



# SHELTER-REPORT

Winter 2019



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*Dear Friends and Partners of Shelter Now*

*“The mountains are our only friends” is an old Kurdish saying which is increasingly being heard again among the Kurds. They feel the West has deserted and betrayed them. After having significantly defeated the ISIS terror regime they have certainly done their part.*

*Udo Stolte was recently in Kurdistan in Northern Iraq when the Kurds in neighbouring Syria were attacked. The projects among the refugees there are still in progress. New projects have now been added: helping slave girls freed from ISIS and caring for war orphans.*

*You can read more about these developments in my travel report.*

*Best wishes*

*Udo Stolte and the Shelter Team*



Deutsches  
Zentralinstitut  
für soziale  
Fragen (DZI)

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Spenden-  
Siegel

Zeichen für  
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*Shelter Now – Rebuilding Lives – Restoring Hope!*



# SHELTER-Report

## Baadre Camp

My companion Fawzi and I drove from the town of Baadre to the large Baadre Camp, where 15,000 Ezidi refugees have settled. You can't imagine the terrible abuse they had suffered at the hands of "Islamic State" militants. In fact they experienced more atrocities than any other people group.

Suddenly Fawzi stopped the car and a gate opened to our left. It was as if I was looking into a kind of mini paradise. Everything was green and beautiful; children were having fun in the playground – laughing, singing and waving to me. I was escorted to a container building, where several women warmly welcomed me. All around me I heard children's voices and laughter. Helen, the director of this centre for war orphans, invited me into her office. She told me about the centre and took me into the classrooms one by one.

The children were happy to see me. Their works of art and other beautiful pictures were hanging on the walls. All of them had good educational material to work with – either alone, in pairs, or in groups.

The Montessori class impressed me the most. It was all relatively calm as each child was highly focused as they worked with Montessori material. It was so designed that the child knows immediately how to proceed. The assignments fall into place automatically. When children have completed a task they carefully return the material to one of the shelves and take out a new assignment. It was fascinating to watch just how orderly, peacefully and motivated all the children were as they went about their work. They all clearly felt valued, loved and well looked after.

I tried to film as much as possible. The children in the other classrooms were likewise very motivated. Suddenly loud music could be heard outside on the playground. Some children were energetically dancing to the rhythm of a song. Others were jumping around on the trampoline. I would love to have stayed there the whole day but we had other appointments to attend to. The pictures of those happy children are simply unforgettable.

Helen, the director of the Child Centre, had the same effect on me when she shared her vision: "It was my dream that the children who have been freed from the hands of IS and have lost their parents would find a place full of love and joy. We give them the love they need and teach them Christian values such as mutual respect, help when difficulties arise, comfort and encouragement.



Children's centre in Baadre camp Montessori classroom



The art classroom



Girl dressed up for the Lalish festival



My staff members are themselves Ezidi refugees from the camp. They are trained teachers and receive regular further pedagogical training. The centre has now been open for 18 months and I can already see significant changes in the children. They now have a sparkle in their eyes that they had lost as a result of their dreadful experiences at the hands of the IS henchmen."

We only found out later that a number of these children are a result of IS jihadists raping enslaved Ezidi girls.

We want to support this children's centre, which has around 90 children aged between 5 and 14. An Egyptian organisation bears 50% of the costs and Shelter Now is going to take on the other half. Our contribution amounts to 2,500 euros monthly.

## The Interview in the town of Baadre

One of the many young women or girls who are cared for by Fawzis wife Lena was willing to tell her story in front of the camera. This interview with a former sex-slave once held by ISIS was a very disturbing occasion. I asked her if she would rather we didn't show her face. This was her reply: "What else will happen to me that is worse than what Daesh have done." (Daesh is the Arabic acronym for 'Islamic State'). She then proceeded to relate in depth her dreadful experiences with both the men and women of ISIS for about an hour. Lena was only able to translate summaries of the account because she often had to break into tears.

Young women, girls and boys who had been freed from IS captivity, or had been able to escape continue to arrive in Baadre. We could hardly imagine the kind of hell they had been through. All of them require assistance. Lena listens carefully to them, puts her arms around them, wipes away their tears and gives them hope.

