



The Next Generation

Annual Report 2021

From the Executive Director

Dear friends and supporters,

I am very pleased to present the Free Yezidi Foundation's 2021 annual report. Our organization has taken significant strides forward this year, including some exciting new innovative projects. At the same time, displacement, trauma, and injustice continue to plague Yezidis. While we have seen some modest signs of hope, we are also realistic about the scope of need in our community.

For many Yezidis, especially the displaced, life moves slowly, and hope is fleeting or completely out of reach. Unemployment rates are astronomical and suicide and post-traumatic stress rates persist. Many Yezidis, young and old, question whether there is any possibility for a viable future in Iraq for the next generation. While we at the Free Yezidi Foundation are very proud of the projects we are implementing and the meaningful change we make, we must not lose sight of the scale of the challenge and the emotional weight that our community members carry. As multiple crises erupt throughout the world, including Afghanistan and Ukraine, assistance to Yezidis and other endangered populations are impacted. Our community must urgently seek options that are more sustainable, more effective, and better provide education, employment, and viability for livelihood in the future with less foreign assistance.

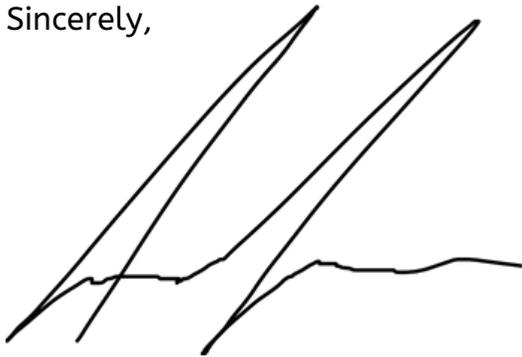
In the pages that follow, you will learn about two such initiatives that we have taken forward in 2021, both housed in the new Enterprise & Training Center: FYF crafts and enterprise, and the FYF Bakery Training Center which houses the Sugar is Sweet bakery and café. Both projects are run entirely by Yezidi women, are real income generators, and provide unique services and goods in the community and beyond. We are not sustainable yet, but we have laid the groundwork for projects that not only provide skills and training but also generate income for team members and for our organization.

Separately, FYF's strives for women's leadership and empowerment as a core principle. I am very pleased to say that by the end of 2021, our team in the field was composed of 89% women, outside of service staff such as guards and cleaners. With more than 100 staff members, we are a major employer in the Yezidi community, and we are operating with a model that is modern and in adherence with international gender norms. This is an uphill battle in a country like Iraq, but I believe we have made great progress. This includes programmatic staff providing justice, trauma, and education services, but also our finance, operations, logistics, and facility managers. We have invested time, energy, and funding in building the capacity

of promising young Yezidis, and they are blossoming into leaders in their respective roles. I am so proud of our team for their tireless work, often behind the scenes, and I am glad that we can bring jobs, skills, income, services, and products to Yezidis in Iraq, with a focus on Yezidi women. We are improving the community every day.

I would like to thank private and government donors who have supported the Free Yezidi Foundation, as well as our friends and allies who stand with us and help in various ways. Your solidarity is critical to the work we do every day. I invite everyone to explore this report, where we will share our activities and some of the heartwarming stories from FYF team members and beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

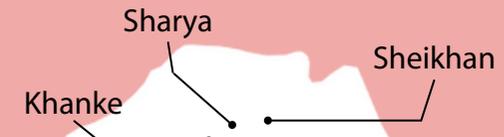
A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several sharp, upward-pointing strokes followed by a horizontal line.

Pari Ibrahim
Executive Director



Mission

The Free Yezidi Foundation (FYF) is a politically independent non-profit organization designed to assist Yezidis in need. The FYF seeks to implement projects to protect and support the most vulnerable members of the Yezidi community.



Geographical Focus Area



Khanke

In camp | 14,407 IDPs
Out of camp | >12,000 IDPs



Sheikhan

In camp | 3,775 IDPs
Out of camp | 500 families



Sharya

In camp | 15,663 IDPs
Out of camp | 17,010 IDPs

Year in Review

The Yezidi community continues its fight for existence in Iraq. Little tangible progress has been made this year, although there have been some bright spots. The absence of a functional solution for displaced Yezidis to return home and the lack of meaningful justice and accountability are two fundamental problems that remain unresolved.

Several individual cases have moved forward in terms of the pursuit of justice, led by German federal authorities. That included the first conviction of genocide. In addition, Belgium and the Netherlands parliaments both formally recognized the Yezidi Genocide. FYF was involved in public and private efforts to advance this formal recognition. The Iraqi Parliament also passed the Yezidi Survivors' Law. This is the first piece of legislation that calls upon the Iraqi Government to provide a compensatory package to genocide survivors, including but not exclusive to Yezidi women and girls. FYF was part of a broad coalition advocating for the passage of this law.

