



MOVEMENT FOR  
NEW ASSYRIA

A snapshot of the state of  
Assyrian national self-reliance

# 2023 National Self-reliance Report

Movement for New Assyria



# Our future is in our hands

The report you are reading represents the first-ever attempt to gauge the general level of self-reliance of the Assyrian nation. It relies on one key metric; implemented development projects.

By aggregating data from various development projects implemented by Assyrian organizations in 2023 and comparing estimated total investments with the estimated Assyrian national economy, we are able to indicate the relative level of self-reliance.

The report should not be seen as a scientific study with precise numbers and data, because no such data exists. Instead, it should be understood as an attempt to raise awareness among Assyrians regarding the significant disparity between our current efforts and the vast untapped potential to effect change independently, rather than relying on others.

*Hiruthaydan b'idan - Khirutan b'idan - ھیرۆژەکانی ئێران - کھیروتانی ئێران*

**Movement for New Assyria**

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## What is national self-reliance?

National self-reliance, also known as national self-sufficiency, alludes to the extent a nation relies on its own resources to achieve its objectives. Nations with a low level of self-sufficiency are inherently vulnerable as they must depend on, and are exposed to, the whims and benevolence of other actors.

A nation can be highly self-sufficient in one sector, such as food production, but be lacking in another, such as production of defense equipment, thus creating possible vulnerabilities for itself.

Throughout human history, the nations with the highest level of self-sufficiency have always been the most successful in defending and asserting their interests, while the ones lacking the will to develop a meaningful level of self-reliance have suffered and been subjected to different forms of hardships.



## What is the Assyrian national economy?

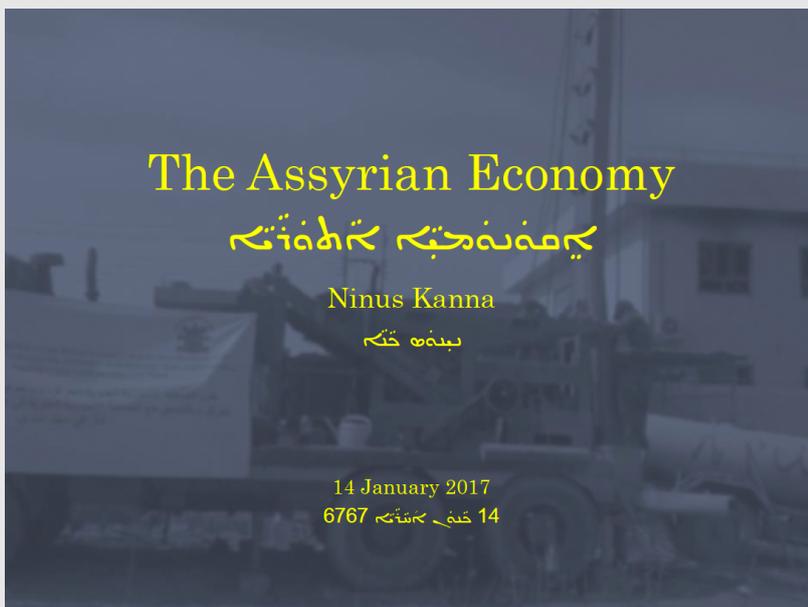
The basis for the estimations at the heart of this report is a brief 2017 study about the Assyrian national economy as a concept.

The short study titled “The Assyrian Economy” explores the Assyrian economy, highlighting its characteristics, components and potential. It attempts to show why, despite lacking a state, the Assyrian nation constitutes an economy, with shared language, production, and consumption.

Using population data and GDP per capita, the study estimates the size of the Assyrian economy across countries and arrives at an estimation of 23-45 billion USD, equaling or surpassing the economies of countries like Jordan and Serbia.



Despite currently lacking a state, the Assyrian nation constitutes an economy



## Measuring the General Level of Assyrian National Self-Reliance

How does one measure a scattered nation's level of self-reliance? Has it ever been done before? The simple answer to both questions is that probably no one knows.

The general level of national self-reliance would be difficult to measure even for a nation-state with the most comprehensive national statistics data. To determine how to approach the task for the dispersed Assyrian nation has been a real challenge.

Nevertheless, we have developed a simple method to do just that. By focusing on the only reliable metric with available data, e.g, the number of implemented development projects by Assyrian organisations, we have been able to establish a formula that, while not accurate, helps to visualize the issue.

While this approach does not offer absolute accuracy or the entire picture, it helps to shed light on the immense disparity between what we are capable of accomplishing and how little we are currently achieving.

