

# BRIDGING YOUTH TO YOUTH

AMMPARO Youth Group Curriculum



## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

**AMMPARO**  
Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities

# MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

## FACILITATOR INTRODUCTION

### Facilitator notes

Thank you for your interest in the well-being of unaccompanied refugee children! This three-session module seeks to introduce ELCA youth to:

- the circumstances of unaccompanied refugee youth from Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia who have journeyed to Cairo, Egypt;
- the larger context of persecution and other reasons for refugee journeys;
- life for young refugees in Cairo today;
- the assets and characteristics that young people bring to their challenges;
- the hazards and helpers on the journey and in Egypt;
- programs that the ELCA offers to accompany these youth in Egypt (including St. Andrew's Refugee Services or StARS, funded in part by the ELCA);
- ways your youth group can accompany these youth; and
- a group of young refugees, living in Egypt, in a facilitated phone or Skype conversation.

Some of this material is intense. Much of the violence that these young people experience every day is gender-based and sexual. While this module focuses on seeing assets and strengths and accompanying people in a crisis situation, there are many references to rape, murder, and assault, especially in the stories and role-play activities. Use your judgment in how to present this material to your group—but please don't sanitize the dangers.

### Contact the AMMPARO team right away to set up your phone call

Session 3 includes a telephone call with youth from StARS. Arranging a time that is safe and convenient for both groups takes some doing, particularly given the time difference (6-10 hours!). When you begin this program, please contact AMMPARO Program Director Mary Campbell at [mary.campbell@elca.org](mailto:mary.campbell@elca.org) or 773-380-2618 to begin the process of arranging the call between StARS and your group. The call will need to be scheduled during the morning so that refugee youth in Cairo aren't out at night. Sunday mornings work well for StARS, since Sunday is a regular workday in Egypt.

### Resources

- [Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017](#)
- [Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre \(NRC/IDMC\)](#)
- [Amnesty International Eritrea 2017/2018](#)
- [“Escaping Eritrea: ‘If I Die at Sea, It’s Not a Problem—at Least I Won’t Be Tortured’”](#) (a good overview of why people try to leave), Guardian, April 21, 2015
- “Situation analysis: Unaccompanied children and youth in the context of Cairo,” StARS internal document (available upon request)
- [Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service](#)

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

### SESSION 1: COUNTRY OF ORIGIN BACKGROUND

#### Learning objective

*By the end of this session, participants will have:*

- explored the circumstances of unaccompanied refugee youth from Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia who have journeyed to Cairo, Egypt;
- found points of connection;
- begun to understand the larger context of persecution and other reasons for refugee journeys; and
- gained insight into why young people make the long journey to Egypt.

#### PREPARING FOR THIS THREE-SESSION WORKSHOP

##### Equipment and supplies

- Map of Africa (or eastern Africa and the Middle East) for the wall
- A marker and a pad of colorful 4x6" or 6x8" Post-its for each participant to take notes for the Journey Wall
- Laptop, projector, Internet connection, and wall to project web-based videos
- Candles, a cloth, a cross (perhaps from Ethiopia or Egypt) to set up a central table or altar for prayer
- A basket for slips of paper
- A copy of the prayer for each participant (or projected on wall)
- Music and lyrics, in Latin, for "Dona Nobis Pacem" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship #753). Lyrics in both languages can be projected or written on a poster on the wall.
- Find out about organizations working with refugees in your area.

##### Before the session

- Choose a space that includes a large empty wall where participants can post facts and stories as they encounter them. This is where you'll create the Journey Wall—a place where participants can post what they learn and their questions in a way that they can review easily before each session. Each session, you will add more material. You can invite church members in to view the wall on a Sunday or create it on easels so it can be moved to another part of your church building. The goal is to keep the Journey Wall up during all three sessions.
- Create signs for these headings for the wall:
  - The Journey Wall
  - Reasons for leaving
  - Difficulties faced
  - Personal strengths
  - Signs of hope
  - Questions I have
- Place the "Journey Wall" label on top or to the side and arrange the others so that there is plenty of space to post items in each category.
- Write and prepare these definitions to be posted on the Journey Wall (also available in PowerPoint)

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

- **Unaccompanied minor:** A person under the age of 18 who has been separated from both parents and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom is responsible for doing so.
  - **Refugee or asylum-seeker:** Someone who is unable or unwilling to return to his/her country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.
- Copy the statistics pages for each of the countries of origin.
  - Copy the stories on the story sheets and cut so each one is on a separate piece of paper. Read the stories ahead of time and, on your copy of the stories, note strengths that each person has shown in his/her situation, so you can prompt others to see and name strengths.
  - Make copies of the opening prayer to distribute to participants.
  - Prepare lyrics for “Dona Nobis Pacem.”

### Roadmap for this curriculum

Comments to the leader *will be written in italic*. Everything else is something that you will be saying in these or your own words during the portions where you talk.

## SESSION 1: COUNTRY OF ORIGIN BACKGROUND

### Roadmap for session 1

- Welcome and opening prayer (5-10 minutes)
- Refugees in the world today (15-20 minutes)
- The context of countries of origin (20-25 minutes)
- Wrap-up and sending: Finding hope (10-15 minutes)

### Part 1. Welcome and opening prayer (5-10 minutes)

*Gather in a circle, near or around the table with the cross and candles. Ask someone to light the candles. Welcome everyone. Take a few minutes to check in on everyone.*

*If your group participated in the Migrant Journey at the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering, use this introduction. If you didn't, skip this paragraph.*

Remember how we took the “migrant journey” at the Youth Gathering in Houston? For those who weren't there, who can tell us about it? What else do you remember? What stood out for you? Where were the migrants from? Why were they leaving their country?

*Thank everyone for their contributions. If details are missing, add some yourself to prompt other recollections.*

We are going to spend our next three meetings learning more about the lives of young people who live in Cairo, Egypt, but come from Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. We will find out why so many young people are choosing to risk the dangerous journey to leave their countries. We will also talk by phone to young refugees living in Egypt so we can hear about their life firsthand.

A lot of what we will learn about these young people will be very hard. Their lives can be filled with violence and danger. The good news is that they are very strong and determined. Also, people of faith are helping them, through the ELCA and our companion organization, StARS (St. Andrew's Refugee Services), in Cairo. We will learn how we can support them, too.

Let's begin by praying. Would someone like to lead us?

God, who is our refuge and strength, we pray today for courage. Courage to learn about places and situations so different from our own. Courage to let our emotions show. Courage to be moved toward action, as we work to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

*Sit in silence for a moment or two.*

### Part 2. Refugees in the world today (15-20 minutes)

Depending on the size of the group, discuss as a group or break into small groups and discuss the following questions.

Imagine you are leaving your house. What 20 things do you want to take with you? Then take away five. Then five more. Then five more. You must carry everything with you.

*After five or ten minutes, come back together (if in small groups) and share what your groups talked about.*

*Pass out the Post-its and pens.*

Can you imagine what might make you leave your home and your family and travel two thousand miles without a parent ... not for a vacation? There will be a lot of information today. Some of it may be new, disturbing, or surprising. At a few points during our time today, we will hear the stories of three young people who made the journey to Egypt. As you are listening to the information and stories, each time you hear a reason for leaving—for example, a threat—write it on a separate Post-it. It takes a lot to leave your home and travel a dangerous path to a place you don't know. Young people also face difficulties when they arrive in Egypt. You can write those down and add them to the "difficulties faced" section. As these young people tell their stories, listen for the qualities that helped them survive and succeed. Are they brave? Faithful? Optimistic? Every time you recognize or hear a positive quality or characteristic, write it on a separate Post-it. You might also have questions you want to ask when we talk to the young people in Cairo. You can write those down, too.

Before we begin talking about the specific countries, let's learn a little about the refugee situation in the world today.

*If you choose, you may use the PowerPoint to highlight numbers and show maps.*

Over the past several years, due to new conflicts in countries such as Syria, South Sudan, Yemen, and Myanmar (affecting the Rohingya people) and continuing conflicts in countries such as Afghanistan and Somalia, millions of people have been forced to leave their homes. "People on the move" are granted protections from the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The most recent annual global statistics are from 2017, so we will use those for this exercise.

At the end of 2017, 68.5 million forcibly displaced people were under the protection of UNHCR. This is the largest number of forcibly displaced people globally since the end of World War II.

