



Mosaic
Middle East

Rebuilding Hope

Mosaic Middle East
Field Report Spring 2022

Amman, Jordan

“People are tired, they have been displaced for a long time now and they just want to return to their place of origin.”

Abdulrahman Isaac,
Mosaic Middle East Iraq Programme Manager

Iraq Situation Today

Drought brings new challenges

Once upon a time in Iraq, farmers could guarantee making a living for their family from the land. However, over recent years there has been a shortage of rain and the once rich soil is turning to dust. Crops are failing. Lethal dust storms are causing a health crisis. Over the last year the sector has seen a 17% fall in economic output due to the droughts.

According to the UN Environment Programme, climate change makes Iraq the fifth most vulnerable country in the world to extreme water

shortages. The Dukan Dam is at its lowest level for 50 years. The World Bank warned that Iraq could suffer a 20% drop in water resources by 2050.

Iraq's Metrological Office recently commented that; "Iraq is particularly vulnerable to climate change, having already witnessed record low rainfall and high temperatures in recent years." So far, the Basra region is one of the worst-affected areas recording a summer high of 53.8 Celsius (129 Fahrenheit)!



Over a million people remain displaced from their homes in Iraq in 2022 (UN)

Millions still in desperate need

The UNOCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview assessment for 2022 estimates that there are 2.5 million people in need within Iraq. About 45% are children, 15% have disabilities and 25% are women. Of these over a million remain displaced from their homes years after the defeat of ISIS.

There are over 100,000 displaced people in the Nineveh Governate alone and over 135,000 in Erbil City in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. It is in the Nineveh Plain where Mosaic Middle East is working to restore businesses and create jobs, with a particular focus on young people and women. With jobs come hope for a brighter future.

The legacy of ISIS in Iraq runs deep. As the UNOCHA report states 'there

are several hundred villages in Iraq to which not a single family from among those displaced during the crisis has returned. Most of these locations are in Ninewa (Nineveh), Diyala, and Erbil. In some cases, this is because families do not want to return or have nothing to return to (e.g., villages are destroyed and abandoned, or there is a complete lack of services, lack of livelihoods, or lack of security) while in some cases their return is actively blocked or obstructed.

Thank you for supporting Mosaic Middle East. We invite you to join us in our prayers for the people in the Middle East and, if you are able, to give towards our efforts to support them.



Children at the Nazarene Church in Amman, funded by Mosaic

Pastor Zaki is passionate about this ministry but he says, "It is a big ministry. We cannot do it alone. But this is the beauty of the body of Christ – we need each other... not just to talk about Him. Not just to preach about Him. But to show his love directly to the people."

Their church does this through a centre, a focal point for all the above.

There has been an increased use of the centre since the end of Covid lockdowns. Their staff and volunteers are taught to genuinely listen, to take time with the refugees and demonstrate love in this way, building understanding and encouraging people in their faith.

"We need each other... not just to talk about the Lord. Not just to preach about Him. But to show his love directly to the people"

Pastor Zaki

Growing Fruitful Relationships in Jordan

In April 2022 our Chairman Rob Shotliff and fellow Trustee Christopher Segar visited Jordan to encourage and strengthen our historic partnerships with churches there; and to create new connections and potential for collaboration. These partnerships underpin our work supporting thousands of refugees in Jordan – men, women and children forced by conflict to flee Iraq.

Mosaic has enduring relationships with churches of various denominations in Jordan. We are in regular contact with church leaders

and Iraqi refugees including by video.

Pastor Zaki of the Nazarene Church in Amman, Jordan told us of their inspiring work with the refugees which includes support for those traumatised by their experiences, groups for children, sewing, cooking and English classes and even a small gym. His small team have a particular focus on Christian discipleship through building relationships of trust, based on Christian compassion. As part of this they use some excellent discipleship materials produced in Arabic by *The Navigators*.



Iraqi refugees at our latest Olive Tree Project with our new partners St Paul's Anglican Church in Ashrafieh, Amman

Big Steps Forward for the New Olive Tree Centre

Following our successful fundraising in 2021 towards a new Olive Tree Centre in Amman, Jordan, we bring news that an excellent premises has been secured for the centre. A five year lease was signed in May. The centre will open in September, God-willing.

