



IMPLEMENTING THE YAZIDI SURVIVORS LAW:

A Review by and for
Yazidi Survivors

Four Years On: Progress, Gaps,
and the Path to Survivor-Led
Transitional Justice in Iraq.



“

We thought we would be forgotten like so many others, but the Yazidi Survivors Law gave us back our names, our rights, and our dignity. For the first time in years, we feel seen and protected.

”

- A Yazidi survivor of the Kocho Massacre

About Yazda

Yazda is a global community-led organisation providing critical humanitarian assistance and promoting accountability and justice for the genocide committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as ISIS, IS or by its Arabic acronym *Da'esh*, against the Yazidi community and other groups. Yazda was established in 2014, three weeks after the genocidal campaign commenced in Sinjar, Northern Iraq, and was among the first organisations on the ground providing lifesaving assistance to survivors. Yazda was also the first actor to document Yazidi survivors' accounts of crimes committed by ISIL.

Since its inception, Yazda has managed a portfolio of specialised humanitarian, justice and rights-based projects, which are community and survivor-centred in design and implementation. Humanitarian programming is delivered in Dohuk, Sinjar, and the Nineveh Plains in Iraq, and addresses beneficiary needs related to general protection, legal, mental health, medical, education, livelihoods, youth and gender-based violence issues. Throughout the years, Yazda has provided support to tens of thousands of Yazidi survivors and to other vulnerable minority groups impacted by ISIL crimes.

With its headquarters registered in the United States (US), Yazda implements projects in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and conducts its advocacy globally. This led to the creation of strong ties between Yazda and other partners including the Iraqi and KRI governments, the United Nations (UN), and members of the international community.

About Yazda's Transitional Justice and Rehabilitation Project

For the past two years, Yazda, through its Transitional Justice and Rehabilitation (TJR) Project, has been providing holistic support to hundreds of survivors of ISIL captivity in Iraq and abroad. This includes comprehensive legal services to apply to the Yazidi Survivors Law, a reparations law and, where necessary, to appeal rejected applications. The support also involves legal awareness sessions to inform survivors of their rights under the law. To ensure that survivors' rights are upheld, Yazda's specialized legal team accompanies and represents survivors throughout the entire legal process, including by attending appointments at the police station, the court, and the different government offices.

Yazda also provides psychosocial support services to survivors, including therapy sessions, rehabilitation activities, and financial assistance to access essential medical care. In parallel, the project promotes advocacy for transitional justice both in Iraq and internationally, guided by core demands of survivors. This includes calling for the exhumation of all remaining mass graves in Sinjar, facilitations of safe and dignified return to their homeland, the adoption of a law on core international crimes in Iraq, and policy reforms to address the root causes of violence and hatred.

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Cover page: Yazidi temple

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Design of the report: Leon Shore



A child walking among destroyed houses in Sinjar, 2024 © David Ben Körzdörfer

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Acronyms

C4JR	Coalition for Just Reparations
CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
CSO / CSOs	Civil Society Organization(s)
GDSA	General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs
Gol	Government of Iraq
IDP / IDPs	Internally Displaced Person(s)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MGMD	Mass Graves and Missing Department
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MLD	Medico-Legal Department
MOLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
UN	United Nations
UNITAD	United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL
YSL	YSL – Yazidi Survivors Law
YSN	YSN – Yazidi Survivors Network

Executive summary

The Yazidi Survivors' Law (YSL), adopted by the Iraqi Parliament on March 1, 2021, represents a groundbreaking advancement for survivors' right to reparations in the country. The outcome of years of survivor-led advocacy, it stands as the first law in the Middle East or Southwest Asia and one of the only in the world to establish an administrative reparations program for survivors of abduction and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). The law provides a wide range of individual, collective, material and symbolic reparation measures to survivors including financial compensation, access to education, land, employment opportunities, and psychosocial support. Importantly, it formally recognizes the crimes committed by ISIL against Yazidi, Turkmen, Shabak, and Christian communities as genocide and crimes against humanity.

Four years after its adoption, this report evaluates the impact of the YSL, examining how it has supported Yazidi survivors, the challenges they have encountered in accessing reparations, and the implementation priorities they have identified. Based on surveys conducted by Yazda with 601 Yazidi survivors and 34 civil society organizations (CSOs), the report finds that the YSL has significantly improved the lives of many survivors. It has provided official recognition of the crimes they endured, enhancing financial stability, educational opportunities, and a path toward healing and reintegration. As of this report, 2,216 survivors have begun receiving monthly financial compensation and 250 have been granted residential land.

At the same time, survivors identified several persistent barriers to accessing reparations. Many described the application process as lengthy, costly, and emotionally burdensome, particularly due to the need to repeatedly recount traumatic experiences. For some, the process also required traveling long distances, including international travel, to complete necessary steps. Survivors further noted that awareness-raising efforts have not reached all eligible individuals, contributing to gaps in understanding their rights under the law and the reparations available to them.

In addition to reflecting on the law's implementation, survivors shared their broader priorities for recovery and justice. When asked to rank their most pressing needs, the majority identified the **search for missing persons** as their top concern (71%), followed by the **exhumation of mass graves** (64%), **improved security** (45%), and **reconstruction of hometowns** (41%). Other key priorities included **compensation and reparations** (41%), **access to justice** (39%), and the **return of internally displaced persons** (37%).

While some of these needs fall within the scope of the YSL, others lie beyond it, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive approach to transitional justice. Survivors are ultimately calling for mechanisms that go beyond financial compensation to address the root causes of violence, enable safe and dignified returns, and support the reintegration of communities devastated by ISIL. Although the YSL remains a landmark achievement in Iraq's post-conflict recovery, its meaningful impact depends on strengthened implementation and the Iraqi government's broader commitment to justice, accountability, and survivor-centered recovery more than a decade after the genocide began.

Purpose of the Report

Four years after the adoption of the Yazidi Survivors Law (YSL) and two years into its implementation, this report aims to provide a comprehensive, survivor-centered evaluation of the law's impact. The YSL represents a landmark step in Iraq's efforts toward justice and reparation for survivors of ISIL crimes. Yet, for any reparations framework to be meaningful, it must be evaluated not only by the standards set on paper, but by the lived experiences of those it is meant to serve.

This report draws on survey data collected between 14 January and 27 March 2024 from 601 Yazidi survivors and 34 civil society organizations to examine how the YSL has been experienced to date. It examines to which extent it has improved survivors' lives but also the remaining barriers to accessing reparations, and the key gaps in the law's implementation. By documenting survivor experiences with the YSL process, from application procedures to the impact of reparations, the report highlights both the transformative potential of the law and the critical limits that risk undermining its promise.

The purpose of the report is twofold:

- First, to **amplify the voices, perspectives, and lived realities of Yazidi survivors**, ensuring that their experiences are directly conveyed to the institutions and decision-makers responsible for implementing the law, and to provide concrete evidence for improving implementation going forward (**section 1**).
- Second, to **identify survivor-led priorities**, using this insight to inform the next phase of YSL implementation and contribute to the design of a broader, inclusive transitional justice strategy in Iraq (**section 2**).

By documenting both progress and remaining challenges, this report aims to inform, guide, and encourage all relevant stakeholders to fulfill their responsibilities in ensuring that the Yazidi Survivors Law reaches its full potential as a meaningful instrument of recognition, redress, and long-term justice.



Commemoration of the Yazidi Genocide at the French Senate in Paris, June 2024, Yazda and the Zovighian Public Office (ZPO)

Introduction

A. ISIL mass atrocities against Yazidis and other groups in Iraq

In the years leading up to 2014, the self-proclaimed Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) capitalized on a convergence of factors, including the instability following the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq, the collapse of state institutions, civil war, sectarian violence, and the resurgence of al-Qaeda. ISIL gained control over large areas of Syria before expanding into Iraq, capturing Fallujah in early January 2014. By June 4, 2014, ISIL launched a major offensive in northern Iraq, taking Mosul and rapidly expanding to capture different areas of the Nineveh Governorate, including the Nineveh Plains, West Nineveh and Sinjar, home to various ethnic and religious groups, notably Christians, Shabaks, Turkmens, and Yazidis.

On August 3, 2014, ISIL invaded Sinjar and launched its genocidal campaign against Yazidis, attacking every town and village surrounding Mount Sinjar. According to the UN Syria Commission of Inquiry,¹ the 400,000-strong Yazidi community in Sinjar had all been displaced, captured, or killed.² The Yazidi genocide has since been recognized by multiple organizations, countries,³ and national courts.⁴ ISIL systematically separated families, executed men and teenage boys and kidnapped and transported women and younger children to holding sites, marking the beginning of a system of organized slave trade.⁵ In the early weeks of ISIL's genocidal campaign, more than 3,100 Yazidis, primarily men and adolescent boys, but also elderly women, were brutally killed in mass executions involving shootings, beheadings, and immolation.⁶ Others perished as they fled to Mount Sinjar, where ISIL had driven them in the searing heat of August. Exposed to extreme conditions, many died from starvation, dehydration, or injuries sustained during the attacks. ISIL also abducted approximately 6,800 Yazidis, the majority of whom were women and children. Today, an estimated 2,600 Yazidis remain missing.

Moreover, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), ISIL destroyed around 80 per cent of public infrastructure and 70 per cent of civilian homes in Sinjar City and its surrounding areas.⁷ ISIL also targeted the livelihood of Yazidis, destroying wells, bee hives and looting livestock as well as personal property such as tractors and cars.⁸ As reported by IOM, while approximately 85 per cent of Sinjar's population led agriculture-based livelihoods before 2014, the destruction of the region's natural resources, irrigation canals and wells, and the stealing or destruction of farming equipment had a direct impact on the ability of the Yazidi community to sustain itself in the region. These attacks inflicted on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction. Additionally, ISIL systematically destroyed Yazidi religious shrines and temples. The Department of Yazidi Affairs in the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) documented 68 Yazidi religious and cultural sites which were destroyed by ISIL, further demonstrating the group's genocidal intent.⁹

In addition to targeting the Yazidis, ISIL also perpetrated mass atrocities against the Christian, Shabak, and Turkmen communities, who had long coexisted in the Ninewa Governorate. These communities endured widespread violence, including mass killings, abductions, forced conversions, torture, sexual violence, and the systematic destruction of their homes, places of worship, and cultural heritage. The exact number of Christian, Shabak, and Turkmen individuals abducted or killed remains unknown.

¹ UNITAD, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: Women and Girls – [Factsheet](#), June 2021.

² UN Human Rights Council, [They Came to Destroy: ISIS Crimes Against the Yazidis](#), June 15, 2016, p. 33.

³ Countries that have recognized the Yazidi Genocide include Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Iraq.

⁴ German Federal Court, [The Taha A.J. Case](#), November 2021.

⁵ UNITAD, [Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Girls: Key Findings](#), March 2023.

⁶ Yazda, [Working against the Clock - Documenting mass graves of Yazidis killed by the Islamic State](#), 2018.

⁷ IOM, [More Support Needed for Survivors of the Sinjar Massacre](#), 4 August 2022.

⁸ Amnesty International, [Iraq: Dead land: Islamic State's deliberate destruction of Iraq's farmland](#), 13 December 2018.

⁹ UNITAD, [UNITAD Report on ISIL Crimes Against Yazidis](#), pp. 54–73, 11 September 2024.