In 2017, 16.2 million people were newly displaced—11.8 million internally displaced people (people living away from home but not having crossed an international border) and 4.4 million newly displaced refugees and new asylum-seekers. This is equivalent to 44,000 new displacements every day of 2017.

Of the **68.5 million** people under the protection of the UNHCR, 25.4 million were refugees, and 68% of these come from just five countries. Does anyone know what they are?

- Syrian Arab Republic (6.3 million)
- Afghanistan (2.6 million)
- South Sudan (2.4 million)
- Myanmar (1.2 million)
- Somalia (986,400)

Most young people who come to Cairo from Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia are refugees. Does anyone know the definition of "refugee"?

*After giving participants a chance to come up with a definition, bring up the UN definition on PowerPoint slide or uncover from the wall.*



## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

According to the United Nations: “A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.”

To be a refugee, someone must be outside his/her country of origin. Can anyone guess which countries hosted the most refugees in 2017?

*Click slide.*

Turkey (3.5 million)  
Pakistan (1.4 million)  
Uganda (1.4 million)  
Lebanon (998,900)  
Islamic Republic of Iran (979,400)  
Germany (970,400)  
Bangladesh (932,200)  
Sudan (906,600)

The United States hosted 287,100 refugees in 2017.

Does this list surprise you? What surprises you? Why?

In 2017, 52% of the world’s refugees were under 18.

In 2017, 173,800 unaccompanied and separated children were under the protection of UNHCR.

- An **unaccompanied child** is a person under 18 who is “separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has responsibility to do so.”
- A **separated child** is a person under 18 who is “separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members.”

*Uncover or post the definition of “unaccompanied child” on the Journey Wall.*

Do you know anyone who has had to leave a place

because it was too dangerous? *[If you know such a story, please share it. Draw connections from the Migrant Journey or other AMMPARO activities.]*

Let’s stop and pray for refugees—that Jesus might walk with them as they journey, try to find what they need, and help them recover from their experiences.

*Improvise a short prayer.*

### Part 3. The context of countries of origin (20-25 minutes)

*Break into three groups. Each group will receive information about the countries of origin. Give them 10 to 15 minutes to review the information and prepare a brief presentation for the rest of the group. Maps are available on the PowerPoint slides.*

Since we will be talking about refugee children in Egypt, we will learn about the reasons why young people make the journey to Egypt. The three most common countries of origin for unaccompanied children in Cairo are Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Each group will have a few minutes to read about one of the countries, add notes to the Journey Wall, and prepare a brief presentation for the whole group. You should choose one person from the group to read out loud the refugee story.

As we build our wall of stories and learnings to help us record what we are learning together, I invite you to jot down reasons for leaving each of these countries and add them to the “Reasons for leaving” part of the wall.

You might also write down difficulties faced in Egypt or strengths you hear in the refugee stories, adding these Post-its to the wall.

*After each group has presented and participants have had a chance to post on the wall:*

Let’s step back and look at this wall. What are you beginning to see about life in Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia? About life for refugees in Egypt? About the young people who make the journey?

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

### *Discussion.*

What is making people leave? *[Violence, threats, no ability to dream.]*

Hearing about this and building our wall of facts, what questions would you like to ask a young person who has journeyed to Egypt from one of these countries? What do you want to know? Write down your question or questions on your Post-it and put it on the wall in the “Questions I have” section. We are collecting these questions to prepare for our phone call with young people from Cairo that we will make in our third session together.

### *Participants write and post.*

Thanks for posting your questions. Now, on a Post-it, write the places you go during the week—places like school, your friends’ houses, the store, sports practice, whatever you do. How would it feel if you couldn’t go to these places because it was too dangerous? Even going to school?

### *Discussion.*

#### **Part 4. Wrap-up and sending: Finding hope (10-15 minutes)**

All these stories are hard. It is hard to feel hope in these situations. When you are in trouble, how do you stay hopeful? *[If no response, suggest a couple—friends, my faith, etc.]*

Re-read your group’s story again, looking for signs of hope. What do you see? *[Lead off with your story. Could be that the family is still alive. There are relatives to go to. There are people helping, etc.]* What do you think Suzan, Ararisso, Hodan, and their peers need in order to be safe again? *[If no response, suggest—bravery? Maybe hope? Faith? A sense of a future?]*

In our next session, we will look at signs of hope that come from young people who are rebuilding their lives, and the people who are helping them in Egypt.

When we have our Skype session with young people from these countries who are living in Cairo, we will learn more reasons to hope.

There are ways we can join the effort to support these young people. One way is by recognizing that they already live among us. At your school, are there students who have come from somewhere else? Do you know their stories? *[Call on people to share.]*

As we wrap up this session, I’d like to challenge you to get to know someone in your school who may have made a journey. Tell us, next week, something about his/her story.

I’d also like to ask one of you to learn more about *[name of group in your area that works with migrants or refugees]*. Who can check the organization’s website this week or stop by the office to learn more about its work? This will be very helpful to us in the next session when we look at how we might accompany young migrants. *[Assign this task to a volunteer.]* Thank you.

In the next session, we will learn about how the ELCA is partnering with a local organization, called StARS, to accompany unaccompanied children living in Cairo.

*Other wrap-up rituals, as are the tradition/practice of your youth group, can be included.*

Let’s stop now and take a breath. *[Pause for breathing.]* We’ll sit in silence for a moment, and then we’ll learn a song together. *[A few moments of silence.]*

“Dona Nobis Pacem” is a familiar song that is used in worship services around the world, using the Latin lyrics or translations into many other languages. It reminds us that we share a longing for peace. Could someone please read the lyrics in Latin? Now could someone read them in Arabic?

Let’s give it a try.

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

*Sing several times through, trying both languages. It can be sung in a canon (round), if your group is comfortable with it. After the singing finishes, sit in silence for a few more moments.*

Let's pray.

Dear God, you are with us in trouble, you are with us in pain, you are with us in fear. You are also with us in joy! We thank you for this time together, and we ask you to remember all the youth we met this evening in stories. Surround them with your love and strengthen them for their challenges. Be with us all this evening as we take their stories into our hearts and homes. In your name we pray. Amen.



## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

### SESSION 1: COUNTRY OF ORIGIN BACKGROUND, HANDOUTS AND ACTIVITIES (STATISTICS AND STORIES)

#### COUNTRY OF ORIGIN INFORMATION AND REFUGEE STORIES

Print copies of the country of origin information and refugee stories, estimating how many will be needed for each small group member to have his/her own copy. Read the stories ahead and, on your copy of the stories, note strengths that each youth has shown in his/her situation, so you can prompt others to see and name strengths.

When printing, be sure to print pages 10-15 only!

#### Resources

- [Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017](#)
- [Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre \(NRC/IDMC\)](#)
- [Amnesty International Eritrea 2017/2018](#)
- [“Escaping Eritrea: ‘If I Die at Sea, It’s Not a Problem—at Least I Won’t Be Tortured’”](#) (a good overview of reasons why people try to leave), Guardian, April 21, 2015
- “Situation analysis: Unaccompanied children and youth in the context of Cairo,” StARS internal document (available upon request)

### Eritrea

Eritrea is a fairly new country in Africa, having gained independence from Ethiopia in 1991. Since then, border disputes with Ethiopia have been used by the government to justify repressive policies. Eritrea has compulsory national service—for men and women between the ages of 18 and 40—which requires long, indefinite conscription and can include military service. Conscription can continue beyond age 40, and military instruction sometimes begins before age 18.

Since its independence, Eritrea has been a one-party state. The only legal party is the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ). Though national elections have been scheduled and cancelled, national legislative elections have never been held. The president has been in office since 1993.

According to Human Rights Watch, the Eritrean government's human rights record is among the worst in the world. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association are limited. The Eritrean government has been accused of arbitrary arrest and detention, and of detaining thousands of people for political activism. People between the ages of 5 and 50 are prohibited from traveling abroad, and those who are caught trying are arrested and detained. Those caught trying to escape the mandatory military service are also arrested and detained. In June 2016, a United Nations Human Rights Council report accused Eritrea's government of extrajudicial executions, torture, indefinitely prolonged national service, and forced labor, and also indicated that sexual harassment, rape, and sexual servitude to state officials are widespread.

