

UNAMI Herald

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May — June 2022



Security Council authorizes one-year mandate extension of United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, unanimously adopting Resolution 2631 (2022)

New York, 26 May 2022 — The Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) today for another year, until 31 May 2023, retaining its core tasks.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2631 (2022) (to be issued as document S/RES/2631(2022)) the Council requested that the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq and UNAMI prioritize the provision of advice, support, and assistance to the Government and people of Iraq on advancing inclusive, political dialogue and national and community-level reconciliation, considering civil society input, with the full, equal and meaningful participation of women.

The 15-member organ also requested the Special Representative and UNAMI to further advise, support and assist the Government of Iraq in facilitating regional dialogue and cooperation, including on issues of border security, energy, trade, environment, water and the adverse impacts of climate change, particularly those contributing to desertification and drought, resilience building, infrastructure, public health and refugees.

The Council also requested the Special Representative and UNAMI to approach gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting issue throughout its mandate and advise and assist the Government of Iraq in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation, involvement and representation of women at all levels of decision-making, including in the context of elections and government formation, and the promotion of women's economic empowerment. They were also requested to



promote, support, and facilitate the coordination and delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance, notably to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the transition of humanitarian services to government systems.

Further, the Special Representative and UNAMI were tasked with actively supporting the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to work together and engage in regular and structured dialogue to resolve outstanding issues, including security provisions, budgetary arrangements and the management of Iraq's oil and gas resources, and to implement

existing agreements, including the 2020 Sinjar Agreement.

Taking the floor after the adoption, India's representative, while welcoming the text, said that UNAMI's focus on the core mandate should not be distracted by additional tasks. The issue of climate change must be addressed holistically under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and no artificial links between climate change and security should be drawn without firm scientific evidence, he said.

Full text of the resolution starts on page 6.



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UN-facilitated dialogue in Erbil: KR political parties discuss elections, public services and empowerment of KR institutions

Erbil, 26 May 2022 – Heads and senior representatives* of political parties in the Kurdistan Region met today at the United Nations compound in Erbil, at the invitation of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). *More on page 8.*

UNDP supports Deputy Governors on local implementation of the “National Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism in Iraq”

Sulymaniyah, 16 May 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq, in partnership with the National Committee on the Implementation of the Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism at the National Security Advisory, completed a three-day workshop to support governorate sub-committees for the implementation of the Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism in Iraq.

More on page 9.

UNESCO Iraq celebrates World Press Freedom Day

Baghdad, 12 May 2022 - More than 2,600 Iraqi journalists have lost their jobs since the start of the Corona pandemic in 2020 until today, and the cause is due to the digital skills possessed by young creators of digital content that pioneering and senior journalists lack. This is one of the major challenges confronting Iraq's journalistic community, which was highlighted at the ceremony with a lengthy discussion among journalists, Iraqi government agencies, international organizations, and foreign embassies ... *More on page 21.*

UN report finds ‘limited progress’ on human rights protections for Iraqis

Baghdad/Geneva, 2 June 2022 - A UN report issued on Thursday, describes “limited progress” towards justice for human rights violations and abuses committed against dissenters exercising their right to free speech in Iraq.

“The Government of Iraq admittedly operates in a complex environment, including within the context of stalled government formation,” said the Update on Accountability in Iraq, jointly published by the UN Assistance Mission there (UNAMI) and the UN human rights office, OHCHR.

“However, continued impunity for killings, disappearances, abduction and torture of activists, undermines the authority of State institutions.”

More on page 18.



Visit to Al-Hol camp in northeastern Syria

Al-Hol, Syria, 5 June 2022 - Today, a high-level UN delegation, accompanied by the Chief of Iraq's National Security Service, visited Al-Hol camp in northeastern Syria: a desolate, sprawling complex of tents in the scorching sun, and the forced home of tens of thousands of people for many years now. The delegation witnessed first-hand the dire conditions on the ground. This was just a glimpse of the immense challenges Al-Hol residents endure on a daily basis - despite the best efforts of humanitarian actors. *More on page 39.*



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In the UNAMI Herald articles are sorted according to the topic and in a chronological order.

UN envoy urges Iraqi politicians to ‘roll up sleeves’ and meet people's aspirations

New York, 18 May 2022 — The top United Nations official in Iraq made an urgent appeal on Tuesday for the prompt formation of a new Government that meets the aspirations of that country's people. “National elections took place well over seven months ago and multiple deadlines for the formation of a government have been missed,” Special Representative Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert told the Security Council.

She pointed out that while political leaders subscribe to the notion of dialogue, the necessary willingness to compromise is painfully absent.

Noting that notorious aspects of Iraq's political life are repeating themselves in “a seemingly incessant loop of zero-sum politics”, Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert – who also heads the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) – said that Iraqis continue to wait for “a political class that will roll up its sleeves to make headway on the country's long list of outstanding domestic priorities”.

These include adequate service delivery to all citizens and an end to pervasive corruption, factionalism and pillaging of State institutions.

The UNAMI chief also emphasized the importance of diversifying the economy and implementing desperately needed reforms.

Moreover, she said that predictable governance rather than constant crisis management is needed, stressing that accountability must be a key feature of the State.

While asserting the State's



authority, Hennis-Plasschaert flagged that it is vital to rein in non-state armed actors.

“The neglect of the population's most basic needs has gone on for far too long,” she underscored.

Turning to the Sinjar agreement, signed in October 2020 by the federal government in Baghdad and the Kurdistan regional government in Erbil, she described it as being seen by many as a “glimmer of hope: a very first but important step in the right direction”.

While the agreement could lead to a new chapter for Sinjar, it first needs stable governance and security structures, she pointed out.

Despite having called for speedy implementation, the UN official said that “clearly, the opposite is true”.

“To date, there is no agreement on the selection of a new independent mayor, and funds for a new local security force remain blocked, possibly due to interference into unclear recruitment procedures”.

Clashes have erupted again in recent weeks, forcing Sinjari families to again pack their belongings and find their way back to Kurdistan to seek shelter, she noted.

Hennis-Plasschaert underlined that the safety and security of Sinjari families should be always front and center, as “they deserve peace under the authority of the State”.

The UNAMI chief concluded by again underlining the importance of overcoming the political stalemate.

“Significant domestic vulnerabilities are being compounded by the ongoing effects of the pandemic and global geopolitical tensions,” she said.

“A sincere, collective and urgent will to resolve political differences must now prevail – it must prevail for the country to move forward and to meet the needs of its citizens”.

By UN News.

Full text of the SRS's speech starts at page 4!



SRSg Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: “It is high time to return the spotlight where it must be: on the people of Iraq, and a programme of action!”

New York, 17 May 2022 – On its 9034th meeting United Nations Security Council deliberated situation concerning Iraq.

Here is the text of the briefing by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, at this meeting:

“Thank you, Mr. President,

Distinguished members of the Security Council,

My briefing today will hit many all-too-familiar notes, as notorious aspects of Iraqi political life are repeating themselves in a seemingly incessant loop of zero-sum politics. But before delving into that, I would like to share some impressions on the recent and ongoing waves of massive dust- and sandstorms hitting Iraq.

Now, while a dust- or sandstorm as such is not a new phenomenon for the country, the current wave far exceeds Iraq’s experiences in recent years. Briefing this Council last February, I spoke about the dangers of climate change and its effects, with desertification as a central concern. Ever since, Iraq has been battered by intense dust- and sandstorms that obscure the sky, send people running for shelter, even resulting in sickness and death.

Now, these storms are only expected to become more frequent. In other words: continued inaction, also here, comes at enormous costs. Having said this, Mr. President, these storms are not the only concern for the people in Iraq.

Iraqis continue to wait for a political class that, instead of being content with stale power battles, they are waiting for a political class that will roll up its sleeves to make headway on Iraq’s long list of outstanding domestic priorities. As you know, national elections took place well over seven months ago, and multiple deadlines for the formation of a government have been missed.

Now, it is true, Iraq is not the only country facing a protracted government formation process. But Iraq’s political leaders would do well not to hide behind that argument. It distracts from what is at stake.

It excuses a political deadlock while non-state armed groups fire rockets with apparent freedom and impunity. It excuses a political stalemate while



ordinary people suffer. It excuses a political impasse while simmering anger – public anger can boil over at any moments.

So, my question is: what will it take to realize that this situation is completely untenable?

To date, political leaders subscribe to the notion of dialogue, or another round of negotiations. But the necessary willingness to compromise? It is painfully absent. Visit any market and Iraqis will tell you: the national interest is, yet again, taking a backseat to short-sighted considerations of control over resources and power play.

It is therefore high time (and yes, I repeat myself), but it is high time to return the spotlight where it must be: on the people of Iraq, and a programme of action that provides: Adequate service delivery to all citizens.

An end to pervasive corruption, factionalism and the pillaging of state institutions.

The implementation of desperately needed reforms.

The diversification of the economy.

Predictable governance instead of constant crisis management.

An end to impunity, with accountability as a key feature of the State, and (of course) ...

Reining in non-state armed actors while asserting the State’s authority.

Over the past three years, you have heard me make these points numerous times. And one thing

remains clear: the neglect of the population’s most basic needs has gone on for far too long.

Again, Iraqi political inaction comes at a huge price. Not (in the short term) for those in power, but for those desperately trying to make ends meet on a daily basis.

Mr. President,

A few more specific observations, beginning with relations between Baghdad and Erbil. The sorry pattern of ad-hoc negotiations continues to prevail instead of what is critically needed: an institutionalized, predictable mechanism for the comprehensive, holistic and durable resolutions of all outstanding issues.

While this is evidently necessary, such a mechanism continues to be plainly missing, and this deficiency is sadly coupled with internal rivalries on both sides as well.

As I said last time: a spirit of partnership and cooperation can and must guide all stakeholders, including with regards to the recent Federal Supreme Court ruling on the KRG Oil and Gas Law. Having engaged with both sides on this matter, I am convinced that there is a way out.

However, and there is no denying it: events in the past have gravely eroded mutual trust. Hence, it will prove essential to build confidence, including by pledging to refrain from politically motivated, unilateral actions in the future.

Now, Mr. President, zooming in on

SRSB Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: “It is high time to return the spotlight where it must be: on the people of Iraq... (Continued)



the political situation within the Kurdistan Region: last year, in May, I participated in an event at the University of Kurdistan. It is a promising event with all Kurdistan Region political parties present.

In my remarks, I outlined the toxicity of political infighting and factionalism. I emphasized the importance of unity, not to be confused with uniformity. I spoke candidly about the need to move away from the yellow & green divide, about the responsibility of leaders to guide outreach and to bring together opposing interests, to focus on solutions that represent the interests of all peoples living in the Kurdistan Region - be it Erbil, Dohuk or Sulaymaniyah.

However, one year later, this promising event seems to have gained zero traction. On the contrary, divisions have deepened - with adverse effects on the peoples of the Kurdistan Region.

Now, and without repeating my remarks of a year ago, but it must be clear: the Kurdistan Region has a choice. And with the Kurdistan Region elections scheduled for the 1st of October later this year, it is of utmost importance to level the electoral playing field - with all political actors, big or small, enjoying equal opportunities. Promoting a conducive electoral environment, that is.

Additionally, I can only underline that geography does not always play in the Kurdistan Region's advantage. In other words: its unique geopolitical circumstances alone, should be enough to give its leaders pause.

And, of course, that goes for the whole of Iraq as well. As I have said on countless occasions: whether we like it or not, a weak domestic home front only creates a welcoming environment for continued external interference.

Now, on a related note, let me also

comment on incoming missiles and rockets: Disturbing, disruptive and dangerous.

With the IRGC claiming responsibility for up to 12 short-range ballistic missiles launched in the early hours of Sunday March 13, another worrisome chapter was opened. And while the IRGC described the targeted location in Erbil as “the strategic centre for conspiracy and evil acts of the Zionists”, no evidence for such claims was found. The targeted site is known as a civilian area, a private compound.

Although both sides - Iraq, Iran - although they are currently engaged in dialogue and do not wish to escalate the issue, Iraq rightfully rejects the notion that it can be treated as the region's backyard, with routine violations of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Now, another case in point are the ongoing Turkish and Iranian shelling activities in the North. So, what are we looking at? Cross-border shelling and missiles as the new normal for Iraq? This is a very risky way to advance interests, and one which further weakens the State of Iraq.

Needless to say: any country or actor seeking to settle a dispute has established diplomatic instruments, including our good offices, at their disposal.

Now, moving to Iraq's very own armed actors operating outside state control: the reckless firing of rockets, including at an oil refinery in Erbil some two weeks ago, remains alarming and unjustifiable. These attacks seek to undermine Iraq's security and stability within an already extremely volatile, politically charged post-electoral environment.

Fact is: “messaging by rockets”, “missile diplomacy” - these are reckless acts, with potentially devastating

consequences. Also, and let me emphasize, Iraq does not need self-proclaimed armed arbiters. And I again underline the great importance of asserting the State's authority. If the perpetrators are known, call them out. This is essential to uphold the Rule of Law.

Ladies and gentlemen, turning to the ever-pressing question of Sinjar:

As we know all too well, Sinjar's recent history has witnessed horrific ordeals, culminating in the heinous crimes committed by Da'esh. Today, while locals urgently need to rebuild their lives, they continue to face unconscionable obstacles. Obstacles due to discord on security arrangements, public service provisions and a unified administration.

The Sinjar agreement, signed by Baghdad and Erbil in October 2020, was seen (by many) as a glimmer of hope: a very first but important step in the right direction.

At the time, I expressed hope that the agreement would lead to a new chapter for Sinjar, one in which the needs of the Sinjari people would come first, that it would help displaced people return to their homes, that it would accelerate reconstruction and improve public service delivery.

But for that to happen, stable governance and security structures are - of course - pre-requisites. Now, ever since the agreement was signed, I have called for a speedy implementation. Well clearly, the opposite is true. To date, there is no agreement on the selection of a new independent mayor, and funds for a new local security force remain blocked, possibly due to interference into unclear recruitment procedures.

Now, on these recruitment procedures: I again emphasize the importance of pragmatism and realism. Not all people who joined “other forces” in the past can simply be painted with the same brush. It must be understood that some of them, absent the authority of the State, simply opted for a safety net, an identity and an income to provide for their families.

We also called on both Baghdad and Erbil to reach out to the people of Sinjar, to open their arms to all Sinjaris. Meanwhile, critics of the Sinjar agreement kept on emphasizing the lack of consultations with local communities.

Now, while no one dismisses good advice, and certainly not UNAMI, I have to say: local consultations did take

SRSJ Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: “It is high time to return the spotlight where it must be: on the people of Iraq... (Continued)

place and continue to take place. At the same time, it is true that both Baghdad and Erbil could and should step up their outreach at the grassroots level. The implementation of any agreement, winning hearts and minds, is hard work. And this one in particular.

A piece of paper alone will not do the job. One needs to be on top of it, 24/7, own it, constantly and proactively engage with the communities on the ground, provide explanations, clarify why a decision has been taken and why it benefits the Sinjaris in the medium to long term. Having said this: significant divides and the fragmentation of local communities are a fact of life in Sinjar, making things even more challenging.

And within this context, it is also important to note that Sinjar has increasingly turned into an arena for external and domestic spoilers.

Now, while some of this can be traced back to 2014 as Da'esh kicked off its atrocities, eight years later it is time to acknowledge that yes, mistakes have been made in the past, but Sinjar is part of the State of Iraq.

By giving room to external and domestic spoilers, the situation will not get any better. And by now, all stakeholders would do well to acknowledge this fact - notwithstanding their gratitude for the

help and assistance received in the past. You know, nobody said that the establishment of stable security and governance structures would be an easy ride.

But there is no denying it: the lack of clear-cut coordination and implementation mechanism, the dominance of partisan interests and the ongoing presence of spoilers significantly hamper meaningful progress. I have to say – international observers have been deployed for less.

Clashes have again erupted in recent weeks. And this sadly made Sinjari families again pack their belongings and find their way back to the Kurdistan Region to seek shelter.

So, let me reiterate:

Sinjaris' safety and security should be front and centre at all times.

They deserve peace under the authority of the State.

Domestic and external spoilers have no place in Sinjar.

Baghdad and Erbil must assume their responsibility, and urgently work together with only one objective: to improve the lives of people on the ground and promote the voluntary, dignified return of displaced persons to their homes.

Mr. President,

A few words on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals

and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives.

In recent months, the Iraqi Ministry of Defence has stepped up efforts to reach new witnesses through broadcasts, the media, as well as consular and diplomatic channels worldwide. As a result, at least two potential new witnesses have come forward during this period, confirming that broadcasts with a wide geographic reach can be helpful in eliciting information.

This demonstrated that investing efforts in obtaining new witness information, and insisting on acquiring satellite imagery analysis from relevant member States, are essential steps to bring this crucial and sensitive file to a close.

Now, Mr. President,

I will conclude my remarks by underlining (once more) the importance of overcoming the political stalemate. Significant domestic vulnerabilities are being compounded by the ongoing effects of the pandemic and global geopolitical tensions.

A sincere, collective and urgent will to resolve political differences must now prevail – it must prevail for the country to move forward and to meet the needs of its citizens.

Thank you, Mr. President.”

Security Council adopts Resolution 2631 (2022) and extends mandate of UNAMI for another year

New York, 26 May 2022 – Text of the Resolution 2631 (2022) adopted by the Security Council at its 9043rd meeting, on 26 May 2022:

“The Security Council,

Recalling all its previous relevant resolutions on Iraq, in particular 1500 (2003), 1546 (2004), 1557 (2004), 1619 (2005), 1700 (2006), 1770 (2007), 1830 (2008), 1883 (2009), 1936 (2010), 2001 (2011), 2061 (2012), 2110 (2013), 2169 (2014), 2233 (2015), 2299 (2016), 2379 (2017), 2421 (2018), 2522 (2020), 2576 (2021) and reiterating resolutions 2107 (2013) and 2621 (2022) on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, and the values set forth in 2367 (2017),

Reaffirming the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Iraq, and emphasizing the importance of the stability, prosperity, and security of Iraq for the people of Iraq, the region, and the international

community, particularly in light of Iraq's territorial victory over the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), and encouraging the international community to increase its support to Iraq in this regard,

Supporting Iraq in addressing the challenges it faces as it continues its stabilization efforts, including the ongoing fight against terrorism and ISIL, Al-Qaida and their affiliates, and continues the task of recovery, reconstruction, stabilization and reconciliation, including the requirement to meet the needs of all Iraqis, including women, youth, children, displaced persons, and persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, recognizing the threat of explosive ordinance and its impact on civilians, including children, and welcoming efforts to clear areas of



such devices,

Condemning in the strongest terms the 7 November 2021 assassination attempt against Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al Kadhimi,

Recalling the fundamental principle of the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises, and the obligations on host Governments, including under the 1961 Vienna Convention on

Security Council adopts Resolution 2631 (2022) and extends mandate of UNAMI for another year *(continued)*

Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, to take all appropriate steps to protect diplomatic and consular premises against any intrusion or damage, and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of these missions or impairment of their dignity,

Commending the Government of Iraq's and the Independent High Electoral Commission's execution of a technically well-managed and generally peaceful election on 10 October 2021,

Calling for the swift and peaceful formation of a new government, to deliver on national priorities for the Iraqi people, including through economic reform, regional cooperation, stabilization, development and the promotion and protection of human rights,

Noting the importance of the Government of Iraq urgently delivering meaningful reforms aimed at meeting the Iraqi people's legitimate demands to address corruption, deliver essential and basic services, diversify its economy, create jobs, improve governance, and strengthen viable and responsive state institutions, recognizing the Government of Iraq's efforts to that effect, and calling for State institutions to redouble efforts to pursue accountability for those responsible for crimes involving the killing, serious injury, abduction or disappearance of demonstrators and journalists, and to safeguard and respect the right of freedom of expression,

Noting the Government of Iraq's desire to see internally displaced persons and displaced Iraqis in Syria return to their areas of origin or resettle elsewhere in Iraq, stressing the importance of achieving dignified, safe and durable solutions undertaken on a voluntary and informed basis,

Recognizing the importance of the effective and timely implementation of the Yazidi Female Survivors Law and the need to hold perpetrators of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence accountable, to provide mental health and psychosocial support to victims, and to provide reparations and redress measures for all survivors identified in the law, and calling upon the Government of Iraq to extend its provisions to all victims,

Recognizing that the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes, and natural disasters, among other factors, can contribute to desertification and

drought, adversely impact the humanitarian situation, and aggravate any existing instability, emphasizing the need for comprehensive risk assessments by the Government of Iraq with the support of the United Nations, upon the request of the Government of Iraq, to take meaningful actions to adapt to or mitigate challenges posed by climate change and ecological change, and acknowledging the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement,

Expressing concern at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Iraq, recalling resolution 2565 (2021) and stressing once again that equitable access to safe, efficacious and affordable tests, treatments and COVID-19 vaccines is essential to end the pandemic,

Calling on the international community to remain strongly committed to providing support to Iraq for its humanitarian, stabilization, reconstruction, and development efforts and looking to the Government of Iraq as it assumes increased responsibility for the provision of humanitarian services,

1. Decides to extend the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 May 2023;

2. Requests that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and UNAMI, at the request of the Government of Iraq, shall:

(a) prioritize the provision of advice, support, and assistance to the Government and people of Iraq on advancing inclusive, political dialogue and national and community-level reconciliation, taking into account civil society input, with the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women;

(b) further advise, support, and assist:

(i) the Government of Iraq, the Independent High Electoral Commission and other Iraqi institutions with efforts to strengthen electoral preparation and processes, including through regular technical reviews and detailed reporting on electoral preparations and processes, as part of the Secretary-General's regular reporting cycle;

(ii) the Government of Iraq and the Council of Representatives on constitutional review, the implementation of constitutional provisions, as well as on the development of processes acceptable to the Government of Iraq to resolve disputed internal boundaries;

(iii) the Government of Iraq with progress on security sector reform, including by prioritizing the planning, funding, and implementation of efforts to strengthen state control and reintegration programmes for former members of armed groups, where and as appropriate, in coordination with other multinational entities;

(iv) the Government of Iraq on facilitating regional dialogue and cooperation, including on issues of border security, energy, trade, environment, water, adverse impacts of climate change in particular those contributing to desertification and drought, resilience building, infrastructure, public health, and refugees;

(c) promote, support, and facilitate, in coordination with the Government of Iraq:

(i) the coordination and delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance, notably to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the transition of humanitarian services to government systems;

(ii) the safe, timely, orderly, voluntary and dignified return or local integration, as appropriate, of refugees and displaced persons, including through the efforts of the UN Country Team, and timely access to legal assistance and civil documentation for internally displaced persons and displaced Iraqis in Syria, including persons at risk of statelessness, particularly children without birth registration or other documentation of legal identity;

(iii) the coordination and implementation of programmes to improve Iraq's capacity to provide effective essential civil and social services, including health care and education, for its people and continue to support Iraq's active regional and international donor coordination of critical reconstruction and assistance programmes, including through effective follow-up of international pledges;

(iv) Iraqi, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and other efforts on economic reform, capacity-building and setting conditions for sustainable development and recovery and reconstruction including in areas affected by terrorism, including through coordination with national and regional organizations and, as appropriate, civil society, donors, and other international institutions;

(v) the contributions of UN agencies,

Security Council adopts Resolution 2631 (2022) and extends mandate of UNAMI for another year *(continued)*

funds, and programmes to the objectives outlined in this resolution under the unified leadership of the Secretary-General through the Special Representative for Iraq, supported by their designated Deputy;

(d) promote accountability and the protection of human rights, and judicial and legal reform, with full respect for the sovereignty of Iraq, in order to strengthen the rule of law and improve governance in Iraq, in addition to supporting the work of the UN Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) established in resolution 2379 (2017);

(e) approach gender mainstreaming as a crosscutting issue throughout its mandate and to advise and assist the Government of Iraq in ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation, involvement and representation of women at all levels of decision making, including in the context of elections and government

formation, and the promotion of women's economic empowerment, by supporting the implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security consistent with resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions, and the Joint Communique on Prevention and Response to Conflict Related Sexual Violence;

(f) Note the importance of treating children affected by armed conflict primarily as victims, and urge the Government of Iraq and UN Country Team to strengthen child protection, including the reintegration of children in accordance with Iraq's national laws and Iraq's obligations under international law, and to support the implementation of the conclusions of the Security Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict;

(g) and actively support the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to work together and engage in regular and structured dialogue in order to resolve outstanding

issues, in a manner consistent with the unity of Iraq and its constitution, including security provisions, budgetary arrangements and the management of Iraq's oil and gas resources, and to implement existing agreements, including the 2020 Sinjar Agreement;

3. Recognizes that the security of UN personnel is essential for UNAMI to carry out its work for the benefit of the people of Iraq and calls upon the Government of Iraq to continue to provide security and logistical support to the UN presence in Iraq;

4. Expresses its intention to review the mandate and reporting cycle of UNAMI by 31 May 2023, or sooner, if requested by the Government of Iraq;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council every four months on the progress made towards the fulfilment of all UNAMI's responsibilities;

6. Decides to remain seized of the matter."

Political Affairs

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 23 May 2022 - UNAMI invited representatives of political parties in the Kurdistan Region (KR) for a joint closed meeting on Thursday 26 May. With the KR elections scheduled for 1 October 2022, this meeting provides a welcome and timely opportunity for a direct exchange of views.

UN-facilitated dialogue in Erbil: KR political parties discuss elections, public services and empowerment of KR institutions

Erbil, 26 May 2022 – Heads and senior representatives* of political parties in the Kurdistan Region met today at the United Nations compound in Erbil, at the invitation of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

With Kurdistan Region elections scheduled for 01 October 2022, the meeting provided a timely opportunity for the parties to exchange views on various issues, including the need to move away from divisive politics and the way forward to credible and transparent elections. Serving the interests of the peoples of the Kurdistan Region dominated today's discussions.

Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and head of UNAMI, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, thanked the parties for participating, urging continued and



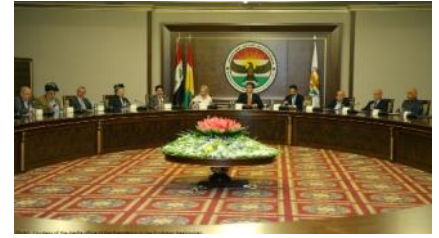
stepped-up efforts to tackle the multiple challenges the Kurdistan Region faces.

*Mr. Bafel Talabani, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), Mr. Ali Bapir, Kurdistan Justice Group (KJG), Mr.

Omar Said Ali, Gorran Movement, Mr. Fadhil Mirani, Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), Mr. Salahdin Babakr, Kurdistan Islamic Union (KIU), and Ms. Badria Rashid, New Generation Movement (NGM).

UNAMI on Twitter

Erbil, 09 June 2022 - UN participated in meeting Kurdistan Region political parties, organized by Kurdistan Region President. Discussions focused on elections, including election-day, constituencies, voter registration plus Kurdistan Region's Independent High Electoral Commission (KIHEC). A committee, in which the UN will participate, continues consultations. Final agreements expected before 1 July.



Social Cohesion

UNDP work to empower and engage local authorities is ongoing in Ninewa and Kirkuk!

Erbil, 8 May 2022 - From May 6 - 8 in Erbil, 25 local officials and police officers from Sinjar attended a training session on causes and analysis of conflict, conflict management techniques, and dialogue and mediation

skills.

UNDP Iraq, in partnership with Public Aid Organization, and in cooperation with Alliance of Iraqi Minorities and Fight for Humanity, is empowering and engaging local authorities and

community mechanisms to promote social cohesion in twelve locations in Ninewa and Kirkuk with support from the Netherlands. The project will train 300 officials, community leaders and civil activists.

UNDP supports Deputy Governors on local implementation of the “National Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism in Iraq”

Sulymaniyah, 16 May 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq, in partnership with the National Committee on the Implementation of the Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism at the National Security Advisory, completed a three-day workshop to support governorate sub-committees for the implementation of the Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism in Iraq.

The workshop, held from 14-16 May in Sulymaniyah, targeted Deputy Governors, and provided an update on progress and challenges faced by governorate committees to develop and implement their plans for Preventing Violent Extremism, reviewed the outcomes of the capacity building programmes of the sub-committee members, and discussed the role of civil society and the importance of their engagement in the local plans. The workshop included representation from the National Committee, and the governorates of Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Basra, Dhi Qar, Diyala, Diwaniyah, Karbala, Kirkuk, Najaf, Maysan, Muthanna, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, and Wasit. On the side of the workshop, a meeting was held with representatives from Sulaymaniyah Governorate including local authorities, civil society organizations, and academics to explore opportunities to strengthen efforts for the prevention of violent extremism in the governorate.

UNDP's approach to supporting the



National Strategy on the Prevention of Violent Extremism falls under Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) and is part of a comprehensive focus on promoting social cohesion and combating violence, extremism, and hate speech, including engagement with youth, media, citizen journalists, religious leaders, local community leaders and Community-Based Organizations.

UNDP Iraq Resident Representative Zena Ali-Ahmad states, “UNDP is working closely with the Government of Iraq to ensure a comprehensive national and subnational approach toward the Prevention of Violent Extremism in Iraq. Our aim is to support a coordinated and sustainable implementation of the National Strategy on the Prevention of Violent Extremism, to positively influence social cohesion in Iraq for the generations of tomorrow.”

According to Mr. Ali Abdullah Albedeiri, Chairman of the National Committee on the implementation of

the National Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism, “This meeting was very important, as the deputy governors are responsible for the committees in their governorates, and they provide an overview of the situation and progress in their respective areas. We have planned programmes for the next six months and we will follow up closely on the national plan's implementation.”

From 23 - 26 May 2022, UNDP Iraq, in partnership with the National Committee on the Implementation of the Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism at the National Security Advisory, continued a capacity building programme to support an additional 30 members of governorate sub-committees in developing their localized plans to prevent violent extremism.

Support to Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) in Iraq is part of UNDP Iraq's Social Cohesion Programme to promote stronger, peaceful, and more cohesive communities in all areas of Iraq.

New contribution from Denmark supports UNDP's integrated approach to social cohesion in Iraq



Baghdad, 05 June 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq welcomes a US\$3.4 million (DKK 24 000 000) contribution from the Government of Denmark to support the implementation of the Iraq Social Cohesion Programme.

UNDP Iraq's Social Cohesion Programme strengthens institutional frameworks to build peace and social cohesion horizontally and vertically in Iraq. The

programme bolsters national and subnational capacities for the implementation of the National Strategy to Prevent Violent Extremism, supports local peace infrastructure mechanisms, including Local Peace Committees, community leaders, Community-Based Organizations and Youth and Women for Peace Groups, and ensures conflict-sensitive approaches to peacebuilding. The programme works with the Iraqi

government, local partners, and peace actors to address divisions that remain in Iraq following the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

According to the Ambassador of Denmark to Iraq, His Excellency, Mr. Stig Paolo Piras, "Improved understanding and trust between different social groups, and between citizens and the state will benefit both the Government and civil society and local groups uniting around a national vision for peace and social cohesion in Iraq."

UNDP Iraq Resident Representative Zena Ali-Ahmad states, "We are extremely grateful to the Government of Denmark, our steadfast partner on social cohesion interventions in Iraq, for this important contribution. Our continued partnership focuses on encouraging peaceful and cohesive communities in Iraq towards durable solutions for reintegration and stability."