B. ISIL's systematic use of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

As part of its genocidal campaign, ISIL systematically targeted Yazidi women and girls subjecting them to various forms of sexual violence including sexual slavery, rape, forced marriages, and other gender-based crimes. Women and girls were systematically separated from their families, detained in organized slave markets, and trafficked among ISIL fighters through sales, gifts, or trades. Sexual violence was institutionalized within ISIL's framework, supported by fatwas that legitimized rape and the enslavement of Yazidi women. These crimes were part of ISIL's broader genocidal strategy to destroy the Yazidi community.¹⁰

ISIL also subjected Shi'a Turkmen women and girls to abduction, enslavement, forced marriages, and rape. Many Shi'a Turkmen girls were forcibly married to ISIL fighters and subjected to sexual violence, including systematic rape and forced pregnancy, often after being separated from their families.¹¹

Christian women and girls, although initially granted some protections under ISIL's interpretation of "People of the Book,"¹² (a term used in Islamic texts to refer to Jews and Christians as recipients of earlier scriptures) were later subjected to abduction, sexual slavery, and rape. Some were forcibly converted or held captive for extended periods, experiencing repeated sexual violence and coercion into religious conversion.¹³

Shi'a Shabak women faced a heightened risk of sexual violence due to their religious identity. Evidence indicates many women were sexually abused during detention, where ISIL justified such acts as punishment for their perceived "apostasy".¹⁴

Taken together, these patterns reveal how ISIL weaponized both gender and religious identity to carry out systematic atrocities. Sexual violence was not incidental but strategically employed as a tool of torture, domination, and genocide, ultimately aimed at breaking survivors, shattering communities, and erasing identities. Recognizing these patterns is critical for shaping reparations mechanism, such as the Yazidi Survivors Law.



Destroyed Yazidi Temple © Yazda

¹⁰ Idem

¹¹ UNITAD, [Report on Sexual Crimes by Da'esh/ISIL in Iraq](#), pp. 24–26, 3 December 2023.

¹² UNITAD, [Summary of Factual and Legal Assessment of ISIL \(Da'esh\) Crimes Against the Christian Community in Iraq](#), 16 September 2024 .

¹³ UNITAD, [Report on Sexual Crimes by Da'esh/ISIL in Iraq](#), pp.20-22, 3 December 2023.

¹⁴ UNITAD, [Report on Sexual Crimes by Da'esh/ISIL in Iraq](#), pp.28-29, 3 December 2023.

¹⁵ See Annex.

C. The Yazidi Survivors Law: A Gender-Sensitive Framework

On March 1, 2021, the Iraqi Parliament adopted the Yazidi (Female) Survivors Law (YSL),¹⁵ establishing an administrative reparations program for survivors of ISIL crimes from the Yazidi, Turkmen, Shabak, and Christian communities.

The law came after years of courageous and determined advocacy led by Yazidi women and girls, who broke long-standing silences around conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and brought sustained national and international attention to the crimes they endured. Their advocacy was instrumental in achieving formal recognition of these atrocities and in securing a legal framework to address them. While the law was initially drafted without meaningful consultation of survivors or civil society, Yazda, which had integrated the voices of survivors into its work from the outset, established the Yazidi Survivors Network (YSN) in February 2019 to formalize and strengthen survivor-led participation. The YSN, a group of 15 Yazidi female survivors trained in transitional justice and advocacy, played a key role in refining the law's content by providing structured input, engaging with policymakers, and participating in national forums. Alongside the YSN, other Yazidi survivors, civil society actors, and survivor-led organizations contributed to the sustained advocacy that ultimately shaped the YSL and led to its adoption. The bylaws guiding its implementation were approved in October 2021.¹⁶

The YSL is the first of its kind in the Middle East, and one of the few globally, to provide reparations specifically to survivors of abduction and CRSV. It offers redress for a wide range of crimes outlined in articles 1 and 2, including sexual slavery, rape, forced marriage, pregnancy, and abortion, reflecting the systematic and gendered nature of the violence perpetrated by ISIL.

¹⁶ The bylaws are Available in English and Arabic [here](#).

Who is eligible under the Yazidi Survivors Law?

According to articles 1 and 2 of the law, the provisions of the law apply to:

- **All Yazidi women and girls** who were kidnapped by ISIL and later freed, and who were subjected to crimes of sexual violence, including: *“kidnapping, sexual slavery, sale in slavery markets, separation from family, forced religious conversion, forced marriage, forced pregnancy and abortion, and physical and psychological harm.”*
- **Women and girls from the Turkmen, Christian, and Shabak communities** who were subjected to the same crimes listed above.
- **Yazidi children (boys and girls)** who were under the age of 18 at the time of their abduction by ISIL.
- **Yazidi, Turkmen, Christian, and Shabak survivors** of mass killings and mass elimination campaigns carried out by ISIL in their areas.

Who is in charge of implementing the Yazidi Survivors Law?

The law is administered by the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs (GDSA), under the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA). As outlined in the law (article 3), the GDSA is headquartered in Mosul and is authorized to open branches in areas where survivors reside, ensuring accessibility and outreach across affected regions. A second branch opened in Sinjar.

The GDSA is managed by a Director General from the Yazidi community, who must hold at least a university degree in law or public administration and have a minimum of ten years of relevant experience. The Director General is appointed by the Council of Ministers. The position is currently held by Ms. Sarab Elias, the first to be appointed to this role.

Applications for reparations under the law are reviewed by an eight-member committee established under Article 10 of the YSL. This committee is chaired by a judge appointed by the Supreme Judicial Council, reflecting a formal and independent review mechanism.

The GDSA started receiving applications in September 2022 and provided the first financial reparations to survivors in March 2023.²⁰

D. The Yazidi Survivors Law: A Step Toward Transitional Justice in Iraq

Following widespread and serious human rights violations, such as those committed by ISIL in Iraq and Syria, states have an obligation under international law to provide effective remedies to victims through a comprehensive transitional justice framework. According to the United Nations, transitional justice encompasses the full range of processes and mechanisms that a society uses to reckon with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, with the goals of ensuring accountability, delivering justice, and promoting reconciliation.¹⁷

Providing redress through meaningful and adequate reparations is a core pillar of any transitional justice process. Equally critical are the recognition of victims and survivors, criminal accountability, guarantees of non-repetition, and the establishment of truth. These elements are essential not only for honoring survivors' experiences but also for addressing the root causes of violence and preventing future human rights violations.

The adoption of the Yazidi Survivors Law represents a significant first step toward building a transitional justice process in Iraq. The law incorporates key elements of reparations, truth-seeking, and initial steps toward accountability. It provides a broad range of individual, collective, symbolic, and material reparations and rehabilitation measures for survivors of ISIL crimes. These include:

- **Monthly financial compensation (Article 6.1);**
- **Employment opportunities (Article 5.5);**
- **Establishment of health centers (Article 5.6);**
- **The right to return to education without age limitations (Article 6.3).**

The law mandates the GDSA to coordinate with relevant national and international actors to:

- **Search for kidnapped and missing persons (Article 5.7);**
- **Document and exhume mass graves, identify and return the remains to families (Article 5.8);**
- **Investigate and document ISIL crimes to support future prosecutions (Article 5.9).**

The YSL also recognizes the genocide and crimes against humanity committed against Yazidis, Turkmen, Christians, and Shabaks (Article 7), and designates August 3rd, the day ISIL launched its genocidal campaign in Sinjar, as a National Day of Remembrance (Article 8.1).

Despite its comprehensive and progressive scope, the implementation of the YSL has revealed several gaps. These must be addressed by the Iraqi government to ensure the law fulfils its promise. A survivor-centered and trauma-informed approach is essential to ensure that reparations are not only delivered, but are truly transformative, restoring dignity, rebuilding lives, and contributing to lasting peace and justice in Iraq.

¹⁷ United Nations, [Guidance Note on Transitional Justice: A Strategic Tool for People, Prevention and Peace](#), October 2023.

Methodology

A. Overview

This assessment employed a mixed-methods approach, centering on a structured survey distributed to both Yazidi survivors of ISIL captivity and representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) engaged in transitional justice efforts and in supporting survivors. The aim was to assess the perceived adequacy, prioritization, and implementation of rehabilitation measures under the YSL, and to identify gaps and survivor-driven priorities.

Building on Yazda's prior experience conducting research with Yazidi communities, the methodology was tailored to the sensitivities of working with survivors of trauma. Ethical considerations guided every stage of the process, with strict adherence to confidentiality, "Do No Harm" principles, and trauma-informed practices. All survivor participants were provided with clear, accessible information about the study, and informed consent was obtained and recorded before participation.

Data collection took place between January 14 and March 27, 2024, for both the survivor and CSO surveys, ensuring consistency in timing and approach across the two groups.

B. Target Population and Sampling

Survivors' Survey

The primary respondents were 601 Yazidi survivors selected from Yazda's internal database. Stratified sampling was applied to ensure diversity across gender, age groups, and geographical locations, including individuals residing in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Duhok, returnee areas in Sinjar, and those abroad to ensure a more complete representation of survivors living in different areas and facing different challenges in accessing the law and needs or priorities.

Civil Society Organizations

The CSOs survey was administered to 34 representatives of CSOs from the Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR), including CSOs supporting other YSL-eligible communities. These CSOs operate across Iraq and were selected for their direct engagement with survivor groups.

C. Data Collection Methods

Survey Instrument and Administration

Structured questionnaires were developed for both survivors and CSOs, incorporating closed- and open-ended questions to gather comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data. All tools were prepared in English and translated into Arabic to ensure clarity and accessibility.

The survivor's questionnaire was organized into eight main sections:

- Demographic information
- Pre-YSL adoption experiences

- Post-YSL adoption awareness and experiences
- Survivors' priorities for rehabilitation
- YSL application process experiences
- YSL financial compensation
- YSL rehabilitation measures
(education access, employment, MHPSS services, housing/land plots, symbolic reparations)
- Outreach and monitoring of YSL implementation

On the other hand, the CSO survey was divided into five sections: Demographic Information; Pre-YSL Adoption; Post-YSL Adoption; Survivors' Needs; and Monitoring and Tracking of YSL.

Both surveys were programmed into KoBoToolbox and administered through tablets. Data collection employed a combination of in-person, telephone, and online methods based on accessibility, logistical constraints, and security considerations.

D. Data Collection Team and Ethical considerations

Data collection was conducted by Yazda's trained staff, including caseworkers and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) officers. The team received internal training on informed consent protocols and "Do no Harm" principles. All team members consistently applied the "Do No Harm" principles throughout the data collection process.

Interviews were conducted in private, one-on-one settings to maintain confidentiality and create a safe environment for participants to share their experiences. To support participant wellbeing, survivors were offered referrals to appropriate services based on the needs they expressed.

E. Additional Data Sources

Information from beneficiary cases

As part of the project's activities, the team conducted interviews with survivors who had received services. The goal of these interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of the YSL on their lives, and the challenges they faced in trying to access their rights. Five stories were integrated into this report. They ensure a more in-depth understanding of the law's implementation and the real-life impact of the reparation program on the lives of survivors, their families and communities. Survivors provided informed consent.

Consultation with advocacy experts and survivors

On May 18, Yazda conducted a consultation with seven Yazidi survivors with expertise in advocacy to get their inputs on the implementation of the law, its impact on survivors' lives and the main gaps in implementation. Their inputs were integrated, with their informed consent, as direct quotes into the report.

F. Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical software to identify trends and demographic correlations. Cross-tabulations were conducted to explore relationships between variables such as gender, location, and access to specific rehabilitation services. Qualitative data from open-ended responses was thematically analyzed to identify recurring needs, concerns, and survivor-recommended priorities.

G. Limitations

Sample Representation

The assessment was conducted exclusively with Yazidi survivors of captivity, in line with Yazda's mandate, the trust it has built within the Yazidi community, and its extensive survivor database. While survivors from Shabak, Turkmen, and Christian communities are also eligible under the YSL, they were not directly included in this phase of the assessment. In order to compensate for this gap and support a more inclusive approach, Yazda encouraged other mandated and appropriately trained entities to carry out similar assessments with survivors from these communities. To ensure broader representation, the report incorporates findings from consultations conducted with non-Yazidi survivors through the Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR), contributions from civil society organizations working with these groups, and insights drawn from relevant reports, workshops, and conferences.

