

Humanitarian action report



Southern Kurdistan (Başûr)

March 2021

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Acknowledgments

I do not want to give you meaningless acknowledgments. I would like to explain your indispensable role. I started the humanitarian actions, because I could not stay without doing anything. My maternal village in Efrîn is razed to the ground. My father's village is occupied by jihadists supported by Turkey. Of course, I had already been active for years, but I wanted to make myself more useful and try to have an impact on populations unjustly made vulnerable by wars for ethnic or religious reasons alone. Overnight I went to refugee camps in Greece, then a second time, and now to Southern Kurdistan. Since then, some people have sent me their moral support, others their financial support so that I can help these refugees.

In fact, it is you, it is your support and your trust that make this humanitarian action possible. **I thank you for your humanism, for your trust and for the refugees you have been able to help with your money.**

I would like to warmly thank Gabriel Gauffre (<https://www.gabrielgauffre.com/>), a French photographer who participated in the humanitarian action on a voluntary basis. He covered the humanitarian action with high quality photos and videos that allowed you to follow this humanitarian action. Almost all the photos in this report are his work.

I would also like to thank the Representation of the Kurdistan Government in France for its administrative support, which enabled us to carry out this humanitarian action.

Finally, I would also like to thank my associative partners, without whom this action would not have had the desired scope, and for the help they gave me, which was crucial.



Introduction

The action took place in the Başûr of Kurdistan, meaning Southern Kurdistan in Kurdish, it is also known as "Iraqi Kurdistan".



IMAGE 1 - LOCATION OF BASUR KURDISTAN ON THE WORLD MAP

The action was supposed to last 2 weeks, but given our actions and humanitarian aspirations, we extended it to 3 weeks. It took place from 13 March to 3 April 2021.

The approach of the humanitarian action is independent. I do not do humanitarian work by profession. I do it out of passion and in my free time and holidays. Therefore, the humanitarian action serves no political or financial purpose.

I take a direct approach on short-term projects only. For medium-term projects I get in touch with associative partners and finally I try to identify long-term projects in the report below.

I adopt a transparent approach by presenting the whole process on social networks, writing this report and making all financial evidence available.

The actions

Autistic child refugees from Rojava



1. ROY, ONE OF THE AUTISTIC CHILD REFUGEE

Refugee families from Rojava¹ mostly have precarious, low-income jobs in Başûr Kurdistan, combining several jobs or working long hours to support themselves. Some families have autistic children who cannot be accepted in the free public school due to certain traits :

- Lack of speech
- Lack of awareness of dangers (cars, knives, heights, etc.)
- Méconnaissance des dangers (voitures, couteaux, hauteurs, etc.)
- Social difficulties
- ...

Admission to special education centres for autistic children is very expensive. For an average income of \$500 per month per worker, admission to a centre per child costs \$500 per month as well. These children are therefore condemned to remain at home without access to any education and without adapted support.

¹ Western Kurdistan, otherwise known as "Syrian Kurdistan"

We subsidised the education of 3 refugee children for one month as a trial and as a relief for the families we met.

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT01 (500\$) #ACT02 (500\$) #ACT03 (500\$)	500\$ x 3 = 1500\$	1500\$ * 1480 = 2 220 000 IQD

I am still today in contact with some families and have referred them to associations or activists in this field.

We have identified **some long-term solutions**:

- Set up a child sponsorship by sending money from my donors to a trusted third party on the spot to directly finance the centers in consultation with the families.
 - I am currently assessing the financial tools to reduce the very high costs of common solutions for transferring money to the region.
- Development of an autism center available for low-income families
 - I am willing to participate in this initiative, but it must be initiated and organized by a large structure that has the necessary funds and human resources.

Kewirgosk camp needs assessment



2 - THE CAMP'S MEDICAL TEAM, ITS MANAGERS, OUR ASSOCIATIVE PARTNER AND OURSELVES

Nearly 8,000 refugees (a total of 2,000 families) from Rojava Kurdistan are living in the Kewirgosk camp north of Erbil. In the current health context, WHO has reduced its subsidies for the delivery of medicines for chronic diseases such as :

- Diabetes
- Thyroid complications
- ...

The camp has 400 refugees with chronic diseases, 43 of whom have thyroid problems. At the time of our needs assessment, there was sufficient medication for only 3 patients.

