

# Welcome to the First C4JR YSL NEWSLETTER

The Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR) is publishing regular newsletters on the Yazidi Survivors Law (YSL) starting July 2023 in three languages: Arabic, English, and Kurdish (Kurmanji and Sorani). Our goal is to share accurate and up-to-date information regarding the YSL and share the views and experiences of all actors included in the implementation of this seminal transitional justice framework to address atrocities committed by ISIS in Iraq.

## Latest News on the YSL

### Application Statistics

As of June 19, the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs announced that a total of 1,670 requests were submitted, including 1,015 applications who completed the procedures to receive their salaries. Positive decisions were issued to 485 women and 353 children, and a total of 603 Master Cards were issued for beneficiaries to date. For more information, visit <https://www.molsa.gov.iq/?article=2432>

### Implementation of the YSL

The YSL includes reparation benefits to be provided to each survivor whose application is approved. These are: 1) a monthly salary, 2) rehabilitation services, 3) return to education, 4) priority in public employment and 5) a housing unit or land. Not all of these benefits have started distribution yet.

- In a ceremony held on March 1, 2023, the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs distributed the first monthly payments under the YSL. At the ceremony, 24 Yazidi survivors (21 women and 3 men) received QiCards that they can use to withdraw the monthly payments. For more information, visit <bit.ly/3xYNI76>.

*"I have been receiving monthly payments since April 2023. As a fixed salary for me every month, these helped me to cover my monthly needs." - Yazidi survivor*

- In order to address the current gap in the provision of mental health services by institutions, the Directorate signed agreements with eight NGOs on March 28, 2023 who can support survivors both during applications to the YSL and after their applications have been approved. These are Farida Global Organization, Free Yazidi Foundation, Hope Makers, Intercultural Dialogue Organization for

Development and Relief, Jesuit Refugee Services, Jiyan Foundation, SEED Foundation, and Yazda. Survivors can request the Directorate to refer them to NGOs close to them who can provide mental health support. Until now, the Directorate has referred 21 survivors for mental health services.



Activation of MHPSS Referral System for the Directorate for Survivors' Affairs workshop, March 28, 2023.

For more information, visit <bit.ly/3KdYPKy>.

- As of June 19, 2023, the Directorate supported the return of 13 survivors to education. 27 other survivors are prepared to return to their education early next year.
- On May 23, 2023, Prime Minister Mohamed Shia' Al Sudani has directed to implement Article 6-2 of the YSL which stipulates to grant a plot of land and real estate loan or a free housing unit to eligible survivors.
- On June 19, 2023, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Directorate held its second annual conference on the YSL on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. The conference was attended by survivors and C4JR representatives as well. The Minister announced that the Iraqi government allocated close to 25 billion dinars to the Directorate in its 2023 budget.

The YSL provides for the search for the missing, exhumation of mass graves and identification, memorialization, and cooperation for prosecuting ISIS members. The law also tasks the Directorate with supporting survivors for them to achieve their well-being. The Directorate has been working towards that end by supporting efforts to search for missing persons, accountability and missing civil documentation. Future newsletters will provide more information on this work.

## Challenges

Each newsletter will highlight one or more challenges for survivors or other stakeholders in the implementation of the YSL. In this first issue, C4JR is drawing attention to the requirement that survivors file criminal complaints in order to qualify for reparations under the YSL.

Shortly after the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs (GDSA) opened the application process, the Committee in charge of deciding individual applications decided that applicants should provide documentation showing they filed a criminal complaint against ISIS perpetrators. This requirement was intentionally not included in the YSL or Bylaws to avoid unduly burdening survivors who had already faced significant trauma.

In order to obtain this document, survivors must travel to a police station and investigative court in their place of origin in Ninewa, to provide a statement about the violations they faced in captivity. This initial visit is often followed up by additional visits including visiting the anti-terrorism court.

*"I visited the court in February 2023 to provide my statement in order to make an application under the YSL. I completed the procedures in April 2023. The court visit was good and did not affect me much, but the legal procedures to issue the investigative papers related to the YSL took a lot of time." - Female Turkmen survivor*

This requirement is creating a barrier for many survivors to apply for reparations. Survivors are expected to travel great distances and cover their own costs for the trip, so many survivors cannot access the court. This is especially difficult if not impossible for the thousands of survivors living abroad who will not be able to receive reparations because they are unable to return to Iraq. For many survivors, repeating the details of the violations they endured is also re-traumatizing. For these reasons, C4JR and many other local and international organizations are advocating to remove this requirement. To find out more, see

<https://c4jr.org/0604202327288>. To hear from survivors, see a video here [https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ex-tid=CL-UNK-UNK-UNK-IO5\\_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1f-B&v=883489246284910](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ex-tid=CL-UNK-UNK-UNK-IO5_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1f-B&v=883489246284910).

At the time of this publication, only applications of survivors who submit documentation showing they filed criminal complaints are being processed. C4JR will immediately provide updates if there are changes to this requirement.

Survivors whom the C4JR met with about the court requirement agreed that survivors should not be coerced to provide investigative papers. They also stressed that there should be additional mechanisms to determine that an applicant is a genuine survivor and the Committee should resort to all other available evidence to verify the claim, such as documents issued by international and domestic bodies or Committee interviews with the survivor. Survivors also highlighted that ISIS members should be held accountable through coordination between the Directorate and other bodies that collect evidence.

