

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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ACRONYMS

DoH	Directorate of Health
DRL	Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HiiL	Hague Institute for Innovation of Law
HLP	Housing, Land, and Property
ICMP	International Commission on Missing Persons
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
NAP	National Action Plan
PSS	Psychosocial Support
WPS	Women, Peace, and Security

FOREWORD

As each year unfolds, we stand proud of the progress we've made, unwavering in our commitment to advancing the rights and dignity of women, particularly those affected by violence and conflict. The path we walk is not without its trials, but it is one that we tread with steadfast resolve. In the face of ongoing struggles—be they societal debates over gender reforms like the amendments to the Personal Status Law or the growing prevalence of hate speech targeting vulnerable communities such as the Yazidis our organization continues to rise above, stronger than ever, united in our mission to create lasting change. In this year's journey, our efforts have yielded tangible, transformative outcomes. We have launched projects that have made a real difference prioritizing protection services, providing livelihood support, and empowering women through sustainable agricultural initiatives.

Our outreach has extended to marginalized communities, often neglected by others, offering them essential services and a renewed sense of hope. Throughout this journey, we have gained critical insights into the multifaceted needs of women, which extend far beyond awareness campaigns and capacity-building efforts. These women need comprehensive support systems to ensure their active participation in shaping the future of their communities. We remain unyielding in our belief that women especially those from marginalized backgrounds must have a voice in the decision-making processes that shape our world. They should not be seen as passive recipients of aid, but as active participants in building the societies they envision. Our vision is clear:

we aspire to see these women in leadership roles across official institutions and sectors, not viewed through the lens of pity, but through one that recognizes their potential, talents, and capacity to lead and effect change. Our commitment to advocating for women's rights remains resolute. We will continue to stand by the women who need us most, empowering them to navigate an ever-evolving world, while aligning our work with global advancements in gender equality and human rights. Together, with the support of our dedicated team, we are building a future where justice, equality, and safety are not just ideals, but concrete realities for every woman. We are committed to a world where women feel secure, valued, and empowered to fulfill their aspirations. This is our promise, and with unwavering determination, we will continue to move forward toward a better tomorrow.





WHO WE ARE

MISSION

Empower women and enhance their capabilities across all sectors, providing equality, equitable opportunities in life, and the decrease of violence and corruption from the society.

VISION

Envision a society where violence and corruption are reduced, ensuring the protection of women's rights.

ABOUT US

Dak Organization for Ezidi Women Development is a feminist organization founded in 2015 by a group of active Ezidi women, as a direct response to the horrific crimes and serious violations committed against the Ezidi community especially women during the brutal attacks carried out by ISIS on the Sinjar region. Dak was born from suffering, to become a feminist voice defending the rights of women from minority groups, particularly Ezidi women, and to embody the deep belief that empowering women is not a choice, but an essential

necessity for building a safe and just world for all.

Dak was established in response to the urgent need to break the silence and create a rights-based entity capable of representing Ezidi women and defending their rights in the face of violence and marginalization. Since its inception, the organization has been committed to promoting the rights of minority women, expanding their participation in public life, and breaking the barriers that prevent them from reaching decision-making positions.

Through its diverse projects in the fields of protection, psychosocial support, economic empowerment, and legal advocacy, Dak seeks to restore hope and dignity to survivors of sexual violence, especially Ezidi survivors. The organization firmly believes that justice cannot be achieved without uncovering the fate of the remaining kidnapped women and ensuring accountability for the perpetrators.

Believing in women's ability to bring about change, Dak Organization continues its commitment to defending the rights of Yazidi women and empowering them to be active agents in building a future that is more just, peaceful, and stable. Since its establishment, Dak has successfully implemented 48 projects in alignment with its mission and vision.



Geographical Focus Area

During 2024, Dak Organization, had working in Duhok governorate and Nineveh including locations around them, particularly in Sinjar.

Duhok Governorate
(Sharya, Khanke, Duhok City).

Nineveh Goernoorate
(Hamdaniah, Bartalah,
Qaraqosh, Bashiqa,
Mosul, Sinjar, sinune, Khanasor,
Duhla, Essian,
Baadra, Shekhan, Beban,
Mahat, Shekhka).



Soleen's Journey to Logistics Officer

Soleen, once a participant in Dak's project, expressed,

The experience feels good, and I'm ready to face the rest of my life in a more positive way. I believe that peace starts within ourselves and our families, as they are the foundation for changing society.