Our plan: A trauma therapy centre for freed IS slaves. We plan to rent a house, employ therapists and provide education and vocational training, music, sport and other activities. We can begin as soon as we have sufficient funding. We already have an official permit. We have a cost calculation for two years of 125,000 euros. We expect that in this period of time we will be able to take care of about 400 girls and women in this centre. We can make a start with 30,000 euros.

## Lalish

Only a few kilometres from Baadre is the Ezidi shrine of Lalish. . We drove there with our friend Abu Ali,



Ezidi kids delighted with new school material

who is highly respected in the area and made it possible for us to take a look at the festival. The sun is celebrated as a deity. Abu Ali explained everything about the ceremony as we walked around. We have been working among Ezidis for quite a while and seek to find out as much as we can about them and their religion. Thousands of young people, in particular, were streaming into their shrines. From time to time people spoke to me in German. Ezidis who live in German come specially to this festival in Iraq.

## Sulamaniye

Due to roadworks on the way to Sulamaniye we arrived late so that the Ezidi kids were kept waiting. They were all totally fixed on finally receiving the school materials that Shelter Now and a partner organisation had financed. They then joyfully besieged us and thanked us profusely.

I saw some of these children in the school the following day (see the large photo on the first page). They were very keen to learn even though they found the lessons in Arabic difficult to understand.

## Kabab in the Ezidi Camp

Unfortunately I was unable to celebrate the day of German reunification as I was either sitting in a plane or waiting at airports. Then an attentive immigration officer in Erbil spotted my German passport and to my surprise congratulated me on German reunification. I planned to celebrate German reunification with a few refugee families two days later. So I bought enough kababs to feed 40 people and we celebrated together in a small Ezidi camp which we regularly visit.



## The Ministry for Religious Affairs

We were also invited to this ministry where our project partner Ari works. His director is Ezidi and is responsible for his people group, whereas Ari is responsible for the Christians. We talked about the situation of these two religious groups. Sadly, their situation is anything but rosy in Kurdistan, as well as in the whole of Iraq and across the border in Syria. Nevertheless, there is freedom of religion in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan in North Iraq. The secular government has banned aggressive missionary activities for all religions. Ari's boss expressed his gratitude for our projects among the Ezidies and expressed his hope that we would continue.

## News from Afghanistan

I shared about our work there in our last Shelter Report. All of our projects continue unabated.

In winter, however, there is a cry for increased support for many in need.

We are so grateful for you our supporters and partners. Without you we could not do the work we do, which means our work is also your work.

*We trust you will all enjoy a blessed Christmas and New Year*

*With our warm regards, Udo Stolte and the Shelter team*

Help for?	Kind of support?	Amount in euros?	Project/ Project no.
An Ezidi orphan	Baadre Children's Centre (one month)	30,--	"Children's Centre Baadre" (8011)
A freed IS sex-slave	Baadre Therapy Centre (one month)	15,--	"Therapy Centre Baadre" (8013)
A freed IS sex-slave	Baadre Therapy Centre (one year)	180,--	"Therapy Centre Baadre" (8013)

**Spendenkonto Schweiz** Shelter Now Germany e.V. Postfinance Bank Kto. 60-798660-9  
BIC (SWIFT): POFICHBEXXX IBAN: CH61 0900 0000 6079 8660 9

**European account details** Shelter Now Germany e.V. NORD / LB Hannover Kto. 25 23 058  
SWIFT: NOLADE2H IBAN: DE65 2505 0000 0002 5230 58

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Begünstigter:

**SHELTER NOW GERMANY E.V.**

IBAN des Begünstigten:

**DE65 250500000002523058**

Kreditinstitut des Begünstigten:

Euro

Auftraggeber/Einzahler:

Verwendungszweck:

**Abzugsfähige Spende**

Bestätigung zur Vorlage beim Finanzamt

Bei Bareinzahlung Empfängerbestätigung des annehmenden Kreditinstituts

