

Human interest story

Mersin, Turkey
September 2017

Zayed* fled from his village in the eastern part of Homs two years ago, walking to the Turkish border. Like Zayed, Ayman* was smuggled from Khibert Al-Joz to Antakya in 2015. Head of a large household of 13 people, he is now the only one who can provide for his wife, mother and sisters in law as well as 8 young children. Zayed is also the only bread winner for a household of 11 people, including his wife, three children (one living with disabilities) and his brother's family.

I work on the call as an electrician ... there is no income in the household except for what I make and all the children are going to school."

Ayman, Mersin, September 2017

Both Zayed and Ayman learned about the project through social media. Zayed was satisfied with the training and considers that he now has sufficient information to get by in everyday situations such as grocery shopping. Similarly, Ayman recalls *"I am better at Turkish now, when a person talks to me I can understand around 50%."* however he wished that the course had lasted longer.

Zayed and Ayman have completed the first phase of the project successfully and are now looking forward to take part in the vocational training. Zayed is hopeful that the training will enhance his chances to find work, regardless of his age. Like Zayed, Ayman has taken computer maintenance and hopes that it will help him access more income generating opportunities.

Every day, Zayed struggles to find paid work to support his family. At times, he has to wait for months before being offered a job. His 50 years old brother has also not been successful in finding work due to his age. Zayed, aged 45, initially worked as a blacksmith but was laid off for similar reasons *"I worked continuously for one and a half year but they eventually asked for someone younger ... right now I do whatever I can find"*. Ayman, 42, faces similar issues and admits that being the only bread-winner for that many children makes his life really hard.



Beneficiaries take part in the Turkish language course, Mersin

"I chose sewing and computer maintenance because they are growth sectors that I could benefit from and would suit me physically, considering my age."

Zayed, about the vocational trainings, Mersin, September 2017

* both names have been changed.