

ANNUAL REPORT

**ASUDA ORGANIZATION
FOR COMBATING
VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN**

**Leading Actor in Supporting Survivors of
GBV and SGBV in KRI and Iraq**

2019

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The Founder's Foreword

In order to be able to further serve women's roles in the community, we need to further understand the problems women face and to actively listen to them. Unfortunately, Iraq faces many issues, and the consequences of these issues have had negative impacts on women's lives. Violence against women has a long history and facing it needs serious action. Together, we can contribute to empowering women in many disciplines of the community. We have lots of barriers in attempting to reduce all forms of violence. What has made these barriers more difficult is the continuous crises that are facing our country. We as Asuda organizations have put in lots of efforts in reducing domestic violence through carrying out numerous projects and in spreading awareness. We find it our responsibility to play a major role in this field and we will continue working for minimizing and eliminating the impacts of violence against women.

Khanim Raheem Lateef

About Us

Asuda for Combating Violence Against Women is a non-profit local organization that was founded in 2000 and registered in 2001 with the Ministry of Humanitarian Assistance and Cooperation in Sulaimaniyah, Iraqi Kurdistan. Asuda is dedicated to combating violence against women through an institutional and systematic approach to enhance the status of women regardless of differences in ethnic grouping and religious background. Asuda's strategy underscores a multifaceted approach to addressing violence against women through protection, awareness, research, capacity building, and empowerment.

Asuda opened the very first women's shelter in Iraq in 2002, providing protection for women who face domestic violence, abuse, and honor-related killings. The shelter provided rehabilitation, counseling, social mediation, problem resolution, support in finding job opportunities, and free legal service to destitute women. Asuda's telephone hotline (110) assisted victims of violence through counseling, referral, and advice. Asuda ran the shelter for 14 years until government-run shelters came into existence. After its closure, Asuda referred its cases to the governmental shelters.

Asuda's Vision

Asuda aims to build a world where women prosper through access to equal rights, resources and opportunities. Asuda strives to eliminate all forms of discrimination and marginalization against women to address societal structural problems and challenge the norms and attitudes limiting women's freedom and agency.

Asuda's Mission

Asuda is committed to gender equity and the empowerment of women. Asuda works to combat violence against women and girls by advocating for women's rights and providing quality multi-sectoral responses for gender-based violence survivors.

What We Do

Asuda empowers women to actively contribute to their community and society, participate in decision-making processes, and lead the social, political, and economic transformation. Asuda supports vulnerable women and girls (widows, IDPs, refugees, SGBV survivors, FHH, etc.) socially and economically in acquiring the proper skills to become economically independent and self-reliant.

Protection & Awareness

1

Asuda acts against all forms of gender-based violence, seeks its prevention, and works towards women's protection. Asuda provides protection services to women in the form of psychological, social, and legal support directly and via a telephone hotline. Asuda refers to cases requiring physical protection to the government and other shelters.

Asuda promotes awareness of women's rights across society and engages women and men to change people's mentality about the consequences of gender-based violence and SGBV through mass media, conferences, seminars, and workshops.



Emergency Response

Asuda seeks to alleviate the hardships women endure in the face of armed conflict and supports their efforts at recovery, resilience, and sustainable development.

Advocacy

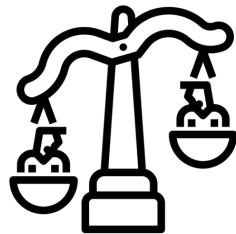


Asuda advocates for peaceful and durable solutions to conflict that require multi-faceted approaches at grassroots and political levels with women's full participation. Asuda's advocacy endeavors to amend laws and regulations that discriminate against women and women's interests and Asuda carries out campaigns to put pressure on the government and other institutions and organizations to ensure the implementation of UN resolutions and international conventions such as UN SCR1325, UNSCR1820, UNSCR1888 and UNSCR2242.

The Issues

- **Gender-Based-Violence**

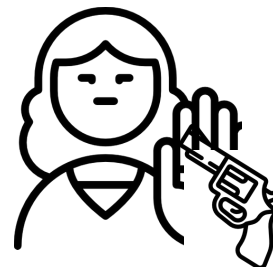
Gender-based-violence is an ongoing social dilemma and a continuous threat on human rights and dignity.



- **Social Norms**

Several social norms within the community give rise to inequality and social stigma.

- **The increase in GBV and domestic violence as a result of small gun ownership**



The Issues

- **Increased violence against human rights defenders across Iraq**

The challenges and obstacles facing the human rights defenders has gotten so extreme as to threaten their lives. Peaceful protesters are the most vulnerable groups facing this threat.