SOLEEN HAZIM

Logistics Officer

What began as a volunteer opportunity soon became a life-changing path for Soleen. Through her hard work, dedication, and passion for peace, she found her calling and was entrusted with the role of Logistics Officer. Her story is not just about a career shift; it's a powerful reminder of the transformative power of peacebuilding and the incredible potential within us all to create change. Soleen's journey reflects the hope and strength that Dak's projects inspire, showing how even one person can make a lasting impact on their community.

Protection



PROTECTION SECTOR

The Protection sector aims to safeguard the safety, dignity, and rights of vulnerable populations, such as women, children, and minorities. It focuses on preventing and responding to violence, abuse, and exploitation while ensuring access to support services and promoting psychological resilience in a secure environment.

Objective of the Protection Sector: To promote the psychological well-being and protection of women and community members in Sinjar by delivering structured psychosocial support (PSS), individual psychological consultations, and community-based GBV awareness, thereby strengthening coping mechanisms, reducing stigma, and fostering a safer, more informed environment.



PROJECTS

In 2024, Dak Organization, in partnership with Heartland Alliance International and funded by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), implemented the Justice for All project. This initiative aimed to build resilient mental health support systems and raise awareness on suicide prevention in minority communities. It focused on strengthening stakeholder capacity and developing a localized suicide prevention strategy in areas with high minority populations, including Shekhan, Alqoush, Telkef, Summel, Sharya, Khanky, and Sinjar, in coordination with the Directorate of Health (DoH) in Duhok.



In partnership with Medica Mondiale, Dak also implemented the Enhancing Psychosocial and Recreational Support for Women and Girls project in the Sheikhan complex, benefiting 229 Ezidi women and girls. This project included stress management training, workshops on motherhood and childcare, self-care sessions for adolescent girls, recreational activities like meditation and physical exercise, literacy courses, and a book collection campaign. Mental health support was central, with 50 women receiving 12 psychosocial support sessions and 24 receiving individual psychological consultations.



Additionally, a Gender-Based Violence (GBV) awareness campaign reached 827 individuals, including 541 females, delivered by trained community mobilizers to promote community-level awareness and psychological recovery. These interventions aimed at empowering women and addressing GBV-related challenges.



Livelihood

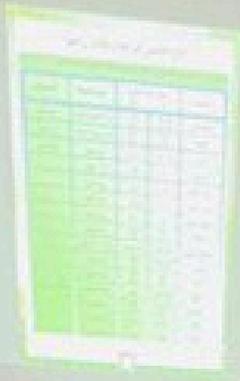


Empower Her

project, implementing by Dak Organization for Ezidi women Development in partnership with CARE, and funded by Aktion Deutschland Hilft (ADH)

تمكينها

هذا المشروع ينفذه منظمة داك لتنمية المرأة العزيرية بالشراكة مع منظمة CARE وتمويل من ADH



منظمة داك لتنمية المرأة العزيرية

Dak Organization for Ezidi Women Development



LIVELIHOOD SECTOR

The Livelihood sector aims to help individuals and communities achieve sustainable income and economic self-reliance by enhancing skills, resources, and access to employment or entrepreneurship opportunities. It focuses on overcoming income generation barriers for vulnerable groups and building resilience in the face of displacement, poverty, or crisis.

Objective of the Protection Sector: To enhance the economic resilience and self-reliance of 50 returning Yazidi women in Sinjar by providing them with advanced agricultural training, value-added product development skills, business knowledge, and start-up support, enabling them to generate sustainable incomes and contribute to local economic recovery.



Dak Organization implemented the Empower Her: Pathways to Women Economic Empowerment in Sinjar project in partnership with CARE Iraq, funded by Aktion Deutschland Hilft. The project responded to the Iraqi government's decision to close Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps by July 2024, which forced many women from ethnic and religious minorities, including Yazidis, to return to their homeland in Sinjar. The region faced significant challenges due to the lasting effects of conflict, particularly the devastation caused by ISIS. The lack of stability, services, and infrastructure left many women struggling to rebuild their lives.



The project targeted 50 returning women, offering specialized training in advanced agricultural techniques such as planting in bags, conservation agriculture, and climate-smart irrigation methods. It also included workshops on producing value-added products like tomato paste, pickles, jams, dried figs, and olive oil. In addition, participants received business skills training covering financial literacy, marketing, and strategies for overcoming local market challenges. Each woman was provided with a grant to purchase essential agricultural tools, seeds, and equipment, enabling her to apply the newly acquired skills. The Empower Her project aimed to promote sustainable livelihoods, strengthen women's economic independence, and contribute to the recovery and rebuilding of Sinjar.



