

## AN INSIGHT INTO MEM'S PRODUCTION COMPANY

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# From the editor

Dear Friends,

Welcome to your Winter edition of MEMO! As we start to look at Christmas coming up and the end of the year approaching, it's a great time to be thankful for everything that God has been doing this year. As you read through this edition, I pray that you will be inspired, but also challenged by the difficulties that we face while shining God's unstoppable hope in the Middle East.

I pray that you are encouraged by the report on our media teams across the region. Reading about teams who are passionate about reaching their own communities in some of the most difficult and unreached parts of the world, always inspires me. You can also find many other updates, including an interview on the back page with our latest UK staff member Matt Hinch.

Please join me in praying for our Life in the Desert project. Many of you will be aware of this vital ministry to help traumatised children in the Middle East and North Africa. There is a big need for it in North Africa right now and you can read more about it, including an interview with MEM's CEO of Media Production in North Africa on page 6.

As always, thank you for your support and together we can see lives transformed across the region.

*James Baldock*

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# QUICK NEWS



## BASMA'S HEALTH:

One of the leaders of our women's outreach in the Gulf, Basma, continues to battle stomach cancer. She has been undergoing intensive chemotherapy and was recently admitted into ICU for few days. Although she is no longer in ICU, she remains in hospital and would love your prayers for healing.

## KINGDOM PLATFORM:

A new animation series for children has been launched on our YouTube channel, Kingdom Platform, and reached 246,000 views in its first two months. In addition to being wholesome content for children, it aims to help the parents watching it learn how to deal with issues, such as children misbehaving, in a godly way.

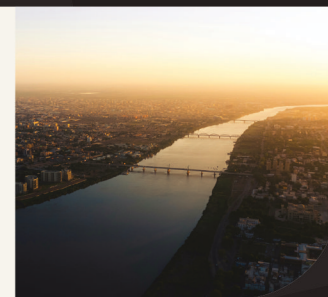


## STRENGTHS:

Work has begun on a new social media project, Strengths, which counters misconceptions about Christianity in the Arab World. Pray for wisdom for the team as they run focus groups and begin the difficult task of creating bold and impactful content that will gain traction online.

## SUDANESE REFUGEES:

We recently empowered and trained 20 workers from four different NGOs in North Africa who are working with women refugees from Sudan. The programme supported these workers in their own needs, but also enabled them to use our programme. Two of these NGOs have already applied our materials in their work with 36 refugee children.





# Impacting the Whole Family

## HELPING CHILDREN ON THEIR HEALING JOURNEY

The number of children in Middle East who have experienced trauma is growing. This is due to increased poverty and prolonged conflict. In one North African country alone, it is estimated that there are between 1.7 and 4 million orphans. A large number of these, in addition to the trauma of losing their parents, have faced sexual and psychological abuse.

Providing help for traumatised children whilst they are still young is vital in order to reduce the negative effects of trauma in their adult lives.

MEM is tackling these issues. We use a 3D animation series, coupled with interactive workshops, to facilitate the healing of children in refugee camps, orphanages and communities in need. The animated series follows the journey of 8-year-old Farah as she faces a series of difficult life events, such as the death of her mother and moving home. After each experience, Farah gains strength and hope from learning about Bible heroes who faced similar situations. The children identify closely with Farah and, after watching each episode, take part in workshops, including art therapy.

So far, MEM has trained over 260 community providers to use Life in the Desert. These trainees have now reached over 7,000 children in refugee camps, orphanages and poor communities with the programme.

**“ I LEARNT THAT IT WAS WRONG TO TELL A CHILD, ‘DON’T CRY!’ OR, ‘DON’T BE SAD!’. I LEARNT TO RESPECT THEIR FEELINGS AND HELP THEM TO PROCESS THEIR EMOTIONS INSTEAD. ”**

- CAREGIVER WORKING IN AN ORPHANAGE IN NORTH AFRICA

**“ BEING ABLE TO FEEL SAFE WITH OTHER PEOPLE IS PROBABLY THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF MENTAL HEALTH; SAFE CONNECTIONS ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO MEANINGFUL AND SATISFYING LIVES. ”**

- BESSEL VAN DER KOLK, THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE

Middle Eastern countries, however, tend to lack mental health funding, resources, and workforce. Stigma around mental health, inadequate transport, and complex referral processes are also barriers to service provision.



