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Impressions of the Bedouin Community 21 October 2009

I'm here in a Bedouin community in Israel, working as a volunteer with Saeed. From my limited experience with the Bedouins (I've only interacted with 2 adult Bedouins) they are very hospitable and friendly people; generous and giving their best to us- their guests.

Compared to what I've seen in Israel, this Bedouin village lacks many things other Arab and Jewish neighborhoods take for granted. There are no paved roads here, just sand and trash everywhere. Much of the garbage is left over construction materials or large piles of wood. There is almost no grass or gardens, just sand everywhere. There are many chickens and a few goats close to the house. It appears that anything nice, such as grass and gardens, or nice furniture depends upon the financial success of the individuals. From the roof you can see almost every roof has a satellite dish and water tanks, and the roof to this building also had a solar panel. All the houses look similar- with the same type of construction and shape of the houses and windows.

Community is very important to the Bedouins. Saeed's cousin lives in the building next door. His brother lives nearby as well. Yesterday the power went out and Saeed was gone. Several people came by the house to check on us and turn the power back on...it went out every 5 minutes for about 40 minutes. The people here love to drink tea and it seems to be the normal cultural practice to offer tea when someone enters your house.

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