Yezidis faced some acute challenges beyond the continued trauma of past atrocities and current displacement. COVID-19 variants effected everyone, and those living in IDP camps were particularly vulnerable due to overcrowding and lack of medical services and information. FYF launched a project to sew and distribute thousands of face masks, while also distributing accurate information about the vaccine and its efficacy. FYF helped displaced persons sign up for vaccines.

In Sharya IDP camp, a massive tent fire broke out, burning down 400 tents. These residents lost everything, including their identification documents. FYF spearheaded a campaign to support families, raising more than \$20,000 and ensuring an orderly and responsible distribution. Finally, Turkey continues to target Yezidi residents of Sinjar with airstrikes, ostensibly in its campaign against the PKK group. This is in violation of international law and is highly destabilizing for Yezidis seeking to return to Sinjar. FYF has been outspoken on the impact of these airstrikes and the targeted assassination of Yezidis in Sinjar by a foreign military actor.

This year we marked the Yezidi Genocide with a series of virtual panels over two days. We focused on issues ranging from discrimination against Yezidis to the pursuit of justice and gender matters, also publishing an op-ed in the Washington Post. Although seven years have passed since the brutal ISIS onslaught, the trauma is still fresh for many, particularly with 2,700+ women and children who remain missing. FYF campaigned all year for action to find and rescue these missing women and children.

FYF opened the Enterprise & Training Center at the beginning of the year, a new flagship initiative where we create hand-crafted items, baked goods, and build hope and opportunity for members of our community, with a special focus on women's economic empowerment.

2021 At a Glance



2800

Face masks distributed



243

Beneficiaries of new GBV services in Sheikhan



275

Beneficiaries provided with skills training, including Yezidi youth and Yezidi women cohorts



230

Displaced people registered for vaccine by FYF



313

Beneficiaries of mental health and psycho-social support services



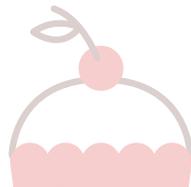
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Vaccine awareness leaflets distributed



\$20,000+

Aid raised for victims of Sharya IDP camp fire



96

Women trained at our Bakery Training Center

Trauma Treatment

In response to extensive trauma symptomology among Yezidis experiencing protracted displacement and the effects of surviving a mass atrocity, FYF continued providing psychotherapy services and psychological first aid (PFA) through its clinical psychologists and Harikara brigade (The Harikara are FYF 'helpers', as described on the next page).

Displaced Yezidis are among the world's most traumatized people. Survivors report experiencing traumatic events, nightmares, flashbacks. Yezidi women whom ISIS enslaved - among them beneficiaries of FYF - are at heightened risk of mental health disorders. FYF's clinical psychologists give services to Yezidi men and women who exhibit signs of depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation.

Effective screening and treatment methods, such as those used by FYF, enable access to intervention for those with previously undiagnosed mental illness. After years of displacement with little improvement in Sinjar, and thus no realistic chance to return to their former homes safely, Yezidis are vulnerable to the effects of trauma and suicidality. Displaced Yezidis' risks are compounded by the lack of mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) services available in IDP camps and in their areas of origin. FYF addressed this service gap over the course of the year through short-term psycho-social support (PSS) services and longer-term psychotherapy.

Among the PSS services FYF offered this year were PFA and referrals through our team of Harikara, who are trained in these methods. PFA consists of techniques intended to stabilize survivors of disasters and human rights violations and connect them to recovery resources such as the MHPSS services provided by FYF clinical psychologists. For many beneficiaries, this was the first time they had access to MHPSS services.

FYF's reporting on mental health assessment of beneficiaries demonstrated a marked improvement in their daily activities of life. The data derived from FYF projects providing trauma treatment have affirmed the impact of FYF's trauma treatment programming. FYF will continue to seek funding for a long-term intervention addressing underlying causes of trauma and reducing risks of suicide among displaced persons.

FYF has been providing trauma treatment and MHPSS interventions since 2017, one of the first Yezidi organizations to bring in international experts to provide services to Yezidi beneficiaries. Next you'll read about Ahlam. She was very fragile, suffered from bad social relationships, and was considered a high-risk suicide case. Ahlam is currently receiving cognitive behavioral therapy sessions at FYF. She is establishing positive social connections and hopes to use her skills and coping strategies to start a new and better life.

Resilience & Recovery

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My name is Ahlam*. I dropped everything to flee for ISIS as they invaded my village in August, 2014. I'm now 26 years and sometimes I think about my parents, they died when I was 11 years old. I was forced to marry my cousin when I was 14.