## The results of the study: marginal use of national resources for national interests

We have identified 78 development projects implemented by six Assyrian organizations in 2023, and listed them in this report.

### Estimating the total sum

Calculating the total sum spent on all the listed projects in this report is unfortunately difficult. Most Assyrian organizations lack proper reporting on amounts raised and spent on their websites. It is therefore only possible to make a rough estimation. This report estimates that the total sum spent on the listed projects to be between 2 - 3 million USD. We will use the middle of that estimation, 2.5 million USD, as our estimated total sum for the further calculations in this report.

### Total sum in relation to the Assyrian economy

To put the value of the 78 projects in relation to the Assyrian national economy, we divide the estimated total sum of 2.5 million with the theoretical Assyrian national economy estimated at 35 Billion USD (mid estimation from the 2017 study this report uses as a reference point). Based on this estimation of the Assyrian national economy, the estimated 2.5 million USD in projects for the benefit of Assyrians implemented in 2003 is a drop in the ocean, constituting only 0.0714% of 35 billion.



We're using  
far less than  
1% of our  
national  
economy for  
our collective  
interests

## 2023 impact

78

Projects implemented

1000s

Assyrian beneficiaries

2.5 mil

Estimated total value

"Implemented development projects by Assyrian organizations is the best metric we have to assess the level of self-reliance."

MNA

## Analysis of the total sum in relation to population size

When examining the relationship between the estimated total value of implemented projects and the Assyrian world population, a key number emerges, shedding light on the level of engagement within the nation.

To derive at this number, we begin with the total estimated sum of \$2.5 million. Assuming an average total donation of \$100, we can calculate that this results in 25,000 donations. This implies that 25,000 Assyrians each contributed \$100, collectively raising the estimated required for the 78 projects.

By comparing the estimated number of Assyrian donors, 25,000, with the estimated world Assyrian adult population of 2.5 million, we find that this translates to 1 percent. According to this calculation, only 1 percent of Assyrians donated to fund the 78 projects implemented in 2023.

Even if one does not agree with all the estimated numbers used to arrive at the 1 percentage, it is clear beyond any doubt that more than 90 percent of Assyrians are not contributing to Assyrian initiatives meant to strengthen our existence in Assyria.



We estimate that only one percent of Assyrians donated to fund the 78 projects

## Inverting the numbers: a thought experiment

While the calculations on the previous page indicate that more than 90% of the world adult Assyrian population is not contributing, it is interesting to see how the results turn out if things are inverted.

If instead 90% of all adult Assyrians were to donate 100 dollars in a year the calculation would be 2,250,000 individuals x 100 dollars and amount to 225 million dollars. **The amount would be enough to finance more than 7000 such projects in a year, given an average project sum of 32 000 USD (2.5 million/78 projects).** This thought experiment helps to show the great untapped potential of the Assyrian nation in advancing its objectives on its own.



## Why self-reliance is difficult to measure

While this report primarily evaluates national self-reliance through the lens of development projects spearheaded by Assyrian organizations, it's crucial to acknowledge the existence of other pertinent metrics that contribute to self-sufficiency.

National self-reliance stems from an inherent belief system within a community, often tacit yet evident in shared behaviors. Such nations naturally gravitate towards establishing and upholding systems and mechanisms to cultivate and safeguard their self-sufficiency. However, quantifying expressions of self-reliance within the Assyrian nation, which is devoid of a centralized authority, poses challenges, as initiatives often manifest at individual or small-group levels.

These efforts span from diaspora families investing in their ancestral villages to support networks among village or familial cohorts, and investments by individual entrepreneurs. The collective impact of these endeavors, both economic and non-economic, contributes to Assyrian national self-reliance, yet they remain elusive to track and quantify.

