pursue more independent livelihood pathways.

At the launch, Ghida Anani, ABAAD's Founder and Director, stated: "This training package was made by women and girls, for women and girls. We hope it serves as an innovative resource directly connected to the realities of the complex crisis we are living through, addressing the new needs and challenges imposed on families and communities."

By developing a structured training package, ABAAD contributed a practical resource that can be used beyond a single activity or project cycle, supporting broader programming for women and girls in crisis settings.



ADVANCING NATIONAL SHELTER STANDARDS

ABAAD also launched the national standards for temporary safe shelters for women and girl survivors of violence, developed in collaboration with the NCLW and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The launch was followed by a roundtable discussion on the realities and challenges facing safe shelters for women and girls in Lebanon.

At the launch, Ghida Anani said: "We hope this serves as a roadmap for opening a serious dialogue on the situation, needs, and aspirations of safe shelters, and for strengthening feminist and humanitarian solidarity in support of those who carry this mission."

This work represents an important contribution to national protection infrastructure by establishing a shared reference for safe, accountable, and survivor-centered shelter practice.

Together, these capacity strengthening efforts demonstrate ABAAD's role beyond direct service delivery. ABAAD supports the actors, tools, standards, and institutional practices needed to improve GBV prevention and response across Lebanon and the region.


08
ADVOCACY
AND GLOBAL
ENGAGEMENT



In 2024, ABAAD continued to advance advocacy and global engagement as part of its broader mandate to strengthen gender equality, GBV prevention and response, and women's rights in Lebanon and the region.

This work complemented ABAAD's direct services by addressing the systems, norms, policies, and institutional practices that shape protection outcomes for women and girls. Through national networks, global platforms, regional consultations, technical tools, and public advocacy, ABAAD contributed to policy dialogue, knowledge exchange, and the development of gender-transformative approaches in both development and humanitarian settings.

MENENGAGE LEBANON NETWORK

The reactivation of the MenEngage Lebanon Network marked an important milestone in 2024. During the year, the network finalized its action plan, aligned with its three-year strategic plan.

The plan sets priorities for expanding the network's regional presence, establishing a youth hub for men and boys, advancing research on masculinities, and launching targeted media campaigns. ABAAD provided capacity-building support to member organizations, equipping them with tools to integrate gender-transformative approaches into their work.

This work strengthened institutional capacity within the network and helped maintain visibility and coordination despite the instability affecting Lebanon throughout the year. Sustained funding for the network and for ABAAD's broader masculinities programming remains a priority to consolidate progress and expand reach.







TOOLS: THE 5 P'S AND ART BY ABAAD

ABAAD developed two tools to engage men and boys in conflict and emergency settings and support reflection on masculinities, care, and non-violent roles during crisis.

The first tool, "The Five P's," is a simplified framework that invites men to reflect on their roles within families and communities during emergencies, with attention to care, mental health, and the needs of those around them.

The second tool was an advocacy artwork titled "A Lullaby of Bombs and Sonic Booms." The piece explored a father's fears during airstrikes and called for peace, while presenting caring masculinity as an alternative to violent or patriarchal responses to conflict.

This work formally launched ABAAD's art-for-advocacy strategy, "Art by ABAAD," through the "Care Over Conflict" series, which focuses on gender equity and feminist peacebuilding. The approach expands ABAAD's advocacy methods by using creative tools to communicate complex issues linked to masculinities, conflict, care, and violence prevention.



CSW68

At the 68th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, ABAAD submitted a written statement highlighting the challenges faced by women and girls in contexts of socio-economic instability, political turmoil, and ongoing crises.

The statement included targeted recommendations on human rights commitments and gender-responsive policies. ABAAD also co-hosted a side event with Generation G partners on technology-facilitated GBV.

ABAAD's engagement at CSW68 strengthened its contribution to global policy discussions on women's rights, crisis response, and emerging forms of violence, while bringing perspectives from Lebanon and the region into international advocacy spaces.



ICVA BOARD

ABAAD is pleased to announce the election of Ghida Anani, ABAAD's Founder and Director, to the ICVA Board. This appointment creates a significant opportunity for ABAAD to bring regional insights and strategies on GBV directly to the global humanitarian stage and to reinforce a shared commitment to safer, more equitable environments for affected communities.