Before and after being displaced, I was constantly physically and mentally abused by my now ex-husband. I now live with my daughter in the IDP camp. I was able to divorce my ex-husband after all the violence I suffered and pain from his involvement in another sexual assault case. I still suffered stigma as a divorced woman and faced many challenges as a single mother. After hearing about FYF services from neighbors, I started participating in sessions in August, 2021. I felt hopeless, and was very afraid to be among people. After attending FYF group therapy sessions and receiving mental health awareness, I realized what I went through is known as domestic violence. And I realized that I am not only a survivor of genocide, I am also a survivor of domestic violence!"

**Name has been changed to protect the survivor's identity*



Women's Services

FYF women's center beneficiaries often experience their first educational courses at our center. For several years FYF has offered language skills in Arabic and English, basic numeracy, computer and ICT skills, and immediately useful training in sewing and knitting. These and other efforts are designed to provide a basic foundation upon which beneficiaries can develop confidence and a profile for potential employment, whether in the host community environment or in their areas of origin.

Classes in the Women's Center continued this year, although with reduced numbers due to COVID. In addition to education and vocation skills, FYF also requires women to attend women's rights courses. FYF designed the women's rights curriculum to consist of classes explaining: violence against women, perils of early marriage, and women's political, civil, economic, social, and cultural rights. In each class, women learned what their legally protected rights were in each facet of daily life. Most women are not aware of this information, and they find the knowledge empowering. FYF is happy to report that the women's rights educational material has proved a remarkable success. Nearly all women (99.6%) have reported that they are able to empower other women with women's rights knowledge. This illustrates the confidence to assert women's rights, including to make decisions regarding family finances and employment decisions. In fact, after completing FYF's course

beneficiaries reported an increase in their participation in household decision-making. This held true across all four categories: children's schooling (95% increase), health clinic visits (7.4% increase), family planning (14.2% increase) and household finances (45.1% increase).

In addition to improving their decision-making rights within their household, the women's rights course changed the way women viewed themselves and their peers. One woman, Kocher, shared that she had "never heard of 'women's rights'" before enrolling in FYF's courses. By attending these courses, Kocher's understanding of women's role in society changed:

"There is always this idea where people value baby sons more than baby girls and actually after I took the women's rights class at FYF, I learned that girls have value just like boys and that girls also have the rights like other humans. I now value and appreciate my daughters more than I used to."

Kocher, FYF beneficiary

Kocho Burial Ceremony

In February, the remains of 105 victims of the Kocho massacre were laid to final rest in a solemn and respectful ceremony in the village, adhering to Yezidi burial customs and religious rites. This was the first mass funeral for Yezidi victims, whose remains have been left in dozens of mass graves since the genocide.

The horrors that befell the Yezidis in Kocho and other Yezidi villages are some of the worst the world has seen. A village of more than 1,000 inhabitants was destroyed in a day. Almost all the men and older women were killed, and women and children were taken as slaves.

Such was the destruction that at the ceremony, some victims had no family members to carry their coffins. They too had been killed, or were missing after being taken captive by ISIS in 2014. Our staff at FYF understood the pain felt by survivors. As part of our commitment to psycho-social support and trauma treatment, our MHPSS teams were present at the ceremony, providing psycho-social services to families during this extremely painful period. FYF continues to support Yezidi survivors and families from Kocho and other villages, and we remain committed to helping them rebuild their lives.



Yezidis mourn during the Kocho burial ceremony

Harikara

FYF developed the Harikara model in 2017 in the process of implementing a grant from UN Women. A cohort of Yezidi women were hired to work as lay implementers with training and assistance from our international psychologists. They chose to call themselves the Harikara, which means 'helpers'. Since that time, FYF has provided targeted training to its Harikara in a number of fields. The focus has always been primarily on MHPSS services, where Harikara explain the basics of trauma treatment to families, provide basic psychological first aid based on their training with psychologists, and refer individuals to the local and international psychologists when necessary.

Our psychologists provide support and backstopping to Harikara through all projects. Harikara now work on the pursuit of justice, combating GBV in the community, and other topics, always in close coordination and under the strict guidance of subject matter experts.

One example: Harikara traveled to Kocho in February to assist the community in the formal burial of 104 Yezidis massacred in that town in 2014. FYF worked with the UN agency for migration, IOM, in conducting discussions with survivors. FYF and IOM worked together to identify and contact families in Khanke related to Kocho victims. Three families asked to participate in the FGDs before the reburial ceremony. Harikara were also available to all persons

during the ceremony for PSS. In some cases, the support FYF provides is not enough to meet the needs of a community overcome with trauma.

