

Constant Pain

Name: Maryam Mustafa Abu Khattab.

Age: 65 years old.

Number of times displaced: 3 times.

Place of residence (before the war): Nuseirat Camp.

Place of residence (after the war): Zawaida.

Social status: Widow.

Number of family members (before the war): 6 children.

Number of family members (after the war): 5 children.

Level of education: Elementary School.

Despite enduring multiple crises since her husband's passing, Mrs. Maryam has demonstrated remarkable resilience while single-handedly raising her six young children without any support. As a determined mother, she refused to let adversity diminish her spirit or allow her children to lose their way amid their struggles with poverty. Even when cancer took a toll on her health at sixty, she persevered in her fight for survival, enduring ongoing pain and suffering.

Renowned for her strength and steadfastness, Mrs. Maryam remained dedicated to her treatment in the occupied territories. Unfortunately, her

challenges intensified when war erupted, destroying the fragile stability she had managed to maintain. A raid targeted her neighbor's home, leading to devastation in her own small house. In the chaos, she lost her son, who was martyred in an attack near their residence. This tragic loss forced the sixty-year-old woman to confront the profound pain of losing her home, her son, and her livelihood. The violent bombings in the Al-Zawaida area also led to the destruction of the sheep pen that had provided for her family.

She reflected, ***"I went for treatment in the occupied territories, and this dose was my last. I had waited for this moment since the beginning of my treatment journey, eager to return to my home, my children, and my sheep, which are integral to my life and daily routine. Every morning, I would call my young son, who slept on the land I rented to graze and raise sheep, chickens, and any other pets I could afford. Before having breakfast, I would remind him to feed the sheep, collect the eggs, and take them to the market".***

Mrs. Maryam found it difficult to cope with these losses. Often, she would become lost in memories of her home and her life before October 7, only for everything to vanish in the blink of an eye, without

warning. After her home was destroyed, she was compelled to stay in a neighbor's house temporarily. She expressed profound sorrow over the loss of her beloved son and the devastation of her life's work. Currently, she is awaiting aid and assistance for survival. Although she has attempted to return and live in a small tent on the rubble of her home, the occupation has prevented her from doing so.

Another raid destroyed the homes of her neighbors, and during that bombing, she lost loved ones and close friends with whom she had shared her life in the neighborhood. Crying has become Mrs. Maryam's way of expressing her overwhelming grief. Each time she tries to regain her strength, setbacks plunge her into sorrow. Nevertheless, she strives to return to life as best as possible, motivated by a desire to remain close to her family, especially her young grandchildren.

