



FONDATION  
**IMPACT HOPE**

## **Psycho-social assistance, education and vocational training for Yezidi genocide survivors**

### **Governorate of Dohuk-Iraqi Kurdistan**

#### **Background**

Although the United Nations Human Rights Council recognized that the Yezidi had been victims of genocide, they were relegated to the camps and almost forgotten. Yezidi internal displaced persons (IDPs) outside the camps have also been left to fend for themselves. The feeling of having been forgotten is very present in the consciousness of genocide survivors. Many project staff in Sharya are themselves survivors of the genocide and are therefore familiar with this reality.

Sharya has an entirely Yezidi population. The climate is cold in winter and very hot in summer. The city is home to a large camp for internally displaced people, with more than 3,000 families. The living conditions of the families in their makeshift homes are difficult. The risk of suicide is much higher among 15-25-year old people than in the comparable group of the average population. Sharya also has a very high rate of victims of sexual abuse.

#### **Brief summary of the project**

The project aims to defend and restore the dignity of displaced persons and refugees, to support the most vulnerable among them, and to give them hope for a better future.

A voluntary, safe and dignified return to Sinjar, their region of origin, remains uncertain.

The project focuses on Yezidi survivors of the August 2014 genocide in Iraq's Nineveh Plain. They have taken refuge in Kurdistan, particularly in the city of Sharya and its seven surrounding villages. The project consists of three main programs that comprehensively address some of the urgent needs of the

survivors: (1) visits to families outside the camps, emergency financial assistance, food aid, legal advice and screening for mental health problems; (2) a structured non-formal education program designed to help young people in the critical stages of their schooling and to boost the very young children in their education; (3) an adult education and vocational training program to strengthen financial autonomy and psychosocial support for women.

### **Specific objective and expected results**

Promote the resilience, the return to dignity and autonomy of the Yezidi genocide survivors through education and psycho-social support.

To achieve this objective:

- The psycho-social well-being of displaced persons and their access to services and emergency assistance will have been improved.
- Young people will have received structured non-formal education in a safe space where they receive educational, recreational and psychosocial support.
- Internally displaced persons, especially women, will have received the means and skills to improve income generation and employment.

### **Activities**

#### *Psychosocial well-being*

The project provides individual/family support through family visits and community support through social activities. In this way, the project helps people to cope with the permanent stress resulting from prolonged travel, financial difficulties, hard living conditions and anxiety related to returning to their place of origin. It also enables socially isolated families to connect with others in a safe and supportive environment and helps displaced families to access appropriate services.

#### *Education of young people*

This component aims to provide children and young people with a safe space to build resilience and better cope with the impact of displacement on their daily lives and future prospects. This will be achieved, in the first instance, through the provision of tutoring in basic school subjects. This structured and quality educational support addresses some of the shortcomings of the public-school system for IDPs. A summer program for young people offers psychosocial support through age-appropriate activities, including excursions, creativity workshops, drama and awareness-raising exercises. The youth summer program focuses on reconciliation, peacebuilding and environmental awareness.

#### *Integral and professional training*

The aim of this component is to provide IDPs with basic intellectual and manual skills that could improve their employability or enable them to generate income. Members of the host community, whose households face the same financial difficulties, are also admitted to these courses, as space and funding are available.

All the activities proposed in this component take place in Sharya. JRS will pay particular attention to women, so that they can learn new skills that can provide them with income.

### **Contribution of the project to a real change**

The project aims at the integral transformation of people. Through training and education from a very early age, children will be familiarized with realities other than those they have known and will glimpse life perspectives that were previously impossible. Adults will be able to secure a future in Kurdistan by rediscovering resilience, self-confidence and providing a decent life for their families.

### **Location of the project**

City of Sharya and its surrounding villages, Dohuk Governorate, Iraqi Kurdistan.

### **Local partner**

The mission of JRS is to accompany, serve and defend the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.

JRS began working with internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraqi Kurdistan only two months after the atrocities perpetrated by Daesh in the summer of 2014. The approach to beneficiaries is inclusive, respectful and non-discriminatory. JRS ensures that clearly identified needs are addressed together with local people. JRS ensures that programmes take into account all dimensions of the human person: physical, intellectual, mental, social, emotional and spiritual.

### **Direct and indirect beneficiaries**

The majority of the people involved in this project are Yezidi IDPs. This sample of people benefiting from the project is representative of the displaced population inside and outside the camps throughout the governorate.

5 520 families of displaced persons benefit from the project in the form of psycho-social support, access to services and emergency assistance.

440 children benefit from the project in the framework of informal youth training.

1 260 adults benefit from the project in the context of women's support and vocational training.

## **Sustainability of the project**

JRS' strategy is based on supporting the most vulnerable and conflict-affected populations. Projects are then expanded and service-oriented with a view to the human, technical and financial autonomy of individuals and communities.

JRS participates in national and regional inter-agency meetings and maintains regular communication with UN agencies and several other local and international NGOs to ensure continuity of action.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The JRS monitoring and evaluation system is designed to collect relevant, accurate and timely information to inform decision-making and ensure the achievement of project objectives. Quantitative data are presented through regular periodic reporting on the logical framework indicators and the monitoring and evaluation plan. Qualitative monitoring measures progress towards more subjective results. Qualitative data are provided by project staff through their observations and engagement with the affected population.

Internal evaluations are conducted at the end of each project cycle using the following evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. An external evaluation will take place at the end of the third year.