Only registered, census-based religions—the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Eritrean Lutheran Church, and Sunni Islam—can be practiced openly and freely. All other religions are persecuted, including other denominations of Islam, such as Shi'ism, and other denominations of Christianity, such as Protestant denominations (other than the Eritrean Lutheran Church) and Jehovah's Witnesses. Evangelical Christians have been among the most persecuted groups.

Malnutrition has increased over the past few years in four of six regions. Last year, UNICEF projected that 22,700 children under 5 would be affected by severe acute malnutrition, and half of children had stunted growth. Relatives living abroad report that people are “struggling to meet their basic needs,” “could not afford adequate and sufficient basic supplies,” and were facing “acute water shortages.” More and more people are leaving drought-affected regions in search of better living conditions.

### Suzan's story

My name is Suzan. I just turned 20. I have been in Egypt since 2016.

I am Eritrean, but I have never been to Eritrea. My mother left Eritrea when she was 15 years old to escape military service. She went to Sudan. I was born there.

When I was eight months old, my father left for Israel. At that time, many Eritreans were going to Israel through the Sinai. But we never heard from him again and still don't know what happened to him. I can't say he is dead because I never received a letter stating that he was dead. I can't say he is alive because he has never called.

After my mother died in 2010, I lived with my aunt in Sudan. As a child, I was happy. We were at church a lot. But as I got older, it got harder. When I left the house, even to go to school, I was afraid of what might happen. I was called names. We sat by our church and sold traditional Eritrean clothes and wooden crosses. But the police arrested us. Twice, we were detained. My aunt raised money from the community to get me out after two days. After that, we didn't work, we didn't leave the house. My aunt said it was better for me to leave.

I love Eritrea, but I didn't want to go there. I thought of going to Libya, knowing that the way would be difficult but hoping that the life after would be good. But we didn't have that much money. My aunt had paid 2,000 Sudanese pounds to get me released from detention. So I approached a man who was a well-known smuggler in our community. He told me that for 5,000 Sudanese pounds, he could get me to Egypt.

They say if you know the smuggler, you will arrive safely. I arrived, but the journey was terrible. The car they picked me up in was very good. But then, once we were out of the city, they put us on trucks that were worse than something an animal would ride in. I was afraid to sleep because I was afraid they would leave me behind. I felt like I would not arrive in Egypt. The situation in Sudan was better.

Finally, after 10 days, I arrived in Cairo. I didn't know anyone. An Eritrean woman found me and offered for me to stay with her. She took me to her house and let me take a shower. I called my aunt and told her I was safe. That woman saved my life. Not the smuggler, not my aunt, but, thank God, it was her.

### Ethiopia

Ethiopia is the second-most-populous country in Africa. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) has been in power since 1994. At various times, opposition-party leaders were subject to harassment, arbitrary arrest, and detention.

The EPRDF was organized as a coalition of four ethnic parties—the Oromo, Amhara, Southern Ethiopian, and Tigrayan. The coalition introduced an ethnic federal system of governance—which meant that Ethiopia was divided into regions based on ethnic/tribal lines. Ethno-nationalist movements grew as a result of this system, and ethnic violence is common in Ethiopia.

One of the major land disputes involves Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. It is an enclave located in the State of Oromia. The city doubles as the capital of Oromia despite the fact that fewer than 20% of its residents are ethnic Oromos. This has led to tensions between ethnic Oromos, who are the minority in Addis, and other ethnic groups such as the Amhara, who are the overwhelming majority in the city.

In 2015 and 2016, protests broke out around the country, during which a hundred peaceful protestors were killed by direct government gunfire. These protests were about land disputes (particularly involving Addis Ababa) and a call for freedom to elect representatives. In August 2016, dozens of protestors were shot and killed by police. The protestors demanded the release of political prisoners, an end to human rights abuses, and a fair redistribution of wealth. Further ethnic violence flared up again in September 2018.

Media is mostly limited to state-owned networks. Private news sources are subject to harassment from the government.

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

### Ararisso's story

My name is Ararisso. I am Oromo from Ethiopia. I am 19 years old.

Life in Ethiopia was really hard. Because my family was in opposition to the government, we faced so many problems. They took our land, and without the land, we had nothing. They beat my mother so badly she ended up in a wheelchair. My older brother was arrested at university and beaten terribly, and after that, he suffered from mental illness. My father was killed.

My older brother and I were arrested and detained for eight months in Ethiopia because we protested after they took our land. After that, we were not allowed to go back to school. We could not move around the country. If we tried, we would be arrested again ... or worse.

Before that, I wanted to be a lawyer. But then they cut off that plan when they said I couldn't go to school anymore. They took away my hope. They took away my future.

After my brother and I were released, my mother was afraid for us. She was afraid we would be beaten as our older brother was or killed as our father was. She told us to leave Ethiopia. I was 17 years old. I have not spoken to my mother since we left. I do not know what happened to her or to my oldest brother.

My brother and I left Ethiopia together and went to Sudan. Our plan was to go to Libya. But then we heard about the things that were happening there, and we were afraid. Someone told us to go to Egypt. On the way, the smuggler loaded us into separate vehicles. I lost my brother in the desert.

When I got to Aswan (in Egypt), I asked the smuggler where my brother was, and he said he didn't pay. But we had paid together. So I don't know what happened to him. I still don't know.

When I came to Egypt, I didn't know anyone. I was homeless. I didn't speak Arabic. I lost my hope again.



### Somalia

In 1991, the Somalian government collapsed, and the country has effectively been in conflict since then. Millions have been displaced, both as internally displaced people and as refugees, over the nearly 30 years of conflict. There is an African Union–backed government in place, though there is frequent and ongoing conflict between the AU-backed government and various terrorist factions, most notably al-Shabab. Al-Shabab commands large parts of the country, forcibly recruits soldiers, and carries out attacks on civilians. In addition, clan wars have lasted for decades.

In addition to this insecurity, the country experiences drought and, as a result, faces a persistent threat of famine. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), more than half the population is in need of humanitarian assistance.

Due to sexual and gender-based violence, a general lack of security and stability, and a persistent fear of forced recruitment, there is a general inability to access healthcare, education, and humanitarian assistance.

### Hodan's story

My name is Hodan. I will be 20 in November (2018). I have lived in Egypt for 6.5 years.

When I was a little girl in Somalia, I lived with my parents, my three brothers, and my two sisters. We played a lot. I went to school. It was a good life.

One day, I was outside playing. My brother was outside, too. All of a sudden some men came, and I saw him get shot in the leg. He was OK and eventually could walk again, but after that, I stopped going outside. I stopped going to school. My father offered to take me, but I refused.

Ten months after that happened, some men came into our house. They messed everything up, they beat my mother and my brothers, and they took my father. Until now, we do not know what happened to him. After that, I stopped talking, and didn't talk again until after we came to Egypt.

After two and a half years, we had heard nothing about my father, and my mother told us that we were going to go to Egypt. I was so happy on the plane because I thought that things would be like they were when we were all together in Somalia. I thought that we would go to Egypt until the war was over and that we would come back and find our father.

But when we got to Egypt, I found that things were very difficult. We went to many schools, but they ignored us or wouldn't help us. Because I hadn't talked for so long, it was very difficult for me to speak and the schools would not take us.

My mother and siblings were separated because my mother and brothers had to find work. The work was hard, and the hours were very long. They were not paid very well, and sometimes they were not paid at all.

It was really hard. For so long, after we came to Egypt, I just sat quietly, without speaking, without really moving.

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

### SESSION 2: ACCOMPANYING YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE JOURNEY

*Note: This session may run 75-90 minutes.*

#### Learning objective

*By the end of this session, participants will have:*

- grasped the challenges and dangers that face young refugees living in Egypt,
- learned about some of the people who help along the way,
- been introduced to the concept of accompaniment,
- reflected on the situation of migrants and refugees who may be in your social or school networks,
- learned how the ELCA and companions accompany these young people on their journey,
- found points of connection with young migrants, and
- identified places where your congregation might be able to make a difference.