UNDP Iraq's five-year Social Cohesion Programme launched in January 2020 to promote stronger, peaceful, and more cohesive communities in all areas of Iraq.

Iraqi cookbook "United Through Food" launched at Iraqi Dialogue and Peace Day

Baghdad, 15 June 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Community Dialogue and Peace Committee in the Office of the Prime Minister yesterday hosted Iraqi Dialogue and Peace Day in Baghdad, which aims to celebrate the unique diversity of Iraqi communities.

The celebration featured cultural and musical performers from across Iraq representing various ethnic and religious groups, and was headlined by oud player Mustafa Zair and his Peace Orchestra. United Through Food, an Iraqi cookbook and history book, was released, focusing on food as a catalyst for unity and social cohesion in Iraq. The book is available online, featuring a brief history of each of Iraq's 18 governorates as well as recipes for dishes specific to each region.

Iraqi Dialogue and Peace Day, the first celebration of its kind, was held at Baghdad International Fair, and included representatives across all Iraqi governorates, government members, non-governmental organizations, diplomatic corps, United Nations agencies, media, and Iraqi artists and influencers.

UNDP Iraq Resident Representative Zena Ali-Ahmad states, "Iraqi Dialogue

and Peace Day is a chance for different groups to come together and celebrate the diverse and unique cultural traditions that bring Iraqis together. I am pleased to announce the launch of United Through Food, a project that highlights the importance of hospitality, generosity and community in Iraqi culture."

According to Dr. Hisham Daoud, advisor to the Prime Minister and Chairman of the Community Dialogue and Peace Committee, "This event is a celebration of peace. Hundreds of people from all Iraqi governorates accepted this invitation and came

together to celebrate music, artistic expression, and cuisine. Society is about art, culture, singing, and joy, and after many decades, Iraqis deserve to experience happiness."

UNDP Iraq's five-year Social Cohesion Programme launched in January 2020 to promote stronger, peaceful, and more cohesive communities in all areas of Iraq.

We invite you to access #UnitedThroughFood at the link below and enjoy reading about Iraq's governorates and their history and food traditions.

<https://bit.ly/39reGWI>





New York, 16 May 2022 - From Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, United States Permanent Mission to the United Nations: "A pleasure to sit down with Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, ahead of tomorrow's [17 May] United Nations Security Council meeting on UNAMI. We discussed the need for Iraq's leaders to quickly form a government – and the importance of renewing UNAMI's mandate".



New York, 16 May 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, and Director of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Raffi Gregorian. They discussed repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration, as well as continued collaboration between the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNAMI.
Photo courtesy of UNOCT.



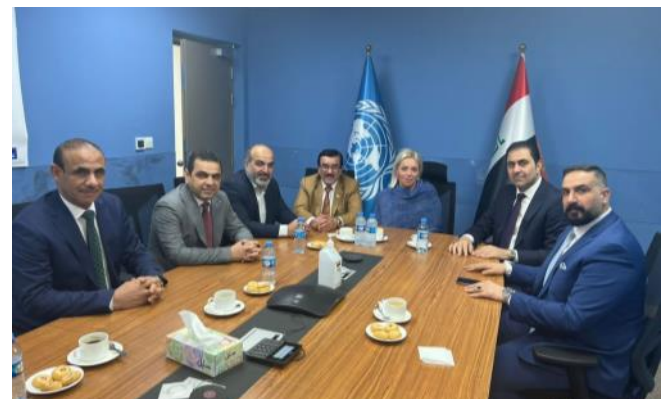
New York, 19 May 2022 - Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) met today with the Charge d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations, Mr. Bader Al Munayekh. Productive discussions included Kuwait's strong support of the works and efforts of UNAMI, and its willingness to strengthen this partnership even further.



Baghdad, 31 May 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and head of UNAMI, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with NATO Mission Iraq Commander, General Giovanni M. Iannucci.



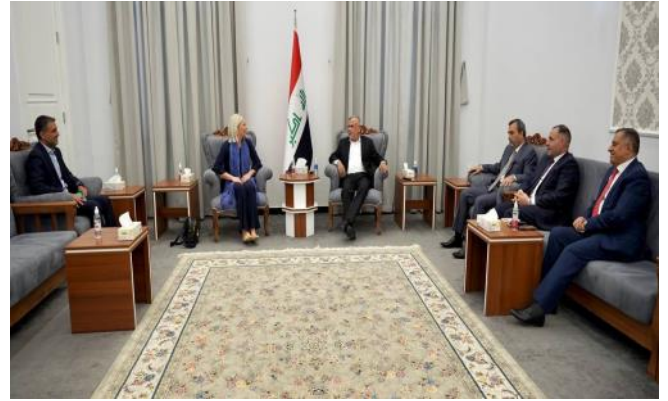
Baghdad, 31 May 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with Mr. Shaswar Abdulwahid, leader of the New Generation Movement. They discussed the political situation in the country with emphasis on the timely, transparent and credible parliamentary elections in the Kurdistan Region.



Baghdad, 1 June 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and head of UNAMI, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad today with a group of independent MPs.



Baghdad, 1 June 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and head of UNAMI, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad today with the President of the Republic of Iraq, H.E. Barham Salih, and discussed the political developments.

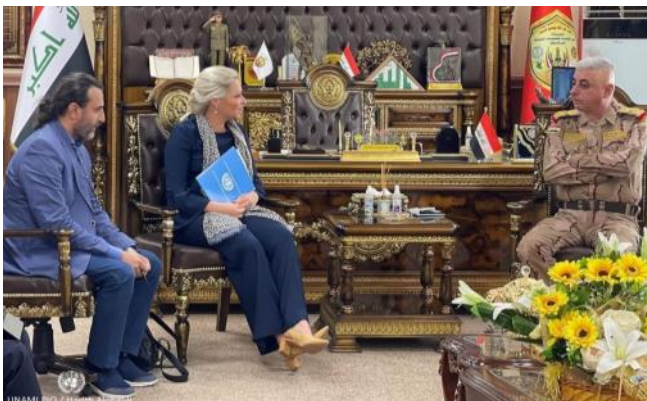


Baghdad, 1 June 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and head of UNAMI, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad today with Fatih alliance leader Hadi al-Ameri. They discussed the latest developments, with emphasis on intensifying efforts to end the political deadlock.



Baghdad, 1 June 2022 – During her visit to Iraq, the Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ms. Marina Sereni, had a working lunch with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and Head of UNAMI, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, and the representatives of the UN agencies and programs in Iraq. It was an opportunity for an update on cooperation in the Country, the humanitarian situation and the prospects for development in Iraq.

Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy.



Kirkuk, 2 June 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and head of UNAMI, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Kirkuk today to meet the acting Governor, Rakan Al-Jubouri, and discuss the situation in the Governorate. She also spoke with Lt. Gen. Ali al-Farajji, Kirkuk JOC Commander, to hear about security developments. Subsequently, she met with women, youth and civil society representatives to discuss the Governorate's needs.



UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 2 May 2022 - Deeply concerned about clashes in Sinjar, with grave consequences for civilians. Sinjaris' safety and security should be front and centre. They've suffered enormously in the past and deserve peace under state authority. Domestic and external spoilers have no place in Sinjar.

Baghdad, 2 May 2022 - The reckless firing of rockets at an oil refinery in Erbil on the eve of Eid al-Fitr is another alarming development. Iraq's leaders must work as one to counter such acts of aggression, which seek to undermine the country's security and stability.

Baghdad, 09 June 2022 - Bomb-laden drone hit Erbil-Pirmam road, causing civilian injuries and damage. Another reckless act. As stated before, Iraq does not need self-proclaimed armed arbiters. Asserting State authority is essential. If the perpetrators are known, call them out and hold them to account.

UNICEF condemns the killing of a 12-year-old child in Sinjar and calls on all parties to protect children from violence

Baghdad, 15 June 2022 - Statement attributable to Mr. Mads Oyen, OIC UNICEF Representative in Iraq:

"UNICEF is shocked at the killing of a 12-year-old boy in an attack in Sinjar area in Ninewa Governorate.

"UNICEF condemns all acts of violence against children and joins the family in mourning the killing of their child. Being a victim of, witnessing or fearing violence should never be part of any

child's experience.

"UNICEF calls on all parties to fulfil their obligation, under international law, to protect children at all times and without delay. All children in Iraq deserve to live their lives without the constant threat of violence.

"The continued usage of explosive weapons in populated areas continues to put children lives at stake not only today, but puts future generations at

risk and needs to stop. In the last 5 years, at least 519 children have been killed or maimed by explosive ordnance.

"UNICEF appeals to all parties to ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth, and calls for the upholding of children's right to protection and to live in an environment that is free from violence at all times."

Gender

Enhancing the coordination between the NGOs to expand service mapping to women and girls

Duhok, 16 May 2022 - Baghdad Women Association (BWA) has implemented a coordination meeting (Pathway meeting) in presence of 14 representatives of NGOs that work in IDPs Kabarto1-2 camps, Domez 1 refuges camp, and government agencies in Duhok.

The goal of the meeting to enhance the coordination between the NGOs to expand service mapping to women and girls especially the services that the project does not cover it.

In a related activity BWA implemented PSS group in Kabarto1 IDPs camp in Duhok, with the participation 19 women and girls inside the camp.

The session included very important topics to provide PSS to women and girls who suffering from Gender-Based Violence in terms mitigate the psychosocial pressure and the rights and positive mechanism to dealing with violence.

In addition, provide them the counseling to overcome the violence

phase except by facing it.

These activities were done under project the Women Peace and Security in the Arab states _Phase II, in partnership with UN Women and support of the Government of Finland.



Norwegian and Swedish diplomats visited the UNFPA-supported Women Centres in Ninewa

Ninewa, 24 May 2022 – UNFPA is grateful to the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Amman and Sida - Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete for contributing to the empowerment of women and girls in Iraq with essential life skills and information about their health and rights.

Today, diplomatic representatives of Norway and Sweden visited the

UNFPA-supported Women Centres in Ninewa. They had the chance to meet and participate in a session with young girls. Together, they learned the different types of violence and how to respond to them. The ambassador of Norway also gave a hand to the women at the centre who were baking cakes and ended their visit with a cake party.



A legal awareness session held with the participation of 11 women



Dohuk, 3 June 2022 - Baghdad Women Association (BWA) implemented recently a legal awareness session at the psychosocial listening and legal counseling center with the participation of 11 women and girls from the Duhok host community. The session included many important topics such as (early marriage, alimony, custody, and personal legal status). In addition, the lawyer has given the participants to ask and discuss, by practicing a questions legal exercise. BWA also implemented Cash-for-Work training for 34 IDP women and girls

from Kabarto1-2 camps.

This training has been implemented in Dunya Hotel Hall by the specialist trainer of Cash for Work topics and economic dialogues.

The goal of the training is, to build the capacity of women and girls to be able to manage their own budgets, and start to work.

Both activities were done under the project “Women, Peace and Security in the Arab states - Phase II”, in partnership with UN Women and with the support of the Government of Finland.

UNICEF and UN partners recently trained 20 participants on gender-based violence case management guidelines

Baghdad, 9 June 2022 - UNICEF and UN partners recently trained 20 participants on Gender-based Violence Case Management Guidelines. After the training the participants will support capacity building and provide mentorship and coaching of GBV service providers to ensure quality case management services to GBV survivors including child survivors.



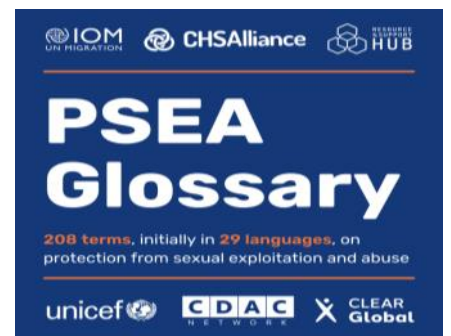
IOM Iraq launched “Multilingual Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Glossary”

Baghdad, 19 June 2022 - IOM Iraq is pleased to share the recently launched Multilingual Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Glossary, covering 208 terms in 29 languages including English, Arabic, Kurdish Sorani, Kurdish Badini, Kurdish Kurmanji and Iraqi Turkmen. Language and word choice are crucial considerations for those working on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). The right words help people to report and resolve problems;

the wrong ones can leave them unclear about their rights and distrustful of those meant to provide assistance.

The Glossary is available at: <https://glossaries.translatorswb.org/psea/>

The Multilingual PSEA Glossary was jointly developed by partners including: CLEAR Global, Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub, CDAC Network, CHS Alliance, UNICEF, and other members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.



Need for balanced media coverage of gender-based violence issues

Mosul, 20 June 2022 - On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, WHO, Ministry of Health and Iraq CMC conducted a workshop in Mosul on balanced media coverage of gender-based violence issues, targeting 60 journalists and media students at the University of Mosul.



UNFPA gender team met the new Director of the General Directorate of Combating Violence Against Women

Erbil, 25 June 2022 - UNFPA gender team met the new Director of the General Directorate of Combating Violence Against Women and discussed the long-standing partnership on supporting women and girls in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The meeting focused on ongoing and upcoming projects that work towards protection and empowering women.

UNFPA and GDCVAW will soon work on a media campaign to promote the services of the 119 hotline and SafeYou app.



In collaboration with UN Women, the High Council of Women Development in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq organized the first KRI 1325 Board meeting

Erbil, 21 June 2022 - In collaboration with UN Women, the High Council of Women Development in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) organized the first KRI 1325 Board meeting in Erbil, to announce KRI 1325 Protection pillar implementation plan of the Second Iraqi National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Representatives from Consulates, Embassies, International Organization, and UN Agencies participated in the meeting.

HCWD Secretary-General Dr. Khanzad Ahmed delivered the opening speech at the meeting, she stressed the important role of the KRI board to supervise the implementation of the 1325 KRI plan (2021-2024) within the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace, and Security. Dr. Ahmad focused in her speech on the CSOs role to support the government during the implementation and monitoring period of the plan as well as the importance to implement the protection pillar plan to provide protection and economic empowerment for women at the camps and women GBV survivors.

Kurdistan Region Minister of Interior Mr. Reber Ahmed the head of KRI 1325 Board, expressed the Kurdish government's readiness to support implementing the KRI 1325 protection pillar action plan to empower and protect women in all fields, especially women affected by war and violence. He also highlighted the importance of law enforcement and legislation to ensure gender equality all over Iraq to support justice and equality for women and protect Iraqi women from all kinds of violence and discrimination. He further stated that this could be



achieved through a participatory process involving governmental and legislative entities, civil societies organizations, and international agencies.

In another topic of his statement, the Minister of Interior said: we have been requesting the International community to provide the financial support in implementing the Yazidi law and fulfilling the promises made by the international community to urge the people to go back to the land of their ancestors, especially in Sinjar who are still living in the in camps for more than eight years.

UN Women Representative for Iraq and Yemen Ms. Dina Zorba underlined the importance of the women, peace, and security agenda under UNSCR 1325 as an essential key pillar of development and stability towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In her speech, she stated that in the past few years, UN Women has been closely working with the Federal and KRI governments and

civil society all over the country to advance the WPS agenda and provide protection against violence against women and SGBV. Also, Ms. Zorba mentioned the 19 June mark an important UN day on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. Sexual violence is considered a weapon or war and it is very important to continue raising awareness of the need to put an end to this violence, honor the victims and survivors around the world, and to put an end to conflict-related sexual violence.

Additionally, she emphasized the vital role carried out by KRI government entities and women's civil society organizations in implementing the National Action Plan II (2021-2024) to implement Resolution 1325. Furthermore, she highlighted the UN Women's readiness to support the KRI 1325 board and provide the technical and financial support to the implementation of KRI NAP II action plan.



Photo: Courtesy of the media office of the Iraqi Presidency

Baghdad, 16 May 2022 - Under-Secretary-General Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, discussing the need to strengthen global efforts for accountability and for the prevention of genocide, including through education, as well as the key role of Iraq in advancing this purpose, with President Barham Salih of Iraq.



Baghdad, 16 May 2022 - Under-Secretary-General Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, acknowledges Iraq's status as State party to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and encourages all possible efforts to fully domesticate it in her meeting with Chief Justice Fa'iq Zeidan in Iraq.



Baghdad, 19 May 2022 - Under-Secretary-General Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, and Iraq's Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Fuad Hussein, agree to establish full cooperation in strengthening prevention and providing support to victims and survivors, including through lessons learned from post-genocidal societies worldwide.



Baghdad, 20 May 2022 - Dr Hisham Al-Alawi, Head of Human Rights Directorate at the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with Under-Secretary-General Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu. The meeting was informative and productive. Exchanged views on the social and humanitarian cost of genocide in Iraq before and after 2003, lessons learned from other countries and the effective preventive measures. Photo courtesy of MoFA.



Erbil, 22 May 2022 - Mr. Réber Ahmed, Minister of Interior, Kurdistan Regional Government, had fruitful discussion with Under-Secretary-General Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, on rallying efforts to support internally displaced persons (IDPs) post-war integration and de-radicalize violent ideologies ahead of their voluntary return to their homes. Photo courtesy of MoI, KRG



Mosul, 23 May 2022 - UNESCO welcomes the visit of Under-Secretary-General Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, to UNESCO worksites in Mosul. With the support of the United Arab Emirates, the European Union, and other partners, Mosul is rising from the rubble, it is healing.

Dialogue on countering hate speech, discrimination and marginalization



Baghdad, 17 May 2022 – Today, the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, and Danielle Bell, Chief of UNAMI’s Human Rights Office jointly facilitated a countering dialogue on hate speech, discrimination and marginalization. The event brought together 19 representatives (five women and 14 men) from Armenian, Bahai, Faili Kurds, Jewish, Kaka’i, People of African Descent, Roma, Sabeian Mandeian, Shabak, Turkmen, Yazidi and Zoroastrians communities and as well as civil society organizations, journalists, Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights, Iraq Bar

Association and Communications and Media Commission. UN Special Adviser Nderitu shared the United Nations global perspective of hate speech noting that “hate speech and incitement to hatred and violence create deep rooted divisions along ethnic and religious grounds which limit the space to build trust and mutual understanding.” She added, “It is essential to address the root causes of hate speech and not only its online and off-line manifestations.” For this, Special Adviser Nderitu reminded participants of Iraq’s responsibilities as State party to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime

of Genocide and encouraged all components of Iraq to work together support development and implementation of actions plans aimed at addressing hate speech so as to do it effectively. “Human beings have immense capacity to find solutions even to problems they themselves create,” she concluded. “Inclusive, results-oriented dialogue matched by commitment and concrete actions is fundamental to ending long-standing inequalities and discrimination in Iraq”, said Ms. Bell during her remarks. During an open discussion session, the participants highlighted key issues facing Iraq, offered solutions and identified next steps to address these issues.



UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 18 June 2022 - Iraq's recent decision to establish a high committee to draft a national policy to address hate speech is recognition of its impact on society and signals its commitment to tackle this scourge. The UN stands ready to support Iraq in this effort. Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert #NoToHate

Hate speech inflames societal tensions, deepens division & weakens the social fabric. For Iraq to complete its journey towards a better future, all efforts must be made to counter hate speech, online & offline. Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, on International Day for Countering Hate Speech #NoToHate

UNAMI Human Rights Office in Erbil met with Women's Rights Committee in the Kurdistan Parliament

Erbil, 16 May 2022 - The UNAMI Human Rights Office in Erbil met today with Women's Rights Committee in the Kurdistan Parliament. The continued high levels of violence against women and so-called honour killings in the Kurdistan region was discussed. Possible avenues for strengthened cooperation between the two offices were also explored, including around potential amendments of the current law on combating domestic violence and the establishment of a special court on domestic violence to hold perpetrators accountable.



UNAMI on Twitter

Erbil, 23 May 2022 – Today in Erbil, journalists, human rights defenders and civil society activists and UNAMI Human Rights Office discussed current issues related to freedom of expression.

Seminar on the implementation activities of the regional action plan of human rights in KRI held in Erbil

Erbil, 25 May 2022 - As part of the implementation activities of the regional action plan of human rights in KRI and for a better implementation of the Access to Information Law No. 11 of 2013 in KRI, Heartland Alliance International in cooperation with the Office of International Coordination of International Advocacy (OCIA) organized a seminar with the participation of relevant government institutions, NGOs, Independent Board of Human Rights, representatives of the regional parliament committees and journalists.

Dr. Dindar Zebari, the head of OCIA opened the event by reiterating the KRG's commitment to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and implement the recommendations issued for Iraq by the human rights treaty bodies and UPR processes.

In her remarks, UNAMI's CHRO encouraged authorities to proactively put information of public interest in the public domain, and ensure procedures are in place to ensure full implementation of the 2013 Access to Information law. Prompt and practical access to information supports



democratic and participatory governance, and helps individuals form opinions based in accurate data”.

UN report finds ‘limited progress’ on human rights protections for Iraqis

Baghdad/Geneva, 2 June 2022 - A UN report issued on Thursday, describes “limited progress” towards justice for human rights violations and abuses committed against dissenters exercising their right to free speech in Iraq. “The Government of Iraq admittedly operates in a complex environment, including within the context of stalled government formation,” said the Update on Accountability in Iraq, jointly published by the UN Assistance Mission there (UNAM) and the UN human rights office, OHCHR. “However, continued impunity for killings, disappearances, abduction and torture of activists, undermines the authority of State institutions.”

Elections

Between 1 May 2021 and 15 May this year, the report notes an increase in politically motivated violence during the pre and post-election period.

The authors explain that in October last year, early parliamentary elections took place in the wake of an “unprecedented wave of country wide demonstrations in 2019,” which were marked by violence, excessive force, abductions, and targeted killings the saw hundreds perish, and thousand suffer injuries.

According to latest news reports, the biggest party to emerge from the vote, led by Shia religious leader, Muqtada al-Sadr, has still been unable to put together a new coalition government.

Limited progress

The Update highlights that while some

progress has been made, particularly on victim compensation, accountability remains limited.

From 1 May 2021 to 30 April, UNAMI and OHCHR documented convictions in relation to four cases concerning violence perpetrated by “armed elements”.

And although the Government-established Fact-Finding Committee is operational, it has not produced any investigative outcomes or provided public information about its work.

The report found that Iraqi authorities have taken just “limited steps” to investigate the unlawful killing and injury of protestors, critics and activists, saying that “much more needs to be done to identify, arrest and prosecute the perpetrators of those crimes, including those responsible for ordering and planning them”.

“UNAMI/OHCHR remains extremely concerned by the continued limited progress towards accountability for crimes perpetrated against protestors, critics and activists,” the report said.

And many who have been subjected to threats and violence have unsuccessfully sought accountability.

Meanwhile, as civic space remains limited and those expressing dissent at risk of reprisal from armed elements, a climate of impunity for human rights violations has evolved, with “a chilling effect” on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Recommendations

The Update recommended that the Government of Iraq conduct prompt, independent and credible investigations

of all alleged human rights violations and abuse perpetrated against protestors, activists, journalists, and critics.

It must also work harder to ensure that victims have access to effective remedies, such as judicial and administrative processes that are responsive to their needs.

Victims must also be informed on the scope, timing, and progress of the proceedings and disposition of their cases.

And the Government should assist victims throughout the legal process, taking measures to minimize their inconveniences, protect their privacy, and ensure their safety – as well as that of their families and witnesses on their behalf – from intimidation.

Global support

The international community also has a role to play.

The report advocates for funding and capacity-building programmes for the police and judiciary, which should include structured oversight.

This aims to ensure that entities comply with international human rights law standards surrounding investigations, prosecutions, and victim's rights, particularly concerning crimes targeting protestors, activists and critics, and provide assistance where needed.

By UN News.

Access the report at:
English: <https://bit.ly/3zbiHcg>
Arabic: <https://bit.ly/3GJDh56>

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 2 June 2022 - Discussion on human rights and women's rights with Iraq's vibrant civil society activists hosted by the Embassy of Italy in Iraq with participation of Italy's deputy FM Marina Sereni and UNAMI HRO chief Danielle Bell. Our collective efforts support the prioritization of women's rights in Iraq.

Photos courtesy of the Italian Embassy in Baghdad.



Seminar with Iraq Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) on access to justice for victims of Da'esh held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 13 June 2022 - News from Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants - A European Union funded initiative, delivered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and International Organization for Migration (IOM): "We are in Baghdad [13 June] and kicked off our seminar with Iraq Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) on access to justice for victims of Da'esh - looking at conflict related trafficking in persons plus how victims

can benefit from full range of reparations in multiple frameworks. Fascinating discussions on important issues: "How will Yazidi victims of sexual violence including human trafficking access reparations under new survivor law? How can trafficking in persons law be complementary? How have foreign courts used cumulative charging of terrorism and trafficking in persons?"

Learn more about GLO.ACT: <https://bit.ly/3MO4xB4>



Government of Iraq and UNFPA organize the first national conference to address early marriage

Baghdad, 14 June 2022 - The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Council of Ministers Secretariat (COMSEC), in partnership with the Women Empowerment Department (WED), and support from the United Kingdom, Sweden, France and Canada, organized a two-day conference to address early marriage in Iraq.

The conference, which took place on 11-12 June, recognised the alarming situation with early marriage which has increased from 21.7% to 25.5% for the past ten years in Iraq.

The event brought together government entities, local authorities, religious and tribal leaders, civil society organisations, young people, academia, and representatives of the international and donor community to discuss the root causes of early marriage, its impact and solutions to address it.

Representatives of the government of Iraq and the government of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, ambassadors, tribal and religious leaders, academia and experts shared profound evidence on the devastating consequences of

early marriage on the socio-economic progress, psychological and physical health of young girls and boys, families, communities and society at large.

UNFPA Representative of Iraq, Dr Rita Columbia, said: "Tribal communities and young people affected by early marriage have asked us to raise our voice and advocate more for women and girls' rights and empowerment and take a step forward in addressing early marriage in Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region. This event shows the criticality of reducing early marriage to fulfill the rights of girls and women, and accelerate achievement of SDGs in Iraq."

The conference participants discussed and elaborated recommendations that will be taken by the Women Empowerment Directorate under the leadership of the Secretary-General of the COMSEC to support the local authorities to reduce and prevent early marriage in Iraq.

The Early Marriage is #NotNormal also includes a social media campaign and a partnership with Rakuten's Viber to promote the end of early marriage.



UNAMI on Twitter

Dhi Qar, 21 June 2022 - Today in Dhi Qar, the Human Rights Office of the United Nations in Iraq met with activists, journalists, lawyers and the Iraqi High Commission For Human Rights (IHCHR) to discuss accountability for violations and abuses committed by unidentified armed elements. We will continue to work together to promote freedom of expression and civic space in Iraq.

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture commemorated in Erbil

Erbil, 26 June 2022 - The Chief of UNAMI's Human Rights Office, Danielle Bell, delivered remarks at an event in Erbil that was organized by Heartland Alliance International in cooperation with Office of Coordinator for International Advocacy (OCIA) and Democracy and Human Rights Development Center (DHRD) in the Kurdistan Region to mark the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. Ms. Bell stressed the necessity of full implementation of Committee Against Torture (CAT) and its recent concluding observations to eliminate torture and ensure accountability in KR and that victims are duly compensated.

The event was attended by representatives of the KR Parliament, Public Prosecution Office, Independent

Human Rights Commission (IHRC), Ministry of Health, Forensic Department, Ministry of Interior and

Wchan Organization for Human Rights Violations.

Photos by the Heartland Alliance.



UNAMI Human Rights Office facilitates high-level policy dialogue on accountability for gender-related killings

Erbil, 27 June 2022 - In line with its mandate to strengthen the rule of law and accountability for human rights violations in Iraq, UNAMI's Human Rights Office (HRO) convened in Erbil a high-level policy dialogue aimed at enabling a structured forum to enhance capacities and build political will to investigate and prosecute gender-related killings, thereby increasing accountability for such crimes. Participants included the High Council for Women and Development in KR, investigative judges, criminal court judges, the Directorate of Combating Violence against Women and Family and UNFPA.

Ms. Danielle Bell, the Chief of UNAMI HRO and Country Representative for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), affirmed that a lack of accountability for gender-related killings sends a dangerous signal to potential perpetrators, noting that impunity serves to normalize violence, while justice reinforces global norms and protection.

During the event, participants explained their work on gender-based

killings, progress towards accountability concerning cases reported in 2021 and the challenges they face in their work. The dialogue also allowed participants to share perspectives on better case management to ensure that perpetrators of gender-based violence are held accountable for their crimes.

Participants made concrete recommendations on a structured way of ensuring that perpetrators of gender-related killings are held accountable for their crimes. UNAMI HRO will continue to work with relevant stakeholders as part of collective efforts towards addressing and preventing gender-based violence.



UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 3 May 2022 - On World Press Freedom Day, UN Iraq commends the courage of Iraqi and Kurdistan Region media workers and calls on authorities to ensure their protection from intimidation and threats and to fully respect the right to freedom of expression and freedom to impart information.

On 23 May in Erbil, journalists, human rights defenders and civil society activists and UNAMI Human Rights Office discussed current issues related to freedom of expression.

Muthanna, 28 June 2022 - The Human Rights Office of the United Nations in Iraq held a roundtable discussion today in Muthanna with journalists, lawyers, the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR) and activists to discuss the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) recently issued report. We will continue to work together to promote freedom of expression and civic space in Iraq.

UNESCO Iraq celebrates World Press Freedom Day



Baghdad, 12 May 2022 - More than 2,600 Iraqi journalists have lost their jobs since the start of the Corona pandemic in 2020 until today, and the cause is due to the digital skills possessed by young creators of digital content that pioneering and senior journalists lack. This is one of the major challenges confronting Iraq's journalistic community, which was highlighted at the ceremony with a lengthy discussion among journalists, Iraqi government agencies, international organizations, and foreign embassies including the UK embassy, Canadian embassy, Australian embassy, and Dutch embassy.

The Netherlands have been an invaluable partner to UNESCO, and yesterday we officially launched the second phase of the project "Breaking the Silence: enhance judicial accountability on safety of journalists and end impunity".

"Crime and violence against journalists too often go unpunished. We believe that Iraq can do much better - press freedom and safety of journalists in Iraq can and must be improved" said by Rochus Pronk, Deputy Head of Mission at the Netherlands Embassy in Iraq.

Paolo Fontani, UNESCO Representative to Iraq, said in his opening speech: "The theme chosen for this year's World Press Freedom Day is "Journalism under Digital Siege". World Press Freedom Day underlines topics that address the digital era's impact on freedom of expression, the safety of journalists, access to information and privacy and how to develop concrete recommendations to address these challenges. The digital era has also put media workers and their sources at greater risk of being targeted, harassed and attacked – for instance, due to data retention, spyware and digital



surveillance.

While the Supreme Judicial Council in Iraq recalled the sacrifices of journalists, the representative of the Council's President, Mrs. Sinan Ghanem, said: "The Supreme Judicial Council strongly supports freedom of expression in Iraq, takes into account the challenges facing the journalistic community, and is one of the supporters of projects to enhance the protection of journalists and end impunity from Punishment."

"We still need to keep up with global development in the areas of digital inclusion, particularly in the press sector in Iraq," said Muhammad Al-Asadi, Executive Director of the Media and Communications Commission CMC. "Our next goal as a body is to build the skills of journalists and women journalists to be able to keep up with digital developments."

