

NADIA's INITIATIVE

Rebuilding from the Yazidi Genocide

FROM GENOCIDE TO JUSTICE



ABOUT THE GENOCIDE

In August 2014, the world witnessed genocide. Over the course of two weeks, the Sinjar region of Iraq was invaded by the so-called Islamic State (ISIS). ISIS militants undertook a strategized campaign to ethnically cleanse Yazidis from existence.

Approximately 400,000 Yazidis fled to the neighboring Kurdistan Region of Iraq and tens of thousands took refuge on Mount Sinjar, where they faced near starvation. The rest, unable to flee, were killed or taken into captivity and subjected to horrific acts of violence – enslavement, forced labor, conscription, torture, and rape.

ISIS considered Yazidis “infidels” and ordered men to either convert or die. Women, on the other hand, were given no choice. They were taken captive, married off to the highest bidder, sexually enslaved, and forced to convert.

More than 6,000 women and children were taken captive by ISIS and over 2,800 are still missing today. Sexual violence was strategically used as a weapon of war and codified in ISIS manuals that explained how to traffic Yazidi women. ISIS believed that violating women would destroy the community from within.

WHO ARE THE YAZIDIS?

The Yazidis are a small minority indigenous to Mesopotamia who are united by their ethnic and religious identity. As an ancient monotheistic religion, Yazidism shares elements with other Middle Eastern traditions, but is set apart by its prayer rituals, a belief in reincarnation, and the central role of the Peacock Angel, Tawusi Malek, who is worshiped as messenger to the Yazidi god.

It is because of these unique tenets of their faith that Yazidis have been persecuted for centuries. Yazidi history recounts seventy-three instances of genocide – the latest of which was conducted by ISIS. The constant threat of persecution led many Yazidis to settle in the northern region of Iraq (namely Sinjar), where the mountainous terrain provides some protection.

“I will never forget the grief in my mother’s eyes when she realized her sons had been executed – not knowing she would face the same fate. I can still feel my niece’s hand being ripped out of mine, as we were separated and loaded onto buses like cattle. And I can still calculate what my body was worth to those who bought and sold it.”

- NADIA MURAD



400,000

YAZIDIS DISPLACED

6,000+

WOMEN & CHILDREN
ENSLAVED

5,000+

MEN & OLDER WOMEN KILLED

TACTICS OF GENOCIDE

ISIS' persecution of Yazidis was so comprehensive, it is as if they used the criteria for genocide as a guideline for how to destroy the community:

1. **Murdering** men and older women en masse and filling over 80 mass graves throughout Sinjar.

2. **Abducting** women and children, enslaving girls and brainwashing boys into joining the ranks of the terrorist group.

3. **Torturing** captives with sexual and physical violence, causing irreversible trauma.

4. **Raping** women to ensure that children born to Yazidi women would be considered Muslim, not Yazidi, under Iraq's patrilineal nationality law.

5. **Destroying** property, schools, hospitals, and homes; burning farms; disabling electrical networks; and polluting water sources, so Yazidis would not be able to survive in Sinjar.

FROM SURVIVORS

"ISIS captured us when we were trying to reach Sinjar Mountain. At the beginning, they only separated my father from us in Sinjar. They did not take me from my mother because I was only 14 at that time. Then, they took us from Sinjar to Til-Afar. Life was so bad there. We did not have enough food [or] good shelter. After 8 months, they separated us from each other. They sold me more than 10 times to different people."

- BADYRA

"I was only ten years old at that time. They took me with other kids to a kindergarten. There, they taught us the Quran. Once, they gave us poison. We thought we died. We spent two weeks in the hospital. Finally, they made a lottery in the kindergarten. There were three things, which were marriage, death, and serving an ISIS family. Each kid got a different paper. Based on that, some were killed. Some were given to their fighters as wives. Others were chosen to be servants in their houses. I was chosen to be a servant. I served a house for two years."

- SAMAR

ongoing hardships

PRESENT DAY

The consequences of genocide have endured long after ISIS' occupation of Sinjar. Genocide is not a singular event. It is a process of marginalization, violence, and resource deprivation. ISIS knew this; for they did not stop at destroying Yazidi lives. They also systematically dismantled agricultural lands and basic resources to prevent the community from ever returning home. While ISIS' military occupation was defeated by an international coalition in 2019, their genocide against Yazidis has yet to be stopped.