#### PREPARING FOR THIS SESSION

##### Equipment and supplies

- Map of Africa (or eastern Africa and the Middle East) for the wall
- A marker and a pad of colorful 4x6" or 6x8" Post-its for each participant to take notes for the Journey Wall
- Laptop, projector, Internet connection, and wall to project web-based videos
- Candles, a cloth, a cross (perhaps from Ethiopia or Egypt) to set up a central table or altar for prayer
- CAPSA prayer for the safety of migrant children—copied onto the Journey Wall or projected from a PowerPoint slide
- UCY exercise cards, printed, cut, highlighted in color (if printed in black and white), and placed in a basket
- Monopoly money (or some kind of paper money)
- Six-sided die
- Timer
- “Bridging Youth to Youth, Module 3, Session 2: The Rest of the Story” on pages 31-32, cut apart for three participants to read and post on the Journey Wall
- “Bridging Youth to Youth, Module 3, Session 2: Accompanying Young People on the Journey” facilitator guide on pages 22-28, containing additional information for the exercise and the functions of Welcoming Congregations
- PowerPoint slide showing map of Welcoming Congregations across the U.S.
- Music and lyrics, in Latin, for “Dona Nobis Pacem” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship #753). Lyrics in both languages can be projected or written on a poster on the wall

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

### Links you will need

- [StARS video](#)
- [UYBP video](#)

### Before the session

- Make sure the Journey Wall is up and visible in the room.
- Create a poster of the prayer for the safety of migrant children to post on the Journey Wall, or project from a PowerPoint slide.
- Cut the UCY role-play stories into slips. Making a binder of all stories, dangers, helpers, etc., will help you lead the activity and discussion.
- Print the “Bridging Youth to Youth, Module 3, Session 2: The Rest of the Story,” cutting the three stories apart.
- Cut the functions of Welcoming Congregations on page 29 of the “Bridging Youth to Youth, Module 3, Session 2: Accompanying Young People on the Journey” into slips and place them in a basket.

## SESSION 2: ACCOMPANYING YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE JOURNEY

### Roadmap for session 2

- Welcome, opening prayer, and warm-up (5-10 minutes)
- Exercise: An unaccompanied youth arrives in Egypt (10-30 minutes)
- Introduction to StARS (St. Andrew’s Refugee Service) (15-20 minutes)
- How we can accompany refugee youth (10 minutes)
- Planning the international call (12 minutes)
- Wrap-up and sending (3 minutes)

### Part 1. Welcome, opening prayer, and warm-up (5-10 minutes)

*Welcome everyone. Take a few minutes to check in on everyone.*

In our last session, we met some young people who decided to make the difficult journey to Cairo as refugees. All of them are trying hard to survive and make their lives better. I’ve been thinking about them this week. What about you? *[Specific prompts as needed. Could take a moment to walk by the wall and review the stories.]*

Did you talk to a schoolmate who is a migrant or refugee? Tell us about him or her. *[What is his/her story? Is he/she accepted at school? What do you think are challenges for him/her?]*

*Ask participant who volunteered to investigate a local group working with refugees and migrants to give the name of the group and a sentence or two about what it does.*

When we left off last week, the young people had arrived in Cairo and found it very difficult. What happens once they arrive? Today we’ll explore that experience and learn about the people who accompany and help them in their life in Cairo. We’ll also learn about ways we can join other congregations in supporting young people seeking safety and opportunity.

Let’s begin by praying for the safety of migrant children and families on the journey and for justice as they reach their destinations. *[Ask a participant to read the prayer posted on the wall while others listen.]*

Lord, No one is a stranger to you and no one is ever far from your loving care. In your kindness, watch over refugees and asylum-seekers, those separated from their loved ones, those who are lost, and those who have been exiled from their homes. Bring them safely to the place where they long to be and help us always to show your kindness to strangers and those in need. We ask this through Christ our Lord, who too was a refugee and immigrant and

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

who travelled to another land searching for a home. Amen.

*Source: CAPSA, Catholic Alliance for People Seeking Asylum, Australia*

In our last session we learned the term “unaccompanied minor.” What does it mean to be unaccompanied? *[Affirm responses.]* Yes, it means being on your own. So what does “accompanied” mean? *[Affirm responses.]* Yes, when you are accompanied, you are not alone. You are with someone else.

What difference does that make, especially on a long journey? *[Affirm responses or prompt—someone to talk to? Someone to help you when you need it?]*

Let’s learn a little more about the experience of unaccompanied children and youth living in Cairo. Afterward, we’ll continue to explore the idea of accompaniment and its significance.

### **Part 2. Exercise: An unaccompanied youth arrives in Egypt (10-30 minutes)**

*This exercise invites students to imagine what it’s like to be an unaccompanied child arriving in Egypt. If time allows, give two or three students the opportunity to volunteer as the unaccompanied child arriving in Egypt.*

*Invite a student to be an unaccompanied child (UCY) arriving in Egypt. Pass out cards randomly to the remaining participants (each may hold more than one, if necessary, so that all cards are distributed). Invite participants to sit in a circle. The UCY volunteer should stand in the middle of the circle.*

*Once everyone is situated, ask the UCY volunteer where he/she is coming from (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia). Is he/she alone or with siblings or friends? Does he/she know anyone in Cairo? How old is he/she? Does he/she have any money? Cell phone?*

*If the UCY volunteer chooses Eritrea, he/she does not have an ID. If he/she chooses Somalia or Ethiopia, roll the die. If he/she rolls a one, he/she*

*has an ID. Otherwise, he/she does not have a valid identification document.*

*Note: If he/she is from Ethiopia, even if he/she has an ID, the date is likely to be recorded on the Ethiopian Orthodox calendar, which can cause discrepancies at UNHCR and other agencies.*

*If the UCY has money, ask how much. Give him/her the equivalent amount in Monopoly money. If the UCY has some money from the journey, he/she will be able to use public transportation. Otherwise, he/she will be walking around the area where he/she was dropped off when arriving in Cairo.*

*Explain that some cards read “choose (a number).” If your card reads “choose (a number),” make the UCY decide where to go before telling him/her what the rest of the card says.*

*Set a timer for 10 minutes.*

*If he/she knows someone, ask who has #8 and start there, following the directions on the cards.*

*If he/she does not know anyone, ask:*

*What is the first thing you’d like to look for? [Food, housing, money, register with UNHCR, etc.]*

*Go person to person until you find it, asking, “Do you have a place I can stay?” / “Can I have some food?” etc. Pretend a day goes by for every person the UCY asks.*

*Those holding cards should read “yes” or “no” except for #8 (“Established refugee”), #9 (“StARS”), #17 (“Faith community”), #23 (“CBO”), #24 (“Street theft”), or #25 (“Police checkpoint”). If the UCY is looking for housing, #1 can also read “yes” (but only if the UCY has money!).*

*Once the UCY finds #8, #9, #17, or #23, reflect on how long it has been since he/she has eaten, had housing, showered, etc. If he/she did not have transportation, he/she may have walked at least five miles. Proceed with directions on the card. At this point, the UCY volunteer should begin collecting*



## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

*the cards as he/she walks around, following the directions on each card and collecting/paying money as instructed on the card.*

*When the timer goes off, how much money does the student have left? What challenges has he/she faced? What decisions did he/she have to make? What did he/she have to give up?*

*Repeat one or two more times, encouraging participants to come up with different scenarios to begin.*

### **Part 3. Introduction to StARS (St. Andrew's Refugee Service) (15-20 minutes)**

As we learned in that exercise, StARS (St. Andrew's Refugee Service) is working in Cairo to assist refugees from across the region. Let's watch these videos to learn more about StARS.

As we watch the videos, you might want to add some Post-its to the Journey Wall. Do you hear any more reasons for leaving? What about challenges faced? Reasons for hope?

*Show [StARS video](#).*

This video was made to show at the UN office in New York in 2018. Since then, the number of refugees living in Egypt has increased to about 247,000.

One of the things that makes StARS unique is that the staff are mostly refugees. Of over 300 staff, more than 85% are refugees themselves. About 25% are young people who came to Egypt as unaccompanied children and graduated from the Unaccompanied Youth Bridging Program, which we will learn more about in a few minutes.

The refugees who work at StARS come from a variety of educational backgrounds, including those who have received all or almost all their education at the StARS school or through UYBP or adult education programs. Others have university degrees in areas such as engineering, teaching, business, and medicine. In the video, Adhar (from South Sudan) is a lawyer. The narrator, Mutaz, is trained as an engineer

in Syria and now works as director of the community outreach program. Wafa, from Sudan, is trained as a dentist and works as deputy director for adults and families in the psychosocial program at StARS.

