

"I found my happiness again"

A success story from
Salamiyah 1 Camp, Iraq



Source: Adolescent Girls Toolkit session © TGH

Shathah, 15 years lives in a large family she is the second child from 6 brothers and 4 sisters. They are a rural family from Khilo village in Sanjar District.

The family is coherent socially and religiously, they were well-known in the area, as they respected from the society. the family is from clan elders so they are very compacted in the traditions and their source of income was agriculture and trade in the place of origin. At that time there was a formal school in the village **"Our home was close to school and we were going without fear with friends"** Shathah said

For them the village was looked like a paradise **"We lived in the paradise, we had all we need and the foremost was safety and peace"** Shathah's parents

The area was rural desert and it has sensitivity due to different populations are cohabit in the area, and social mixture in the village there were also Yazidis in the village. However after the arrival of ISIS, everything changed the circumstances became complicated, life accompanied with fear, hunger and deprivation of liberty.

"We would go out to the bathroom outside near the door of our house with a veil and you could imagine our situation then" Shathah continued **"Imagine that we had not been out of home for years just in the case of a very urgent issue or severe illness for fear of ISIS"**

People forced to displace escaping from war and conflicts seeking for safety in other areas, but they lost their source of live and their homes. In Baaj District away from the respect for 2 years and a half and started the tragedy more and more from lack of water, foods and at that time there was no school or health center in the area. Shathah's family joined her uncle's family and they are away from social and political strife.

"It was terrifying" Shathah's brother said

Meanwhile, the situation has intensified and military operation in Mosul has begun, people started escaping to Iraqi Army, the family was temporarily transferred to Umm al-Jarabiyeh camp before being finally relocated in Salamiyah 1

"We have experienced alienation within our homeland and we were scared all the time" Shathah's father said

As soon as the family arrived the camp in 2017 TGH team identified her as drop out of school case. During follow up, TGH provided psychosocial support to Shathah and awareness sessions to the family in their tent. After while Shathah started participating in the activities inside TGH's space and also participated in sewing and knitting courses in Salamiyah 1 camp. Finally the family enrolled her in formal school and in parallel has successfully completed Adolescent Girl toolkit sessions in TGH Community Based Center in Salamiyah 1 camp as well as she is now a member of Adolescent Girl Committee in the camp.

"The camp for us now is a small safe country after we had missed it for years under the rule of ISIS and I am happy now because I no longer worry about my daughters and my wife. I am truly grateful to God" Shathah's father tells

"Thanks to TGH! for implementing Adolescent Girls Toolkit*, it is a wonderful program. I have gained more friends, more knowledge and skills on this developmental stage. I feel so happy now, I am going to school with my friends from the same sector and I am currently in the third grade in the secondary school. I found my happiness again" Shathah tells

*The Adolescent Girls Toolkit for Iraq is a collection of learning sessions and tools designed to empower adolescent girls from IDP, Refugee and Host communities in Iraq to address key issues on life skills, Reproductive Health, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Financial Education