200,000

STILL
DISPLACED
IN NORTHERN
IRAQ

2,800

WOMEN &
CHILDREN
STILL MISSING

150,000

RETURNEES
TO SINJAR
STRUGGLING
TO REBUILD

LIVING IN LIMBO

Seven years after ISIS' atrocities, the Yazidi genocide is no longer front-page news. Yet, the humanitarian crisis persists. Hundreds of thousands of Yazidis remain in cramped displacement camps, while those who have returned home lack electricity, clean water, healthcare, education, and livelihood opportunities.

Improvements to Sinjar's local governance and security are prevented by political disputes between the Iraqi Federal and Kurdistan Regional governments. Although both claim sovereignty over the land, neither is willing to take responsibility for Sinjar's reconstruction. In the vacuum of good governance, foreign-backed militias are gaining influence and destabilizing the region. Once again, the Yazidi community is paying the price.

MISSING BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Of the 6,000 women and children taken into ISIS captivity, 2,800 are still missing. For them, the violence of genocide is not a memory, but a daily reality. The world has listened in horror to the accounts of survivors like Nadia Murad, but there have been no coordinated efforts to rescue those still missing and in captivity.

Thousands of survivors are mourning their relatives whose remains lie in unmarked and mass graves. Only a handful of graves have been exhumed. For families hoping to return home to Sinjar, living among mass graves is unthinkable. The inability to identify and honorably bury loved ones magnifies the community's loss.

JUSTICE DELAYED

Survivors have put themselves at great personal risk to retell accounts of genocide and share experiences of sexual violence. They have defied taboos and faced stigma in the hopes that authorities would hold their abusers accountable. Shamefully, the international community has not fulfilled its responsibility to prosecute perpetrators. No international body or Iraqi court has tried ISIS members for sexual violence or genocide.



"Despite everything we were subjected to in captivity, our life is still difficult in Sinjar. Since being liberated, many of us live in homes that are not ours because ISIS blew up our homes, burned and looted our property, and stole our money."

- SURVIVOR

"We hope our brothers and sisters will be released from ISIS captivity, and we will meet them again."

- SURVIVOR

PERSERVERING IN THE FACE OF PERSECUTION

Despite ongoing hardships, the Yazidi community is working together to rebuild their homeland, restart their lives, and advocate for accountability. They are eager to participate in Sinjar's local governance and security. Yazidis know that stabilizing the region is the best way to prevent future persecution and create a more peaceful world for their children. We are here to help them achieve these goals.

"Whenever I am discouraged, I only have to look at the resilience of my community to know that we can build a better world if we pair their strength and innovation with tangible support."

-NADIA MURAD



supporting local

VISIONS OF JUSTICE

Nadia's Initiative empowers the Yazidi community in their pursuit of justice. Survivors tell us that justice is twofold:

1. REPAIRING THE PAST

have their day in court

2. ADVANCING THE FUTURE

receive support that
enables them to heal &
move forward

Nadia's Initiative advocates world leaders and policymakers to prosecute ISIS perpetrators and utilize accountability as a mechanism to prevent genocide and sexual violence. We work with Yazidis to design, support, and implement projects that restore access to education, healthcare, livelihoods, WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene), culture, and women's empowerment. Our programs are driven by survivor needs and center the local community's participation to achieve equitable and sustainable results.

enterprises by women for women

When ISIS invaded Sinjar, Iraq, Wafa and her family fled their home and took refuge on Mount Sinjar. On the way, her father and older brother were captured by militants and their fate remains unknown to this day.

Although Wafa eluded the terrorist group, life in displacement was not without hardships. Her mother struggles with mental illness and her younger brother lives with an untreated medical condition. After years in a camp, Wafa's family decided to return home and try and piece together their lives. Upon arrival in their village, they found that ISIS had destroyed their house, stolen their money, and looted their possessions.

With her mother unable to work and no assistance from the government, the burden to support the family fell solely on Wafa's shoulders. So, Wafa enrolled in NI's Women's Empowerment program, which

provides training and grants for women to start their own small businesses.