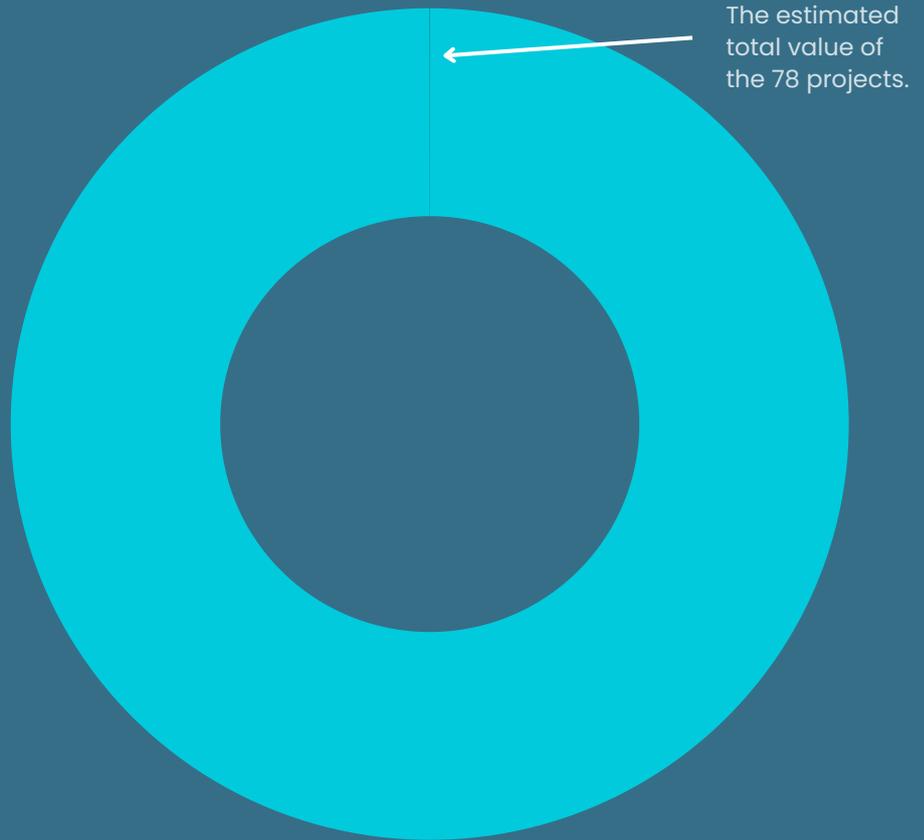
As such, it's essential to recognize that this report offers just one perspective among numerous factors influencing the nation's overall self-reliance.



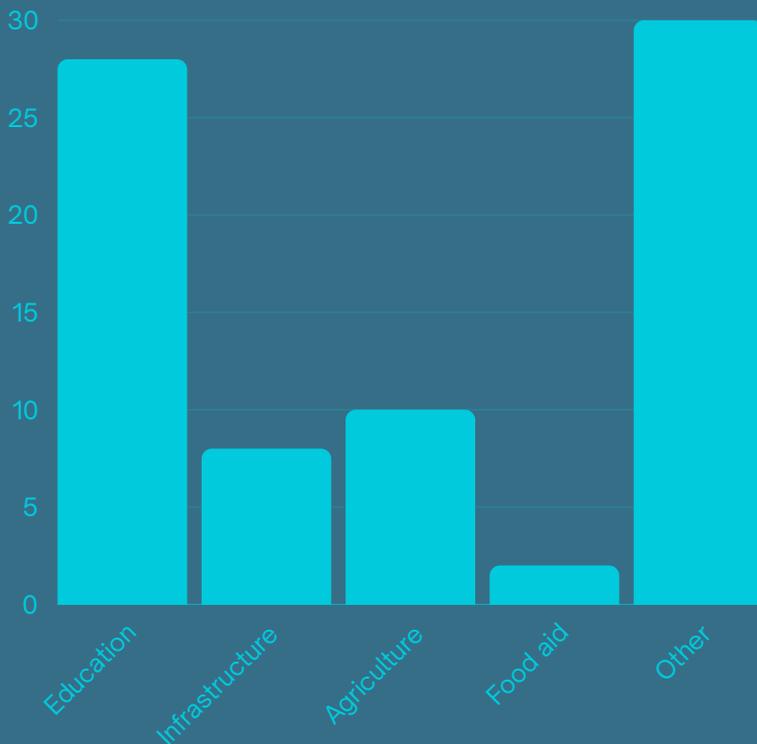
Quantifying expressions of self-reliance within the Assyrian nation, which is devoid of a centralized authority, poses big challenges

# The invisible comparison

The estimated total value of the implemented projects, 2.5 million, is barely visible in this donut chart symbolizing the total Assyrian national economy, 35 billion, underscoring just how little Assyrians are investing in their collective future.



Estimated national Assyrian economy  
100%



## Types of projects

A majority of the listed projects support educational efforts while only two were food aid projects. Relief aid projects to the Baghdede fire victims is included under "other".