A Yezidi couple asked FYF Harikara to perform a wellness check on their adult son, who exhibited signs of depression. The Harikara immediately went to his tent but he was not there. The Harikara later received news that the son had committed suicide that day. FYF's supervising psychologist provided the saddened Harikara with reassurance and followed up with them. FYF also reached out to the man's family after the mourning period. This suicide was not an isolated event, however. After years of protracted displacement, suicide rates are high in the IDP camps. Although FYF and an external evaluator found FYF's trauma treatment to be a great success, there remains the need for sustained and expanded support.



One Step At a Time

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I am Leyal*, a Yezidi from Sinjar. I used to live in a large house with my uncles and cousins - 32 people in total. We spent the days doing agricultural work, looking after our cattle and crops. Our lives drastically changed on 3 August 2014. The Islamic State (ISIS) came to our village and killed my male relatives immediately, my father, brother, cousins and uncles. ISIS killed them because they see us as infidels (kuffar), unworthy of life and liberty. All the females in the house were taken into captivity, kidnapped, enslaved, raped, beaten. I lived through hell. I finally escaped captivity in 2019 and am staying since my escape in an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in Iraq. After all of the trauma, I was now living alone in a tent. all I remember is how pleasant life was, our cattle, green farm, my brothers and cousins giggling. I joined FYF courses and received MHPSS services. I learned about FYF's services on 3 August 2021, during FYF's presentations, on the commemoration of the day that changed our lives forever. The social workers and the environment made me feel so welcome. It helped me to begin interacting with others again!"

**Name has been changed to protect the survivor's identity*

Youth Services

FYF responded to requests from the community to provide resilience training and skill development to Yezidi youth, including young men and women.

Mental health issues are commonplace among the Yezidi community, but are particularly prevalent in youth. Tragically, the beginning of 2021 saw a significant increase in suicides among Yezidi youth in IDP camps, prompting concern of a mental health crisis. With the continued spread of COVID-19, services available to IDPs from other organizations were significantly reduced last year, limiting the support available to those in need.

Our youth resilience program, which began in April of 2021, came at a time of great need for Yezidi youth. Open to 18 to 25 year olds, FYF aims to empower young people by helping them to envision and create brighter futures for themselves. Beneficiaries participate in skills development sessions, designed to help them enter the workforce, and increase their employability through English language classes.

Participants are also able to access MHPSS services, which are vital in helping young people lead healthier and more hopeful lives, despite the circumstances in which they live. A total of 172 young people graduated from the program in 2021, with further growth anticipated in 2022.



COVID-19 Response

The continued spread of COVID-19 and the emergence of the Delta and Omicron variants were of great concern for FYF in 2021. Most of our beneficiaries and the wider Yezidi community live in crowded displacement camps. The lack of hygiene and sanitation coupled with the inability to socially distance posed serious challenges in combating the spread of the virus.

While most of the international NGOs left the camps as the virus took hold, FYF continued operations throughout the pandemic. We adapted revised health and safety measures as the situation has evolved. In Khanke, beneficiaries have made thousands of face masks to distribute without charge to the camp population. With the rollout of the vaccination program in Iraq, FYF also commenced efforts to raise awareness of the vaccine and its benefits. FYF informed thousands of IDPs about the vaccine, using The WHO approved pamphlet, and helped IDPs register for their vaccination. Thanks to our energetic outreach teams, FYF has reached thousands of people and helped curb the spread of the virus.



Enterprise & Training Center

In Iraq, Yazidis have historically suffered persecution and discrimination. This has led to previous incidents of violence and mass atrocities, but also the marginalization of Yazidis in the workplace. Suffering from lack of education and economic opportunity, Yazidis have focused on agriculture and subsistence living for centuries.

FYF won a bid to take over a facility in Khanke, which we have transformed into the FYF Enterprise & Training Center (ETC). The ETC is a multi-faceted space where we house the Bakery Training Center and the Sugar is Sweet cafe, the Crafts & Enterprise project, a child-friendly space or nursery for working mothers, and other initiatives to come on line in the future.

In the Yazidi community, women traditionally stay at home and often do not join the workforce due to gender and cultural norms. The FYF ETC is a safe space where Yazidi women can work, learn new skills, earn a basic income, and help provide for their families. As you can see in the following testimonies, the active participation of women in such activities is changing attitudes surrounding women and work, making the ETC an important economic and social innovation in the community.





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Before attending the classes at the FYF center, I was always thinking about why boys can work and I as a girl cannot. It was always my dream, since I was a child, to work and have my own business. I wanted to work as a tailor. But I did not have the power and courage to take the next steps, even though my family was always supporting me. I never had enough knowledge about my rights as a woman.”

