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Newsletter

Special Edition: Mosul Legal Support Centre



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How does the Mosul Legal Support Centre help?

Ceasefire's Mosul Legal Support Centre helps harmed civilians obtain compensation for reparation caused by military operations in the city.

Civilians affected by these operations have the right to seek compensation under Iraq's law on Compensating the Victims of Military Operations, Military Errors, and Terrorist Acts (Law No.20 of 2009). Nevertheless, the procedure for filing a claim under the law is intricate, subject to frequently changing requirements and demanding in terms of the required documentary evidence.

Our Mosul Legal Support Centre provides free legal counsel in-person and over the phone to civilians seeking compensation under Law No. 20 of 2009. The lawyers assist civilians in compiling the necessary documentation and submitting their claims, and the centre also manages a modest fund to cover the costs associated with the application process.



Since the opening of the centre, the legal team has undertaken a variety of outreach activities to promote awareness among the general public in Mosul regarding the services that are offered by the centre. This includes distributing posters to various public locations across the city, such as courthouses, compensation offices, and seriously devastated areas of the city. In addition, they visited several neighbourhoods to offer assistance to civilians who had not yet claimed compensation and held meetings with local community leaders to explain the work of the centre and encourage referrals.



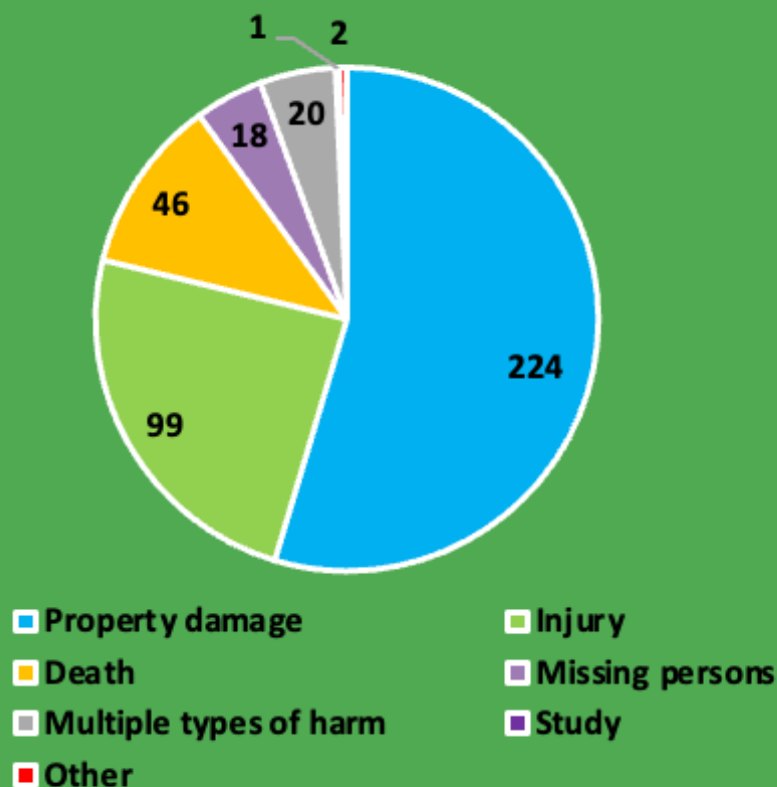
International Women's Day

On the occasion of International Women's Day, one of our lawyers was asked to give a presentation at an event for families of missing persons that was put on by the local non-profit organisation, Humanitarian Line. She led a special workshop on the subject of securing reparation for a group of about thirty women, most of whom were mothers or widows of missing or disappeared persons.



Caseload at Mosul Legal Support Centre

The Mosul Legal Support Centre saw a total of 410 cases in its first year falling under the following categories:



Interview with Mosul Legal Support Centre Lawyer, Mostafa Al-Juboori

How did you become involved with the Mosul Legal Support Centre and what motivated you to work in this field?

I started with the Mosul Legal Support Centre in February 2022, initially as a volunteer and a trainee. In March 2022, I officially became a lawyer at the centre. What motivated me to work in the field was my observation that many civilians who were harmed in the conflict were not coming forward to claim their rights. Even in private law firms, there are not many lawyers specialized in the area of compensation, but I found that this work suited me well.

Could you explain to us the main benefits that the Mosul Legal Support Centre provides to its community?

The centre provides legal advice, free of charge, to civilians harmed by military operations. Many civilians are unaware of their right to compensation or do simply not have the legal knowledge required to complete the compensation process. We help to lift some of this burden off of civilians by preparing the case files that are submitted to the investigation court, assisting civilians with obtaining and copying and the required supporting documents for

their claim, and communicating with them closely throughout the process to guide them every step of the way.

What is unique about the situation of civilians in Mosul?

Mosul is the centre of Nineveh, Iraq's second largest governorate. It was also the main stronghold of ISIS in Iraq, from which the group declared its so-called state. Nineveh in general, and Mosul in particular, are among the cities that were declared disaster zones because they were almost completely destroyed by the conflict. Yet, the amounts allocated for compensation are small compared to the rest of Iraq's affected governorates, and the procedures for obtaining the compensation are complex and bureaucratic. This means that civilians often face long delays before they receive their payments.

What are the main changes you have seen since the opening of the Mosul Legal Support Centre?

The centre has become an important legal reference point for the beneficiaries. They contact us after completing each step in the process in order to obtain advice from the centre's lawyers on the next steps required. We have also started

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providing consultation and advice to other organizations and agencies working in this field. Last year, we held a workshop in Erbil which was attended by several officials and decision-makers involved in the issue of compensation, as well as Iraqi civil society members and activists. We have also started to train recent law graduates through placements at the center.

What is the most rewarding part of your work at the Mosul Legal Support Centre?

Through my work at the centre, I am able to combine my love for humanitarian work with a source of livelihood, and provide a service that serves my city and its people. This work has enabled me to continue providing legal advice to those who lost family members or were injured in the conflict, or who lost their homes after spending years of their life building them, given the economic situation in the city. On a personal level, this was the first job I got after my graduation, and it was a turning point in my career in terms of the relationships I gained and skills I built. Being in constant communication with the beneficiaries has made me into a better listener, and I have also gained skills in data collection methods, not to mention everything I have

learned from my colleagues and our project coordinator.

How can more civilians be made aware of their right to compensation?

Social media campaigns are one way to raise awareness. Another way is to conduct field visits and surveys and invite civilians to attend workshops where they can be introduced to their rights. Media outreach is also important, such as appearing on satellite channels to explain the services provided by the center, as well as reaching out to unions, local organisations, and government institutions to raise more awareness of our services. Civilians also need material support to enable them to initiate compensation requests, as well as constant encouragement and follow-up to enable them to complete the procedures.

Since the opening of the Mosul Legal Support Centre, the total number of civilians who have received help and support is 508



More to come on fundraising challenges and events soon...



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