# Index of implemented projects\*

## Projects by Assyrians Without Borders in 2023

	Project	Cost \$	Location
1	Earth quake relief	No info	Malatya
2	Christmas gifts for children	No info	Turabdin
3	Financial support to Assyrian school in Beirut	No info	Beirut

## Projects by Nineveh Rising in 2023

	Project	Cost \$	Location
1	Baghdede fire - relief to victims	No info	Baghdede

## Projects by Assyrian Church of the East Relief Org. in 2023

	Project	Cost \$	Location
1	Christmas gifts to children	No info	Assyrian region
2	Medical aid to Assyrians	No info	Jordan
3	Baghdede fire relief	No info	Baghdede

### \*Disclaimer

We've diligently compiled projects by recognized Assyrian organizations in 2023, yet it's possible we've overlooked lesser-known groups or specific projects inadvertently due to limited information. Any such oversights are unintended.

Our report doesn't aim to exhaustively list every detail but rather to convey a message of hope and collective empowerment, encouraging Assyrians to recognize that our destiny lies solely within our control.

Please contact us if you feel your organization should have been included or have suggestions or questions.

## Projects by Shlama Foundation in 2023

	Project	Cost \$	Location
1	Rehabilitation of the Mar Gewargis Church	4 500	Deralok
2	Response to the wedding fire tragedy - phase 1	25 491	Baghdeda
3	School books for students	795	Alqosh
4	School books for students	3 148	Tesqopa
5	Distributing Christmas gifts for 538 children	3 507	Baghdeda
6	Distributing Christmas gifts for 400 children	5 884	Bashiqa
7	Distributing Christmas gifts for 65 children	1 499	Bagera
8	Religious garments for churches	5 000	Region-wide
9	Dorm for Assyrian students for 2023-24	4 500	Ankawa
10	Completion of a home for a widow and her three children	17 200	Koya
11	Supporting Batnaya Primary School with necessities	1 400	Batnaya
12	Re-establishing the Tel Keppe football team	1 440	Batnaya
13	Constructing 230 meters of irrigation canal (phase 2)	8 840	Komani
14	Providing transportation for 12 students to universities	2 000	Assyrian region
15	Rehabilitating and equipping a vegetable shop	3 100	Baghdeda
16	Shlama Football League - 2023 Season	34 776	Assyrian region
17	Providing transportation for 14 students	2 813	Baghdeda
18	Installing a new 110-kVA generator	14 650	Hazarjot
19	Rehabilitating and equipping 8 schools	21 270	Alqosh
20	Delivering flowers for the elderly on Valentine's Day	700	Assyrian region

**Grand total: 162 513 USD**

## Projects by Etuti Institute in 2023

	Project	Cost \$	Location
1	Christmas gifts to children	No info	Baghdeda
2	Completion of soccer field	No info	Bakhitme
3	Bleachers for soccer field	No info	Hazarjot
4	Annual leadership training	No info	Hazarjot
5	Repair of water pipes	No info	Merkacha
6	Construction of playground	No info	Dooreh
7	Scholarships for students	No info	Assyrian region
8	Workshop for youth	No info	Nahla
9	Workshop for youth	No info	Erbil
10	Fuel to Assyrian families	No info	Armenia
11	Music project Assyrian karaoke	No info	Germany
12	Fuel and equipment to Assyrian school	No info	Baghdede
13	Support to students	No info	Armenia

## Projects by Assyrian Aid Society in 2023\*

	Project	Cost \$	Location
1	Distribution of Christmas gifts	No info	Sheikhan
2	Distribution of Christmas gifts	No info	Zhakho
3	Distribution of food baskets to families	No info	Karmelis and Baghdad
4	Distribution of Christmas gifts	No info	Karamlis and Bartella
5	Distribution of Christmas gifts	No info	Baghdeda
6	Rameil Daycare support	No info	Nohadra
7	Support to three schools: Nessiben, Akito Basic, and Berta	No info	Nohadra
8	Installation of pipes and submersible pumps	No info	Beshemyaye
9	Scientific laboratories to schools	No info	Assyrian region
10	Generator maintenance	No info	Malla Barwan
11	Relief to Baghdede burn victims	No info	Baghdede
12	Printing of the dictionary for schools	No info	Nohadra
13	Fuel for generators for 13 villages	No info	Nohadra
14	Rehabilitation Shlama basic school	No info	Zhakho
15	Construction of irrigation channel	No info	Dehi
16	Salaries of lecturers and transportation for schools	No info	Nohadra/Arbil
17	Rehabilitation of irrigation channels+water dam	No info	Nahla
18	Renovation of Hezani and Marka schools	No info	Nahla
19	Rehabilitation water borehole+new solar panels for pump	No info	Karamlesh
20	Oil heaters for Akito Elementary School	No info	Nohadra