Sheerin, FYF Beneficiary

Crafts & Enterprise

The FYF Crafts & Enterprise initiative draws from Yezidi cultural and artistic expression. Fully outfitted with looms, wool, and plenty of space, the facility hosts around two dozen artisans - all Yezidi women. FYF provides the facility, the managers, guards, drivers, utilities and raw materials. We also provide an instructor and help with marketing and reaching customers. The artisans make their own decisions about what items to create, and they keep the proceeds of their sales.

Dropping everything to flee for safety as ISIS invaded her village in August 2014, Farida remembers leaving behind a crochet hook she was using to make herself a pink sweater as she and her family escaped through the back door of their home in 2014. Farida, along with hundreds of thousands of other Yezidis, fled and later found shelter in the harsh conditions of a displaced persons camp. For nearly eight years now Farida and her family have lived in Khanke IDP Camp. They have lost hope in returning home to Sinjar or living in dignity. They miss their family home and their village. Farida constantly fears for her and her family's safety. Farida said,

“I couldn't stop thinking about my home, and the image of my pink crochet hook would not leave my mind.”

Recently, Farida learned about the ETC. In the ETC, FYF provides livelihood skills trainings and education to Yezidi women like Farida, who seldom possess adequate formal education or access to jobs skills programs. Among these programs is the crafts and enterprise initiative, where Yezidi women produce carpets, blankets, and woven children's toys for sale. When Farida learned about this project, she excitedly jumped at the chance to enroll. Farida learned new skills, crafted her own items, and now has the opportunity to make some income. This has made her feel independent and proud that she could use her creative talent for a job. She pictured her lost crochet and the sweater she was making. She thought, “I can finally complete my pink sweater.” At the ETC, Yezidi women like Farida have the chance to acquire vital jobs skills and also regain a sense of themselves and earn some income at the same time.



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The center is helping us a lot in many different ways. When I am in the tent, I don't see anything else. When I come here, you feel like it is a different world. You're talking with friends, and working, leaving the tent. When we sell products, it supports us financially.

Coming to work helps your family, and it empowers and encourages other girls to find work. Before 2018, even if they had the chance, girls wouldn't come, but now I see girls are looking for work, they are empowered to search for jobs and try new things."

Farida, ETC artisan



Bakery Training Center

Discrimination and prejudice against Yezidis can be seen at many different levels of society. Misconceptions of Yezidi customs, identity and culture has been present in Iraq and Syria for centuries, and endure to this day. As such, many Muslims still refuse to eat food made by Yezidis, believing it to be 'unclean.'

Sugar is Sweet, our newest venture, was established to provide Yezidi women with a space to create and sell their own goods to our community and others. This provides unique options for Yezidi IDPs and host community members, and also the opportunity to sell items to other communities and tackle discrimination. Located in our Enterprise and Training Center, the cafe is open to people of all religions and nationalities, without discrimination or judgement.

In 2021, 96 women graduated from our Bakery Training Course, which equipped participants with baking and finance skills while providing them with a modest income. Eight of these women were chosen to run the Sugar is Sweet cafe and bakery.

Since opening in November, our cafe has grown, and is a popular space for Yezidis in the area to celebrate engagements, birthdays and other special occasions in a beautiful setting away from camp life. In addition to traditional Iraqi cakes and sweets, a wide range of desserts

and refreshments are available, including custom-made cakes, which have proved to be particularly popular. Vendors are now asking Sugar is Sweet to cater events and sell their items to supermarkets in Duhok. In this way, we are building a sustainable, locally run business, staffed entirely by Yezidi women. FYF is proud to have responded to the needs of the community in this way, and is excited to see what the coming years have in store for Sugar is Sweet.







“

I enjoy it because I can leave my home and come to work. The classes were very useful for me, and I want to learn more and work more...I learned finance skills, and how to bake. I see that I'm encouraging other girls to go to classes and training. My friend never used to go out, and now she is asking me about sewing classes. I'm the eldest in my family, and have encouraged my sister to go to classes after school so she can find work."

Shaima, Sugar is Sweet Bakery & Cafe

Children's Safe Space

FYF has provided children's safe spaces for Yezidi IDPs since late 2015. While COVID-19 restrictions limited the opportunity to safely deliver services in 2020-21, we have consistently been a haven for young Yezidi IDPs who seek fun and learning in dreary IDP camps.

For the first months of the year, FYF operated a sort of daycare facility for women attending FYF courses at our in-camp center. Later, when that center was used largely for Yezidi youth, focusing on young men and women, we opened the nursery & day-care facility within the ETC. The key to operating children's safe spaces is to combine nurturing and a warm environment with educational activities. The children's safe space is open Sunday through Thursday from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

In addition to providing enrichment to children, this also allows mothers who are staff members, beneficiaries, and others to drop off their kids and join the workforce or benefit from vocational courses. In this way the daycare helps to promote women's economic empowerment.