It is also noteworthy that StARS is a ministry of St. Andrew's United Church of Cairo, but most of the staff and clients are Muslim. Since the very beginning of its ministry, StARS has been committed to helping the most vulnerable refugees and to being a safe and welcoming place for any refugee who needs help. *[Take a few minutes to talk about how that might be surprising and/or why you think that is part of the call to accompany companions.]*

Since we are focusing our conversation on StARS' work with unaccompanied children, let's watch this video about UYBP. It was made in 2017, so many of the statistics are out of date, but listen to the stories, told by young people who have graduated from the program. You might want to jot down some notes for our Journey Wall!

As we watch this next video, keep an eye out for Suzan and Ararisso, whose stories we heard last week and from whom we will hear more in a few minutes.

*Show [UYBP video](#).*

This video was made in 2017, and since then the numbers have only grown. There are now approximately 4,500 unaccompanied children who are registered with UNHCR living in Egypt (the vast majority in Cairo). Since 2014, more than 1,500 unaccompanied children have been enrolled in UYBP.

In the spring 2019 term, 420 students are registered in UYBP: 280 in the core (full-time) program, 40 in the junior program, 20 in the part-time literacy program, and 80 in the alumni program. Due to demand, there is no longer a wait list; instead, caseworkers refer clients directly to UYBP. In the spring 2019 term, there are 35 young mothers enrolled, all of them also unaccompanied children, under the age of 19. Of the staff, all 45 are refugees and 31 are UYBP graduates.

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

Do you remember the stories of Hodan (from Somalia), Ararisso (from Ethiopia), and Suzan (from Eritrea) from last time? Let's take a few minutes to hear about how StARS changed their experiences in Egypt.

*Invite participants to read the "rest of the story" for each of these young people.*

What challenges do you hear? What stories of hope? Who are the helpers? Is there anything that surprises you about the work of StARS? *[Invite conversation and any insights to be added to the Journey Wall.]*

### Part 4. How we can accompany refugee youth (10 minutes)

Though we probably will not be able to travel to Egypt to accompany these young refugees, there are things that we can do in the U.S. to help.

One way is by joining the 100 ELCA congregations that have pledged to embrace migrants with open arms by joining the Welcoming Congregations network. This is a project of AMMPARO, Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities. In Spanish, "amparo" means the protection of a living creature from suffering or damage.

Let's hear about how these congregations are accompanying migrants.

*Pass around a basket of slips of what these congregations are doing. Read them aloud. Look at the PowerPoint slide showing a map of Welcoming Congregations throughout the U.S. Is there one in your area?*

ELCA youth are getting more involved in the Welcoming Congregations program. Did you hear something that we might be able to do as a church or in conjunction with *[name of local organization]* to accompany young migrants? *[If the map shows a Welcoming Congregation in your synod or conference:]* Would someone like to contact *[name of congregation]* to find out what it is doing?

During the 2017 calendar year, 33,400 people were resettled to the United States, a 65% drop compared with 2016 (96,900). In 2018, a total of 22,491 refugees were resettled in the U.S., less than half of the allotted number of 45,000. If you think that refugees such as Hodan, Ararisso, and Suzan deserve a chance to be resettled in the U.S., you can contact members of Congress to tell them! Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has very helpful resources to help you understand the processes refugees go through in order to be resettled.

The 40-day "I Was a Stranger" Bible and prayer challenge provides Bible verses about migration, being a stranger, and welcome.

*Discussion follows about how the group might be feeling called to do more.*

### Part 5. Planning the international call (12 minutes)

Through videos and stories, we have begun to understand what life is like for young refugees living in Cairo. In our next session, we will have a conversation with members of the Youth Advisory Board at StARS. We'll learn about their lives and share something of our own with them.

The call will be about 45 minutes long. The youth staff at StARS have good English, but we will need to take into consideration that the connection might be choppy so that we might have to repeat questions. To use our time efficiently, we need to choose two people to represent all of us during the call. These people will do the talking, ask the questions we have, and respond to questions the refugee youth may have. Let's take a minute to decide who these two people will be. *[Look for youth who won't be shy or tongue-tied and can confidently connect by phone.]*

To plan our questions, let's review everything we posted on the Journey Wall under "Questions I have." We will probably have time to ask three or four of these questions. Our questions should not make the young people uncomfortable or require them to disclose confidential information. Are there any

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

questions that should be added? We have focused so much on challenges facing these youth that we don't know much about the positive things in their communities and lives. What could we ask to learn about them?

*Discussion. Choose the three or four questions that interest the group most. Make sure there is space to share positive things and that refugee youth aren't asked to disclose anything confidential.*

What should we share about our own lives? What would you say about our community? About the positives and challenges facing youth who live here? What positive things can our two conversation leaders share? What about ... *[Give an example of a challenge and an asset or good thing in your community.]*

*Ask for input, discuss, and have youth shape their contribution. Together, make a quick outline of final questions and topics to share. You may want to meet with the two conversation leaders to confirm that they understand how to prepare for the call.*

### Part 6. Wrap-up and sending (3 minutes)

Let's stop now and take a breath. *[Pause for breathing.]* We'll sit in silence for a moment, and then we'll sing the song we learned last week, "Dona Nobis Pacem."

*Sing together. Allow a few more moments of silence when singing stops.*

Let's pray together.

Dear God, we are grateful that you accompany us each and every day on our journey through life. Thank you for your presence among us and among the youth we met this evening in stories and videos. We pray particularly for the young people we will meet by telephone soon. We don't know them yet, but you do. Be with them as they go about their lives. Surround them with your love and strengthen them for their challenges. May we take all the youth we have met tonight with us and keep them in our prayers this week. In your name we pray. Amen.

### Before the next session

- Contact AMMPARO Program Director Mary Campbell at [mary.campbell@elca.org](mailto:mary.campbell@elca.org) or 773-380-2618 to confirm arrangements for the call. The call will need to be scheduled during the morning so that the refugee youth aren't out at night.
- Please share the questions you will ask with Mary Campbell so that they can be shared with the Youth Advisory Board at StARS prior to the call.
- Review the call outline in session 3 so you can prepare the two call leaders and all participants as they pull together questions and plan the call.

### SESSION 2: ACCOMPANYING YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE JOURNEY, FACILITATOR NOTES

#### Exercise: An unaccompanied youth arrives in Egypt/background information

This exercise invites students to imagine what it's like to be an unaccompanied child arriving in Egypt. If time allows, give two or three students the opportunity to volunteer as the unaccompanied child arriving in Egypt.

Invite a student to be an unaccompanied child (UCY) arriving in Egypt. Pass out cards randomly to the remaining participants (each may hold more than one, if necessary, so that all cards are distributed). Invite participants to sit in a circle. The UCY volunteer should stand in the middle of the circle.

Once everyone is situated, ask the UCY volunteer where he/she is coming from (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia). Is he/she alone or with siblings or friends? Does he/she know anyone in Cairo? How old is he/she? Does he/she have any money? Cell phone?

If the UCY volunteer chooses Eritrea, he/she does not have an ID. If he/she chooses Somalia or Ethiopia, roll the die. If he/she rolls a one, he/she has an ID. Otherwise, he/she does not have a valid identification document.

Note: If he/she is from Ethiopia, even if he/she has an ID, the date is likely to be recorded on the Ethiopian Orthodox calendar, which can cause discrepancies at UNHCR and other agencies.

If the UCY has money, ask how much. Give him/her the equivalent amount in Monopoly money. If the UCY has some money from the journey, he/she will be able to use public transportation. Otherwise, he/she will be walking around the area where he/she was dropped off when arriving in Cairo.

Explain that some cards read "choose (a number)." If your card reads "choose (a number)," make the UCY decide where to go before telling him/her what the rest of the card says.

Set a timer for 10 minutes.

If he/she knows someone, ask who has #8 and start there, following the directions on the cards.

If he/she does not know anyone, ask:

What is the first thing you'd like to look for? (Food, housing, money, register with UNHCR, etc.)

Go person to person until you find it, asking, "Do you have a place I can stay?" / "Can I have some food?," etc. Pretend a day goes by for every person the UCY asks.