REGIONAL ADVOCACY ON SAFE SHELTERS

As part of the regional project "Empowering Women, Changing Communities," funded by Diakonia, ABAAD participated in national consultations in Jordan and Morocco with CSOs working on the protection of women.

The consultations focused on the realities and challenges facing emergency safe shelters for women and girl survivors of violence. They provided space to share achievements, lessons learned, and operational challenges since the establishment of shelter services in different contexts.

This engagement contributed to regional knowledge exchange on safe shelter models and reinforced ABAAD's role in advancing survivor-centered shelter standards and protection practice beyond Lebanon.

DIGITAL SAFETY

In collaboration with the ISF, ABAAD developed and disseminated practical guidance on digital safety for communities across Lebanon.

The initiative, led jointly with the ISF's Public Relations Division, emphasized the link between digital security, personal safety, and family safety, particularly in a context where cybercrime and technology-facilitated GBV are growing concerns.

ABAAD provided accessible and actionable guidance to help individuals and families strengthen safer online practices. This work reflects ABAAD's continued commitment to addressing emerging protection risks, including technology-facilitated violence, as part of a comprehensive GBV prevention and response agenda.

Together, ABAAD's advocacy and global engagement in 2024 reinforced its role as a national and regional technical actor. The organization contributed to policy dialogue, strengthened gender-transformative networks, advanced tools for prevention, participated in global advocacy platforms, supported regional learning, and addressed emerging forms of violence affecting women and girls.


09
COOPERATION
WITH THE PUBLIC
SECTOR

ABAAD maintains ongoing coordination with national and local governmental institutions across Lebanon. This cooperation is central to ABAAD's model, particularly in contexts where access to communities, service continuity, and referral pathways depend on strong local and institutional partnerships.

Engagement with municipalities and Social Development Centers (SDCs) is especially important. These institutions are trusted local actors and key entry points for safe and accessible services. They provide physical spaces for activities and case management, support community outreach, and contribute to building local trust and legitimacy around protection and prevention interventions.

Throughout 2024, ABAAD worked with municipalities and Social Development Centers (SDCs) to identify individuals and families in need, deliver awareness sessions, and implement psychosocial and emotional support groups alongside community events. This partnership model strengthened local ownership and supported the continuity of community-based programming on GBV, mental health, legal rights, and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security.