- **Government's lack of priority towards women's issues**



Like many other crucial issues, women's issues receive little attention from the Iraqi government

OUR RESPONSES

1

Asuda has been a leading figure in the response to combat gender-based-violence. Through its various services, Asuda has created a safe space for survivors of gender-based-violence.

2

Asuda has tackled many sensitive social norms through community outreach and engaged various societal groups in civic and fruitful roundtables and group discussions.

3

Asuda has condemned any threat towards human rights defenders and works tirelessly to end the unjust treatments of human rights activists.

4

Asuda has worked towards increasing women's voices and the discussion of women's issues within the Iraqi government.

5

Asuda has conducted thorough research on the correlation between firearms and the increase of violence against women in Iraq: recommending effective actions to decision-makers.

Areas We Cover

- **Case Management**

Asuda has been a pioneer in case management and psychosocial service provision. In 2019, through three listening centers in Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, and Duhok, Asuda has provided psychosocial and legal support to survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Within the listening centers, psychologists, social workers, and lawyers provide psychosocial sessions and provide legal consultation and representation to GBV survivors.



- **Emergency Response:**

Asuda confronts the humanitarian crisis in Iraq with efforts to alleviate the suffering and save the lives of women, particularly as the crisis of war and displacement has taken an exceptional toll on their physical and psychological well-being. We ensure that the special needs of women are adequately met in the context of emergency response. This includes putting up measures that reduce women's exposure to violence during the crisis of displacement. Asuda provided emergency relief, livelihood opportunities, and psychosocial support to women in refugees' camps and IDPs communities.





- **Livelihood**

In partnership with UN Women, Asuda launched a successful and important job placement project for women and girls in an attempt to encourage women and girls to be financially independent. The project was implemented in Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, and Duhok and it had a great and life-changing influence on many women and girls.

- **Community Engagement in**
- **Civil Discourse**

Asuda has engaged decision-makers, stakeholders, and leaders in society to address sensitive and crucial social issues such as masculinity, gender roles, and gender norms. One of Asuda's signature programs in 2019 was engaging men and boys in several workshops and training sessions to address gender-based violence and ways to prevent it.



• Capacity Building and Mentorship Exchanges

Asuda saw a gap in the quality of the service provision by government shelters due to the government's lack of funds to these shelters. In response, Asuda provided a series of intensive training to the staff of Erbil's and Duhok's women shelters.

Asuda also implemented a mentorship exchange program/workshop on the KRG's experience in advocating for and passing the Act of Combating Domestic Violence (Act #8 2011). This law is the only one that exists in Iraq to combat domestic violence. Many attempts are currently underway to pass a similar law in the Iraqi Parliament. In order to support the exchange of ideas and experiences between civil society organizations in the north of Iraq with the center and south of Iraq, this one week program provided participating CSO from the center and south with the opportunity to meet with the KRG's relevant authorities (High Judicial Council, Anti Domestic Violence Investigation Court in Sulaimaniyah, Directorate of Combating Violence Against Women in Sulaimaniyah, former members of the KRG Parliament) to learn about the advocacy efforts it took to pass the law, the government bodies in charge of implementing the law and the gaps and challenges facing the implementation of the law.



• Advocacy

Asuda advocates for peaceful and durable solutions to conflict that require multi-faceted approaches at grassroots and political levels with the full participation of women. Asuda pursues the amendment of laws and regulations that are discriminatory against women and women's interests and aims to carry out campaigns to put pressure on the government and other institutions and organizations to ensure implementation of UN resolutions and international conventions such as UNSCR1325, UNSCR1820, UNSCR1888 and UNSCR2242, and CEDAW. Asuda is a member of the Iraq National Action Plan for UNSCR1325 (INAP).

Our advocacy work increases awareness of the situation of women, calls attention to human rights issues faced by women, and informs effective responses to alleviate women's suffering and find lasting solutions to the causes of women's marginalization. Our advocacy work serves to shake down apathy and awaken the conscience of local society and the world community in order to achieve policy changes, legal reform, and stronger enforcement of laws and practices that defend women. Our advocacy takes 3 forms:

