

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



ALLIANCE



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NOTE FROM THE FOUNDER



Danielle
De La Fuente
Founder & CEO

As we reflect on the journey of the past year, I am filled with a sense of pride and gratitude for the remarkable strides we have made together. 2023 has been a testament to our collective resilience, innovation, and unwavering commitment to enriching the educational landscape. Attempting to sway educational policy towards a more whole child development approach that incorporates mental health and wellbeing, we have seen dramatic advancements from earlier years. Our journey, though challenging, has been incredibly rewarding, illuminating the path to a future where education is more accessible, personalized, and holistic.

In the rapidly evolving world of today, the role of EdTech in transforming learning experiences has never been more crucial. Our approach has consistently been one of augmentation rather than replacement, by thoughtful integration of technology. We aim to complement traditional classroom learning with the benefits of digital innovation. This delicate balance ensures that while we embrace the advancements in technology, we never lose sight of the human touch that lies at the heart of education.

This year, we started by deepening our understanding of the unique educational contexts we operate in, allowing us to further tailor our strategies to meet the diverse needs of our communities. We then set our sights on enhancing the capabilities of educators, empowering them with the skills needed for social and emotional learning (SEL), and emphasizing the importance of their wellbeing. Recognizing the gaps in conventional education, we have bridged these gaps by fostering a more inclusive learning environment. Finally, we championed the adoption of a hybrid learning model, which marries the best of digital and traditional education, responding adeptly to the demands of our times.

The success stories and positive feedback from our initiatives are a clear indication that our efforts are making a significant impact. However, none of this would have been possible without the support of our dedicated team and partners. Their belief in our programming, dedication and passion towards children, and shared collective vision has propelled our work exponentially as we began our journey to scale.

As we look to the future, we remain even more committed to refining our strategies, exploring new opportunities for growth, and ensuring that every child has access to the quality education and mental health tools they deserve!



OUR MISSION

Amal Alliance, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit, Non-Governmental Organization committed to the empowerment of children who are displaced and marginalized through educational and social development initiatives worldwide. Our initiatives span both non-traditional and formal education environments. We uphold the principle that every individual is a global citizen, carrying the social and moral duty to guarantee every child can access essential skills for realizing their full potential. Our efforts are geared towards influencing systems impacting children facing displacement and marginalization by implementing comprehensive, evidence-based solutions. Our comprehensive approach caters to both the mental and physical well-being of children, through education and integration efforts centered on social-emotional learning, tackling trauma at its foundational level. These initiatives empower children to discover their resilience and strength, notwithstanding their adverse situations.



VISION

Our vision is a world where every child, regardless of their circumstances, has the opportunity to thrive and contribute to a more inclusive and peaceful society. We envision communities that embrace and support the well-being and development of all its members, especially the youngest and most vulnerable. Our philosophy is grounded in the belief that education and emotional support are the cornerstones of building resilient individuals and communities. By focusing on the holistic development of the child, we aim to lay the foundation for a future where children are not defined by their circumstances but empowered to overcome them.

OUR “WHY”

We acknowledge the impact of protracted crises and natural disasters on communities, tearing apart families, and severely hindering the development of young minds. Severe stress and exposure to conflict delays early childhood development, damages the neurology of young children, and leads to learning difficulties and chronic physical, mental, and emotional consequences. Our commitment to providing quality education and social development programs is rooted in our understanding that children thrive when provided with the tools and resources necessary to obtain an effective education and succeed. Furthermore, we understand the impact that strong, peaceful families and communities have on the growth and development of our youth. Through this lens, we are committed to advancing quality holistic learning opportunities—rooted in our 4 Pillars—to empower all children to become global learners and future leaders.



Social & Emotional Learning:

Increases the ability to properly identify and process emotions, thus decreasing behavioral problems and emotional distress

Early Childhood Development:

Supports healthy cognitive, emotional, and physical growth during the most formative developmental years

Psychosocial Support:

Improves overall well-being by holistically engaging the mind, body, and spirit

Peace-building:

Creates cohesive, more peaceful communities by recognizing the importance of human relationships

Advancing Global Goals:

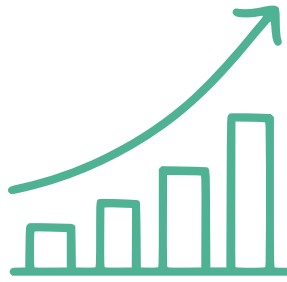


BY THE NUMBERS

Since our inception, Amal Alliance's holistic programming has benefitted

286,000 CHILDREN

around the world.