Social Cohesion



SOCIAL COHESION SECTOR

The Social Cohesion sector promotes trust, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence among diverse community groups. It strengthens the social fabric through dialogue, cooperation, and collective identity, aiming to reduce tensions, prevent violence, and foster inclusive participation, especially in conflict-affected or marginalized areas.

Objectives: Teachers' awareness of acceptance and inclusion has increased, and their role in creating a cohesive environment among students from different backgrounds has been activated. Social participation among students from different religious and ethnic groups increased through teacher-led initiatives.



In partnership with USAID through the DCEO-Tahfeez program, Dak Organization implemented the project “Enhancing Social Interaction Among Shekhan Community Through the Educational Sector” to promote peaceful coexistence among Yazidi, Christian, and Muslim communities. The project focused on fostering inclusivity and communication within schools by engaging teachers, students, and parents.

The initiative began with a five-day training course for teachers on communication, problem-solving, diversity, inclusion, and modern teaching methods. Trained teachers then led six days of knowledge transfer sessions for their peers. Additionally,



Four community awareness campaigns celebrated diversity and promoted unity, while six parent engagement sessions encouraged inclusive values at home. The project reached 683 beneficiaries (267 males and 416 females), strengthening mutual understanding and cooperation among Shekhan’s diverse communities through education.



Peacebuilding



PEACEBUILDING SECTOR

The Peacebuilding sector works to resolve conflicts, promote dialogue, and build trust among diverse groups. It empowers youth, women, and community leaders as peace agents through training, dialogue, and inclusive activities, aiming to prevent future violence and strengthen long-term resilience

The objectives of the program are to foster inclusive, safe spaces for intergroup dialogue, strengthen the leadership and life skills of youth and women, promote non-violent communication and peaceful coexistence, enable continued engagement through digital platforms, and build collective memory and community resilience.



in partnership with ForumZFD and funded by BMZ, launched the Communities in Dialogue in Sharya project in August 2024 as a peacebuilding intervention aimed at fostering social cohesion and non-violent conflict resolution among IDPs, host communities, and returnees in northern Iraq.

The project creates inclusive dialogue spaces for youth, women, and community leaders through mobile conversations, skills training, cultural expression, and digital platforms. The Communities in Dialogue in Sharya project aimed to reach a total of 1,325 individuals through a variety of inclusive peacebuilding activities. These included dialogue sessions, community outreach trips, life skills and leadership trainings, creative expression initiatives, digital engagement workshops, and community events.



The target beneficiaries encompassed IDPs, returnees, and host community members, with a special focus on youth, women, and community leaders from areas including Sharya, Shkhka, Duhok, Al-Qush, Shekhan, Beban, and Bozan.



Right to Owning Prosperity Initiative

Dak, in collaboration with the Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (Hiil) under the Iraqi Justice Innovation Initiative, launched the "Right to Owning Prosperity" project to improve women's access to housing, land, and property (HLP) rights in Sinjar—a region where these rights are vital for empowerment and long-term security. The project trained 10 local lawyers on HLP issues, enabling them to support women in navigating legal challenges and asserting their rights. These trained lawyers conducted six awareness sessions, educating 90 Yazidi women about their HLP rights and how to secure them. Additionally, 34 women were referred to UN-Habitat for further assistance in dealing with complex HLP matters.

A comprehensive assessment was also conducted, focusing on Eizidi women and a smaller group of Yazidi men in Sinjar. It explored their awareness of HLP rights, challenges in registering ownership, the legal and institutional support they need, and the broader implications of conflict and displacement on their ability to access and register HLP rights. The assessment also examined perceptions around women's empowerment and identified critical legal gaps. Importantly, the findings revealed that many individuals still require significant support to understand and claim their HLP rights, highlighting the ongoing need for legal aid, awareness efforts, and institutional assistance in post-conflict Sinjar.



Voice of the Missing People Initiative

Dak Organization, in partnership with the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP), implemented the "Voice of the Missing People" initiative, bringing together a powerful group of over forty individuals. The session included representatives from various organizations working on missing persons issues, along with families of victims and survivors of ISIS captivity. Media representatives from diverse communities—Yezidis, Muslims, and Christians—participated, as did key representatives from the Compensation Department, the Human Rights Office in Mosul, and the Office of Kidnapped Persons in the Kurdistan Region.