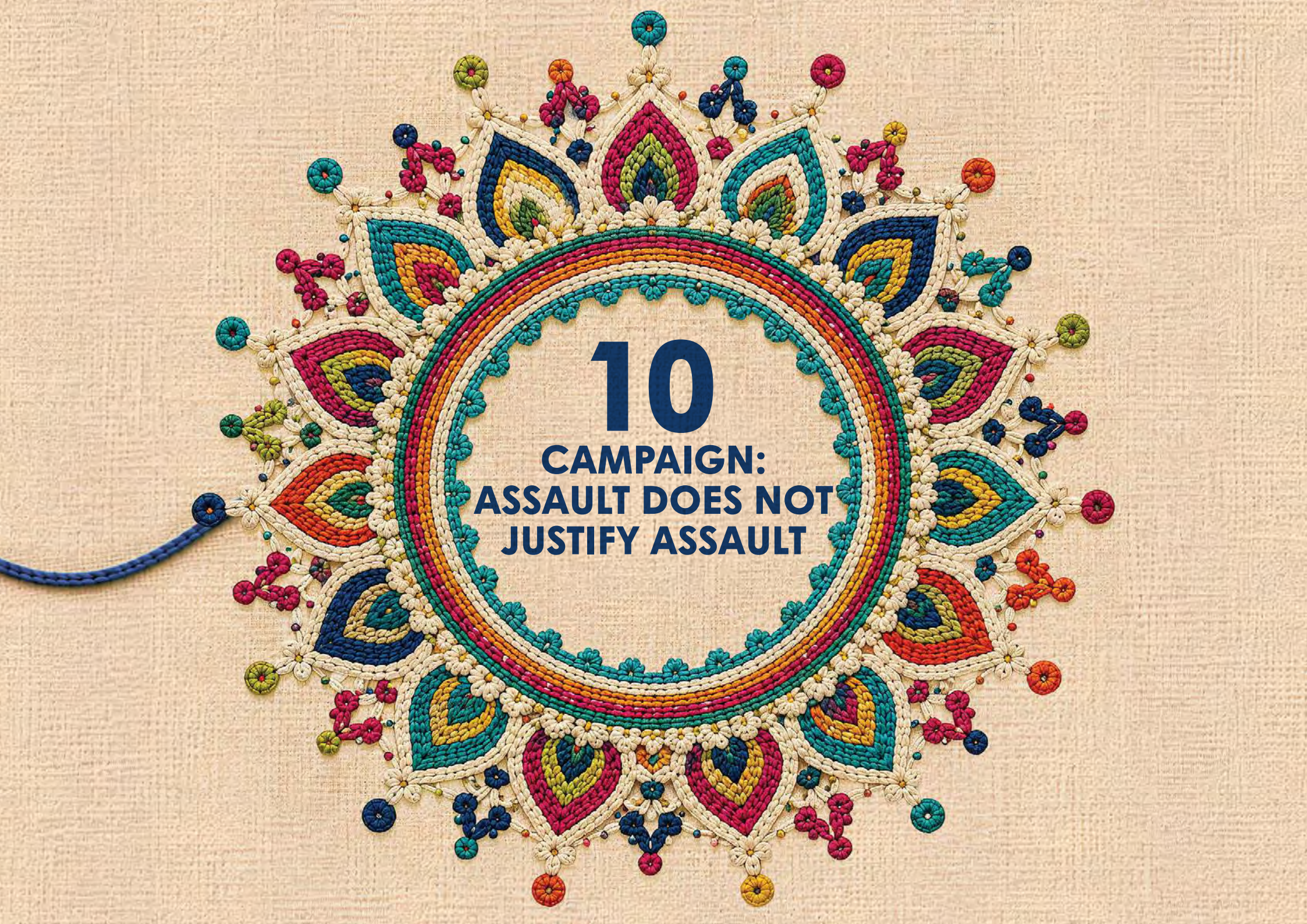
During the armed conflict and displacement crisis that began in September 2024, coordination with Social Development Centers (SDCs) intensified significantly. Under the guidance of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSa), Social Development Centers (SDCs) played a leading role in responding to the needs of internally displaced persons. Joint coordination supported rapid needs assessments, reduced duplication of services, and enabled more organized distribution of relief kits.

In 2024, ABAAD and the NCLW jointly convened a meeting with directors general and senior officials from Lebanese ministries and public institutions. The meeting focused on defining the role of each ministry in implementing Lebanon's National Strategy for Women 2022 to 2030 and its first action plan for 2024 to 2026.

This meeting was part of a joint project between the NCLW and ABAAD, supported by the European Regional Development and Protection Program for Lebanon and Jordan, a joint European initiative backed by Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Through this cooperation, ABAAD contributed to stronger alignment between civil society expertise and public sector responsibilities. The work reinforced coordination at local and national levels, supported the integration of gender equality priorities into institutional action, and strengthened the role of public actors in advancing protection, prevention, and women's rights.




10
CAMPAIGN:
ASSAULT DOES NOT
JUSTIFY ASSAULT

In 2024, Lebanon faced the severe consequences of armed conflict, including displacement, economic disruption, psychological distress, and increased pressure on already fragile public and community support systems. For women and girls, the crisis also intensified risks of violence, discrimination, marginalization, and reduced access to protection services.

ABAAD launched the campaign "Assault Does Not Justify Assault" to reinforce a clear protection message: conflict cannot be used to deprioritize women's safety. In emergency settings, women should not have to choose between seeking shelter for their families and protecting themselves from violence, exploitation, or abuse.

> **"Protecting women in all contexts must remain a priority, even in times of war. We fully acknowledge the immense burdens and costs of war, but these should not stand in the way of safeguarding women. This protection must be an integral part of national relief plans and multi-sectoral humanitarian responses. Women across Lebanon are enduring physical and psychological dangers. We all know that violence, in all its forms, increases significantly in conflict zones, further exacerbating the suffering of women who bear many burdens during these crises and beyond."**
>
> **Ghida Anani, Founder and Director, ABAAD**

The campaign called for stronger sectoral efforts to protect women from all forms of violence and discrimination during conflict. It also advocated for specialized psychological, social, medical, and humanitarian support, in partnership with organizations providing safe shelter, healthcare, and access to justice.

