

Rojava's Êzidî Emergency: Humanitarian Emergency Scale Perceived Needs (HESPER) Assessment & Gender-based Violence Situation Analysis



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Photo: Newroz Camp- Rojava, Kurdistan (North Syria)

Foreword

Roj Women is a Kurdish grassroots women's rights association established in 2004 and based in London, since its establishment Roj Women has been working with a two-fold mission. Firstly, through advocacy work aiming to improve the lives and expand the opportunities available to women living in Kurdish regions all over the world by conducting research and campaigning to raise awareness around the political factors that shape their struggle among policy makers and the general public, secondly, through working on community development in the UK and campaigns for far-reaching legal and political reforms in Turkey with the ultimate aim of improving the lives of Kurdish and non-Kurdish women in Turkey.

Through our community work we pursue the empowerment of women among the Kurdish migrant population in the UK by means of:

- a) Seminars and trainings to advance general education and knowledge of rights.
- b) Language courses, counselling sessions, apprenticeships and other similar work related training to develop women's skills in order to tackle unemployment.
- c) Provision of facilities for community recreation.
- d) Psychological support and legal and general advice for victims of domestic violence and forced marriage.

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We are indebted to the Êzidî people who welcomed the team and shared their experiences with the help of Noori Saaed, Êzidî camp resident and interpreter. This study would not have been possible without the logistical support of the camp administration, Abdel Hakim and the women's organisation members of Rojava including interpreter and translation support from Dijle Ose, Muhammad Ibrahim and Nujin. And, Maha Sidky from UNHCR in Qamislo, Rojava, we thank her warmly for sharing the population figures after their registration exercise.

This report is a joint work of Roj Women, Cenê and International Free Women's Foundation. Cenê is a Kurdish women's office for peace based in Germany and the International Free Women's Foundation in the Netherlands, their work includes organising conferences, publications, seminars and social and political activities in Europe. They support social and humanitarian projects for women and children in the Middle East and in other parts of the world.

We hope that this publication will be useful to organisations, NGOs, researchers and individuals who wish to further their support to the people of Rojava, with particular aims on addressing gender-based violence and gender equality.

Background to the Emergency

Since January 2014 it is estimated that the seizing of territory by armed opposition groups (AOGs) in Iraq has displaced 1.8 million people. AOGs have included Batthist, tribal militia, ex-Iraqi army personnel and members of IS/ 'Daesh' entering Iraq from the Syrian conflict. In early August 2014 population displacement intensified when thousands of Êzidî people from Sinjar Province in Iraq fled North in order to escape AOG advances into their towns and villages, this was largely attributed to IS/ 'Daesh' expansion. By early September reports¹ counted an estimated 500,000 displaced people settling in camps in Northern Iraq and tens of thousands more refugees crossing the border into Syria and Rojava, the self-administered region of North East Syria, with the assistance of the People's Protection Units of Rojava.

Since the start of the revolution in Syria people living in the North East, predominantly ethnically Kurdish regions, began to take part, taking authority from the Assad regime and defending themselves militarily with the deployment of YPG/ YPJ, 'People's Protection Units', linked with military training and support of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party). The People's Protection Units are recognised as having played an essential role in the most recent wave of the crisis by rescuing Êzidî civilians from Sinjar region and opening a safe passage for them to flee North away from the attacks against them. Political activities since the revolution began include the formation of a governing Assembly/ Ruling Council administering three cantons, Efrin, Cizîrê and Kobanê, via unions and associations described as system of 'democratic confederalism'.

IS/ 'Daesh' forces are an element of the Syrian conflict that emerged within the past three years characterised by fundamentalism, insurgency and sectarian brutality. IS/ 'Daesh' forces have reportedly been bolstered by foreign funding, seized Iraqi military hardware and a porous Turkish border, which has allowed foreign fighters into Syria unchecked. They are now in control of significant territory with ambitions to expand to establish an 'Islamic State of Iraq and Sham' (ISIS) or an 'Islamic State of Iraq and Levant' (ISIL). Many civilians in their path have tended to flee, which has created an intensified refugee crisis on top of the first waves of displacement caused by rebel engagement with the Assad regime. Most recently Western powers have given the existence of IS/'Daesh' as a reason for military intervention in the form of air strikes in Iraq and Syria.

Almost 4000 Êzidîs refugees are now living in a camp (Newroz Camp) established since 11th August close to the town of Derik in the canton of Cizîrê in North Syria, in addition 25 internally displaced Arab families from Idlib and Aleppo are living in the camp. Êzidî refugees from Sinjar brought with them reports of massacre, kidnap and rape; many of them fled in the clothes they were wearing and some were forced to abandon family members who they could not carry or transport. It is in this light that humanitarian actors are currently working in the region and this research aims to support their objectives of care and safety for refugee populations.

¹ Iraq IDP Crisis Situation Report No. 9, 29th August 2014, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info>



Newroz Camp, September 2014

Executive Summary

This report was undertaken to investigate the situation of Êzidî refugees in Rojava, Kurdistan (Northern Syria) following their displacement from Sinjar Province, Iraq, particularly in light of the widespread media reports of violence against women and with existing knowledge of the intensification of risk to displaced or refugee women in conflict situations and in particular the Syrian conflict.²

The research draws attention to the fact that despite the numerous and broad range of perceived problems experienced by this displaced population that there is also a finding of risk to the safety and welfare of women and girls which will require both emergency response and long-term durable solutions, reintegration, survivor-centred support. This report is not a large-scale GBV enquiry and focuses on the needs of women and girls rather than boys and men, which is a limitation, but reflects existing knowledge about the situation of women in patriarchal society with an honour-based tradition.³

Immediate perceived problems of the displaced population include concerns about shelter, clothing, education and trauma, which are being addressed by the camp management committee, established by the regional council, and UNHCR. The research identifies areas in

² Peace and Security UN Women (2014). 'We just kept silent' Gender-based violence amongst Syrian refugees in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

³ 'Honour'based violence and Kurdish communities: Moving towards action and change in Iraqi Kurdistan and the UK', Gill Hague, Aisha K. Gill, Nazand Begikhani *Journal of Gender Studies* Vol. 22, Iss. 4, 2013

which further discussion and research would be beneficial, in particular in terms of problems of 'Separation' (and solutions for re-unification), 'Income and livelihood', 'Too much free time'. Given the importance placed on women's honour by the respondents, demonstrated by their spontaneous comments about it confirmed by a community-level informant, and the problem of safety and violence against women, which was raised by some respondents, this will also be an area warranting further intervention.

The situation analysis on gender-based violence examined Rojava-based women's organisations for their activities and capacity to cope with emergency and long-term planning and solutions. It found encouraging signs of intense activity in Rojava relating to women's empowerment, political, economic and social emancipation in addition to specific services such as safe houses, medical, security, protection and psychosocial support. However the active organisations are reliant on their own membership for resources and the existence of reliable data and systems on case management and indicators for monitoring and evaluation of work was not yet established. Work needs to be done on establishing indicators, which are in line with humanitarian protection cluster in terms of data collection, storage and sharing, developing referral pathway for survivors, developing context specific standard operations procedures, and multi-sectoral engagement and prevention programming.