Programs have been

**IMPLEMENTED IN
BANGLADESH, GREECE,
LEBANON, TURKEY, AND
UGANDA**



Thanks to strategic partnerships, our content has been

**DOWNLOADED IN
175 COUNTRIES.**

IN 2023...



18 WORKSHOPS

administered for training purposes



1,100 SCHOOLS

contacted



324 TEACHERS

directly trained to implement the programs



10,000 CHILDREN

reached through Amal Alliance programming



As we move to scale Colors of Kindness, we aim to reach

**500,000 CHILDREN
BY 2027**





ABOUT THE PROGRAM

PROMOTES EMPATHY, EMPOWERMENT, & INCLUSIVITY



Colors of Kindness, developed by Amal Alliance, is a multi-award winning educational program renowned for its innovative integration of technology to foster social and emotional learning (SEL) among children. Aimed at promoting empathy, empowerment, and inclusivity, it extends a helping hand to those most in need of support, including refugees, children with disabilities, and those from underserved communities. Initially crafted to address the urgent needs of children in emergency situations, who are often deprived of crucial life skills, the program's versatility has been proven through successful applications in diverse environments such as Bangladesh, Greece, and Uganda in both informal and formal educational settings.

Tailored to meet the unique cultural and situational needs of its participants, Colors of Kindness offers various iterations of the curriculum, ranging from 10 to 18 weeks, alongside a self-paced SEL workbook. Its recognition by the LEGO Foundation & HundrED as one of the most innovative and scalable methodologies for social and emotional learning underscores its effectiveness and the potential for wide-reaching impact. Despite challenges posed by limited connectivity in some regions, the program delivers its rich content through an engaging mix of digital workbooks and weekly podcasts, featuring universally relatable, colorful, gender-neutral characters that guide children through their learning journey.

ENGAGING MIX OF DIGITAL WORKBOOKS AND PODCASTS



HISTORY

2020

Pilot in Bangladesh

Colors of Kindness was initially tested in Bangladesh including the Rohingya camp in Fall 2020. The program showed a remarkable 16.5% increase in social and emotional competencies.

2021

Workbook adaptation downloaded in 175 countries

2022

Pilots in Nakivale Settlement Uganda, Palabek Settlement Uganda, and Greece

2023

Early-stage scale-up in Greece & second cohort in Uganda



SEL is crucial for supporting mental health and creating positive learning environments. It equips learners with essential life skills for academic and real-world success, addressing gaps often overlooked in traditional curriculums.



WHY SEL?



MOVING TO SCALE

In Greece, the COVID-19 pandemic drastically affected children's lives, leading to school closures and increased household stress, with vulnerable groups suffering the most. This period, however, offered a chance to reimagine education to enhance wellbeing and academic outcomes. Notably, Greece shelters a significant number of refugee and migrant children, whose education was further jeopardized by the pandemic.

In response, Amal Alliance launched a collaborative pilot project with the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs and six NGOs, utilizing Learning Equality's Kolibri platform and conducting a study with the Harvard Graduate School of Education's EASEL Lab. Running from January to June 2022, this initiative reached 400 children across diverse settings, emphasizing the need for quality social-emotional learning (SEL) resources and psychosocial support. The Harvard Summary Report can be found [here](#).

"Both me and the children have used and are still using the breathing strategies because they help have them concentrate, and stay calm when they're more stressed and angry."