The session focused on urgent and sensitive topics, offering the latest updates on the missing and their fates, while addressing the profound struggles faced by the families. The goal was to ensure their voices are heard and their rights fully acknowledged through a platform for meaningful dialogue and collaboration.

The event successfully targeted and engaged 29 participants in total, including 22 males and 7 females.



Women's Action for Peace

The "Women's Action for Peace" project, successfully implemented by Dak Organization for Ezidi Women Development in partnership with UPP and funded by DGAP – Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, focuses on promoting the active participation of women and youth from civil society in peace processes and nonviolent conflict transformation across specific regions, including Italy, the Middle East, and North Africa. This aligns with UNSCR 1325 and supports the implementation of Italy's National Action Plan (NAP) for 2020-2024. The project's main goal is to enhance the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) by facilitating skill and experience exchanges, with a special emphasis on gender-sensitive peacebuilding approaches. It also supports women peacebuilders in implementing nonviolent conflict transformation initiatives and advocates for increased female involvement in peace processes.

In addition, the project collaborates with institutions to develop and implement national action plans (NAPs) that are in line with the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. Targeting 40 beneficiaries (20 male and 20 female), the project addresses critical issues such as the revision of the Iraqi Personal Status Law to better protect the rights of women from religious minorities. It also tackles the issue of hate speech by empowering media, activists, and community members to foster tolerance and respect.



16 days of activism

During the 16 Days of Activism campaign, Dak Organization undertook several pivotal initiatives aimed at raising awareness about gender-based violence (GBV) and promoting gender equality across various communities. From November 19 to December 10, Dak facilitated 16 Salam Bus trips in Sharya, Beban, and Shekhka, engaging 356 individuals in comprehensive discussions on gender equality, the empowerment of women, and the eradication of GBV. These sessions were tailored to both mixed-gender and female-only groups, ensuring a wide-reaching impact.



In addition, Dak implemented the "Your Voice is Power" initiative, which took place on November 28 at Cihan University in Duhok Governorate. This event involved 100 college students, aged 20-25, who participated in discussions centered on GBV, the importance of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and broader themes of gender equality.



On December 5, 2024 Dak organized an event at the Sahrya Center, with 25 women from staff and volunteers coming together to engage in awareness-raising activities on women's rights and GBV. Furthermore, Dak participated in a Media Forum organized by the Iraqi Women Journalist's Forum, which included 50 organizations from Iraq and the Kurdistan Region. The forum focused on the achievements of Resolution 1325, media coverage of gender equality efforts, and the critical role of media in advancing women's rights.

The campaign's outcomes were substantial, with 75% of media coverage dedicated to activities under the Second National Civil Society Organizations' plan for Resolution 1325. The efforts resulted in significant dissemination of awareness materials, university dialogues on the intersection of women, peace, and security, and the production of media content that emphasized women's contributions to peacebuilding. Additionally, 18% of the initiatives focused on capacity-building for media professionals and workshops with clerics and tribal leaders to prevent sexual violence and promote public awareness on GBV. Through these efforts, Dak successfully contributed to advancing gender equality, increasing the visibility of women's roles in peace and security, and supporting survivors of GBV.



VOLUNTEERISM PROGRAM

Dak Organization proudly announces the successful completion of its two-month Volunteerism Program, held in 2024, which brought together 15 passionate and committed volunteers. This transformative program provided participants with invaluable hands-on experience across a variety of organizational departments, including Logistics, HR, Finance, Proposal Writing, MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning), Legal Awareness, Women Empowerment, and vital field roles such as Community Mobilizer and Facilitator.

In addition to practical experience, the program offered engaging skill-building sessions that further enhanced volunteers' capabilities in essential areas such as computer skills, reporting, English communication, and academic correspondence (including both email and in-person communication).

We are thrilled to share that many of these dedicated volunteers have successfully transitioned into full-time roles with other NGOs, leveraging the skills and knowledge they gained during the program. Moreover, three of our exceptional volunteers have joined the Dak Organization team as permanent staff members, and we are excited to continue collaborating with them in our mission to empower women and promote positive change.



Ahwaz's Journey to Empowerment and Leadership

The experience with Dak was great. Dak truly empowers women. I am so thankful for the economic support and personal encouragement I received. Thanks to Dak, I am now a Master's student, a dream I never thought possible before.