The ceremony featured discussions and presentations by a group of journalists on how to break the digital siege on journalism, as well as presentations by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior MoI, on its next steps in strengthening the Iraqi national mechanism for safety of journalists and ending impunity.

The Dutch organization FreePressUnlimited participated in a presentation on the national plans to develop Iraqi media, and the head of FPU, Leo Williams, spoke about the partnership with UNESCO in Iraq, on "Breaking the Silence".

The MDP Multi-Donor Program for the Safety of Journalists and the Promotion of Freedom of Expression is the primary source of financing for this event. Iraq implements three primary axes in the context of this initiative, headed by the journalistic community, that focus on enhancing legislation ensuring press freedoms, protecting women journalists, and building an effective advocacy pattern in Iraq.

UNESCO convenes round table on the Breaking the Silence Phase II project



Baghdad, 1 June 2022 - UNESCO Iraq, in coordination with the High Judicial Council HJC, the Iraqi Ministry of Interior MoI, the Media and Communications Commission (CMC), and with the participation of a group of Iraqi journalists, held a round table on the Breaking the Silence project to enhance government accountability and judiciary follow up on the safety of journalists and ending impunity, funded by the Netherlands embassy in Baghdad, to discuss the mechanisms of implementing the activities of the project, which will extend over a period of two years.

The HJC, the CMC and the MoI opened the discussions by submitting pledges and commitments of the state authorities to activate the contents of the Iraqi National Mechanism of Safety of Journalists and Ending Impunity, in an open discussion with representatives of the Iraqi journalistic community as media institutions and civil society organizations active in the field of press freedom.

The representative of the HJC, Judge Iyad Mohsen Damad, expressed the

judiciary's readiness to implement this project and activate its provisions and recommendations that will result from the project, which will express the aspirations of the Iraqi journalistic community in a manner that serves the process of improving the environment for practicing journalism and media as well as freedom of expression in accordance with the borders that protect the freedoms of others as well.

For his part, the representative of the Ministry of Interior, Major General Saad Maan, confirmed that the Ministry of Interior is fully aware of the challenges that are faced by the Iraqi journalistic community, and MoI has been seeking with UNESCO since 2014 to set real standards for practicing the profession freely and safely, despite the magnitude of the security challenges that the country is witnessing from time to time.

The Media and Communications Commission, through the Director of its Media Regulation Department, affirmed its continued cooperation with UNESCO to improve the reality of press freedoms, announcing its decision

to settle 50% of the debts owed by the media for previous years and to drop them through the decision of the Council of Ministers adopted by the Commission, as well as its willingness to support all the stages of the Breaking the Silence project in a way that achieves the aspirations of the media and press community.

During the discussions, the attendees presented a number of challenges that are still present in the field as well as basic requirements that must be found with appropriate solutions, including the rights of women journalists and the problems they face, in addition to the urgent need for coordination between the formations and types of security forces deployed in the field, which is generally under the authority of the Central Operations Command and the Office of the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, while the representatives of the government authorities promised to find solutions to all that were put forward and within the platforms of the project implemented by UNESCO.

This is the second session within one week implemented by the UNESCO office in Iraq within this project. The first was held on May 25, 2022 with some representatives of civil society organizations who are active in the field of press rights and freedoms to agree on a joint working formula and implement effective advocacy and campaigns for the benefit of the Iraqi journalistic community.

The project aims to protect journalists and their access to justice, as well as working to build capacity and enhance trust between journalists and law enforcement authorities, as well as coordinating the relationship between the media, government officials, security forces and the judicial system in the country.

UNITAD

Dutch Minister of Justice and Security visited UNITAD

Baghdad, 19 May 2022 - Special Adviser and Head of the Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), Christian Ritscher, welcomed in UNITAD's office in Baghdad H.E. Dilan Yeşilgöz-Zegerius, Minister of Justice and Security of The Netherlands. They discussed mutual cooperation in pursuing justice and accountability for ISIL's international crimes in Iraq.



UNITAD and Stanford University conclude seminar on mainstreaming trauma-informed approach to investigations

Baghdad, 1 May 2022 - The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) and Stanford University's Center for Human Rights and International Justice concluded a seminar on a trauma informed approach to accountability for international crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq, in conclusion to various roundtable discussions.

The seminar, which was held on April 28th in Stanford University intended to provide a high-impact forum to showcase UNITAD's Witness Protection and Support Unit (WPSU) innovative trauma-informed approach to investigations and the range of psychosocial activities of the WPSU in conjunction with colleagues from Stanford's Human Rights in Trauma Mental Health Program (HRTMHP). The forum gathered a wide range of stakeholders representing various academic disciplines, civil society organizations as well as the International Criminal Court, with the aim of engaging with the experience of the WPSU, and discussing best practices. It was an important arena to stimulate dialogue on lessons learned from the collective experience of the UNITAD/Stanford team and identify areas in which current practices on the ground in Iraq can be further enhanced.

Dr. Nenna Ndukwe explained during the seminar UNITAD's approach to promoting and implementing a trauma-informed approach and how it is embedded in the Team's internal and

external activities. Dr. Ndukwe underlined the importance of UNITAD's partnerships with national partners and the Government of Iraq, as well as international institutions such as the HRTMHP at Stanford University in mainstreaming the Team's trauma-informed approach to investigations highlighting that this seminar marks the continued partnership with Stanford's HRTMHP, and reaffirming that "UNITAD experts will continue to employ best practices that safeguard vulnerable witnesses and survivors, and ensure the lessons learned from its employment of such practices are put to use for improving investigative approaches across the sector".

From the outset of its work, UNITAD has sought to creatively implement its mandate drawing on a wide range of partnerships with survivor groups, national authorities, private sector entities and non-governmental organizations. Cognizant of the fact

that investigations involving witnesses and survivors requires an approach sensitive to the trauma they have suffered because of ISIL crimes. The work of UNITAD's WPSU has been central to the investigations ensuring a trauma-informed approach is embedded in all interviews, aiming to create conditions whereby witnesses can provide the fullest possible account while ensuring the utmost regard for their well-being.

In May 2021, UNITAD WPSU psychologists in collaboration with experts from Stanford HRTMHP published the "Trauma-Informed Investigations Field Guide" document which is a guide adopted by UNITAD in an effort to share leading, actionable practice for domestic and international investigators with respect to their engagement with vulnerable survivors and witnesses. The publication and more information about the work of UNITAD's WPSU can be found on UNITAD's website.



Supported by OSAPG, UNITAD and UNDP: Iraqi religious leaders renew their commitment to support accountability for ISIL/Da'esh crimes

Baghdad, 19 May 2022 - The United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, and the United Nations Investigative Team to promote accountability for crimes committed by Da'esh/ISIL in Iraq (UNITAD), jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) held, the Second High-Level Conference on the Interfaith Statement on the Victims and Survivors of ISIL/Da'esh.

The conference aimed to build on the momentum generated by the adoption of the landmark Interfaith Statement adopted in March 2020 by the religious

leaders of the Chaldean Catholic, Kakai, Shia, Sunni and Yazidi communities of Iraq, under the auspices of the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and UNITAD. It also aimed to ensure that accountability, as an integral part of sustainable social cohesion, remains at the heart of the support which the United Nations is providing to religious leaders and actors in Iraq, to advance healing, trust building, reconciliation, and social cohesion, by countering hate speech. More than 40 faith leaders from across Iraq took part in the conference, including some of the leaders

representing parties to the Interfaith Statement.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG) and Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Nderitu said that "moving forward, bringing peace and building a joint future requires accountability as well as re-knitting the social fabric of the country, from the highest levels in the government institutions in Baghdad to the smallest villages at the heart of the country. This is in the hands of each and every one of Iraq's citizens and religious leaders have a key role to play. This requires the involvement of

Supported by OSAPG, UNITAD and UNDP: Iraqi religious leaders renew their commitment to support accountability... (Continued)



all communities, and we are here to support you.”

Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator to Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, stated that “the United Nations recognizes the important role of religious leaders in promoting coexistence, preventing violence and extremism, and addressing the needs and grievances of the Iraqi people. While we recognize that the government has the primary responsibility to protect populations, many actors, such as religious leaders who have a strong influence on the lives and behavior of those who follow their faith, shall play an important role in strengthening mutual respect in communities. That is why today’s event is so important.”

In his opening remarks, Special Adviser (SA) and Head of UNITAD Mr. Christian Ritscher stressed that “ensuring accountability for Da’esh/ISIL international crimes and serving justices to the victims from all Iraqi communities are key in ensuring viable reconciliation in Iraq”, adding that “the Interfaith Statement came as an important acknowledgment by faith leaders of the tremendous suffering which Iraqi communities endured as a result of Da’esh/ISIL crimes. It reflected a core belief of UNITAD, and the UN at large: there is no hierarchy in victims. The magnitude of ISIL/Da’esh crimes affected all Iraqi faiths and communities, and to us, each and every victim of such international crimes matter, from all communities that suffered from ISIL crimes.”

UNDP Resident Representative for Iraq, Ms. Zena Ali-Ahmad says, “Today’s conference demonstrates a

unified approach to peacebuilding in Iraq. Engaging with interfaith religious leaders across the country is key to promoting cohesion between groups and is a necessary step to building a strong social fabric. UNDP is committed to working with our partners to ensure all Iraqis are supported during the journey towards sustainable peace through our ongoing work to promote moderate religious discourse, prevent violent extremism, combat hate speech, and encourage reconciliation and reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons back into their communities.”

During the conference, the United Nations senior officials reiterated their full and unwavering commitment to victims of ISIL/ Da’esh crimes, which targeted a broad range of communities whether Christian, Kaka’i, Shabak, Shia, Turkmen, Sunni or Yazidi.

Participants at the event discussed challenges and opportunities to ensure that justice for all victims and survivors can be achieved, highlighting the importance of holding ISIL/Da’esh perpetrators accountable for the serious allegations of international crimes committed by them through national courts.

The attending religious leaders renewed their commitment to dialogue and mutual understanding between religious communities in Iraq in areas most impacted by ISIL/Da’esh crimes. They also identified challenges faced by survivors of ISIL/Da’esh crimes, particularly those who have been subject to sexual and gender-based crimes. They also explored means of further coordination with the UN co-hosting entities to effectively engage religious communities in Iraq in promoting accountability as an integral part of viable social cohesion.

Religious leaders and actors reiterated the commitment expressed in the March 2020 Interfaith Statement and renewed their repudiation and condemnation of the violence committed by Da’esh/ISIL as completely contrary to their respective faiths. The Statement also underscored that member of all religions across Iraq have been impacted by the crimes of Da’esh/ISIL, and that all survivors must be supported in their efforts to move on with their lives within their communities. The Interfaith Statement built upon the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide’s Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Counter Incitement Which Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes.

Following liberation from ISIL/Daesh, UNDP has engaged with over 2,500 leaders through its Social Cohesion Programme, and lately during 2021-2022, UNDP-Iraq facilitated dialogue forums among 300 religious leaders from different sects in Anbar, Diyala, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din. UNDP has also provided training for 82 religious leaders from various faiths on moderate religious discourse and combatting hate speech, and supported the establishment of a coexistence network to foster dialogue, coexistence, and tolerance amongst targeted communities in Anbar, Baghdad, Erbil and Ninewa.

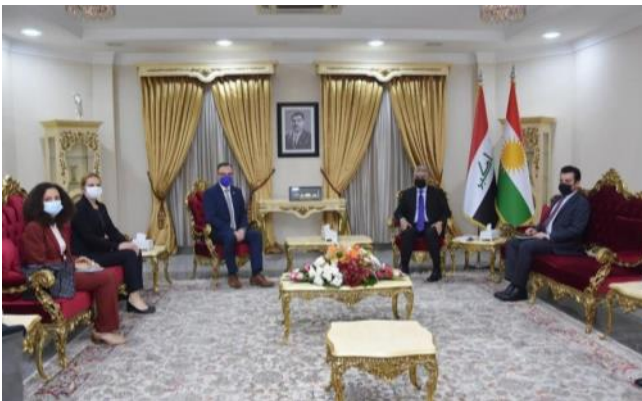




Khanke, 24 May 2022 - Stories of survivors who have been trying to move on with their lives while advocating for justice for themselves, their communities and victims were the highlight of USG and Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Nderitu, and Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD, Mr. Christian Ritscher's joint visit to Khanke refugee camp. USG Nderitu and SA Ritscher were highly inspired by the resilience of the Yazidi community, especially when seeing the work of inspiring talented women of the Free Yazidi Foundation Enterprise and Training Center + Sugar is Sweet Bakery and Café in Khanke.



Kojo, 24 May 2022 - United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG) and Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Ms. Alice Nderitu, and Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD Iraq Mr. Christian Ritscher, paid tribute to victims of ISIL who are buried in Kojo and visited the Kojo school; now a memorial for the Yazidi victims of genocide committed by ISIL members. Special Adviser Ritscher reaffirmed UNITAD's commitment to continue working to hold ISIL perpetrators accountable for their international crimes. The two Special Advisers also visited the mass graves in Solagh and Hardan, and met with Yazidi survivors and families of the victims.



Erbil, 25 May 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met, for the first time, with H.E. Mr. Rayber Ahmed, Minister of Interior of Kurdistan Regional Government. They discussed the continuous cooperation between UNITAD and KRG in ongoing investigations of ISIL crimes.

Special Adviser Ritscher expressed his gratitude to KRG for supporting UNITAD's operations and investigations. This excellent cooperation attests to KRG's commitment to the common goal of holding ISIL members accountable for their international crimes.



Baghdad, 26 May 2022 - In a joint meeting with Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary for Multilateral and Legal Affairs, H.E. Qahtan Al Janabi, and the Chief of Staff of Iraq's Prime Minister, Judge Raed Juhi, Special Adviser Christian Ritscher expressed his gratitude to the Government of Iraq for their invaluable support to UNITAD. In the meeting, Special Adviser Ritscher reaffirmed his and UNITAD's commitment to build Iraqi national legal and investigative expertise and to continue the solid cooperation aiming at holding ISIL members accountable for their international crimes.

Discussing Da'esh's destruction of cultural heritage, the UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum holds its fourth thematic roundtable

Baghdad 3 June 2022 - The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL held the Fourth Thematic Roundtable of the UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum. The thematic roundtables of the Forum bring together tens of Iraqi and International Non-Governmental Organizations to address one theme relating to UNITAD's investigative activities. The fourth thematic roundtable was held under the title "Da'esh/ISIL's Crimes in the Destruction of Cultural Heritage". Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD

Christian Ritscher elaborated in his opening remarks on UNITAD's work aiming to bring Da'esh/ISIL perpetrators to justice, including those responsible for the destruction of cultural heritage, as the Team plans to expand its investigative work on those crimes. He further added: "I'm delighted that a number of Member States have recently provided funding to support UNITAD's investigations in the destruction of cultural heritage". Addressing the present NGOs, Special Adviser Ritscher also explained that: "the principal objective of this

roundtable's discussion is to exchange thoughts and get your advice on how UNITAD can work better with the NGO community to strengthen our investigations into ISIL destruction of cultural heritage". Mr. Don Schultz, Head of FIU5, UNITAD's Field Investigation Unit focused on Da'esh/ISIL crimes committed against the Christian community in Iraq, spoke about UNITAD's investigations in this area, as a significant portion of this destruction was committed against Christian sites, including the

Discussing Da'esh's destruction of cultural heritage, the UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum holds its fourth thematic roundtable *(Continued)*

destruction and vandalization of churches and monasteries.

Mr. Seán Fobbe, Chief Legal Officer of RASHID International presented on the work of his organization, with special focus on ISIL crimes in destroying Yazidi cultural heritage sites, which he described as aiming to destroy the soul of the Yazidis. He further explored how the destruction of cultural heritage, besides being an international crime on its own, can also serve as evidence to prove the intent for committing genocide.

Mr. Farhad Kakay, Director of the Chiraw Organization spoke about the crimes committed against the Kakaai community, which aimed to destroy the community and its culture, including Kakaai cultural heritage sites.

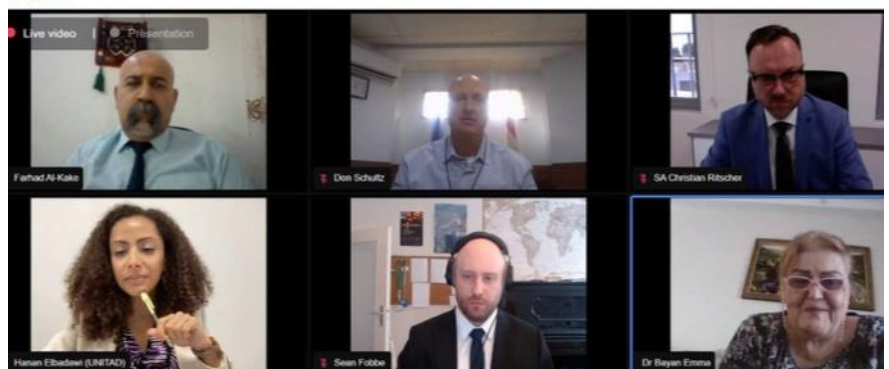
In 2014, ISIL deliberately committed what could amount to war crimes through destruction of cultural heritage in an attempt to erase Iraq's rich cultural diversity. Investigating those crimes by ISIL/Da'esh against the rich and diverse Iraqi cultural heritage is one of UNITAD's cross cutting investigative themes and one that requires continuous collaboration with the different constituencies of the Iraqi community. The fourth thematic

roundtable, thus, allowed for an open discussion with different NGOs about this investigative area and how UNITAD can work better with NGOs in this area.

The UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum was launched in December 2020, with the aim of serving as a platform that brings together all relevant international and Iraqi NGOs for regular collaboration, exchange of ideas and best practices, as well as exploring areas for enhancing cooperation. The UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum has been convening two types of events; the first is a series of thematic roundtable discussions in a panel-format,

addressing specific thematic areas relating to UNITAD's investigative activities. The events bring together international and local experts with UNITAD team member for an in-depth discussion on one theme for each roundtable. While the second type of events is the biannual plenary roundtable which aim to provide a broader update on the work of UNITAD, and to serve as an open space for suggestions on how to better engage with NGOs. The plenary biannual meeting also serves as a space where survivors can have their voices heard by both UNITAD and the NGO community.

UDO UNITAD NGO Dialogue Forum Thematic Round...



Denmark commits long-term funding to UNITAD for ISIL accountability



Baghdad, 05 June 2022 – The Government of Denmark has committed long-term funding to UNITAD's pursuit of justice for ISIL's international crimes in Iraq. The funding agreement of 16 million Danish Kroner will support key areas of

UNITAD's work until the end of 2025. This includes support to capacity building with the Government of Iraq on technical and digital investigations, and furthering UNITAD's investigations into sexual and gender-based crimes and crimes against children.

The new contribution builds upon previous Danish support to UNITAD, which began in 2019, and has provided backing to important aspects of UNITAD's mandate. UNITAD's partnership with Denmark has already seen notable achievements through the delivery of a training course on internal criminal law and international humanitarian law for Iraqi judges, and the establishment of 'Zeteo', UNITAD's ground-breaking artificial intelligence platform.

According to the Ambassador of Denmark to Iraq, Mr. Stig Paolo "building capacity in the Iraqi justice system to hold ISIL accountability for sexual violence, gender violence and

violence against children is vital to building a stable and peaceful Iraq". Special Adviser and Head UNITAD Christian Ritscher indicated that "Denmark has been a vital supporter of UNITAD and this announcement of long-term support to the Team's work is yet another example of the strong partnership that exists. With Denmark's generosity we will continue to strengthen our efforts with the Government of Iraq to hold ISIL to account".

The new project will continue to follow a comprehensive approach to ISIL accountability that strengthens the ability of the Iraqi authorities to conduct digital investigations in line with international best practices and enhances the use of advanced technology to strengthen UNITAD's investigations. Particular attention will be given to applying these technologies to ISIL's crimes that involved sexual enslavement and the recruitment of child soldiers.

UNITAD Psychologists conducted a training for Iraqi Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Baghdad, 7 June 2022 - As part of its work to support capacity building for Iraqi authorities, UNITAD Psychologists conducted a training for Iraqi Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on basic psychosocial skills, aiming to sensitize participants on psychosocial issues and dealing with trauma survivors. Women Social Welfare and Protection Department in the Ministry took part in the training, which covered a range of topics including impact of trauma, stress management techniques, basic psychosocial support and identification, referral and case management for survivors.



New York, 7 June 2022 - Ahead of his briefing to the United Nations Security Council, Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met with H.E. Ambassador Ferit Hoxha, President of the UNSC and Permanent Representative of Albania to the UN. They discussed UNITAD's leading investigative work and potential cooperation in promoting accountability for ISIL crimes.



New York, 9 June 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met with Ambassador Antje Leendertse, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations. Special Adviser Ritscher expressed thanks to Germany's continued support to UNITAD's Economic Crimes Unit; one of the Team's key investigations. They discussed efforts to pursue justice through national proceedings to prosecute ISIL perpetrators for international crimes.



New York, 9 June 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met with Ambassador Trine Heimerback, Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations, during his visit to New York to brief the Security Council. They discussed ongoing cooperation in promoting accountability for ISIL international crimes.



New York, 10 June 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met with Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative to Sexual Violence in Conflict. Special Adviser Ritscher briefed on UNITAD's investigations on sexual and gender-based crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq, and promoting psychosocial support for survivors. They also discussed prospects for mutual cooperation.

Special Adviser Ritscher briefs Security Council on UNITAD investigative progress: cooperation with Iraq is key



Baghdad, 10 June 2022 – Special Adviser Christian Ritscher briefed the UN Security Council on the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) over the past six months. The briefing, which highlighted the progress described in UNITAD's eighth report to the Security Council, stressed the significant progress in cooperation between UNITAD and the Government of Iraq in the pursuit of justice and accountability for ISIL international crimes.

Cooperation with the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Judiciary has been key for the implementation of UNITAD's mandate as reaffirmed by Special Adviser Ritscher, expressing his gratitude to the Government of Iraq, the Iraqi judiciary, and the authorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government for supporting the implementation of UNITAD's mandate. "I have made it a priority to establish and

maintain a continuous dialogue with senior members of the Iraqi Government, including the Presidency, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Security Advisory," said the Special Adviser.

The Special Adviser mentioned that earlier this year, strategic discussions between UNITAD and the Iraqi National Coordinating Committee, chaired by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, jointly defined common areas of priority. This included information sharing as well as capacity building for national counterparts.

During the briefing, Special Adviser Ritscher presented examples of the progress, during the reporting period, in the Team's structural investigations, which aim to cover ISIL crimes against all affected communities; Yazidis, Shia, Sunni, Christian, Kaka'i, Shabak and Turkmen Shia. One example was the progress in UNITAD's investigations into

ISIL's development and use of chemical and biological weapons, which revealed new information through testimonial, digital, and documentary evidence pertaining to the manufacturing and use of these weapons. Special Adviser Ritscher stressed that "our investigations will look more closely at the underlying procurement system for these weapons and related financial flows. This entails focusing on the involvement of specific individuals, including those involved in conducting human tests with chemical agents on detained persons."

Highlighting future priority areas for the work of the Team, Special Adviser Ritscher said that UNITAD intends to intensify its investigations pertaining to crimes committed in Mosul, the capital of the so-called "caliphate" of Da'esh/ISIL. He also mentioned that UNITAD plans to expand investigations into ISIL's destruction of cultural heritage. He said that "ISIL's vicious destruction of cultural heritage was an attempt to erase Iraq's diverse cultural history." He expressed his devastation after seeing the magnitude of the destruction in some of the cultural heritage sites which he visited recently. "At the same time, I continue to be impressed by Iraq's ongoing efforts to restore these sites," he pointed out.

"I can compare the restoration of cultural heritage sites to our own work at UNITAD in the pursuit of accountability and justice. It equally takes years and is a painstaking process, but it is work that must be done", said the Special Adviser. He reiterated UNITAD's commitment to continue working towards holding ISIL members accountable for their international crimes in Iraq, stressing that this is "a commitment we owe to the survivors, to international justice, and to humanity at large."



New York, 11 June 2022 - In their meeting Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Mr. Alexandre Zouev, and Special Adviser Christian Ritscher discussed areas of potential cooperation, as well as the importance of justice and accountability in the pursuit of rule of law and sustainable peace.



New York, 11 June 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher addressed a meeting of the Permanent Representatives of the Arab Group at UNHQ, to brief them on the work of UNITAD in investigating ISIL crimes in Iraq.

The meeting is the first engagement for UNITAD with the League of Arab States, and discussed areas of potential cooperation with countries of the region in promoting accountability for ISIL international crimes.

UNITAD, Iraq, and Finland co-host a special event at UNHQ: presenting investigations into ISIL's crimes against the Tikrit Air Academy personnel

Baghdad, 15 June 2022– The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL, jointly with The Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations, and The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations co-hosted a special event titled “The Pattern of Mass Killing: ISIL crimes against the Tikrit Air Academy Personnel.”

The Special Event was held at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York and brought together participants from the diplomatic community, civil society and different UN offices.

“Our special event coincides with the eighth anniversary of this massacre; one of the most heinous crimes committed by ISIL against the predominantly Shia unarmed cadets of the Iraqi Air Force.” said Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD Christian Ritscher in his opening remarks, adding that: “UNITAD has completed a case brief on this massacre with detailed evidence that can be used to support prosecutions of ISIL members, including some who are allegedly most responsible for those crimes.”

H.E. Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr AlUloom, Permanent representative of Iraq to the UN underlined that Iraq will spare no effort, and for as long as it takes to bring before justice all perpetrators of terrorist crimes against all Iraqis especially those committed by ISIL (Daesh). The crime against Tikrit Academy cadets, is rightfully called by Iraqis crime as (the crime of our time). Just as victory over those terrorists was obtained by Iraqis, also fair, transparent and just trials and accountability of those who committed these heinous crimes will be obtained by Iraqis themselves and according to the national legal procedures consistent with the Iraqi legislative code. H.E. Bahr AlUloom, commended the efforts of UNITAD team and Special Adviser Christian Ritscher, and welcomed continued cooperation between the Iraqi government and the UNITAD team.

Special Adviser Christian Ritscher renewed his gratitude to the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi judiciary for the invaluable collaboration with UNITAD on the investigations into those crime, as well as the tremendous work conducted by the national experts in mass grave excavations and victim remains identification. “With the continued collaboration with the Government of Iraq and Iraqi judiciary, UNITAD will be able to further advance investigations towards ensuring accountability for ISIL international crimes, and serving justice to the victims, who have been waiting for long to see their day in court,” said



Special Adviser Ritscher.

During the event, UNITAD presented a video that was produced in partnership with SITU Research, as a special production aiming at bringing the crime scene to viewers. The video synthesizes testimonial, documentary, digital and forensic evidence into a compelling narrative that tells the story of the core international crimes committed by ISIL/Da'esh members in Tikrit. Additionally, UNITAD's lead investigator on this file presented an overview and presentation on the case.

Through a video address, Yasser Al Khozaa'i, Investigative Judge at the Rusafa Court in Bagdad, presented the work done by the Iraqi Judiciary investigating the Tikrit Air Academy massacre, including the support provided to other countries who can arrest and prosecute perpetrators. He also highlighted the Iraqi judiciary's approach in extending full support to UNITAD, under the guidance of the President of the Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council, Dr. Faiq Zeidan.

In his intervention, Mr. Sarhang Hamasaeed, the Director of Middle East Programs at the United States Institute of Peace highlighted the importance of accountability in reconciliation and peacebuilding, adding that holding ISIL perpetrators accountable is highly significant to ensure that the massacre was not committed by one community against another community, but by members of a criminal organization who committed those international crimes.

Following the Q&A, H.E. Ms. Miia Rainne, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations and Chargé d'Affaires a.i, provided concluding remarks for the event, highlighting that achieving accountability, especially for the most serious international crimes, is a precondition for sustainable peace and that victims for these crimes deserve to have closure and information about the fate of their family members.

The video presented during the event will be made available in full on UNITAD's official website and social media.



Baghdad, 14 June 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was delighted to welcome H.E. Mr. Martin Jaeger, German Ambassador to Iraq, today at UNITAD's offices in Baghdad. They discussed the ongoing fruitful cooperation between Germany and UNITAD in the field of investigating ISIL international crimes.

In lead up to flagship migration policy conference, Iraq makes key pledges for improved governance

Baghdad, 11 May 2022 - The UN Network for Migration applauds the Government of Iraq's commitment to improved migration governance in the lead up to the International Migration Review Forum, where progress on the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) will be reviewed.

Iraq is the first country in the Middle East and North Africa region to submit both a Voluntary National Review (VNR) – an overview of the State's progress toward the GCM's objectives – and a set of forward-looking policy pledges.

On 10 May, the Government of Iraq's Inter-Ministerial Technical Working Group on Migration met in Baghdad to discuss the upcoming Forum (IMRF) and migration governance priorities, as well as to validate its Voluntary National Review, drafted with the support of the UN Network on Migration.

Iraq is a signatory of the GCM – the first intergovernmental agreement to cover all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner – and a member of the Champion Country initiative. As a Champion country, Iraq demonstrates support for the GCM through leadership and engagement in multilateral processes.

The Inter-Ministerial Technical Working Group committed to a total of seven policy pledges based on findings of the VNR and the activities implemented under the working group's thematic taskforces. Commitments include:

1. Prioritization of Migration, Environment and Climate Change by

the TWG

2. Improved collection and management of Migration Data

3. Follow-up on the Migration Governance Indicators Assessment

4. Expansion and strengthening of the National Referral Mechanism for Reintegration

5. Dynamic Diaspora Engagement

6. Systemization of identity management through implementation of an electronic Return Case Management System

7. Better engagement on Integrated Border Management

The Government of Iraq will send a delegation to the IMRF and will participate in all the Forum's main events including, the thematic roundtables, policy debate, and a general debate which will endorse an overall progress declaration.

"Almost four years have passed since Iraq signed the Global Compact for

Migration in 2018. Last year, we were among the first governments in the Middle East and North Africa to complete the voluntary national review of the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration," said Mr. Karim al-Nouri, Deputy Minister of Migration and Displacement, during the Technical Working Group meeting.

"[The IMRF] is a good opportunity for us to show Iraq as a strong country that is committed to implementing the GCM, and present what has been accomplished. [We would like] to inform all partners that Iraq will be present and strong in this initiative."

In recent years, important strides have been made towards improving migration policy in Iraq, notably through the development of a National Migration Strategy. The UN Network on Migration looks forward to supporting the Government of Iraq in meeting its GCM policy pledges over the next four years.



A specialized training held in Baghdad on mapping reintegration service providers

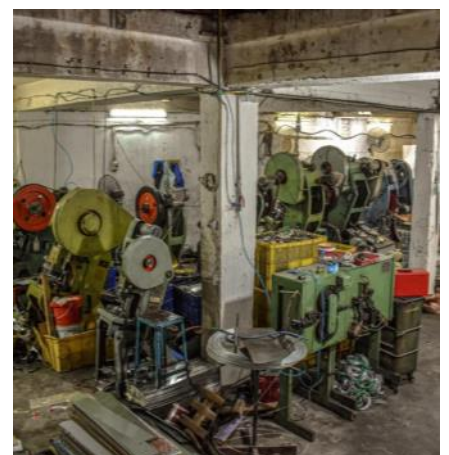
Baghdad, 12 May 2022 - With the voluntary return of Iraqi citizens who fled abroad from years of crisis, society-wide coordination is needed to support their sustainable reintegration at home.