It is recommended that there be:

- Networking structures, information sharing and coordination meetings between international humanitarian actors and women's organisations locally and the Women's Commission in order to harness the potential of the women's organisations in the area to work effectively with the camp in terms of relief, rehabilitation and development regarding GBV.
- Culturally appropriate engagement of both women and men in the Êzidî population to maximize their chances of care and support with efforts to engage at the local level all sectors of the community (men, women, leaders, children etc).
- Standardisation of referral, case management and information management with usable guidelines and rollout.
- Ideally the establishment of indicators which match humanitarian Protection Cluster indicators in terms of data collection, storage and sharing, developing referral pathway for survivors, developing context specific standard operating procedures, multi-sectoral engagement and prevention programming.⁴
- Campaigns to fundraise internationally to support both emergency services for survivors and long-term GBV programming.
- Campaigning through rights networks to increase understanding of the context.

⁴ See: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/applications/ir/indicators/global-clusters/10/ind-key/1/domain/p2-pg-gender-based-violence-676>

Introduction

This report aims to present the findings of a research exercise, which used mixed methodologies, including the Humanitarian Emergency Settings Perceived Needs (HESPER) Scale,⁵ a situational analysis of gender-based violence (GBV)⁶ provisions in humanitarian settings and semi-structured interviews. The first part of the report addresses the results of a HESPER study conducted in Newroz Camp near Derik in Rojava, North East Syria, the second part is a situational analysis of GBV interventions⁷ in the setting of Rojava and short analysis of four in-depth interviews with Êzidî people from the camp in relation to the attacks they had experienced.

GBV was decided an appropriate subject for the report for three main reasons:

- a. Anecdotal reports of kidnap and rape of women in attacks on Êzidî people
- b. The traditional importance of women's honour
- c. Roj Women's remit as women's support and campaigning organisation

Challenges

Challenges for the fieldwork included intermittent power supply, translation/ interpretation, inability to interview all the required respondents, lack of existing records and systems. The study has not been able to obtain as much information as preferred however it is possible to make some limited conclusions and recommendation about the issues, concerns and opportunities for GBV in this setting.

Overview of the study

The goals of the study were as follows:

1. The first goal was to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment by identifying the perceived needs (i.e. the serious problems) that people living in Newroz camp have.

The study made use of the standardised tool the Humanitarian Emergency Settings Perceived Needs Scale (HESPER) developed and tested by the World Health Organisation and Kings College London. The HESPER Scale measures the serious problems of adults living in humanitarian situations (for instance during conflicts or other disasters), based directly on their own views (i.e. people's perceived needs). It shows the problem areas with which people would like help. The HESPER Scale aims to provide a quick, scientifically robust way to measure people's serious problems, and includes a wide range of social, psychological and physical problem areas.⁸

⁵ World Health Organization & King's College London (2011). The Humanitarian Emergency Settings Perceived Needs Scale (HESPER): Manual with Scale. Geneva: World Health Organization.

⁶ For an example of a detailed situation analysis see Centre of Arab Women for training and research (CAWTAR). 2011. 'Situation analysis of gender-based violence in Lebanon. Lebanon: United Nations Population Fund'

⁷ Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) 2005, Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings. Focusing on Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence in Emergencies

⁸ For a full manual on HESPER please see: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789241548236_eng.pdf

2. The second goal was to give an idea about main GBV issues that might arise for the new refugees in Rojava and to map the capacity of existing support networks for GBV issues in the Rojava region. In addition, in the HESPER survey a question, which asks respondents about whether violence against women is a serious problem, is also included.

Sampling Method for HESPER

The sampling was planned with a list of tents provided by the camp administrator. Four (two person) interviewing teams (interviewer-interpreter) were established to cover the four geographic sectors of the refugee camp and a simple random approach was used with approximately one in every 8 tents being selected with the aim of achieving 100 interviews with the first female of the household who could take part. A small number of males (10) were also interviewed. The fieldwork team completed 101 interviews. Most respondents were female, and all were over 15 years old. Further demographic information such as educational level, marital status, religion and number of children was not asked in the survey due to the limited scope of this exercise.

Method for situation analysis

The research team asked the host local women's committee to facilitate visits with key organisations working with GBV. A framework of questions relating to GBV situation analysis was identified for use in semi-structured discussions with civil society and non-governmental organisations with a mandate/ focus on gender; an assembly minister with responsibility for the Women's Commission was also interviewed and the situation analysis materials shared with her office. The desirable organisations to contact included those involved in activities such as coordination, community, psychosocial, health, legal/ protection and security in relation to GBV. In addition, from the HESPER exercise four respondents were identified who were willing to take part in a further interview to consider the situation of women and their experience of the attacks which had them led to flee from Sinjar.

Part 1: HESPER assessment & Key Findings

Interviewers used the HESPER Scale to ask participants about 26 different types of problems (i.e. health care, place they live in, education). Overall, participants rated 8.6 of these areas as serious problem (the lowest number was 2 and the highest was 17). Figure 1 shows an overview of the number of areas rated as serious problem by participants. In order to get a better understanding of the problem areas please see later comments and observations.