## From The Survivors

### Message from the C4JR's Survivors Council

*"The YSL is important because it is an acknowledgement of the atrocities and injustices that befell us as ISIS survivors and it promises to hold ISIS members accountable. It also enables survivors to be financially independent and meet several other needs.*

*The Iraqi government should allocate an appropriate budget to implement all provisions of the law, not just the compensation clause. Also, survivors should be consulted if there are any suggestions to improve the law. As survivors, we do not want any changes without being consulted."*

### Coming up on the newsletter

The C4JR prepared an anonymous survey to learn about survivors' thoughts and opinions about the application process for the YSL. We will start reaching out to survivors soon to ask if they would like to participate in this survey, and will share its results here anonymously. We hope that the survey will allow us to better identify the successes, challenges and needs for the YSL applications.

## THERE IS NO DEADLINE TO APPLY TO THE YSL! HERE IS HOW YOU CAN APPLY IF YOU ARE A SURVIVOR

The YSL provides reparations if you are a member of one of the following groups:

- Adult and minor female survivors of ISIS captivity from the Yazidi, Shabak, Christian or Turkmen communities;
- Male Yazidis who were abducted by ISIS when they were under the age of 18 at the time they were abducted by ISIS;
- All persons from the Yazidi, Shabak, Christian or Turkmen communities who were abducted by ISIS and personally survived a specific incident of ISIS mass killing.

Applications are made to the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs. You can apply in three ways:

- Making an appointment with the Directorate in their Sinjar or Mosul offices and visiting the office at the appointment time. You can make the appointment at <https://ur.gov.iq/login>. See this video on how to make an appointment: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ARucl4gYU&ab\\_channel=IOMIRAQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ARucl4gYU&ab_channel=IOMIRAQ)
- Filling out a hard copy form and taking it to the Directorate physically. You still need to register online using the link above to get your unique registration code.
- Applying online. You can submit your application, together with copies of your ID and any supporting documents you have to the link above. See this video on how to apply online: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfoDfQWwErE&ab\\_channel=IOMIRAQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfoDfQWwErE&ab_channel=IOMIRAQ)

You can apply on your own, you do not need a lawyer or NGO to apply. If you would like any support with the application, you can contact NGOs in your area. **There is no deadline to apply for the YSL. There is also no fee to apply.**

You can follow the Directorate's announcements on Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100076062182514>

## Get To Know C4JR Members

In each newsletter, we will highlight the YSL-related work of two C4JR member organizations, including information on where and how to reach them.

**Free Yezidi Foundation** - Khanke, Sheikhan, Sharya



Free Yezidi Foundation's (FYF) all-female protection team works with survivors, including survivors with children born of rape, providing them with MHPSS services, supporting them to apply for and collect YSL reparations, and enabling them to access an array of services that holistically address their needs and empower them to heal and recover. To do so, FYF's protection team undertakes the following:

- Assists YSL survivors in the process of applying for and collecting reparations under the YSL;
- Provides social and psychological support to survivors, including trauma treatment and individual and group therapy sessions;
- Provides livelihoods and education services to survivors;
- Supports survivors' access to justice to hold perpetrators accountable;

- Provides safe spaces and resources to empower survivors to defend their rights, including their right to reparations;
- Coordinates with the General Directorate for Survivors' Affairs and IOM advisors to improve survivor-centered and effective implementation of the YSL.

Survivors can contact the FYF protection team directly at any of the following numbers:

+9647502068053  
 +9647510358018  
 +9647805059772

**Justice for Minority Rights - Nineveh**



Justice for Minority Rights supports survivors through:

- Registering YSL applications using the electronic portal;
- Providing legal and psychological support to survivors;
- Following up on investigative papers.

Justice for Minority Rights has its offices in the Al-Rabee district of Bashiqa. Survivors can contact the organization at the below number and e-mail address:

jomr\_ngo@yahoo.com  
 +9647508194265

**About the C4JR**

The Coalition for Just Reparations (C4JR) is an alliance of 33 NGOs calling for comprehensive reparations for civilian victims of atrocity crimes perpetrated during the ISIL conflict in Iraq. C4JR uses Iraqi law and international human rights law to support reparation claims of survivors and encourage Iraqi authorities to meet their obligation to provide reparations. C4JR also works to inform, advocate, offer viable solutions and engage with different stakeholders to ensure survivors realize their right to reparations by providing space for deliberation, collaboration and reflection.

Here is what the C4JR has done about the YSL in the recent months.

- C4JR published a report, More than "Ink on Paper": Taking Stock two Years After the Adoption of the Yazidi [Female] Survivors Law: <https://c4jr.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/More-than-Ink-on-Paper-two-years-after-YSL-adoption-report-FIN-ENG.pdf>
- Conducted a podcast interview with former president of Iraq, Dr. Barham Salih who offered his insights on the passage and implementation of the YSL: <https://c4jr.org/0803202327158>
- Conducted a consultation meeting with survivors and C4JR members on June 19, 2023, on the International Day Against Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, with a view of better integrating survivors views and perspectives into C4JR programming and advocacy.

You can visit our website at [www.c4jr.org](http://www.c4jr.org) for more information.

**Contact Us**

Please contact us at [info@c4jr.org](mailto:info@c4jr.org) for any feedback regarding this newsletter. You can also follow us on social media at the links below.



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