Survey Findings

"A lot of survivors had a normal life before the crimes and now their dreams are gone, and their lives were destroyed. Reparations cannot bring back everything but a small part of normal life, like access to education, learning how to deal with trauma, and support in building their own projects. It also helps restoring trust. A lot of survivors, including Yazidi Survivors lost trust in the government. This can help them to rebuild that trust."

- Thikran Mato, Yazidi Survivor and Director of Nobody's Listening

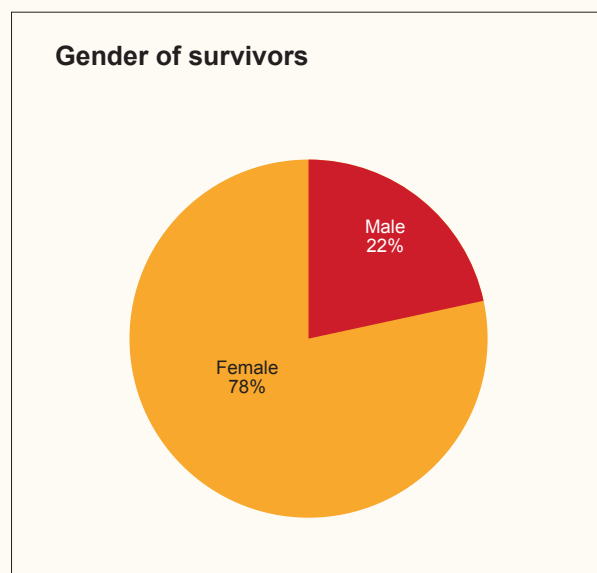
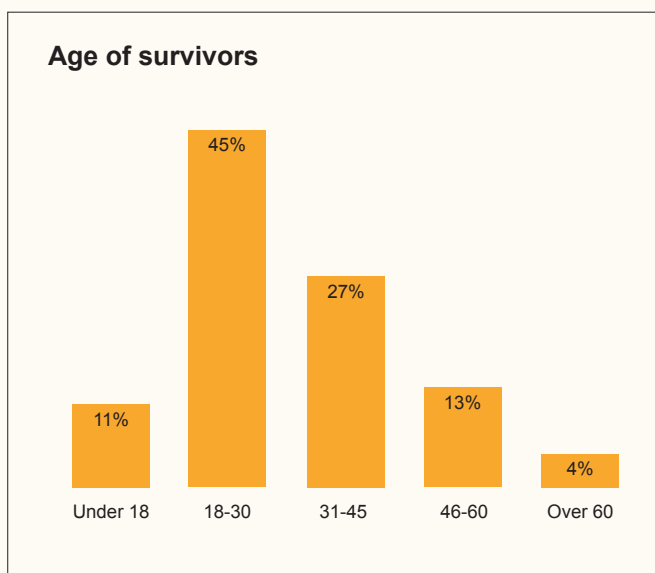
Demographics

This section provides an overview of the individuals and organizations who participated in the study. It is divided into two subgroups: Yazidi survivors of captivity, as rights-holders under the Yazidi Survivors Law (YSL), and CSO representatives, who support implementation and advocacy related to the law.

Survivors

Of the 609 individuals invited to participate in the survey, 601 (99%) provided consent and completed the questionnaire. The demographic profile of participating survivors reveals important patterns related to gender, age, displacement, marital status, and socioeconomic vulnerability.

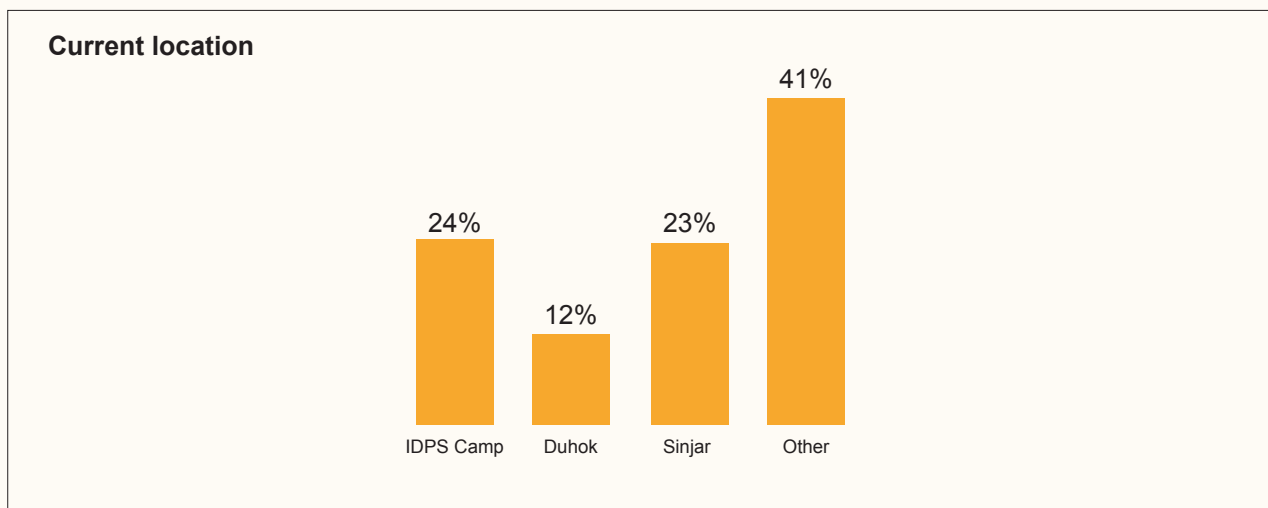
The majority of respondents were female (78%), while the remaining proportion were male (22%). In terms of age, the sample was predominantly young adults, with 45% aged 18-30 and 27% aged 31-45. An additional 11% were under 18 as illustrated below:



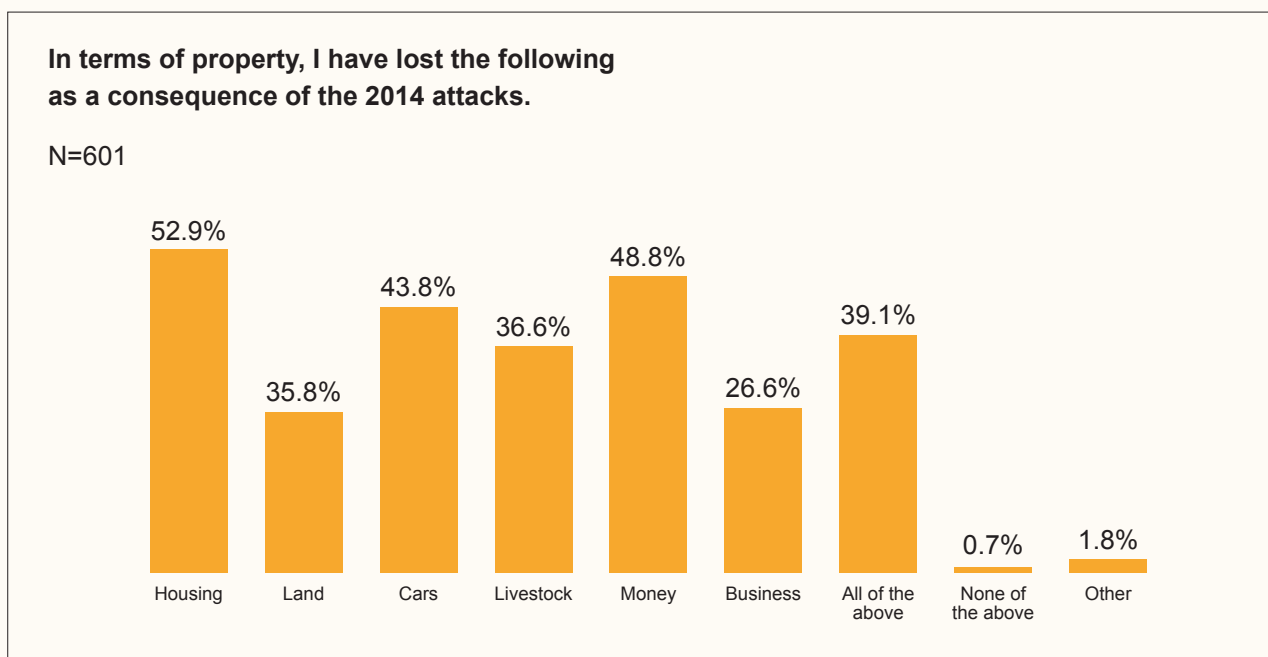
Participants were geographically dispersed across multiple locations: 24% resided in IDP camps, 23% in Sinjar, 12% in Duhok, while the largest share (41%) were located in other areas, including abroad.

Marital status data further underscores the social disruption caused by the conflict. Nearly half (48.9%) were unmarried, 28.9% were married, and 12.3% reported that their spouses were missing.

Additionally, educational attainment was notably low, with over 40% of respondents identifying as illiterate and having never attended formal education.



All survey participants reported a very strong impact of ISIL attacks on their lives and livelihoods. 53% (318 of 601) of respondents said they lost their homes, 49% had lost money, 44% a car, 37% livestock, 26% and 27% reported their land and business being affected. Finally, 39% (235 respondents) reported losing all of the listed property types, highlighting the extensive and multidimensional impact of the attacks. Only 1% (4 respondents) indicated they had lost none of the listed items, suggesting that nearly all survivors experienced some form of property loss.



Civil Society Organizations

To complement survivor perspectives, the study also engaged 34 representatives from local and national civil society organizations (CSOs) actively involved in survivor support, advocacy, legal aid, and community development. These voices were critical in providing a broader view of how the Yazidi Survivors Law is being interpreted, implemented, and experienced at the community level.

The CSO sample showed greater gender balance than survivors, with 59% female and 41% male participants. Age distribution was younger overall, with 56% aged 18-30, 32% aged 31- 45, 6% aged 46-60, and 6% over 60.

CSO representatives were based across a range of locations, with the largest proportion operating from Duhok (35%). Others were located in Sinjar (21%), IDP camps (9%), and the Nineveh Plain (9%), while 26% were based in other areas.

Yazda's team in a IDP camp in Duhok, © Yazda



SECTION 1

Survivor Perspectives on the
Implementation of the Yazidi
Survivors Law.



Yazidi child walking in Sinjar City

Section 1: Survivor Perspectives on the Implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law

According to the survey, the following key findings emerged:

- **Limited Consultation and Information-Sharing** – 90% of survivors reported not being consulted during the drafting of the YSL, and over half said they lacked information about the law's implementation.
- **Administrative and Procedural Barriers** – 60% faced travel difficulties, 45% struggled with documentation requirements, and 34% cited a lack of clear guidance on the application process.
- **Positive Staff Conduct and Improved Livelihoods** – 43% noted respectful behavior from staff as a positive element, and 87% of those receiving reparations said it improved their living conditions.
- **Ongoing Gaps in Psychosocial Support and Access to Services** – While many survivors received MHPSS services post-2014, 80% said such services were not offered to them through the YSL process.
- **Symbolic Recognition Matters Deeply** – Over 94% of survivors emphasized the importance of Iraq's official recognition of the Yazidi genocide and the national day of remembrance.

Together, these findings reveal a critical truth: while the YSL represents a historic legal milestone, its implementation remains uneven and, at times, re-traumatizing. Survivor testimony points to the urgent need for a more inclusive, transparent, and trauma-informed approach to ensure the law fulfills its promise as a foundation for justice, dignity, and recovery.

1.1 Involvement of survivors and CSOs in the passage and implementation of the YSL

"Any law that is passed should be survivors-centered and survivors should have a role in it."