Daycare activities include games, art, English lessons, drawing, computer time, and a simple COVID-19 awareness lesson. Instructors adjusted lessons according to the number of children attending the center.

Children stay as long as their mothers are attending courses or working. We are pleased to offer a large and very child-friendly space in the ETC. FYF has child protection policies in place to ensure the safety and care for children while their mothers are getting the education and training they deserve.

The safe space has proved beneficial to those children who could attend. It is one of few safe spaces for children in Khanke to play, more so because many formal schools closed during the height of the pandemic. As one child beneficiary shared:

"At home there is no space for me to play, but FYF has a space, it is very safe. I also like all the teachers, they treat me with love."

Every Child
Has The
Right
To Live In
Safety &
Dignity

Justice & Accountability

Analytical Report: The Hardan Atrocities

The horrific massacre committed by ISIS in the village of Kocho has been well-documented. In 2021, FYF completed its painstaking research and analysis of a similar tragedy in the village of Hardan, a devastating tragedy that has been severely under-documented.

Located on the north side of Mount Sinjar, Hardan was one of the areas most affected by the ISIS onslaught in August 2014. In 2016, mass graves of Yezidi civilians were found by locals who had returned to the area. Left unprotected for years, the mass graves were officially exhumed for documentation and identification purposes in February 2022.

Our structural analysis is the first on Hardan, and is the product of many months of investigative work by the FYF team, and headed by a renowned international lawyer. The report is for official use by national prosecutors, law enforcement officers and UN mechanisms in the pursuit of justice for crimes committed by ISIS members against Yezidis, and has been shared with two UN mechanisms and prosecutors in several different countries. FYF sought to understand what happened, when, where, and why - where the ISIS members came from, what they did and what they said.

As highlighted in this report, several foreign ISIS members were found guilty of crimes against Yezidis - including genocide - in 2021. If ISIS members returning to the West are linked to what happened at Hardan, our analysis will be vital in piecing together involvement and culpability in one of the most horrific crimes committed against our community in the Yezidi Genocide.



Justice & Accountability

Court Casa

In 2021 the first ever ISIS member was convicted of genocide in a court of law. In November, a court in the German city of Frankfurt found Taha al-Jumailly guilty of genocide for his involvement in the ISIS atrocities against the Yezidi community, including enslaving a woman and her young daughter, who he left to die in the summer heat. Months prior, his wife, Jennifer Wensch, was found guilty of multiple charges, including crimes against humanity, for her role in the murder. While the pace of prosecution is slow, FYF is pleased justice is being served for the Yezidis, and is assisting authorities in multiple jurisdictions in the quest for justice for the victims and survivors of the genocide. FYF is also engaged as a civil party in a high-profile criminal case in Europe. This suit has been ongoing and FYF's work will become public in 2022.

Yezidi Survivors Law

The passage of the Yezidi Survivors Law by the Iraqi Parliament in March was one of the most significant events of the year. For the first time, the rights of Yezidi survivors and survivors from other minority groups persecuted by ISIS were recognized and enshrined in Iraqi law. Among the provisions are allocated public sector jobs, land, and financial stipends for survivors.

FYF works closely with survivors to educate them on their rights under the new legislation, and how they can access related services and entitlements.



Advocacy

Official Statements

FYF issued several official statements throughout the year to draw attention to matters of importance to the community. This year, official statements highlighted the impact of Turkish air strikes on the Yezidi population in Sinjar, the massive fire in Sharya IDP camp, the search for missing Yezidis, convictions of ISIS perpetrators for crimes against Yezidis, and other topics. FYF statements are often quoted in news outlets and policy analyses. FYF bases its statements and information on knowledge from the community, with FYF and HQ team members liaising closely to deliver the FYF policy position on essential matters.

In the Press

FYF submits op-eds and works with journalists in Iraq, Europe, North America, and further afield in order to reach stakeholders around the world. This year, FYF op-eds, quotes, and news items have been published in the Washington Post, Newsweek, Guardian, Telegraph (Netherlands), NRC (Netherlands), and countless other outlets.

Separately, FYF works with the UN and non-governmental actors on matters of mutual importance. This year, FYF participated in a panel with Amnesty International and

worked with their justice team to highlight genocide trials. The US Holocaust Museum published a lengthy handbook for human rights advocates, including several pages on FYF's justice and accountability outreach efforts. FYF team members also engage in multimedia efforts, including dozens of panels throughout the year.