We had coordinated a short-term action with stakeholders for the purchase and delivery of medicines, but this was constrained by administrative machinery. After spending a day visiting the camp and touring the medical facilities, in consultation with the camp director, and then a few days later an appointment with the Ministry of Health, we had communicated with the stakeholders a plan of action. We had communicated with the stakeholders a budget of \$1500 for approved medicines, but had received a quote of \$6500. Still, we spent a whole day consulting a medical center for the purchase of the medicines, adjusted the estimates, prices, etc but not all the medicines had Ministry of Health stamps to be allowed in the camps, etc. Despite our good will and repeated efforts, we were faced with an administrative bottleneck that prevented us from completing the delivery of medicines in a short-term project.

Invoice reference	Quotation in US dollar	Quotation received
#DEV01	1500\$	6247\$

The Yezidis in precarious situation



3 – ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING WITH OUR PARTNER ASSOCIATION

Since the invasion of their region, Sinjar, in 2014, the Yezidis of this area have fled to other cities in Kurdistan. They are still the most fragile and precarious refugee community today. They cannot return to their lands because of the ongoing conflicts and cannot rebuild their lives because of the economic difficulties, and the politicians do not adapt their agendas to their needs either. For example, most of them live in temporary tents and are not allowed to build more solid dwellings made of brick, cement or cinder block. This fragility of the home has had a direct impact on their daily lives for the past 7 years.

The slums in Hewlêr (Dîvan Hotel)



4 – SLUMS OF THE DÎVAN HOTEL

The slum is located in the vicinity of the 5-star hotel in Dîvan. The slum is inhabited by 18 families, a total of 160 people with 60 children between 1 and 15 years old.

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT04	900\$ + 14\$ (delivery)	900\$ * 1450 = 1 305 000 IQD +20 000 IQD of delivery

A total of 50\$ per family to buy basic necessities:

- Rice
- Wheat
- Lentils
- Beans
- Tomato paste
- Oils
- Pasta
- Sugar
- Tea
- Shampoo
- Soap
- Detergent

• ...

The slums in Ainkawa



5 - SLUMS IN AINKAWA

The slum is located near the Hyksos Hotel in Ainkawa. There are a total of 19 families there. The temperature when we were there was around 45 degrees Celsius and there were people at risk such as elderly people and small children.

We brought them:

- Rice
- Tea
- Baby milk
- Drinking water filters
- 3 air conditioners for :
 - 2 very old people (+80 years old)
 - 1 infant

We also received donations from people on site :

- A second-hand television
- Two second-hand refrigerated water coolers

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
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#ACT05 (300500IQD) #ACT06 (80000IQD) #ACT07 (65000IQD) #ACT08 (65000IQD) #ACT09(30000IQD)	365 \$	540 500 IQD
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Families in need in Slemani



6 - SAC DE NOURRITURES DISPOSEES POUR LES FAMILLES

Through our local NGO partner with the help of a university professor who knew the refugee community well, we provided 21 families with basic necessities. Products such as :

- Rice
- Wheat
- Lentils
- Beans
- Tomato Paste
- Oils
- Pasta
- Sugar
- Tea
- Sanitary towels

- Detergent
- ...

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT10	846 \$	1 251 500 IQD

The isolated woman in Slemani



7 – THE BROKEN TELEVISION

The Yezidi professor from the American University of Slemani knew the refugee community in the city well. After our distribution to the poor families, he told us about the case of an isolated and disabled woman. She is a refugee from Afrin in Rojava, she is disabled in her legs and cannot work or participate in social activities. She stays at home most of the time, and her only activity is when her neighbors come to visit from time to time. We provided her with the same basket of necessities as the other 21 families, but also replaced her damaged television with a new one so that she could enjoy her time more. Of course, we chose the entry-level model that would be enough to bring her out of her dreary environment.

Invoice reference	Coûts en euro (€)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT1	124 €	202 000 IQD

The surroundings of the Khanke camps



8 – DELIVERIS OF ESSENTIAL GOODS TO FAMILIES

The Khanké refugee camp is saturated. There are many tents and shantytowns on the outskirts of the camp that do not benefit from the aid present in the camp (education, health, subsidies, aid from organizations, etc.). We have prepared basic baskets with food and hygiene products.