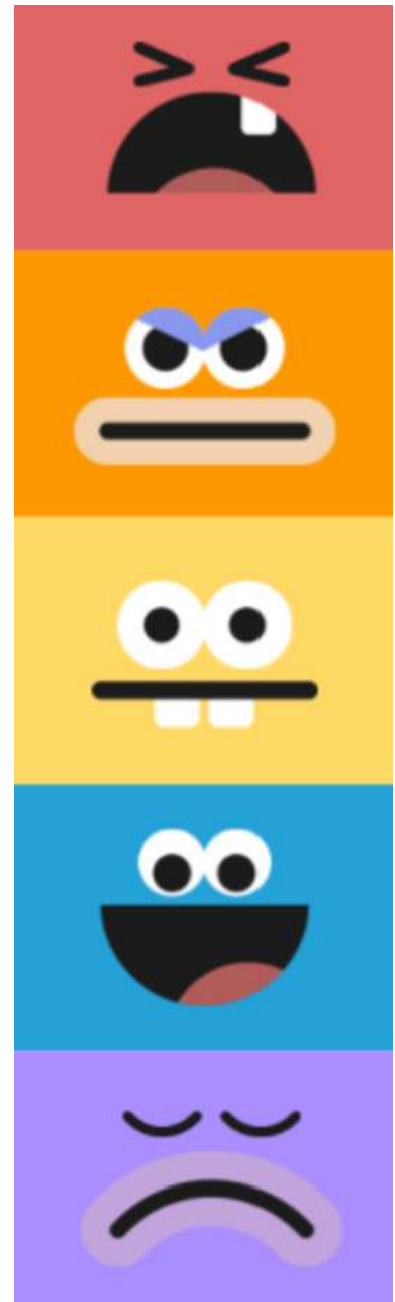


The pilot demonstrated the effectiveness of targeted SEL interventions, showing notable improvements in students' SEL competencies despite challenges like absenteeism. Inspired by these results, the Greek Ministry of Education endorsed the nationwide rollout of Colors of Kindness. With Amal Alliance, the program was expanded, making it available to all public schools via the Skills Lab platform from September 2022. This expansion underscores a commitment to enhancing SEL in education, and adapting to the needs of children across Greece.

With ongoing efforts to refine and evaluate the program's impact, Amal was selected for the MIT Solve/LEAP Challenge funded by Jacobs Foundation. Together we built a roadmap of key factors for the early stage of scaling.

EARLY ADOPTERS

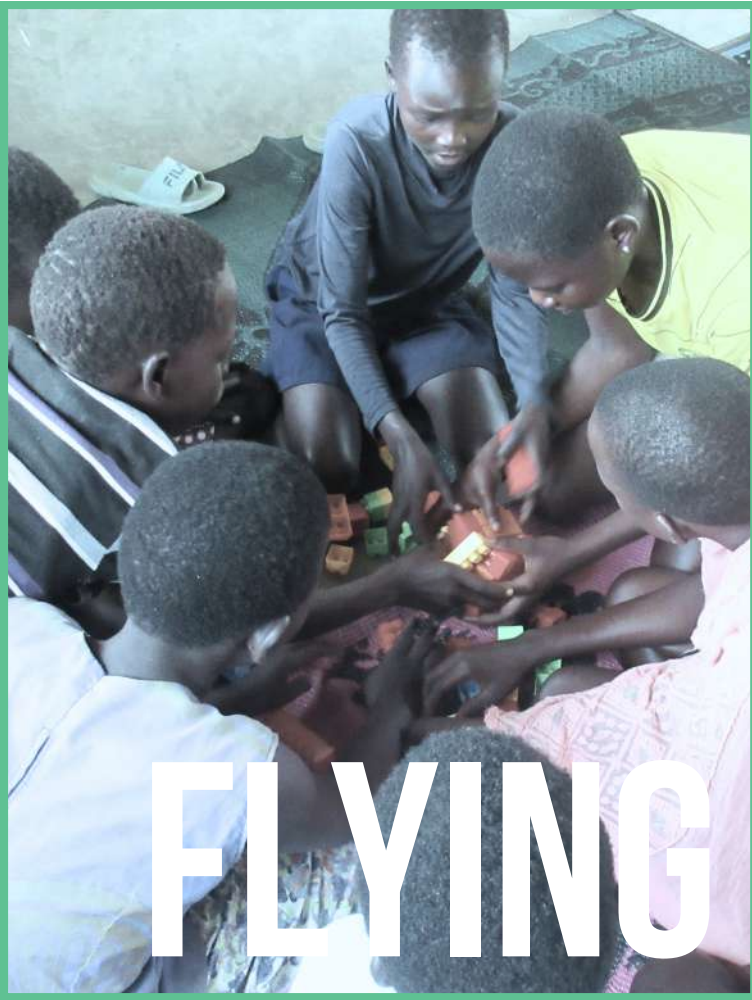
In 2023, Colors of Kindness had transitioned from a pilot phase to early stage scale. Starting the academic year with 280 early adopters, the following semester expanded to 320 classrooms. With massive media exposure, introductory sessions across municipalities and awareness sessions with regional educational directors Amal Alliance set to broaden its impact through strategic scaling efforts. Focusing on engaging both parents and teachers directly, our next steps include organizing pop-up sessions and comprehensive campaigns aimed at empowering these crucial stakeholders. These interactive sessions are designed to equip parents and teachers with the knowledge and tools necessary for integrating social emotional learning (SEL) principles into daily interactions with children, both at home and in school environments. By fostering a community-wide understanding of SEL's importance, we aim to create a supportive ecosystem that enhances the efficacy of the Colors of Kindness program. This community-centered approach not only amplifies the reach and impact of our initiatives but also ensures that the benefits of SEL are sustained and woven into the fabric of educational practices across Greece, reinforcing our commitment to nurturing resilient and emotionally intelligent future generations.