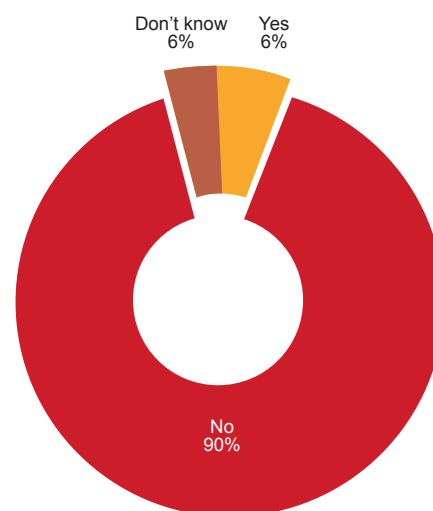
- Hala, Yazidi Survivor and Advocate

The assessment revealed limited consultation of survivors during the drafting of the YSL. Only 6% of participants (35 out of 601) reported being consulted before the adoption of the YSL, while the majority (90%) stated they were not consulted. Another 4% indicated they did not know whether they were consulted. More than 55% of survivors assessed found that they did not receive enough information on implementation of YSL.

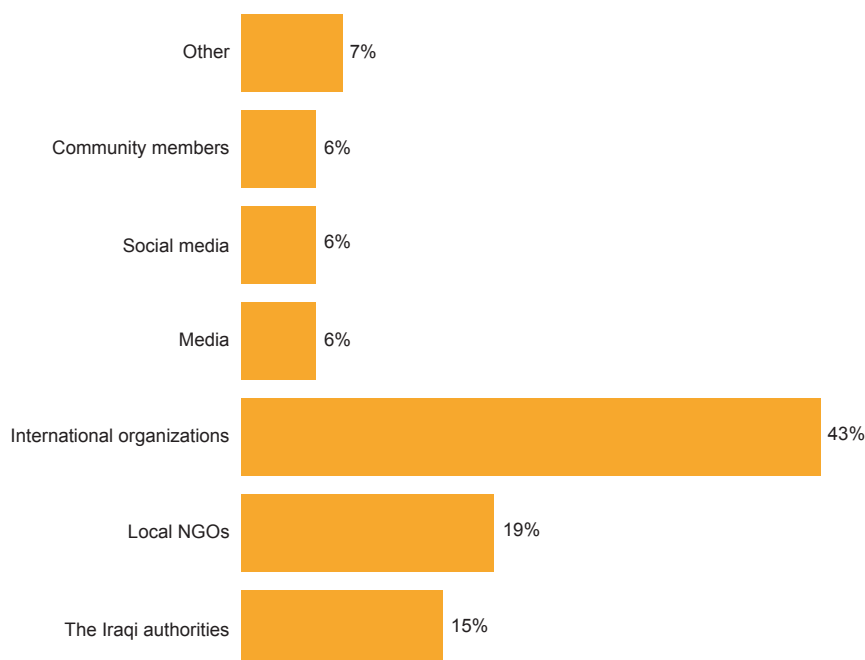
Survivors consulted before the adoption of YSL

Among those who were consulted:

- 43% of the consultations were conducted by international organizations.
- 19% involved local NGOs.
- 15% were facilitated by Iraqi authorities.
- Smaller percentages of consultations occurred via media (6%), social media (6%), community members (6%), and other sources (7%).



Consulted by



The consultations were primarily conducted as:

- One meeting (41% of cases)
- More than one meeting (31% of cases).
- Workshops (9%) or conferences (12%).
- Other formats accounted for 6%, with 1% preferring not to answer.

Out of the 34 CSOs assessed by Yazda, only 29% said they were consulted before the adoption of the YSL and only 35% participated in meetings related to the YSL before its adoption. 41% of CSOs believe that survivors were not involved in the decision-making process regarding the YSL.

Survivor engagement in the drafting of the law was minimal, both in scope and representation, with the majority of survivors unaware or uninvolved in the consultation process, underscoring the need for greater inclusion of survivors' perspectives in legislative processes in Iraq.

1.2 Survivors' experiences with the application process:

Among the 577 survivors who answered to questions about the challenges they encountered during the application process, several key issues emerged:

- 60% (349 out of 577) cited difficulties with travel as a major barrier to applying under the law
- 45% (257 out of 577) highlighted the burdensome documentation requirements
- 34% (194 out of 577) reported a lack of clear information on how to navigate the process
- 28% (162 out of 577) noted the lack of regular updates on the process
- 22% (126 out of 577) found it difficult to physically access the relevant offices where applications were processed

On Distance and Access:

Travel-Related Barriers Faced by Survivors During the YSL Application Process

"Travelling to different locations to apply to the YSL is very difficult for survivors, many survivors live in camps and have to go to all these places. Many don't know where to go, which department, which offices."

- Hala, Yazidi Survivor and Advocate

60% of survivors surveyed (349 out of 577), identified travel difficulties as a major barrier to applying under the law, while 22% (126 out of 577) specifically cited challenges in physically accessing the relevant offices where applications are processed. This feedback is closely tied to the procedural requirements of the law, which demand that survivors gather several official documents and file a criminal complaint in person at the police stations or investigation courts where the initial crimes were committed.

Although the YSL is designed as an administrative reparations program, the burden of proof placed on survivors remains substantial. Applicants must obtain various forms of documentation, including civil and national identification, certificates confirming their captivity, and investigation files, often from offices spread across Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region. Many survivors also need to go to one of the GDSA offices in Mosul or Sinjar to submit their applications.

These travel demands are particularly challenging given that many survivors lost their legal documents during abduction and displacement in August 2014. For some, returning to areas where they were abducted or detained can be re-traumatizing. Through the survey's open-ended questions, survivors emphasized the heavy financial burden associated with repeated travel, especially in the absence of dedicated transportation support.

Lived Experience: Navigating Administrative and Financial Hurdles in the YSL Application Process

A Yazidi survivor who had been abducted by ISIL and spent several years in captivity eventually escaped and was reunited with his family and community.

For over two months, he attempted to file a criminal complaint, repeatedly traveling between Baadry Camp and Sinjar, a one-way journey of approximately 130 to 150 kilometers that takes 4 to 5 hours due to numerous security checkpoints and roadblocks. Completing the round trip in a single day meant spending an entire day on the road, a process that was both physically exhausting and psychologically taxing.

Each journey was met with new obstacles: government offices closed for holidays, overcrowding, and long wait times. After finally submitting his complaint and testifying in court, he encountered further delays in obtaining a civil registry extract, an essential document for completing his application. On three separate occasions, the civil registry office in Sinjar was closed during his visits.

By the time he reached out to Yazda for support, the survivor had already spent over 450,000 IQD.

Expanding Access Beyond Borders: A Pilot Program for Survivors in Germany and France

Survivors who have resettled in third countries face various barriers returning to Iraq to apply to the law (financial, time, and administrative constraints), preventing them from seeking reparations they are entitled to.

A new pilot program initiated by the GDSA and tested in Berlin, Frankfurt and Paris seeks to overcome this obstacle. The GDSA, in cooperation with the Supreme Judicial Council and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that survivors who live abroad and want to apply for reparations under the YSL are allowed to file a criminal complaint and provide their testimony via videoconference in Iraqi diplomatic missions in Berlin, Frankfurt and Paris.¹⁸ With this decision, survivors living abroad are able to apply to the YSL via the online portal without being required to return to Iraq. According to the GDSA, 150 applications have been submitted from France and Germany, with 120 cases already interviewed.¹⁹

¹⁸ Yazda, Taboo, Important [Announcement for Survivors of ISIL Crimes Living in France and Germany and Wanting to Apply to the Yazidi Survivors Law](#), July 1st 2024.

¹⁹ Rudaw, [Iraq's National Team to Document ISIS Crimes Meets with UN Investigative Team](#), 8 May 2025.

On Administrative Hurdles and the Burden of Proof in the Application Process

45% survivors surveyed identified the extensive documentation requirements as a major barrier in applying to the YSL, while 15% cited the requirement to file a criminal complaint as a significant challenge. One survivor underlined that this was perceived as a *“lack of trust in what survivors say”* and added that *“the request for eyewitnesses is difficult, especially because most of the survivors live abroad”*.

Although the YSL was designed as a non-judicial, administrative reparations mechanism, the current requirements for survivors often resemble judicial proceedings in both complexity and burden of proof, contradicting the core principles of administrative reparation systems which are meant to be expeditious and minimally invasive. According to the YSL’s own by-laws, the Committee must first exhaust official records before requesting additional proof (Article 8.2) and may accept a wide range of evidence, including NGO documentation and survivor testimony (Article 8.1). Interviews should only be conducted if absolutely necessary (Article 8.3).

Yet the Committee, a few months after receiving the first applications, added a requirement obliging applicants to file criminal complaints and provide “investigation documents” in order to apply to the law, blurring the lines between the administrative and criminal justice process. Several survivors reported having to recount their traumatic experiences multiple times to different officials, often in environments that lacked confidentiality or psychological safety. One survivor from Yazda’s assessment stated: *“The questions were painful and triggered my symptoms.”* Survivors must also provide eyewitness testimony. For those residing outside Iraq or for whom witnesses are unavailable due to death, displacement, or trauma, this requirement can become an insurmountable obstacle.

These procedural burdens are further exacerbated by broader barriers in Iraq’s justice system, particularly for survivors of CRSV. These include the lack of female judges and officers, fear of community stigma, absence of survivor-centered judicial procedures, and insufficient guarantees of confidentiality or psychological support. A survivor described her own experience: *“The investigation room is noisy, people are coming and going, sometimes the investigator asks questions when the door is open. They ask questions related to sexual violence without respecting the privacy or confidentiality of survivors. They don’t let us feel like we have a safe space to give our testimony and don’t consider the psychological condition of the survivor. When survivors are not ready to share their testimonies and say everything they have been through, they risk losing their right to reparations under the law.”* This environment can be re-traumatizing, not only for applicants but also for witnesses, many of whom are themselves survivors. As one survivor put it: *“I had to be a witness for someone else and had to give my full testimony again. It’s very hard to tell the whole story again and again. You need a psychologist with you for that.”*

As articulated by UN Special Rapporteurs: *“Administrative reparation programmes must aim at reducing survivors’ and victims’ exposure to stigma and re-traumatization and at guaranteeing their wellbeing throughout the administrative process.”*²⁰ To fulfill the YSL’s promise of a survivor-centered reparations framework, it is essential to revisit and revise these requirements in line with international best practices. Doing so would reduce the procedural burden on survivors, minimize re-traumatization, and affirm the YSL as a pillar of Iraq’s broader transitional justice efforts.

