International Committee of the Red Cross

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**ICRC: Syria’s Decade of Loss –Fatima’s Story**

Fatima Moussa was 18 when her world changed. Originally from rural Damascus, she left Syria four years into the conflict and now lives in a refugee camp in Arsal, Lebanon with her family.

She was seven months pregnant when she fled, travelling to join her parents in Arsal, after her husband went missing in Syria. Her son was born and so far has spent his whole life in a refugee camp.

Adjusting to the hardships of living in a tent was very tough and she says she thought of going back to Syria many times.

“I wanted to go back to Syria, but they wouldn’t let me. We remained here and started to cope.,” she said.

Now 28, she says she had wanted to continue studying to become a lawyer but the conflict and its impact on her family disrupted her plans.

She now runs a beauty parlour doing hair and make-up and selling perfumes and wedding dresses.

“It’s fun and makes me feel better. Above all, I have my own income to provide for my own expenses; I no longer have to depend on somebody else,” she says.

She longs to return to Syria but says it’s out of the question right now.

“The situation in Syria is getting worse, there’s a gas crisis, bread crisis, diesel crisis and oil crisis.

Relatives tell us to return. With no gas, diesel or bread, it’s impossible.”

**SHOTLIST**

Location: Al-Ward Refugee camp in Arsal, Lebanon

Filming date: 1.02.2021

Languages: Arabic

On-screen Credit: ICRC

Length: 14:07

Format: HD mp4

Cameraperson: Adeeb Farhat

Producer: Miriam Atallah

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**Overview:** Fatima Moussa, a refugee from rural Damascus, now living in Al-Ward Refugee camp in Arsal, Lebanon with her family. She runs a beauty parlour doing hair and make-up, and selling perfumes and wedding dresses.

00:00 Shots of Al-Ward Refugee Camp in Arsal, Lebanon

00:19 Fatima walking through the camp.

**Soundbite: (Arabic) Fatima, Syrian refugee and beauty salon owner**

00:33 “When I arrived here, the situation with the tents was heart breaking. One blanket, with no other supplies or basic goods.

**00:45** I was pregnant at that time. It was so hot in August. I came in June and delivered one month or one and half months later. It was too hot, and I thought the baby would not survive here*.* I said I would not stay. I wanted to go back to Syria, but they wouldn’t let me. We remained here and started to cope. We managed to cope, thanks to God.”

01:11 Fatima arriving at her salon and entering

01:51 Fatima inside her salon tidying the perfume area.

**Soundbite: (Arabic) Fatima, Syrian refugee and beauty salon owner**

02:30 “During my first days in the camp, I thought it would be impossible to adapt; tents are extremely different from our homes. Later, we managed to cope and started to buy objects to fit them into the tent. I never expected to open a shop or have a business or a source of income.

03:05 Now that I have opened the salon, it offers makeup, hairdressing, wedding dress rental, hair colouring, gel and haircuts. We now sell makeup, clothes and perfumes.”

03:30 I came with some experience from Syria. I had done some courses and training in a salon. Afterwards, I opened my own business.

03:42 I love my work very much and I like the idea of having the salon.

It’s fun and makes me feel better. Above all, I have my own income to provide for my own expenses; I no longer have to depend on somebody else.”

04:05 Fatima sorting out the wedding dresses

**Soundbite: (Arabic) Fatima, Syrian refugee and beauty salon owner**

05:17 “The situation in Syria is getting worse, there’s a gas crisis, bread crisis, diesel crisis and oil crisis. Relatives tell us to return. With no gas, diesel or bread, it’s impossible.

We are lucky everything is available here. It’s not as good as our past life in Syria. But we managed to adapt to our new life. Hopefully, we can get back someday.

05:53 I miss many spots in Syria including Hamidiya and Umayyad Mosque. These are the places I remember the most. I used to visit them and take photos with my husband.

06:09 I have friends and neighbours in the camp, my uncle’s family as well; we are all one family.

06:19 Ten years have passed since the beginning of this crisis; we spent four in Syria and six here. The four years in Syria were very difficult and here the situation is even more difficult; both are challenging. During the ten years since the crisis, we lost a lot of people and our lives have completely changed. We pray for God to resolve this challenging situation.

06:49 My experience is like of many other Syrians with a few differences; some lost their husbands, others lost their children, brothers or sisters.

07:10 Ten years have passed since the crisis, four in Syria and six here, we are now entering the eleventh year.

07:23 It is heartbreaking, but we managed to adapt.

07:34 Fatima demonstrates her make-up skills

**Soundbite: (Arabic) Fatima, Syrian refugee and beauty salon owner**

10:01 “Now, I live with my father, mother and child in the same tent; we are fine.

We have the same routine every day; we drink mate tea, tidy the tent, pray Zhuhr, have fun on our mobile phones. We cook and sit around in the evening; nothing new, the same routine.”

10:44 Shots around the camp and Fatima walking in a group

11:26 Fatima preparing and drinking mate tea with her Mother.

**Soundbite: (Arabic) Fatima, Syrian refugee and beauty salon owner**

13:25 “Of course, we would all love to go back to Syria. All our relatives and family members are there. We fully belong to our village.”

13:36 Vehicle driving through Al-Ward Refugee Camp in Arsal

13:53 Shot of the camp from a distance

**14:07 ENDS**