After conducting market research and composing a business plan, Wafa opened a cosmetics shop. "This project strengthened my self-confidence, self-reliance, and it reduced psychological pressure."

In addition to business training, the program also helps women learn to cope with trauma through yoga classes and therapy. "From this project, I learned positive adaptation techniques to manage stress, anxiety, and grief."

With a stable flow of income, Wafa is able to put food on the table and pay for medical treatment for her mother and brother. Any leftover money goes toward supporting her younger sisters' education. "I spend every day in this shop for my sisters, so they can continue their studies and have a better future."



WOMEN LED, SURVIVOR CENTRIC

ISIS deprived Yazidi women of their freedom, agency, and lives. We believe the path to healing is through enabling women to reclaim their agency. Nadia's Initiative designs projects that empower women and survivors of sexual violence with the resources to provide for their families, become leaders in their communities, and revitalize their homeland.

We know that it is not only "women's programs" that impact survivors. Women are uniquely affected by every sector of our work, including access to education, healthcare, livelihood opportunities, clean water, and legal justice. We cannot separate women's empowerment from the holistic rehabilitation of the Yazidi community.

That is why Nadia's Initiative undertakes a survivor-centric approach to all our programs. For us, this means centering the needs of survivors by listening to their hardships and dreams. We do not wait for women to ask for help, we actively seek their participation and input in our projects from design to implementation.

"Life became very difficult. I was under psychological and financial pressure. We couldn't find any job opportunities in the area – especially for women."

- ADLAN

"We women are no less capable than the rest of society to work outside of the home."

- BARFI

80%

OF YAZIDI WOMEN
AND GIRLS WHO
SURVIVED SEXUAL
SLAVERY HAVE
PTSD¹

40%

OF SURVEYED
SURVIVORS AVOID
SOCIAL SITUATIONS
FOR FEAR OF
STIGMATIZATION¹

1. Source: Ibrahim et al. BMC Medicine (2018) 16:154
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-018-1140-5>

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

LONG TERM COMMUNITY HEALTH

Community health is a vital building block for improving education, women's equality, and economic prosperity. The COVID pandemic has highlighted fundamental inequities in healthcare systems across the world. Displaced, marginalized, and conflict-affected communities start off with inadequate access to healthcare and are the last to receive assistance during global crises.

Nadia's Initiative provides comprehensive primary, specialized, and mental healthcare to Yazidis in Sinjar. We are restoring hospitals and clinics that ISIS destroyed and expanding the healthcare sector with new services and facilities to introduce a quality of care that the region has never before seen.

18%

OF SURVEYED
YAZIDIS DO NOT
HAVE ACCESS TO
HEALTHCARE IN
THEIR COMMUNITY

43%

OF CHILDREN WHO
VISITED LOCAL
MEDICAL CLINICS
IN 2017 WERE
MALNOURISHED ¹

45%

OF SURVEYED
YAZIDIS REPORT
THAT THEY DO NOT
HAVE ACCESS TO
NECESSARY
MEDICINE

Primary Health Centers are necessary for us here because if these health centers are not open, people have to drive to the city of Sinjar - even if it's late at night. This is a good service for the community when the primary health centers and schools are restored and opened.

- ANONYMOUS

"Government buildings like Primary Health Centers (PHCs) were the most affected and damaged during the conflict. As we can see now, the PHC is restored. We just need to have medical staff here to work and provide services for the community."

- ANONYMOUS

1. Sinuni Sub-District Office, 2018.

HEALTHCARE

lifesaving care

"My soul was in God's hands and if I didn't have this oxygen machine, I wouldn't exist." Like millions of people across the globe, Golan fell ill with the COVID-19 virus. The difference? Golan is from Duhola village in Sinjar, Iraq, where years of conflict have incapacitated the region's healthcare system.

In December 2020, Nadia's Initiative provided clinics across Sinjar with oxygen concentrators to treat COVID-19 cases and other respiratory diseases. Concentrators generate oxygen from the air, which means they do not need to be replaced like oxygen tanks. As a result, Sinjar's patients will benefit from the project for years to come.