Those holding cards should say yes or no except for #8 ("Established refugee"), #9 ("StARS"), #17 ("Faith community"), #23 ("CBO"), #24 ("Street theft"), or #25 ("Police checkpoint"). If he/she is looking for housing, #1 can also read "yes" (but only if the UCY has money!).

Once the UCY finds #8, #9, #17, or #23, reflect on how long it has been since he/she has eaten, had housing, showered, etc. If he/she did not have transportation, he/she may have walked at least five miles. Proceed with the directions on the card. At this point, the UCY volunteer should begin collecting the cards as he/she walks around, following the directions on each card and collecting/paying money as instructed on the card.

When the timer goes off, how much money does the UCY have left? What challenges has he/she faced? What decisions did he/she have to make? What did he/she have to give up?

Repeat one or two more times, encouraging participants to come up with different scenarios to begin.

### **Housing (#1)**

Unaccompanied children often live in small, crowded apartments with several other UCYs. In some cases, there are so many people living in one apartment that they have to sleep in shifts because there are not enough beds for everyone. Boys and girls sometimes are forced to live together. Girls are sometimes subject to sexual assault by their roommates.

### **Transportation (#2)**

Public transportation options in Cairo include buses and the Metro (rapid transit). There are also privately owned minibuses that run on designated routes throughout the city. In many neighborhoods, tuk-tuks (small motorbike taxis) carry passengers to catch bus or Metro routes.

### **Exploiting landlord (#3)**

Due to racism and discrimination, refugees are often subject to exploitation. A landlord at any time can decide he does not want to provide housing to a refugee (or group of refugees) and might demand money (sometimes more than what was originally paid) and/or make threats to call police.

### **Work (#4)**

Unaccompanied children, and refugees in general, are often subject to exploitation in the workplace. Because many cannot speak the language and refugees do not have the right to formal work, they are limited to informal work. Employers sometimes withhold pay, take IDs, or prevent domestic workers from leaving the home where they are employed. Even UCY who receive financial assistance often do not have enough to make ends meet, which forces them to stop attending classes so that they can find work.

### **Financial assistance (#5)**

Once they are registered with the UNHCR, unaccompanied children are entitled to financial assistance of 600 Egyptian pounds (approximately \$35) each month.

### **Medical care (#6)**

Refugees do not automatically receive medical

assistance from UNHCR and are not entitled to receive assistance from the government of Egypt. They are often quoted higher prices than Egyptians at hospitals and, if they do not know Arabic or English, have trouble communicating with hospital staff.

### **Legal representation (#7)**

The StARS Refugee Legal Aid Program (RLAP) assists unaccompanied children with the process of registering at UNHCR. It also refers particularly vulnerable cases to UNHCR for resettlement. At this time, it is incredibly difficult for unaccompanied children to be resettled, particularly since the number of refugees accepted for resettlement by the United States has been dramatically reduced.

### **Established refugee (#8)**

In many cases, unaccompanied children are assisted first by an established refugee, who may help them find StARS, UNHCR, housing, food, etc.

### **StARS (#9)**

St. Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS) was founded in 1979 by members of St. Andrew's United Church of Cairo. Today, it serves over 35,000 refugees each year across education, legal aid, community outreach, and psychosocial programs. Of over 300 staff, 85% are refugees themselves and approximately 25% are young people (ages 18-21) who came to Cairo as unaccompanied children and have graduated from the Unaccompanied Youth Bridging Program. Over the past few years, StARS has become the main center for providing services for unaccompanied children living in Cairo.

### **Registration with UNHCR (#10)**

In order to receive protection from the UNHCR, all refugees must approach the office, which is located approximately 20 miles from downtown Cairo. Refugees must have legal residence, which they can get on their UNHCR card, but if they are stopped before registering, they are subject to detention and deportation. Unaccompanied children must be registered with UNHCR in order to receive financial assistance. If they lose their cell phone and cannot be reached by UNHCR, they are at risk of having their file closed, which would make them ineligible



## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

for many services and put them at risk if they were detained due to lack of residency permit.

### **UCY on-call (#11)**

When unaccompanied children arrive at StARS, they are sent to speak to an on-call psychosocial worker, usually a refugee who speaks the same language or someone who is working with an interpreter. The on-call psychosocial worker will make an assessment of what the UCY needs in terms of housing, food, and medical assistance. Depending on the severity of the situation, the UCY may be referred immediately to a caseworker, lawyer, and/or Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF/Doctors Without Borders) for cases of sexual assault. Each month, about 500 unaccompanied children come to StARS to receive on-call services, including 100-120 newly arrived unaccompanied children.

### **Friends (#12)**

If a UCY has friends in Cairo, they will sometimes allow him/her to stay with them, lend the UCY money, and/or help the UCY get to StARS or UNHCR. Give the friend the choice to help with housing. Ask if he/she knows about StARS.

### **Akl (#13)**

Since most unaccompanied children coming to Egypt do not speak Arabic, they will not know that the word for “food” is “akl.” Through a grant from ELCA World Hunger, on school days, StARS provides breakfast and lunch for anyone under the age of 18. Approximately 600 children eat every day across the three meal sites.

### **Language classes (#14)**

Most unaccompanied children coming to Cairo do not speak Arabic or English. They can pay for language classes or enroll in the Unaccompanied Youth Bridging Program (though there is usually a wait list).

### **Madrassa (#15)**

Many unaccompanied children who arrive in Cairo have been out of school for a long period of time. Only refugees from Syria and Sudan can enroll in public schools in Egypt. All others must

enroll in private and/or community-based schools. Many community-based schools use the Sudanese curriculum. Public universities in Egypt accept the Sudanese exam results for entrance into university, but only for Sudanese nationals. Students from other countries are not eligible for public university but can enroll in private universities.

### **Youth staff position (#16)**

StARS provides graduates of the Unaccompanied Youth Bridging Program (UYBP) with youth staff positions once they have graduated and are over the age of 18. Youth staff have the opportunity to learn job skills and receive support from the youth development officer, and often are hired into full-time trainee or staff positions. Approximately 25% of StARS' 300-plus staff are youth staff. Youth staff positions provide safe employment for young people and allow them to continue studying in UYBP's alumni program or the StARS Adult Education Program, or to pursue other educational opportunities.

### **Faith community (#17)**

Faith communities, both Christian and Muslim, are incredibly important for refugee communities throughout Cairo. Connecting with a faith community gives unaccompanied children access to safe, trustworthy adults who can help them navigate the systems and provide spiritual nurturing and support.

### **Psychosocial worker (#18)**

StARS' Unaccompanied Children and Youth psychosocial programs have trained psychosocial workers who follow up on individual cases and provide one-on-one support to particularly vulnerable unaccompanied children. Over 500 unaccompanied children are currently receiving one-on-one psychosocial support.

### **UYBP (#19)**

StARS' Unaccompanied Youth Bridging Program provides education and psychosocial group support to over 400 unaccompanied children every six months. UYBP classes focus on Arabic and English languages. Students choose between the vocational

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

preparation track, which helps them prepare to enter the job force, or the academic track, which helps them get back on track for formal education with their peers (either at the StARS school or other schools).

### **Wait list (#20)**

The Unaccompanied Children and Youth psychosocial programs have long wait lists. While waiting to access these programs, psychosocial workers contact unaccompanied children by phone to follow up on cases and check to see if there are any urgent needs that have arisen. Approximately 1,500 unaccompanied children currently receive these monitoring phone calls. There are currently over 300 young people who are waiting to enter into one-on-one psychosocial casework.

### **Age assessment (#21)**

Because unaccompanied children often do not have any kind of identification when they approach UNHCR to register, they do not have any way to prove their age. UCY who are assessed to be over the age of 18 are not eligible for financial assistance. The StARS legal aid and psychosocial programs work with young people who claim to be under 18 but have been age-assessed as over 18 to try to reverse decisions. StARS provides financial assistance for those who have been assessed over the age of 18 but whom StARS believes to be under 18.

### **Community Housing Program (#22)**

The StARS Community Housing Program provides foster care for unaccompanied children, matching them with hosts from their own ethnic and religious communities. Both the host and the unaccompanied child have a psychosocial worker, and the host receives financial compensation to help toward rent and food costs.

