

# NOUR'S STORY

I have a dream now, a future to look up to: I want to be a teacher to inspire others same as my teacher did me.

Nour is a bright fifth grade girl who lost her father during the conflict in Syria. Her mother struggled to support her four children and Nour was at risk of dropping out of school because of issues with low self-esteem, shyness, bedwetting, and bullying.

The interventions of a Manahel mental health and psychosocial support officer involved school teachers, Nour's mother, and the girls responsible for bullying her. These have improved her self-esteem, bedwetting issues, and academic achievements.

*Names have been changed for safeguarding purposes.*

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# AYA'S STORY

The big smile on her face never fails to fill my heart with love and hope. The way she waves her hand when she sees me makes me ecstatic, it's priceless! *Aya's teacher*

Left blind in one eye as a toddler, nine-year-old Aya from northwest Syria suffered bullying at school because she looked different. The bullying affected her self-esteem and left her unable to read and write by second grade.

In late 2020, the Manahel safeguarding officer at Aya's school referred her to the newly opened special education centre located near her home. Now after one year, Aya can proudly read the complete alphabet, recognise numbers, and even solve maths exercises.

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# THE STORY OF SALMA AND RAMI

I felt proud to be in a position where I can make a difference in the lives of thousands of children with disabilities, assisting them in achieving their right to a high-quality, inclusive education.

University student Salma was inspired to help set up an advocacy group of parents and caregivers after seeing the incredible impact of a new special education facility on Rami, her 11-year-old brother she cares for.

The Manahel programme supported the creation of both Rami's new school and the advocacy group his sister helped found to support children like him.

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# SARAH'S STORY

I love school now. I love studying and I want to become a safeguarding officer one day. That's my new ambition.

Sarah is a young, creative girl who is easily distracted and has difficulty focusing. She was left experiencing emotional and behavioural issues after she and her family were forcibly displaced several times during the conflict in Syria.

Manahel delivered an essential protection training package to a safeguarding officer who was then able to work with Manahel mental health and psychosocial support services to identify and address the causes of Sarah's emotional and behaviour concerns.

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# FADIA'S STORY

Manahel's support had great impact on my life. I feel more empowered as a female in our society because I have my own source of income.

Fadia, 35, was a former teacher in southwest Syria but struggled to find work after fleeing to a new location because of the war.

Fadia was recruited as a librarian in a Manahel-supported school and went on to develop her skills and inspire new practices involving children and parents after receiving safeguarding training delivered by the programme.

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# LILY'S STORY

I am proud of her achievements so far. Together with her remarkable capabilities, we will achieve what others believe is impossible. *Lily's teacher*

Lily, 9, from northwest Syria, has Down's syndrome and specialised mental health needs and missed out on her early school years due to issues exacerbated by conflict and instability.

Lily's mother credits staff at the Manahel Special Education Centre for the transformation in her daughter, who is impressing everyone with her academic and social progress after a year at the school.

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# JUDY'S STORY

I was in class when the shelling happened. Every time I hear an aircraft approaching, I panic and feel afraid, but not this time because I know exactly what to do.

***Pupil at Judy's school***

Mother-of-four Judy is now a Manahel safeguarding officer, helping promote life-saving evacuation procedures for school pupils after fleeing her own home because of war.

Manahel developed an emergency response plan to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. The plan included providing safeguarding officers with extensive training on safe evacuation, risk assessment, and means to improve mobilisation of community resources.

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# JUMANA'S STORY



Education is very important to counter extremism and poverty. I believe that education is our children's best hope to build a better future. Manahel has provided our children with access to quality inclusive education.

Displaced mother-of-four Jumana, 40, is creating new opportunities for children with autism and bipolar disorder after realising her lifelong dream to teach.

Jumana works in a Manahel-supported school where she has been able to apply positive discipline methods, learned from Manahel's training, to make a positive impact on students with special needs.

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