We helped 32 families, including 3 with ISIS survivors. One of the female ex-daesh prisoners was interviewed and we are working on publishing the video.

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT12 (1237000 IQD) #ACT13 (1300000IQD) #ACT14 (780000IQD)	907 \$	1 273 000 IQD + 70 000 IQD (Census taker)

The Newroz for Orphan Children

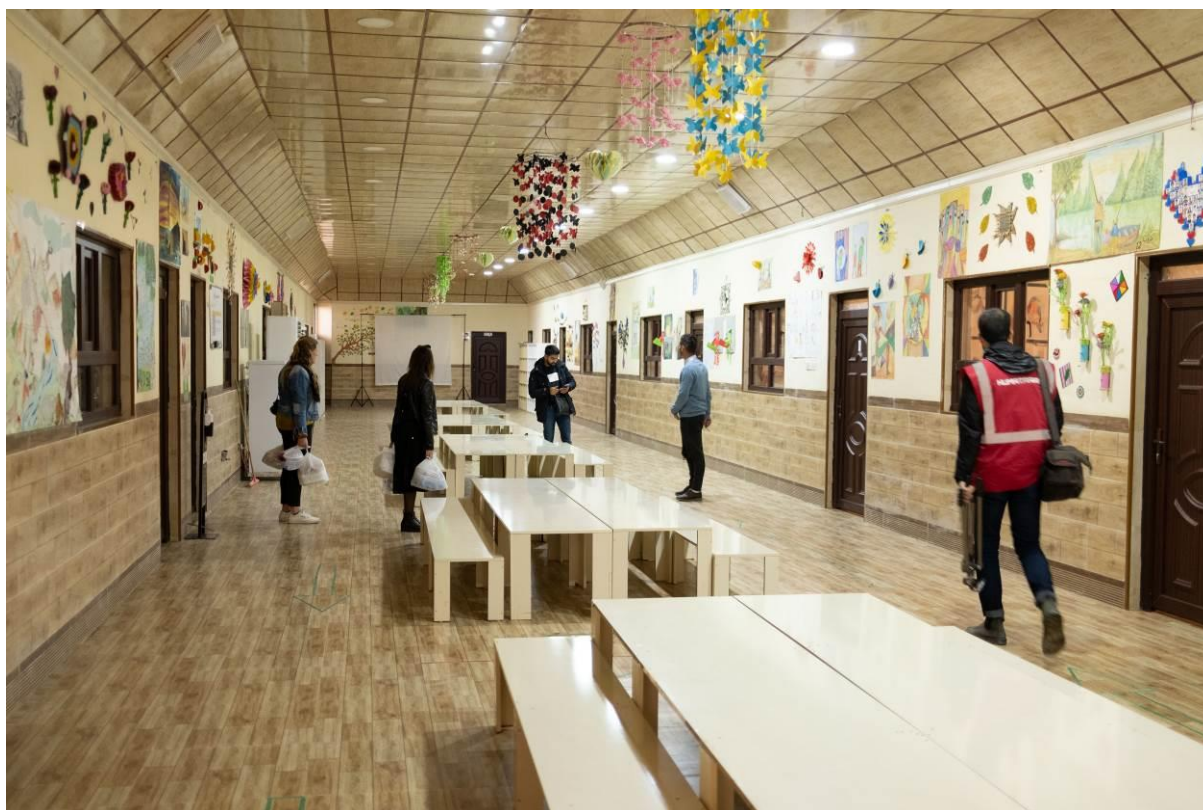


9 – SOME OF THE ORPHANES AT THE NEWROZ. THE GIRLS ARE AT ANOTHER TABLE.

Newroz is the most important annual celebration of the Kurdish people, celebrating the new year taking place on 20 or 21 March depending on the arrival of spring. The entire Kurdish society celebrates this event. However, when we visited an orphanage in Erbil, we discovered that they do not have the chance to celebrate it. So we decided to organize a Newroz for them. We provided a special lunch from a local restaurant for all the children. 75 orphans from 5 to 19 years old were able to enjoy a festive meal that they had not had the chance to have before.