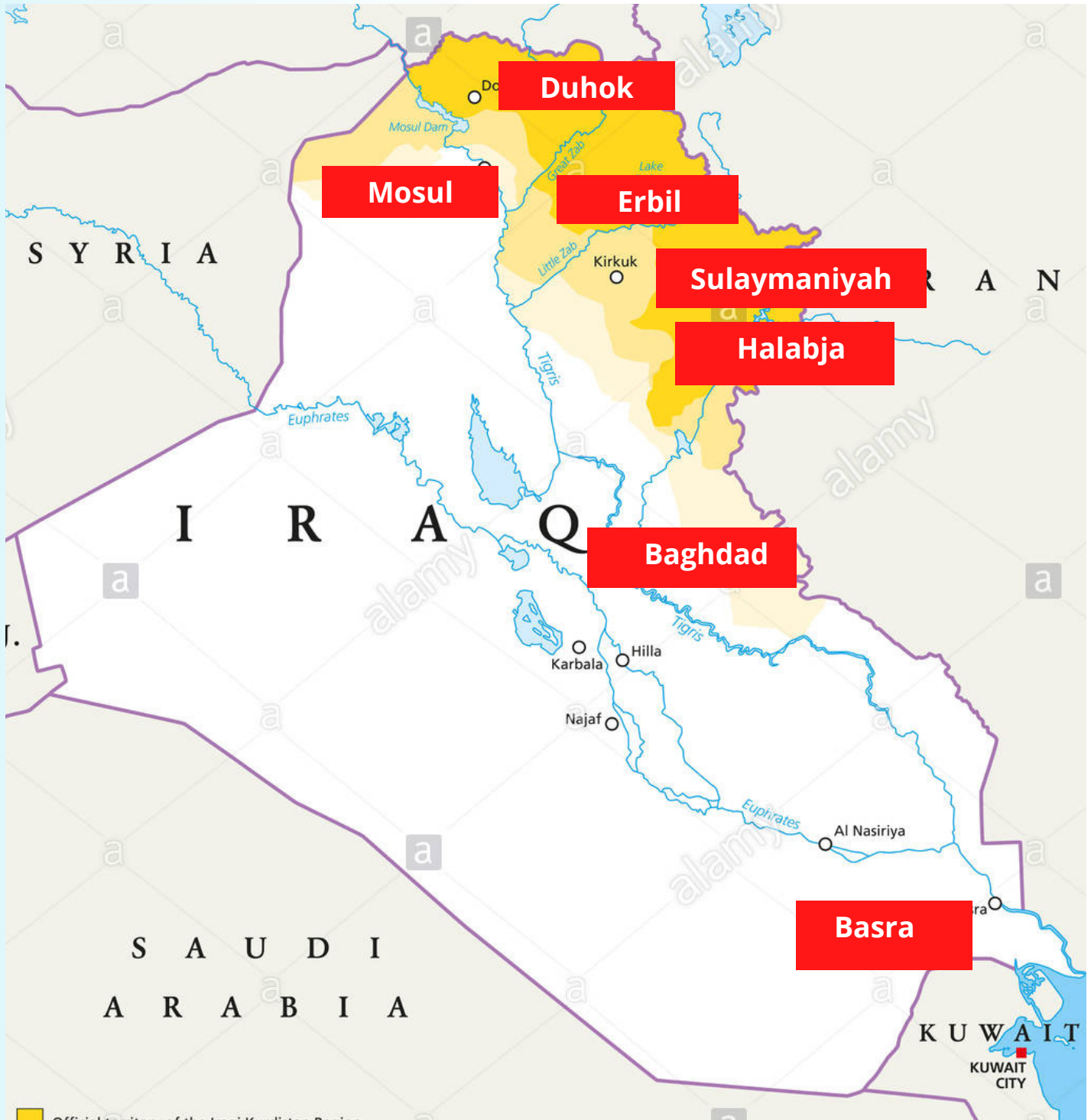
- Local led advocacy
- Government advocacy
- Partner-led joint advocacy



- **Cash Assistance**

In partnership with Vital Voices Global Partnership, Asuda has provided cash assistance to survivors of extreme gender-based violence since 2014 and is still ongoing. Up until 2019, cash assistance to 158 women has been provided with a budget of over half a million dollars.