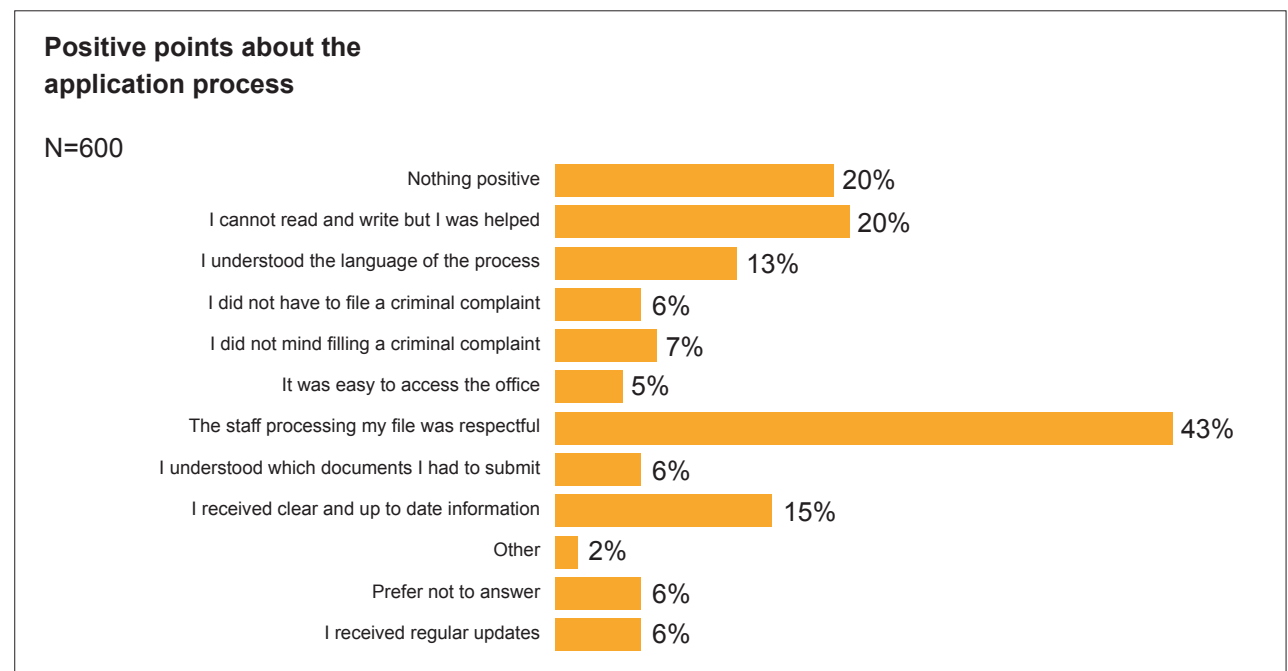
²⁰ UN Special Procedures, [Communication to Iraq Alleging Violations of the Rights of Yazidi Survivors](#), 10 May 2023, p.3.

Positive Aspects Identified by Survivors: Interpersonal Support and Basic Accessibility

When asked about the positive aspects of the application process, the most frequently cited strength was the respectful behavior of staff, reported by 43% of respondents (258 out of 600). This suggests that interpersonal interactions with government personnel played a meaningful role in shaping survivors' experiences.

Other positive elements included support for survivors with low literacy noted by 21% as well as the provision of clear and up-to-date information (15%) and language accessibility (13%). These findings point to some encouraging efforts toward basic accessibility within the system.

However, one in five survivors (20%) reported that they experienced no positive aspects during the process. Only 5% felt that accessing the offices was easy, and 6% received regular updates. A small minority reported no difficulties in filing (7%) or choosing not to file (6%) a criminal complaint.



1.3 Impact of the Yazidi Survivors Law on survivors' lives

"Reparations help rebuild survivors' lives and prepare for the future, fixing homes, bringing stability and hope. It is the first step toward a normal life again. It also shows that recovery is possible, and people can move forward after a crisis."

- Awaz Abdi, Yazidi Survivor and Advocate

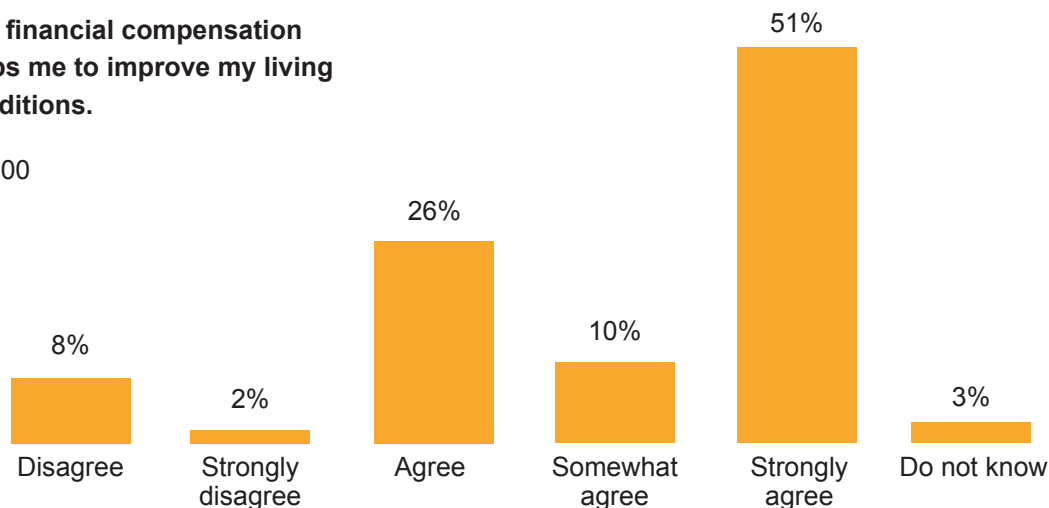
Since the implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law, tangible progress has been made in delivering key reparation measures to survivors. As of July 2025:

- 2,216 survivors have been recognized as eligible and are receiving a monthly salary,²¹
- 250 survivors have been allocated a residential land,²²
- 16 survivors have resumed their education.²³

To the statement “The financial compensation helps me to improve my living conditions”, a large majority of respondents expressed agreement: 51% strongly agreed, 26% agreed, and 10% somewhat agreed, totaling 87% positive responses. In contrast, 8% disagreed, 2% strongly disagreed, and 3% said they did not know. These findings indicate that most survivors see the financial compensation under the law as contributing meaningfully to improving their living conditions.

The financial compensation helps me to improve my living conditions.

N=600



Generally, 94% of the 34 CSOs assessed by Yazda on the YSL described being overall satisfied with the Yazidi Survivors Law. When asked about the strengths of the YSL, CSOs cited the recognition of the Yazidi genocide and the importance of the law in the justice and accountability process: one of the CSO representative underlined that *“Recognizing the atrocities faced by the Yazidis is considered one of the most important strengths of the law.”* while another stated that the law *“represents a first step by the Iraqi government in acknowledging the atrocities and providing support to survivors.”* They also underlined the inclusion of comprehensive reparation measures, the provision of financial support and compensation which *“helps cover survivors’ basic needs.”*, access to education, health and mental health services effectively recognizing *“the need for rehabilitation and support services for survivors”*.

These perspectives highlight the significance of the law as a cornerstone of justice and recovery. The following section analyzes how its provisions have translated into real-life impacts for survivors, across individual reparation measures including financial reparations, access to housing, education, employment, and psychosocial support.

²¹ GDSA, [Facebook post](#), 30 June 2025.

²² GDSA, [Facebook post](#), 29 May 2025.

²³ GDSA, [Facebook post](#), 11 November 2025.

On monthly financial compensation (Article 4.1 and Article 6.1)

The YSL provides survivors with a monthly financial compensation of not less than twice the minimum pension salary stipulated in the Unified Pension Law No. 9 of 2014 and its amendments (**Article 6.1**). In practice, survivors receive a monthly compensation that is transferred to a designated bank account and accessed through a Mastercard for withdrawal. Survivors typically receive approximately eight hundred thousand IQD per month (equivalent to approximately 600 USD).

Out of the 601 survivors surveyed, 513 survivors already receive monthly payment and 87% answered that financial reparations improved their living conditions. Of these survivors, more than 93% found that the payment arrives on time and more than 95% find the way of receiving the payment easy. However, 80% of the 195 respondents who answered the question about using the Mastercard abroad indicated that they do not use the card outside of Iraq, likely due to high international transaction fees. Instead, 96% (150 individuals) reported that their family members in Iraq withdraw the payments locally and then transfer the funds to them abroad through informal channels.

Lived Experience under the YSL:

‘Now I Lock My Door and Feel Safe’ - A Mother’s Story of Recovery.

A Yazidi survivor was living with her children in a camp in Duhok where services were very limited. She reported feeling afraid notably as a single mother and survivor living without external support.

As living conditions in the camp continued to deteriorate, and neighbors began returning to Sinjar, she felt increasingly isolated and vulnerable. The withdrawal of most humanitarian organizations and the decline in access to essential services - such as access to clean water and healthcare - further exacerbated her situation.

After receiving reparations under the Yazidi Survivors Law, she moved out of the camp and rented a private home in the Shariya neighborhood. This shift gave her and her children a renewed sense of safety, stability, and dignity.

“I used to sleep in fear, wake up in fear, and live every day with uncertainty. Now, for the first time, I lock the door of my own home and feel safe with my children. The Survivors’ Law gave us a new beginning.”

Lived Experience under the YSL:

How Reparations Restored a Future for Two Brothers from Kocho.

Two brothers, born in the village of Kocho, survived years of captivity after being abducted by ISIL. Following their escape, they were reunited with a few family members who had also fled from ISIL-controlled areas.

Upon their escape, the brothers encountered significant legal challenges. After receiving legal support from Yazda, they were both accepted under the YSL. With a stable monthly income, they are now preparing to launch a small business - an important step toward financial independence and building a dignified, self-reliant future.

“We thought we would be forgotten like so many others, but this law gave us back our names, our rights, and our dignity. For the first time in years, we feel seen and protected.”

On the provision of residential plot of lands (Article 6.2)

Survivors were asked questions about the loss of land and personal property, and the extent to which the YSL was able to provide redress through the provision of residential plots of land under Article 6.2. More than 70% of assessed survivors were aware that receiving a residential plot of land is a part of YSL rehabilitation measures. Around 80% of all the survivors assessed by Yazda expressed that they currently needed housing. So far, 250 survivors have been allocated a residential land.²⁴

Access to Education (Article 5.4 and Article 6.3)

60% of 356 survivors who answered this question said that they were not able to continue their education as a consequence of the attacks on Sinjar. 168 survivors (47%) out of 356 strongly agreed that education was very important to them, and of these, 139 (39%) were aware of the age exemptions offered under the YSL to increase access to education for survivors. 69 applied for the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) offered by the Ministry of Education in coordination with the GDSA, and another 76 individuals expressed interest in the program.

²⁴ GDSA, [Facebook post](#), 29 May 2025.

Lived Experience under the YSL:

From Captivity to the Classroom

A Yazidi survivor was living with her children in a camp in Duhok where services were very limited. She reported feeling afraid notably as a single mother and survivor living without external support.

As living conditions in the camp continued to deteriorate, and neighbors began returning to Sinjar, she felt increasingly isolated and vulnerable. The withdrawal of most humanitarian organizations and the decline in access to essential services - such as access to clean water and healthcare - further exacerbated her situation.

Public employment at a rate of 2% reserved for survivors eligible under the law (Article 6.4)

53% percent of the 601 survivors assessed were not aware that accessing public sector employment is part of YSL rehabilitation measures.

Around 2% of survivors reported that they had applied for public sector employment; five survivors reported being offered a job. 309 of 583 respondents said they would be interested in obtaining a job in the public sector. Survivors are currently prohibited from receiving both a salary as public-sector employees, and their monthly financial compensations under the YSL and have to make a choice between two rights provided under the YSL: access to public employment and access to financial compensations. As one survivor told Yazda: *"Now if I want to be a government employee, I have to choose between my salary and the compensation I receive as a survivor."*

Access to mental health and psychosocial support services (Article 4.2, Article 5.2 and Article 5.6)

"Thanks to the Yazidi Survivors Law, many survivors have experienced significant psychological improvement. With a stable source of income, they become self-reliant. Their ability to give back, such as offering sacrifices in memory of their lost loved ones, gives them emotional peace and strengthens their resilience to move forward."

- Hala, Yazidi Survivor and Advocate



Close to 67% of the survivors surveyed said they received MHPSS services after 2014. This was provided mainly by international and local organizations through a referral system coordinated by the GDSA and the IOM.

More than half of the survivors surveyed indicated that they are still in need of MHPSS, while 40% stated that they do not currently require such support. When asked about their awareness of MHPSS services as part of the rehabilitation measures under the YSL, only 23% said they were aware, over 50% were unaware, and approximately 25% said they did not know. Notably, nearly 80% of survivors reported that MHPSS services were not offered to them after applying under the YSL.