Figure 1. Overview of number of areas rated as serious problem

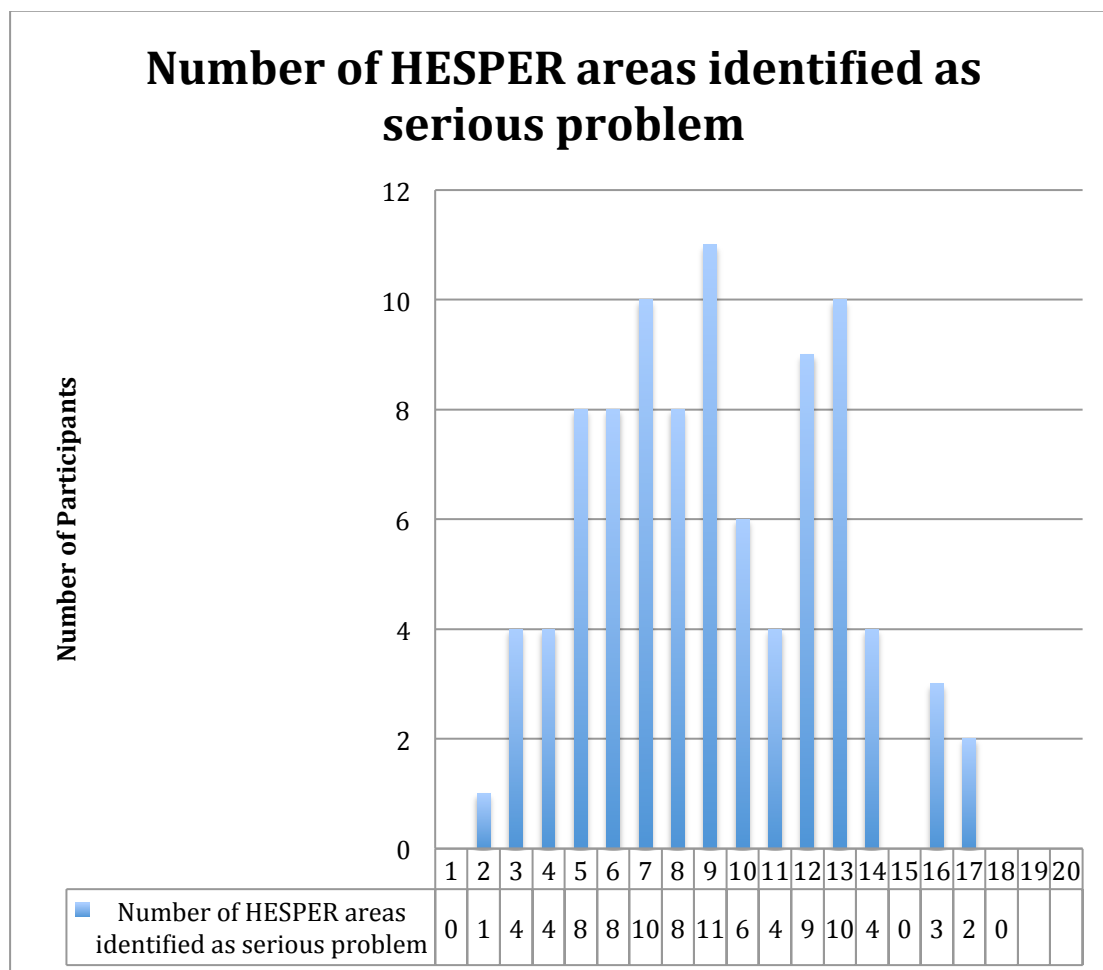


Table 1 and Fig 2 show the frequency with which each of the 26 HESPER areas were rated as one of participants' three most serious problems (i.e. as either their most serious problem, second most serious problem, or third most serious problem). 'Place to live' was the problem area that appeared most in the top three concerns. 'Income or livelihood' was rated by almost half (47.2%) as one of their three most serious problems, more than any other problem area. Other areas which were named by more than 10% of participants as one of the their three most serious problems included 'Food' (24.5%), 'Physical health' (23.0%), 'Place to live in' (20.8%), 'Being displaced from home' (18.6%), 'Separation from family members' (16.7%), 'Clothes, shoes, bedding or blankets' (16.4%), and 'Alcohol or drug use in your community' (14.5%).

Table 1. Number/ % of participants who rated each of the HESPER scale's problem areas as one of their three most serious problems (n=101). Items are ranked and listed in descending order of total priority ratings

HESPER Item	Number / % of participants (n=101)
Place to Live	22
Education for your children	10
Income or livelihood	10
Clothes, shoes, bedding, blankets	10
Distress	9
Separation from family members	8
Being displaced form home	7
Too much free time	5
Physical Health	5
Toilets	5
Food	5
Drinking Water	4
None	4
Information	1
Healthcare	1
Keeping Clean	1

Figure 2 HESPER items rated in one of three most serious problem areas

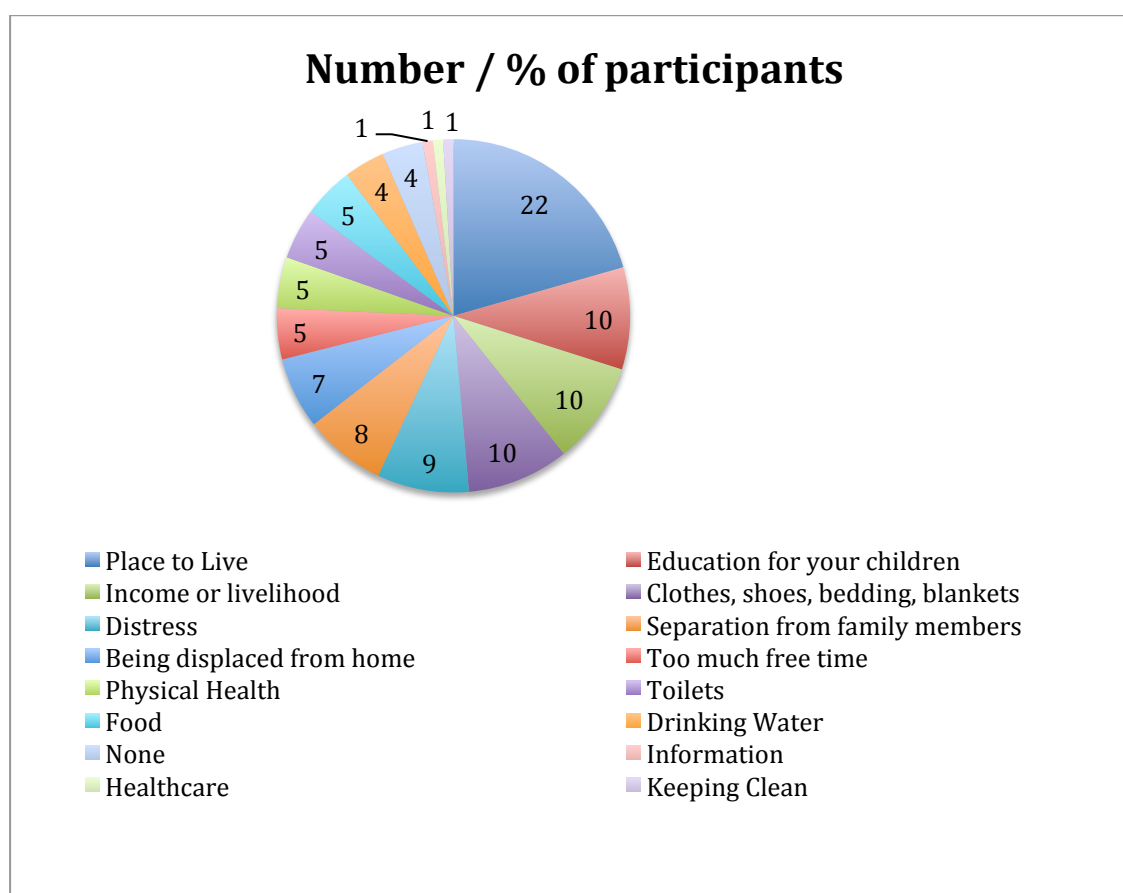


Table 2 shows the number of participants who rated each of the 26 HESPER areas as one of the top three most serious problems. ‘Clothes, shoes, bedding, blankets’ was rated as serious problem by 84% of participants, again more than any other problem area. The following areas were rated as serious problem by more than half of participants: ‘Being displaced from home’ (77%), ‘Distress’ (70%), ‘Toilets’ (69%), ‘Income or livelihood’ (67%), ‘Too much free time’ (67%), ‘Separation from family members’ (62%), ‘Keeping clean’ (58%), ‘Education for your children’ (52%). However if those for whom children are not relevant are removed from the figures then it could be said that 60% of parents rate this as a serious problem.

Table 2. Participants rating each of the HESPER areas as a serious problem

HESPER item	% Participants rating a serious problem
Clothes	84
Being displaced from home	77
Distress	70
Toilets	69
Income or livelihood	67
Too much free time	67
Separation from family members	62
Keeping Clean	58
Education for your children	52
Place to Live	44
Food	35
Physical Health	31
Drinking Water	24
Care for family members	24
Information	20
Healthcare	17
Mental illness	14
Care for people in your community	10
Safety or protection from violence for women	8
Safety	6
The way aid is provided	5
Support from others	3
Moving between places	1
Respect	0
Law and justice in your community	0
Alcohol or drug use	0

Other serious problems

When the respondents were asked to name any other serious problems not listed on the HESPER Scale, the items given in **Table 3** were underlined.

Table 3. Other serious problem

Other serious problem	Number/ % reporting
Permanent place to live/ security	9
Winter coming	7
Baby milk, baby supplies/ crib	6
<u>The situation of kidnapped women</u>	<u>5</u>
More lighting outside at night	2
Gynaecologist	1
Special needs education	1

Observations during the fieldwork

Age

When asked their specific age the respondent did not always know it but it did not pose a problem for the fieldworkers to allocate the age bracket. Sometimes, for female respondents, their husband or male family member who was present would give the answer on their behalf or the ID card would be produced. One respondent was a 15 year-old pregnant girl.