Areas of Asuda Organization's services:



Asuda By Numbers



756

of total women, men, and children were provided with psychological and legal service

Survivors benefited from the cash assistance services

158

63

Male leaders and decision-makers participated in Asuda's signature program: Boys' and Men's' Engagement program psychological and legal services

Women shelters staff in Erbil and Duhok received capacity building trainings legal services

17



Asuda By Numbers



129

Women received financial support through Asuda's job placement program

NGO representative and stakeholders participated in Asuda's mentorship program

30

40

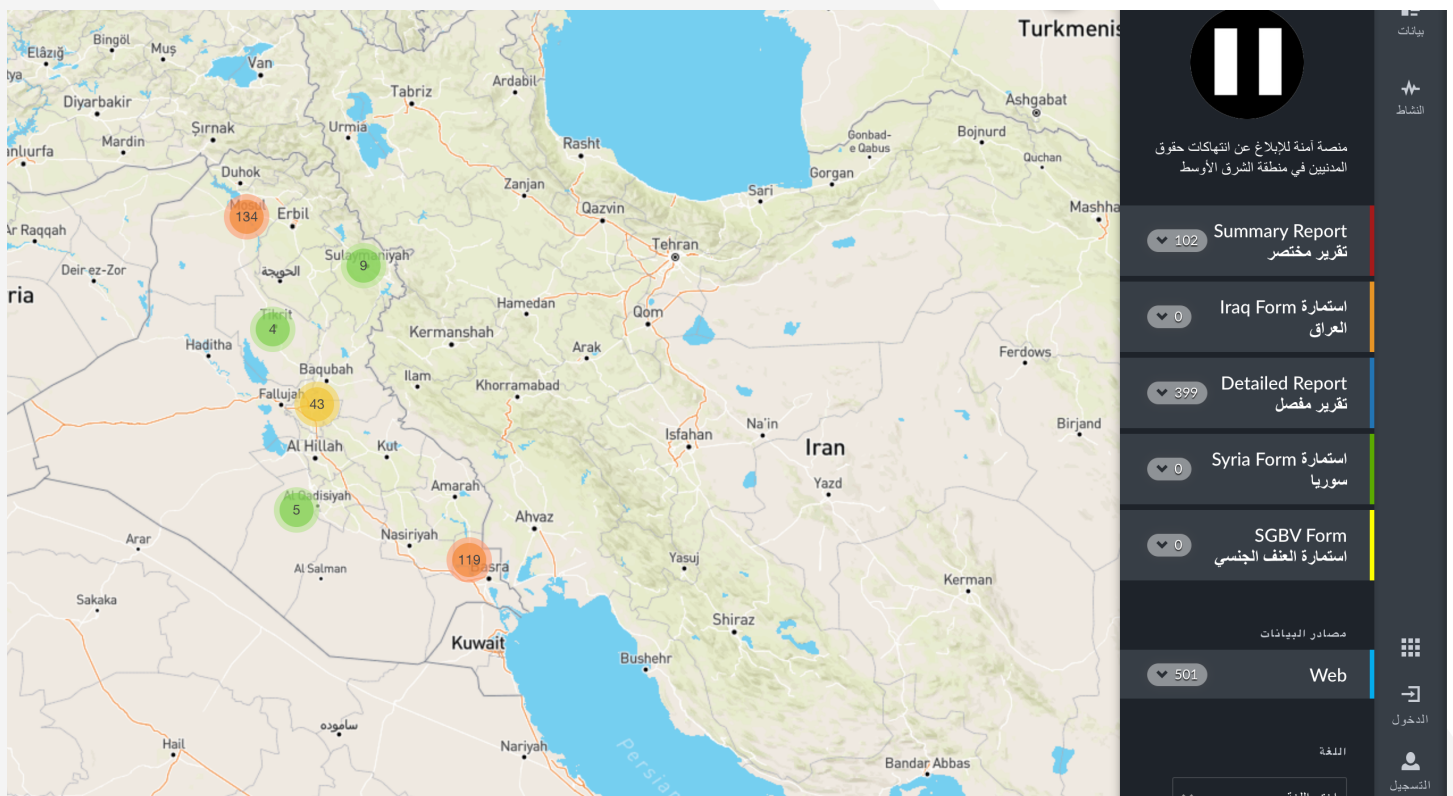
Human Rights defenders on monitoring, reporting, and documentation of Human Rights violations across Iraq

Ceasefire MENA:

Using Online platform to report on Human Rights Violation in Iraq

Since 2015, under the project of “Defending civilian rights and promoting reparation and accountability in Iraq”, Asuda Organization in Partnership with Ceasefire International has developed an online tool known as Ceasefire MENA to allow activists, Human Right defenders, NGOs or any survivors of violence to report any types of Human Rights violation using this online platform. In three main governorates in Iraq (Baghdad, Mosul and Basra) Asuda researchers were responsible for collecting and submitting monthly data on Human Right Violations in the cities.

<https://ceasefire-mena.ushahidi.io/>



Furthermore, in order to allow human rights defenders better access to the platform, Asuda conducted a two-day workshop in Sulaimaniyah for a group of twenty Human Rights activists to be equipped with effective tools for monitoring and documentation of Human Rights violations across Iraq. Civil Society activists, women activists, Human Rights activists who are working as Human Rights defenders from different local NGOs attended the workshop from three governorates of Iraq: Mosul, Baghdad and Basra.