Lived Experience under the YSL:

A Mother's Path to Healing through Psychosocial Support

On August 3, 2014, a woman was abducted by ISIL along with her two children. During their year in captivity, she and her children endured severe physical and psychological torture and had to forcibly convert and renounce to their Yazidi identity. The experience left deep and lasting impacts on their mental health.

After escaping captivity, the survivor and her children were displaced to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The mother continued to suffer from serious psychological and physical issues.

Later, as she applied to the YSL, she learned about specialized psychosocial services available for survivors. Through the GDSA, she was referred to Yazda. She started to follow therapy sessions. These sessions helped her process the trauma she experienced in captivity. Over time, her mental health gradually stabilized.

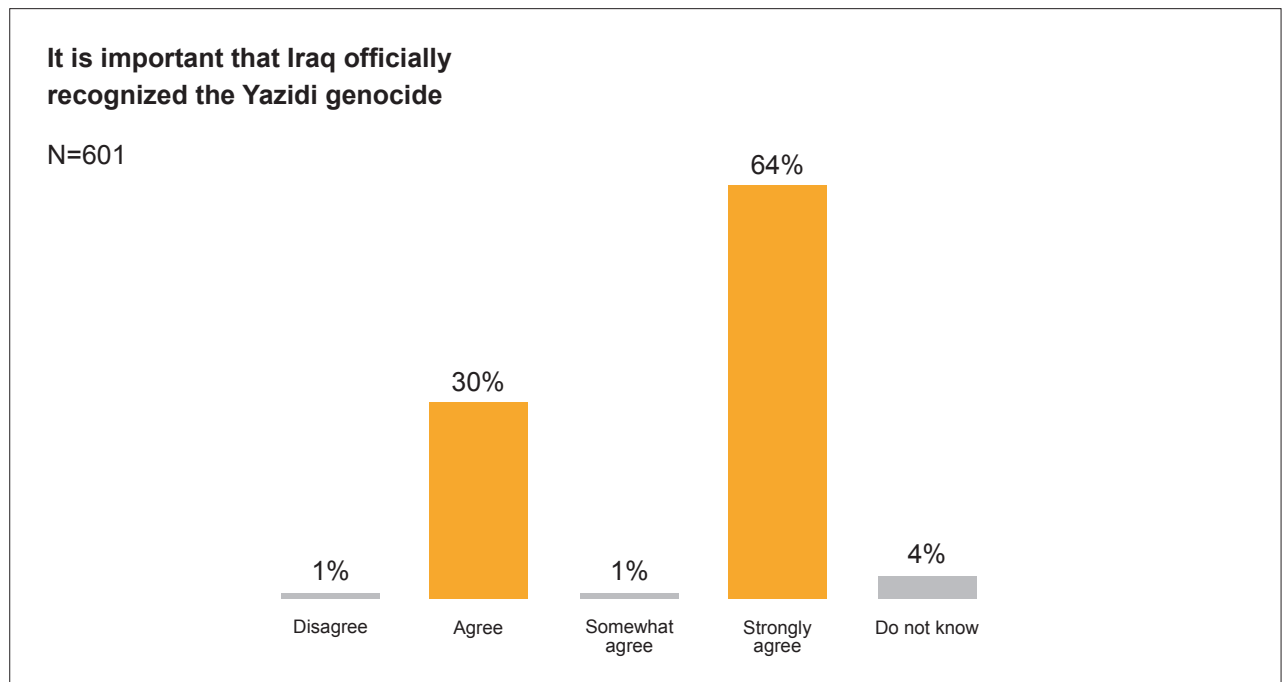


Destroyed houses in front of the Mont Sinjar © Yazda

"Many survivors, including myself, do not know much about the rest of the articles and paragraphs of the YSL except for the one on financial compensation. Survivors have the right to know about the rest of the articles and what is the process to access their rights and if the Directorate is working on implementing each of the provisions."

- Hala, Member of the Yazidi Survivors Network

Nearly 94% of survivors assessed by Yazda emphasized the importance of Iraq's official recognition of the Yazidi genocide (Article 7.1). Additionally, over 96% highlighted the significance of designating August 3rd as a National Day of Commemoration (Article 8.1).



Civil society organizations highlighted the symbolic significance of the Yazidi Survivors Law, emphasizing its role in advancing recognition, justice, and accountability. As one representative noted, *“The YSL represents a first step by the Iraqi government in acknowledging the atrocities and providing support to survivors.”* Others pointed to the law’s formal acknowledgment of the genocide against the Yazidi community, describing it as *“a crucial legal recognition of the crimes committed.”* Some also underscored its potential to contribute to broader accountability efforts, with one respondent stating that *“the YSL promotes transitional justice and combats impunity for the crimes committed.”*

These perspectives affirm that beyond its material provisions, the law also serves as a powerful tool of recognition and validation for survivors and their communities.

The YSL has brought crucial recognition of the crimes committed by ISIL as well as individual reparations to more than two thousand survivors, including monthly financial compensation, access to education, and plots of land. However, the application process is often burdensome, costly, and re-traumatizing. Many survivors remain unaware of their full rights under the law. These gaps highlight the need for a more transparent and survivor-centered implementation of the law. Moreover, survivors have made clear that individual reparations alone are not enough. Section 2 outlines their broader priorities, from the search for the missing to safe return and accountability, underlying the need for a broader transitional justice framework in Iraq.

SECTION 2

Survivor Priorities Beyond the
Yazidi Survivors Law: Setting a Path
Toward Transitional Justice in Iraq.

*Exhumation of mass grave by Iraqi
authorities in Zumany, Sinjar, February
2025 © Yazda*



Section 2: Survivor Priorities Beyond the Yazidi Survivors Law Setting a Path Toward Transitional Justice in Iraq.

Based on the assessment conducted with 601 Yazidi survivors living in Iraq and in exile, Yazda identified a set of survivor-defined priorities that go beyond the current scope and implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law.

Survivors identified the following as their most pressing needs:

- **Search for Missing Persons** – 71% of participants prioritized the fate of missing relatives.
- **Exhumation and Identification of Mass Graves** – 64% emphasized the need for proper handling of mass graves and the return of remains to families.
- **Improved Security Conditions** – 45% called for stronger protection and safety in areas of return.
- **Reconstruction of Hometowns** – 41% stressed the importance of rebuilding Sinjar and other destroyed areas.
- **Compensation and Reparations** – 41% pointed to the importance of receiving reparations and compensation.
- **Access to Justice** – 39% demanded formal accountability for ISIL crime.
- **Return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)** – 37% talked about the return of the IDPs, linked to improved security, services, and local governance.
- **Access to Basic Services** – 25% highlighted the importance of having access to all basic services, including education, healthcare, housing, and psychosocial support.

When asked about the three most urgent priorities the answers reflect similar trends as survivors ranked their urgent needs as being: Missing Persons (80.2%), Mass Graves exhumation (71.2%) and the Improvement of Security (27%).

While the YSL is a critical first step in addressing the needs of survivors, these findings show that its current implementation is insufficient to meet the broader justice demands of survivors. A more comprehensive and coordinated transitional justice process, with survivor leadership at its core, is needed to ensure truth, accountability, reparation, and guarantees of non-recurrence for all communities affected by ISIL's crimes.

2.1 Clarifying the Fate of the Missing and Ensuring Dignified Exhumations

Missing persons emerged as the top priority for survivors, with 71% of respondents identifying it as their priority, followed closely by the exhumation and identification of mass graves, cited by 64% of participants.

The YSL assigns the GDSA a coordination role in addressing both issues:

- **Article 5.7** mandates the GDSA to coordinate the search for kidnapped Yazidi, Turkmen, Christian, and Shabak men, women, and children in coordination with the competent authorities inside and outside Iraq and the victims' families, and to ensure that those found or their families receive legal recognition and compensation in accordance with relevant laws.

- **Article 5.8** tasks the GDSA with coordinating efforts with the Martyrs Foundation and the Department of Mass Graves' Affairs and Protection to complete all procedures related to locating and investigating mass graves, identifying the remains, and ensuring their dignified return and burial.

These provisions reflect the law's recognition of the importance of truth, remembrance, and dignity. Survivors' responses, however, show that progress on these fronts remains limited and urgently needed. Indeed, as of mid-2025, approximately 2,600 Yazidis remain missing. Despite the enduring trauma faced by families, the search for the missing has been marked by fragmentation, politicization, and a lack of coordination between federal and regional authorities. There is still no centralized, regularly updated database of missing persons, and no single institution has been clearly tasked with leading this effort. Families often navigate the uncertainty alone, without legal recognition of their missing relatives, and therefore without access to compensation or psychosocial support. The process of locating and rescuing the missing has relied heavily on families, community leaders, and volunteers, rather than on sustained, state-led mechanisms.²⁵

While the GDSA has, since 2023, supported and coordinated the rescue and return of a handful of survivors, these operations remain isolated and limited in scale. To ensure the sustained and systematic recovery of those still missing, significantly more resources must be allocated, including dedicated funding, personnel, and logistical support. Political will at the highest levels is also essential to prioritize these efforts, ensure inter-agency coordination, and strengthen collaboration with international partners, civil society organizations, and survivor networks actively working on rescue operations. Most missing Yazidis are believed to be in Syria, where access has long been limited, but the fall of the Assad regime creates a new opportunity for coordinated search efforts. The recent creation of the Independent Institution on Missing Persons (IIMP) in Syria by the United Nations²⁶ offers also an important international mechanism, but there is no clear framework yet to link Iraqi efforts to this new body. Without such coordination, the gap between families' expectations and the state's capacity to deliver truth and justice will continue to widen.



Ceremony of return of the remains at the Solagh monument, February 22, 2025 © Yazda

²⁵ Yazda, [The Unknown Fate of Missing Yazidis: 8 Years On and Still Waiting](#), September 2022.

²⁶ United Nations General Assembly, [A/77/L.79 – Draft Resolution: Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic](#), 26 June 2023.

In parallel, the exhumation and identification of mass graves, another core pillar of truth and redress, has proceeded slowly. Since 2015, Yazda has documented over 95 mass graves in Sinjar and surrounding areas. As of 2025, 74 mass graves have been exhumed and only 297 individuals had been formally identified. UNITAD, which had been one of the lead supporting actors in exhumation efforts in Iraq, had officially its mandate terminated on September 17, 2024, leaving families with little information about the future of the process. Despite efforts by the Mass Graves and Missing Department (MGMD), 16 mass graves in Sinjar and Baa'j districts remain to be exhumed. Additionally, 437 exhumed remains are awaiting identification in the labs of the Medico-Legal Department (MLD) in Baghdad. The identification process is further delayed by logistical challenges in collecting DNA samples from families residing in third countries, which requires international coordination and dedicated funding.

In response to these ongoing challenges, Yazda signed a Cooperation Agreement in May 2025 with the MGMD and the MLD to formalize collaboration on the documentation of crime scenes, exhumation of mass graves, and identification of victims.²⁷

2.2 Towards Safe Return: Security, Reconstruction, and Reintegration

Survivors also emphasized the importance of improving security (45%), which is closely linked to the return of internally displaced persons (37%), the reconstruction of their hometowns (41%), and the urgent need for access to basic services (25%). Several of these key priorities expressed by survivors fall outside the YSL's current scope.

Security concerns, identified by nearly half of all respondents, are not addressed in the law, despite being a major barrier to return and integration. Sinjar and its surrounding areas continue to face challenges from competing armed groups, unresolved political disputes, and a fragile security framework. There are at least 11 armed groups present in Sinjar.²⁸ Moreover, the 2020 Sinjar Agreement signed between the Iraqi and the Kurdistan Government to restore stability and normalize the security and administrative situation in Sinjar, failed to include communities affected by the genocide and to bring the meaningful changes and stability.²⁹



Houses destroyed in Sinjar, 2024
© David Ben Körzdörfer

²⁷ Yazda, [Iraqi Authorities and Yazda Sign Landmark Agreement to Advance Justice and the Search for Missing Yazidis](#), 2 June 2025.