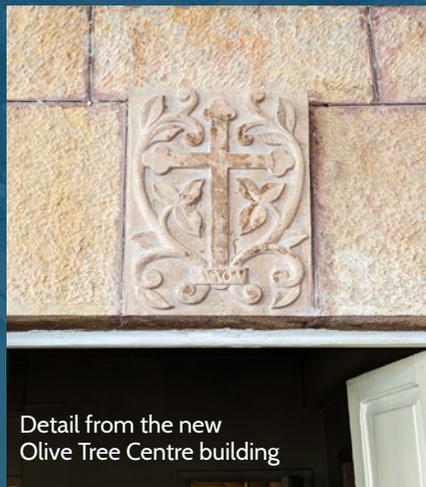
On our visit in April the Chairman of Mosaic, Rob Shottliff, signed a new Collaboration Agreement with DSPR of the Middle East Council of Churches for the development of the new centre in Amman. Renovations funded by our supporters have begun to transform the building into a space fit for purpose and ready to serve the refugees.



Signing of the Collaboration Agreement with DSPR of the Middle East Council of Churches

The new centre will include a variety of therapeutic programmes for the refugees and activities for children and young people in particular.

With the new relationships we are developing there is potential for much fruit if we remain faithful to the Lord and prayerful in all we do.



Detail from the new Olive Tree Centre building

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

John 15:7-8 NIV



From left: Mosaic Middle East Chairman Rob Shottliff with Issa Nesheiwat, our new man in Jordan, and representatives of DSPR, outside the new Olive Tree Centre premises



Trustees Christopher and Rob with Mosaic Programme Manager for Iraq Abdulrahman meeting with Yazidi leader Baba Chawish



The Lalish Temple is the Yazidis' most holy shrine in the world

Shining Light on Forgotten Communities

Mosaic Middle East aims to reflect God's love for the most vulnerable people of the Middle East, restoring lives and bringing hope from despair. The Yazidi people suffered perhaps more than any other group when ISIS swept across the north of Iraq in 2014. They remain a highly vulnerable religious minority in the country.

Last month we met Baba Chawish, a top Yazidi cleric who has dedicated his life to serving the Holy Shrines of Lalish in Northern Iraq. He welcomed Mosaic Chairman Rob Shottliff, Trustee Christopher Segar and our Iraq Programme Manager Abdulrahman Isaac for a visit to the world famous Lalish Yazidi Holy Temple.

Lalish is located 1000m above sea-level, surrounded by breathtaking mountains on three sides.

A Tragic History

Throughout their history the Yazidis have culturally kept themselves distinct within a large geographical region in what is now Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran. The majority live in Iraq.

Under ISIS, the Yazidis were required to convert to Islam. Males over 12 years who didn't convert were shot. Women over 60 years were executed and young women and girls who didn't convert were tortured, raped and sold. The UN report over 5,000 Yazidis were killed and 7,000 women and girls were forced into sex slavery.

The ISIS invasion was widely recognised as genocide. There are still over 200,000 displaced Yazidis.

A Continuing Conversation

For our trustees, meeting with Baba Chawish was a great opportunity to hear what is happening to these people. Baba Chawish talked about the lack of security, which has prevented many Yazidis from returning to their lands. This is fragmenting their culture, faith and community. There is also a lack of jobs. Baba Chawish asked for Mosaic Middle East's help to support their request for greater security, more employment opportunities and investment in their region. He also asked us to help their voice to be heard in the UK.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, Mosaic has been able to help thousands of Yazidi families who remain in camps many years after ISIS were defeated. Mosaic provided hygiene packs for thousands of people during Covid, as well as winter coats for adolescent girls and toys at Christmas for the children.

Please join us in prayer for the Yazidi people who have suffered so much at the hands of ISIS.

Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 5 v 16

Riveen's Journey to Hope

In 2021 many of you gave generously to the Tree of Hope appeal for the new Olive Tree Centre. This involves a new mosaic artwork which will be two metres high and installed on a wall in the reception area. Riveen is one of the mosaic-makers creating the 'Tree of Hope' mosaic for the building.

Her involvement has been one of profound restoration, for which we are very grateful. Her story, like so many of the refugees is one of tragedy, but also the restoration of hope.

Riveen was playing with friends in 2005 in Qaraqosh, Iraq when an explosion went off. She was struck with shrapnel in her calf, back and neck. The scars and physical pain from the event remain today. For thousands of Iraqis bomb blasts, kidnapping and persecution was part of everyday life. Then ISIS came and changed the trajectory of her life.