Such coordination can be seen in the Government of Iraq's National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which aims to link returnees to the protection and reintegration services they need as they reestablish themselves in Iraq.

On 11 and 12 May, IOM Iraq held a specialized training in Baghdad for staff from the Ministry of Migration and Displacement's central, Karkh and

Rusafa branches. Participants worked on mapping reintegration service providers, including government and local service providers, civil society organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs and UN agencies. This list of reintegration service providers will be used by the NRM to facilitate direct assistance and immediate referrals to specialized services in return communities.

This training was made possible with support from the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



IOM raises awareness on legal pathways of migration

Baghdad, 26 May 2022 - IOM Iraq conducted a community event to provide to accurate information about legal pathways of migration, risks of irregular migration and Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration assistance services through the “Voluntary Returnees as Messengers” project.

This event was made possible with support from the Government of Germany.

“I learned about IOM’s Facilitated Voluntary Returns Programme and registered; now my family is preparing

to return to our village,” said Ahmed Eliyas, from Ninewa Governorate.

Developed primarily by IOM, under the auspices of the Iraq Durable Solutions Technical Working Group, the Durable Solutions Toolkit provides practical guidance on the steps necessary to facilitate safe, voluntary, and dignified returns, while addressing the specificities of the Iraq context. It adopts a people-centered approach, placing community-based planning and accountability towards IDPs at the heart of all phases of the return process.

Supported by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



IOM Iraq teams are conducting pre-departure health assessments for households preparing to leave AAF and return home voluntarily

Baghdad, 01 June 2022 - Following the closure in 2021 of Amriyat Al Fallujah (AAF) camp for internally displaced persons, several households expressed an interest in return to their areas of origin.

From 30 May – 2 June, IOM Iraq teams are conducting pre-departure health assessments for households preparing to leave AAF and return home voluntarily. During the health

assessments medical staff check that returnees are fit for travel, deliver treatment for acute medical conditions, and provide medication for those with chronic illnesses until they can find new service providers in their areas of origin.

This activity was made possible with support from the Government of the Republic of Korea.



A specialized training held in Erbil on legal concepts and legislative techniques related to international migration law

Erbil, 5 June 2022 - The Government of Iraq has made important strides towards improving its migration policy framework, following the ISIL crisis. A previous legal mapping exercise, supported by IOM, identified several recommendations for strengthening the legal frameworks related to migration in Iraq.

As a follow up action, IOM Iraq recently held a specialized training in Erbil on legal concepts and legislative techniques related to international migration law. The training was for participants from the

Legal Affairs Taskforce of the Government’s Inter-Ministerial Technical Working Group for Migration.

It covered the legal concepts and operational practices relating to international migration law, legislative frameworks such as national strategies and amendments to existing laws, national legislation vis-a-vis international standards, and the legislative process in Iraq.

This training was made possible with support from the European Union.



IOM Iraq facilitated the voluntary return or relocation of 127 displaced families (550 individuals) from Amriyat Al Fallujah informal site

Baghdad, 06 June 2022 - Almost 5 years after the conflict against ISIL was declared over in Iraq, there are still over 35,000 internally displaced persons in Anbar Governorate.

IOM’s Facilitated Movements Programme supports the safe, voluntary, and dignified return or relocation of displaced people across Iraq.

Last week, IOM Iraq facilitated the voluntary return or relocation of 127 displaced families (550 individuals) from

Amriyat Al Fallujah informal site, in close coordination and cooperation with the Government of Iraq. The returning and relocating families receive transportation, departure and re-installation grants to support their reintegration.

IOM will continue to work with the Government to support the safe, voluntary, and dignified return and relocation of displaced people across Iraq. This activity was made possible with support from the U.S. Department of

State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.



On World Refugee Day: everyone has the right to seek safety



Erbil, 20 June 2022 - This year, World Refugee Day reminds us that every person has a right to seek safety – whoever they are, wherever they come from and whenever they are forced to flee conflict or persecution.

In Iraq and especially in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), we commend the people and authorities for the welcome extended to some 300,000 Syrian, Iranian, Turkish and other refugees and asylum-seekers of which over 90 percent live in the KRI.

Today, as Iraq is recovering from years of armed violence and internal displacements due to the fight against ISIL (Da'esh), UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, stands with refugees and communities who have been hosting them as the country heads towards stability and prosperity.

UNHCR praises the authorities in Iraq, particularly in KRI, for providing healthcare and soon education to the refugees through their public systems, and for having allowed them to fend for themselves by getting jobs. Funding for humanitarian emergency responses around the world is being overstretched, as partners must address the needs of the 100 million

people who have been forced to leave their homes, most recently in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. Nonetheless, UNHCR remains committed to supporting the Iraqi and KRI authorities and people in their efforts to help refugees restore their lives with dignity.

“Today, on World Refugee Day, we celebrate the generosity that the authorities and people in Iraq, especially in the KRI, have demonstrated even during their own adversity: they have opened their doors and hearts to shelter and protect those displaced from neighboring countries and their own sisters and brothers who fled ISIL (Da'esh) violence. Seeing today in Erbil how so many refugees have been able to resume dignified lives is a testament to their resilience, but also to the hospitality of their hosts. UNHCR remains committed to working together with the authorities and the international community to support host communities and refugees alike. On this day, it is also important to reiterate the importance of keeping borders open to allow safe passage to those who flee violence and persecution - whoever they are, wherever they come

from, and whenever they are forced to flee, we must be prepared to welcome them, like Iraq and the KRI has done in particular in relation to Syrian refugees.” said Jean-Nicolas Beuze, Representative of UNHCR in Iraq.

Durable solutions for those who were forced to flee must be sought, especially in protracted situations and until the time refugees can go home in safety and dignity. In Iraq, UNHCR is investing in existing public services to strengthen their capacity to serve both host and displaced communities through readily accessible interventions of high quality. Ultimately, it is to the benefit of all that refugees become more self-reliant and engage in the local economy so that they no longer depend on humanitarian assistance and contribute to the communities that welcomed them.

The UN response in Iraq in relation to Iraqi families displaced by ISIL, many of whom have now returned home, is transitioning from a humanitarian response into one rooted in a development framework, working hand in hand with relevant public institutions. It is critical that refugees and asylum-seekers are not left behind while the country moves towards the achievement of sustainable development goals, leaving behind years of a daunting humanitarian crisis.

By welcoming refugees, Iraq and the KRI have allowed those forced to flee to rebuild their lives free from discrimination and away from armed violence, providing them space to rebuild their lives in safety. UNHCR is committed to standing with the authorities and people in Iraq, including KRI, until long-term solutions are achieved.

IOM's Individual Livelihoods Assistance (ILA) programme supports refugees to start small businesses

Baghdad, 20 June 2022 - It's World Refugee Day!

Ibrahim Muhammad Salim is a refugee from Syria's Hasakah Governorate. When he fled to Iraq, he faced many challenges, particularly financial. Searching for a source of income, he opened a small shop selling baklava and other sweets. To expand his business, Ibrahim applied to and was selected for IOM's Individual Livelihoods Assistance (ILA) programme.

“When we received the grant, we had the financial means to expand. We

bought some raw materials and opened a branch for Tahini Halva. Then we opened a second branch for fruit jam. We also participated in a two-day course about how to expand any small business — we benefited a lot,” said Ibrahim.

For individuals from vulnerable populations, ILA provides access to vocational training, job placement services and assistance in expanding or starting a micro-enterprise.

This activity was supported by the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration



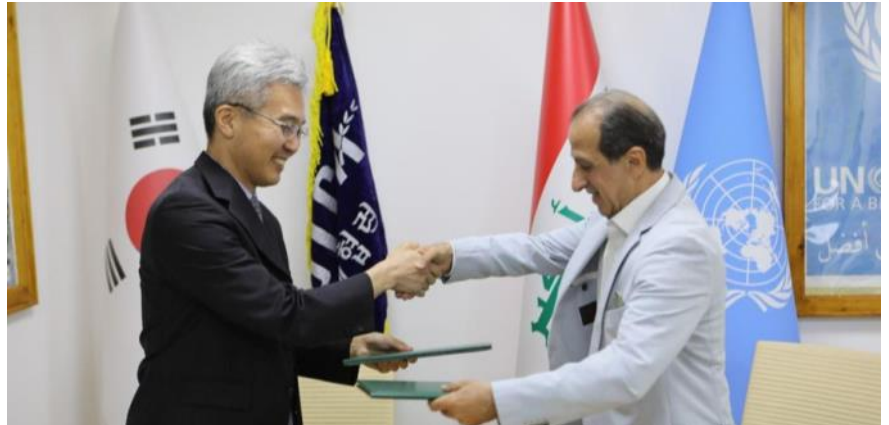
UN-Habitat Iraq receives generous support from Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to promote peace and stability by facilitating sustainable returns

Baghdad, 23 June 2022 - UN-Habitat Iraq welcomes the contribution of USD 6 million from the Korean Government through the Korea International Cooperation Agency Office in Iraq.

Today, during his visit to UN-Habitat Office, Mr. Cho Hyeong Lae, Country Director, KOICA Iraq Office and Wael Al Ashhab, Head of UN-Habitat Iraq Programme, signed the contribution agreement which aims to support the returnees in Ninewa.

The two-year programme aims to facilitate the sustainable returns of vulnerable displaced population to Sinjar by supporting their housing, land and property rights and improvement of living conditions.

Further, the programme aims to directly support 55,800 vulnerable populations in Sinjar by improving access to dignified housing, securing land tenure and improving living conditions and access to basic services and livelihoods.



Mr. Cho Hyeong Lae, emphasized the commitment of the Korean Government and KOICA in collaboration with UN-Habitat to support Iraqi government to provide assistance to the most vulnerable population in Iraq. Wael Al Ashhab, thanked the KOICA delegation for their generous contribution and emphasized UN-

Habitat's commitment to support Iraqi people in dire need of housing, HLP and improve the living conditions which are key issues to promote the sustainable returns. Both parties agreed that housing, WASH and HLP rights should be prioritized activities to continue supporting the rights of the most vulnerable groups in Iraq.

UNDP, IOM, and Iraqi government agencies encourage returns and reintegration in Ninewa

Erbil, 27 June 2022 – UNDP Iraq and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in partnership with the Office of the National Security Advisory, and with participation from the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MOMD) and other relevant government agencies, have brought together over 45 community and tribal leaders as well as local authorities from Ninewa Governorate in a workshop aimed at fostering understanding and community readiness among local leaders to facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqis back into their communities.

UNDP and IOM are working with the Government of Iraq to support the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqi families with perceived affiliation to ISIL, including those returning from Syria, in line with the government's efforts to end protracted displacement through proactive measures to facilitate access to durable solutions.

The workshop included participants from the areas of Baaj, Ayadia, Makhmour, Mosul, Al Qiarah and Telafar in Ninewa, and discussed the details of the return process, challenges facing families who will return, the role of community leaders and local government in facilitating the reintegration of families, and the work which UNDP and IOM are undertaking to facilitate return and reintegration. The

workshop produced a unanimous consensus to enhance community acceptance of returning families.

UNDP Iraq Resident Representative Ms. Zena Ali-Ahmad emphasizes, "UNDP is committed to working with the Iraqi Government and IOM to ensure communities are well informed and ready to accept the return of displaced families back to their communities of origin. Our sustainable approach to community readiness includes discussions with local and national authorities surrounding livelihood opportunities, mental health services, and housing options for both returning families and community members."

According to Mr. Giorgi Gigauri, IOM's Chief of Mission in Iraq, "IOM's whole-of-society approach to identifying and facilitating durable solutions for displaced Iraqis demands that the needs, concerns and awareness of all those affected are taken into account – this is a crucial component of joint efforts by IOM, UNDP and the Government of Iraq to resolve the cases of individuals facing complex barriers to return and reintegration. The good faith and commitment to social cohesion shown during this workshop are a hopeful indication of increased opportunities for concerted action moving forward."

Dr. Saeed Al-Jiashi, Advisor, National Security Advisory, states, "This meeting



is very important in clarifying accurate information to the community about returning families and the stages of rehabilitation, including defining the timetable for returns. We have addressed issues by presenting facts and listening to tribal leaders, heads of administrative and security units, and local peace committees."

In 2020, UNDP Iraq launched a dedicated five-year Social Cohesion Programme to promote stronger, peaceful, and more cohesive communities in all areas of Iraq. The Community-based Reconciliation and Reintegration Project supports the community readiness, return, and reintegration of families perceived to be affiliated with ISIL, who are often among the most marginalized and vulnerable, as well as supporting host families in areas of return.

Today, Iraq is a GCM Champion Country

Baghdad, 26 June 2022 - IOM Deputy Director General for Operations, Ugochi Daniels, congratulated Iraq for the strides it has made under the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) since first becoming a signatory in 2018.

Today, Iraq is a GCM Champion Country and participated at the recent International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) in New York with a strong Voluntary National Review capturing significant achievements, including the endorsement of a National Migration

Management Strategy and establishment of an inter-ministerial Technical Working Group on migration (TWG) to facilitate coordination, communication and decision making among ministries working on migration issues.

On the heels of the IMRF, IOM Iraq and the UN Network on Migration stand ready with the technical expertise and on-the-ground experience necessary to continue supporting the Government of Iraq in improving migration management.



Humanitarian

American diplomats visit Khanke Camp, meet displaced families

Duhok, 23 April 2022 - Mr. Joey Hood, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, recently led a U.S. Consulate General Erbil team including Deputy Consul General Ms. Chahrazed Sioud, and the USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance Senior Humanitarian Advisor, on a visit to

Khanke Camp, Duhok.

Along with other representatives from the US consulate, they met with displaced families to understand more about their situation and needs. The team also met with the camp management, as well as WFP + IOM Iraq teams, to discuss ongoing support for the families.



School meals fed approximately 23,000 students in Nineveh and Kirkuk governorates

Baghdad, 26 April 2022 - In collaboration with the World Food Programme, Caritas Czech Republic fed approximately 23,000 students in Nineveh and Kirkuk governorates this year to encourage them to continue their education.

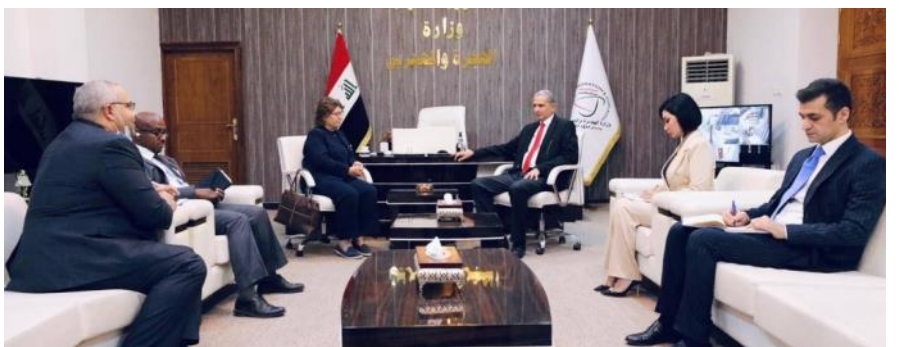
Booklets and posters were provided to children in addition to school meals to teach them about the importance of education, food health, and hygiene.

"The project is implemented by the WFP Iraq in partnership with Caritas Czech Republic in Iraq with the financial support of the government of Iraq."



DSRSG/RC/HC visits Ministry of Migration and Displaced, discusses support to IDPs in Iraq

Baghdad, 12 May 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq/Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano met in Baghdad with the Acting Minister of Migration and Displaced (MoMD), Mr. Othman Al-Ghanimi. They discussed mutual cooperation in the field of support to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq.



Representatives of UNHCR and WFP briefed donors on the food security situation of the Syrian refugees living in Iraq



Baghdad, 15 May 2022 - Representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR Iraq) and the World Food

Programme (WFP) briefed donors on the food security situation of Syrian refugees living in Iraq and highlighted the importance of continued food

assistance to these vulnerable communities in the face of socioeconomic impacts.

The two representatives emphasized the support WFP and UNHCR have provided to Syrian refugees since the onset of the crisis and continue to do so, yet the ongoing socio economic impacts including increases in food prices have eroded the purchasing power of people's income threatening their food security. Continuity of support to the most vulnerable households is critical to prevent the deterioration of the families' situation and reversal of gains made through the past years of assistance.

The briefing was attended by several donor representations who have been strong partners of WFP and UNHCR's live-saving interventions in Iraq.

Syrian refugees in Iraq will lose access to basic foods without urgent funds

Baghdad, 16 May 2022 - Syrian families living in camps in Iraq face alarming levels of food insecurity, according to a new figure from the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

With very little funding in place to assist people with their day-to-day lives, many appear on course for a deterioration of their already testing circumstances – drowning in more and more debts that they have no means of repaying

Iraq hosts nearly 260,000 Syrian refugees, the vast majority of whom reside in the Kurdistan Region. This includes 95,745 people who live in camps – 72,000 of whom receive life-saving food and cash assistance from WFP, while UNHCR provides a range of services, including, among others, legal support, registration services, cash assistance, and education support. 86 percent of in-camp refugees remain food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity following a string of socio-economic shocks.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment in 2020 and the consequent devaluation of the Iraqi dinar are still being felt while price rises caused by the war in Ukraine continue to reduce people's access to basic food.

Families' dependence on irregular and unpredictable cash jobs in the informal economy is a key aggravator of food insecurity. When opportunities to earn



dry up, they are pushed into negative coping strategies, such as buying food on credit, reducing expenditure on basic needs, selling assets, child labour and having children drop out of school. Urgent additional funding is needed to continue assisting 72,000 vulnerable Syrian refugees in camps in Iraq. WFP requires US\$ 10.1 million to continue uninterrupted monthly food and cash assistance. Receiving this is vital as 86 percent of people in camps are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity – without the requisite funds tens of thousands of people will suffer ever more severe levels of food insecurity.

In a joint statement, Ally Raza Qureshi, WFP Representative for Iraq and Jean-Nicolas Beuze, UNHCR

Representative for Iraq said:

“These are serious indicators that highlight the urgent need for supporting vulnerable Syrian refugees who are adversely affected by the current economic difficulties in Iraq. WFP and UNHCR have supported Syrian refugees since the onset of the crisis and continue to do so, yet the rising food prices and reduced purchasing power of people's income places them at greater risk of being food insecure.

“WFP and UNHCR are grateful to all donors for their continued and steadfast support to the most vulnerable families in Iraq and would request for their assistance to help ensure that in these trying times, no one shall go hungry.”

UNHCR is grateful for Government of Japan's renewed commitment to support thousands of displaced persons, returnees, and Syrian refugees in Iraq



Baghdad, 18 May 2022 - The Government of Japan contributed a generous USD five million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), renewing its longstanding commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable displaced families in Iraq in 2022.

This contribution from Japan comes at a crucial moment when humanitarian funding in Iraq is declining despite continued significant needs, exacerbated by the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and newly arising food security challenges linked to the conflict in Ukraine.

In the context of Iraq, documentation is crucial. An identity or civil document can be the difference between accessing healthcare and sickness, between going to school or remaining without any education, or for refugees, between being able to remain safe in Iraq and being deported to Syria where violence

continues to destroy lives. Over 25 percent of Iraqi families who had been displaced by the violence from ISIL and 16 percent of those who have now returned home as well as close to 40 percent of Syrian refugees in Iraq lack a valid identity document.

With Japan's generous support, UNHCR will be able to support over 9,000 Iraqi internally displaced persons (IDPs) to obtain civil documentation and to continue to offer its registration services to Syrian and other refugees and. Being recognised as an Iraqi citizen or a refugee in Iraq is a necessary step for having one's rights fully recognised and fulfilled.

Additionally, Japan's support will allow UNHCR to provide free legal assistance to 8,500 IDPs and refugees in Iraq, including to allow survivors of gender-based violence to file cases with law enforcement and judicial authorities if they wish, or support individuals with issues related to their properties or workplace. It will also help UNHCR provide legal aid for Syrians at risk of deportation from Iraq.

According to the Japanese Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. SUZUKI Kotaro, "UNHCR's support for the documentation is an essential assistance to save IDPs, returnees and Syrian refugees in Iraq from imminent danger and ensure their human dignities. I commend UNHCR's continuous and

tireless endeavor to mitigate sufferings of those most vulnerable people. I hope that this project will alleviate the hardships of those people, who also have been most affected by current food security in the wake of the crisis in Ukraine."

"In Iraq, access to identity and civil documentation is crucial across the humanitarian and development spectrum. So many Iraqis displaced by the recent conflict lost their ID. Being recognised as an Iraqi citizen is key to have access to education or health public services, but also to receive return grants and compensation for lost property. Similarly, not only can documentation prevent a refugee from being deported to a country where their life might be at risk, it also guarantees their access to education and health services as well. Japan's valuable contribution will help thousands of individuals now in Iraq today, but also over the years to come as the country continues to recover and rebuild," said Jean Nicolas Beuze, Representative of UNHCR in Iraq.

The Government of Japan has been one of UNHCR's most important contributors over recent years. Thanks to the generous contributions of Japan and its people, thousands of IDPs, returnees and Syrian refugees in Iraq have been able to regain their place in Iraq and live in dignity and security

Flexible funding from Sweden enables WFP to provide lifesaving assistance to displaced families in Iraq



Baghdad, 19 May 2022 – WFP Iraq is to receive US\$1 million of the US\$91.6 million that the Government of Sweden has contributed to the organization's global flexible funding for 2022.

The funds will support up to 327,000 displaced Iraqis and Syrian refugees living in camps, with lifesaving assistance in the form of cash distributions and food baskets.

"With the unprecedented levels of global food-insecurity we see today, WFP's efforts to fight hunger are more crucial than ever," said Jonas Lovén, Sweden's ambassador to Iraq. "We

welcome this allocation to help vulnerable displaced people and refugees in Iraq who need our urgent support in these difficult times, and hope that more donors will step up."

The multilateral contribution will ensure WFP is able to make critical operational funding decisions, allocating funds to where they are needed most.

It comes at a time when WFP and its partners in Iraq face funding shortfalls amid rising costs.

This will ensure that Iraq's many internally displaced people (IDPs) continue to receive support as rising food prices are making it harder to put food on the table.

"Despite Iraq's ongoing transition towards development and stability, humanitarian needs remain a reality," said Ally Raza Qureshi, WFP Iraq Representative. "Hundreds of thousands of people are supported by WFP in camps based on their food insecurity levels. And while durable peace and conditions for return are not

guaranteed for these protracted displacement cases, their immediate food security needs must be met to save lives and maintain peace and harmony."

WFP Iraq can now continue provide assistance under one of the core pillars of its crisis response in the country, while working to boost resilience-building activities that improve livelihoods, ensuring that vulnerable people are able to provide an income for themselves and their families.

This includes supporting farmers with training and provision of agricultural assets, providing skills and vocational training to youth and supporting the Government of Iraq to implement the National School Feeding Programme for young children. There is also a focus on reforming and improving the social protection schemes in Iraq including prioritization of the most vulnerable households, with special attention to the Public Distribution System for food rations (PDS) which covers most of Iraq's population.

British diplomats and UNICEF visit newly displaced families

Dohuk, 23 May 2022 - The British Embassy Iraq and UNICEF visited Shariya IDP camp in Dohuk Governorate, where 155 newly displaced families are hosted due to the recent insecurity escalation in Sinjar district.

The delegation including Mr. David Hunt, British Consulate General in Erbil, met the newly arrived families and visited a UNICEF-supported child protection center where psychosocial support programs are implemented for children of different age groups.



Working in Iraq on cash assistance for families in need

How two WFP staff collaborate to overcome challenges and pioneer solutions

Story by Brooks Fleet, WFP Supply Chain Retail and Markets

Erbil, 26 May 2022 - At the UN World Food Programme, Supply Chain Retail Officers and Programme Officers work extremely closely when delivering cash or voucher operations, but have you ever wondered exactly what each of them does, and how they work together? What better example than in Iraq, where today the transfer modality is nearly 100 percent cash-based transfers.

We spoke to Ahmed, a Supply Chain Associate working on retail and logistics and Abdulla, a Programme and Policy Officer (Cash-based Transfers, CBT) to find out the similarities and differences in what they do, and how both of their roles contribute to a successful CBT programme in-country.

Can you explain the core duties of your role?

Ahmed — “I work on payment reconciliation, market analysis, monitoring retailers, market price assessment, retailers’ training as well as communication with the government regarding the import and export of food products into the country. In my day-to-day work, I organize meetings and discussions with cooperating partners’ retail and logistics focal points, and colleagues to support those who have been displaced. This work includes bringing up operational challenges and finding solutions together.

My duties currently in the Iraq office are to collect and analyze data on the Iraqi food price market to obtain better prices for people assisted. Part of this work is encouraging retailers to stock local products like tomatoes and



chicken. This is on the micro level; our Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) colleagues lead on market and monitoring across governorates and the whole country. It’s especially important given the Ukraine conflict and rising food prices. I follow up and monitor the work of contracted retailers inside the camps and provide guidance and training to retailers to assure families get the best service and value in return. My previous experience in the field of logistics, transportation and storage has given me the skills to assess and evaluate market information to better understand the market situation and to provide trainings to retailers on things like stock management which can help improve their business. Our Supply Chain team does the reconciliation every month and prepares the monthly distribution reports to ensure that the vendors are paid the value amount as captured in the SCOPE system.”

Abdulla — “My duties include designing and planning CBT activities, implementation of CBT projects, and finally, working with colleagues in Supply Chain on the reconciliation and closure. My role also includes coordination with the Financial Service Providers (FSPs) and Cooperating Partners (CPs) to ensure the operation goes smoothly and according to plan.

We are using 100 percent CBT modalities in the country through different delivery mechanisms: Mobile Money Transfers (MMT), Direct Cash, and E-vouchers (EV).”

How do Supply Chain and Programme colleagues work together in CBT?

Ahmed — “We do the camp assessments together to assess local food prices and quality as well as share thoughts with one another and discuss with them the proposed supply chain market solutions for programmatic needs.

With my colleagues in Supply Chain, we are focusing on the market situation and analysing the needs of families and VAM and Programme. We also analyse the distribution situations, monitor the performance of retailers, and provide these retailers with guidance including retailer trainings. We assess which market development activities are feasible in the area.”

Abdulla — “We have complementary duties when it comes to the CBT operation process. For instance, both units work together to ensure the E-voucher retailer prices are set prior to the redemptions and based on the market price range. Supply Chain colleagues conduct market assessments and make sure every month the retail prices are fixed and approved by WFP.

Working in Iraq on cash assistance for families in need *(continued)*

Following that, we as Programme CBT oversee the data processing in the WFP SCOPE data management system, and completion of payments to ensure the cycle starts and people can redeem their vouchers accordingly.

Moreover, at the end of the month when distribution to households is completed, we start with the reconciliation process. The reconciliation phase is basically to ensure that all the amounts distributed and number of people reached are reported and reflected correctly in the WFP system. The process starts with receiving distribution reports from WFP's contracted FSPs or CPs. Once we receive the reports, we share them with Supply Chain colleagues so they can create the Monthly Distribution

Reports (MDRs) and get them signed by both WFP and the relevant FSP or CP. Later, and based on the signed MDRs and invoices, we as Programme process the reports on the Invoice Tracking System in order to submit the reports to Finance to reflect the actual distributed amounts in the system. With that, both Programme and Supply Chain work together to make sure all the distributions are reported properly on WFP's systems and our donors/audits are able to see how the funds are transparently consumed.

My job differs from Supply Chain colleagues in that I am working mostly on managing and implementation of programme CBT activities in the country, while Supply Chain colleagues are involved in the reconciliation phase,

market and price assessments as well as monitoring retailer performance. I on the other hand am mostly involved in the modality/delivery mechanism designs, transfers to people assisted, and coordination with FSPs/CPs and Sub-Offices."

With thanks to all partners who support WFP's supply chain and cash and voucher assistance in Iraq, including Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Union, France, Germany, Government of Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Multilateral Funds, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, UN Agencies, United States, the World Bank, PepsiCo Foundation, and Individual Donors through #ShareTheMeal.

UNDP boosts vital reconciliation and reintegration for perceived ISIL-affiliated families in Iraq with support from Government of Japan

Baghdad, 3 June 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq yesterday hosted the Japanese Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. SUZUKI Kotaro, on a visit to Habbaniyah, Anbar to meet with local government, partners, and beneficiaries of the Community-based Reconciliation and Reintegration in Iraq Project.

The project covers four areas of Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din, working closely with local and national government partners to facilitate community acceptance for the return and reintegration of 4,000 displaced perceived ISIL-affiliated families. The project's integrated phased approach includes mediation and reconciliation processes for community acceptance, and a full-scale socio-economic reintegration support package in communities of return, including shelter rehabilitation and psychosocial and livelihood programming, with emphasis on local government and community ownership.

UNDP's integrated approach to stability and durable solutions in Iraq includes infrastructure and housing rehabilitation, livelihoods support, security sector reform, as well as social cohesion. Ensuring community readiness and reintegration for thousands of Internally Displaced Persons, including persons perceived as affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), is critical to supporting durable solutions for the

displaced in Iraq, toward a stable future for all Iraqis. With support from the Government of Japan, this successful fulsome groundbreaking reintegration project can be replicated and extended to other areas of Iraq.

UNDP Iraq Resident Representative Zena Ali-Ahmad states, "In Iraq, social cohesion has become a priority aspect of stabilization. To ensure durable solutions, we must not only provide access to infrastructure and basic services, but also target the return and reintegration of those remaining IDPs, who are the most vulnerable, in order to ensure that no one is left behind. UNDP is grateful to the Government of Japan for supporting this vital project in Iraq."

According to the Japanese Ambassador

to the Republic of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. SUZUKI Kotaro, "The Community-based Reconciliation and Reintegration Project has a great significance in Iraq toward healing and recovery from the scars of terrorism and destruction. This project emphasizes the role of community in development for the Iraqi people."

The Community-based Reconciliation and Reintegration Project is anchored on the UN Iraq Joint Approach for Community-based Reconciliation and Reintegration of persons perceived to be affiliated with ISIL in Iraq. It is part of UNDP Iraq's five-year Social Cohesion Programme launched in January 2020 to promote stronger, peaceful, and more cohesive communities in all areas of Iraq.



Visit to Al-Hol camp in northeastern Syria



Al-Hol, Syria, 5 June 2022 - Today, a high-level UN delegation, accompanied by the Chief of Iraq’s National Security Service, visited Al-Hol camp in northeastern Syria: a desolate, sprawling complex of tents in the scorching sun, and the forced home of tens of thousands of people for many years now. The delegation witnessed first-hand the dire conditions on the ground. This was just a glimpse of the immense challenges Al-Hol residents endure on a daily basis - despite the best efforts of humanitarian actors. Many people, in particular children, never asked to be part of this desperate situation with no end in sight. However, 50 percent of Al-Hol’s total population (currently about 56,000 individuals) is under the age of 12. They find themselves deprived of their rights, vulnerable and marginalized. The already extremely precarious

humanitarian and security conditions have deteriorated further in past months, making the risks associated with this slow-moving catastrophe ever clearer: a camp like Al-Hol fuels resentment and inspires terrorists, from breakout operations to large-scale attacks. If left unaddressed, the situation will inevitably impact the region and far beyond. The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: “Keeping people in restricted and poor conditions ultimately creates greater protection and security risks than taking them back in a controlled manner. Iraq is demonstrating that responsible repatriations are possible, by finding dignified solutions anchored in the principles of both accountability and reintegration. The best and only durable solution is to control the

situation, managing returns swiftly and decisively, in the spirit of partnership, to prevent the legacy of yesterday’s fight from fueling tomorrow’s conflict.”

The UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, Imran Riza: “Al-Hol is no place for children. The steps taken by the Government of Iraq are extremely important in the path to solutions. Action by other Member States with citizens in the camp is urgently needed.”

So far, and with the latest transfer on 1 June, over 2,500 Iraqis have been repatriated. But as thousands of Iraqis (around 28,000 Iraqi citizens in Al-Hol alone) are still out there, the Iraqi authorities do realize that they cannot stop here. The UN commends Iraq for its courageous efforts, welcomes the hard work of Iraq’s High Committee on Repatriations, and stands ready to continue providing the required post-return humanitarian and protection assistance. We urge all other governments (Al-Hol currently hosts 51 nationalities) to follow suit by repatriating their citizens, residents or associated persons - of course, with the appropriate measures of justice and accountability in line with international law, and community reintegration programmes for those found innocent of any crime.





Baghdad, 14 June 2022 - IOM Iraq welcomes Deputy Director General Ugochi Daniels and MENA Senior Advisor to the Director General, Othman Belbeisi, to Baghdad. Today, they met with National Security Advisor, Mr. Qassim Al-Araji, Secretary General of the Council of Ministers Secretariat, Mr. Hameed Al-Ghazi and others. IOM remains committed to supporting the Government of Iraq to develop and implement robust, comprehensive migration policies.



Baghdad, 15 June 2022 - On Day 2 of their Iraq visit, Deputy Director General Ugochi Daniels and MENA Senior Advisor to the Director General, Othman Belbeisi, joined by IOM Chief of Mission in Iraq, George Gigauri, met with President of the Republic of Iraq, H.E. Barham Salih, to discuss ongoing cooperation on country-wide stabilisation, prevention of violent extremism, facilitated voluntary returns of Iraqi migrants. The IOM delegation also met with Ministers from the Ministry of Migration and Displacement and the Ministry of Planning. Partnerships and cooperation such as these remain essential to supporting Iraqis as they continue to return home after years of displacement.



Baghdad, 16 June 2022 - Today, IOM Iraq highlighted the needs and realities of IDPs in Jeddah camps 1 & 5 during a visit from IOM Deputy Director General Ugochi Daniels, MENA Senior Advisor to the Director General Othman Belbeisi, accompanied by IOM Iraq Chief of Mission Giorgi Gigauri. Through humanitarian, protection, health assistance and more, achieving durable solutions to their displacement is a key priority for IOM.



Kirkuk, 19 June 2022 - IOM Iraq Chief of Mission (CoM), Giorgi Gigauri, paid a visit to informal sites in Kirkuk's Hai Al-Askari neighborhood, where IOM is implementing a multi-sector humanitarian response focused on finding durable solutions for the area's IDPs, who continue to live in poor conditions. CoM also met with the Deputy Governor of Kirkuk, Dr.Imad Daham Al Jubori, to discuss the importance of durable solutions work in sustainably ending displacement in Kirkuk.

IOM remains one of the major actors in the country working to meet remaining humanitarian needs for those displaced

Baghdad, 27 June 2022 - As funding for humanitarian assistance in Iraq continues to decrease, IOM remains one of the major actors in the country working to meet remaining humanitarian needs for those displaced.

This means paying special attention to women and girls, who are at greater risk and often face heightened challenges — for instance, when it comes to accessing safe and dignified livelihoods or securing the civil documentation needed to access fundamental rights and essential services.

IOM Deputy Director General for Operations Ugochi Daniels emphasized the importance of both gender-

mainstreaming and gender-specific projects for an approach that addresses the specific needs and realities of the people we serve.

In cooperation with the Government of

Iraq, civil society and local communities, IOM is well-positioned to help in situations of displacement and return to address the vulnerabilities of Iraq's women and girls.



IOM Iraq distributed e-vouchers to 722 displaced families in Salah al-Din Governorate

Baghdad, 23 June 2022 - Families in protracted displacement continue to reckon with a lack of necessary household items.

This month, IOM Iraq distributed e-vouchers to 722 families who were displaced from Balad to Samarra district, Salah al-Din Governorate. The

vouchers were used for the purchase of non-food items (NFIs); this will support the families to meet their most urgent basic needs, helping to sustain them as they move towards durable solutions to their displacement.

This activity was supported by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.



Stabilization and Development

Iraq topics raised at the Brussels VI Conference

Brussels, Belgium, 27 April 2022 – Today, WFP Iraq Representative, Ally Raza Qureshi, spoke at a side event for the Brussels VI Conference that focuses on innovation, digital solutions to foster youth empowerment, economic inclusion and well-being.

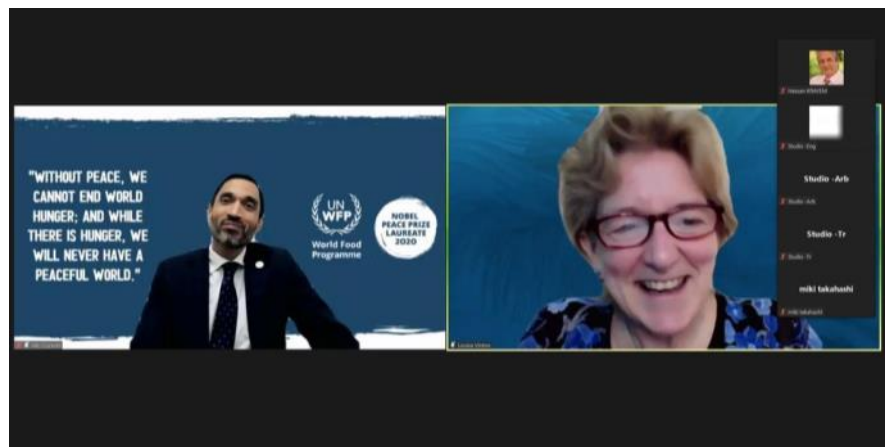
The event was joined by donors, host governments in the region, NGOs, private sector, the UN and WFP's Regional Bureau in Cairo focusing on the important work being done to promote self-reliance for youths facing unemployment in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Qureshi highlighted WFP's EMPACT (Empowerment in Action) project implemented in Iraq since 2017 and prioritising young Syrian refugees, Iraqi displaced people and the host community with digital skills and English classes that enable them to create and find work opportunities online. Since its inception, over 9,300 people graduated, with 2,311 in 2021 alone and tens of thousands more in their families through livelihoods opportunities.

The future is young, let us all come together in solidarity and support the creation of a better tomorrow for our youths.

On the margins of the Brussels VI Conference supporting Syrian Refugees, WFP, UNICEF and UNHCR facilitated a side event on reforming social protection systems to best meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities, enhance coverage and ensure that no one is left behind.

The focus was on sharing experiences from the region, including effective linking of humanitarian responses to national social protection systems. Senior level speakers from Iraq and the region discussed social protection reform and needs, with an audience of national governments, UN agencies and partners.



WFP supported several key government representatives to attend and speak including Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government, H.E. Ms. Zakia Sayed Salih, Director General of the Central Statistics System at the Ministry of Planning, Dr. Qusay Abdul Fatah and Director General of Social Protection at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ms. Thikra Abdul Raheem.

A common theme identified was the need for a 'single registry' of families eligible for assistance: one unified system to support people across all the areas they may require help – food ration card, pensions, unemployment support and other grants for the most vulnerable households.

Muntaha and her husband Hussain have 10 children, four who are young and live with them, daughter Nasrin and her brothers Ayaz, Abdulrahman and Mohammed. Their older siblings are married and thankfully found jobs. But their parents are too unwell to work, and as dad Hussain recounts, "We were living in Damascus, we were working and things were good. But the war broke out, the destruction that

engulfed the place... Because of the fighting, we were afraid because we have children."

Terrified, they fled to Sulaymaniyah, Iraq in 2013, where for nearly 10 years they have lived in a refugee camp.

The recent food price rises – around 11 percent – are threatening the food security of families such as theirs. Now "everything is expensive, and you can imagine a person with no income who has six family members to support... The price of vegetable oil has significantly risen, all items have gone up, sugar, rice and even vegetables are becoming more expensive. What was priced at 500 dinar, now it becomes 1,000 dinar... sometimes these prices of items have doubled. In fact, if the situation continues to be as it is now, it will be difficult." He pauses. "Actually, it is very difficult, especially as I am sick and cannot work." Muntaha and Hussain continue to suffer health setbacks, "I have had several operations, my wife and I are on four to five types of medications that we need... when we need anything, we resort to debt or borrowing... We are managing our needs day by day, as best as we can."

Story by WFP Iraq

Rebuild, recover and reform: how the European Union is supporting development in Iraq



Baghdad, 9 May 2022 - With \$US 166 million pledged since 2016, the EU's commitment to the people of Iraq is as stronger than ever. From supporting stabilization efforts, to bolstering the anti-corruption agenda and strengthening local institutions, the European Union has been there when Iraq needed it most.

Helping Iraqis rebuild their lives after conflict

58-year-old Ahmed, a patient at Mosul's Cardiac Surgery Centre at Al Salam Hospital recovers from heart surgery.

"I just successfully finished a heart valve transplant. This was possible due to the upgraded facilities in the hospital along with a dedicated and professional medical team," says Ahmed. The Centre was damaged in the ISIL conflict and rehabilitated through UNDP Iraq's Funding Facility for Stabilization, with generous support from the EU. Today, the center performs complex heart surgeries through a dedicated team of 12 medical professionals and more than 50 administrative staff, and serves 30,000 Iraqis around Mosul.

Reforming Iraq's anti-corruption agenda

Corruption is a major issue in Iraq, and UNDP is working with Iraqi institutions and the international community to help fight it. In partnership with the EU under UNDP's Anti-Corruption & Arbitration Initiatives (ACAI) project, UNDP brings together representatives from the two main bodies in Iraq that protect the country's integrity – the Federal and KRI Commissions of Integrity (COI) as well as other relevant public institutions – to help them strengthen

Iraq's anti-corruption agenda. Focus areas like the international UNCAC (the only legally binding, universal anti-corruption instrument, which Iraq is signatory to) and how to develop legislation in line with international standards are included within the project.

Creating a secure investment climate for businesses

Establishing mechanisms to settle disputes outside of the courtroom is also crucial to providing a secure investment climate, increase cross-border trade transactions, and create jobs for thousands of Iraqis.

In partnership with the EU under ACAI, UNDP holds consultation workshops with the Legislative Committee, general managers, Federal and KRI Governments' legal advisors, chambers of commerce, civil society organisations, and the private sector, to discussing international instruments aimed at promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution and ensuring compliance with Iraq's obligations under the relevant international

conventions.

Changing behaviours to protect the environment

A bakery employee sorts through newly received paper bags, replacing the previous stock of plastic bags previously used for bread.

Erbil in Iraq's north produces over 20,000 tons of solid waste every day which goes to landfill or is burned in open air. Most of the waste comes from packaged goods, mainly water bottles and plastic bags. Through a partnership with the EU, UNDP distributed one million paper bags to bakeries around the city, promoting the switch from plastic to paper for one of the country's most consumed product: bread. An awareness campaign accompanied the distribution to let the bakers and consumers know about the dangers of plastic both environmentally and to their health.

Protecting heritage and boosting Iraq's tourism Industry.

The newly-installed pathway at Ur, in Iraq's southern governorate of Thiqr.

Ur is an ancient Sumerian archeological site that has been standing for over 4500 years. As one of Iraq's most famous archeological treasures, it was enlisted in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2016. To facilitate the access of visitors and encourage tourists, a wooden pathway, waiting bay and rest areas were installed around the site, thanks to a partnership between the EU and UNDP. A website containing a detailed database of the Sumerian contents of the Nasiriyah museum, and a section to organize visits to Ur was also included as part of the project.

Helping women learn new skills and grow their business

"This is a great workshop. Everyone is so kind to us, and it is a great opportunity for the women here at the camp to learn a new skill like beekeeping that could potentially turn to an actual job," says Lolan, one of 10 participants undertaking training in beekeeping at an IDP camp in Dohuk.

Beekeeping existed in Iraq for thousands of years, but in some areas, it is considered job only for men. To break the stigma, Bojeen Organization, and through a partnership between EU and UNDP taught 50 women across Dohuk the craft of beekeeping and provided them with the right tools to kickstart their own honey businesses.



Rebuild, recover and reform: how the European Union is supporting development in Iraq *(continued)*

Funding Facility For Stabilization (FFS)

In 2015, at the request of the Government of Iraq and with the support of the Global Coalition Against Daesh, UNDP established the Funding Facility for Stabilization to carry out stabilization activities in areas affected by the ISIL conflict. The European Union is the fourth largest donor of the 30-partner, multilateral programme. To date, around 3,100 projects are completed, improving the lives of more than eight million Iraqis. Of which, with the EU's support, 190 rehabilitation projects are completed, benefitting 1.36 million Iraqis.

Support to justice initiatives curbing corruption and promoting commercial dispute resolution Project (ACAI)

Funded by the EU, this project builds on Iraq's national efforts to improve transparency and accountability across state institutions and supports Iraq to deliver to its national and international commitments regarding the fight against corruption, to support the Iraqi institutions in the revision of national anti-corruption laws, promote their alignment with international standards, and provide specialized on-demand training and mentorship opportunities for corruption investigators and integrity judges.

Supporting Recovery and Stability in Iraq Through Local Development

In response to the fragmented process of local development in Iraq, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been supporting Governorates in building capacity for effective planning and implementation of local development strategies through the Supporting Recovery and Stability in Iraq through Local Development programme. Funded by the European Union (EU), the programme targets 9 Governorates: Anbar, Ninewah, Salah al-Din, Erbil, Sulaimaniyah, Duhok, Basra, Missan and Thiqr.

UN Habitat support families to return to their home, completely rebuilt and re-paired

Mosul, 7 May 2022 - The Headway Programme, funded by the European Union, and implemented by UN-Habitat, has rehabilitated destroyed homes of the victims of ISIL conflict in Mosul.

At the beginning of June 2014, ISIL imposed its control over several cities. More than 240,000 houses were damaged or destroyed. Mahmoud's family lost five members during the bombing that directly hit and destroyed their house and car. The horrible incident left Arshad, one of the survivors of the bombing that killed both his parents, who were relatives of the Mahmoud family, mentally unstable to the extent that made him lose the ability to walk on his feet for a long while. Mr. Moayad took the responsibility of adopting Arshad and raising him as one of his sons.

"Thanks to UN-Habitat, after the renovation of our home, we feel alive and happy once again," Mr. Moayad said. "And we are hopeful towards the



future."

Under the Headway Programme, funded by the European Union, and implemented by UN-Habitat, the Mahmoud family returned to their home, completely rebuilt and re-paired.

"We are witnessing the transformation of Al-Yarmouk park from a neglected area to a place full of life" said one of the resident while enjoying the new central "dancing" fountain feature that UN-Habitat has

realized as part of the on-going rehabilitation of one of the most iconic parks in Mosul with funding from the European Union.

The fountain has a diameter of 30 metre and is attracting crowds of people enjoying the evening spectacle of water jets and underwater coloured lights dancing at the sound of music. This new feature is connecting the family picnic and playground areas that will be soon open to the public.

Canada supports WFP's life-saving work in Iraq

Baghdad, 11 May 2022 - In 2021, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) received a total of a CAD 5.5 million contribution from the Government of Canada, including CAD 1 million from a regional project between Canada and WFP. This donation has helped WFP provide food assistance to 255,000 displaced Iraqi families and 72,000 Syrian refugees living in camps as well as emergency livelihood restoration activities

throughout 2021.

WFP focuses on women and youth in all its work, including with Canada's funding, through innovative urban livelihood projects that provided vocational and skills training to those most in need in cities and towns, while also teaching online marketing. In the long term, such activities support participants to provide a living for themselves and their families.

"This multi-year contribution from

Canada has enabled WFP to continue providing monthly food assistance to the most vulnerable families, alongside helping people rebuild their lives," said WFP Iraq Representative Ally-Raza Qureshi. "Such activities are helping change the lives of Iraqis who are returning home and trying to get back on their feet after conflict, through our resilience-building and livelihood-generating projects, which also foster entrepreneurship."

UNDP completes rehabilitation of 60 municipality shops and three schools in western Ninewa



Baghdad/Ninewa, 10 May 2022 – Sixty municipality shops in Tal Abta and three primary schools in Sinjar that were damaged or destroyed during the ISIL conflict were officially inaugurated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ninewa Governorate. Benefitting around 1,900 residents, the four facilities in western Ninewa were rehabilitated through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) with generous funding provided by the Government of Canada.

The three fully rehabilitated schools have the capacity to accommodate around 1,290 students in Sinjar. While the municipality shops will serve approximately 600 patrons per day. The sixty shops also include a vegetable market with the capacity to hold 50 vendors that will help formalize micro businesses in the region and contribute to sustainable livelihoods creation.

Since 2015, Canada has contributed more than US \$38 million to FFS, supporting infrastructure rehabilitation and placing a special focus on promoting livelihood and employment opportunities for Iraq's most vulnerable communities.

"Rehabilitating infrastructure and services, such as schools, municipality shops, water treatment plants, electricity substations and livelihoods productive infrastructure are important to ensure people return home safely and with dignity. Western Ninewa has always been a priority area for FFS and will continue to be as we work tirelessly alongside the international community, the Ninewa Governorate and local community leaders to support the return of the remaining vulnerable displaced populations," says UNDP's Resident Representative in Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"We are extremely grateful to our longstanding partners, the Government of Canada for generously funding these projects. We are proud to support critical sectors like education and livelihoods in Iraq, and we look forward to continuing our work together to build a stable and prosperous Iraq," she added.

"The opening of these shops is a significant achievement for this community and tangibly demonstrates the important work of the UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization in fully supporting the transitions between humanitarian, peace, and development efforts in Iraq. The shops will help set the conditions for families to end their displacement, return home, and contribute to their community's long-term economic and cultural recovery. Canada is proud to support this programme," says Ambassador of Canada to Iraq, Gregory Galligan.

Since 2015, through the Funding Facility for Stabilization, UNDP has completed around 3,100 stabilization projects across the liberated areas of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din. To date, the programme has supported the return of more than 4.8 million displaced people back to their place of origin.

UN-Habitat in Iraq: 25 years of improving people's living conditions

Baghdad, 12 May 2022 - UN-Habitat Iraq celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. The program looks proudly back at the many milestones in its history of improving living conditions in Iraq by accelerating recovery and promoting adequate housing, better access to basic services and sustainable urbanization.

In response of the drastic deterioration of living conditions and widespread impoverishment, particularly among internally displaced people (IDPs), the UN Secretariat called on UN-Habitat in early 1997 to act as the implementing agency for the multi-million Settlements Rehabilitation Programme set up to assist IDPs and other vulnerable groups in Iraq. Between 1997 and 2003, UN-Habitat built over 21,000 houses, 756 schools, 134 health centers, over 700 km of water mains and 200 km of sewers, nearly 3,000 KM of roads and 34 bridges in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. It also oversaw the Housing Sector Observation Programme in Central and Southern Iraq, as well as the implementation of the Neighbourhoods Rehabilitation Project in Baghdad.

After 2003, UN-Habitat was largely



engaged in early recovery efforts, supporting new waves of IDPs through the provision of shelter and reconstruction initiatives. In those years, UN-Habitat has also played an essential role in delivering technical assistance to central and local authorities facing unprecedented urbanization challenges to advise on policy making and strategies, including the National Urban Strategy and National Housing Policy in 2010 (which was reviewed and updated in 2018), upgrading informal settlements and supporting decentralized decision-making.

In 2014, as the country plummeted into

a complex humanitarian crisis triggered by the occupation by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) which caused the forced displacement of over 6 million people and the physical destruction of settlements affected by the fighting, the portfolio of UN-Habitat Iraq expanded to include both humanitarian and development programmes providing IDPs, Syrian refugees and host communities with dignified shelter and an improved living environment.

In the past 3 years, the agency has refocused its attention towards community-based reconstruction, rehabilitation of housing and basic

UN-Habitat in Iraq: 25 years of improving people's living conditions (continued)

services in urban settlements affected by the conflict, participatory design and creation of public open spaces, construction of low-cost housing units to support the return of vulnerable IDPs to their areas of origin, delivery of vocational training, and implementation of informal settlement upgrading projects, while continuing to provide technical assistance to local and national authorities in urban policy-making and city planning, urban heritage conservation, advocacy, data analysis, GIS mapping, climate change adaptation, and the protection of Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) rights of minorities and vulnerable groups.

Since its inception, UN-Habitat in Iraq has applied a people-centered approach and established a strong network of international and national partners. UN-Habitat remains steadfast in its commitment to strengthen further the

long-standing partnership with the Government of Iraq to achieve its goals for improving the lives of citizens. The agency has served as the leading thinktank for sustainable urbanization and human settlements and has played an unique role in supporting the country attain nine of the ambitious indicators of SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Mr. Wael Al-Ashhab, Head of UN-Habitat Iraq, remarked: "The last 25 years have given us plenty of reasons to celebrate. This is an incredible milestone for any UN-Habitat office. If we look back at where we started and what we have achieved, since 1997 we have certainly made remarkable progress. The programme has reached this success through our staff's dedication, commitment, and hard work."

Finally, these accomplishments would not have been possible without the

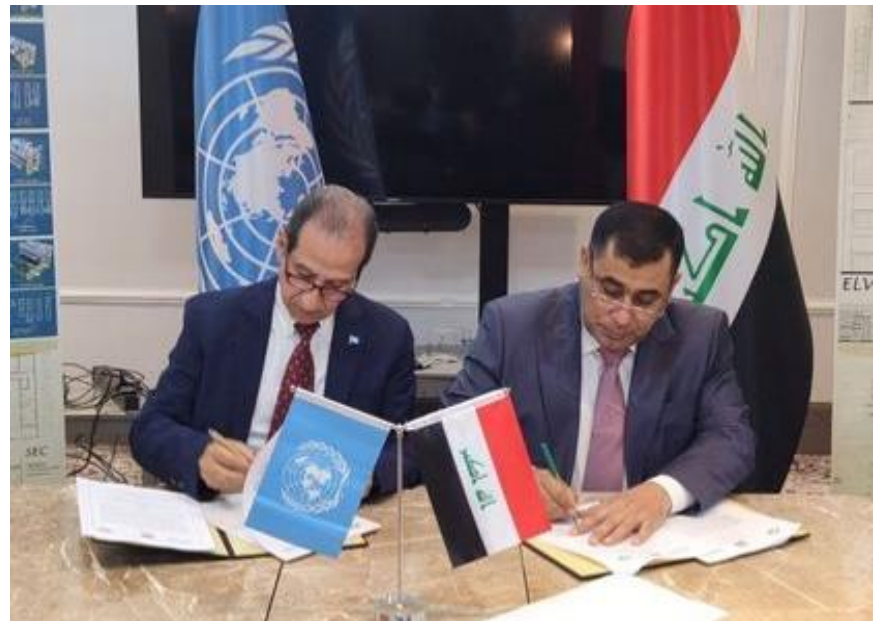
trust and generosity of numerous donors who provided funding, commitment, and support to UN-Habitat's programmes and projects. UN-Habitat has also partnered with UN sister agencies and national counterparts to contribute to the recovery, peace-building and socio-economic stability of the country. These partnerships have strengthened UN-Habitat's efforts and impact throughout its 25-year existence in Iraq.

On this auspicious occasion, UN-Habitat Iraq renews its commitment towards enhancing urban prosperity, scaling-up environmental sustainability, combating climate change and contributing to improved urban policies and legislation, by broadening its collaboration with international and national partners to align and accelerate the application of the New Urban Agenda and contribute to achieving the SDGs in Iraq.

UN-Habitat Iraq signs Memorandum of Understanding with Muthana Governorate under the patronage of the Minister of Construction, Housing, Municipalities and Public Works

Baghdad, 15 May 2022 - Under the patronage of H.E. the Minister of Construction and Housing/Ms. Nazanin Muhammad Wasu, represented by the Head of Housing Department /Mr. Haider Al-Mayali, and attendance of the Regional Representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the Arab States/Dr. Erfan Ali, UN-Habitat Head of Programme/Mr. Wael Al-Ashhab, the Representatives of the Muthana Governorate in the Iraqi Parliament: Mr. Abdulabbas Khadir, Mr. Muhammad Rasoul, as well as representing the Scientific and Academic side of the Governorate/Dr. Hussein Karim/Head of the Advisory Bureaus of Muthana University/Dr. Hussein Youssef/Head of Civil Engineering Department at Muthana University and First Deputy Governor of Muthana in-charge of the Housing Development portfolio in Muthana Mr. Sami Nima Al-Hassani, Director of Muthana Housing Department, Chairman of the Urban Planning Council, Mr. Bashar Fadel, Associate Director, Expert Engineer Abdullah Karim, and Vice-President of the Urban Planning Council, Mr. Safaa Jassim.

The First Deputy of Governor of Muthana, signed with the Head of



United Nations Human Settlements Programme/Iraq (UN-Habitat), a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the Housing Development Strategy road map through developing pilot projects in Muthana Governorate.

The MOU will guide the implementing of the recommendations agreed upon during the Cairo Conference held 30-31 August 2021 organised by UN-Habitat

Regional Office, on the operationalization of the Housing Strategy in Iraq, and the implementation of the proposed road map for urban development and investment in housing sector in Muthana Governorate, that was prepared by Muthana Housing Department, Urban Planning Council with the support of UN-Habitat and Muthana University.

Canada reaffirms its commitment to Iraq's stabilization with new CAD 10 million support

Baghdad, 17 May 2022– The Government of Canada has pledged an additional CAD 10 million (approximately US\$ 7.8 million) to support the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq as it works to accelerate stabilization efforts and boost sustainable livelihoods across western Anbar and Ninewa.

Canada's generous contribution will be channelled through UNDP's flagship programme, the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS), established in 2015 to fast-track stabilization efforts in areas liberated from Daesh. To date, Canada has provided over US\$ 39.6 million, including supporting UNDP's COVID-19 response package to the Government of Iraq.

Focusing on young people and women, the funding will prioritize skills development and training, small grants for new enterprises and start-ups, and the rehabilitation of damaged houses to

enable the safe and dignified return of hardest to return population groups.

With FFS transitioning in 2023, UNDP will also use the contribution to build the capacity of the Government of Iraq, allowing it to leverage existing structures and processes to ensure remaining needs are met quickly and to the highest standards.

"We are extremely grateful to the Government of Canada for this generous contribution which will safeguard the hard-won stabilization gains made since 2015. Our strong and continuous partnership will give women and young people greater financial independence by providing more jobs, more opportunities and practical skills training," says UNDP Resident Representative in Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"The emphasis on building infrastructure and rebuilding homes that prioritize the needs of women and girls is equally important. Thanks to

support from Canada and the international community, UNDP will continue to deliver at high speed, scale and quality," adds Ms Ali Ahmad.

"The Funding Facility for Stabilization continues to deliver projects that are critical to supporting the transitions between humanitarian, peace, and development efforts in Iraq," says the Canadian Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq, Gregory Galligan. "Canada's latest contribution reinforces our commitment to stabilizing areas liberated from Daesh, and ensuring that gender equality is a cornerstone of those efforts."

With the support of 30 partners and the Government of Iraq, the FFS has completed over 3,100 projects in areas liberated from Daesh. This has facilitated the dignified and safe return of over 4.8 million Iraqis to their communities of origin, where they hope to restart their lives.

Iraqi Government officials and UN-Habitat Iraq inaugurate the Bab Sinjar housing complex in Mosul

Mosul, 16 May 2022 - Mr. Ameen Ibrahim Finsh, Mayor of Mosul along with the Senior Government Officials in Iraq convened with Dr. Erfan Ali, UN-Habitat's Regional Representative for Arab States, and Mr. Wael Al Ashhab, Head of UN-Habitat Iraq County Programme for the inauguration ceremony of the Bab Sinjar Housing Complex in Mosul, a project made possible through the munificent support from the Government of Japan.

The destruction of homes has been the major obstacle for displaced citizens trying to settle back in their areas of origin. Ninewa Governorate has the highest number of vulnerable people, with more than 260,000 returnees living in deplorable conditions.

The successful completion of the Bab Sinjar Housing Complex in West Mosul offers a safe and dignified residence for 2,300 returnees who have lost their homes in Mosul. The nine medium-rise residential buildings, comprising of 324 apartments, have been built within the city centre on land offered by Mosul Municipality. With an overall budget of USD 10 million, the project also comprised of the rehabilitation of 578 houses in the nearby Zanjili neighborhood, and vocational training for 153 returnees which included 46 females. The project has successfully



leveraged infrastructure investments from Ninewa governorate and is seen as one of the best practices for durable solutions.

Japan has been a major contributor to UN-Habitat projects in Iraq to assist internally displaced citizens by the ISIL crisis. Since 2014, the Japanese Government has provided approximately USD 56 million in fundings to UN-Habitat Iraq projects, including the construction of the Bab Sinjar Housing Complex.

After the ribbon cutting ceremony, several dignitaries spoke, including Mr. Ameen Ibrahim and Dr. Erfan Ali. In a video message, Mr. Kotaro Suzuki, Ambassador of Japan, lauded the efforts of everyone who contributed to make this project a success. He said: "As its name "HABITAT" shows, the assistance provided by UN-Habitat is

not limited to providing housings and shelters, but also includes basic infrastructure and employment opportunities to ensure to create the entire environment for people to lead humanly lives." Finally, keys were handed over to respective beneficiary families' representatives.

While speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Dr. Erfan Ali expressed his gratitude to the Government of Japan for their generous support and mentioned the great partnership between the Government of Iraq and UN-Habitat from durable solutions perspective.

Mr. Ameen Ibrahim Finsh, Mayor of Mosul, expressed his gratitude to the Government of Japan and UN-Habitat. He also highlighted the great need of the similar projects towards the returnees.

British diplomats and UNDP visit water treatment plant in Basra

Basra, 15 May 2022 - UNDP Iraq representatives joined H.E. Mark Bryson, UK Ambassador to Iraq on a visit to a water treatment plant in Basra to better understand issues affecting water in the area.

