

OPERATION EZRA

A WINNIPEG JEWISH COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FOR THE
RESCUE AND RESETTLEMENT OF YAZIDI REFUGEES

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Current Update - November 9, 2017

- Grass-root project founded in March 2015 with primary objectives of raising awareness and fundraising to privately sponsor Yazidi refugees to Winnipeg.
- To date, over \$500,000 was raised by Operation Ezra across Canada. Applications for Private sponsorship were submitted for a total of 10 families or 55 people altogether.
- (8) families or 45 people have arrived to date and 2 families or 10 people are due to arrive to Winnipeg in the next few weeks.
- Operation Ezra is a well organized community wide project, guided by a steering committee and several programming committees. In addition to providing support, Operation Ezra partners and a large group of volunteers provide the following tools and services for a successful integration.
 - Furnishing and setting up complete homes with donated goods for private and corporate donors.
 - Clothing & shoes through corporate donors.
 - Welcoming of new families and assistance with all the necessary paperwork required to start new lives in Canada
 - Assistance with public transportation, banking, finding medical professionals and accompanying refugees to all their appointments.
 - Enrolling children in schools and school follow throughout the year
 - Assistance with finding employment (to date 13 people have been placed by Operation Ezra volunteers)
 - Running a supplemental EAL program and staffed with professional volunteers
 - Assistance with coordination of community events to help create a strong, cohesive and supportive Yazidi Community in the city.

OPERATION EZRA COALITION: Bridges for Peace • Congregation Shaarey Zedek • Crossed Hands Refugee Committee • Jewish Child and Family Service • Jewish Federation of Winnipeg • Jewish Foundation of Manitoba • King's Fellowship Church • Manitoba Multifaith Council • Rady Jewish Community Centre • Temple Shalom Synagogue • The Salvation Army • Yazidi Community of Manitoba

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- In addition to providing full settlement support for all privately sponsored families, Operation Ezra is also currently assisting (12) Government sponsored families . The number of government sponsored families Operation Ezra is assisting is growing rapidly. The support provided includes :

- Translation assistance to settlement agencies in the City.
- Clothing and shoes.
- Kitchenware and furniture.
- Housing search assistance.
- Employment assistance.
- Access to all Operation Ezra programs including the weekly EAL program and all social events.

- In addition to providing settlement supports to new comers in Winnipeg, Operation Ezra is also assisting refugees in their home towns wherever possible (e.g. Mount Sinjar Winter clothing campaign)

Future Plans for 2018

- Continue with awareness building
- Continue to support the current Operation Ezra Privately sponsored families
- Continue to fundraise and privately sponsor more Yazidi families to Winnipeg
- Continue to provide support to Government sponsored families as described in section above.

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Recommendations

- More Sponsorship Agreement Holders are needed in major centre of refugee deployment and more spots should be awarded to groups with a history of sponsoring Yazidi refugees (we spent months last year looking for available spots)
- Federal Government should develop formal partnerships with groups like Operation Ezra and use the infrastructure and resources available to help support government sponsored families (Hybrid settlement model). This was one of the recommendations made at the last Standing committee meeting in July 2106.
- In settling families in any cities, stronger consideration should be given to cities with existing and thriving Yazidi communities and we should avoid settling new families in cities where no Yazidi community exists (e.g. Moose Jaw).
- Municipal Settlement agencies lack resources to provide adequate levels of settlement assistance. Federal Government should consider funding the hire of contract employees by established and operating settlement agencies (such as Jewish Child and Family Service, a founding partner of Operation Ezra.
- Family reunification opportunities should be prioritized as families play an important role in the integration of new comers.

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General Information

- Names of Yazidi Camps where Operation Ezra has contacts on the ground

- Turkey
 - Midyat Camp
- Syria
 - Newroz Camp
- Iraq
 - Jum Mishko Camp
 - Bersofe Camp
 - Deraboon Camp
 - Bajed Kendala Caml
 - Khanke Camp
 - Sharia Camp
 - Kuberto Camp 1
 - Kuberto Camp 2
 - Shekhan Camp
 - Mamlan Camp
 - Dawdia Camp
 - Akera Camp
 - Arabet Camp

- Operation Ezra currently has a data base consisting of 3700 families wanting to immigrate to Canada from Iraq and Turkey.

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