Public Events & Presentations

FYF participates in public events to amplify the voice of the community and advocate for better and broader humanitarian and human rights support for Yazidis. This year, FYF leadership engaged in several high-profile events, including formal presentations at the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, the US Holocaust Museum, the Iraqi Embassy in the Hague with UNITAD and the ICC, co-hosted discussion with the Wilson Center in Washington, meetings with Netherlands parliamentarians and government authorities, meetings with US government and Congressional stakeholders, and several presentations for academia, the press, and human / women's rights partners. FYF also hosts a steady stream of visitors to our centers in the field, where guests learn more about the plight of Yazidis and efforts to support the community. Finally, FYF works with partners in the field, like the UN and other NGOs, to support systemic change and support for Yazidis.

Advocating for Genocide Recognition

In 2021 UNITAD, the UN's investigative mechanism on ISIS crimes, the Belgium Parliament, and the Netherlands Parliament all formally recognized the Yazidi Genocide. FYF has worked extensively with all three parties, including many years of advocacy with Netherlands officials.

FYF provided formal testimony before the Belgian Parliament as the Yazidi Genocide bill was under consideration. Genocide recognition is important in securing justice in the post-genocide era. ISIS publicly announced its expectation to destroy Yazidis, not as part of a military campaign, but for the express purpose of eradication. This was a planned and systematic eradication, and formal recognition of this crime is critical for the surviving community.



Yezidi Genocide Commemoration

Virtual Panels

Yezidi civil society has a unique role to commemorate the Yezidi Genocide for the Yezidi and international communities. FYF hosted 11 virtual panels on 2-3 August this year. The online event allowed Yezidi and international stakeholders to remember, express solidarity, explore challenges, and discuss the path forward. The panels can be viewed on FYF's YouTube channel. The themes were:

- Voices from the Field
- Yezidi Survivors' Law.
- Yezidis: The Next Generation
- The Hardan Massacre.
- Combating Yezidi Discrimination.
- The Future of Sinjar: Challenges & Opportunities
- Yezidi Genocide: The European Perspective
- Justice & Accountability
- Slavery, Gender, & Sexual Violence
- Yezidi Genocide: The American Perspective
- Genocide, Recovery, & Support



FYF 3 August Recommendations

Each year FYF issues an official statement to mark the Yezidi Genocide, and draws attention to topics of importance. This year, FYF highlighted the search for missing Yezidis, the status of the Sinjar Agreement, the need for equal opportunity for Yezidis, the Yezidi Survivors' Law, better conditions for IDPs, and justice and accountability.



Missing Yezidis

Yezidis have suffered innumerable tragedies as a result of the Yezidi Genocide, but no issue is more painful than the unknown fate of more than 2700 missing Yezidis.

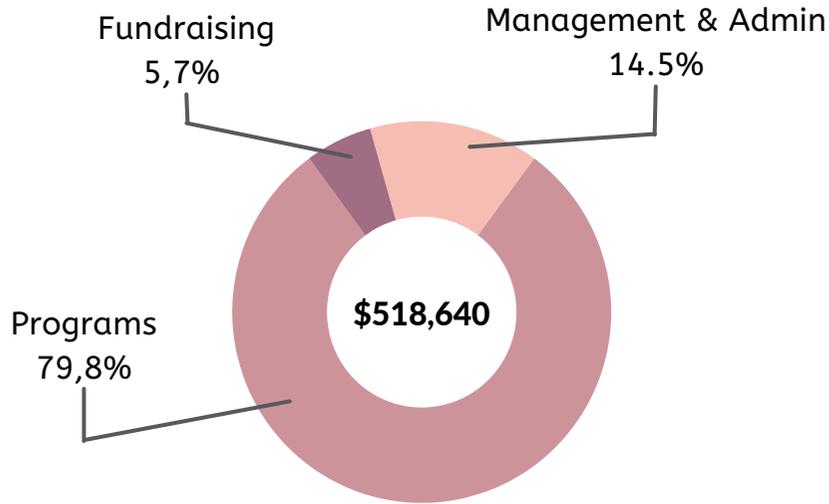
At the forefront of our advocacy efforts was the campaign to bring back missing Yezidis, calling on the international community to take serious steps to relocate missing Yezidi women and children and reunite them with their loved ones. FYF helped lead other organizations in a campaign to pressure governments to find missing Yezidi women and children. This has included letters government authorities, public pressure, and consistent advocacy year-round.

Our efforts have been featured in numerous media articles on this topic. In keeping with FYF's survivor-centered approach, FYF does not discriminate in its advocacy against those Yezidi women who have children born from rape. This is a complex issue within the community, but FYF adheres to international women's rights and human rights norms. We will continue in our efforts to identify the missing and do all that we can to bring back any Yezidis, no matter their circumstances, and in accordance to their wishes and their fundamental rights.