Above: the 'Tree of Hope' mosaic design for the new centre in Amman, Jordan
Below: Riveen at the Madaba Olive Tree Centre



Riveen's positive message to all refugees

"The only way to help your family is to follow your dreams and goals. Forget all the bad things you see in your life. Keep your goals high. Keep your dreams to help those in need... Keep your head held high like birds and flags flying high. Feel proud and never give up. You will get there one day, stay strong and believe in yourself. Your story does not end because you are a refugee."

Riveen was just 18 years old when ISIS invaded in 2014. She fled with her family overnight.

During the chaos, Riveen was separated from her beloved, Saemon, who was now in Jordan with his family. Hopes of their engagement began to fade as Riveen was denied a visa to Jordan five times. It was decided that Riveen would travel to Lebanon where she and Saemon were married in 2015. Life in Lebanon as refugees was extremely difficult.

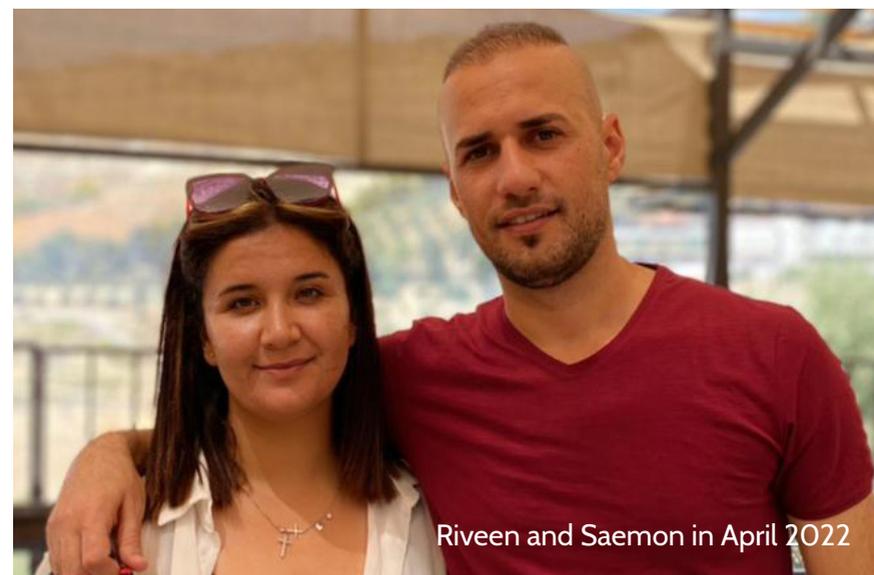
Riveen and Saemon were finally approved for visas to Jordan and ended up in a small city called Madaba. It is famous for its mosaics. She was trained in making mosaics as part of a project run by a Christian charity there. She has come through many traumatic experiences into a wonderful new era of creativity and hope. Riveen is now

teaching others to make mosaics, including the team who will work on the Tree of Hope.

We asked Riveen, 'How has support from Mosaic Middle East donors helped?'

"To be very frank, it has helped me a lot. The support provided by organisations like Middle East Mosaic helps us refugees to provide for our needs such as paying bills, rent and buying food. It also helped me a lot this year because I am now waiting for a child. And, as I said before, this has all helped me psychologically too. God bless you."

You can help refugees like Riveen move from trauma to hope. Please pray for our work and, if you are able to, give towards our work in Iraq and Jordan.



Riveen and Saemon in April 2022

Your support is vital

Your financial support during the pandemic is deeply appreciated. Please consider if you are able to help more now. Our immediate needs include: £7,200 for therapeutic programmes of activities for refugees with our various partners in Jordan; £72,000 for our next six employment projects in Iraq for the Christians returning to their devastated villages and £9,500 for vital relief of Yazidi families still living in camps after the ISIS genocide against them.

As one refugee told us, "You make us feel there are good people in this world who try to support us". God bless you.

You can give direct online:
mosaicmiddleeast.org/donate



What your gift can achieve

The latest Mosaic employment project (above) is a new bakery in Teleskof, Iraq. Mosaic Middle East has completed 18 employment projects to date, with another 22 planned by 2024. Each of these projects is self-sustaining once established. The profits and wages generated are channelled back into the local economy. In this way they bring hope to whole communities in the region.

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Company No. 6598173 Registered in England and Wales