²⁸ Yazda & Zovighian Partnership, [Collapsed Security Threatens the Future of Yazidis and Minorities in Sinjar](#), 22 September 2022.

²⁹ Hanar Marouf, [The Sinjar Agreement Has Good Ideas, but Is It a Dead End?](#) (<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/the-sinjar-agreement-has-good-ideas-but-is-it-a-dead-end/>), 1 April 2021.

Although the return of IDPs is consistently identified by survivors as a top priority, the Yazidi Survivors Law contains no provisions to support or facilitate this process. Despite repeated commitments from successive Iraqi governments since 2014, approximately 109,000, including thousands of Yazidi survivors, remained displaced across 21 camps in the Kurdistan Region as of the end of 2024.³⁰ Those who have returned to Sinjar face dire conditions, with extremely limited access to essential services such as electricity, clean water, education, and healthcare. Reconstruction of hometowns, another major concern, is also absent from the law. Reconstruction is a critical pillar for the return of IDPs and long-term stability in Sinjar. To date, no meaningful rebuilding has been carried out or even planned by the local, regional, and national governments.

2.3 Pursuing Justice Through Criminal Accountability

"The first kind of reparations should be for justice to be applied."

- Amira, Yazidi Advocate

Access to criminal accountability is considered a priority by 39% of the respondents. Additionally, more than 98% of the survivors assessed found it important for Iraq to prosecute ISIL members for genocide and crimes against humanity and 95% of those assessed found that ISIL perpetrators should not benefit from general or special amnesties.

While the YSL has several provisions dedicated to justice and accountability for the crimes committed by ISIL against the Christians, Turkmens, Shabaks and Yazidis (Article 5.9, 7.3 and 9), international crimes including genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes have not yet been incorporated into Iraq's domestic legislation. Without prosecution avenues for international crimes, current trials in Iraq have been carried out under the *Anti-Terrorism Law No. (13) of 2005*.³¹ This law has a very broad definition of terrorism acts and fails to take into account the full spectrum of the crimes committed against Yazidis and other groups, including crimes of sexual and gender-based violence, destruction of cultural property, militarization of children and forced conversion. Moreover, the Iraqi judicial system has been widely criticized by international human rights organizations for lacking due process, failing to uphold fair trial guarantees, and making extensive use of the death penalty in terrorism-related cases.³² The use of torture during interrogations and the near-exclusive reliance on confessions for conviction has also been widely documented and denounced.³³

Attempts to establish a national accountability mechanism in Iraq have been heavily politicized and have ultimately failed. The recent closure of UNITAD in September 2024 coupled with the amendment of Iraq's General Amnesty Law No. 27 of 2016,³⁴ has further deepened survivors' mistrust in national accountability mechanisms and reinforced the urgent need for inclusive, credible justice efforts.³⁵ The recent creation of the National Center for International Judicial Cooperation (NCIJC) in Baghdad³⁶ offers a degree of hope for advancing accountability, but its success will depend on whether it adopts a survivor-centered approach, is adequately resourced, and is accompanied by legislation on core international crimes and strong witness protection measures.

At present, the only meaningful justice avenue available to Yazidi survivors is through universal jurisdiction cases pursued in third countries, primarily led by Germany,³⁷ and more recently the Netherlands³⁸ and Sweden.³⁹ However, due to limited outreach and lack of access to accurate information, many survivors, particularly those still residing in Iraq, are unaware of these efforts and unable to participate meaningfully.

The Hasna A. trial: a groundbreaking outreach model

On December 11, 2024, Hasna A. was sentenced to a 10-year prison sentence for enslaving a Yazidi woman in Syria in 2015 (Z.), membership to the terrorist organization ISIL, promoting terrorist crimes, and endangering her minor son. The court held that the enslavement of Z. amounted to a crime against humanity. This landmark trial is the first conviction of an ISIL member for core international crimes in the Netherlands.

The Court allowed for the hearings to be screened online and provided translation into Kurdish. The availability of online screening and the inclusion of translation services in the Hasna A. case was groundbreaking and allowed for the hearings to be accessible to non-Dutch speakers and to survivors, including those living in Iraq. It also relieved NGOs supporting survivors from providing translation services which can be costly and technically complicated.

Yazda organized two screenings of the trial in Duhok and Sinjar in Iraq where most members of the global Yazidi community currently reside. For the first time in a decade, they were able to witness justice in action.

As underlined by one of the participants following the hearing, *“Other trials should be accessible online, and survivors in those countries should be invited to attend.”*



Screening of the live-stream Hasna A. Trial Judgement by Yazda in Sinjar, December 11, 2024 © Yazda

³⁰ UNHCR Iraq, [Internally Displaced People](#).

³¹ Available [here](#).

³² Human Rights Watch, [Iraq: Unlawful Mass Executions Resume](#), 24 January 2024.

³³ Human Rights Watch, [“Everyone Must Confess”: Abuses against Children Suspected of ISIS Affiliation in Iraq](#), 6 March 2019.

³⁴ Iraqi Parliament, Second Amendment to the General Amnesty Law No. 27 of 2016 (published in the Official Gazette, al-Waqā’i, No. 1 of 2025, 18 February 2025), 21 January 2025.

³⁵ Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR), [Iraqi Civil Society and Survivor Networks Position on the Request of Iraq to Terminate UNITAD’s Mandate in September 2024](#), March 2024.

³⁶ Yazda, [Statement on Its Meeting with the National Center for International Judicial Cooperation in Baghdad](#), 12 February 2025.

³⁷ Yazda, [Historic Yazidi Genocide Case in Germany: The Conviction of an IS Member](#), 30 November 2021.

³⁸ Yazda, [A Dutch court hands down historic verdict and convicts an ISIL member for crimes against Yazidis in landmark case in Netherlands](#), 11 December 2024.

³⁹ ICTJ, [Sweden sentences woman to 12 years in prison for genocide and war crimes in Syria](#), 11 February 2025.

2.4 Transitional justice as the way forward

More than a decade after the genocide committed by ISIL, the justice demands articulated by survivors make one point unequivocally clear: the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government have yet to design and implement a survivor-centered, comprehensive transitional justice strategy. Despite recurring promises, survivors remain in protracted displacement, without truth, justice, or effective guarantees that such atrocities will never happen again.

As this report has shown, the Yazidi Survivors Law marks a significant, yet incomplete, step. As a quasi-transitional justice mechanism, it offers a foundation upon which broader, complementary processes can be built. But for this to happen, Iraq must embark on a national dialogue, guided by survivor voices and supported by inclusive consultations with all communities affected by ISIL's crimes, including displaced Yazidis, Christians, Shabak, Turkmen, and others as well as civil society organizations that support them.

This broader transitional justice process must be rooted in the four core pillars: truth, justice, reparations, and guarantees of non-recurrence. Two of the most urgent gaps, truth-telling and prevention, require particular attention:

Truth-Telling: Beyond the Search for the Missing and the Exhumation of Mass Graves

For survivors of the Yazidi genocide and other ISIL atrocities, a national truth-telling process is essential, not only to document what happened but also to recognize what was lost, who failed to act, and how trust can be rebuilt. A survivor-centered truth-seeking initiative should involve the collection and preservation of testimonies from survivors, including those in exile, using voluntary, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive methods, while using all existing evidence and avoiding re-interviewing survivors who already shared their testimonies.



Iraqi specialized teams MGMT and MLD exhuming mass graves in Sinjar in February 2025 © Yazda

Truth-seeking must go beyond documenting ISIL's crimes and also confront the failures of the security apparatus of the GoI and KRG to prevent these atrocities, to protect civilians, and to provide meaningful redress. This includes an honest assessment of delayed rescue operations, ongoing neglect in Sinjar and other liberated areas, and the impunity that continues to shield perpetrators.

A national truth commission, or a formal truth-seeking mechanism embedded within a broader transitional justice framework, should be established with a clear mandate to investigate these dimensions. It should ensure active participation from affected communities, provide opportunities for both public and confidential testimony, and produce a final report in relevant languages. Survivors deserve a platform to be heard, one that carries weight, leads to recommendations for institutional reform, and serves as an official historical record to prevent denial and erasure.

Guarantees of Non-Recurrence: The Missing Pillar in Iraq's Justice Process

Preventing future atrocities requires more than recognition: it demands structural change. Guarantees of non-recurrence must begin with comprehensive security sector reform. This includes professionalizing national and local forces, ensuring minority representation in recruitment and leadership, and removing those implicated in past abuses. Sinjar and other disputed or vulnerable areas, where Yazidi communities remain exposed to insecurity, political interference, and ongoing threats, should be prioritized.

Despite the military defeat of ISIL, Yazidis and other minorities in Iraq continue to face hate speech,⁴⁰ intimidation, and exclusion. These patterns are sustained by impunity, political fragmentation, and the absence of strong legal protections. Iraq must pass and implement robust anti-discrimination legislation, formally recognize minority rights, and establish clear accountability for incitement and hate crimes. Education reform should also play a central role, embedding the histories and lived experiences of persecuted groups into school curricula to build empathy, inclusion, and collective memory.

Institutional mechanisms must be developed to track and respond to early warning signs of mass violence. Public officials, community leaders, and media outlets must be held accountable for dehumanizing rhetoric or complicity in abuse. At the same time, survivor-led initiatives, such as local memorialization projects, cultural revival programs, and reconciliation efforts, must be supported and integrated into national recovery plans.

Above all, these processes must be designed with survivors, not for them. Only by placing their voices, needs, and dignity at the center can Iraq move toward genuine justice, reconciliation, and long-term peace. The Yazidi Survivors Law is a beginning, but it must be matched by bold, coordinated steps to address the full scope of harm and prevent its recurrence.

Conclusion

The Yazidi Survivors Law represents a historic and groundbreaking step toward justice and reparation for survivors of ISIL crimes in Iraq. As the first reparation law in the Middle East or Southwest Asia with a specific focus on survivors of abduction and conflict-related sexual violence, it establishes a precedent for survivor-centered, gender-sensitive transitional justice in the region. The law enshrines a broad set of individual and collective reparation measures and recognizes ISIL crimes as genocide and crimes against humanity, marking a vital moment of acknowledgment and accountability.

⁴⁰ A Yazda, [Under Constant Threat: Hate Speech Against the Yazidi Community in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq](#), 8 December 2024.

Human Rights Watch & Yazda, [Joint Open Letter to the Iraqi Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government on the Hate Speech Targeting the Yazidi Community of Iraq](#), 10 December 2024.

However, the survey conducted with 601 survivors and 34 CSOs revealed some gaps in the drafting and implementation of the law that hinder survivors' access to their rights. Survivors face a burdensome, costly, and often re-traumatizing application process. The requirement to file a criminal complaint before accessing reparations undermines the administrative nature of the YSL and risks exposing survivors to stigma and harm. Additionally, a lack of consultation with survivors during the law's drafting and implementation has contributed to the gaps and overall lack of awareness of survivors' rights under the law.

Additionally, the YSL cannot exist in isolation. Its success depends on the implementation of a broader transitional justice framework in Iraq, which remains fragmented and underdeveloped. As survivors have expressed, the full range of their rights - truth, justice, reparations, and guarantees of non-recurrence - must be realized through a comprehensive, inclusive, and survivor-informed national process. The YSL can serve as a cornerstone of this process.

Through the inclusion of material, symbolic but also individual and collective reparations, the law has the potential to be transformative for survivors, affected communities, and participate in Iraq's transitional justice process.