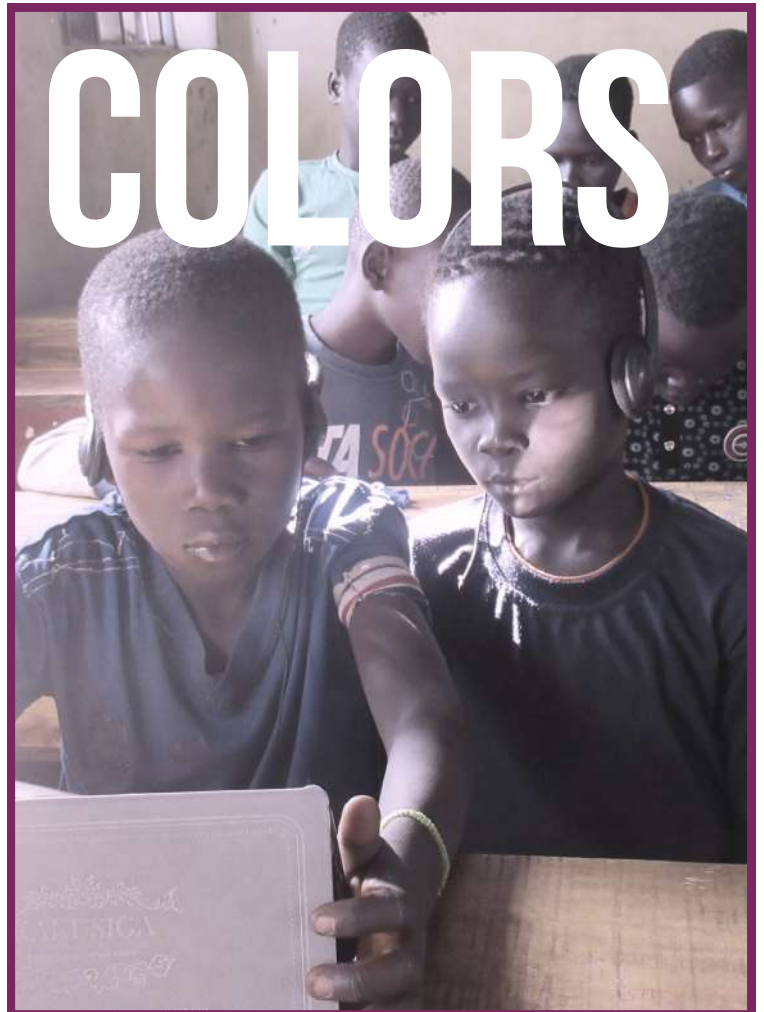
Emotions Thermometer



"...because it was something structured, well organized, it gave them guidance, they knew what they should do every week, they could see the results of measurable results, which is not something that happens all the time."