As part of the campaign, female reporters covering the war in Lebanon carried ABAAD's Safe Line message and number on their protective vests. This initiative connected public visibility with direct access to support, ensuring that information about ABAAD's Safe Line reached audiences during a period of heightened risk and national attention.

The campaign also carried a broader advocacy message: one form of protection should not replace another. In times of conflict, civilian protection, humanitarian assistance, and protection from GBV must be addressed together. ABAAD used the campaign to keep women's safety visible within the national crisis narrative and to reinforce the need for GBV prevention and response within humanitarian planning.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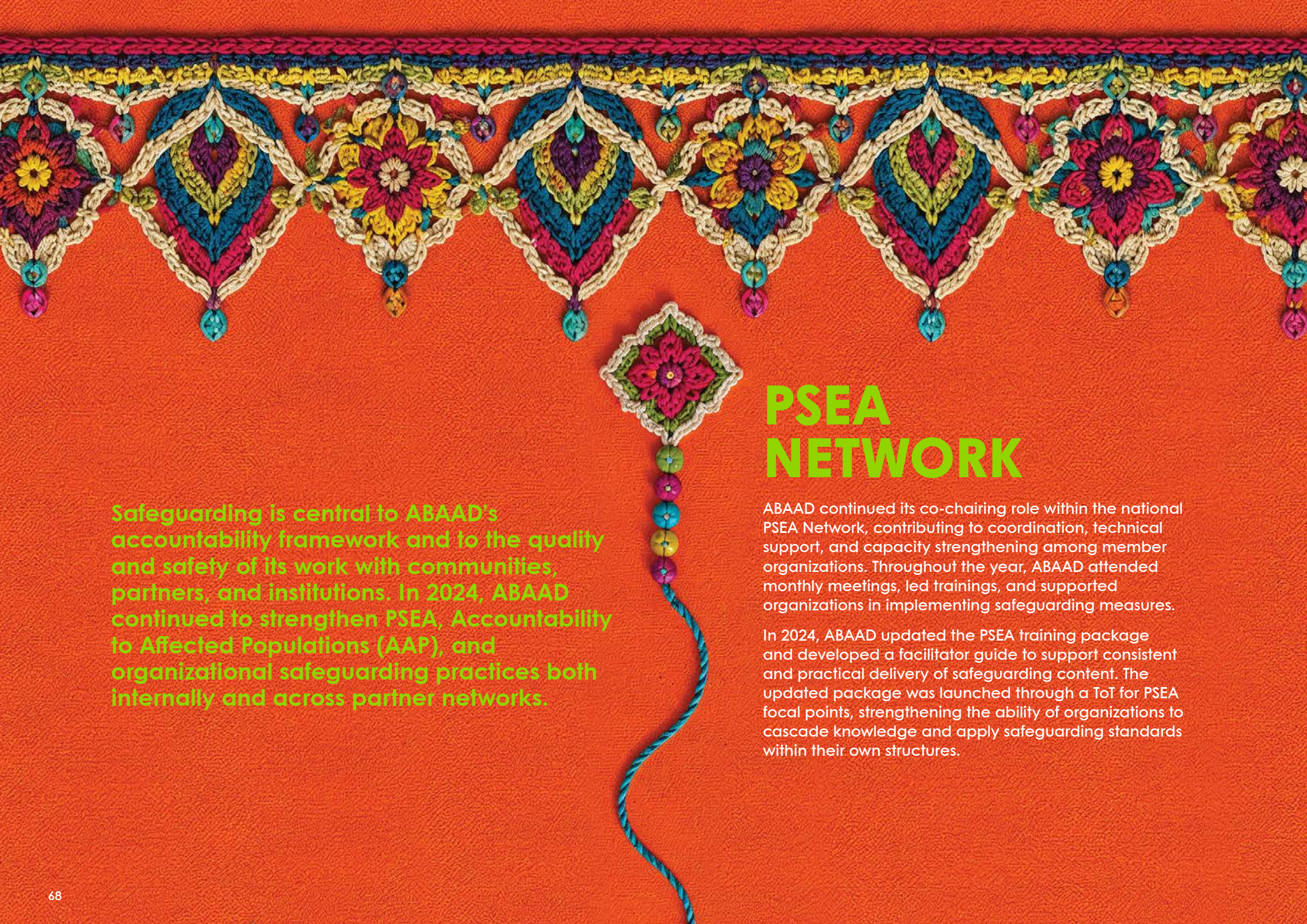
11
SAFEGUARDING