AHWAZ

Community Mobilizer

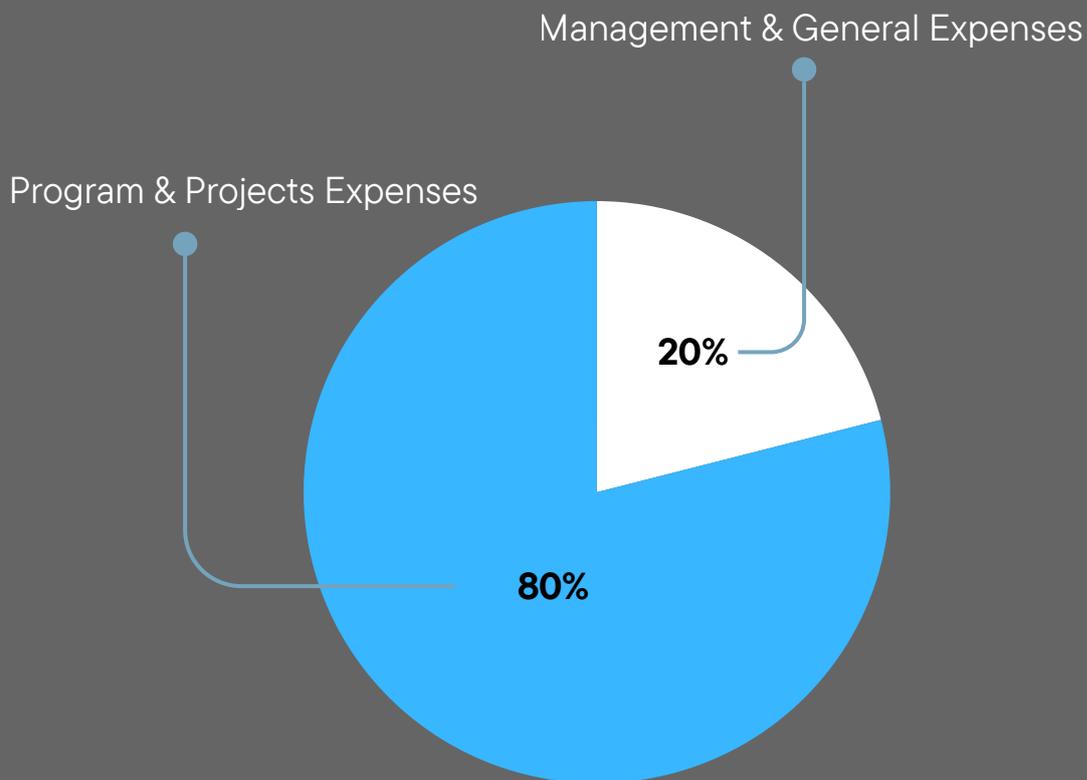
Ahwaz's journey with Dak began as a volunteer, and from there, her life was transformed. After participating in peacebuilding sessions, she became deeply passionate about making a difference and was inspired to become a peacebuilder. Her dedication and hard work led her to take on roles as a Community Mobilizer in one project and as a Focal Point in another.

Ahwaz's story is a shining example of the life-changing impact of Dak's programs. From a volunteer to a leader, she embodies the power of empowerment, education, and support in helping women realize their full potential.

Financial Summary

In 2024, Dak Organization projects were funded by foundations and donors, either directly or through partnerships.

The total expenses for 2024 were 394.211.244 USD, and it has been spent as follow:



Gratitude to Our Donors and Partners

Our achievements are made possible by the steadfast support and collaboration of our donors and partners. Their dedication empowers us to make a lasting impact, and we are deeply grateful for their continued trust and partnership in driving positive change.



Looking Ahead

In 2025, Dak Organization for Ezidi Women Development will continue to build on its successes, focusing on empowering marginalized women and girls in northern Iraq. Our priorities will include expanding mental health initiatives, promoting social cohesion, and advocating for women's legal rights and participation in peace processes.

We are committed to ensuring women, especially from marginalized backgrounds, are seen as active participants in shaping their communities. Our goal is to see them in leadership roles, recognized for their potential and capacity to lead.

Over the past year, we have made a tangible impact through protection services, livelihood support, and sustainable agricultural programs. Our work has reached marginalized communities, offering essential services and renewed hope for a better future.

We remain dedicated to advocating for women's rights and empowering them to navigate an ever-evolving world, aligning with global advancements in gender equality and human rights. Together, we are building a future where justice, equality, and safety are realities for every woman.



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