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

**SHOTLIST**

Location: Rural Damascus, Syria

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Duration: 13:20

**00:00 Amina’s neighbourhood and inside her home tidying up.**

**Soundbites Amina:**

*00:38 “I used to go out in the middle of the crisis, during events that now everyone has heard of. I wasn’t scared.*

*00:51 I went out in the mornings. Many people were scared to go out because of the sniping and missiles that hit the highway.*

*00:59 One day I was shocked to see so many dead people on the highway, they were carrying vegetables and shopping.*

*01:11 They were trying to work and get on with their lives. Thank God I was not hurt during my commute.*

*01:19 10 years ago, I had a different business idea in mind; very different from a grocery store or a motorcycle repair shop. I had contracts for cleaning mosques, churches, and restaurants.*

*01:36 If I had had the money I would have started my own cleaning service company.*

*01:42 In 2009 I realized that I can’t pursue this dream.*

*01:48 I got the permit and started buying plumbing tools, electrical equipment, wall paint, and lights.*

*01:59 It was successful and worked well for a while.*

*02:05 I wanted to expand but I couldn’t due to the spike in prices in 2016.*

*02:18 At that time, we also started to sell motorbike accessories and parts.*

*02:23 The business grew; we stopped selling many products, and focused on motorbike equipment.*

*03:20 What happened was one of my neighbors from Ghouta, he was a young man in the bikes repair business. He was renting the shop in front of mine. He always bought parts from Hafeer.*

*02:46 He offered to partner with him, while sitting around the fire with a cup of tea.*

*He said if you have the money we can become partners. At first, I declined because I didn’t have any experience fixing motorbikes. But eventually he convinced me.*

*03;01 I consulted my husband, and he told me it was a great idea.*

*03:04 Douma was known for motorbike repairs. When the events took place Douma shut down. So I was the only shop in the area operating from the camp.*

*Our first sale was for 10,000 (Syrian Pounds).”*

**03:21 Amina walking to her motorbike repair workshop and opening up for business.**

**Soundbites Amina:**

*05:13 “I memorized and kept track of everything I sold. The next time we needed tools I went to the market and bought everything myself.*

*05:27 When my husband passed away I closed the shop. After that we got the Red Crescent donation and started to slowly get back to work.*

*05:32 I wasn’t ashamed of the type of work I was doing.*

*05:37 In 2018 I felt a lot of pressure; the job was demanding, and I was working all day; finishing after 9pm. At one point I had enough; I wondered why I had to keep working like this. But I had to continue; I have four kids, living conditions became more expensive, and my husband who was sick at the time was out of his job.”*

**06:06 Amina sitting down for tea**

**06:33 Amina in her workshop and fixing a motorbike.**

**Soundbites Amina:**

*08:12 “If I had to describe my last 10 years in one word it would be fatigue… and I hope these years never come again.*

*08:21 When the crisis started I felt sorrow and pain more than feeling afraid, but then it started turning to fear.*

*08:36 And still the situation is very frustrating.*

*08:40 From sorrow to fear, and now it’s just frustrating.*

*08:44 Everyone is suffering and is under pressure because of the high cost of living. Half of the goods are either not available or hard to come by.*

*08:56 Our childhood was much nicer than our kids’ childhoods. They never got a chance to live a happy childhood.*

09:06 Missiles and things like that. Our childhood was much better.”

**09:16 Amina talking to shopkeepers and neighbours in her area.**

**Soundbites Amina:**

*11:09 “For the last ten years, because of my work in cleaning, I made a lot of friends; I had plenty of female friends that worked in the same industry.*

*11:22 And when the crisis started we were separated.*

*11:27 We used to visit family on Fridays; they were lovely gatherings. My father’s cousins usually visited on Friday.*

*11:39 He used to make Arabic coffee; we would talk, laugh, and joke around. These gatherings no longer happen.”*

**11:44 Amina closing up the shop**

**Soundbites Amina:**

*12:34 “Sometimes quitting crosses my mind but I have no other source of income. My kids were bullied because of what I do. My eldest daughter faced problems getting marriage proposals because of me.*

*12:55 Some of the neighbours accepted me, and the work I do, and some didn’t.*

*But in the end everyone accepted me – “Ammoun the motorcycles lady.”*

*13:11 I stand behind every woman with a similar business idea because it is nothing to be ashamed of. I want it to continue growing.”*

**13:20 ENDS**

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