Trainees often comment that our programme is the best material they’ve ever used for traumatised children and report that children who have historically struggled to receive help literally run to this programme.

The programme’s Christian content, which speaks to children from all faiths or none, is integral to its success. As children learn about the God of the Bible, they start to understand themselves as children under His care. They begin to experience a safe connection with a God who heals.

**“ I LEARNT THAT NO MATTER THE HARD SITUATION I AM IN, GOD CAN STILL STRETCH HIS HANDS AND HOLD MINE. ”**

- CHILD PARTICIPANT

The caregivers we train to run the programme, many of whom have experienced horrific trauma themselves, benefit professionally and personally:

**“ BECAUSE I WORK WITH CHILDREN WHO FACE CHALLENGING LIFE SITUATIONS, I SOMETIMES FEEL LIKE I’M BREAKING DOWN. I LOCK MYSELF IN MY ROOM AND CRY SO THAT NO ONE WILL NOTICE. THROUGH THE TRAINING, I LEARN HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO EXPRESS OUR BURDENS AND THE THINGS WE FIND CHALLENGING, SO THAT WE CAN RECHARGE AND GO ON. ”**

- CAREGIVER WORKING IN AN ORPHANAGE IN NORTH AFRICA

Staff at orphanages, children’s leaders at churches, and people working in refugee camps are desperately seeking training like this to help children across the region.

Together, through your prayers and financial support, we can train people across the Middle East and North Africa to go into orphanages, refugee camps, and churches, and have an exponential impact on many more children.

## Christmas is Coming

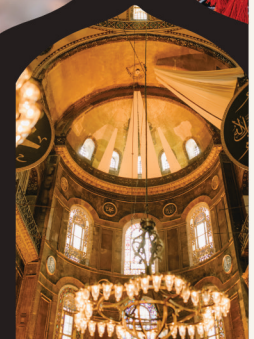
COULD YOU HELP SUPPORT US BY GIVING TO OUR UPCOMING CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN, RAISING FUNDS TO ENABLE US TO TRAIN MORE CHILDREN’S LEADERS IN NORTH AFRICA?

STAY CONNECTED TO LEARN MORE OR YOU CAN GIVE NOW VIA THE LINKS BELOW

GIVE ONLINE



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## Interview With

### Q&A WITH THE CEO OF THE MEM'S PRODUCTION COMPANY

#### CAN YOU TALK US THROUGH THE CREATIVE PROCESS OF CREATING THE LIFE IN THE DESERT ANIMATION?

I am constantly amazed at the amount of work everyone invests in getting Life in the Desert completed to perfection. After the script is written by Salam\*, it is revised by three different people from three different angles: Ibtisam revises it with a director's eye, Rawda looks at the psychological impact on children, and Hoda reviews the spiritual teaching throughout the series from a theological standpoint. These three revisions usually lead to rewriting major parts of the script. Yet Salam, the scriptwriter, is so patient and does whatever it takes to incorporate feedback so the work can be the highest quality.

#### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SCRIPT HAS BEEN FINALISED?

That's when we start the process of modelling, rendering, lighting, animation, dynamics, compositing, editing, and voice design. It takes a long time as we have to re-work elements a number of times to make sure quality of the 3D animation is excellent.

#### THERE ARE 26 EPISODES (2 SEASONS) OF LIFE IN THE DESERT, HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE EACH EPISODE?

In normal working conditions, it takes two and a half to three months to complete an episode. As the number of animators on staff tends to fluctuate, our animators have been expanding their areas of speciality and learning each other's roles so that they can help out if colleagues are absent.

#### AND HOW MANY ACTORS DO YOU USE?

Ah yes, in Season 2 we actually used 12 different professional voice actors. And when we dub the season into different Arabic dialects so that it's more widely accessible, we would use another 12 actors.

#### DO YOU HAVE ANY TESTIMONIES FROM YOUR TEAM MEMBERS ABOUT WORKING ON THE LIFE IN THE DESERT SERIES?

My colleague, Kareem, shared that he was personally touched by the heroine's encounter with Jesus. It was eye opening for him to realise that his relationship with God is easily affected by his relationship with others. He's noticed that when he has a quarrel or is struggling with unforgiveness, he finds it difficult to enjoy his relationship with God to the full. As a result, he's learnt to put more effort into building good relationships with others and letting go of the grudges he holds in his heart.

