

Working for Change

Mohammed Said and the Women's Center

A short story highlighting the experience, reflections, and contributions of a worker

M

ohammed Said, a construction worker from the Qalandia refugee camp, located approximately 11 kilometers north of Jerusalem, has recently made a contribution to the local community in the Shuafat Refugee Camp in East Jerusalem. As part of the Investment Programme for Resilience (IPR), funded by Germany through KfW Development Bank and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), he worked alongside a number of teammates to rebuild the Women's Center in the Shuafat Refugee Camp that had been destroyed by a fire.

Over 15,000 Palestinian refugees reside in Shuafat Refugee Camp in the occupied Palestinian territory. It is widely acknowledged that the camp's high population density and inadequate infrastructure pose numerous challenges for its residents. Mohammed and his team labored for four months to bring the Women's Center back to life. Mohammed remained dedicated to completing the

project to the highest standards despite the lengthy commute, even though the workers had to park far from the construction site due to a lack of parking space in the crowded camp, and notwithstanding the interruptions caused by Israeli military and police raids.

Their efforts ultimately bore fruit, and the Women's Center was revitalized. Mohammed feels proud of the effort he and his team put into the project, and he marvels at the difference between the center's initial condition and how it looked when they finished: a renovated structure ready to improve the lives of camp residents.

For Mohammed, restoring the Women's Center meant more than just repairing a building; it also meant enhancing the lives of the residents of Shuafat Refugee Camp. He urges others to preserve community spaces such as the Women's Center and give back to their communities in any way possible.

The rehabilitation of the Women's Center in Shuafat Refugee Camp exemplifies the resilience and resolve of the construction workers who, like Mohammed Said, poured their hearts into the project even though they encountered numerous obstacles along the way. Mohammad asserts that the IPR program illustrates the beneficial effects of international cooperation and community involvement.