Safeguarding is central to ABAAD's accountability framework and to the quality and safety of its work with communities, partners, and institutions. In 2024, ABAAD continued to strengthen PSEA, Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), and organizational safeguarding practices both internally and across partner networks.

PSEA NETWORK

ABAAD continued its co-chairing role within the national PSEA Network, contributing to coordination, technical support, and capacity strengthening among member organizations. Throughout the year, ABAAD attended monthly meetings, led trainings, and supported organizations in implementing safeguarding measures.

In 2024, ABAAD updated the PSEA training package and developed a facilitator guide to support consistent and practical delivery of safeguarding content. The updated package was launched through a ToT for PSEA focal points, strengthening the ability of organizations to cascade knowledge and apply safeguarding standards within their own structures.

PSEA AND AAP TRAININGS

ABAAD's Accountability and PSEA Department conducted 26 trainings in 2024, reaching 437 participants from ABAAD teams and external organizations.

Training levels ranged from foundational sessions on PSEA and AAP, to advanced trainings including PSEA ToT and PSEA Coaching and Mentoring Workshops.

This progressive learning approach allowed participants to move from core concepts to more specialized technical knowledge. It also supported organizations in embedding safeguarding principles into policies, procedures, staff practice, and community-facing work.

In addition to training, ABAAD supported organizations through a structured PSEA Coaching and Mentoring initiative.

In 2024, 14 local CSOs and 2 Iraqi organizations successfully completed the initiative, while 3 additional organizations began the process later in the year.

The initiative supports organizations in developing safeguarding policies and procedures while addressing the gap between written policy and practical implementation. This includes strengthening internal systems, clarifying staff responsibilities, improving reporting and response mechanisms, and supporting safer organizational practice.

Through this work, ABAAD contributed to stronger safeguarding capacity beyond its own programs, supporting civil society actors to prevent, identify, and respond to risks of sexual exploitation and abuse in a more systematic and accountable manner.

Together, ABAAD's safeguarding efforts in 2024 reinforced its role as both an implementing organization and a technical partner on accountability, PSEA, and safer programming.

12

RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS

In 2024, ABAAD produced and contributed to research, training materials, and programmatic resources that reflect its technical expertise, field experience, and regional role in advancing gender equality and GBV prevention and response.

These resources are designed to support practice beyond individual activities or project cycles. They provide partners, practitioners, frontline actors, and community-based organizations with tools that can be adapted, replicated, and integrated into broader programming.

Program ABB: Promoting Positive Parenting

Developed in partnership with Equimundo, this manual promotes positive parenting and active father involvement in early childhood development, addressing a critical gap in culturally adapted training resources in the Arab region. Supported through SCC funding, the toolkit was adopted by the Ministry of Social Affairs as the official publication for use across its social development centers.

Makani Project

A collaboration with Terre des Hommes Italy, COSPE, and Ana Aqra Association aimed at reducing disparities in access to primary education and supporting children at risk of social exclusion in Lebanon, through integrated interventions in education, protection, empowerment, and community inclusion.

Decoding Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

A multi-country study coordinated by Rutgers and ABAAD as part of the Generation G programme, exploring the prevalence, forms, and impact of TFGBV on women and girls across different regions.

Active Citizenship as a Promoter of Gender Equality in Lebanon

Coordinated by ABAAD and funded by UNDEF, this study surveyed 1,214 Lebanese youth and conducted 22 focus group discussions to examine the relationship between active citizenship and gender equality.

Reflections from Ethiopia: Masculinities and Militarism Training

A brief documenting ABAAD and the Ethiopian Human Rights Defenders Center's experience delivering training on militarism and masculinities to civil society organizations in Ethiopia.