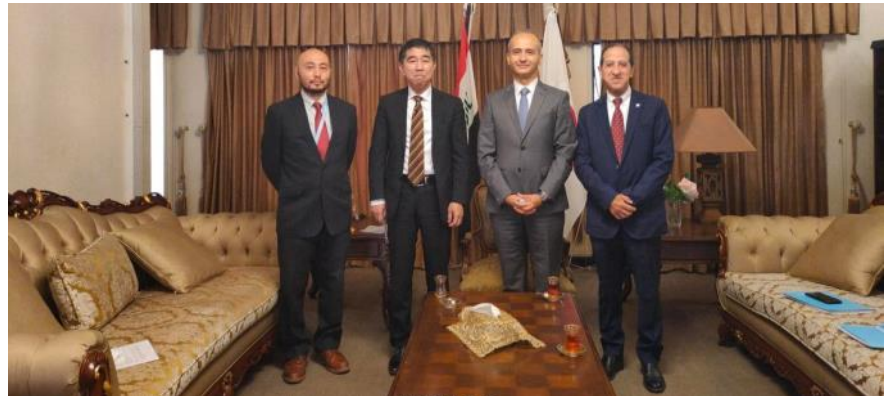
The UK is supporting UNDP's Environment, Energy and Climate Change Programme activities that provide capacity building and technical assistance to support environmental rehabilitation and development efforts that address the root causes, risks and mitigation measures associated with environmental degradation, climate change, and disaster shocks.



UN Habitat representatives meet with Japanese diplomats, discuss ongoing joint projects

Baghdad, 16 May 2022 - UN-Habitat Regional Office for the Arab States/ Regional Representative, Mr. Erfan Ali: "The partnership between Japan and UN-Habitat was always exemplary and impactful in Iraq. Glad to meet H.E. Kotaro Suzuki Ambassador of Japan to Iraq to review the ongoing implementation of the significant urban recovery and reconstruction projects by UN-Habitat Iraq". "Housing is the backbone of the New Urban Agenda. Glad to attend the signature of a new agreement between UN-Habitat Iraq and the governorate of Muthana to start the implementation of a vital social housing programme".

The meeting was part of a four-day mission by the Regional Representative of Arab States, Dr. Erfan Ali, to inaugurate the Bab Sinjar Housing Complex in Mosul which was made possible with a generous funding from



the Government of Japan.

Dr. Erfan Ali discussed the outcomes of the Bab Sinjar Complex which provides 2,300 returnees with safe residence and requested continued support from Japan on aiming to upscale and expand on the project.

Dr. Ali accompanied by Mr. Al Ashhab

also met with Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA) Country Director, Mr. Gen Yoneda. The meeting was set to discuss the future partnership between JICA and UN-Habitat regarding social cohesion and master planning of urban development in the regions of Erbil and Sinjar.

UN-Habitat officials visited the on-going rehabilitation of Baiji Park

Baiji, 17 May 2022 - Dr. Erfan Ali, UN-Habitat Regional Representative for Arab States, and Mr. Wael Al Ashhab, Head of UN-Habitat Iraq Programme, visited the on-going rehabilitation of Baiji Park, a project funded by the European Union in the city of Baiji. The Park was entirely redesigned during participatory sessions with the community to include multi-purpose sports grounds, a cycle route for children, gazebos for families and a large fountain.

The new facilities are being realised by Janat Al Frdaws and Sabe'a Sanabul Organization for Relief & Development (SSORD) who have been also entrusted with several complementary activities,

such as delivering vocational training, organising a sports festival, tree planting and conducting a cleaning campaign in the neighbourhood of Al Asri. Dr. Erfan and Mr. Wael met with staff of the two NGOs and their female horticulture team, and together planted a tree each as a symbolic gesture of good will and prosperity for the new endeavour.

High delegation also checked the on-going construction of a new maternity ward and a drug store at Al Bu'aaji Health Centre.

The construction of these two new buildings has provided the team the occasion to test the use of an innovative thermal and sound insulation plaster

Momentum (99% organic) for exteriors and Sikareflective waterproofing paint for the roof, both of which will contribute to reduce energy consumption and a more comfortable interior.



Iraqi officials visited three IOM Iraq EDF businesses in Bashiqa

Bashiqa, 18 May 2022 - A delegation of Government of Iraq officials from the Ministries of Agriculture; Migration and Displacement; and of Labor and Social Affairs visited three IOM Iraq Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) businesses in Bashiqa, Ninewa Governorate. The visit was an opportunity for government representatives to learn more information about businesses that

received grants through the EDF, and to speak directly with employers. IOM Iraq launched the Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) in 2018 to help provide small and medium enterprises with access to capital to stimulate their recovery and growth and create jobs. This activity was supported by the Government of Germany, via KfW Development Bank.



UNFPA conducted a five-days training on evidence-based reporting

Baghdad, 19 May 2022 - UNFPA with funding from Rural Development Program of Peoples (RDPP), conducted a five-days training on evidence-based reporting.

20 governmental staff from Baghdad, Erbil, Sulaimaniyah and Duhok received new skills in case studies development and analysis. The obtained skills will be used by the trained staff for improving quality of state reports and policies.



IOM Iraq organized a technical workshop focused on livelihoods programming for representatives from the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government

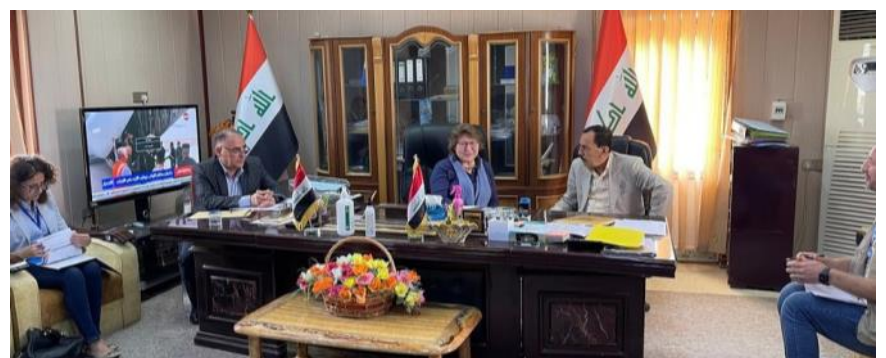
Baghdad, 19 May 2022 - On May 19, IOM Iraq organized a technical workshop focused on livelihoods programming for representatives from the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government. The workshop was an opportunity to delve into the technical processes of IOM Iraq's livelihoods programme, and compare priorities, activities, and available data between IOM, Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government programmes. It was also an opportunity to present highly participatory research - the results of thousands of interviews and

surveys conducted in 12 governorates of Iraq since 2018 - as well as IOM's method of choosing communities to work in and project participants. The workshop was attended by representatives from the Government of Iraq's Ministries of Agriculture, Migration and Displacement and Labor and Social Affairs; and the Kurdistan Regional Government's Ministries of Agriculture and Water Resources, Planning, Trade and Industry, and Labor and Social Affairs. This activity was supported by the Government of Germany, via KfW Development Bank.



DSRSG/RC/HC Vojáčková-Sollorano visited Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 22 May 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano visited today Kirkuk and met with the acting mayor of Daquq, Sheikh Lues Effendi and humanitarian and development actors, including UN and NGOs. They discussed local coordination.



UNDP completed the rehabilitation of the 2,125-meter-long Al Safina irrigation channel

Baghdad, 24 May 2022 - 100 farmers from Shirqat now have access to irrigation facilities!

UNDP completed the rehabilitation of the 2,125-meter-long Al Safina irrigation channel. Over 74 residents from Shirqat were hired under cash-for-work to complete the rehabilitation. This will help boost the agricultural

productivity across the region.

It was implemented by UNDP Iraq's Crisis Response and Resilience Programme with funding from Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ), provided through KfW Development Bank.



WFP rehabilitated 24 water pumping and sewage stations in Anbar

Anbar, 25 May 2022 - Today, Mr. Peter Felten, Chargé d'Affaires of the German Embassy in Iraq visited the Sub-Qutnia water irrigation station at Zangoura District of Ramadi, Anbar, accompanied by Mr. Ally Raza Qureshi, WFP Iraq Representative, the Mayor of Ramadi, officials from the Directorate of Water Resources and farmers.

The farmers in the area are now able to harvest their produce grown with the water from the pumping stations and irrigation systems rebuilt or repaired by WFP and partners.

The visit highlighted the power of building partnerships that build resilience and change the lives of vulnerable communities following years of displacement due to the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) that devastated infrastructure and livelihoods across wide areas of northern and western Iraq.

“Germany and the United Nations who

are very well represented in the country are really looking forward to work in such a coherent way with the government, which is really strategically addressing the essential issues that the country is facing, especially climate change,” said Mr. Felten.

With thanks to the support of partners

such as Germany, WFP rehabilitated 24 water pumping and sewage stations in the area, in addition to clearing more than 150 KM of irrigation canals that restored agriculture to more than 37,500 hectares of fertile land, creating livelihoods and long-lasting economic benefits to the communities, and helping tackle climate change.



Supporting sustainable living in Iraq

Baghdad, 24 May 2022 - Iraq's economy sustained serious damage and material losses during the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) occupation from 2014 to 2017. After the Iraqi army reclaimed control of the occupied areas, owners of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) found themselves with limited resources and a lack of financial support to recover.

In 2018, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iraq established the Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) programme, a financing mechanism to provide SMEs with access to capital and support large-scale economic recovery following the war with ISIL. Grants aim to stimulate growth, increase demand for workers and provide new job opportunities.

Jobs increase incomes, stimulate

spending, revitalize the economy and give people a sense of purpose and dignity.

“I have been working in this field since the seventies,” says 68-year-old beauty industry veteran, Nadia Behnam Mikhail. “I have a great passion for this profession, and I also have the talent.”

“I got moral support from my brother and family to go to Lebanon to study this profession, and then I returned to Iraq to work in it,” she continues.

Indeed, after graduating with a diploma in cosmetology in 1973, Nadia worked in a hair salon until 2004, when she left the country due to increasing instability and violence.

Nadia returned to Baghdad in 2016, where she opened her own business — Nadia Salon — but with only three employees, she was unable to accommodate the number of clients

seeking beauty services.

“When I returned to Iraq, there were battles to liberate cities from ISIL control,” she tells us. “We were receiving few customers.”

Economic recovery following ISIL's defeat was brought to a halt when the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in country. Both businesses and patrons were impacted by curfews and mobility restrictions put in place to curb the spread of the virus. This combined with volatile oil prices and the decreasing value of the Iraqi dinar spelled trouble for business owners like Nadia.

“Things were very bad for us due to economic deterioration, market fluctuations and a lack of customers. Since we deal with [clients] directly, things were quite dangerous with the possibility of infection so high. Many of our customers disappeared, so there

Supporting sustainable living in Iraq *(continued)*



were periods when I could not cover workers' salaries," Nadia recalls.

Enterprise Development Fund financing to SMEs was scaled up between 2019 and 2021, including in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I heard about the EDF grant programme through a friend who works in a humanitarian NGO. She encouraged me to apply and use the grant to develop my [salon]. After receiving the grant, I also created job opportunities," Nadia continues.

"I have plans to expand my project and work on increasing the number of female employees; and I will try to keep pace with developments in modern equipment for the salon business."

Elsewhere in Baghdad, Haider Mirza Kadhum works running his own metal can factory.

"My beginnings were as a young worker in my father's paint company. I loved iron cans, and I used to collect them in [various] shapes and bright colors," he remembers. "When I grew up, I decided to realize my dream and in 2000 opened this factory in partnership with my younger brother, in which we invested our shares of the money we got from the family's inheritance."

The business grew steadily but simply didn't have enough employees to keep up with increasing demand. "We currently have five production lines. Our total number of workers is twenty, but the processing procedure requires six workers in each line."

The factory's clientele continued to grow in number until it reached almost all governorates in Iraq — with many customers representing famous Iraqi shops and companies.

Then, ISIL rose to power. "The period of ISIL's occupation was very difficult — sales were affected by about 25% because many of our customers came from the governorates occupied by ISIL. Many companies and factories were closed in the [now] previously occupied governorates."

Haider describes the next dramatic setback his business faced: "Work stopped completely during the COVID-19 period, which brought us a lot of financial losses, especially during the lockdowns. We were unable to move freely, and the [procurement] of raw materials was very difficult, even during the partial lockdown. The difficulty of workers' access to the factory led to low factory productivity and delayed delivery of materials to companies and customers."

One day, Haider heard about IOM Iraq's EDF programme. "There was a group on WhatsApp in which people working in the field of manufacturing in Iraq meet, and there was a person who spread news about the grant [opportunity] in the group. I said to myself, 'this is an interesting thing'."

Haider applied and was selected to receive a grant, which he found to be an encouraging incentive to further develop the factory. He used some of the capital to buy new machines for making modern designs, which led him to hire twenty new employees — employees he could now afford with the help of the grant.

Since the EDF programme was first launched, grantees have employed a total of almost six thousand people. And over 90% of people hired by EDF grantees were either unemployed or previously in precarious day jobs.

Istabraq Jabbar Mahdi, a 66-year-old father of two from Baghdad, owns a company that manufactures and supplies furniture to schools and universities.

"When I founded my company, we had only two employees, but soon our business prospered, and we had many customers — including public and private schools," says Istabraq, who established his company in 1972 with the support of family and friends. "The work continued until 2014. When ISIL occupied some cities in Iraq, the security situation became very

dangerous, and we had to stop the [work entirely] because of the security restrictions that affected many of our customers."

After sustaining huge financial losses over the course of two years, Istabraq resumed his work.

"In 2016, the security situation improved, and we were able to return to work, but we faced challenges that stopped us from rising to the level of performance we worked at before."

Several years later, government measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 meant the closure of schools and universities for long periods of time.

"When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the business was knocked again significantly, as [the number of] organizations that made up the bulk of my client base — and the levels of demand for equipment and materials that my company had previously supplied — went down," Istabraq explains.

"After hearing about IOM's EDF programme through a call for expressions of interest, I submitted an initial application for business recovery support. Upon meeting the eligibility criteria for the programme, I then submitted a complete application and was successfully selected to receive a grant to support the integration and expansion of my business and allow me to buy more advanced equipment and hire ten more workers."

The Enterprise Development Fund has supported over 1,200 Iraqi SMEs across the country to help create more than 5,700 jobs for men and women, returnees and host community members alike in key economic sectors. Nada, Haider and Istabraq received grants to expand their businesses through the EDF, thanks to generous support from the Government of Germany via KfW Development Bank.

By Rafal Abdulateef, IOM Iraq



UN Iraq served more than 4.2 million Iraqis in 2021

Baghdad, 26 May 2022 – The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Iraq released its annual report for the year 2021, contributing to Iraq achieving its own development goals, to build back better and to leave no one behind.

The report highlights UN serving more than 4.2 million beneficiaries, including displacement affected populations, increasing access to services in priority sectors as well as implementing 629 infrastructure projects rehabilitating thousands of private and public buildings, including schools and medical centers.

As a result, 51% of returnee households are now living in locations with adequate access to services and infrastructure, especially water supply. Moreover, around 152,500 refugees, IDPs, returnees, and other vulnerable groups received multipurpose cash assistance in 2021.

According to the report, over 40,000 youth received technical and vocational trainings while thousands of Iraqi workers benefited from decent job opportunities in the most promising economic sectors. Other interventions include supporting Iraq's human rights through strengthening the investigative capacity of the Fact-Finding Committee to promote accountability for human rights violations and abuses, improving government services to protect women and girls from domestic and gender-based violence, and strengthening public healthcare services.

In addition, the UN Iraq also facilitated 416 partnerships in sustainable development, conflict prevention, and mitigation processes, which reached 2.5 million people from vulnerable groups (women, girls, children, IDPs, refugees) in fragile settings, including nine refugee and 26 IPD camps. Eight Area Based Coordination mechanisms (ABC) have been put in place in complex areas of return to ensure effective coordination and joint planning with local government structures to facilitate returns of IDPs.

More than 5 million m2 of contaminated land were cleared of explosive ordnance in the main cities of Mosul, Fallujah, and Ramadi. Also, over four million people were also reached with campaigns to boost vaccine confidence and raise awareness of the SDGs, their importance for Iraq, and current and future climate change impacts.

"2021 was a challenging year for Iraq, marked by a series of negative socio-economic impacts from Covid-19 that continue to submerge the country with unprecedented challenges. Despite all these challenges, UN Iraq continues to support the Government of Iraq's efforts in reducing poverty and improving the living conditions of vulnerable people, resolving the IDPs situation, strengthening equitable services delivery, fighting climate change, and enhancing Iraq's thrive towards achieving its own ambition towards the Sustainable



Development," said Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq.

UN Iraq Annual Results Report summarizes the results achieved in 2021 by 22 UN entities and presents findings and in-depth analysis that tracks progress in the five strategic priority areas of the revised joint Iraq and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2020–2024 (UNSDCF).

More results and information can be found in the report, accessible on the UN Iraq website at:

https://iraq.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/UNCT%20Annual%20Results%20Report%202021%20final%20-IRAQ_.pdf

Italy reaffirms its commitment to Iraq's stabilization with EUR 2 million contribution

Baghdad, 1 June 2022 – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), is supporting the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with an additional EUR 2 million (approximately US\$ 2.26 million) to assist communities affected by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Italy's contribution to UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS), which implements fast-track initiatives in areas liberated from ISIL, has been formalised on the occasion of the first visit to Iraq of the Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H. E. Marina Sereni. Italy has generously provided more than US\$ 20 million, since FFS was set up in 2015 with the objective of returning internally displaced Iraqis to their homes. Deputy Minister Sereni commended the new contribution as a concrete support of the Italian Government for the



stabilization process in Iraq in order to guarantee better human conditions to its people, by supporting their urgent needs. A safer Iraq is more than ever a priority of the Italian Cooperation in the country.

"Italy's previous support made an invaluable contribution to crucial stabilization projects in the liberated areas and contributed to providing much needed support to more than 6.6 million people," says UNDP Resident Representative Zena Ali Ahmad.

"We are grateful for Italy's continuous support to stabilization in Iraq. This

additional support will position FFS to meet better the expectations and needs of the people of Iraq and contribute to improved conditions that will allow the remaining displaced Iraqis to return to their communities of origin with dignity," adds Ms Ali Ahmad.

With the support of 30 partners and the Government of Iraq, the FFS has completed over 3,100 projects in areas liberated from ISIL. This has facilitated the dignified and safe return of 4.8 million Iraqis, to their communities of origin, where they hope to restart their lives.

ITC launches partnerships with major agri-food companies in Iraq

Baghdad, 8 June 2022 – New partnerships to connect Iraqi agri-food companies with local producers have now been launched in the country with support from the European Union.

The Strengthening the Agriculture and Agri-food Value Chain and Improving Trade Policy (SAAVI) project signed partnership agreements with major enterprises in the agri-business sector including Beirut Erbil for Potato Products (BEPP), Rawnaq aldur and Waffir.

In Iraq farmers often sell their products in the local markets without making due profits. They are unaware of existing options to upgrade their products and access more remunerative markets.

These partnerships will enable the companies to seize these opportunities and develop local alliances to establish durable linkages and trust between producers and large agri-food buyers. Through this collaboration buyers will support farmers to improve their production practices to meet the latest market requirements.

As part of these partnerships, SAAVI organized tailored market awareness workshops for farmers and private sector partners in Mosul, Al Hamdaniya and Basra. These workshops serve as a platform for producers and buyers to connect and discuss current practices and entry-points for collaboration. Negotiations are ongoing for the first batch of products to be delivered to



interested buyers. Local agri-business plans will also be developed with farmers and buyers to support improved competitiveness and long-term quality improvement, that will create profitable business models.

Agriculture is an important sector for Iraq, as it contributes to economic diversification, inclusive job creation and private sector growth, particularly micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Products, such as tomatoes and other vegetables and poultry products exhibit significant potential for development, notably in the domestic market. There is a need to address competitiveness issues, and foster value addition, as well as improve market linkages for unlocking the potential in the sector.

The International Trade Centre (ITC), in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee

Council (NRC), will provide farmers, with an emphasis on youth and women, with technical assistance in less resource-intensive agriculture, enhanced post-harvest practices, quality improvement and food safety standards in alignment with buyers' requirements. Buyers will in turn gain access to commercially viable volumes of quality products, being able to progressively substitute imports, and offer Iraqi consumers with the local healthy agri-food products they have been seeking.

The five-year SAAVI project seeks to enhance competitiveness of agriculture and agri-food value chains and improve trade policy in Iraq. SAAVI is funded by the European Union and implemented by ITC in close collaboration with the Government of Iraq, NRC, and other implementing partners.

IOM Iraq's Information, Counseling and Referral System (ICRS) programme support small businesses

Mosul, 08 June 2022 - Umm Taha is a 44-year-old mother of four from Mosul. She sat down with us to detail her experience working to provide for her family's needs and ensure that her children continue their studies.

"I never quit my job, no matter how simple it was, and [didn't let] my children know [what it was] so that they would not be ashamed of it," she says. She has worked in a variety of simple jobs, all of which negatively impacted her health.

Things were made worse by prevailing societal opinions of her as a working woman — opinions that exacerbated her psychological condition.

"I went out every morning and heard them say: 'Where are you going? What do you do?'" Umm Taha remembers. "I ignored their words and returned from work with tears filling my eyes, trying hard to hide them from my children so as not to negatively affect them. Tears were the only way to relieve the psychological pressure I face every day."



Umm Taha describes her relationships before and after she started her own business: "My relationships were limited, as I was busy providing for the needs of my home and family. After I opened this shop — which I feel is my kingdom and my livelihood — day after day, my circle of relationships has expanded. There is a good demand from my shop. I am very happy with where I have reached."

With the support of kind people, Umm Taha built her shop, but it remained empty until she received a grant through IOM Iraq's Information,

Counseling and Referral System (ICRS) programme. With the grant, she was able to equip her store with the tools needed for it to run smoothly.

"My dream of starting my own business has come true," she smiles, "and this dream will be completed by expanding and upgrading the shop to cover all our needs [so that it] continues to be a source of livelihood for my children."

The peacebuilding, life skills and small business management trainings offered through the ICRS boosted Umm Taha's confidence: "During the training days, I felt great optimism and hope that overwhelmed me; [whereas] after tiring days, I was full of despair and depression. As for the business management training, I learned how to deal with all ages, choose the best method and attract customers. Every note I learned from the trainings, I repeat to my children so that they learn as I learned and practically apply it in their own lives."

This support was made possible thanks to the Government of Canada.

IOM Iraq and the National Bank of Iraq organized a session for business owners on how to apply for a commercial loan, and other banking services

Baghdad, 8 June 2022 - The Iraqi economy faces a long road to recovery from several recent crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted labour markets and private sector functioning throughout 2020, 2021 and continuing into 2022. A recent IOM Iraq study showed that, overall, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) receiving conditional cash grants through IOM's Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) displayed more resilience to negative economic effects of COVID-19 than SMEs that did not receive EDF grants.

On 25 May 2022, IOM Iraq partnered with the National Bank of Iraq to organize a session on how to apply for a commercial loan and other banking

services, attended by 13 EDF business owners from Basra Governorate.

On 8 June 2022, IOM Iraq partnered with the National Bank of Iraq to organize a session attended by 15 EDF business owners from Ninewa Governorate on how to apply for a commercial loan, and other banking services.

The session discussed the application process itself, including required documents and fees, and also explained the benefits of opening accounts and applying for loans.

Under the framework of its private sector development programming, IOM continues to support Iraqi SMEs by promoting enhanced access to financial



services through coordinated referrals. Read more about the impact of conditional cash grants during the COVID-19 pandemic in Iraq at: <https://bit.ly/3HRLR1M>

This event was supported by the Government of Germany, through KfW.

A technical training workshop was held on managing and updating the “Iraq Forum for Sustainable Development” platform

Erbil, 9 June 2022 - Within the framework of joint cooperation between the Ministry of Planning and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), a technical training workshop was held for a period of five days in Erbil (5-9 June 2022) on managing and updating the “Iraq Forum for Sustainable Development” platform, with the participation of specialists from the Ministry of Planning on information technology and media.

The project, which was funded by the Iraq

UNDAF Trust Fund, highlights the achievements made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by providing a web platform that interacts with citizens and government institutions, including public and private universities, civil society organizations and international community institutions.

The Forum can be accessed via the link: <https://iqforum.mop.gov.iq>

The mobile application can also be downloaded through Google play and Apple store.



Sinjar Court House reopens with support from USAID and UNDP

Sinjar/Baghdad, 14 June 2022 – The Sinjar Court House has been reopened with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Court House, which provides important legal services such as administration of justice, was left severely damaged during ISIL occupation. With generous funding from USAID, UNDP rehabilitated this important facility that serves over 25,000 people across Sinjar District. The spacious and purpose-built Court House consists of 25 rooms, a director room, four waiting rooms and one main courtroom.

The project was implemented through UNDP's flagship programme, the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS). Since 2015, USAID has contributed around US \$400 million to FFS, including over \$10 million in Sinjar, making it the FFS programme's leading partner.

To date, USAID has supported around 900 FFS rehabilitation projects, including critical water and electrical

infrastructure, as well as schools, housing, and health facilities.

“The reopening of this facility is an important milestone in the journey to rebuild Sinjar and for the rule of law to prevail in the area. Rehabilitating critical infrastructure and restoring essential services such as the Sinjar Court House is key to creating a safe and dignified environment for families choosing to return to Sinjar. Especially, through USAID's support, UNDP has been able to prioritize support to the Yazidi survivors of genocide as they return and rebuild their lives after years of conflict and trauma,” says UNDP Resident Representative in Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

“Restoring access to the judicial system is a critical component of the recovery process. The reopening of the Sinjar Court House is therefore a beacon of hope for the entire Yazidi community. USAID is proud of our work to rehabilitate this essential infrastructure, offering legal services and law enforcement to the residents of Sinjar,” said USAID Mission Director to Iraq, John Cardenas.



“We are here today because of the generous funding provided by USAID. As one of the founding partners of FFS, USAID has made generous contributions to Sinjar and to stabilization in Iraq,” added Ms. Ahmad.

Since 2015, FFS has worked with the Government of Iraq and local actors to ensure safe, dignified, and voluntary returns and to lay the foundation for the successful reintegration of displaced populations into the community. To date, around 3,100 projects have been completed across the five governorates liberated from ISIL, improving the lives of more than 8 million Iraqis.

He is from Syria and I am from Iraq. But we work together like brothers

Dohuk, 20 June 2022 - Faris Hussein Hiro is a refugee from the city of Qamishli, north-eastern Syria. He fled to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq following years of conflict in his home-country and found employment on a farm in Dohuk cleaning water irrigation channels, to improve the efficiency of transporting water from the source to farm areas.

"We left Syria because of the problems. We feared for our lives," said Hiro, the father-of-four. "My children were afraid of the fighting."

The project that employs Hiro employs women and men from the local community, as well as Syrian refugees and Internally Displaced Persons. The short-term work provides families with much-needed income. It is part of an initiative by the International Labour Organization (ILO), under its employment-intensive investment programmes (EIIP), that contributes to local infrastructure development.

The farm in Dohuk is one of three sites where the ILO, under the PROSPECTS partnership which is supported by the Government of the Netherlands, is implementing EIIP projects, bringing together members of different communities. The other two sites focus on promoting sustainable waste management and afforestation.

Waleed Abdulkhaliq is a local farmer

from Dulopi village in Dohuk, and has been working closely with Hiro on the farm. "I am from this area and I work to support my children and family," said the forty-seven-year-old farmer. "Through this work, we benefit because we receive an income, but our local community also benefits from the irrigation work."

Most of the workers employed on the farm have lived through years of hardship –whether as refugees and Internally Displaced Persons forced to flee their homes or vulnerable host community members who have also been affected by conflict and socio-economic challenges.

Yet, this initiative has helped promote social cohesion among workers-creating a sense of community and solidarity, which the two men are very proud of. "We all work together here as brothers," said Hiro.

"He is from Syria and I am from Iraq. But that makes no difference to us. We



work together like brothers," added Abdulkhaliq. "There are women working here as well and they are like sisters to us."

According to recent UNHCR data, there are currently over 250,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq. In addition, around 1.2 million people remain internally displaced.

PROSPECTS brings together ILO, UNHCR, UNICEF, the World Bank and IFC. The partnership with UNHCR has ensured that refugees and Internally Displaced Persons have improved access to finance. With UNICEF, it has included referring youth to trainings that provide pathways to decent work opportunities. Under the PROSPECTS programme in Iraq, the ILO focuses its work on supporting thousands of forcibly displaced persons and host community members to access livelihoods and decent job opportunities through labour intensive infrastructure projects; skills training; financial inclusion and entrepreneurship and public employment services.

To-date, over 16,000 working days have been created for women and men from displaced and host communities through EIIP. This is equivalent to 341 employment opportunities, more than half of which are for women.

By ILO News.

Norway reaffirms its commitment to stabilization in Iraq with US\$ 7.5 million contribution

Baghdad, 24 June 2022 - The Government of Norway has made a new contribution NOK 70 million (approximately US\$ 7.5 million) to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Iraq's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS), which supports stabilization, durable solutions, and the safe return of internally displaced Iraqis in the five governorates liberated from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

This is Norway's fourteenth contribution to FFS since 2015, bringing its total support to over US\$ 72 million. Norway's previous contributions have supported the implementation of 131 critical projects in the liberated areas, benefitting more than 3 million people

"We are grateful to Norway for this timely additional contribution to the Facility. With the extension of the FFS mandate until 2023, the most critical remaining priority needs are estimated

at approximately US\$ 300 million for 2022-23 required to address the most critical remaining stabilization needs across the five governorates of Anbar, Diyala, Ninewa, Kirkuk and Salah al-Din. We believe that continued support is critical to secure Iraq's still-fragile stability," says UNDP Resident Representative for Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"With the generous support of donors like Norway, and in partnership with the Government of Iraq, UNDP has completed more than 3,100 critical stabilization projects across the liberated areas. Looking ahead, we are focusing on remaining critical needs in priority locations and sectors, working toward durable solutions to safeguard the hard-won stabilization gains made since 2015, and target the most vulnerable IDPs," adds Ms. Ali Ahmad. Norwegian Ambassador to Jordan and Iraq, Ambassador Espen Lindbæk says, "I am very impressed by the work

that the UNDP is doing in Iraq and the very concrete results achieved over the years. The FFS has ensured the possibility for many Iraqis to return to their homes in a safe, sustainable, and dignified manner. Norway is proud of this partnership and happy to support FFS in its last phase. I strongly encourage the Government of Iraq to take over and build on the activities of the FFS to ensure the continuation and sustainability of the gains made, to ensure the safe return of displaced Iraqis."

In addition to rehabilitating key infrastructure and basic services, in 2022, FFS will place greater emphasis on promoting livelihood and employment opportunities through the rehabilitation of supportive infrastructure for productive sectors, such as agriculture and small industries as well as capacity support to local government counterparts.

On “Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day”, the UN calls for support to MSMEs as effective agents of change to help advance in rebuilding and recovery efforts

Baghdad, 27 June 2022 - The United Nations set aside 27 June to annually celebrate the role that micro, small and medium enterprises play in the global economy, poverty reduction and the attainment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

This year, UN agencies in Iraq share a statement to recognize MSMEs at the heart of any resilient recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, and climate crisis. They contribute to the structural transformation of economies through decent jobs creation and income generation, particularly for vulnerable population, hence addressing the root causes of irregular migration.

“Following the economic shocks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and in view of the current food insecurity, MSMEs can be effective agents of change to help advance in rebuilding and recovery efforts” said UN Resident Coordinator in Iraq, Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, adding: “They also have the potential to adopt actions in their business practices to contribute to ‘building back better’, in adapting to and mitigating climate change”. MSMEs and start-ups need assistance to be the driving forces behind relevant innovations and take up new ‘environmentally-friendly’ opportunities, as well as to improve their resilience to future shocks. Empowering MSMEs can thus contribute to a transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all and to building

greater stability and resilience.