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT15	405 \$	600 000 IQD

The orphanage in Khanke



10 – INSIDE OF THE ORPHANAGE

Many parents were massacred in the 2014 Yazidi genocide by ISIS, and their children were orphaned. The Our Bridge orphanage is a unique place for this battered community. In addition to the orphans, children from the Khanké refugee camp come here to be educated. You can see the efforts made on this orphanage, which make the atmosphere of the place particularly pleasant and remarkable.

We wanted to contribute to this orphanage by buying them school supplies (coloured pencils, sharpeners, Velleda markers, notebooks), material for educational workshops and gardening and craft materials.

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT16 (56000IQD) #ACT17 (52500 IQD) #ACT18 (58000 IQD) #ACT19 (145000IQD)	210 \$	311 500 IQD

Educational and sports workshops at the Sharia camp



11 - ATELIER DANS LES CAMPS DE SHARIA

We participated in educational workshops in the Sharia camp through two of our associative partners. The workshops involved 11 teenagers under the age of 18 on two themes :

- **Raising awareness about COVID-19** : Barrier gestures, sanitary hygiene, etc.
- **Raising awareness on child marriage** : Les raisons et les conséquences d'un mariage en dessous de 18 ans. (Unintentional marriage, impossibility of access to studies, etc.)

In order to carry out these workshops, we provided: school bags, pens, coloured pencils, pencils, erasers, rulers, pencil sharpeners, staplers, notebooks and tipex.

We also provided our partner with sports equipment to organise a table tennis tournament. (Rackets, balls, net and finally for the reward 2 watches)

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT20 (60000 IQD)	405 \$	600 000 IQD
#ACT21 (46000 IQD)		
#ACT22 (235000 IQD)		
#ACT23 (7500 IQD)		

Educational and sports workshops at the Bardarash camps



12 – EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

As the scope of our humanitarian actions is only on the short term, we wanted to have an impact on the medium term in order to bring more to the refugees. Thanks to one of our local partners who has competent teams with whom we were able to collaborate for 3 weeks, we provided them with various materials to carry out their activities:

- Volley balls and nets
- Skipping ropes
- Notebooks, coloured pencils and sheets
- Sewing kit with patterns

Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)	Cost in Iraqi Dinar (IQD)
#ACT24 (17500 IQD)	405 \$	600 000 IQD
#ACT25 (12500 IQD)		
#ACT26 (75000 IQD)		
#ACT27 (230000 IQD)		

The Christian communities



13 – VIEW ON NINEVEH PLAINS

This humanitarian action included within its scope assistance to Christian refugees. These refugees were caused by the Daesh invasion of Mosul and the attacks on the Nineveh Plain in 2014 where the Christian communities (Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syriacs, etc.) resided. Nevertheless, by 2021, there were no Christian refugees left in the camps in Kurdistan. The community has shown a remarkable resilience that has brought them out of this precarious situation.

We therefore turned to committed associations and locals to explore the prospects of short-term projects to help these communities. From our study, the Christian communities in Kurdistan are more focused on long-term development projects that do not fall within the scope of our humanitarian action.

I would like to personally apologise for not being able to engage with these communities as originally planned. I would also like to thank the many friends and associations who took the time to discuss with our humanitarian action to find viable projects within the framework of our humanitarian action. I have no doubt that these contacts and relationships will bear fruit in future projects where I will be happy to support them.

Western Kurdistan (Rojava)



14 -ON THE WAY TO THE BORDER

As part of this humanitarian action, we also had the ambition to study the dynamics and needs of Western Kurdistan (Rojava). The situation being more precarious and difficult, there is a greater need for humanitarian work on the spot. However, due to administrative problems and a tense context both in terms of health and security, we were unable to visit Western Kurdistan (Rojava).

Expenses

This is the first humanitarian action to incur costs on donations. We are all volunteers, we do not take a salary and we pay all of our expenses (travel, accommodation, food, etc). Countless efforts have been made by the volunteers, both financially and through our partners who have given us their support.