"My situation was bad. I've been in the hospital for seven months and I used oxygen

for four months. Then, they gave me this machine, and my situation became better," shared Golan.

Over the past few months, the oxygen machines have saved countless lives, including Golan's. A clinic staff member reported, "We have used the machines for more than 40 cases, many of which were COVID-19 cases."

Conflict-affected regions like Sinjar lack the healthcare infrastructure to respond to pandemics such as COVID-19. We at Nadia's Initiative know that long-term investments in health systems are critical to preventing and responding to future public health crises.



returning to learning

Al Salam Primary School was ransacked, damaged, and abandoned in the wake of ISIS' occupation. Displaced Yazidi families are eager to return to their homes, but many are concerned about the state of Sinjar's schools. They know that education is key to a safer, more stable, and prosperous future for their children.

Nadia's Initiative restored Al Salam's classrooms and lavatories, and constructed a new playground where kids can play freely.

The school's rehabilitation has encouraged several displaced Yazidi families to return home.

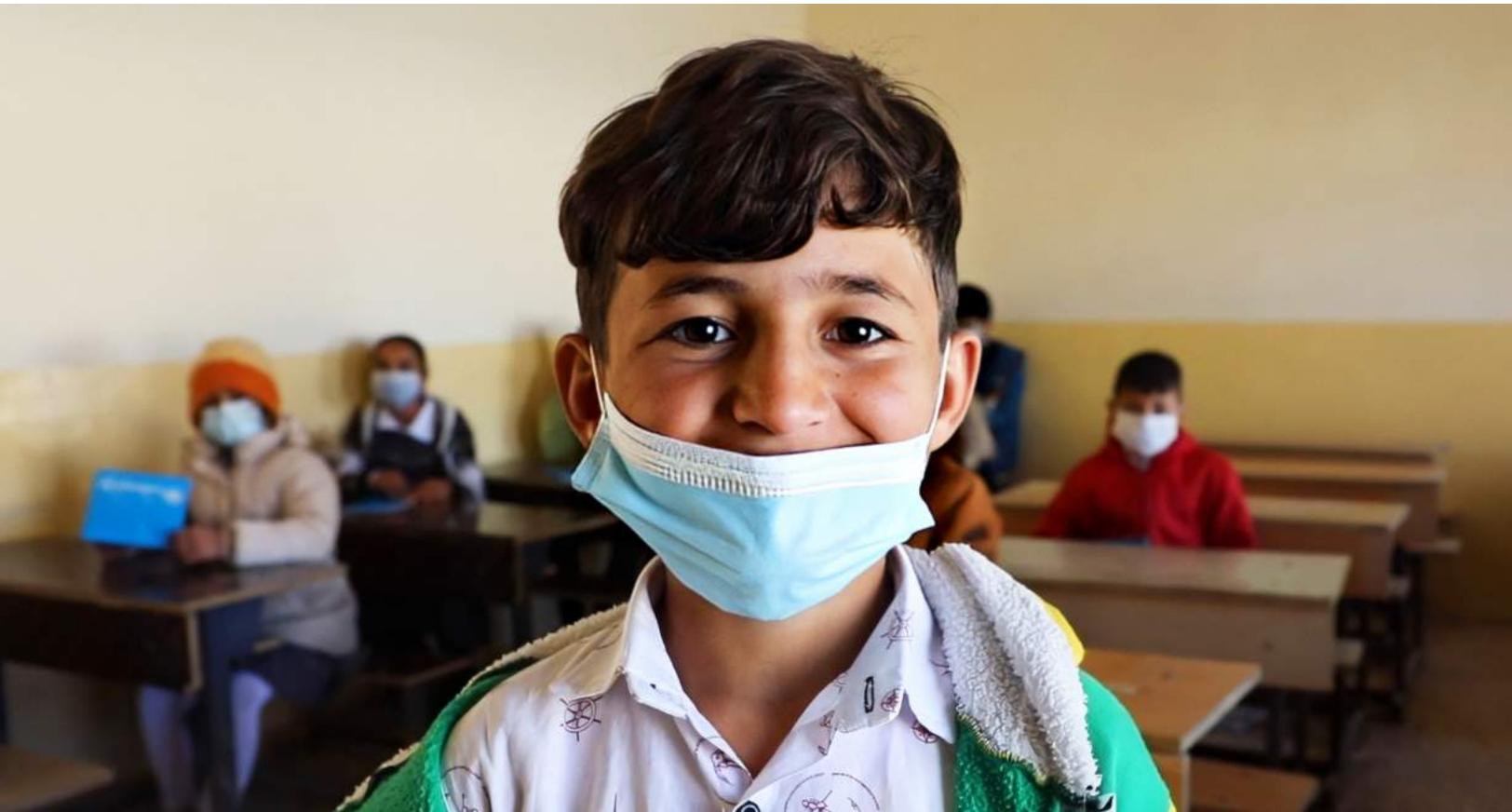
A local teacher explained the project's impact: "With no school here, many people can't return because they want their children to receive an education. This school is now a place for many students. About 300 students come to this school. The school was

