



LIGHT IN THE MARGINS

The air in Cairo's Sudanese refugee community hums with life. Narrow valleys twist between crumbling walls, voices echo from rooftop to rooftop, and children weave through puddles and dust in the afternoon heat. It's here – amid one of Egypt's most impoverished neighborhoods – that two Focus on the Family Middle East team members carried in a message of hope.

For two long, joy-filled days, they met with 62 Sudanese girls, refugees between the ages of 13 and 18. Many carried invisible weights – poverty, fear, broken families, and the harsh realities of growing up too quickly in an unforgiving world. Partnering with the local NGO (non-governmental organization/non-profit) *Think & Do*, the Focus on the Family (FOTF) team presented *No Apologies* in a simplified, sensitive way – making the content approachable without diluting its truth- so the girls could engage fully and see themselves in the message of hope being shared.

As Remon Shohdy (FOTF Middle East Director) described, at first the girls were quiet and cautious. But soon, they began opening up and joining in every activity, participating eagerly. One NGO leader expressed complete astonishment: **"Although we have been serving them for a year, we could not get them to open up. The topics you presented urged them to share their struggles and dreams. What you have done will profoundly help us in our ministry for years ahead!"**

By the end, 49 of the girls stepped forward to sign the abstinence pledge – a choice to make decisions with their future dreams in mind, and to live a life with no regrets. Their leaders wept with gratitude:

"You exerted great effort with the youth and powerfully helped us in our ministry. We long to have you again soon."

In a culture where topics such as relationships and sex are often left unspoken, this kind of transformation is radical. When the church is silent, the world fills the gap. Social media influencers, celebrities, and movies are ready to define what love and worth should look like. That's why Focus on the Family Middle East is fighting for a different narrative: one rooted in truth, freedom, and the belief that every young person can begin again.

Why it Matters

The challenges these young people face are not so different from those in the West—pressure, confusion, isolation—but in the Middle East, the silence around sexuality and identity leaves even deeper scars. If the Church doesn't speak, TikTok will. If mentors don't show up, the world will gladly take their place.

That's why the Focus on the Family Middle East team keeps going—city to city, church to church—turning long days into sacred moments. Almost everywhere they go, they hear comments like, "No one else is willing to speak about these topics" or "our young people have never heard a presentation like that" or "I remember the lessons from *No Apologies* from when you spoke in my church, 14 years ago." They aren't just teaching morality; they're restoring dignity. They aren't just talking about purity; they're awakening purpose.

And in the refugee slums of Cairo, in youth camps under the desert sun, in classrooms packed with teenagers desperate for truth, light is breaking through. One story, one pledge, one changed life at a time.

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14)