In Iraq, MSMEs represent a large share of the private sector. Supporting Iraqi MSMEs is instrumental for economic diversification, women and youth empowerment and ensuring sustainable peacebuilding efforts. Furthermore, supporting MSMEs comprises assisting young people as the upcoming employers and employees, leveraging on Iraq’s demographic dividend. The White Paper for Economic Reform outlines the Government of Iraq’s goals of attracting investment, inclusive development, introducing e-governance systems and fostering local production. By building on this impetus for reform and supporting MSMEs, the United Nations can help improve the overall business environment for MSMEs, increase their capacity to compete and assist the Iraqi government in achieving the goals set out in the Iraq’s White Paper.

The UN in Iraq is working collaboratively to support MSMEs, particularly in high potential sectors for economic diversification and job creation, such as agriculture and agri-food value chains and the culture and creative industries. Improving MSMEs’ competitiveness and value chain upgrading opportunities is extremely needed nowadays in Iraq to boost the local economy and create sustainable livelihood opportunities. Well-defined strategies with mutually reinforcing interventions, fostering productive alliances, building bridges between the public and private sector and

enhancing human and social capital, with a focus on young people, are crucial.

MSMEs need coordinated action and targeted support to untap their potential for sustainable and inclusive growth and decent work creation. We will continue to join our efforts to support MSMEs in Iraq to ensure they have the capacity and resources to leverage a green transition, increase their productivity and competitiveness and foster employment. The time to act is now.

Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq
Eric Buchot, Head of Country Programme, International Trade Centre

Dr. Salah ElHajjHassan, FAO Representative, Iraq

Ally Raza Qureshi, WFP Representative, Iraq

Maha Kattaa, ILO Country Coordinator, Iraq

George Gigauri, IOM Chief of Mission, Iraq

Erik Willems, Regional coordinator, UNCTAD

Zena Ali Ahmad, Resident Representative, UNDP Iraq

Paolo Fontani, Director and Representative to Iraq, UNESCO

Jean-Nicolas Beuze, UNHCR Representative, Iraq

Mads Oyen, OiC Representative, UNICEF

Agriculture

Coordinating agriculture and technical vocational education and training in Iraq

Baghdad, 11 May 2022 - A needs assessment workshop for establishing a National Agriculture Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Committee was held in Baghdad.

This committee would be instrumental in harmonising various activities being undertaken by key partners to reform agriculture-related TVET in Iraq.

Representatives from the Prime Minister's Advisory Commission, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of

Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and, the European Union (EU) Delegation, UNESCO, ILO, FAO, GIZ, private sector, and the BRIDGE project, a Canadian government funded project to support the transition of male and female youth and adult women into new livelihoods, attended the workshop. The European Union Delegation to Iraq presented its new agriculture TVET project. UNESCO presented its current

TVET reforms while the Ministry of Agriculture highlighted their strategy and plans which affect agriculture-related TVET.

Participants discussed current initiatives to reform TVET, the opportunities for greater co-ordination and the advantages of establishing a National Agriculture TVET Committee, which could provide an overarching strategy for agriculture-related TVET for increasing alignment, reducing overlap and highlighting gaps in current activities.

Coordinating agriculture and technical vocational education and training in Iraq *(continued)*



During the workshop, it was agreed that the proposals would be considered by various partners and a decision be made in the coming month.

Ms. Barbara Egger, Head of Cooperation of the EU Delegation said, "this workshop provides an opportunity for partners to come together to better understand each other's current activities with the aim of ensuring greater alignment and impact".

Mr. Faisal from the Ministry of

Agriculture speaking on the occasion said, "The workshop highlighted the range of current activities to support the agriculture sector. Through these combined efforts to reform the TVET system, the agriculture sector can increase its productivity and its contribution to the economy."

Mr. Eric Buchot from ITC believed that "TVET is vitally important as a driver of job creation and productivity". He added that it was crucial to "ensure

that young people emerge from TVET institutions and higher education with the practical skills and knowledge that will enable them to take up jobs in the sector, and to ensure that the current workforce has access to courses that enable them to innovate and develop their businesses".

The workshop was organised by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and forms part of a five-year project "Strengthening the agriculture and agri-food value chain and improving trade policy in Iraq" (SAAVI). This 22.5 Million EUR project, funded by the European Union, aims to contribute to inclusive growth and job creation for Iraq citizens, particularly for youth. It seeks to enhance the competitiveness of Iraq's agribusiness value chain, while improving the country's trade policy. It is hoped that eventually projects to improve the competitiveness of the private sector may revitalize Iraq's bid to join the World Trade Organization.

From farm to fork: Europe Day in Iraq highlights country's vital agri-food sector



Baghdad, 11 May 2022 – The Delegation of the European Union to Iraq marked Europe Day in Baghdad today. An event that brought together partners, highlighted the country's vital agri-food sector and efforts that support its sustainable development.

The one-day event was attended by representatives of the various partner ministries and local authorities, UN agencies, international partners, the private sector, unions, and key stakeholders of the agricultural sector.

The EU Ambassador to Iraq Mr. Ville Varjola, stated that "This week, we are celebrating Europe Day. It commemorates the 'Schuman Declaration' of 9 May 1950, which paved the way for Franco-German reconciliation and laid the foundations of what is now known as the European

Union. Today, the EU continues to work in order to achieve peace also outside its borders". Mr Varjola added that "History has proven that the development of a robust agricultural sector is one of the most powerful tools to end poverty, boost prosperity, and ensure food security. For this reason, the EU is investing in the development of the entire agri-food value chain in Iraq to promote the needed diversification of its economy. This has proven to be all the more important given the rise in food prices globally, triggered by Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war on Ukraine".

A key feature of the event was an exhibition hall, under the theme "from farm to fork" that displayed an array of different activities and stories from the field. This included booths and stalls

run by women from rural areas, as well as partner agri-food companies exhibiting and selling their products. It also included an exhibition on the livestock-dairy value chain. The event was an opportunity for participants to voice their experiences of working in the sector, whether in terms of forging commercial alliances with buyers or accessing opportunities to develop their entrepreneurship skills and small businesses.

"Thanks for all operating agencies in Iraq and the European Union for providing cooperation to implement programmes that support the agriculture sector," said Dr. Hadi Hashim, representative of the Ministry of Agriculture during the event.

A technical panel discussion with experts from the sector offered an insight into some of the challenges, opportunities and practices in addressing agri-food development through a value chain approach. The panel discussion served to raise awareness on this new approach, supported by the EU and with buy-in from the Iraqi government, identify a common understanding on how to further support value chain stakeholders to improve competitiveness and unleash the potential in the sector, as well as to present on-going activities carried out

From farm to fork: Europe Day in Iraq highlights country's vital agri-food sector *(continued)*

through the Agri-food Business Development Programme - AfBDP.

"This is an excellent example of how to support the agriculture sector and how to create synergies among different stakeholders," said Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, FAO representative in Iraq, on behalf of Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Solloran, UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq,

Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

The European Union in Iraq funds international partners - the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the

International Trade Centre (ITC), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)- under the umbrella of AfBDP.

Central to the AfBDP is an agri-food value chain approach that supports stabilisation and governance, while promoting sustainable and decent job creation.

The second steering committee meeting for the Enterprise Development Fund for Agriculture (EDF-A), held in Baghdad



Baghdad, 22 May 2022 - The agricultural sector in Iraq served as a safety net to many during the height of the ISIL crisis. Yet it has come under increasing strain as slow-onset environmental change, environmental degradation, and governance

challenges have forced many rural families to abandon agricultural livelihoods in search of seasonal opportunities.

The Government of Iraq, the European Union and IOM have partnered to support economic development and sustainable job creation in Iraq, in particular through targeted efforts in the agricultural sector. On May 22, IOM Iraq organized the second steering committee meeting for the Enterprise Development Fund for Agriculture (EDF-A), in Baghdad.

Following the meeting, IOM will reinforce interest in increased stakeholder participation, linkages between programming, and more. Participants planned a way forward in

terms of specific and measurable objectives for coordination with Government of Iraq and KRG partners, and revisited assumptions about value chain development in Iraq.

Since the previous steering committee meeting, the EDF-A project has identified promising agricultural value chains and entry points for investment, including suggested costs per job, areas of high priority, and revised thresholds for conditional cash grants to agricultural value chain actors, in close consultation with other EU-funded partners as well as Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government stakeholders.

This activity was supported by the European Union.

The rehabilitation of North Al-Jazeera irrigation scheme is restoring the vital water supply in Rabea, Ninewa

Rabea, 30 May 2022 - The rehabilitated North Al-Jazeera irrigation project was officially inaugurated yesterday by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Ministries of Water Resources, of Agriculture and of Planning, Ninewa Governorate, farmers union and community leaders with generous funding by the European Union.

The North Al-Jazeera irrigation project was launched in the early 1990s. It was severely damaged during the ISIL occupation. After the liberation, farmers found themselves unable to continue the agricultural practices since the irrigation project stopped pumping irrigation water. Adding to this, the repercussions of climate change added to the farmers' suffering.

Through this project, FAO rehabilitated the water pumping station at Tel Al-Hawa, 11 bridges, 17 power transmission towers, 21 water control gates, cleaning of irrigation canals from



silt and debris engaging 1,250 households through the Cash-for-Work activity and providing spare parts to 150 linear-move irrigation systems. More than 200,000 people from Rabea and the surrounding areas will be benefiting from resuming agricultural activity.

"We thank FAO for this achievement which will revive the agricultural lands, provide jobs and encourage the return of displaced persons to Ninewa", says the Administrative Undersecretary in the Ministry of Water Resources, Mr. Raed Abed Zaid Al-Jashami.

"Rehabilitating this irrigation water project will improve the ability of

vulnerable agricultural families to resist shocks by increasing their income and resilience, rebuilding agricultural infrastructure and improving rural livelihoods, especially for smallholder farmers, and enhancing their capabilities to achieve food security and better lives," says FAO Representative in Iraq, Dr. Salah ElHajj Hassan.

"The re-operating of this vital agriculture project for farmers in a period where the country is going through a severe decline of water resources will have a significant positive impact on agricultural production, improving farmers' incomes and lives. This achievement would not be possible without the support from one of FAO Iraq's major partners, the European Union," he adds.

The rehabilitation of the North Al-Jazeera irrigation scheme is funded through a significant contribution by the European Union through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syria Crisis, 'Madad Fund'.

FAO and the European Union: a real partnership with dairy producers and empowering rural women

Nineveh, 13 June 2022 - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture-Ninewa Agriculture Directorate, and through the European Union (EU) funded project "support to agricultural livelihoods of rural and peri-urban returnees and communities in Nineveh Governorate, Iraq", held a four-day intensive training on improving manufacture and marketing of traditional dairy products. 75 dairy producers participated including 50 women from Zummar district, Telkaif district, and the city of Mosul.

This training provided an opportunity for the participants to learn about good practices for handling and processing dairy products with practical samples to make these products. During this training, the health aspects to process traditional dairy products were emphasized with the introduction of new techniques on how to process different types of cheese that the Iraqi consumer wants and which have been imported from neighboring countries and they can be manufactured locally. This aims to obtain healthy and safe dairy products and to promote simple ideas to produce distinctive products that can be competitive in the market. The women dairy producers also received training on the use of pasteurizer, how to follow the good milk hygiene standards and to ensure the hygiene of the device under the supervision of FAO Iraq's International Livestock Value Chain Expert, Dr. Chedly Kayouli.

Dr. Kayouli stressed during the training on the importance of examining milk before use to obtain the

highest quality products. The female extension officers carried out the laboratory examination in the presence of all participants to consolidate the examination process through practical practice.

"FAO is striving to establish a real partnership with the dairy producers and to empower them, which is a priority for the organization. This will help them to support their families' income. It is necessary to activate the role of women milk producers in particular. These trainings seek to improve the capacity of the sector and to contribute to the national development in preserving local products and improving their quality", says FAO Representative in Iraq, Dr. Salah ElHajj Hassan.

On the training's practical side, focusing on cheese making, FAO Iraq's expert Dr. Kayouli, highlights that: "a participatory and interactive approach was followed to reflect the spirit of teamwork and self-development, which contributed to the development of new types of cheese for the first time in Iraq and Nineveh in particular."

The women participants liked the new

produced varieties of cheese and their wonderful taste, and they emphasized that they are learning this to supply the local market. "At the beginning, we used the traditional methods. Nowadays, with thanks to FAO's practical training, we have been able to use modern techniques, starting with the process of examining the milk and learning to use the equipment. In addition, we learned modern methods of processing cheese and new types that are popular in the local market," says dairy producer Houda Khalid Jamil from Al-Hamdania, who participated in the training held in Zummar district.

"We look forward to the continued support of FAO and the European Union to improve the manufacture of these products and the development of the household industry to meet the growing market needs," Houda adds.

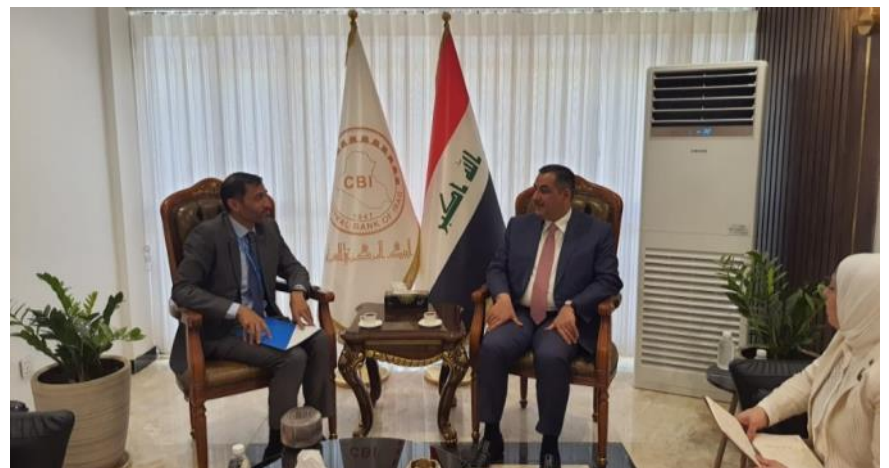
This EU funded project's contributions formed advanced and successful models of partnership with dairy producers and enabled thousands of families in Nineveh, especially returnees, to improve their income, to develop their businesses and to create new job opportunities.

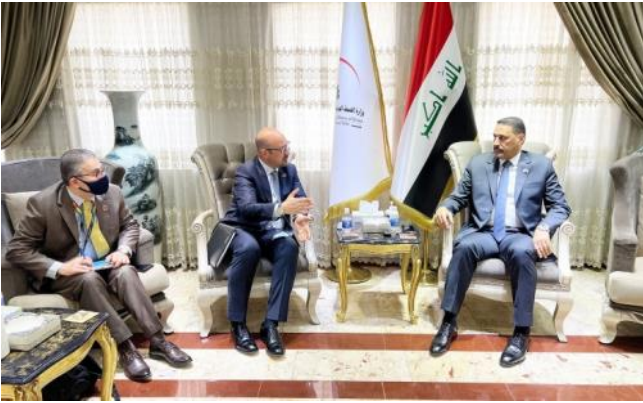


WFP Iraq Representative met with the Governor of Central Bank

Baghdad, 23 June 2022 - WFP Iraq Representative Ally Raza Qureshi met with his Excellency, the Governor of Central Bank of Iraq, Mr. Mustafa Ghalib Mukheef and discussed the pivotal role of the Central Bank as the pillar of Iraq's economic stability and driver for development through challenging times.

The two dignitaries discussed the possibility of utilizing CBI's social and development initiatives towards further supporting small holder farmers and the agricultural sector in line with WFP's activities in that regard with emphasis on clean energy and climate smart farming solutions.





Baghdad, 9 May 2022 - WHO Representative in Iraq, Dr Ahmed Zouiten: "Pleased to discuss with H.E Dr Hani Al-Aqabi of the Iraq Ministry of Health the multi-sectoral coordination to tackle the ongoing Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) outbreak in Iraq. We agreed to scale up preparedness and response efforts to control the outbreak in the affected governorates."



Basra, 15 May 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq, visited Basra governorate along with Dr Riyad Al-Hilfi from Iraqi Ministry of Health, and witnessed the preparedness and response efforts deployed by the Health Directorate to control the Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) outbreak in southern governorates.

He was very pleased with the outcomes of the clinical management of cases as two confirmed CCHF cases in Basra governorate left the hospital today after recovering from the infection.

Since the start of the epidemic, six cases were suspected in Basra with no associated deaths.

Great event of FAO and partners on Hemorrhagic Fever



Baghdad, 16 May 2022 - Last week, to keep pace with the events of the spread of hemorrhagic fever in Iraq, in coordination with the College of Veterinary Medicine, the University of Baghdad, the Ministry of Health and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO, contributed to the organization of the workshop entitled Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever from one health perspective.

The workshop was held under the patronage of the President of the University of Baghdad, Prof. Dr. Munir Hamid Al-Saadi, and under the supervision of the Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, Prof. Hamid Ali Kazem, and in the presence of the Technical Deputy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Mithaq Abdul-Hussein, Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Iraq Dr. Salah Al-Hajj Hassan, Head of the Veterinarians Syndicate Dr. Samira Latif, and Dr. Karim bin Jabara represented the FAO

through the Zoom platform and Dr. Amer Musa Yassin in his presence.

The workshop aimed at building and implementing effective collaborative One Health strategies, simultaneously addressing the health of people, animals and the environment. Ensuring a One Health approach is essential for progress to anticipate, prevent, detect and control diseases that spread between animals and humans, ensure food safety, prevent environment-related human and animal health threats, as well as combatting many other challenges.

In line with this approach, FAO international expert, Dr. Karim Ben Jebara, delivered a lecture on the measures to control and prevent the occurrence of Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever, including its occurrences and the Geographical Distribution in Animals and Humans in Iraq; the virus Transmission to Humans; the virus transmission in Ticks and Animals, the Pathogenicity of the disease in Humans and Animals and the Disease Prevention and

Control.

To conclude, Dr. Amir Moosa Yassin, FAO expert presented the following recommendations of the workshop:

- 1- Establishment of a high scientific board affiliated to the council of Ministers acting on all scientific activities in the country.
- 2- Activation of stopped abattoirs and establishing new ones where needed. And preventing animal slaughtering outside the abattoirs.
- 3- Specifying a special budget to provide insecticides for regular spraying and dipping campaigns to control ticks.
- 4- Preventing animal movement from and to the infected areas.
- 5- Public awareness campaigns especially for livestock breeders and butchers.
- 6- Addressing a plan to control vectors and rodents.



FAO and Veterinarians Syndicate intensify efforts to combat Hemorrhagic Fever in Iraq



Baghdad, 18 May 2022 - To intensify efforts in limiting the increasing spread of haemorrhagic fever in Iraq, in collaboration with the Syndicate of Veterinarians, the College of Veterinary Medicine / University of Baghdad, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Medical Association, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) took the initiative to organize a workshop entitled (Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever Workshop).

The workshop was held under the patronage of the Technical Deputy of MoA Minister, Dr. Methaq Abdul-Hussein and the representative of FAO / Iraq, Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan with the participation of a number of parliament

members, the head of the agricultural committee in the parliament, the financial advisor to the President of the Republic, a member of the advisory body of the Council of Ministers, the Captain of the medical association along with a large number of veterinarians working in the public and private sectors, in addition to an audience of livestock breeders and farmers from Baghdad who participated in the workshop.

The workshop included presentations of specialized scientific lectures about the disease by a number of specialists. The expert of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations presented the methods of disease transmission and modern methods of controlling it, in addition to clarifying the role of FAO in Iraq in the support provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, including the Veterinary Directorate, through the implementation of the project, (Improving Delivery of Animal Health Services and Disease Surveillance in Iraq), donated by US Defence Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). The project activity included, in addition to training courses for veterinary staff (currently ongoing), providing equipment, devices

and materials for field and laboratory diagnosis of diseases, which cover an important group of epidemic and transmissible diseases, including the Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever, with providing of personal protection equipment currently used by Vets in the field to control the disease.

In conclusion, the workshop recommendations were presented, which included:

1. Support the veterinary staff currently working with new ones and to fill the current shortage in operating veterinary clinics, by accelerating of the implementation of the amendment of the Veterinary Medical Progression Law for the year 2021.
2. Forming a crisis cell from all ministries, Baghdad Municipality and municipalities to control the disease.
3. Conducting awareness campaigns for breeders, butchers and relevant authorities.
4. Rehabilitation of the currently operating slaughterhouses and the creation of new ones.
5. Reactivating the Supreme Committee for Epidemiological Disease Control in the Council of Ministers.

Improving delivery of animal health services and disease surveillance in Iraq

Baghdad, 22 May 2022 – The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), hosted the Risk Assessment Workshop, as part of the United States Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) funded project, Improving Delivery of Animal Health Services and Disease Surveillance in Iraq. The workshop aimed at strengthening the capacity of the veterinary services to identify hazards, manage, communicate and monitor risks.

Twenty six specialists from the veterinary services in Baghdad, Erbil, Duhok, Nineveh, Anbar, Wasit, Muthanna and Basra participated to the training. The opening session was attended by the FAO Representative in Iraq, the Technical Undersecretary of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture as well as the Representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Iraq. The FAO Representative, Dr. Salah Al-Hajj Hassan stressed the organization's commitment to adopting modern concepts and values in the "One Health" approach to confront health threats to animals, humans, plants and the environment. "By developing knowledge and foresight on emerging

threats to health and their consequences, as well as on resilience to disease and health improvement, the adoption of this holistic approach will help achieving sustainable agricultural production and global health" and will enable coordinated efforts from Government, FAO- and WHO to overcome the serious challenge, he said. The Technical Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Dr. Mithaq Abdul-Hussein, in his speech focused on the concept of one health, the recent spread of the Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever in Iraq and the way to deal with it, as well as climatic changes and their impact on the emergence of animal diseases.

WHO Representative, Dr. Ahmed Zouiten, underlined the importance and the role of the veterinarian services in Iraq in addressing CCHF and all other transmissible zoonotic diseases; he added the valuable contribution of FAO work to strengthen and update information among specialists and supervisors of animal health services in Iraq and underlined the importance of intensifying coordination and joint action to control such diseases, as well as flagging the need for closer coordination in the efforts for



controlling human and animal diseases.

During the workshop, Dr. Ghazi Yahya, representative of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) in the Middle East, discussed the "WTO SPS Agreement", with emphasis on the OIE Roles, in ensuring the safe trade of animals and animals "products" while Dr. Yamen Hegazy, FAO Regional expert, provided an introduction to Risk Analysis. Dr. Shaheen Bayoumi, FAO-EUFMD expert in cooperation with Dr. Rehab Elbassal, FAO Regional expert led the session on "Animal Health Hazards Identification for the Trade of Animals and Animal Products".

The four days' workshop is timely needed and will enable veterinary services to scale up capacities and train Iraqi vets in the field.

WHO leads multisectoral efforts to fight Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) in Iraq



Baghdad, 23 May 2022 – The World Health Organization (WHO), in cooperation with the Ministry of Health in Iraq, is scaling up preparedness and response activities to control the Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever outbreak in Iraq.

As of 22 May 2022, Iraq reported 97 laboratory-confirmed cases and 18 deaths, with Thi Qar governorate reporting more than 50% of the cases. Currently, all Iraqi governorates have reported cases.

Further coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health is under way to make a difference in controlling the outbreak.

“WHO is working closely with partners to enhance surveillance and outbreak response interventions in all affected areas. We are hoping to educate the population and those working closely with animals and livestock to raise their awareness of the disease, reduce their exposure to the virus and prevent further transmission,” said Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq.

“The different meetings and field missions we have conducted so far allowed us to interact with different spectrums of society and identify the gaps to be

bridged, especially in view of the approaching Eid Al-Adha festival, where communities come into close contact with animals, including potentially risky animals.”

Emergency response activities

WHO is working closely with the Ministry of Health to build up and deploy joint rapid response teams from the health and agriculture sectors to implement a practical strategy for the treatment of animals. WHO also aims to strengthen the diagnostic capacity of hospitals, train health workers to strengthen their capacity for adequate case management, and enhance epidemiological investigation and surveillance to detect and respond to cases as early as possible, as this increases the chances of survival. In addition, WHO and the Ministry of Health have scaled up risk communication and community engagement activities to raise the awareness of the general public and target vulnerable groups and communities.

Awareness-raising session in Dhi Qar governorate focused on the best household practices to control the transmission of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever at the household level

WHO and the Ministry have conducted a mission to Dhi Qar governorate to assess preparedness and response efforts to the outbreak. The mission conducted different meetings and sessions with health officials and workers, community leaders and women in the governorate to discuss health needs and gaps in responding to Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever and

boost coordination to ensure greater engagement at all levels. Other governorates will also benefit from WHO and Ministry support.

To strengthen the capacity of laboratories in other governorates, WHO has started the process of procurement of essential laboratory supplies to ensure continuity of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever testing.

Community engagement

WHO, in coordination with the Ministry, has so far conducted 3 health education sessions targeting 200 community members, including religious/tribal leaders, women, health workers and butchers, to equip them with the correct information on Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever and mobilize them to spread the acquired knowledge among their communities.

Fifty women were engaged during the session, focusing on the best household practices to control the transmission of disease at the household level, while 50 community leaders and butchers were updated on health-related concerns regarding livestock trading and freshly slaughtered livestock. Twenty health workers were also sensitized to the incidence of the disease, the number of ticks in the environment, and the influence of climatic factors and geographical conditions.

In addition, WHO and the Ministry of Health paid a field visit to Al-Fhood township in Thi-Qar to discuss with community leaders the priority interventions to lower transmission and prevent further spread of the disease.

FAO Iraq strengthening veterinary services capacities on responding to animal health emergencies

Baghdad, 20 June 2022 – The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq, in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is hosting a four-day Training for Trainers (ToT), as part of the United States Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) funded project, Improving Delivery of Animal Health Services and Disease Surveillance in Iraq.

This ToT in Skills Emergency Management using the Good Emergency Practice (GEMP), aims at standardizing and improving countries' capacities to respond efficiently, rapidly and adequately to animal health disease emergencies and to assess the level of preparedness and command structures, risk analysis, also to review their contingency plans, funding mechanisms, information system, just

to name a few.

Over 30 representatives from national veterinary services and public health, who completed successfully the online training using GEMP tool, have participated in person. This training will set out clearly the elements required for veterinary services to achieve preparedness planning for any animal health disease emergencies. It will also support them to be better prepared and share the learnt knowledge with their peers.

FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan states, “We are committed to incorporate ‘One Health’ approach in our work to confront health threats posed by the persistence of Transboundary Animal Diseases and their consequences to a country's economy and livelihoods. This training aims to provide the Iraqi veterinary

services with the needed knowledge and tools to achieve preparedness planning for animal disease emergency.”

“We will continue working in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture towards limiting the risk of spread of high-threat animal diseases in the country and into neighboring countries thanks to DTRA's generous contribution,” he adds.



A new partnership boosts workers' voices and labour rights in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq



Dohuk, 28 April 2022 - Saleh Ibrahim Ahmad was recently elected to represent his fellow workers at an afforestation project at the University of Dohuk, where they are planting olive trees on more than 35,000 square meters of land which has been bare for many years.

In his 24 years of employment in various jobs, he has never taken on such a role before. But the agricultural worker says he is fully aware of what is needed to ensure that workers are supported and their voices are heard.

"This is a new experience for me and I like it," said Saleh. "I help workers understand their rights and I help raise their awareness on issues such as those related to safety. I also listen to their challenges and try to help them solve any problems they may have at work, for example if there is a dispute between two workers."

The site where Saleh works employs around thirty workers under one of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s employment-intensive investment programmes (EIIP). It is one of three sites where the ILO, under the PROSPECTS partnership which is supported by the

Government of the Netherlands, is implementing EIIP projects. The other two sites focus on improving water irrigation systems on farms and promoting sustainable waste management at the Kwashes Sorting Plant, also in Dohuk.

EIIP supports local infrastructure development by using local labour and resources to create much needed employment and income. A key component of EIIP is to build the capacity of local institutions and partners to promote Decent Work principles.

There are now worker representatives at all three sites - a new practice recently introduced under the programme in collaboration with the Kurdistan United Workers Unions to improve working conditions and address the needs of workers. The ILO has embarked on the new partnership with the union and provided training to selected members to enable them to promote decent work among workers.

Ghareeba Ahmad Mohammed, is a member of the Kurdistan United Workers Unions who has years of experience working with the union in Dohuk. She recently participated in training sessions with the ILO in Iraq and is now involved in all three sites.

"We have held awareness raising sessions for workers on various issues such as those related to their labour rights, Occupational Safety and Health and a complaint mechanism where they can raise their concerns," explained Ghareeba. "We also held a session on the election process and then held the elections. Saleh

was one of the workers who was elected. If there are any problems, Saleh calls us. We have a special hotline for the union where any complaints by workers can be raised."

In addition to the hotline, Ghareeba explains, a committee, established with ILO's support, comprised of the worker representatives, union members and representatives of the local directorates, meets once a month to discuss any issues and complaints. This includes a range of topics such as the importance of organizing workers' unions, work complaint and disputes procedures, and Occupational Safety and Health. They also produce regular reports detailing their activities, the working conditions on sites and any follow up that may be needed.

It is hoped that these initial pilot activities will be replicated on other sites, including in Ninewa, Erbil and Basra to strengthen the role of trade unions in Iraq and provide an important model to monitor Decent Work principles in the sector.

"It has been a great experience raising the awareness of workers on their labour rights and finding solutions to their problems," said Ghareeba. "There are some workers who do not know that there is a specialised entity like the union, which can defend their rights."

"I hope to be able to offer workers, especially women who are involved in these projects, more support. This experience benefits both the union and the workers."

By ILO news.

Tailored ILO trainings in Iraq build capacities of inspectors in various fields

Erbil, 23 May 2022 - The International Labour Organization (ILO) and its training arm, the International Training Centre (ITCILO), held workshops in Erbil for labour and social security inspectors and other relevant stakeholders aimed at strengthening their capacities in various aspects related to inspection.

The workshops targeted government officials working closely with the ILO under two different projects: Social Protection Programme for Iraq: Leveraging Effective Response and Accelerating Reform and Enhancing labour governance, inspection and working conditions in response to COVID-19, both of which are supported by the European Union.

In a series of tailored sessions, the trainings targeted heads of social security departments, social security

inspectors and labour inspectors from across Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Under the social protection programme, the ILO is supporting a newly established department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for social security inspectors. In doing so, the ILO undertook a training for heads of social security departments to enhance their understanding of how to build an effective labour inspection system and strengthen the institutional capacity of the social security departments. This included practical guidance using various ILO tools and examples of international good practices. The training focused on the roles and responsibilities of inspectors, as well as challenges and gaps social security inspectors face within the newly established department at the

Ministry.

"The topics which were discussed represent the need to strengthen the inspection system in our Ministry," said Ahmed Al-Turki, head of the social security inspection department in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Iraq. "We will continue to participate in the programme of ITCILO in the coming year, in efforts to strengthen the inspection system and build the capacities of inspectors."