damaged, but it's cleaned and restored thanks to Nadia's Initiative."

Once the school was completed, Nadia's Initiative handed over its administration to the Sinjar Education Department, which staffed and reopened the school. Students could not wait to get back in the classroom.

"My name is Beckham. I am a 4th grader. I was in Jam-Mishko IDP camp and was attending school in the camp. The school there was not good. Now our school is open and we returned to Tel Qasab. Now we are in our village and attend school here," said Beckham, a fourth-grader at Al Salam Primary.

With each school we restore, Nadia's Initiative shows Yazidi students that we see their potential, believe in their future, and are investing in their education.



EDUCATION FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Education is about transformation; transforming ideas, opportunities, and futures. Access to learning not only opens doors to job opportunities, it also provides children with the skills to stand up for their rights and make change in their communities. Investment in education is an investment in strong and equitable societies.

Destroying schools was a tactic of ISIS' genocide. Restoring access to education is Nadia's Initiative's antidote. Yazidi students continue to pursue their education despite the challenges of genocide, displacement, and social distancing. To support their dreams, Nadia's Initiative rebuilds schools throughout Sinjar.

We know that quality education is about more than buildings. It is about setting students up for success with safe spaces and essential supplies for learning. That is why our programs also improve the capacity of local teachers, administrators, and students with school supplies. We build libraries and playgrounds as portals for information and imagination – places kids can be kids and regain a sense of normalcy.

"We can go to the school in the village in less time and with fewer costs. We no longer need to travel those distances to reach the school in the city."

- STUDENT OF WARIDYA
PRIMARY SCHOOL

"When you invest in education, you are not only changing the lives of children and their families, you are strengthening communities by investing in future leaders, peace-builders, and activists. You are investing in a better future for us all."

- NADIA MURAD

2X

YAZIDI GIRLS ARE
TWICE AS LIKELY
AS BOYS TO NOT
HAVE ACCESS TO
EDUCATION

67%

OF SURVEYED
YAZIDIS REPORT
THAT THERE IS NO
SCHOOL WITHIN A
SAFE WALKING
DISTANCE OF
THEIR HOMES

62%

OF CHILDREN IN
SINJAR ARE OUT
OF SCHOOL

EDUCATION

LAY OF THE LAND

As a historically agricultural community, Yazidis have depended on Sinjar's land as the foundation of their livelihoods, culture, and community for generations. But conflict and displacement in Iraq have severely impaired Yazidis' deep-rooted ties to their homeland.

ISIS intentionally destroyed Yazidi farmlands and public infrastructure to sever Yazidis' food supply. They burned fields, polluted wells, and stole generators. Years of fighting to regain territory further damaged roads and electricity networks.

Thousands of Yazidis are returning to Sinjar only to find their farms destroyed and businesses demolished. Since the massacres, many Yazidi women have become heads of their households. It now falls on them to put food on the table and send their children to school, despite having little to no job opportunities.

Nadia's Initiative is working to revitalize Sinjar's economy from the ground up. We are targeting food insecurity by supplying farmers with the tools to revive their lands. Our programs improve trade and transportation by restoring roads, power homes and businesses by reconnecting them to the electrical grid, and create job opportunities by empowering women to open small businesses that provide much-needed services to the community.