Another team member, Noor, shared that she has always been impressed by the wonderful relationship between the heroine and her father. He is always good to her, even when she is angry or sad. The father is such an attractive model of God's unconditional love.

#### DO YOU HAVE ANY PRAYER REQUESTS YOU WANT TO SHARE?

Team members have experienced a number of health issues and tricky life circumstances over the past few years, so we would love prayer for health and spiritual protection.



**BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT, OUR TRAINING EMPOWERS CHILDREN'S LEADERS**  
**THANK YOU!**



# New Media Teams

## WHAT MAKES US DISTINCTIVE?

Recent months have seen natural disasters and increased instability in places where we have been training emerging media teams. Our teams, our partners, and their communities need our continued support.

Libya is still reeling from the flood which tore through the city of Derna, leaving over 10,000 dead and 46,000 people displaced. Even before this disaster, political stalemate and dire living conditions meant that Libya was a volatile and sensitive place to work in. Despite this, MEM has been training and supporting a new media team for Libya to translate and record the Bible in the Libyan dialect, in which no Bible translation exists. The team have almost finished translating and creating audio recordings of the four Gospels. Their future goal is to start a digital ministry with a specialised page for Libyan youth.

Our team are travelling to Northern Iraq, also known as Iraqi Kurdistan, this November to train 16 Kurdish, Yazidi and Iranian young believers on how to use digital media to reach their communities for Christ. This is particularly exciting as 98% of people in Iraq are unreached with the Gospel. However, after a recent suicide bombing outside the Turkish parliament, Turkey launched airstrikes against Kurdish militants in Northern Iraq as we write this.

Please pray for visas that our teams are waiting, for a safe travel for MEM's team and that the training will be fruitful, so that more Iranians, Kurds, and Yazidis can hear about Jesus.



Please pray for this new media team as they continue to navigate a sensitive security situation and work hard to reach Libyans with the Gospel.



The war in Sudan has forced hundreds of thousands of Sudanese to flee to where our team are in North Africa. Although the war is upsetting, it is a blessing to meet media teams from Sudan in person. They have a unique hunger and thirst for the Good News of Jesus, especially in the midst of war. We are now working with two teams, equipping them with media and social media skills so that they can share Jesus with those who follow the dominant religion of Sudan.

Praise God for new connections with Sudanese media teams despite the war. Pray that God will sustain them as they learn to reach other Sudanese people with the message of Christ.

In Morocco, the need for Jesus in the wake of the earthquake is great. We have been working with an emerging media team in Morocco and last year we provided training to 13 local believers in media basics. They have requested our help with producing the programmes that share the Gospel and resonate with Moroccans.

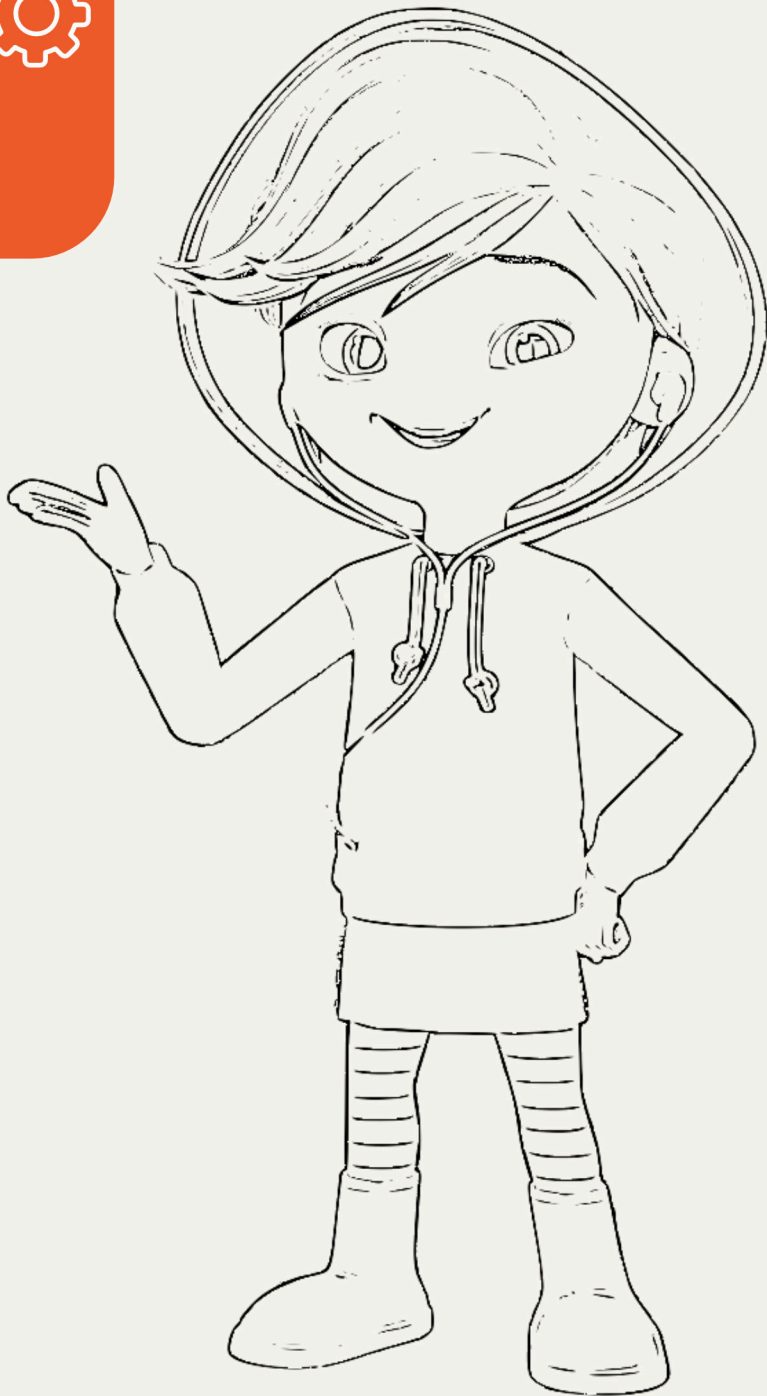
Please pray for this emerging Moroccan team, wisdom to know how to move forward in this season, and for increased funds to help us do so.