The Yazidi Survivors Law thus paves the way for the region and the world in establishing a transformative reparation program tailored to survivors of captivity and CRSV. In Syria, after 53 years of the Assad regime - including 24 years of Bashar Al-Assad's rule - and more than 13 years of armed conflict with gross violations of human rights law and serious violations of humanitarian law, the YSL can be used as a model of reparations law. As in Iraq, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance and sexualized torture was systematically used in Syria, requiring a tailored reparations program which includes reparations for crimes of CRSV.

Recommendations

To the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Parliament

- **Provide adequate resources to the GDSA to fully implement all provisions under the YSL**, including access to education, land, employment, healthcare, and mental health services so that reparations are comprehensive and transformative.
- *Clarify that survivors' monthly financial compensation is not a salary* and can be cumulated with a government employment and salary.
- **Prioritize the search for missing persons, the exhumation of mass graves and the identification of bodies** by allocating adequate budgets and resources to the Mass Graves and Missing Department and the Medico-Legal Department.
- **Adopt a law on core international crimes** to enable prosecution of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, while ensuring the meaningful participation of survivors in the judicial processes and the implementation of all witness protection measures.
- **Tackle the root causes of violence and hate** by addressing the discriminations faced by minority and indigenous communities, promoting awareness and education, notably on the ethnic and religious groups in Iraq and on genocide and other crimes committed by ISIL against minority groups, fostering interfaith dialogue and adopting a comprehensive law on the protection of minority rights in Iraq.

- After consulting all the communities affected by ISIL crimes, **develop a comprehensive transitional plan for the upcoming 5 to 10 years** to ensure truth, criminal accountability, reparations and guarantees of non-recurrence are upheld and to become a model in the region and in the world. Survivor and CSO consultation should be fully part of the design and monitoring of the transitional justice plan and process.

To the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs and the Committee

- **Expand the pilot program for survivors living abroad**, making it permanent and available in all countries where survivors reside, including, Australia the U.S. and Canada and other European countries than Germany and France, ensuring survivors can access reparations without returning to Iraq.
- Uphold the administrative nature of the YSL by **removing extra-legal requirements**, such as the obligation to file criminal complaints, and ensure the application and appeal processes are cost-effective, timely, and reduce the risks of re-traumatization, and stigma.

To the international community and donors

- **Support the full Implementation of the YSL and broader transitional justice mechanisms** by providing technical assistance and sustained financial support to ensure all forms of reparations under the YSL are implemented comprehensively, including access to education, land, employment, healthcare, and mental health and psychosocial support.
- **Promote accountability through universal jurisdiction** by supporting ongoing and future prosecutions of ISIL crimes through universal jurisdiction mechanisms. Encourage countries where survivors reside to open investigations and prosecutions and ensure meaningful survivor participation and accessibility of hearing.
- **Ensure survivor participation in justice mechanisms** and provide interpretation and translation in relevant dialects for survivors engaging in legal processes abroad. Promote accessibility measures such as livestreaming or remote participation in trials and hearings, especially for survivors living in diaspora communities.
- **Ensure the evidence collected by UNITAD is preserved and accessible** and facilitate the continued use of evidence collected by UNITAD for international prosecutions and national proceedings, including in Iraq.
- **Fund survivor-led and community-based Initiatives** by investing in programs that center survivors' voices, experiences, and leadership, including community-based transitional justice and memory initiatives, documentation, psychosocial support, education, and livelihoods.
- **Encourage long-term planning for transitional justice in Iraq and support the development of a comprehensive 5–10-year transitional justice plan in Iraq**, co-designed with survivors and civil society organizations, to ensure an inclusive and holistic response to ISIL's crimes and the broader legacy of violence.

Annex: Yazidi Survivors Law

In the name of the People Presidency of the Republic

Based on what was approved by the House of Representatives in accordance with the provisions of first clause of Article 61 and the third clause of Article 73 of the Constitution.

The President of the Republic decided on // 2021 the issuance
of the following Law No. () for the year 2021

Yazidi [Female] Survivors' Law

Article 1

For the purpose of this law, the following terms shall have the meaning ascribed to them below:

First: The [female] survivor: Every woman or girl who has been subjected to crimes of sexual violence from her kidnapping, sexual slavery, selling her in slavery markets, separating her from her family, forcing her to change her religion, forced marriage, pregnancy and forced abortion or inflicting physical and psychological harm to her by ISIS since the date 3/8/2014 and was freed afterwards.

Second: The Directorate: The General Directorate of Yazidi Female Survivors' Females Affairs.

Article 2:

The provisions of this law apply to:

First: Every Yazidi [female] survivor kidnapped by Daesh and was freed afterwards.

Second: Women and girls from the (Turkmen, Christian, Shabak) components who were subjected to the same crimes mentioned in Article 1 (First) of this law.

Third: Yazidi children survivors who were under the age of eighteen at the time of their kidnapping.

Fourth: Yazidi, Turkmen, Christian and Shabak survivors from the mass killings and mass elimination carried out by ISIS in their areas.

Article 3

First: General Directorate shall be established to care for female survivors' affairs and will be linked to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and is based in Nineveh Governorate and has the right to open branches in the areas where female survivors are present, whenever necessary.

Second: The General Directorate stipulated in the first clause of this article is managed by an employee under the title of Director General, from the Yazidi component, who holds at least a first university degree in the field of law or administration and has experience and practice of no lesser than ten years in his field of work and shall be appointed by the Council of Ministers.

³⁹ Available [here](#). Translation from Arabic: IOM Iraq (revised version: March 24, 2021).

⁴⁰ IOM comment: The term female is put between bracket to mean that while the term is not mentioned per se in the original text of the law, it is used in this translation to replace the suffix added to the term survivors in the Arabic text, to refer to female (women, girls) survivors.

Article 4

This law aims to:

First: Compensate the [female] survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law financially and morally and to secure a decent life for them.

Second: Rehabilitate and take care of [female] survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law and to prepare the necessary means to integrate them into society and prevent the recurrence of the violations that occurred against them.

Article 5

The Directorate undertakes the following means to achieve its goals:

First: Statistics and preparation of [female] survivors' data and those included in the provisions of this law based on information issued by governmental and non-governmental institutions working in this field.

Second: Providing the necessary care for [female] survivors and groups covered by the provisions of this law.

Third: Coordinating with all government institutions, local and international organizations in order to support [female] survivors and groups covered by the provisions of this law.

Fourth: Providing educational opportunities for [female] survivors and their children.

Fifth: Securing employment and job opportunities to enable [female] survivors to achieve their economic and social well-being.

Sixth: Opening health and psychological rehabilitation centers to treat [female] survivors and working to open health clinics inside and outside Iraq.

Seventh: Searching for the kidnapped of Yazidis, Turkmen, Christians, and Shabaks men, women and children, whose fate is still unknown. This work shall be done in coordination with the competent authorities inside and outside Iraq and the victims' families, treating their conditions legally and granting them benefits and compensating them or their families in accordance with the relevant laws.

Eighth: Coordination with the Martyrs Foundation / Department of Mass Graves' Affairs and Protection in relation to mass graves to complete all procedures related to searching and investigating, opening mass graves, revealing the identity of the remains and return them to their families in order to bury them in a manner befitting their sacrifices.

Ninth: Coordination with investigative and judicial bodies and international committees concerned with investigation and gathering evidence, and providing them with all statistics, data and evidence that contribute to documenting and establishing crimes committed by ISIS in a way that helps prosecute the perpetrators of these crimes.

Article 6

First: The [Female] survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law shall be given a monthly salary that shall not be less than twice the minimum pension salary stipulated in the Unified Pension Law No. 9 of 2014 and its amendments.

Second: [Female] Survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law shall be granted a residential plot of land with a real estate loan and shall be exempted from the provisions of laws and decisions of the (dissolved) Revolutionary Command Council no 120 of 1982 or a free housing unit.

Third: [Female] survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law have the right to return to study and shall be exempted from the age requirement.

Fourth: [Female] survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law shall be given a priority to public employment at a rate of 2%.

Article 7

First: Crimes committed by Daesh against the Yazidis and other components, (Turkmen, Christians and Shabaks) shall be considered crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Second: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in coordination with the official concerned institutions, undertakes to reveal the crimes mentioned in the first paragraph in international forums, especially those committed against [female] survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law.

Third: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in coordination with the official concerned institutions, shall undertake initiating criminal proceedings against the perpetrators of the crimes in the first clause, and cooperate for the extradition of criminals in order to be tried before the competent courts.

Article 8

First: The 3rd of August of each year shall be considered a national day to reveal the crimes committed against the Yazidis and other components and media shall provide all programs for this date and clarify the abuse, kidnapping, sexual violence, captivity and displacement committed by Daesh.

Second: The Ministry of Culture, Baghdad Municipality and the concerned authorities shall take the necessary measures to immortalize the Yazidi victims and other components and to build monuments, statues and exhibitions on this occasion.

Article 9

First: The perpetrators of the crimes of kidnapping and captivity of Yazidis shall not included in any general or special amnesty.

Second: Punishment prescribed by law for perpetrators of the crimes mentioned in the first clause of this article shall not be dropped, and the judicial and administrative authorities are obligated to follow up to arrest the perpetrators and accomplices in committing these crimes, as well as implementing the provisions of the law and provide protection for witnesses and victims.

Article 10

First: A committee shall be formed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to consider the requests of survivors and groups covered by the provisions of this law, and it shall consist of

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------|
| 1. | A judge nominated by the Supreme Judicial Council. | Chairman |
| 2. | Director General of Women Survivors' Affairs (MOLSA) | Vice President |
| 3. | A representative of the Ministry of Interior | member |
| 4. | A representative of the Ministry of Health | member |
| 5. | A representative of the Ministry of Justice | member |
| 6. | A representative of the National Retirement Authority | member |
| 7. | A representative of the High Commission for Human Rights | member |
| 8. | A representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government | member |

Second: The committee decides on the validity of the requests submitted to it within a maximum period not exceeding 90 days from the date of receiving the request.

Third: The applicant has the right to appeal to the same committee its decision within a period of 30 days from the date of issuance of the decision in order to reconsider it. And in case of refusal for the second time, the applicant can appeal the decision before the court of first instance, and its decision shall be final and binding.

Fourth: The committee may open an electronic platform to receive and consider applications from inside and outside Iraq, and the approval for being covered by the provisions of the law takes place after conducting the interview for the applicant before the committee that was formed in the first clause of this article, to facilitate receiving their entitlements according to this law.

Fifth: The percentage of women in the committee to be formed in the first clause of this article shall not be less than 30%.

Sixth: The number of meetings of the committee formed in the first clause of this article shall not be less than two meetings per week.

Seventh: The committee holds its meeting when the presence of the absolute majority of its members is achieved.

Eighth: The decision to be covered by the provisions of the law shall be voted on by a simple majority, and in case the votes are equal, the side on which the chairman is will prevail.

Article 11

Compensation for [female] survivors and those included in the provisions of this law does not prevent them from receiving compensations according to local laws or special international decisions related to them.

Article 12

The Council of Ministers shall issue instructions to facilitate the implementation of the provisions of this law within a period not exceeding 90 days from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Article 13

This law shall be enacted from the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

The Rationale

Crimes committed by ISIS against the Yazidis and the rest of the components (Christians, Turkmen and Shabak), shall be considered genocide crimes and crimes against humanity, and given the physical, psychological, social and material damage that these crimes have resulted on all victims, especially women and children, and with the aim of addressing these damages and the negative effects resulting from them and granting the necessary rights for [female] survivors and those covered by the provisions of this law, their rehabilitation and reintegration into society, and as reparations and compensation for what happened to them, and [female] survivors in particular, and to protect them and their areas.

This law is promulgated.