70%

OF HOUSEHOLD
INCOME IN SINJAR
IS EARNED FROM
AGRICULTURAL
ACTIVITIES

50%

REDUCTION IN
FARMER INCOME
SINCE THE
CONFLICT

3,000+

HOMES ARE
DESTROYED IN
NORTH SINJAR
ALONE

"As a Yazidi woman, I have four children. It's hard to make a living with no job opportunities available. We have no financial resources, so it's hard to make ends meet and support our children's education."

- ANONYMOUS

LIVELIHOODS

Sources:

1. FAO United Nations. 2016. Iraq Agricultural and Livelihoods Needs Assessment.

2. UNHABITAT. 2016. Emerging Land Tenure Issues Among Displaced Yazidis in Iraq.

sowing seeds of hope

When Zahra's farm was destroyed by ISIS in 2014, she and her family were forced to flee their home in search of safety. "Overnight, we lost everything. All our property was stolen and more than one hundred trees were burned down," she said.

Zahra and her family of seven lived in Kabrto IDP camp for two years, but her youngest son, Khairi, can still picture the life they lost: "When we left our house fleeing from ISIS, we also left all of our childhood memories, dreams, and everything we built for years."

In 2016, Zahra was able to return to Sinjar. Nadia's Initiative knew that if Zahra had the tools to rebuild her farm, she would build a brighter future for her children and village.

That's why we created projects to provide Zahra and hundreds of other Yazidi farmers with agricultural tools, including greenhouses, irrigation materials, seeds, and dairy cows.

As part of this program, Nadia's Initiative worked with Zahra to build a new greenhouse. "If it wasn't for Nadia's Initiative, it would've been difficult to grow anything again. We are grateful. We are making a living off this farm. They provided us with material like fertilizer, seeds, pipes, a generator, and other equipment."

At forty-seven years old, Zahra never considered resettling elsewhere. "We do our best to make our life as it was in the past and practice our customs and traditions in our homeland," said Khairi.



keeping heritage alive

During its occupation of Sinjar, ISIS blew up Sheikh Mand Temple in Gedala village. Militants thought that by destroying religious sites, they could destroy the Yazidi religion. But as long as the Yazidi people survive, so too will their cultural and religious heritage.

Nadia's Initiative rebuilt Sheikh Mand Temple to provide a space for Yazidis to practice and preserve their traditions.

Baba Jawish, a prominent religious leader, stated: "This is the first shrine that was rebuilt in Sinjar after its destruction by ISIS. Seventy-four genocides have not ended the existence of the Yazidis. This temple was destroyed by ISIS. We thank God it has been built by Nadia's Initiative."

At an opening ceremony for the Sheikh Mand Temple, religious leaders and community members gathered to inaugurate the shrine by carrying out traditional rituals. It was the

first of many cultural festivals that will be celebrated at the site.

"Today, I am very happy with the rehabilitation and opening of Sheikh Mand temple, which was destroyed about 7 years ago. We will continue with our religious rituals and cultural traditions like before," shared Ruweh Eidaan, one of the temple's caretakers.

While the Temple's destruction symbolized ISIS' attempt to eradicate Yazidism, its rehabilitation is now a sign of the Yazidi people's survival and efforts to restore their homeland in Sinjar.

Another clergyman, Farhan Baba Sheikh, demonstrated this resilience, "After August 3rd, 2014, when ISIS attacked the Yazidi areas, they destroyed these temples and places of worship. We want to show that we Yazidis will remain. And we will return to our homeland and rebuild our temples and homes. God willing, we will remain."



SUSTAINING SPIRITUALITY

In their attempt to culturally cleanse Yazidism from Iraq, ISIS destroyed temples and religious sites throughout Sinjar. Nadia's Initiative recognizes that empowering Yazidis to celebrate their heritage is critical to countering the process of genocide and spiritually sustaining the community for generations to come.

Nadia's Initiative restores Yazidi temples with input from clergy, activists, and local families charged with guardianship of the shrines. Temples serve as places of worship for local residents and allow the entire community to preserve religious symbols and pride.

We also work to create cemeteries, memorials, and museums to honor those who were killed during the genocide and ensure the history of the Yazidi people will not be forgotten.