### **Community-based organization (CBO) (#23)**

StARS works with a number of refugee community-based organizations throughout Cairo. Some CBOs can provide assistance to refugees within neighborhoods so that refugees do not have to travel all the way to StARS. They can also refer vulnerable cases to StARS legal aid and psychosocial programs.

### **Street theft (#24)**

Refugees, particularly African refugees whose dark skin and lack of Arabic make them stand out, are extremely vulnerable to street harassment and theft.

### **Police checkpoint (#25)**

If refugees are registered with UNHCR and have a valid residence permit on their UNHCR card, they pass through checkpoints. If they do not have a valid residence permit, they may be arrested and detained in a local police station. If they are registered with UNHCR, UNHCR can usually advocate for them to be released in seven to 10 days. If they are not registered with UNHCR, there is no protection for them, and they are subject to indefinite administrative detention and/or deportation.

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

<p><b>1 HOUSING</b> – \$300</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose 3, 8 or 22.</li> <li>• If you have 8 or 22, keep \$300.</li> </ul>	<p><b>5 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE</b> + \$600</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 10.</li> <li>• Go to 2.</li> <li>• Go to 1.</li> </ul> <p>(In addition, roll the die. If you roll an even number, keep moving. If you roll an odd number, go to #25.)</p>
<p><b>2 TRANSPORTATION</b> – \$50</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pick one: 4, 9, 14 or 15.</li> <li>• If you have 9, keep \$50.</li> </ul> <p>(In addition, roll the die. If you roll an even number, keep moving. If you roll an odd number, go to #24.)</p>	<p><b>6 MEDICAL CARE</b> – \$25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 2.</li> <li>• If you have 9, keep \$25.</li> </ul> <p>(In addition, roll the die. If you roll an even number, keep moving. If you roll an odd number, go to #24.)</p>
<p><b>3 EXPLOITING LANDLORD</b> – \$400</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lose housing (1).</li> <li>• If you have 9 or 18, return there; if not, continue asking “Can you help me?” around the circle.</li> </ul> <p>(In addition, roll the die. If you roll an even number, keep moving. If you roll an odd number, go to #24.)</p>	<p><b>7 LEGAL REPRESENTATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to 10.</li> <li>• Must have 9.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4 WORK</b> + \$400</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 2.</li> <li>• Go to 1.</li> <li>• Easier with 14, but you must give up 14 if you take work.</li> <li>• Give up 15 or 19.</li> </ul> <p>(In addition, roll the die. If you roll an even number, keep moving. If you roll an odd number, go to #24.)</p>	<p><b>8 ESTABLISHED REFUGEE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to 9.</li> <li>• Go to 1.</li> </ul> <p>(In addition, roll the die. If you roll an even number, keep moving. If you roll an odd number, go to #24.)</p> <p><b>9 STARS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to 11.</li> </ul>

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

<p><b>10 REGISTRATION WITH UNHCR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 2.</li> <li>• Easier with 7.</li> <li>• Choose 5 or 21.</li> </ul>	<p><b>17 FAITH COMMUNITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to 8 or 9.</li> </ul>
<p><b>11 UCY ON CALL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 9.</li> <li>• Go to 2.</li> <li>• Go to 13.</li> <li>• Choose 18 or 20.</li> <li>• Yes or no to 6?</li> </ul>	<p><b>18 PSYCHOSOCIAL WORKER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 9.</li> <li>• Collect 2.</li> <li>• Collect 13.</li> <li>• Choose 19 or 20.</li> <li>• Choose 1 or 22.</li> </ul>
<p><b>12 FRIENDS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FRIEND, roll the die: Will you help with housing—yes (even) / no (odd)? (If yes, go to 1; if no, keep looking.)</li> <li>• FRIEND, roll the die: Do you know about StARS—yes (even) / no (odd)? (If yes, UCY, go to 9; if no, keep looking.)</li> </ul> <p>(In addition, roll the die. If you roll an even number, keep moving. If you roll an odd number, go to #24.)</p>	<p><b>19 UYBP</b> + \$50 (TRANSPORTATION)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 9.</li> <li>• Choose 4 or 15.</li> </ul>
<p><b>13 AKL</b> – \$150</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have 9, keep \$125.</li> </ul>	<p><b>20 WAIT LIST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 9.</li> <li>• Choose 4 or 14.</li> </ul>
<p><b>14 LANGUAGE CLASSES</b> – \$50</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can now translate “akl” = food (13) and “madrasa” = school (15).</li> <li>• Choose 4 or 15.</li> </ul>	<p><b>21 AGE ASSESSMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 10.</li> <li>• If you have 7, collect \$600.</li> </ul> <p>If you do not have 7, you are assessed to be over 18 and no longer receive \$600 (return \$600).</p>
<p><b>15 MADRASA</b> – \$100</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 2.</li> <li>• Must have 14.</li> <li>• If you have 9, keep \$100.</li> </ul>	<p><b>22 COMMUNITY HOUSING PROGRAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have 9.</li> <li>• Go to 1 (keep \$300).</li> </ul>
<p><b>16 YOUTH STAFF POSITION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need 9 and 19.</li> </ul>	<p><b>23 COMMUNITY- BASED ORGANIZATION (CBO)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go to 8 or 9.</li> </ul>

### 24 STREET THEFT

- Lose any money you have.
- Lose cell phone (if you have one), which means you also lose 10 (if you have it) because UNHCR can't reach you.

### 25 POLICE CHECKPOINT

- If you have 10, keep moving.
- If you do not have 10, you are detained and may be deported to your country of origin.



## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

### SESSION 2: WAYS THAT WELCOMING CONGREGATIONS ACCOMPANY MIGRANT YOUTH

*Cut these into slips for participants to pull and discuss.*

Pray for justice for migrants.

Advocate for public policy that will positively impact the current immigration crisis, such as ending family separation or seeking alternatives to the detention of children in prisonlike facilities.

Educate your community about immigration issues and migrant rights.

Offer a church home for migrant children and families.

Attend immigration hearings with a young migrant.

Write a reference letter for a young migrant.

Provide emotional and spiritual support for a young migrant.

Offer English as a Second Language classes for migrants and refugees.

Invite migrants for meals and fellowship.

Offer hospitality to people who come to town for a court hearing and accompany the migrants to court.

Help secure free legal counsel for migrants and asylum-seekers.

Visit young migrants in detention facilities.

Partner with a local organization helping migrants and refugees with specific tasks.

Fund international phone cards or cell phone plans for migrant youth.

One church offered a "Three Kings" party at a local detention facility. It brought in everything needed to celebrate the arrival of the magi, a traditional holiday in Central America.

One church opens its doors twice a month to receive migrants, feed them, provide them with overnight shelter, and allow them to call their families so they can buy a bus or plane ticket to get to their court date on time.

One church gave its contact information to its companion synod in El Salvador, so that if young people came to Milwaukee, they could come to their church.



### THE REST OF THE STORY

#### Suzan's story

Suzan's family is originally from Eritrea, but it was not safe for her to return there or to continue living in Sudan. Her story last time ended with her reflection about the woman who had helped her when she first arrived in Egypt.

*Her story continues:*

I went to IOM (the International Organization for Migration) to get help, and because I was under 18, they told me to go to StARS. I arrived and approached the on-call desk, where I told someone a little about my story. I was surprised that someone cared that much about me. They gave me advice and helped me find the help I needed. They gave me safety tips and asked if I was interested in school.

I applied for UYBP and was accepted to start in August. I was not receiving any financial assistance, but once I was registered for UYBP, I received transportation money. The first time they gave me transportation money, I cried. It was six Egyptian pounds, just like the six pounds my aunt used to give me in Sudan. I loved being here. I ate here, I went to class, I loved psycho-ed classes, I stayed all day.

In January, I was hired as a UYBP youth assistant. In July, I became a senior assistant. In October, I became a trainee psychosocial worker for UCY, and now I'm a UCY psychosocial worker with individual case management. I want to tell my story to my clients, but I know that it's important for me to listen to them and support them. I want to support my clients as much as I can so that they know what is available. If they just stay home, they'll lose hope. Newcomers need to be supported so they stand up, not give up.

#### Ararisso's Story

Ararisso came to Egypt from Ethiopia after his family members were persecuted because of their political affiliation. Remember that his story, last time, ended with: "When I came to Egypt, I didn't know anyone. I was homeless. I didn't speak Arabic. I lost my hope again."