Drinking water

In general most people were satisfied with the drinking water situation, but for those who did say it was a serious problem a few said it was the water supply was too far for some of them, others commented that it was not clean or sterile enough and did not taste right. Some tents had a collection of small water bottles. Some tents had an open bucket/bowl of water but it was not confirmed whether this was for drinking or not.

Food

Most people did not consider food to be a serious problem but those who did say it was stated that it was cooking facilities that was an issue for them. There is a functioning catering operation underway and food was being delivered three times per day to each area of the camp. Boxes of food including beans, spaghetti and cans of other goods such as tuna were distributed or collected from central distribution.

Place to live

Place to live was rated as one of the top three most serious problems by 22% (top of the perceived most serious problems) although most people did not say that place to live/ shelter was a serious problem. The comments were about flooring being close to the earth, hard to keep clean, shared space issues with some feeling cramped. Additionally, worries about what will happen when winter comes e.g. the tents would not be warm enough and there would be too many people inside in cold weather.

Toilets

Most people said that the toilet situation was a serious problem. Reasons given for concerns included toilets not being hygienic or clean or that they were not conveniently accessed. They said that the people were not using the facilities properly rather than blaming the camp management. Some commented that they would go to the open fields nearby and it was observed that some defecation was taking place in open spaces or near rocks/ pathways around the camp. This is of concern because safe, accessible sanitation spaces are a protective factor in preventing GBV.

Keeping clean

There was an almost equal split in opinion about this issue but more than half stated that keeping clean was a serious problem. Comments about the concerns were more related to the place to wash rather than the supply of soap. Water for washing would have to be collected rather than piped to the tent area. Besides the main shower cabins people were using a small washing tent next to their own tent in some areas, some of these additional tents were built by the camp management team.

Clothes, Shoes, Bedding and blankets

The majority of people said that clothes were a serious problem. Many of them mentioned that they had left Sinjar with the only clothes they were wearing. People locally had donated some clothes but not all had been suitable. Some clothes had been made for children from other material such as bed covers. There were cultural/ religious requirements such as no blue clothing and only a round neck design (no v neck). The women wanted to be wearing white clothing. There was also concern about enough blankets for winter and many people said that shoes were a major issue with many children barefoot and some adults with sore feet from the long walks they had made to escape Sinjar. Clothes were being delivered to the camp as the fieldwork was taking place, this area therefore may not rate as highly in a repeat HESPER exercise.

Income or livelihood

A majority said that income was a serious problem because they have just lost their livelihoods and forced to leave their homes, businesses, livestock, property etc. Some commented about how they want to work and do something, many had previously been employed in various occupations including fruit picking, caring for livestock, working for the Iraqi army. Some had lost substantial livelihoods including one who had lost 10 shops and all his stock. It was commented that there were many poor people in the camp. Others commented that they had not had much income before the attack and therefore there was not a lot of impact on them materially as a result of their experience. Another comment was a concern about paying for an essential operation to prevent the onset of blindness.

Physical health

The majority of people did not say they had a serious problem with physical health, however a substantial minority did. It depended on personal circumstances but there was mention of diabetes, eye problems, there were some children with the appearance of skin conditions. The health services were busy undertaking screening with different age groups and administering vaccinations.

Healthcare

The majority of people said they did not have a serious problem with health care. Each person had been given an individual medical card, there is a camp clinic and pharmacy, mother's were observed administering medicines to their children. There was an elderly lady being looked after by International Rescue. Some who had a serious problem were concerned about payment for more substantial medical care, such as operations, as they have no income or savings. One fieldworker was asked about crutches or a wheelchair, another was asked for transport to hospital and another was asked about an operation that needed to be carried out and for an agency to assist.

Distress

The majority of people said they were suffering from varying forms of distress, feeling devastated and very anxious. People have experienced severe traumas from loss of family members including children/ parents to extended families, homes, livelihoods, property, some have witnessed violence and all forced to flee. There are sacred religious sites, which they have left behind, as well their support networks such as neighbours and friends. They had uncertainty about what was going to happen to them now. Some reported genocide against their people. Some reported children experiencing nightmares, they expressed major concern about missing women, adults described having trouble sleeping and many broke down or were close to tears when they were asked about distress.

Safety

A large majority of people said that safety was not a serious problem where they are now and most made reference to Asayış (Camp security team), YPG as they are in their protection. But a small minority said that safety was still a serious problem. Although they have escaped immediate danger the small minority still feel they could be attacked again.

Education for your children

Around half of the respondents said that education for their child is a serious problem. However if those for whom children's education does not apply/ did not know are removed from the sample then it could be said that 60% of parents consider education for their children to be a serious problem. Education for children was rated as one of the top three serious problems by 10%. The fieldworkers were told that a school with 55 classrooms is being constructed at the camp. UNICEF is actively organizing primary age activities in the camp at present. It was not possible to find out more about whether girls stop going to school earlier than boys because no schooling is in place at present.

Care for family members

This question was not always immediately understood and most respondents clearly stated they could look after their family members and did not have a serious problem.

Separation from family members

The majority of people reported having a serious problem as a result of separation from family members. Some said it was not a serious problem because most family had been able to escape together. However if they said it was a serious problem then it was because they had no idea what had happened to their family members, they knew they had left them behind or had taken a different route and had not seen them or heard from them for a few

weeks. Some had found out from others that a family member they had left behind had died or been killed but they could not find out with certainty.

Being displaced from home

The majority of respondents said that being displaced from home was a serious problem; it was the second most mentioned serious problem after the problem of clothes. People said the place they live is important to them because of cultural and religious reasons, there are holy places where rituals are completed. A few commented that they do not want to go back to Sinjar as they do not feel it will be safe. Some said they had been treated better in Rojava than they had been before because of their identity as a minority which had been discriminated against and had experienced genocides and attacks several times before whereas they are being treated well in this area.

Information for displaced people

There was not a serious problem for 75% of people but for those for whom it was a problem it was related to information about their lost family, friends and loved ones rather than about information they received in the camp about aid and other information related to services.

The way aid is provided and respect

A large majority of people said that there was not a serious problem with the way aid is provided. They said it was fair and they were informed about it. They commented that they could not complain about it on the whole.

Almost everyone said there was not a serious problem with the respect they received. They said that they had been rescued by the YPG (Kurdish forces) and had been treated very well. They said they had received respect and have been treated in a positive way that they had never before anywhere. Some said they felt better in this setting than they would feel in Iraq and that they trust the local people here who are taking care of them.

Moving from place to place

They did not say that movement was a serious problem. Comments included that they did not have the money to move outside the camp and go elsewhere but they know they could if they wanted to and had the resources.

Too much free time

The majority of people said that having free time was a serious problem. Comments were made about wanting things to do, for workshops and activities, about being extremely bored. It was suggested by a respondent that if there were activities in which they could make things they could then sell them to make some income. People said they had too much time to think about what had happened to them and to worry about things.

Law and justice

Almost everyone stated that there was no serious problem with law and justice and feel in a shared situation with other members of the camp as well as being supported by the camp management and they are aware of the 'Asayiş' security provided by the local authorities.