FLYING



COLORS



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

COUNTRY CONTEXT: UGANDA

Uganda hosts the largest refugee population in Africa with over 1.45 million people primarily from South Sudan and the DRC. It has faced a severe educational crisis exacerbated by the pandemic. Over 13 million Ugandan children, including 600,000 refugee children, have been out of school since March 2020, with uncertain prospects for returning due to sporadic school reopenings and closures. This crisis fueled our partnership with Hopelink for All Foundation (HAF-Uganda) & Learning Equality to bring the Flying Colors program to Uganda.

Flying Colors is an innovative initiative designed to engage children aged 7-12, including those out of school and from vulnerable refugee and host community backgrounds in Palabek Refugee Settlement, in digital learning through a mix of playful and social-emotional learning within a blended education model. This project aims to support 600 learners at levels equivalent to P3 and P4, utilizing Amal Alliance's Colors of Kindness program—specifically developed to help children navigate the complex emotions arising from emergencies and trauma—integrated into Kolibri. Kolibri, developed by Learning Equality, is an offline-first educational toolkit that allows for the organization and distribution of educational content and facilitator resources without the need for internet access, facilitating learner progress tracking and data collection on a large scale.

Central to Flying Colors is the "Flying Colors Bundle," a collection of newly developed learning resources focused on promoting learning through play and fostering enjoyable learning experiences. This unique approach facilitates a true blended learning experience, where the new educator support materials enable impactful engagement with the digital content on the platform and guide project-based playful learning activities offline.

ENGAGING, DIGITAL CONTENT ACCESSED OFFLINE



PROMOTING INTEGRATION & CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING



Flying Colors aims to broaden educational access by providing interactive, consistent, and engaging teaching and learning materials in settings where internet access is unavailable. The program supports the continuation of education for at-risk and out-of-school learners through modules aligned with the national curriculum, thereby paving the way for their integration into formal education systems. The goal is to improve academic outcomes and promote the integration of displaced children into host communities, enhancing cultural understanding. Curriculum development and implementation are timed to coincide with school terms, aiming to establish links to formal education, although direct reintegration is not the program's primary focus.

The project's name, Flying Colors, is inspired by the Kolibri (meaning "hummingbird" in many languages), symbolizing global reach, combined with the SEL-focused "Colors" curriculum. In collaboration with the Hopelink for All Foundation (HAF) Uganda, the first and second cohort ran through 2023. With a commitment to community-involved co-design and backed by its evidence partner Innovations for Poverty Action, Flying Colors is poised for impactful expansion and scalability.

LEVERAGING TECH



EdTech significantly enhances education but cannot replace in-person learning. It should support and personalize the educational process, using digital tools to improve wellbeing and teaching strategies. To blend technology effectively while maintaining human interaction, we suggest four key strategies: understand the specific educational context to customize learning, boost teacher skills in social and emotional learning (SEL) for their and their students' wellbeing, incorporate SEL to address gaps in traditional education, and adopt a hybrid approach that combines technology with traditional methods to meet modern needs.

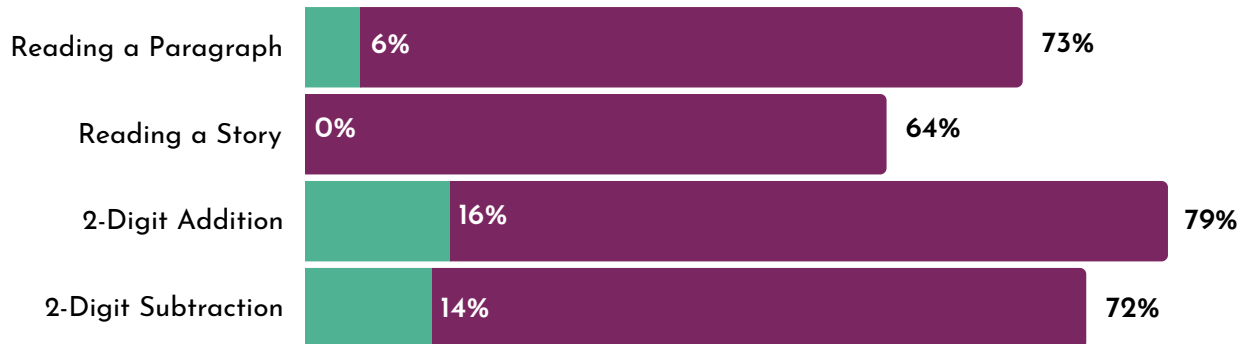
RESULTS

In 2022/23, we piloted Flying Colors in 4 schools in Palabek Refugee Settlement in Northern Uganda, with a focus on primary school age out-of-school learners. 714 refugee and host community learners were enrolled in one of two consecutive 12-week cohorts, enabling learning and an iterative approach to set up Flying Colors for future replication and scale. Results showed strong improvements in learners' English literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills. You can find the full results [here](#).

