

SYRIA: SECURITY TRAINING

'My office building was bombed. About 30 people died. I do not know how, but I was not even injured. It was a miracle. I could die at any time. But it is what I have to do.'

Musbah (name changed), works in Aleppo, Syria, providing life-saving aid to orphans, widows, and other women and children who have fled the violence and terror of the Syrian conflict.

He admits that his choice to stay in Aleppo – a regular target of missiles and violence – causes his family deep concern ('It makes my mother cry,' he told us), but he is proud of his role.

He shows photos of a library his organisation opened, and a bakery where people who have been forced from their homes are employed making bread from locally-grown ingredients. The bread is distributed to people in desperate need of food.

He says: 'We offer care and relief to people in need. Most of the people we help are widows and orphans, whose husbands or parents have been killed in Syria's war.'

'We found that in some cases, they could not read, so we are teaching them how to. It is so important – there is no other way.'

Musbah is part of a new generation of Syrians: those who have either lost everything, or are dedicating their lives to those who have lost everything, in a war which is now in its fourth year.

The UN reports 10.8m Syrians – out of a total population of 22.4m – are in urgent need of aid, and warns this will increase to more than 15m by the end of this year.

And because only Lebanese people are allowed to enter Syria, the only people who can help are new to the aid sector: dedicated, but inexperienced; committed, but untrained.

We are working in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, training those people, and ensuring local communities have the skills they need to respond to disasters: to save, and improve, millions of lives.

Musbah completed RedR UK's Personal Security training in Gaziantep, Turkey.

He said: 'In Syria there are a lot of people who are trying to help. We work hard but started with no experience and so we are very happy to receive training from experts.'

'Security training is vital. In Aleppo, we move from under threat of snipers, handheld guns, IEDs, mortars, thermal rockets, cluster bombs, vacuum bombs and barrel bombs. The training showed

me extra steps to take, and some reasons behind them, which helps me understand why it is good to do certain things.'