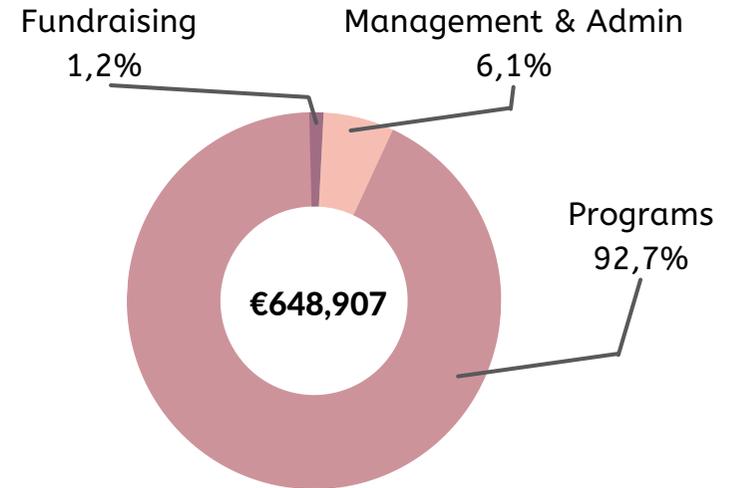


Financial Summary

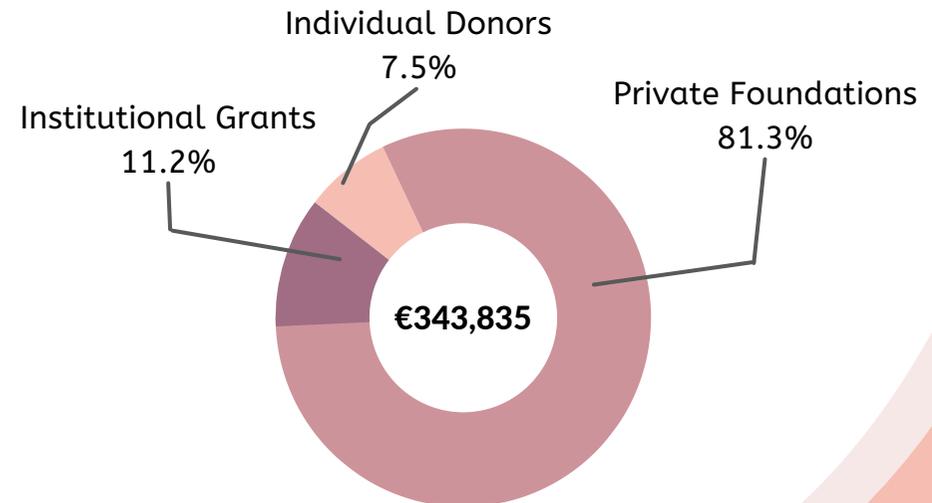
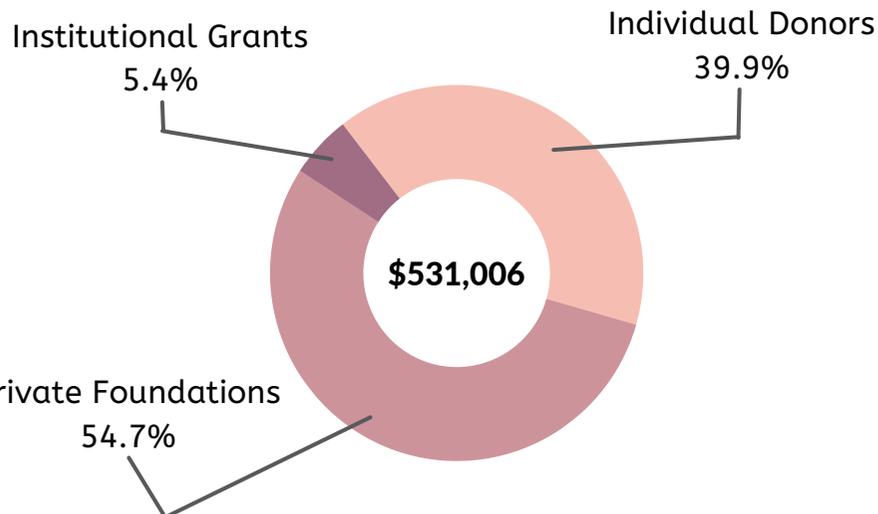
Free Yezidi Foundation - USA



Free Yezidi Foundation - Netherlands



EXPENDITURES



REVENUE

Thank You for Your Support

The Free Yezidi Foundation thanks all partners, supporters, and allies of FYF and the Yezidi cause. Thank you for your solidarity and generosity. FYF team members work hard every day to make a difference in the lives of beneficiaries. We could not do our work without your support.

We applaud all those who have contributed to our work, and we encourage those of you who believe in our mission and projects to consider standing with us.

Together, with the right approach, we can transform the lives of our downtrodden and traumatized people, one at a time.

Thank you for your solidarity and support.

- The Free Yezidi Foundation





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