Safety and protection from violence for women

A large majority states that safety or protection from violence for women is not a serious problem. However 8% of respondents said that in Sinjar violence against women had been a problem (this is not about the attacks against women but in their former lives). In the opinion of the fieldworkers there was limited opportunity to explore the subject or to establish what different forms of violence against women might be, especially as there were a number of people around during some interviews, including men and neighbours. One woman commented that she felt more able to talk about these things now than she had before arriving at the camp. The safety of the kidnapped or missing women was an issue that was spontaneously mentioned as a serious problem, which is causing distress and some of those who mentioned this were asked if they could take part in a further interview on the subject. Following the HESPER assessment, 4 of the participants were later visited for in-depth interview on their experiences.⁹

Mental illness in the community and care for those without family/ careers

The large majority of responses did not say that mental illness was a serious problem. For those that commented that there was a problem it appeared there were a few individuals who are suffering from mental illness that they are aware of and it was a respondent who lives close to one unwell person who stated it was a problem because the shouting would disturb them.

The majority of respondents stated that care for other people were not a serious problem. There were some respondents who said that it was a serious problem but there was no clear comment about the issues underlying this response.

⁹ For the summary of the interviews see page 18, Qualitative Interviews

Conclusions from HESPER

The study gives an overview of the serious problems that the population living in Newroz Camp, Derik, has, based directly on their own views. 'Clothes, shoes, bedding and blankets' was the area which was perceived as serious problem by the largest number of participants, shortly followed by 'Being displaced from home' however 'Place to live' was rated by the largest number of participants as one of their three most serious problems. Other areas which were commonly rated as one of participants' three most serious problems, and were also perceived as serious problem by a large number of participants, were 'Education', 'Income/Livelihood', 'Distress', 'Separation from family members'.

LIMITATIONS

The sample size was calculated to be adequate for the needs of the study using formulae available in the HESPER manual. The timing was in the early stages of establishment of the camp (after one month) therefore the issue of 'Clothes', and 'Being displaced from home' are likely given that many had arrived with only what they could take immediately and had just been displaced from home. The chaotic nature of their departure from Sinjar influences the problem of 'Separation from family', the violence that had been experienced and uncertainty about the future influences 'Distress'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our findings, we recommend that:

1. Actors in Newroz Camp should consider addressing 'Place to live' aspects of the shelter provided due to the concern about winter, 'Education', 'Income, livelihood', 'Distress', 'Toilets', 'Separation' are also coming out as common perceived serious problems as is the issue of being able to cook themselves, cooking facilities
2. More detailed interviews (for example key informant interviews or focus groups) should be conducted with the population in Newroz Camp. These should focus especially on 'Separation from family' and 'Displacement from home', 'Income and Livelihood' and 'Too much time' to gain a deeper understanding of how these issues might be addressed, and to identify relevant community resources, suitable interventions and supports.
3. In terms of GBV, one of the respondents was a 15 year-old pregnant female, which raises child protection issues. The issue of 'Safety or protection from violence for women' was rated as a serious problem for 8% of respondents. Given the general under-reporting of this issue, we can assume the real figure is much higher. The serious problem of returning the kidnapped women and what has happened to them was raised spontaneously and raises questions about how they would be rescued and cared for and re-integrated if/ when rescued. These aspects of concern about women are likely to warrant further work and intervention.

Qualitative interviews

Interviews were undertaken with people who had agreed to a further conversation about their experiences and opinions in relation to the issue of missing women. The approach was to ask them to talk about what happened to them during the attack, what they thought had happened to others during the attack and what they thought would happen now, with an emphasis on women's experiences. The small number of interviews and the challenges of the fieldwork environment including interpretation that the findings are limited but give some indication of challenges for GBV programming with the population. 4 families were approached, two were from the North of Sinjar and the other two were from the South. The families from the South was directly involved and witnessed the attack by ISIS members, however the North was warned by their families, friends and YPG/ YPJ members had reached the North of Sinjar and assisted the Ezidi families to evacuate their village before the arrival of ISIS.

Findings

- Women's honour is very important and was given as a reason to flee the hostile forces and is of continuing concern, view that women were taken as a prize of war.
- Media reports are that rape was used as a weapon of war against the Êzidî population and there are also reports that some women have been sold although it was not possible to speak with anyone with direct evidence in this study.
- One respondent said she heard women's screams during the attacks but could not see what was occurring, as she was too afraid to look back.
- Some believe that the kidnapped women and girls will be at serious risk of suicide to protect their honour however a respondent explained they would be less likely to be at risk of suicide 'we would tell them they are innocent'.
- We were told that rescued girls would be inspected for virginity and that if they had been raped they would not find a husband, because 'Êzidî women are only for Êzidî men'.
- We were told that it was unlikely that any man would wish to marry them, however, if a Êzidî man wanted to marry a woman or girl who had been kidnapped and possibly raped that it was his choice.
- We were told that some Êzidî women and girls have chosen to remain with the Women's Protection Unit (YPJ) and had called their families to say to 'forget' them and that they have joined armed resistance.
- The Peoples Protection Units and the current host population are reported to be very respectful towards them and they have been well treated by the local host community and therefore there is a level of trust established.
- When Yekitiya Star volunteers had toured the camp to offer training and activities for women provided outside the camp in nearby towns, they encountered resistance to the idea of them leaving the site, this control was exercised by males.
- An idea was suggested that for any rescued women and girls to be accepted by the religious members that a decree from the religious leader Baba Sheikh would need to be made and this would require a petition, however when raised in an interview the respondent said this would make no difference to the returning women in practice.

There appear to be prevalent gender equality, safety and GBV issues which it was not possible to explore in depth in these interviews but require appropriate responses. YPJ and union actors appear to be offering and providing services already, which is encouraging. The next part of the report investigates the potential for local host community-based organisations to be involved in GBV work going forward.

Part 2: Situation Analysis of Gender-based Violence

Introduction

The analysis is derived partly from information on the situation at Newroz Camp and partly from the capacities of the local host organisations in Rojava (North East Syria). Newroz Camp was newly established in August 2014 and has very limited capacity for addressing GBV issues as yet whereas a number of women's organisations have been established in the surrounding host towns in Rojava which could provide support to any GBV prevention efforts in future.

General demographic information at the Camp

According to the identification exercise recently conducted in the camp by UNHCR the gender and age distributions of the camp are found in Table 4.

Table 4. Age and Gender Distribution in Newroz Camp as of 20/09/2014

0-2 M	0-2 F	2-4 M	2-4 F	4-12 M	4-12 F	12- 18 M	12- 18 F	18- 60 M	18- 60 F	>60 M	>60 F	All
127	157	147	125	516	470	329	324	751	640	90	66	3742

Total female: 1782

Total male: 1960

Source: UNCHR

These figures give an idea of the size of the population that may need services in future. The population figures are fluctuating as the people move in and out of the camp. There is currently no explanation underlying the figures. The figures aim to help any organisation wishing to plan for gender-based services to understand the scale of work intervention they might wish to plan for.

With respect to these figures, the population count conducted by the camp administration had a larger figure of around 5000 but they also said that numbers were fluctuating as people came and went.

Table 5. General information about the population in the Camp

First Language	Kurdish Kurmanji
Other languages	Arabic
Ethnic/ Tribal Groups	Arish, Kerani, Al Khaldi, Hababi, Merkhan tribes There are 25 families from Idlib/ Aleppo , all are Arabs
Religions (%)	Êzidî 96% in the camp (the Sinjar province has a very small number of Christian families, less than 5% but this camp does not have any Christians at this time) 4% Muslim Arabs from Idlib
Occupation / job/ lifestyle at home	Êzidî people were farmers, employee or volunteer of Iraqi army and police, were living in compound villages close to the border. The Arab families are from a trading lifestyle, lived in an urban setting.
Other comments	After Saddam's regime changed the families stayed in the compound villages. In bigger villages/ towns they had schools and health centres.