Standards for Temporary Shelters for the Protection of Women and Girls Survivors of Violence

Developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the NCLW, with UNFPA support and ABAAD contributions, this document sets national standards for protective shelters.

5 P's and Men's Identities in Times of Crisis

A practical tool developed by ABAAD to support men in reflecting on their roles, mental health, and responsibilities to their families during emergencies and periods of crisis.

Countering Anti-Gender Backlash

A learning brief from Strengthening Civil Courage partners in Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria, documenting approaches to countering anti-gender backlash within peace-building and human rights work.



DONORS AND PARTNERS

ABAAD's 2024 work was made possible through the support of institutional donors, public sector partners, civil society organizations, networks, and community actors who contributed to sustaining GBV prevention, response, advocacy, and institutional strengthening across Lebanon and the region.

FINANCES

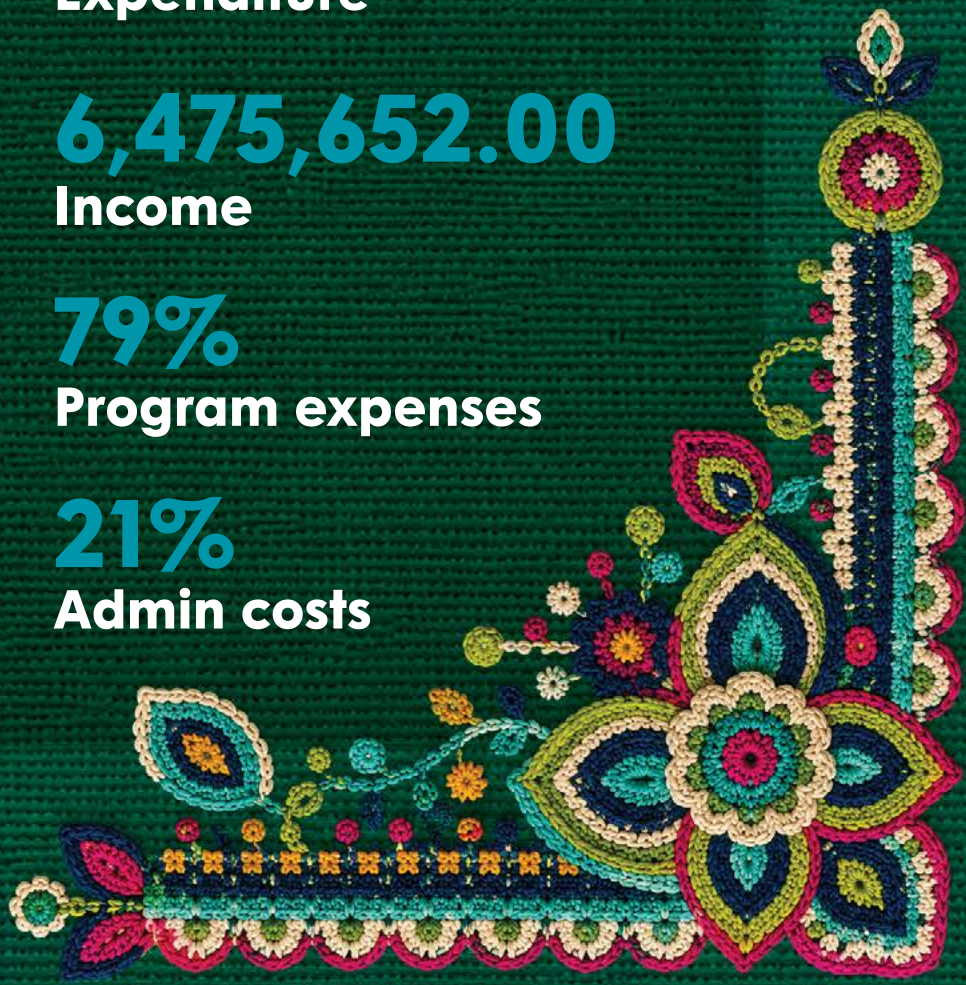
ABAAD continued to prioritize responsible financial management, ensuring that resources were directed toward program implementation, service continuity, emergency response, capacity strengthening, and organizational accountability.
In a year marked by increased needs and operational pressure, sustained donor support remained critical to maintaining essential GBV services and adapting programming to emerging risks.