Nevertheless we have the following costs:

- Photographer's plane tickets
- Both way to Rojava border
- A full tank of petrol

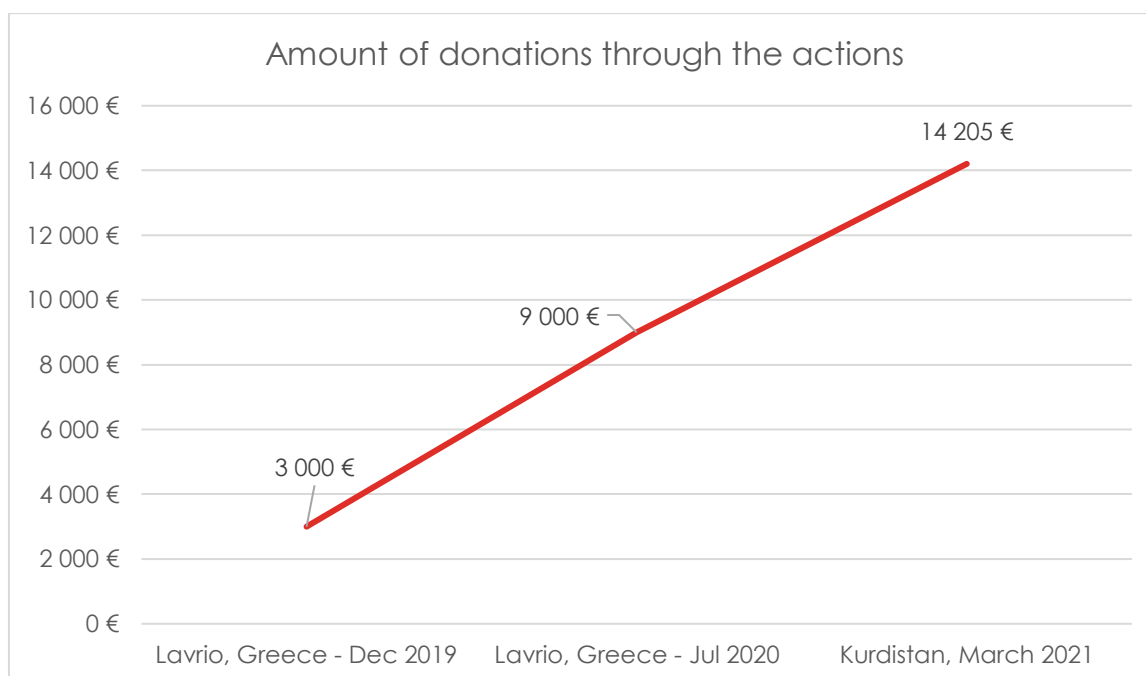
Invoice reference	Cost in US dollars (\$)
#ACT28 Rojava : 151 500 IQD Essence : 20 000 IQD	582 \$