Population movement in the camp

As reported by the camp manager Abdel Hakim, people began arriving around 3rd August and many more followed after 10th August 2014. Most people went to Duhok, some more may come to Newroz, and there are some shifts as people are going from here to Iraq or to other sites in Turkey. Since the beginning of September people have been settling here from Iraq, the camp administration said they expect the population to increase not decrease.

At present there is a small amount of routine movement of the population of the camp. The reason given for this was that the population of the camp is generally poor and that anyone who has money can go to the town and get medicine and clothes but many people do not have the resources so it is a small number. It was suggested that compared to other sites where there are people with more money, such as those in Duhok, this is a poor camp however it was not possible to verify this comparison.

Camp Leadership and administration

After the onset of the emergency the ruling council assembly of Rojava which comprises 22 ministers, agreed that a management committee for the camp be formed including Kurdish Red Crescent and Rojava Organization for Rescue as well as a financial committee, which collects public donations and administers them. There are five managers in the head committee, including two women Rojbin and Tekosin and a central manager called Abdel Hakim, which handles communication with international and national visitors, water, food, and health. Women from the Êzidî community in the camp are not yet taking part in the administration and management of the camp, however there are female and male staff from the local host population in the committee. A woman called Bahar who was described by an Êzidî interpreter as a religious woman/ seer/ clairvoyant has been working on some social affairs within the camp and has been taking part in training on how the Rojava system works with the local women's organisations. There is a logistics committee for bringing food and water and power. Rojava Women's Union Yekitiya Star has come to help with the camp but it was not clear how often, with how many volunteers or the caseload as yet, with the intention to provide psychological and social support. The following people were also identified as being active in the camp from the Êzidî population:

Table 6. Êzidî contacts at Newroz

Types of Activities	Contact Person (via camp management committee)
Religious and social affairs committee	Sheik Hallaf (Êzidî man)
Concerned with women's affairs and the martyrs	Bahar (Êzidî woman)
Social activities, society, organising and communicating to try to get recognition for Êzidî rights	Kawa (Êzidî man)

Table 7. Organisations operating in the camp

Organisation	Role/ Sector	Contact	Comments (Gender link e.g. services for women/ information)
UNHCR	Camp Resources and development	UNHCR Regional office	Interest in all issues including GBV
UNICEF	Education and children's activities	Present on site	Child Protection interest and also GBV
International Rescue	Camp services, referral system, care for vulnerable	Office can be located on site	Interest in all issues including GBV
Save the Children	Child Protection	Contact via Head Quarters	Child Protection interest and also GBV
Heyva Sor (Kurdish Red Crescent)	Humanitarian assistance/ medical aid	Office can be located on the camp	Health care and emergency services, interest in GBV
Yekitiya Star Union for Women's Affairs (working with YPG for women's rights and empowerment)	Women's affairs, Education, women's problems, schools	Can be contacted via camp management committee or Asayiş (security)	Covering a broad geographic area investigate women's issues including GBV
Asayiş (Security)	Security	Can be contacted via camp management committee	Emergencies/ arrest/ interest in GBV
Legislative Council – Women's Commission	Undertaking a survey of GBV in the Singal attack commencing 24/09/14	<u>Destya-jin@hotmail.com</u> <u>d.jin.r.x@gmail.com</u> <u>commission-woman@outlook.com</u> 052 429420 052 429425	Gathering data for programming/ planning for GBV

Education

Kurdish Red Crescent and UNICEF are working on education provision. All children will be eligible. It was not possible to ask about whether or not girls stop attending school earlier than boys because the service had not been established. The fact that one respondent was 15 years old and pregnant suggests that early marriage and child bearing may be impacting the education of some female children.

GBV Concerns

The initial indications derived from the HESPER research and in-depth interviews suggest that there are concerns amongst the population about:

- Rape/ kidnap/ sale of women by hostile forces
- After care for any women who may be rescued, currently offered by Yekitiya Star Union and YPJ units (report that some women have remained with YPJ women's section of the People's Protection Units following the attacks in Sinjar, including one in a safe house)
- Risk to women rescued from recent attacks/ kidnapping related to suicide and social ostracism once they return home
- 8% of women in the HESPER survey identified safety and violence against women to be a serious problem (likely under-reported)
- Child marriage (under 16) is practised
- Honour-based traditions and religious rules regarding virginity and marriage are practised, men have choice over women i.e. patriarchal society
- It will not be generally acceptable for young women/ girls to travel away from their families e.g. for training off camp and is likely to have to be conducted by women

It is hard to conclude whether or not emergency services for survivors (health, trauma, safety and child protection) or long-term community development programmes are more appropriate for this setting but it seems clear that some care is already being delivered therefore the capacity for both should be supported and planned for. It is not known what the longer term plan for the settlement of the refugees will be although some expressed the desire to stay and some 200 families have reportedly been housed closer to extended relatives in a local town/ village that we did not have the chance to reach.

Women's Organisations in Rojava

The women's welcoming committee stated that there is 27 women's organisations established in Rojava at present structured into unions/ associations/ committees. The larger unions have members throughout the Rojava region who act as first points of contact for that area. The unions are funded and run by volunteer members who may share the cost of communal spaces/ offices in order to carry out their work with additional work being carried out in the homes of members. The system of women's organisations has been established since the start of the revolution and is constantly being discussed and worked upon. Currently the unions and associations have a chair and a co-chair system i.e. more than one chair, or a chair with assistants, for each organising entity. The organisations provide a variety of services including gender-based violence (GBV) assessment and support, family mediation and legal support, safe houses for women and children, support for the wives and families of şehid/ martyrs, personal economic and social empowerment programmes.

In order to conduct the situation analysis in relation to GBV the report attempted to include those from legal, political, psychosocial, security, health and training backgrounds with specific interest in women's rights and protection.

Limitations

The team was invited to meet several organisations who met the criteria of the exercise however there was no opportunity to meet a representative of a health organisation nor were we able to meet with any one from the security services (Asayiş). Therefore the situation analysis could not be completed as fully as wished and the processes and data gathered by these units are not known. We also did not obtain a full list of all the organisations. It was challenging to obtain written records during the trip.

Findings

Table 8. Below outlines the established women organisations in Rojava, which the team were able to visit to conduct the situational analysis. Following the table are more detailed summaries about the organisations consulted.

	Coordination	Prevention	Response
Yekitiya Star	Acts as the umbrella organisation, and coordinate between other organisations	They make regular home visits and outreach work to educate the community on gender issues. The principle is encouraging self help, rather than dependency.	The core of their activities is to encourage self-help amongst women, this is mainly achieved through educating and training, linking with other services and agencies
Mala Jin	Often the first point of contact for other organisations for establishing suitable referral for GBV victims.	They provide mediation for couples & refer family disputes to court or refer cases for arrest to Asayiş (security). They undertake home visits and training focusing on GBV.	They refer members or victims of GBV where necessary e.g. training, safe place to stay, psychosocial support from another charitable or voluntary organization.
SARA	Lead agency for GBV, including early and forced marriage, honour killing.	They have published material and campaign against GBV. They work with other organisations, including Asayiş to tackle GBV. They conduct seminars and training for themselves and service users. Active publicity and information	They keep a record of incidents and use GBV report for coordinating prevention and response activities.
Women's Foundation	They are within the psychosocial sector and liaise with Mala Jin and Sara and Yekitiya Star to provide services. They have a policy of recruiting women as main decision makers.	They conduct IEC campaigns to raise awareness of GBV and promote community action.	They have a 24-hour line on call services. They provide supportive counselling and case management of survivor. They advocate for the needs of survivor to family members and other agencies. Will accompany to security or medical assistance
Minister/Woman Commission	They attend weekly and monthly inter-sectorial coordination meetings held by lead GBV coordinators /agencies.	They aim to provide appropriate health, psychosocial and security services through advocacy, development and training.	They aim to setup a commission specifically focussing on GBV. Commissioned report into GBV amongst Êzidî women to commence 24/09/14 Gathering data from SARA regarding GBV
Judge/ Zozan	The laws, prosecutions relevant to GBV are still under discussion and being reformed,	There is zero tolerance on GBV, perpetrators are immediately arrested and brought to trial. Unequal laws are never referred to or used in any decisions or prosecutions.	Unreported GBV is treated as crime. Punishment for GBV includes financial, imprisonment and prohibition penalties.