## (Contin) Projects by Assyrian Aid Society in 2023

	Project	Cost \$	Location
21	Street lighting	No info	Bakhtme
22	Installation irrigation water network	No info	Hayes
23	Extension of drip network to irrigate trees	No info	Chaqala
24	Installation streetlights	No info	Blejane
25	Replacement of electricity grid	No info	Hazarjot
26	Renovation of school	No info	Bakhetme
27	Installation of street lightts	No info	Armoota
28	Small business grants	No info	Assyrian region
29	Training in law and psychology	No info	Nineveh plain
30	Establish irrigation channel	No info	Kishkawa
31	Mobile medical clinic	No info	Assyrian region
32	Refrigerators and medical mattresses for nursing home	No info	Nohadra
33	Water filters and coolers for schools	No info	Assyrian region
34	Papers for schools	No info	Assyrian region
35	Irrigation project	No info	Dooreh
36	Food aid to families	No info	Assyrian region
37	Computers to schools	No info	Assyrian region
38	Fuels for generators	No info	Nohadra area

\*Assyrian Aid Society has independent branches in Iraq, Australia, USA, Australia and Sweden. The implementing branch is Assyrian Aid Society Iraq.

## Common misconceptions about national self-reliance

**No nation has secured its freedom on its own, why do you expect Assyrians to be able to do it?**

National freedom struggles are intricate endeavors that often span generations. While cooperation with or support from external actors is often an important ingredient, such external involvement remains only a complement to the agency of the nation seeking freedom. As a general rule, the more a nation develops its capacity for self-reliance, the more likely it is to succeed in safeguarding its interests and achieve its aspirations, including developing partnerships with external actors.

**Doesn't Assyrians lack the numbers and resources necessary to develop a meaningful level of self-reliance?**

While the Assyrian global population, estimated at 3-4 million, might seem modest compared to larger nations, it is not negligible. In fact, it surpasses the populations of numerous independent states. The economic study referenced in this report underscores that Assyrians possess substantial resources comparable to those of nation-states. However, they have yet to harness these resources to a significant extent in advancing their national interests.

**Assyrians have always sent aid to their kin in Assyria, but it did not stop our decline, what makes you believe it will now?**

Aid from the diaspora has been limited in scope and often viewed as temporary relief rather than a strategic investment. Secondly, achieving self-reliance encompasses far more than mere aid initiatives. It embodies a collective mindset that drives a spectrum of actions, both small and large, economic and non-economic, culminating in progressive momentum. Regrettably, Assyrians lack this cohesive sense of self-reliance. This can and must change.

**It's not wrong to ask others for help, why be against it?**

Assyrians have been asking different powers to save them for more than a century with no results, as is well-known. Nevertheless, the MNA does not advocate for isolationism. Instead, we advocate for building up our capacity as a nation - on our own. The ability to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with different political actors will follow as a result. We say yes to partnerships but no to humiliating begging.

## Disclaimers and notes

### **General disclaimer**

The inclusion of the projects by the organizations listed in this report does not mean endorsement. We urge every donor to do their own research and only donate to Assyrian organisations that practise transparency and accountability.

### **Attribution in instances of shared funding**

In some instances, a project implemented by one organisation was supported financially by another organisation mentioned in the report. In such cases, we only report the project once and attribute it to the implementing organisation.

### **External finance**

Some of the 78 projects are fully or partially funded by non-Assyrian donors. Due to lack of information on funding we have chosen to include all projects, without regard for if they are funded by external actors and whether partially or fully.

### **A call to Assyrian organizations**

We call on all Assyrian organizations to follow best practices in their fundraising and project management, including having full transparency and reporting on the management of funds to help increase trust and the willingness of the Assyrian public to donate and track the impact of the support.



## Who we are

The Movement for New Assyria was conceived in 2018 by a group of young Assyrians who saw the need for a complete change of the way Assyrians act in response to our national cause.

## What we do

The mission of the MNA is twofold: to bring about a mental change in as many Assyrians as possible and to leverage the new mentality to create real change on the ground in Assyria.

### Mental change

Our primary mission is to create change by fostering a new mindset. We do this by addressing the root cause for the prevalent defeatism among Assyrians.

### Practical change

Our secondary mission is to create change on the ground in Assyria on a massive scale. We do this by mobilising and organising as many Assyrians as possible.



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