

Her Word Matters

@herwordmatters

<https://mahrraalameri.wixsite.com/herwordmatters>

Main goal:

As Her Word Matters team, our goal is to be a source of encouragement for teenage girls and younger to follow their passions. We want them to know that they don't have to follow footsteps, they could create their own for others to follow. Our project is based on motivation, we wanted to build a positive environment that any girl could feel safe and heard.

Vision: Our vision as her word matters group is for all girls and women to enter the field of their choice without having to worry about gender discrimination.

Mission: To achieve that, we made social media accounts, and wrote a book.

Sustainable Development Goals:

- 4- Quality Education
- 5- Gender Equality
- 9- Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
- 10- Reduced Inequalities

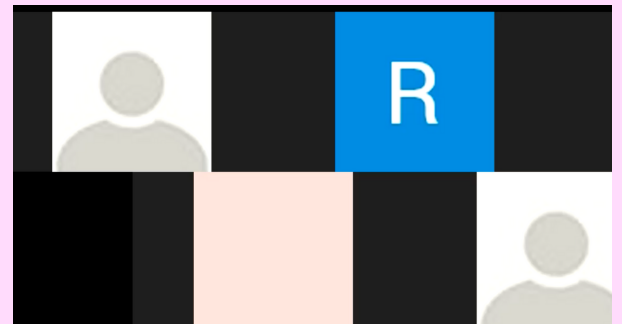


Aim and objectives :

- 1- To encourage young girls to pursue their passion.
- 2- Change the negative mentality towards girls in STEM majors.
- 3- To inspire and motivate girls to speak up. Push them to follow what they aspire to be, even if it is seen as a male-dominated industry.
- 4- To positively influence as many girls as we can through our project.

Team:

Our team consists of 5 junior students: Randa Magzoub, Mahra Alameri, Alreem Aldhaheeri, Maryam Alkhyeli and Rauda Alnuaimi from Emirates National School Alain. Her word matters is a project that all 5 of us are very passionate about and proud to showcase. We all believe in the power women hold that is not used to its full potential due to the discrimination they face everywhere. We chose to focus on women in STEM as here in the middle east, it's less talked about so we wanted to shed light on the topic.



We did this in many ways

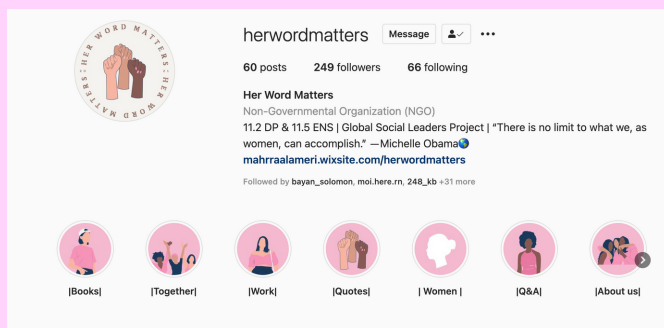
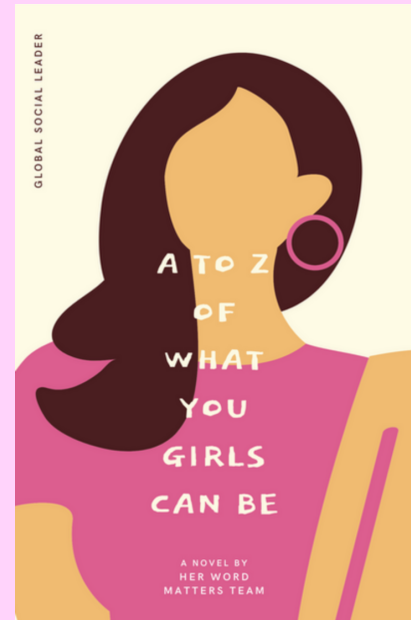
1- Through books, books have an interesting way of showcasing an issue. We felt that books can be a powerful tool in aiding and increasing awareness about women in STEM.

From what we collected from our research, we noticed that most issues like this stem from childhood and what children are fed into their brain, and when they grow, these unhealthy mindsets grow with them. We wanted to make sure this next generation is not fed misconceptions about women in STEM so we wrote a children's book. To make the book more interesting for children to read, we made it in alphabetical order on jobs in STEM that they can be. The book is written in first person as examples of women in those careers speaking directly to the audience and letting them know that they can be achievers and women who change history too! For our teenage audience, we put daily book recommendations for them to read and get educated on this topic. We carefully chose books that fit their age group and books most teenagers would find interesting.

2- Through social media, as social media plays a big role in many peoples lives, we made sure to promote and market our accounts as best as we could. There we posted many sub-topics relevant to the projects like stories of historical women, what women had to face, as well as motivational content for our audience. The Her Word Matters website was constructed for anyone that doesn't own social media accounts. It has our Instagram posts as well as some extra exclusive content. The website is where we uploaded our book for its ease of use. To make sure the book reached children, we promoted it on local WhatsApp group chats, our Instagram, and other ways to reach parents. We also asked local influencers to promote our accounts which many did. From that, we gained many teenage followers from our local area that benefited from our project.

Achievements

Our proudest achievements are writing the book. The book was not completed, however, we uploaded a portion twice a week. We aimed to do this for all 26 letters of the alphabet, and we finished 19 letters so far. Another achievement is our loyal Instagram audience which reached around 250 followers. Many of them are active in interacting with us privately and sharing their opinions and personal experiences about the discrimination they faced. We built an open environment for people to share their thoughts. We were also featured in the *IBelieve* weekly newsletter which made us gain recognition. This was a perfect opportunity since their audience is mostly high school students who can benefit from a project like ours.



Advice taken

We took the advice given to us from our first phase. We made sure we were consistent in uploading posts on our social media accounts so we made a schedule that we strictly followed. We noticed from our insights that we were reaching many accounts, and as of recently, our insights show we reached around 730 accounts.

Impact

We impacted the community in many ways. We got messages from teenagers saying they are considering entering stem majors. Through our direct messages on Instagram, we got to discuss with people that had questions about our project and where we stand on some topics. We answered them to the best of our abilities and we are happy to know that we widened their perceptions on this topic. We can not give a specific defined number on the number of girls who read our book but we've got feedback from girls enjoying the snippets we have on our website.

Event

We held an event that was laid back and had an easy-going atmosphere. In the event, we answered common questions about discrimination in STEM. We also held discussions about misconceptions regarding the topic with our audience and we let them express their thoughts. The event was a success and one of the highlights of our journey so far. It gave us direct contact with our audience.

Skills and lessons learned

The journey of our project helped us as team members gain so many valuable lessons. We learned how to run and promote social media accounts, how to write to a targetted specific audience. We learned how to research what is lacking in our communities and the environment around us and take action to fulfil the need. We also gained many skills like communication, perseverance, persistence, persuasion skills. These skills were acquired when we were persuading our young audience through our Instagram account which was our main means of communication between us and our followers.

Randa Magzoub, Mahra Alameri, Alreem Aldhaheer, Maryam Alkhyeli and Rauda Alnuaimi ; Emirates National School Alain