"The enemies of Yazidis, humanity, and our people attacked us, oppressed us, and caused a lot of pain. Their goal was to erase Yazidism, but thanks to God, good people, and support, Yazidism will endure."

- WORSHIPPER AT SHEIKH
HASSAN TEMPLE

68

YAZIDI SITES,
INCLUDING
TEMPLES, STATUES,
TOMBSTONES,
GRAVES & SHRINES
WERE DESTROYED
BY ISIS IN IRAQ¹

9

SHRINES WERE
DESTROYED IN
SINJAR ALONE¹

1. Fobbe, Sean, Navrouzov, Natia, Hopper, Kristen, Khudida Burjus, Ahmed, Philip, Graham, Nawaf, Maher G, ... Qari, Dawood Sulaiman. (2019, August 2). Destroying the Soul of the Yazidis: Cultural Heritage Destruction during the Islamic State's Genocide against the Yazidis (Version 1.0.0). Zenodo. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3826126>

CULTURE

RAISE A GLASS TO CLEAN WATER FOR ALL

In a water-scarce region like Iraq, potable water supply is hard to come by. This was true even before years of conflict polluted water sources and disrupted pipelines. Water is not only necessary for drinking, it is needed for hand washing, cooking, farming, and sanitation. To put it plainly; where there is no clean water, there is no way to live.

By comprehensively restoring access to WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) in Sinjar, Nadia's Initiative enables Yazidis to return home and lead healthy lives. We reconstruct wells, pipelines, and lavatories and provide hygiene kits to help stop the spread of disease.

The best part - local communities are at the center of it all. In villages where we rehabilitate WASH infrastructure, we also organize water committees comprised of residents who are trained and tasked with managing and maintaining the water supply. The water committees share what they know by conducting school hygiene workshops that teach children how to keep their communities safe and healthy.

LACK OF CLEAN WATER &
SANITATION TAKES A
DISPROPORTIONATE
TOLL ON WOMEN.

IT THREATENS:

- WOMEN'S MATERNAL &
REPRODUCTIVE
HEALTH
- AVAILABLE TIME TO
PURSUE EDUCATION &
WORK OUTSIDE THE
HOME

WASH

"We returned to Hardan village three years ago, but we have had difficulty accessing clean water. The water in the villages is not drinkable. Nor is it good for cooking."

- RESIDENT OF HARDAN
VILLAGE

"ISIS destroyed the well of the village, so people didn't have water."

- RESIDENT OF ZERAVKI
VILLAGE

water on tap

Imagine having to drive ten hours for a sip of water. Residents of Hayali village do not have to imagine because this was their lived reality until Nadia's Initiative restored Hayali's well and water pumps.

One Hayali resident told us, "Having drinkable water has greatly benefitted us. This support was needed in this village. We now have clean and drinkable water. It's good for the villagers and their cattle as well." Now, rather than ten hours, "It takes about ten to twenty minutes to fill our water tank and take it to the village."

A member of the Hayali community and his son are now employed as guards at the well. They help residents turn on the pump to

collect potable water. "For two to three hours a day, people bring their water tanks or trucks to collect water. We didn't have access to drinkable water before, but we can use this one for drinking and other household uses as well."

Ensuring equal access is a key component of our water and sanitation initiatives. Hayali residents are generous with their newfound resource. They remember what it was like living without a well, so they make sure to share water with friends and neighbors: "For those who don't have a water tank, I help them get water. Even some of the other neighboring communities come here to fill their water tanks - we are happy that others can also benefit from this project."



honoring the departed

In February 2021, the bodies of 104 Yazidis massacred by ISIS were returned to the village of Kocho, South Sinjar after being exhumed and identified. Among the deceased were Nadia Murad's friends, neighbors, and two of her brothers.

In a statement, Nadia wrote, "I miss my brothers every day and am glad to be able to honor them with a proper burial, but my heart is still broken for the thousands of Yazidi families whose loved ones remain in mass graves."

Living with this reality is a burden that weighs heavily on the psyche of the Yazidi community. The longer they wait for exhumations and honorable burials, the longer communal trauma is exacerbated and dignity denied.

Nadia's Initiative advocates authorities to

expedite exhumations and burials for all victims of genocide out of respect for the deceased and survivors alike. Years of continued pressure helped bring about the ceremony to honor Kocho's victims.