Asuda's Partners

1

VITAL VOICES



Vital Voices Global Partnership is a global movement that invests in women leaders who are solving the world's greatest challenges. We are "venture catalysts" identifying those with a daring vision for change and partnering with them to make that vision a reality. We scale and accelerate impact through long term investments to expand skills, connections, capacity, and visibility. Over the last 22 years, we have built a network of 18,000 change-makers across 182 countries who are collectively daring to reimagine a more equitable world for all.

2

UN WOMEN



UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide. UN Women supports the UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes, and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide.

It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities:

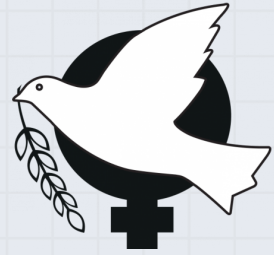
- Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems
- Women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy
- All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence

Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action

UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality, and in all deliberations and agreements linked to the 2030 Agenda. The entity works to position gender equality as fundamental to the Sustainable Development Goals, and a more inclusive world.

3

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM WILPF



On 28 April 1915, during World War I, a unique group of 1,136 women from warring and neutral nations gathered in The Hague, the Netherlands, to discuss how to end the war and ensure permanent peace. The meeting ended with the foundation of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom. The organisers of the congress were prominent suffragists, who saw the link between their struggle for women's right and the struggle for peace. They believed that the full and equal participation of women in the decision-making processes was necessary to achieve sustainable peace.



MADRE



MADRE is an international women's human rights organization. We partner with community-based women's groups worldwide facing war and disaster. Our mission is to advance women's human rights by meeting urgent needs in communities and building lasting solutions to the crises women face. Our history is rooted in progressive movements for peace, justice, and women's human rights.



CEASEFIRE CENTER FOR CIVILIAN RIGHTS

The Ceasefire Centre for Civilian Rights is an international initiative to develop civilian-led monitoring of violations of international humanitarian law or human rights; to secure accountability and reparation for those violations; to develop the practice of civilian rights



6

MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP

minority
rights
group
international

Minority Rights Group International campaigns worldwide with around 150 partners in over 50 countries to ensure that disadvantaged minorities and indigenous peoples, often the poorest of the poor, can make their voices heard. Through training and education, legal cases, publications, and the media and cultural programmes we support minority and indigenous people as they strive to maintain their rights – to the land they live on, the languages they speak, to equal opportunities in education and employment, and to full participation in public life.

7

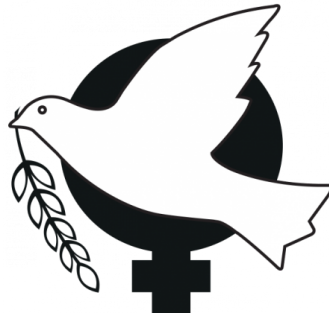
HEARTLAND ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL

Heartland Alliance, one of the world's leading anti-poverty organizations, works in communities in the U.S. and abroad to serve those who are homeless, living in poverty, or seeking safety. It provides a comprehensive array of services in the areas of health, housing, jobs and justice – and leads state and national policy efforts, which target lasting change for individuals and society.

HEARTLAND
ALLIANCE
INTERNATIONAL



**HEARTLAND
ALLIANCE**
INTERNATIONAL



CEASEFIRE || ||
centre for civilian rights



Asuda's Finances

Asuda's funding comes from a variety of donations and fundraising activities. Most funds are given by organizations, bodies, and individuals, either from the private sector (trusts and foundations) or the public sector (statutory and governments). Asuda is very grateful to all the partners who have worked with us in 2019 and to the decision-makers who have provided financial support, without whom none of this important work could have taken place. For 2019, we wish to give a warm thank you to the following donors who have continued to support us strongly:

- US Government through DRL
- European UnionSwiss
- GovernmentCanadian Government through their embassy in Iraq
- Norwegian Government
- German Government through GIZ

How to support us



There are many ways for you to find out more or get involved with Asuda's work.

Donate

Make an immediate difference by supporting us, this will allow us to help combat violence against women. Donate now!

Subscribe on our website

You can receive regular updates about our work and news from our partners around the world by subscribing to our website or Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/AsudaOrganization>.

<https://asuda.krd/>.

Get social

If you like our organization and work, please tell your friends on Instagram or Facebook!