

Hope in the face of adversity

Fleeing from Syria, in 2013, was the most difficult experience Rasha had to go through at the time.

“My family and I have not only had to witness bombings, we have also seen death with our own eyes” Rasha recalls.

“Before the war started in Syria, I was living with my in-laws. The house was spacious. We had everything we needed. But when the war began, my husband, children, and I had to leave Homs. We headed to Lebanon, hoping to find a safe haven. But life is so difficult in Lebanon. My husband has been facing medical problems and we have been unable to cope with the cost of living here, with our children,” she adds.

As her husband grew sicker, Rasha became progressively the bread winner of the family. It was a position she would never have imagined having when she was still living in Syria. “Before, we were well-off. But life was not perfect either. My in-laws used to beat me if I ever wanted to go outside the house. I was not even allowed to go visit my parents on my own. I was not treated as a human. No one appreciated me at home and I was only destined to raise my children and take care of the house,” says Rasha.

Coming to Lebanon had many consequences for the young woman and her status within her family. In Syria, before the war, working outside the home was unimaginable. Today, her family relies on her solely. However, finding a job in Lebanon for a Syrian refugee is not an easy task. By law, Syrians are only allowed to work in three sectors: agriculture, construction and the environment (cleaning). Most women, such as Rasha, who live in urban areas, are only able to find opportunities in the informal sector, with no guarantees of decent work conditions. Despite the difficulties, Rasha has no choice but to work.

“We no longer receive food vouchers to cover our basic needs. It has become extremely difficult to make ends meet,” concludes Rasha. With her family, she has moved in with her sister in law in a one-bedroom apartment, in the suburbs of Beirut. Rasha gives private tutoring lessons to children in the afternoon and attends cash for learning programs in the morning. She hangs on to the hope that her children will have a better life.



Credit: Acted

“ I have lost family members, friends and neighbors ”