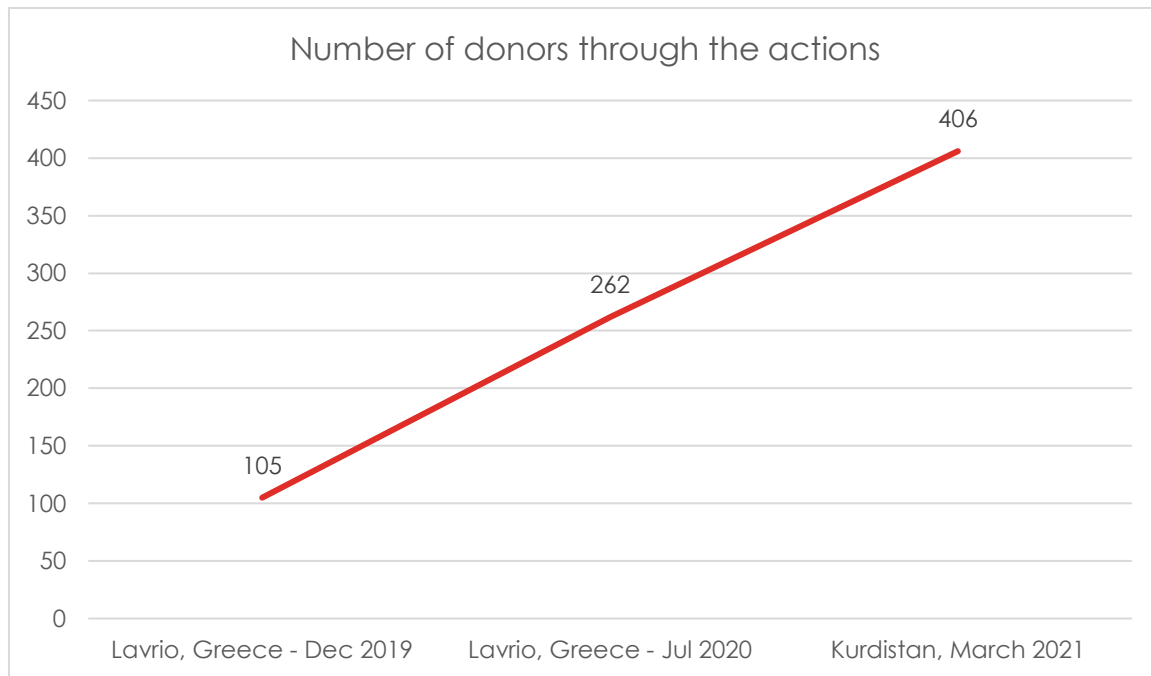
Conclusion

Financial

The humanitarian action is growing every year. We have raised :

- 14 205 €
- Through 406 donors
- In over 20 countries around the world





Out of this amount of 14205€, a total of 5545€ was spent. We were not able to use the full amount for two reasons:

- Unavailability of financial tools to use such an amount on the spot. We must not forget that Kurdistan is linked to Iraq and that using such an amount is a challenge for which we are still looking for solutions.
- Lack of time on the humanitarian action (volunteers use their holidays and free time)
 - o Find project that have a real impact on the refugees
 - o Find feasible and serious project
 - o Find reliable and trustful partners
 - o Coordinate all the agendas

Humanitarian

Our approach proved to be successful. In just 3 weeks we managed to completed more actions than some organisations do in a year. We managed to study the dynamics and needs across the different regions of Southern Kurdistan (Hewlêr, Duhok, Slemani). This indispensable study allows us to better foresee and apprehend the next actions that we could carry out in South Kurdistan in order to have a better impact.

Nevertheless, this rhythm has intensely solicited our volunteers on the spot with days of more than 15 hours of work and no rest days.

For the future, we intend to help Rojava, which is facing greater humanitarian needs and which will also allow us to study the dynamics and needs on the ground. However, we would have a smaller and less intense scope than in Southern Kurdistan. Nothing is planned yet, but discussions are already taking place with associative partners to study the different projects. We would like to have more of a medium or long-term approach in order to help the communities on the spot as much as possible. If you have interesting projects or associations, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Press & Media

Kurdistan24

French Kurdish activist brings hope to displaced Yezidis in Kurdistan

Arya Jemo's family began helping refugees while he was still in school in France. Now 25, the Kurd from Afrin is giving back to people in need in Kurdistan.



Wladimir van Wilgenburg



2021/05/05 14:51



Arya Jemo (second left), a Kurdish activist from France, has distributed aid to needy displaced Yezidi families in Kurdistan. (Photo: Gabriel Gauffre)

<https://www.kurdistan24.net/en/story/24436-French-Kurdish-activist-brings-hope-to-displaced-Yezidis-in-Kurdistan>

BabylonFM



<https://babylonfm.net/2021/06/02/breakfast-club-tech-consultant-arya-jemo/>

The photos & vidéos

You can find more photos & videos of the humanitarian action via :

- Instagram : [@aryus](#)
 - Saved Story: You have a day to day view with a very precise view of the situation.
 - Photos / Videos posted
- Twitter : [@aryajemo](#)
 - More textual descriptions of day-to-day actions with photos
- Youtube : [aryajemo](#)
 - Larger videos on humanitarian action

Forms :

In a duty of transparency with my donors and in a perspective of continuous improvement, I provided below 3 forms in order to contact me directly.

The forms are to be filled in by email and sent to the emails mentioned.

Request for information

Name :

First name :

Email :

Phone number:

Subject :

Message :

Send the form to the following email : humanity@aryajemo.com

Suggestions for ideas/projects

Name :

First name :

Email :

Phone number :

Subject :

Message :

Send the form to the following email : humanity@aryajemo.com

Request for invoice (only for donors)

Name :

First name :

Email :

Phone number :

Invoices references :

Where have you made a donation :

Date of the donation :

Amount of the donation :

Justification of the request:

Mandatory attachments: :

- Proof of identity of the donor (national identity card, resident card, passport, driving licence)

To send to the following email : humanity@aryajemo.com