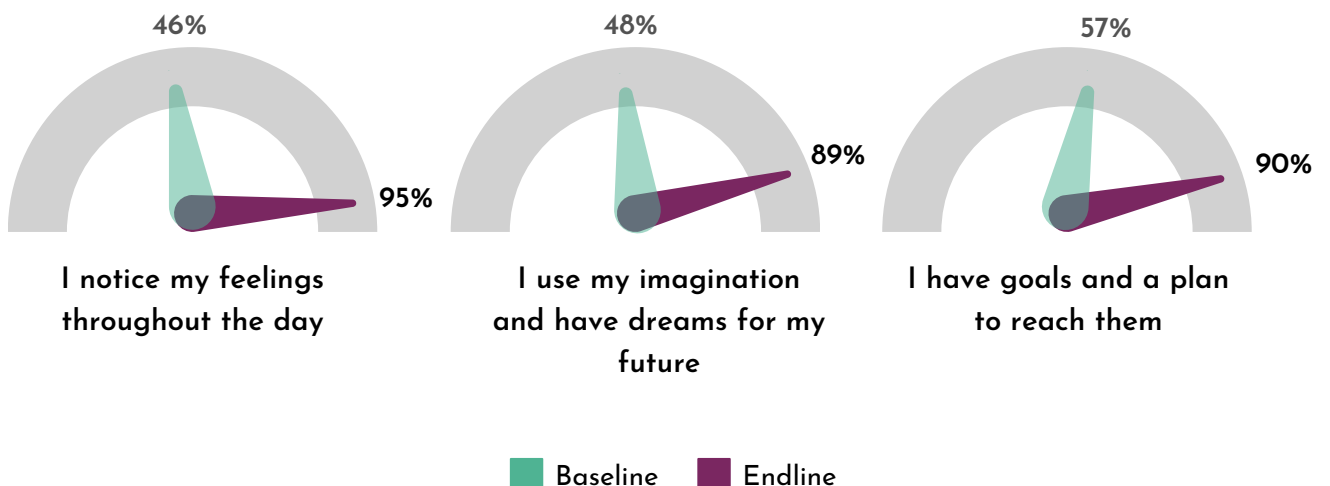
82% OF LEARNERS GRADUATED



NUMERACY & LITERACY



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING





SCALING &



EXPANDING



GROWING EVIDENCE & ADVOCACY

As Amal dove deeper into our scaling journey, the growing evidence base was essential towards advancing advocacy efforts. Danielle De La Fuente, Founder & CEO, represented the organization across numerous international forums and education conferences. This gave Colors of Kindness major exposure within the field of education in emergencies. Amal Alliance contributed to the following:

Education Cannot Wait's High Level Financing Conference (Geneva, Switzerland)

Panelist on Addressing Holistic Needs Through Education

CIES (Washington, DC)

Panelist on Social & Emotional Learning in Crisis Contexts

Clinton Global University (Nashville, TN)

Panelist on Expanding Opportunities for Alternative Education

UKFIET (Oxford University)

Presenter on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Social & Emotional Learning

Clinton Global Initiative Greenhouse (New York, NY)

Presenter on Inclusive Economic Growth

UNGA (New York, NY)

Advocacy across events

UNHCR GRF (Geneva, Switzerland)

Moderator for High-Level Panel: Achieving health and wellbeing for all: strengthening health systems and mental health & psychosocial support for refugees and host communities

LAYING FOUNDATIONS: 2024

In 2023, Amal Alliance avidly laid the foundation for 2024. Gearing up to expand our efforts to migrants and low-income families in the US, we prepared for the launch of two pilots. 1) Bringing Colors of Kindness to the Rafael Hernandez School in Boston, and 2) beginning to design and structure the mobile learning program estimated to be wheels rolling May 2024.

