

FROM DARKNESS TO DIGNITY: HOW HOLISTIC SUPPORT RESTORED A FAMILY'S HOPE IN MARIB

In the dusty confines of Al-Hama displacement camp in Marib, the story of Shakib Jamil Muhammad Naji Al-Qabati reflects the prolonged conflict in Yemen. A 43-year-old father, Shakib has faced upheaval since 2016, when he and his family first fled their home in Taiz. After seeking refuge in Al-Jawf, they were uprooted again in 2019, ultimately arriving in Marib with little more than the trauma of their losses.

Displacement shatters identity, community, and stability. For Shakib, the repeated dislocation stripped away his home and support network, leaving him unable to provide for his wife and two young sons. Their shelter in the camp lacked privacy and safety, and the loss of his motorcycle, his only source of income, plunged the family into severe financial distress and triggered a deep psychological crisis.

This trauma manifested in deteriorating mental health, leading to anxiety, paranoia, and aggression. Shakib recalls, "I felt like I was drowning in darkness every day. My children were afraid of me, and I could not provide for them." His wife struggled with spinal problems, living in fear, while one son showed signs of severe distress, including bedwetting and constant fearfulness.

A turning point came through the project "Providing life-saving and sustainable multi-sectoral essential support to the most vulnerable communities in Ma'rib City and Khabb wa ash Sha'af", funded by the Yemen Humanitarian Fund (YHF). The project recognized that protection needs are both material and psychological, offering a holistic package of support.



A YFCA worker conducts a needs assessment with Shakib.

The intervention provided two critical forms of assistance. First, Cash for Protection support enabled Shakib to repair his motorcycle, restoring his capacity to earn an income. Second, the family received Psychosocial Support (PSS) sessions, offering a safe space to process their trauma and learn coping mechanisms.

The impact was transformative. With his motorcycle repaired, Shakib regained not just an income but also his sense of purpose as a provider. The psychosocial support helped him manage his anger and rebuild relationships within his family. “Today everything has changed,” Shakib says, filled with renewed hope. “Repairing my motorcycle gave me back my livelihood, and psychosocial support helped me regain my calm. My children are smiling again, and my wife no longer fears me.”



Shakib and his children near his repaired motorcycle.

This intervention did more than provide temporary relief; it restored the family's foundation. By addressing both economic and emotional crises, the project reduced risks of violence and child labor, allowing the children to focus on education and recovery in a safer environment. Shakib's wife reported feeling more supported and less isolated, despite her ongoing health challenges.

This story illustrates how integrating practical aid with psychological care can create sustainable change. For Shakib and his family, it was not just about financial aid or therapy sessions—it was about rebuilding life, dignity, and hope from the ashes of conflict and displacement.