For survivors from Kocho and Yazidis across the region, ISIS' violence is still very tangible. In Nadia's words, "We feel that violence in our grief for the deceased and in the absence of the 2,800 women and children still in captivity. We feel it in the cramped conditions of IDP camps and among the rubble that was once our homes, schools, and shops. But we also feel the perseverance of our community and the persistence of our faith and values. It is those values, shared by peoples around the world, that drive us to stand for our dignity and human rights in the face of persecution and indifference."



AMPLIFYING GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

Yazidis in Iraq experienced violence and persecution for decades. Which begs the question: would accountability for these crimes have discouraged ISIS from repeating them? Nadia's Initiative is determined to break the cycle of marginalization and vulnerability. We are on a mission to create a world where women are able to live peacefully, and where communities that have experienced atrocities receive justice.

Survivors want to face their abusers in a court of law for the sake of healing and accountability. Yazidis are fighting to ensure that criminals will not be able to continue doing harm and that communities around the world will not have to face the same atrocities.

Nadia's Initiative amplifies Yazidi calls for justice and advocates world leaders to listen and act. Nadia Murad played a pivotal role in pushing the United Nations Security Council to create a team (UNITAD) to investigate ISIS' crimes. UNITAD has since collected damning evidence, but transforming this evidence into justice and accountability requires action. We continue to garner political will to prosecute.

As with our programs on the ground, Nadia's Initiative's advocacy work centers the voices of survivors. We advocate for the adoption of legislation, like UN Resolution 2467, that introduces a survivor-centric lens to conflict-related sexual violence in international law, peacekeeping, and security. We know that legislation is not the end-all-be-all, which is why we pair it with continued action, implementation, and accountability.

"We as survivors, we have the right to ask the Iraqi government and European countries [to protect] our rights. We don't want to lose our rights. We are so tired and we don't have representation. Many of us have no mothers, fathers, or brothers. We have nothing. We want our rights."

- SURVIVOR

80+

MASS GRAVES
AROUND SINJAR
HAVE YET TO BE
EXHUMED

62%

OF YAZIDIS NAME FAIR
TRIALS FOR ISIS
PERPETRATORS AS
CRITICAL TO JUSTICE,¹

69%

NAME THE IMPORTANCE
OF INTERNATIONAL
PROTECTION AGAINST
FURTHER HARM,¹

ADVOCACY

1. Akhavan, Payam, et al. "What Justice for the Yazidi Genocide?: Voices from Below." *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 42 no. 1, 2020, p. 1-47. Project MUSE, doi:10.1353/hrq.2020.0000.

want to help?

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Seven years after the Yazidi Genocide, it may feel as though it is too late to make a difference. However, recognition, action, and support are more crucial than ever. The needs are immense and the challenges extensive, but, step by step, we are making positive and lasting change in the lives of Yazidi families. Together, we can provide comprehensive support for children, women, and families in Sinjar and advocate for survivors of genocide and sexual violence globally. It is our duty as global citizens to collectively ensure that human rights are protected. The Yazidi community's safety, opportunities, and equality depend on bold action from every one of us. We cannot let them down.



STEPS TO TAKE TODAY

Visit:

NADIASINITIATIVE.ORG



Follow:



NADIAINITIATIVE



NADIASINITIATIVE



NADIASINITIATIVE



NADIA'S INITIATIVE



NADIA'S INITIATIVE

1.

Learn more! Follow us on social media and sign up for our newsletter for live updates from projects on the ground and advocacy around the world.

2.

Read stories from survivors to hear from their perspective. Check out Nadia's book, *The Last Girl*, to get started.

3.

Share what you have learned with friends. Activate your community to raise awareness.

4.

Write policymakers to support prosecutions of ISIS members, invest in the redevelopment of Sinjar, and introduce legislation that strengthens protections against genocide and sexual violence.

5.

Contribute to our work.



**“HELP US LEAVE A
BETTER, SAFER, AND
JUST WORLD TO FUTURE
GENERATIONS”**

-Nadia Murad

Reach us at info@nadiasinitiative.org

PO Box 9449, Washington, DC, 20016

**NADIA's
INITIATIVE**