BRINGING PROGRAMS TO THE USA

To address challenges of stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns among migrant and underserved children in the U.S., we began planning for a pilot of Colors of Kindness in a magnet school within the Boston Public School System. Colors of Kindness will run in the Rafael Hernandez Dual Language public school of Boston for 16 weeks from January - June 2024.



Additionally, we began to form partnerships to bring a mobile learning/care bus of Colors of Kindness to migrant children in the State of Massachusetts. Together with the Massachusetts Governor's Executive Office of Education, Horizons for Homeless Children, and Neighborhood Villages, we will provide developmentally appropriate and trauma-informed care to migrant children living in remote motel shelters. We expect to be wheels rolling June 2024, and hope to establish a model for replication across the Commonwealth and neighboring states.

MOBILE LEARNING

GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM: RENEWING OUR COMMITMENT

Amal Alliance is a proud Member of the Global Refugees Forum (GRF) Education Alliance. Launched in Geneva in December 2019, the inaugural forum helped transform the aspirations of the Global Compact on Refugees into concrete action. At the High Level Officials Meeting in December 2021, we announced that we fulfilled the 4 pledges made at the inaugural GRF, and exceeded our initial goal fivefold.

In the lead up to the GRF 2023, Amal Alliance renewed their engagement and pledged their commitment to children worldwide with two pledges for 2023-2027. Click below to learn more about each pledge.

MULTISTAKEHOLDER PLEDGE FOSTERING MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING



PLEDGE TO PRIORITIZE PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (PSS) FOR CHILDREN & TEACHERS IMPACTED BY CRISES AND EMERGENCIES



We are grateful to UNHCR and global education stakeholders for their ongoing commitments and partnership to work towards our collective goals.



OUR PEOPLE



EXECUTIVE BOARD

Danielle De La Fuente
Founder & Executive Director

Anil Khurana
Chairman

Dominic Register
Secretary

Aizat Zhakybalieva
Director & Chief of Operations

Panagiotis Arkoumanas
Director

Eduardo Jose Carillo Marquez
Director

Robert Jones III
Director

Parisa Elahi
Director

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Rea Hystuna

RESIDENT SCHOLAR

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CONTRACTORS

Emmanuel Abecia Montesa

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(Listed by Country Affiliation)

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Ms. Giorgia Nagalli, Brazil

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Mr. Theodore Batis, Greece

Ms. Souzanna Klimentidi, Greece

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ACADEMIC AFFILIATES

Boston University's Global Development Policy Center

Columbia University's School of Social Work

EASEL Lab of Harvard Graduate School of Education

MIT Solve / LEAP

NYU Silver School of Social work

COALITIONS, NETWORKS, & AFFILIATIONS

Consortium for Street Children

COVID 19-Response Consortium

Future of Jobs Committee, G-20Y Association

Global Campaign for Education USA

Inclusive Education & Early Childhood CoP

INEE Early Childhood Dev. in Emergencies Task Team

INEE PSS-SEL Working Group

Institute of International Education Scholar Rescue Fund

Karanga, Global Alliance for SEL & Life Skills

NGO CoM Subcommittee on Children

UNHCR GRF Group of Friends for Health & MHPSS

UNHCR GRF MHPSS + SEL Task Team

UNHCR Humanitarian Education Accelerator (HEA) Alum

The Federation of Sustainable Development Orgs

THRIVE Coalition

SPECIAL APPRECIATION

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Mr. Koji Miyamoto

Mrs. Heidi Lazani

Mrs. Jane McCall Politi

Coalition Space, Flatiron NYC

Mrs. Maria Pia Belloni

HundrEd

Mrs. Ann Rakoff

PWC Greece

Mrs. Nora Marketos

MHPSS Collaborative

Mrs. Santina Marketou

Meraki





To our partners, sponsors,
& collaborators:

Thank you, weebale,
ευχαριστώ





COMMITTED TO FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY



Amal Alliance is committed to financial transparency, and upholds Candid's platinum seal of transparency, with all our 990 forms online. All grants and contributions go directly to programming costs to serve our beneficiaries.



AMAL ALLIANCE

EMPOWERING GLOBAL CITIZENS



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