

CASE STUDY

Jordan: Early Childhood Development

January 2009

Save the Children established the Jordan Country Office in 1985 with a special focus on children and families. Since then, our programs have contributed to both social and economic development, and have positively impacted the lives of more than one million Jordanian children and women. Our efforts to improve health care services and education and create economic opportunities for poor women result in real and lasting change for them and for their children.

Ghanem, a former Iraqi soldier and father of two young children, is quite a hit at the Irbid Kindergarten's Community Learning-through-Play Day. Surrounded by young children captivated by his



Iraqi volunteer, Ghanem Jaber Hatiyah, holds puppets made by a fellow volunteer for Irbid Kindergarten's Community Learning-through-Play Day

puppet performance, Ghanem is clearly enjoying himself too. As a volunteer in Save the Children's Khatawat Early Childhood Development program, Ghanem is not only helping children in need, but has found an opportunity for personal growth and fulfillment.

"Although I am 45 years old, I never before felt like this, like I have a role in life. Now I have more energy and a curiosity to learn and develop myself."

Ghanem grew up in a poor Iraq community. After high school, he joined the army to support his family and five years later was wounded in the Iran-Iraq war. Ghanem struggled to recover and make a life for himself. He spent years as a migrant worker,

traveling between Iraq and Jordan until he married Maysoun, a Jordanian woman. They settled in Irbid, Jordan where he now owns a small shop.

"I always wanted to find a way to help others, but never before did I have such an opportunity as Khatawat. I had never heard of child protection before. I suffered a lot as a child, and it makes me feel good to make children happy so they will not hurt like I did."

In the Khatawat program, Save the Children helps vulnerable families, both Iraqi and Jordanian, by providing tuition for their 4- and 5-year-olds to attend safe community kindergartens where they receive a quality early childhood education.

Ghanem has visited the homes of families to explain the benefits of the program and help them enroll their children. He earns their trust by being present at every stage: on registration day, at the parents' orientation and on the bus with the children on the first days of school.

Ghanem wants more for his children, as any parent does, and through this program he found a way to support their growth, as well as his own.

“We are grateful because this program has given our children a chance to be happy. Save the Children provides a safe place for them to play and learn. It is much more than we even imagined for our children.”



54 Wilton Road • Westport, CT 06880
1.800.SAVETHECHILDREN • www.savethechildren.org

Save the Children is the leading independent organization creating lasting change for children in need in the United States and around the world. For more information, visit savethechildren.org. Save the Children USA is a member of the International Save the Children Alliance, a global network of 28 independent Save the Children organizations working to ensure the well-being and protection of children in more than 120 countries. For our privacy policy, please visit <http://www.savethechildren.org/about/policies/privacy.html>.