



Amanda Thompson

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Upon arriving in the Bedouin village, I immediately saw a difference in the way they lived compared to the surrounding area. The roads are made only of dirt. This is the only place I have seen dirt roads in all of Israel. The roads are paved everywhere else. Garbage litters the dusty patches along the dirt roads and in the spaces between the houses. People sit in plastic chairs outside on the dirt at night because there is nowhere else for them to gather. The apartments are very small and most of them are unfinished. There are light fixtures hanging from the ceilings, cracks in the plaster, and inadequate plumbing. As you look out from the rooftops, you can see that there are no streetlights. You can't see any schools for kids to go to. In the middle of the day, there were a significant number of kids running around. There was a distinct absence of shops or businesses of any kind. It looks like they have a good distance to find any businesses. Even the places where they keep the animals are unfinished and haphazard looking. There are chickens running around everywhere. The biggest problem I see, however, is the lack of a public waste system. People do the best they can but there are piles of garbage that line the streets. This, along with the unfinished construction projects, make the area seem unsafe.

Even with all of this, there is still a learning center here where the Bedouin send their children to help them advance in English, Hebrew, Arabic and Math. They come into the unfinished building and sit at plastic tables with plastic chairs. There were a few adults available to help them with homework and give them lessons. The computers are old and dusty and some of them don't work. There are broken computers lying on the ground outside because there is no proper way to dispose of them.

However, the hospitality of the Bedouin in this village surpasses everything I have ever seen before. They feed us like we are royalty. They are always quick to offer us anything and always ready to have tea with us. These people are amazing!!

Amanda