Table 8. Women's Organisations/ related actors - summary

Women organisations in Rojava

Yekitiya Star

There are four women who organise and coordinate the union, and there are 61 active members in each canton in Rojava (3 Cantons in Rojava). It is an umbrella organisation for all other women's organisations in the region. Their aim is to make sure women are independent and empowered through a variety of activities, with a 'personal and general' approach i.e. they will respond to individual cases but also undertake general work in training and information. There are six areas of activity which are coordinated by the union, including training and education, alternative dispute resolution/ family matters, political/ ideological awareness, self defence health and economic independence.

They make regular home visits and outreach work to educate the community on gender issues. The principle is encouraging self-help, rather than dependency. They are constrained by resources, which are limited to voluntary work and member's contributions. In their regular meetings they discuss emerging issues that members may bring for discussion e.g. female homelessness, sexual exploitation had recently been discussed. Yekitiya Star's chair Tekosin took us to the border crossing which they are monitoring which is used for trafficking and they have issued a warning to house where they suspect sexual exploitation to be taking place. Issues of family dispute would be referred to partner organisation Mala Jin.

Mala Jin

There are three main managing members, one of these members attends court hearings and meetings and the office was opened in 2011.

- They provide mediation for couples and refer family disputes to court or refer cases for arrest to Asayiş (security).
- They place victims of violence into safe houses.
- They are also collaborating with the legal and woman's commissions on removing second marriage and other unequal laws e.g. before the revolution men could marry up to 4 wives and now having multiple wives is banned.
- They have also identified under marriage as a major issue and are trying to find ways to overcome it, through linking cases with courts. They receive and deal with complaints from female and male victims of violence.
- They keep a record of all their cases and dealt with over 45 cases last month, covering Cizîrê canton.
- They aim to intervene in family disputes, consult the parties, assess the case and make recommendations.
- They said that domestic violence is the biggest issue they deal with.

- They are all volunteers with no funding apart from what members contribute. They have zero tolerance of gender-based violence in all its forms (emotional, economic, physical).
- They maintain confidential files.
- In terms of prevention they undertake home visits and training
- In terms of after care as appropriate they will refer to health training, safe house or other organisations such as Yekitiya Star or SARA for health, training or safe place to stay or psychosocial support from another charitable or voluntary organisations.
- They have provided immediate support at Newroz camp by collecting aid and making visits, but have no real resources to develop a project for the camp, although they plan to open a Mala Jin in the camp if they can, but resources limit them.
- If Mala Jin finds a court decision unfair, they re-refer the case back to the court.

SARA

Independent women's organisation, also works closely with Mala Jin.

- SARA is considered to be the lead organisation in GB.
- Staff work on a voluntary basis and it was formed in 2011 with their own efforts, they created their budget through collecting money among themselves and their members.
- They conduct publicity campaigns but are also known through word of mouth, and through other women organisations.
- They have four main committees: Management, Press, Diplomacy & archive and Legal.
- They have created a documentary, which will be released on the 19th Sep, about the Êzidi women.
- They have visited North Kurdistan to extend their network. They provide links to safe housing and legal support.
- They work to prevent early marriage and they conduct seminar and training for themselves and service users.
- They have 25 volunteers including the 12 who agreed to start it. They have recently carried out a survey across 3 cantons Cizîrê , Afrin and Kobanê in order to find out how many cases of different types of GBV had been recorded, attempting to include data from all ethnicities and backgrounds.
- They protested about perpetrators of honour killing, which has lead to some arrests and they also took care of a young girls funeral in one of these honour-killing cases, as the family had disowned her.
- Asayiş will call Sara if they have cases of GBV
- The women's commission is using the data they are compiling
- They have internal meetings weekly, which cover different areas coordination and general issues, every two weeks a management meeting and monthly meetings, which can include other organisations. They discuss factors contributing to GBV in coordination meetings they develop strategies to address factors.

- They have established protocol for managing clients and referrals. They use standard documentation of incidents and use GBV report for coordinating prevention and response activities.
- They are including national government in their work and they have an open financial operation.
- Although they conduct their own training with their own volunteers and GBV organisations they still aim to conduct this with other sectors such as health, security and legal.

Women's foundation

This is a voluntary organisation within the psychosocial sector with aspiration to develop social spaces for women. They have recently opened a building but were previously working from their volunteer's homes. Post revolution, they say the number of cases of violence against women escalated, as the revolution progressed, it encouraged women to come forward with their domestic issues whereas it was a taboo to do so before the revolution.

- They have a policy of recruiting women as main decision makers.
- They have unwritten policies and mandates for providing counselling, advocacy and referral for survivors of GBV.
- They have and maintain a list of related organisations.
- Staff work on a voluntary basis, and they do not have any paid staff.
- They work closely with SARA to decide which women's organisation is suited for each case.
- Although their policies are not written yet, they said they have established collective understanding through discussion and training.
- They intend to establish regular training and development relation to women's services appropriate for the cases.
- They do have a mandate or intention for women's empowerment programming.
- They do not yet include any males but intend to in the near future.
- They do not have a full client management plan established yet but it is under discussion. Adequate resources is a big issue, they rely on the network for support.
- They wish to extend their relationships with organisations outside of Syria.
- They would like to open social venues to bring women together, where they can socialise, gardens, and swimming pools for women only, but they do not have the economic means to do so.
- They have one person responsible for the confidential archive.
- They wish to establish income generating literacy vocational and civil society empowerment activities, however resources are limited.
- For response they have a 24 hour open phone line, they undertake an assessment in standard way by providing case management for the survivor, planning for the safety of survivor and advocate on behalf of survivor to family and agencies.

- They can assist survivors with phone calls, referrals, escort them to health, legal or security services.
- Although they keep confidential files, it is not clear if they analyse these for planning purposes.
- It is not clear whether they have a main contact to take part in meetings with other organisations, it appears to be anyone who is available.

Desteya Jin (Women's Minister) and Women's Commission

The Women's Commission has been established since January 2014.

Their work includes discussing and debating laws for child protection as well as GBV. A bill is being sent to the assembly at the moment for establishing legislation relevant to violence against women, and GBV. In the new administration there are commissions that co-exist including women's, children, law and justice, project, international relations, culture and finance. There is not a commission specifically focussing on GBV, but they are in the process of setting one up. The first step is gathering demographic statistics on health, education, violence, and young people, unmarried/ older single women. In recent years they have become more aware of GBV cases but are not certain whether this reflects more incidence of violence against women or is because they have given more attention to the subject, or due to changes in society, which have empowered women and encouraged more women to come forward.