6,475,652.00
Expenditure

6,475,652.00
Income

79%
Program expenses

21%
Admin costs

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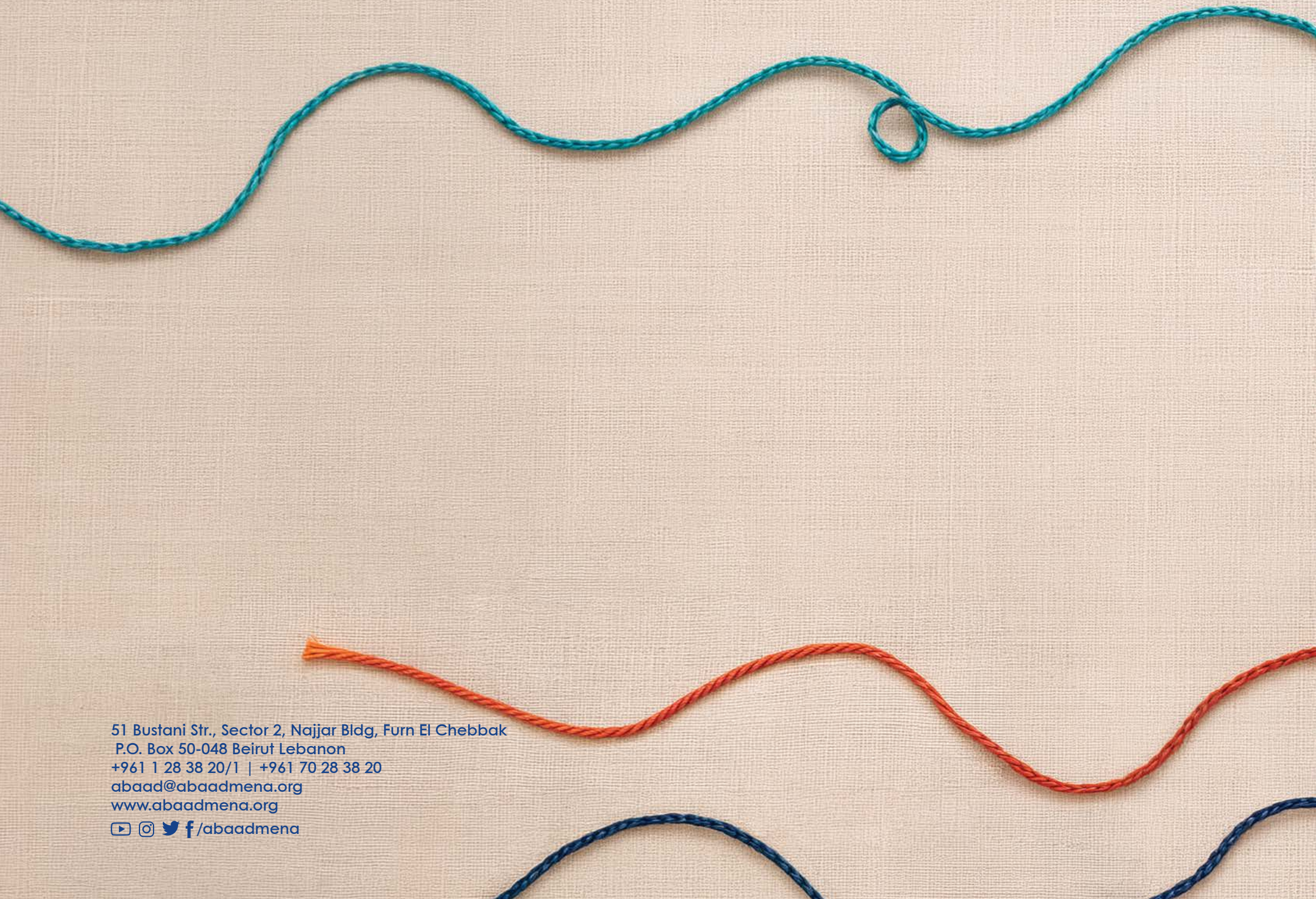

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