



## Women's Empowerment and Livelihood Program



MISSIONEAST

مبادرة **NADIA's**  
نادية **INITIATIVE**

# Business Incubator for Women-Led Small Businesses

**Beneficiaries: 50 women**

**Duration: 12 months**

Since the 2014 genocide, nearly 150,000 Yazidis have returned to Sinjar. Many of these returnees are women, widows, and survivors. Having lost their husbands, they are now the primary income earners. Due to limited resources, immense trauma, and a challenging local economy, these women are struggling to rebuild their lives. Nadia's Initiative's women's empowerment and livelihood program provided 50 women in Sinjar with small business management and vocational training, business start-up grants, digitization training, savings groups, and psychosocial support.

## Objective 1

- Help women, whose husbands are still in captivity or have been killed, find dignity in supporting their families.
- Strengthen the income generation capacity of these women to support their livelihoods through the establishment of profitable businesses.

## Objective 2

- Female-run businesses will provide women with socializing spaces outside the home, enabling them to process the trauma of war and create stronger social bonds and mutual support systems to increase their resilience long-term.

## Objective 3

- The community will gradually shift its cultural ideologies to include women in the small business economy beyond oversaturated markets. This will benefit not only women today, but also the next generation of women in the community.



A sustainable livelihood means increased resilience. This project enables women to support their families and ensure their children can attend and remain in school. It also provides women with the opportunity to be self-reliant, reduce daily stresses, restore dignity through empowerment, and enable healing.



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Identification of Beneficiaries



### Vulnerability and interest criteria included:

- Households with a disabled person
- Widowed women
- Women who have skills and experience in running a business
- Women who show interest in running a business
- Feasibility of the business ideas/plan
- Women with more than six members and only one/or no members with income-generating capabilities.



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Business Development Training

- Training in writing and submitting a business plan
- Discussions around business ideas with peers and trainers
- Financial literacy training
- Business management training, including basics of bookkeeping and marketing strategies
- One-on-one feedback on business proposals



### Vocational Training

- Vocational skills training based on individual business plans
- Introduction to buying and selling strategies
- Training in market-related skills and general logistics
- Knowledge about wholesaler's locations and prices

### Digitalization Training

- Digital marketing
- Digitization for business purposes
- Mailing lists for restocking notifications
- How to build a small social media presence

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Provision of Cash Grants

### First installment:

- For logistical support during the initial establishment phase

### Second installment:

- For restocking supplies and maintaining businesses

### Third installment:

- For support after businesses are effectively operating



## Voucher Distribution

Following the establishment of the businesses, 500 vouchers were distributed among vulnerable households in Sinjar. These vouchers were redeemable at any of the businesses that were included in this project. The vouchers were distributed to increase visibility and promote the newly established businesses. They were also a way to support vulnerable households.

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## Saving Groups

A savings group was set up to be managed and run by women who reside in the same locations. These savings groups provide:

- Access to affordable financial services
- Safe and supportive spaces to discuss business challenges
- A decreased reliance on external actors



## Psychosocial Support

Providing training and small business opportunities is a sustainable way to meet a few of the immediate challenges many women face. However, livelihood and other concerns must be addressed alongside structured psychological support. These challenges need to be managed holistically and sustainably, addressing women's tangible needs, while supporting them in the process of healing from the immense trauma they have endured. The project's protection team provided women with individual and group counseling and recreational activities, such as yoga. Communication skills sessions about conflict resolution were also established to strengthen women's resilience.

# RESULTS



## Economic Independence

The project provided all necessary support and resources for women to generate an income and secure their livelihoods. Economic independence enables women to regain a sense of autonomy and dignity, all contributing to their healing.

## Enhanced Resilience

This project provided access to structured group support sessions. Women now have access to support systems, savings groups, and socializing spaces, creating stronger bonds and social safety nets. Creating supportive environments increases women's resilience within communities.



## Gender Equality

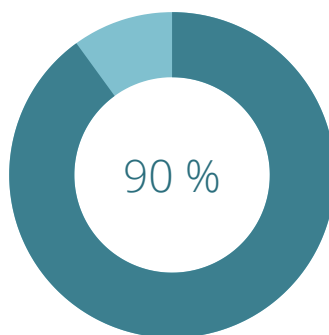
The project has created spaces for women to be independent and self-reliant in a largely male-dominated economy. This, as well as including men in awareness-raising sessions based on gender equality, is a step towards creating a gender-equal society.



# SURVEY RESULTS

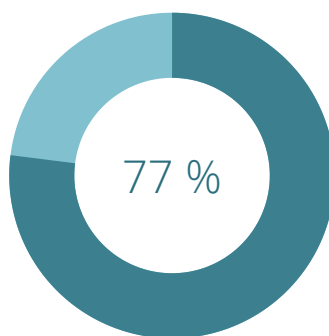
A quantitative survey was conducted at the end of the project to assess the project design and implementation. Nadia's Initiative ensures that comprehensive assessments are conducted to identify shortcomings in a project's planning and implementation process and determine the community's current and future needs.

Is this income now larger than your income before starting the business?



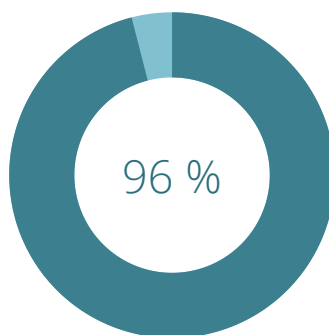
90% of women said that their income-generating capacity has increased.

Did the trainings help you manage your business?



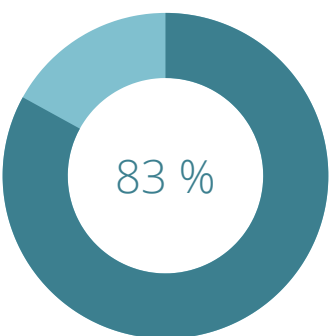
77% of women said that they found the training helpful when managing their business.

Was the level of the training appropriate?



96% of women said that they found the training appropriate and useful.

Do you have people working in your business?



83% of women said that they now have people working in their businesses

Learn more about these new businesses by clicking on  
the links below:

**Maha's Coffee Shop**

**Layla's Greenhouse**

**Khanaf's Fabric Shop**

**Shamy's Kitchenware Shop**

**Laila's Greenhouse**

**Namira's Bakery**

**Kozah's Fabric Shop**





# About Nadia's Initiative

Nadia's Initiative is dedicated to rebuilding communities in crisis and advocating globally for survivors of sexual violence. Nadia's Initiative's current work is focused on the sustainable re-development of the Yazidi homeland in Sinjar, where Nadia Murad grew up. When ISIS launched their genocidal campaign, they not only killed and kidnapped Yazidis, but also destroyed the Yazidi homeland to ensure the community could never return.

Nadia's Initiative works with the local community and a variety of implementing partners on the ground in Sinjar to design and support projects that promote the restoration of education, healthcare, livelihoods, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), culture, and women's empowerment in the region. All Nadia's Initiative programs are community-driven and survivor-centric, and work to promote long-term peacebuilding. Nadia's Initiative advocates governments and international organizations to support efforts to rebuild Sinjar, seek justice for Yazidis, improve security in the region, and support survivors of sexual violence worldwide.

[www.nadiasinitiative.org](http://www.nadiasinitiative.org)