

Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights

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1. Fact Sheet

Mission

The Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights supports survivors of human rights violations, defends fundamental freedoms and promotes democratic values in Kurdistan-Iraq, Iraq and Northern Syria. We strive for a democratic society that protects the dignity of the human being, where adults and children enjoy the rights to life and freedom, and citizens are free from torture and terror.

Name and logo

Jiyan (zia:n) is the Kurdish word for life. The tree in our logo is a calligraphic artwork spelling out the name of our organization in Arabic and Kurdish.

History

In 2005, we opened Iraq's first treatment center for survivors of torture in the multiethnic city of Kirkuk. The Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights is a non-profit and non-governmental charity organization registered in Iraq. In 2007, the German organisation Jiyan Stiftung für Menschenrechte e.V. was founded to provide support. Both organisations work closely together.

Where we work

The Jiyan Foundation operates 10 centres in Kurdistan, Iraq and Syria. In Iraq, we have so far worked in Alqosh, Baghdad, Chamchamal, Duhok, Erbil, Kirkuk, Mosul and Sulaymaniyah, while in Syria we operate a centre in the city of Qamishlo. We also operate mobile teams to reach remote areas and camps

Programs

The Jiyan Foundation provides survivors of violence and their families with physical rehabilitation, mental well-being and social reintegration measures. We are committed to ensuring that survivors can exercise their basic human rights and are protected from further attacks. We promote civic engagement and peaceful coexistence. Through training and research, we are constantly improving the quality of our work. Our programs are:

- Trauma Care and Health Program
- Rights and Justice Program
- Democracy and Civil Society Program
- Program for Training and Capacity Building

The variety of these programs depicts our holistic approach, which we base on the experience that, in post-repressive societies, the rehabilitation of individuals, families and communities is a crucial step in building a peaceful civil society.

Beneficiaries

We treat survivors of human rights violations and violence, including victims of torture, genocide, war and terror, persecution as well as gender-based and domestic violence. We specifically address vulnerable groups such as women and children, prisoners, people living in rural and remote areas, Syrian refugees, and internally displaced persons. We help survivors regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity or spiritual beliefs.

Over the past 20 years, around 100,000 survivors have benefited from our work.

Team

We employ about 120 local staff, among them psychologists, trauma therapists and social workers, psychiatrists and physicians, physiotherapists, as well as management and administrative staff. In Berlin, Germany, a small team supports the Jiyan Foundation.

Finances

Our work depends on international project funding and private donations. Majority of our funding comes from the German Foreign Office, the European Union and MISEREOR.

Call for donations

The easiest way to donate is through our online donation form via our [website](#) with SEPA, Klarna, credit cards or PayPal. The Jiyan Stiftung is a registered charity organization in Germany. Donations from people living in an EU Member State are tax-deductible.

Our bank account in Germany:

Jiyan Stiftung für Menschenrechte e.V.

Name of bank: Ethikbank

BIC/SWIFT: GENODEF1ETK

IBAN: DE48 8309 4495 0003 3196 44

For donations via PayPal we have set up the address donate@jiyan-foundation.org

Donations can also be made via [betterplace](#) or [globalgiving](#).

Photographs and video material

We present a selection of pictures from our work at

- Flickr (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/jiyanfoundation>)
- Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/jiyanfoundation>)

Stay informed

Our website is regularly updated and you are welcome to join our press mailing list. We are also on social media:

- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/jiyanfoundationint>)
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/jiyanfoundation>)
- Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/jiyanfoundation>)
- Website (<https://jiyan.org>)

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2. Portrait Salah Ahmad: Founder and President of the Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights

Salah Ahmad, born in Kirkuk in 1959, is the founder and president of the Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights, the only institution offering comprehensive medical, psychotherapeutic and social assistance to survivors of human rights violations in Iraq.

After being forced to flee his hometown in the early 1980s, he settled in Berlin, Germany, where he studied psychology and became a trained child and youth psychotherapist and systemic family therapist. Throughout his career, he has treated hundreds of traumatized refugees from numerous countries at the Zentrum Ueberleben, Germany.

After the fall of the Ba'ath regime he had fled from, Mr. Ahmad decided to return to his hometown Kirkuk where he established the first treatment center for survivors of torture in Iraq in 2005. He has continued to use his experience and expertise to advance the idea of psychotherapy and trauma care in his home country, to establish a unique network of rehabilitation centers in North Iraq, and to train hundreds of local staff for the benefit of thousands of survivors of human rights abuses.

Mr. Ahmad regularly commutes between Germany and Iraq and now holds an exceptional position in the Kurdish region as the success and respected work of the Jiyan Foundation allow him to push for policy changes that in return impact our clients' lives.

To honor his tireless work and accomplishments in Iraq, Mr. Ahmad was awarded the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in February 2015.

3. Quotations of Patients and Staff

"You must know ... what you are doing for us here in Halabja is unheard-of. For over twenty years we have been suffering now, and you are the first ones to soothe our pain. Each day I include you in my prayers."

Survivor of the chemical attacks, Halabja

"This center is more than just a treatment center. It is a hospital, a school, a private clinic, and a social counseling office for our clients. They trust us and believe that we can help them and change their situation for the better. Our patients tell us many hidden subjects and secrets, describe their pains and sometimes speak to us about their dreams. They are lost between past suffering and present struggle."

Therapist, Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights

"I came to the women`s group of the center because I heard so many good things about it. You know, we have always been told that Kurds cannot be trusted. But here, everybody is equal and all of us have

the same problems. If all the people of Kirkuk came to understand each other like we do in this group, we could finally live in peace."

Songül, Turkman woman, from Kirkuk

"I'm very grateful to your organization. Organizations such as yours may not provide money or earn our living, but they are doing very much to ease some of our pains."

Mawlood, a survivor of the Ba'ath regime

"I recently returned from abroad. There, the doctors are very kind with their clients. I see the same generosity in your center. Since my mother has started visiting you, she feels much better; I would like to send my sister for treatment, too."

Son of one of our clients who regularly visits us

"When I first came to this center, I had no motivation for staying alive. After meeting you, life is getting back to me."

Galawezh, a survivor of the Ba'ath regime

"Coming here takes the pressure off me and all my negative thoughts go away. Sometimes I come by just like that, without an appointment."

Female patient

"I am here because I have a goal to achieve and I have to fight to get there, and this place protects us."

Resident of a women's shelter, Sulaymaniyah

"Children are now talking about the bombings as if they were talking about a cartoon movie. How many generations will pay the price of what is happening to us now? I wish to write to you that the situation has improved and that we all returned to normal life. But unfortunately, the scope of violence increases every month, as does the number of people searching for help at our center."

Staff of the Jiyan Foundation, Kirkuk

"I used to think of negative things, which led me to my depression, and I tried to commit suicide twice but regretted it later. Those thoughts affected my body and I started having headaches and feeling angry but then I decided to change my thoughts, and my life got so much better."

Resident of a women's shelter, Sulaymaniyah