## Answers from Autumn's Crossword -

1A: Life in The Desert 1D: Lebanon 2D: Ears 3D: Ten 4D: Eid 5D: Email 6D: Transforming 7A: Bahrain 8D: Instagram  
9A: Simeon 10D: Equip 11A: New 12A: Netflix 13D: Linked 14A: Gulf 15D: Damascus 16A: Gender 17D: Echo  
18A: Mecca 19A: Medjool 20D: Juba 21D: Lives 22A: Assad 23D: Data 24A: Unstoppable 25A: Saul

# COLOUR



# INTRODUCING...

MEM UK'S Creative & Digital Specialist...

*Matt Hinch*



# TEAM

### WHAT DID YOU ALWAYS WANT TO BE?

A race car driver. I've grown up watching Formula 1 so naturally I would love to be able to drive cars super fast every weekend if I could.

### WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO OVER THE NEXT YEAR?

Seeing God's provision. Having only joined MEM six months ago, I'm excited to see more of God's provision in and through the work of our incredible team. It's an absolute pleasure to hear the stories and the impact our content is having and I'm excited to see how God's provision for it will grow over the coming year.

### YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY?

My computer. I'm a bit of an Apple geek so any new piece of tech that allows me to speed up or improve my workflow, I'll jump at it! Technology is going through a really interesting change at the moment as we come out of a boom, so I find it really interesting to see what the next new thing will be.

### SOCIAL MEDIA – ARE YOU A FRIEND OR FOE?

Big Friend! I kinda have to be given it's in my job description but I also believe in the power of social media! Don't get me wrong it has its bad sides, but I think the power that social media has to share the Gospel and reach people we never could before, means it's worth investing the time to understand how it works and how it can be an effective tool for sharing the Gospel.



### WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE DOWNTIME ACTIVITY?

Lego or walking. I used to be a big Lego fan as a kid and like most people I grew out of it, but recently I've been picking it back up again and I've got to say, it is great fun! I do love a good walk though. God has blessed us with an incredible planet and so I take most opportunities I can get to see as much of it as I can.

### WHAT INSPIRES YOU MOST ABOUT MEM'S WORK IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

I think the Middle East is so much of an unknown to the Western world. It's almost only ever spoken about in the news when something bad happens but actually, there's so much beauty to be found and stories to be shared. Sharing the Gospel is what we're all called to do and through the incredible team that MEM has brought together, we can share this in the parts of the world that need to hear it the most. That's an incredible vision and a journey I'm proud to be a part of.

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# TRANSFORMING LIVES WITH UNSTOPPABLE HOPE



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