When they realised violence against women was relatively high they established women's houses as safety, these are separate to the ones available through SARA and Yekitiya Star, although they have a relationship with those organisations. There are three members of staff in each house. When information about extreme cases is received, e.g. threat to life, the victim is immediately taken under their protection, they are placed into women shelter house.

They are discussing a service for Êzidî women, but there will be separate comprehensive research on this first. They have a case folder, including photo and footage and photographs of Êzidî people to use against perpetrators and seeking advice on what to do for prosecution.

Zozan (Judge)

The laws relevant to GBV are currently under discussion and being reformed, despite this there is zero tolerance of GBV and perpetrators are immediately arrested if a report is made and brought to trial if adequate evidence. Although the legislation has not been passed the following table describes the legal definitions and policies regarding GBV, which are intended some amend existing Syrian law and some incorporate it.

Table 9. Offences related to GBV and comments under new administration

Types of offence	Description of legal definition or policies governing the types of GBV	Statue of limitations for this crime.
Rape/ attempted rape	Any penetration or attempted constitutes rape and as soon as it is reported the perpetrator will be arrested.	There are no limitations of time.
Statutory rape (rape or minor)	Under 16 is statutory rape, although some cantons are debating whether 18 should be the age.	There are no limitations of time.
Marital Rape	Rape is always a crime, whether married or not	There are no limitations of time.
Other forms of sexual violence (e.g. sexual exploitation)	The perpetrator of the crime is the criminal, not the exploited person	There are no limitations of time.
Domestic violence (intimate partner abuse, including economic, emotional, etc.)	All three are crimes, which can be prosecuted.	There are no limitations of time.
Forced marriage	Forced marriage is a crime, it is also debated constantly about whether parents should need to give permission for marriage over 18.	There are no limitations of time.
Trafficking for sex or labor	Sex trafficking is a major crime, and any suspicion would be immediately investigated.	There are no limitations of time.
Other forms of GBV (e.g., FGM)	Honour killing is an offence and would be punished. Any practices of FGM would be a crime.	There are no limitations of time.

The Syrian laws are being applied where they agree that it is reasonable, for example, the law on who keeps the child with divorcee parents (a child stays with mother until the age of 15, and the child decides who he or she wishes to stay with, thereafter). Unequal laws are never referred to or used in any decisions or prosecutions, e.g. share of wealth between male and female children. The age of majority (adulthood) is 18 years old for both for men and women and 16 is the age for marital consent for males and females.

According to previous Syrian law, men had the majority of share of property in divorce or marriage, however according to Rojava laws, it will be a 50/50 share. The same will be applied to the inheritance right of girls and boys.

Emergency contraception is legal but it is a taboo subject in society and is obtained secretly and discreetly. Young people can obtain it with a doctor's certificate and it is not restricted to cases of rape, it is down to the discretion of the doctor whether to or not to disclose information to parents. Abortion is legal under 3 months but it is also not widely accepted in society and married couples must both agree to procedure, therefore social norms are part of the issue. If there is any risk to the women, then she has the choice to go ahead or not. If a woman has difficulty in paying for contraception or abortion, Yekitiya Star will take responsibility.

Everyone has a duty to report GBV and in Rojava it is taken seriously and people do report, and non-reporting will be treated as crime.

In terms of prosecution Yekitiya Star, Mala Jin and Asayiş can be involved in the process. While witness corroboration is helpful it is not obligatory for a prosecution. Currently there is no fixed timeframe for prosecution to outcome, it depends on the severity of the case, however no case should be prolonged unnecessarily. Proceedings can take place privately with the judge and Mala Jin will support the survivor of GBV.

There are standard sentencing procedures for perpetrators of GBV, which include financial, imprisonment and prohibition penalties. Sentencing gets tougher for repeat offenders, however it is difficult to provide safe imprisonment given the security issues related to being in a conflict. The judge does not have discretion over sentencing and there are minimum penalties. Sentences are applied to all cases. The system is very new, but there is some rehabilitation of offenders, such as literacy in prison, however there is limited capacity for other interventions at this time.

In Rojava there is separation between parliamentary and legal research commissions, which are undertaking reviews of the issues relating to GBV. To become a judge it would be required to have qualified in Syrian law, and have practiced in certain time, however because there is a gap in GBV law in Syrian law and lack of understanding of GBV there is currently a bill going through and research going on about laws to protect women, which is being discussed in the assembly. The court does conduct GBV training for court staff at the law academy and GBV is one of the main topic areas. The court suffers from some difficulties in terms of resources but copes in general, it would operate better if it was better equipped.

Prior to the revolution, GBV and related issues went unaddressed, now there are many organisations tackling them, the judge states that the various organisations and groups are trying to change society and now many women know they have options.

Overall Summary of Women's Organisations in the self-administered areas

- Systems and processes are in development and are formalised in some places more than others.
- Case management and referral seems to be working according to verbal communication and contacts within the network instead of formalisation.
- Data is being collected but does not appear to be being analysed yet but is intended.
- There is an understanding of public campaigns, empowerment of women in social, political and economic terms and their importance in tackling GBV issues.
- There was little evidence of the inclusion of men in decision-making relating to women's organisations.
- It was not possible to meet an Arab women's organisation and this reflects an noticeable absence and greater inclusion of Arab women in associations would be welcome.
- All organisations would benefit and requested greater networking opportunities with other women's organisations.
- All organisations would like to investigate ways to partner on programming and delivery with funders and supporters, whether practical or through campaigning or communicating.

Conclusion

The research has established that there are considerable needs for women in relation to GBV in both Rojava in general and also in the context of the humanitarian crisis of the Êzîdî population this was established through all the methodologies and suggests a consistent need.

The HESPER section of the report can be used as a start point for further work in order to address the perceived needs of the refugees in the camp. The scale can be used again to monitor changes in the perceived needs over time if required.

There are several challenges that face the administration and organisation of GBV interventions and planning:

- On going situation of conflict including the possibility of further population shifts.
- Stresses on the host population as it is engaged in current conflict.
- Resources are limited by the economic conditions of the self-administered areas and the lack of recognition of the self-administered government under international law.
- Entrenched patriarchy in Êzîdî society combined with a traumatised population of refugees.

It was recognised that the majority Êzîdî refugee camp, Newroz Camp, Derik is very recently established and that there are many positives opportunities for engagement with the camp in terms of GBV issues including:

- Some politically active/ rights aware members of Êzîdî population to facilitate engagement.
- Feelings of trust towards the host community/ Asayîş/ People's Protection Units and the new administration by the Êzîdî refugees due to the care and protection received thus far.
- Several local and international organisations capable of providing both emergency services and long term GBV and gender empowerment programming if coordinated and resourced adequately.

Recommendations:

- Networking structures, information sharing and coordination meetings between international humanitarian actors and women's organisations locally and the Women's Commission in order to harness the potential of the women's organisations in the area to work effectively with the camp in terms of relief, rehabilitation and development regarding GBV.
- Culturally appropriate engagement of both women and men in the Êzîdî population to maximize their chances of care and support with efforts to engage at the local level all sectors of the community (men, women, leaders, children etc.)
- Standardisation of referral, case management and information management with usable guidelines and rollout.
- Ideally the establishment of indicators which match humanitarian Protection Cluster indicators in terms of data collection, storage and sharing, developing

referral pathway for survivors, developing context specific standard operating procedures, multi-sectoral engagement and prevention programming.¹⁰

- Campaigns to fundraise internationally to support both emergency services for survivors and long-term GBV programming.
- Campaigning through rights networks to increase understanding of the context.

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