*His story continues:*

But then someone brought me to StARS, and it is my home now. I have learned so many skills here. I learned Arabic and English. I learned computer skills. StARS gave me back the hope I had lost in Ethiopia.

I graduated from UYBP and then was offered a job as a teaching assistant. Now I'm a trainee screening and intake officer.

Things are still hard in Ethiopia. We are still waiting for change. And I still want to be a lawyer. I gained hope again, and now I can dream of being a lawyer someday.

### Hodan's story

Hodan came with her family to Egypt from Somalia but was separated from them when her mother and brothers had to find work. Her experiences in Somalia and Egypt were so difficult that she stopped talking.

*Her story continues:*

Every refugee knows StARS. After all the other schools had rejected my sister and me, we came to StARS, hoping to enroll in the school. We sat the exam, but I was not accepted to the school. They offered me a spot in the Adult Education program, so I started taking classes when I was 16 years old. In 2016, when I was called and offered a position in UYBP (the Unaccompanied Youth Bridging Program), I was so happy.

My sister and I enrolled in UYBP and then in the alumni class. After we graduated, she was offered a job in UYBP. I had two interviews, but they chose other people. I had given up, but then I got a call from GAP (groups and activities) offering me an interview. I was really nervous during the interview, but they called me five minutes later and offered me the job. It was the happiest day of my life!

My life has changed since I started working at StARS. I help with the handicrafts group and learn a lot about how to run groups. I would love to be a caseworker someday.

I love everything about StARS. I feel safe here. I can help my family, and we are together now because of StARS.

If I could give advice to anyone, I would say, "Be grateful and thank God."

### SESSION 3: GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

#### Learning objective

*By the end of this session, participants will have:*

- gotten to know young refugees living in Egypt by phone,
- shared their own stories with them,
- reflected on the conversation and what they felt and learned, and
- listed next steps the group can take in order to accompany refugees and/or migrants.

#### PREPARING FOR THIS SESSION

##### Equipment and supplies

- The Journey Wall with photos, Post-its, map of Africa
- Laptop, projector, Internet connection for Skype conversation, and a wall to project call if video is possible
- A marker and a pad of colorful 4x6" or 6x8" Post-its for each person to take notes on the conversation, for the Journey Wall
- Candles, a cloth, a cross (perhaps from Ethiopia or Egypt) to set up a central table or altar for prayer
- Music and lyrics, in Latin, for "Dona Nobis Pacem" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship #753). Lyrics in both languages can be projected or written on a poster on the wall

##### Before the session

- Follow up with AMMPARO Program Director Mary Campbell to confirm arrangements for the call.
- Make sure the Journey Wall is up and visible.
- Check that your Internet/phone connection is working.

- Confirm that youth leading the call are prepared with questions and stories to share from your own context.
- Write "Ahlan wa salan" on a large Post-it for the wall—or on a PowerPoint slide.

#### SESSION 3: GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

##### Roadmap for session 3

- Welcome, opening prayer, and warm-up (4-5 minutes)
- The call (50 minutes, including connecting)
- Debriefing and what's next (15 minutes)
- Wrap-up and sending (4 minutes)

##### Part 1. Welcome, opening prayer, and warmup (4-5 minutes)

"Ahlan wa salan!"

Who can tell me what that means?

Yes—it means welcome. Today we will be greeting and welcoming members of the Youth Advisory Board from StARS. Let's practice saying "Ahlan wa salan" to one another. *[Practice saying the phrase.]*

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

Before we place our call, let's pray.

God, we thank you for this gathering and the time we are about to share with new friends in Egypt. May we welcome them and their stories with open hearts and minds. Help us listen with our whole selves, share our own stories with courage, and find ways to be companions on the journey. In your name we pray. Amen.

In a few minutes we'll place our call and meet *[insert names if you know them]*. Our call leaders have created a plan around our questions. Here are a few other things to know.

- The call is 45 minutes, but cuts in the connection may mean that we have less time. That's not much time to cover lots of ground! When it's your turn to talk, be very concise.
- *[Designate a youth]* will keep time for us and give us a heads-up when 30 minutes have passed and again when we have five minutes to go.
- We won't be asking questions that are inappropriate or asking for too much personal detail.
- If the conversation leaders are asked a question by the refugee youth that they can't answer, it's OK to turn to someone else in the group to answer it.
- Give our refugee guests your complete attention throughout the call, even when you don't understand what is being said.
- Use your Post-it Note pads to jot down anything you want to remember—things that stand out, that particularly affect you.
- When we end, let's all say, "Ma' al-salāmah"—go with peace. Let's practice a few times.

### Part 2. The call

(50 minutes, including connecting)

- Start with greetings and introducing all the participants. Give a group hello and welcome ("Ahlan wa salan!").
- Listen as Youth Advisory Board members introduce themselves.
- Be sure to say how much you appreciate their willingness to take the time to talk and share about their lives.
- Start by naming your church and community—where you live and worship. Share a bit about your community—your school, your church, your activities, some highlights and challenges.
- Segue into questions and conversation.
- The person keeping time should signal when the call reaches 30 minutes and again at 40 minutes so you can start moving toward ending the call.
- Be sure to thank everyone again for participating, especially the translator (it's hard work).
- Group goodbye—"Ma' al-salāmah!"

### Part 3. Debriefing and what's next

(15 minutes)

*Help participants debrief the call with these discussion questions:*

- What are your overall impressions of what you heard?
- Is there anything you want to share from your notes?
- What positive things did you hear?
- What challenges did you hear?
- How do they meet those challenges?
- How does God walk with them?

## MODULE 3: Refugee Youth in Cairo, Egypt

- How do other people walk with them?
- Can you see yourself in their stories?
- What have you learned?
- How might we accompany migrant youth?

Now that we have had this great opportunity to talk with *[names]* and hear their stories, let's identify what is next for us as we seek to walk with migrant youth and families in our communities. We can learn more, we can share what we have learned with others, and we can move ahead in being part of the movement to welcome and accompany youth.

*Depending on your sense of next steps, discuss one of these options and affirm any other ideas that youth may propose.*

*Learn more:*

- **Invite a migrant community organization to come** and talk about its work and how you can participate.
- **Take the Migrant Journey** as a youth group and then offer to lead a similar trip for members of your congregation.
- **Learn more about issues facing migrants** through the AMMPARO Facebook page, [Facebook.com/ELCAammparo](https://www.facebook.com/ELCAammparo)
- **Commit to doing the other Bridging Youth to Youth modules**, including module 1 on root causes in Central America and module 2 on migrant youth in U.S. communities.
- **Undertake an immersion experience at the U.S.-Mexico border** (AMMPARO offers some trips).

*Share what you have learned with others:*

- **Have an "open house"** where the youth group invites church members to view the Journey Wall and hear about the call.
- **Share some stories of youth**, including the ones you talked to, at worship or in your congregation's newsletter.

- **Create a slide show of images and learnings** from these sessions to show during worship.

*Commit to supporting the AMMPARO network:*

- As a youth group or as a congregation, **join the AMMPARO network as a Welcoming Congregation**. A Welcoming Congregation makes four commitments: 1) to spiritually and pastorally accompany migrants in its community, 2) to physically accompany migrants in its community at ICE check-ins and to get needed services, 3) to pray for justice for migrants, and 4) to advocate for the human rights and protection of migrants. To see how youth might participate:
  - list concrete ways to accompany migrant youth and families in your community, inspired by what you learned about the Welcoming Congregations program in session 2, or
  - talk to migrant organizations in your community.
- **Create an advocacy campaign in your congregation** centered on one of the many issues found on the ELCA AMMPARO Facebook page, [Facebook.com/ELCAammparo](https://www.facebook.com/ELCAammparo).

*Encourage the group to commit to an action step and create follow-up plans in another meeting.*

### Part 4. Wrap-up and sending (4 minutes)

*End the session with a "popcorn" prayer that invites youth to add petitions for people the group has learned about or met via phone or video during the last few weeks. Conclude the prayer by thanking God for the opportunity to learn more about youth in Egypt and asking God to help the group discern how best to accompany them in their journey.*

*Dismiss the session with everyone saying, "Ma' al-salāmah!" God bless you!*