"It has been a pleasure and honour to be part of the efforts aimed at strengthening social security inspection in Iraq," said Olena Vazhynska, programme officer for social protection and labour inspection at ITCILO. "The training course conducted in Erbil not only contributed to reinforcing the knowledge of the Heads of Social Security Departments of the

Tailored ILO trainings in Iraq build capacities of inspectors in various fields *(continued)*

international framework for the realization of the right to social security but also responded to specific needs voiced by the participants in terms of examples of practical tools, experience sharing and best practices of the ILO strategic compliance model's application."

The training was followed by a capacity building workshop for social security inspectors in charge of monitoring compliance within labour and social security regulations. The workshop introduced participants to concepts and principles surrounding effective social security systems, current approaches of labour inspectorates in relation to social security matters, as well as compliance with legal obligations under national legislation and International Labour Standards.

"This workshop was beneficial in shedding light on modern inspection systems and labour standards related to inspection," said Moustafa Mohammed Ali, social security inspector from Baghdad.

Within the framework of the labour governance programme, the ILO held a Training of Trainers workshop for labour inspectors on its "Building Modern and Effective Labour Inspection Systems" training package. The package includes 17 modules covering a wide range of topics related to labour inspection; from principles and policies to practical tools and methods for visits.

The training equips national labour inspectorates with comprehensive training material that can be used as a



tool in developing their own training curricula, adapted to specific contexts, strategies, priorities and needs.

This includes tools and knowledge that would allow them to apply key principles in the preparation, implementation, and follow-up of inspection visits; introduce ILO guidelines for inspection; design and evaluate training activities using learning and participatory approaches; and plan and deliver training sessions on the "Building Modern and Effective Labour Inspection Systems" modules.

"We have gained new knowledge through this workshop in relation to reporting, work-related injury and other skills related to inspection," said Hasanain Abdul Wahed, a labour inspector at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and participant of the training.

"This training provides technical content that is based on the training of the ILO material for labour inspectors and on teaching skills, so the idea is that they will be able to deliver

training on technical content related to inspection to inspectors, including newly recruited ones," said Felix Martin Daza, an official of ITCILO. "In addition to the course, our centre has created a platform in which this selected group of trainers can access adequate training material that can be used in the training of other inspectors."

A key aspect of the training included an on-site study visit to a steels company, where participants were able to put their theoretical knowledge into practice. Labour inspectors observed the work site and provided feedback in relation to Occupational Safety and Health, working conditions, and other aspects related to the topics covered in the training.

The ILO has been building the capacities of these inspectors through a series of trainings aimed at strengthening their role in the promotion and enforcement of labour regulations and procedures in Iraq.

By ILO News.

Social security and protection and their implications on the country's labour force discussed in Baghdad

Baghdad, 28 May 2022 – The ILO, together with 'Al Malooma' – Information Centre for Research and Development, organized a one-day national symposium in Baghdad to discuss key policies and practices related to social security and protection and their implications on the country's labour force.

The event, entitled "Iraq 2050: Economically Productive and Socially Protected" brought together scholars, academic and experts; representatives from the government and members of parliament; employers' and workers' organizations; key policymakers and practitioners; as well as UN and development agencies.



Draft retirement and social security law in Iraq discussed



Baghdad, 31 May 2022 - Constructive meeting between the ILO and Members of the Parliamentarian Committee on Labour on the draft retirement and social security law in Iraq. The draft law will bring in several changes that would make the Iraqi social security legislation closer to meeting the minimum requirements of International Labour Standards.

ILO is committed to supporting the government and partners in their efforts to upgrade institutional capacity

Baghdad, 20 June 2022- A consultative meeting was held today between the International Labor Organization and the Department of Pension and Social Security of Workers in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to draw out a vision of how it could be possible to advance the improvement of institutional construction and raising its permissiveness in line with the guidelines.

International Labor Organization is committed to supporting the government and partners in their efforts to upgrade institutional capacity that allows for more efficient delivery of services (Social Security, Social Protection, Employment) within the Ministry and readiness to respond to plans expansion in the scope and coverage of the Warranty Social for inclusion of unorganized sector workers.



New Public Pension Management System in KRI

Erbil, 22 June 2022 -: Thanks to a partnership between the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNDP Iraq and the KRI, public pension affairs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will be more efficiently managed.

Processing time for pension applications will be reduced, retired employee records will be easier to

access, and pensioners will receive their entitlements in a swift and efficient manner. A training session was recently held for staff that will be administering the system, so they can hit the ground running when the system is launched later this year. The project was generously funded by USAID Iraq.



The implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme discussed

Baghdad, 22 June 2022 - ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq, Ms. Maha Kattaa, met with the Acting Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), Judge Salar Abdul Sattar Mohammed, and other officials of the Ministry to discuss progress made in the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme, which was developed with Iraq's government and its worker and employer representatives, to promote decent work. The discussions focused on efforts to support entrepreneurship and business development, social protection reform and inclusion in line with international standards and the development of a National Employment Policy aimed at facilitating job creation and improving working conditions.



Encouraging peace, social cohesion, and community trust-building with local authorities in Iraq

Duhok, 28 April 2022 - Following the liberation of ISIL held territories in Iraq, infrastructure has been re-built and relationships re-established, however distrust and uncertainty between many groups remain due to the lingering effects of prolonged conflict.

To address this social fragmentation, UNDP Iraq, in partnership with Public Aid Organization, and in cooperation with Alliance of Iraqi Minorities and Fight for Humanity, is empowering and engaging local authorities and community mechanisms to promote social cohesion in twelve locations in Ninewa and Kirkuk with support from the Netherlands.

The main objective of the project is to support local authorities, security personnel, police, and community police with resources for conflict resolution and increasing community trust and unity, enabling them to facilitate and encourage engagement with members of their communities. The year-long project includes development of a peacebuilding curriculum, capacity building programmes for relevant local authorities and community mechanisms, hosting of communal dialogue and mediation sessions, and facilitation of up to ten Local Peace Agreements.

From 21 to 23 April in Duhok, twenty-five local officials from Tal Afar District, Ninewa attended the first training session implemented to empower participants with information on causes and analysis of conflict, conflict management techniques, and dialogue and mediation skills.

“When I started my position, I opened the door for any citizen that wants to discuss any issue and speak to me privately, at home or on the phone. We address sensitivities and sectarian speech through use of open dialogue. In Tal Afar we have agreed that all people are welcome to return to the area, with four exceptions; these are people who still believe in Daesh and encourage the dissemination of ISIL ideology, murderers; perpetrators of sexual violence, and those who have abused women and taken their freedom. We have encouraged displaced families to return from Turkey and assisted families of those affiliated with ISIL to retrieve their homes. During the occupation of ISIL, there was a line drawn between our communities. Now, this line has disappeared.” - Mayor of Tal Afar, Qassim Mohammed Sharif.

“Tal Afar needs to focus on education and the balance of powers to build community trust and social cohesion. We know there is tension and conflict between communities, but we do not know the real background of the issues. We can do a deep dive into the subjects through communal discussions. The most important thing is for people to get back their land and the money that they lost.” - Director of Tal Afar Municipalities, Novem Saber Hussein.

“Our social fabric was fragmented during the era of ISIL. Agriculture is the spine in the economy of Tal Afar and good water supply will keep people employed. Because of the shortage of water now, many are without jobs. Promotion of small businesses in Tal Afar such as cattle raising is key to

boost the local economy in the district. In the last 5-6 years, ISIL destroyed all small projects. Before ISIL occupied the area, I owned over 5,000 acres of land and fed almost 400 families. But it was all burned, and we had to start from scratch again. Recovery is happening but it is slow.” - Director of Agriculture in Tal Afar and Tribal Leader, Saado Ibrahim Saado.

“As community police, we are different from other security forces. When people visit us in our office, they don't see weapons. Initially, society was against women visiting police stations. Now, after three years of work, we have 45 women in the community police group. We work to address community problems; for example, during the early days of liberation, looting and theft was common due to lack of public lighting. On behalf of the community, I visited the electricity directorate and informed of the security issues. They improved their power supply, and this stopped the theft. One of the skills we are learning is how to work in synch with communities.” - Mohammed Ali Abdullah, Captain, Community Police, Tal Afar.

In 2020, UNDP Iraq launched a dedicated five-year Social Cohesion Programme to promote stronger, peaceful, and more cohesive communities in all areas of Iraq.



IOM is supporting the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Interior (MoI) to set up Community Policing offices

Baghdad, 10 May 2022 - What does civil society have to do with Community Policing? A lot!

Community Policing involves law enforcement working together with civil society to improve security and safety in communities, thereby reducing the likelihood of future displacement and the risks to vulnerable populations.

That's why IOM is supporting the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Interior (MoI) to set up Community Policing Offices (CPOs) with separate but linked Referral Guidance Centres (RGCs) run by local civil society organizations (CSOs).

The RGCs help bridge the gaps

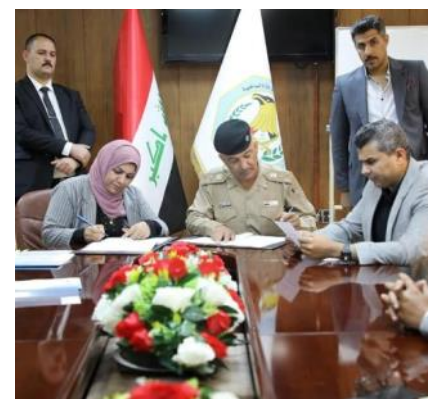
between police and community members and act as a safe space and referral mechanism.

Within the Community Policing system, RGCs maintain close communication and coordination with Community Police officers to refer community members to the appropriate service providers to meet their needs.

The MoI recently signed contracts with local civil society organizations (CSOs) who will run RGCs in six different locations across Iraq (Basra, Haditha, Hawija, Kirkuk, Najaf, Shirqat) with more to follow.

These CPO-RGCs have been established with the support of the governments of Germany, the

Netherlands, United States of America, Japan, Canada, Australia and the European Union.



IOM Iraq conducted a training for law enforcement training officers and border guards to build their capacity in Community Policing



Basra, 12 May 2022 - In Iraq, years of conflict and crisis have left behind a distrust between communities and law enforcement agencies, especially in the country's border regions.

IOM supports the Government of Iraq to implement initiatives on Community Policing (CP), an approach that

promotes a collaborative relationship between communities and law enforcement in addressing security concerns.

As part of this support, IOM Iraq conducted a five-day training from 8-12 May for law enforcement training officers and border guards from Basra

and Missan to build their capacity in CP.

The training included presentations, practical exercises, group discussions and other activities to help participants better understand the CP approach; the stakeholders involved in Community Policing Forums; the development of community safety plans and initiatives; gender-based violence, conflict-related sexual violence and human trafficking; and integrated border management.

As a result of this training, the participants are now better able to engage with new and existing Community Policing Forums in Basra and Missan, including addressing cross-border issues.

This training was made possible with the support of the Government of Germany.

The first Community Policing Office in Missan is opened!

Missan, 15 May 2022 - The first Community Policing Office in Missan is opened!

Community Policing Offices (CPOs), with separate but linked Referral Guidance Centres (RGCs) run by civil society organizations, help facilitate the community's access to law enforcement and justice and provide crucial assistance to at-risk individuals.

The Governor of Missan attended the opening event along with the Director of the Women's Empowerment Department and other officials from across the governorate. At the national level, the Head of Community Policing (CP) under Iraq's Ministry of Interior was present, as were representatives of IOM.

The establishment of this new CPO and related RGC further strengthens the Ministry of Interior's implementation of CP across the country with IOM's



support. This approach recognizes that human rights, rule of law and security are crucial to development. Policing must be tailored to local communities' needs and grounded in a rebuilding of trust between law enforcement and community members.

Since 2014, IOM has provided

comprehensive technical support to the Government of Iraq in the form of capacity building, equipment delivery and infrastructure development to expand the CP model.

The establishment of the CPO and RGC in Missan was supported by the Government of Germany.

Perception of police, security and governance in Iraq

Baghdad, 28 May 2022 - Through community policing forums, disputes over housing, land, and property that could escalate to violence are referred to and resolved by IIMA housing, land and property assistance centers.

A 2019 survey showed 99% of members of community policing forums said Housing, Land and Property Assistance Centers contributed to the defuse of conflict.

The International Migration

Organization has been working with the Ministry of Interior in the Iraqi government since 2012 to implement community and police engagement throughout Iraq.

This approach acknowledges that human rights, rule of law and security are key to development. Rebuilding trust between law enforcement and community members starts by providing them with a safe, neutral space to work together in addressing

safety and security issues.

Community Engagement and Police Action Program has been supported by the governments of Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and the EU.

Read more (EN): https://iraq.iom.int/resources/perception-police-security-and-governance-iraq?fbclid=IwAR1CToMOpPSn06-BraMo_haJPADj0jCWtHHZuhTJur1hs_iR69AGcPviXnsI

Iraq high-level meeting to present assessment findings and foster national ownership to address threats posed by terrorist and FTF prisoners



Baghdad, 8 June 2022 - The Government of Iraq and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) held a meeting to discuss prison reform in Iraq. UNODC, as an implementer of a capacity building initiative funded by the U.S. Government, presented to key stakeholders from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the High Judicial Council, and the National Security Advisory, on the 6th of June 2022, a review of its recent assessment of Iraqi correctional facilities. UNODC presented the findings as part of the “Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters in Detention” programme, which enhances the capacity of countries to develop tools to address radicalization and terrorist recruitment in prisons. The presentation focused on understanding imprisonment issues from a system’s perspective, and by looking at organizational functions,

inmate well-being, infrastructure, and security. The report’s findings are based on comprehensive coverage of three major adult male reformatories and one female reformatory facility under the jurisdiction of the Iraqi Ministry of Justice.

During the session, H.E Minister of Justice, Mr. Salar Abdulsatar stated the study was an important assessment that had been prepared with the support of UNODC experts and affirmed that the Ministry was already implementing many of the recommended reforms – and looked forward to working more deeply with UNODC and other international development partners to continue to make progress in these areas, in cooperation with key agencies.

In support of the Minister’s comments, Mr. Ali Elbereir, Senior Programme Coordinator and Head of UNODC Office in Iraq stated that this study came as part of the objectives of the Prison Reform Programme to enhance the capacities of the Government Ministries and departments to detect, analyze and manage threats posed by foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and prevent violent extremism in prisons. This is through providing technical assistance to the sector of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice including law enforcement, corrections, and justice sector departments.

U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission,

Mr. Gregory LoGerfo noted that the U.S. Government wholly recognized that defeating Da’esh and preventing its resurgence in Iraq does not end with conviction in the courts but rely upon prison facilities capable of implementing best practices in sentencing management and the rehabilitation of extremist prisoners. He commended the Ministry and Government of Iraq for reforms undertaken to date and for their commitment to strengthening security protocols and implementing enhanced protections for human rights within Iraqi prisons. He emphasized that this commitment is emblematic of the type of leadership the United States hopes to see from all members of The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, particularly as they undertake to manage Da’esh affiliated prisoners in a post-conviction setting.

The meeting concluded with a detailed discussion, in which feedback was obtained from the participants to be considered in the endorsed report. Through this partnership, UNODC aims to strengthen Iraq’s institutional capacity to manage and mitigate the threats of terrorists and FTF prisoners. International corrections best practices will be utilized, including classification and case management, contraband control, access control between cells and prison buildings, and development of intake processes.

KRI’s anti-corruption agenda strengthened under new agreement with Commission of Integrity



Erbil, 19 June 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq’s (KRI) Commission of Integrity (CoI) have today renewed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen KRI’s legislative and strategic anti-corruption frameworks and to enhance, the investigative capacity of it in line with international

principles and standards.

The three-year MoU provides a framework of cooperation between the two partners under a number of areas, including identifying legislative gaps in anti-corruption and subsequently developing legislation in line with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, enhancing the KRI’s anti-corruption strategic framework, and

strengthening the role of KRI’s CoI Investigations Department.

“We, at the Commission of Integrity of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, have multiple challenges in our day-to-day activities. Hence, having substantial contributors and supporters, who are ready to lend a hand to us – is a real value. Continuing cooperation with our long-time partner UNDP is a strengthen KRI CoI’s legislative and strategic anti-corruption frameworks and improving our capacities in line with worldwide approaches.” – stated Dr Ahmed Anwar, the Chairman of KRI Commission of Integrity.

“The renewed Memorandum of Understanding is a sign of continued commitment of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq’s Commission of Integrity to deliver on Iraq’s own regional and international commitments and

KRI's anti-corruption agenda strengthened under new agreement with Commission of Integrity *(continued)*

respond to the clear expectations of Iraqi citizens. I welcome this step and look forward to a continued partnership under the EU-funded project, to the benefit of Iraq and its people" – stressed Ms. Barbara Egger, Head of Cooperation Section at the EU Delegation to Iraq.

"A robust anti-corruption agenda and investigative arm of the Commission of

Integrity will mean increased transparency and accountability, and a more efficient administration of justice in line with international standards. We are delighted to renew this commitment with KRI's Commission of Integrity which will be instrumental in restoring public confidence in the institutions that serve them," says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq,

Zena Ali Ahmad.

The objectives of this MoU falls within the framework of the currently ongoing EU-funded Anti-Corruption and Arbitration in Iraq (ACAI) Project, implemented by UNDP.

More information on the ACAI project can be found at <https://www.undp.org/iraq/publications/fostering-justice-curb-corruption-iraq>

Kurdistan Region of Iraq launched its Anti-Corruption Strategy last December and now is rolling it out

Erbil, 22 June 2022 - Anti-Corruption strategies intensify the fight against corruption and try to build a society with no chance for it. Kurdistan Region of Iraq launched its AC Strategy last December and now is rolling it out.

UNDP Iraq, jointly with the European Union, continues to support KRI CoI and held three workshops in Erbil for over 70 delegates from KRI political parties, Governorates and General Consulates. The Consulates' staff

became aware of the strategy objectives and pledged to mobilise international support for the AC Strategy while political parties learned their obligations arising from the Strategy and UNCAC, and their political supervisory role on the Strategy. Individual Governorates got acquainted with how to enforce and measure the indicators of the strategy for an eased supervision.



Workshop aimed at fostering understanding and community readiness to facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqis repatriating from Al Hol Camp held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 23 June 2022 - Today, UNDP in Iraq and IOM, in partnership with the Office of the National Security Advisory, and with participation from the Ministry of Migration and Displaced (MOMD), and other relevant government agencies, have brought together over 45 local authorities and community and tribal leaders from Ninewa in a workshop aimed at fostering understanding and community readiness to facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqis repatriating from Al Hol Camp.



IOM has been working together with the Ministry of Interior since 2012 to implement Community Engagement and Policing across Iraq

Baghdad, 26 June 2022 - Law enforcement is working together with civil society through Referral Guidance Centres (RGCs) to reduce the likelihood of future displacement and risks to vulnerable populations.

RGCs are run by civil society organizations and located beside Community Policing Offices. They provide a safe space where community

members can be referred to the appropriate service providers to meet their needs.

IOM has been working together with the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Interior since 2012 to implement Community Engagement and Policing across Iraq.

This approach recognizes that human rights, rule of law and security are

pivotal to development. It starts with rebuilding trust between law enforcement and community members by providing them with a safe, neutral space to work together in addressing safety and security issues.

The Community Engagement and Policing programme has been supported by the governments of Germany, the Kingdom of the

IOM has been working together with the Ministry of Interior since 2012 to implement Community Engagement and Policing across Iraq (continued)

Netherlands, the United States of America, Canada, Japan, Australia and the European Union.

Safety and security issues are being successfully resolved through Community Engagement and Policing.

A 2019 survey showed that 86% of issues raised in Community Policing Forums (CPF) were resolved to the satisfaction of CPF members.

A total of 46% of these issues were resolved by the CPF directly, while others were referred to government or civil society organizations as part of the important bridging role that CPFs play in connecting communities, government and civil society.

Through Community Engagement and Policing, vulnerable and marginalized groups play a key role in identifying and addressing safety and security issues.

A 2019 survey highlighted that 31% of issues raised during Community Policing Forums (CPF) were brought forward by women. Additionally, more than 500 women and youth have been trained in the Community Engagement and Policing approach.

Community Policing Offices (CPOs) provide dedicated safe spaces with trained officers to respond to the concerns of community members.

A 2019 survey of community members

in five areas where CPOs were established showed 92 per cent of people were satisfied by the services provided by the CPOs.

Through Community Policing Forums (CPF), disputes over housing, land and property (HLP) that can escalate into violence are being referred to, and resolved by, IOM-managed HLP Assistance Centres.

A 2019 survey showed that 99 per cent of CPF members said that HLP Assistance Centres had contributed to defusing conflict.

IOM has been working together with the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Interior since 2012 to implement

Community Engagement and Policing across Iraq.

This approach recognizes that human rights, rule of law and security are pivotal to development. It starts with rebuilding trust between law enforcement and community members by providing them with a safe, neutral space to work together in addressing safety and security issues.

The Community Engagement and Policing programme has been supported by the governments of Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the United States of America, Canada, Japan, Australia and the European Union.



Mine Action

The presence of explosive ordnance scattered throughout the Sinjar district poses a significant obstacle to all rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts

Sinjar, 3 May 2022 - Among the problems afflicting the Yazidi community of Sinjar post-liberation, nothing is more dangerous than the enduring presence of explosive ordnance. Improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war are everywhere; their presence continues to threaten the lives of Yazidis, and impedes the safe return of internally displaced persons to their homes.

Nearly eight years after the defeat of Da'esh, the legacy continues to live on - on school walls filled with photos of missing family members and in the remnants of houses once standing.

The presence of explosive ordnance scattered throughout the Sinjar district poses a significant obstacle to all

rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. No stabilization and/or humanitarian tasks can be done if critical infrastructure such as hospitals, power plants, schools, bridges, and roads are littered with improvised explosive devices so advanced, they are barely visible to the untrained, naked eye. Before anything can be safely rehabilitated, before any building can be reconstructed, it must first be cleared from explosive ordnance.

With contributions from donors like Canada, UNMAS has been able to continue its work in Sinjar and across the liberated areas by hiring and training Iraqis from the local communities. This will allow for a

sustainable and localized humanitarian mine action response in Iraq.

UNMAS would like to thank the Government of Canada for its role in facilitating mine action activities in Iraq.



UNMAS in Iraq has contributed to the clearance of numerous essential service facilities across the country

Kirkuk, 13 May 2022 - Successive conflicts in Iraq have resulted in layers of explosive ordnance contamination, legacy landmines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in particular, that continue to impact reconstruction, agricultural, and economic development in country.

Since inception, UNMAS in Iraq has contributed to the clearance of numerous essential service facilities across the country, including power and water plants, as well as enabling access to agricultural areas and water resources.

The clearance of the Kirkuk-Hawija electrical power line is one example. During the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the power line was attacked, which caused significant power outages in #Hawija. As a consequence, the city had to rely on local generators, using gas and oil to serve a population of nearly 100,000.

UNMAS cleared the power line from the explosive ordnance over a distance

of approximately 17.5 km. After clearance, the power line was rehabilitated and the town of Hawija was able to restore reliable electricity supply, as well as reducing the use of fuel-powered generators, thus creating less pollution from the use of generators.

The Government of Sweden, through

the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), provides essential financial support to UNMAS Iraq as part of a multi-donor effort to contribute to the protection of civilians impacted by explosive ordnance and enabling humanitarian action, socio-economic development and welfare.



The Government of Canada supports UNMAS nationalization efforts via partnership grant model in Iraq



Baghdad, 22 May 2022 – The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) welcomes a new contribution of \$CA 5 million (approximately \$US 4 million) from the Government of Canada to further develop national capacity in Iraq. The Canadian contribution will support the partnership grant model, the core foundation behind UNMAS 2020 nationalization strategy.

The presence of explosive ordnance, including improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in areas retaken from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), commonly referred to as Da'esh, continues to endanger the lives of women, men, boys, and girls and hinder the return of displaced communities.

“Families shouldn’t have to return to their homes and rebuild their communities while living in fear of explosive ordnance, especially IEDs meant to target and maim children. Canada is proud to support the work of UNMAS and its partners in rising to this challenge, particularly in building the capacity of Iraqis, in a gender-sensitive manner, to address both their immediate and long-term needs in this area,” explained Mr. Gregory Galligan, the Canadian Ambassador to Iraq.

In 2020, UNMAS adapted its strategy to ensure optimum and sustainable support to the Government of Iraq, particularly through the focus of its assistance to sustainable national

capacity inclusive of national authorities and national operators. As part of this strategy, UNMAS rolled out a partnership model bringing together international mine action organizations with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), paving the way for national ownership and localization of the mine action response in Iraq.

Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, UNMAS Chief Mine Action Programme in Iraq, described the significance of this support: “Canada is an essential contributor to the UNMAS Iraq programme, and is especially supportive of our efforts to nationalize the mine action sector in country. The continuation of the partnership model will allow us to train and share crucial knowledge, skills and tools necessary for humanitarian clearance. This will not only enhance existing national capacity, but will also support a consistent and sustained mine action response in Iraq.”

UNMAS consistently advocates for gender mainstreaming and equal opportunity across all its activities and with all its partners. UNMAS encourages the hiring and training of capable women and men and provides critical livelihood opportunities to vulnerable communities.

Finland continuously supports the mine action sector in Iraq

Baghdad, 28 May 2022 - UNMAS Iraq Chief Mine Action Programme, Pehr Lodhammar, recently met with Finnish Ambassador to Iraq, H.E. Mr. Matti Lassilla, at the embassy in Baghdad. Lodhammar briefed on UNMAS Iraq's latest activities supported by the Government of Finland and other donors.

Finland supported UNMAS Iraq throughout the period from 2017 to 2019. Finland has donated more than EUR 1.5 million to support the provision of explosive ordnance risk education to vulnerable populations including internally displaced persons and returnees who fled their homes in

Anbar, Ninewa, Kirkuk, Diyala and Salah-Al Din during the ISIL occupation.

Ambassador Lassilla also visited UNMAS Iraq clearance operation site at Shatt Al-arab areas in Basra governorate where UNMAS Iraq teams are clearing landmines and other types of explosive ordnance since 2021. Shatt Al-Arab was a major battlefield during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) and as a result, the area is heavily contaminated with unexploded ordnance. Once cleared, the area will be used for agricultural activities and construction houses for local residents.

UNMAS would like to thank the

Government of Finland for its continuous support of the mine action sector in Iraq.



Italy supports UNMAS Iraq's gender mainstreaming initiatives in mine action

Baghdad, 9 June 2022 - UNMAS Iraq Chief Mine Action Programme, Pehr Lodhammar, recently met with the Italian Ambassador to Iraq, H.E. Mr. Maurizio Greganti, at the embassy in Baghdad. Mr. Lodhammar briefed on UNMAS Iraq's latest activities supported by the Government of Italy through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), Amman, and other donors.

Italy is a reliable donor for UNMAS Iraq. In the last five years, Italy has donated more than EUR 3 million to UNMAS activities in Iraq, which include clearance operations of

residential areas, provision of explosive ordnance risk education, and technical support to Iraqi national mine action authorities to enable a sustainable and autonomous mine action response. Italy also supports UNMAS Iraq's gender mainstreaming initiatives in mine action.

Prior to the meeting, Lodhammar met with Mr. Emilio Cabasino, Director of AICS #Amman, and the accompanying delegation at the UN compound in Baghdad.

UNMAS would like to thank the Government of Italy for its continuous support of the Iraqi mine action sector.



UNMAS representatives with the Director General of DMA discussed ongoing projects

Baghdad, 15 June 2022 - The Director General of DMA, Eng. Dhafir Mahmood Khallaf, discussed with UNMAS Representative in Iraq, Mr. Pehr Lodhammer, the social, humanitarian, economic and technical returns of the European Union grant that had been directed at governorates of Basra and Nineveh.

From his part, the spokesperson of DMA indicated that the Director General of DMA had praised the efforts made by the European Union Mission and UNMAS against the background of all the technical, logistical and financial support provided by them in this direction.

Pointing out at the same time the importance of gender and awareness activities that this grant was keen to



devote and integrate within the various mine action activities.

19 police officers from the Ministry of the Interior completed explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) level-3 training

Baghdad, 22 June 2022 - UNMAS Iraq recently celebrated the graduation of 19 police officers from the Ministry of the Interior who completed explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) level-3 training courses at the Salman Pak EOD Training Center in Baghdad. For the first time, an Iraqi female police officer participated and completed this training course. This highlights the efforts made by the MoI senior officials and UNMAS Iraq to include women in a training that previously only was open for men. The course aimed to increase Government of Iraq's national mine action capabilities while also promoting gender equality.



COVID-19 Pandemic

UNICEF conducted a COVID-19 vaccination awareness project

Ninewa, 18 May 2022 – UNICEF conducted a COVID-19 vaccination awareness project with 48 young people from the community in partnership with the Directorate of Health in Ninewa, with the support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.

"I love raising awareness. I love talking to people about vaccines. I feel very proud when I change people's view of the vaccine," Zaman, 24. She works with the outreach team at Mosul

University to reach out to people on COVID-19 vaccine uptake.

Zaman lost her grandfather due to COVID-19, and this issue greatly affected her life because she was very close to him. "My grandfather got the virus, and he could not fight back the disease. I wish he had taken the vaccine," she says with regret.

"I feel very proud to be a young woman and work in this field. At this time, people are starting to accept more that women can work," says Zaman.



UNICEF and Germany delivered 653 refrigerators to support vaccination in Iraq

Baghdad, 2 June 2022- UNICEF, funded by Germany, is contributing substantive resources to support safe and reliable immunization of children and their families in Iraq, and this week handed over 653 refrigerators to be distributed in 600 health facilities across the country. This equipment will ensure the safe storage and potency of vaccines against common childhood illnesses and COVID-19.

In a joint visit to the UNICEF warehouse in Iraq, Dr. Riyadh Abdul Ameer, Director General of the Public Health Directorate in the Iraq Ministry of Health, Dr. Firas Jabar Hashim, Immunization Department Manager, and Mr. Ken Legins, UNICEF Deputy Representative a.i., jointly checked the equipment, that will allow health workers to deliver life-saving vaccines to over 1.9 million children and COVID-19 vaccine to over 10 million

eligible adolescents and adults.

In coordination with health authorities, UNICEF has supported national and sub-national efforts to strengthen the cold chain, not only for routine immunization program vaccines but also COVID-19 vaccines.

In addition, the funding provided by the German Government is supporting measures addressing the impact of COVID-19 by ensuring communities have access to basic Health, WASH, Child Protection and Education services.

"Thanks to the Government of Germany, UNICEF has invested almost USD\$1 million in equipment needed to ensure that vaccines are properly stored and transported until they are administered to children and their families, and to ensure access to primary healthcare services. We are very grateful to Germany for this



opportunity to meet the needs of vulnerable children and women in Iraq", said Mr Legins.

UNICEF will continue to support capacity building, procure supplies and maintain vital equipment needed for vaccination campaigns, including rehabilitation of cold rooms, refrigerators, temperature monitoring systems, and cold boxes.

UNICEF launched new Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) intervention

Baghdad, 4 June 2022 - To support COVID-19 vaccination in Iraq, and in partnership with Directorate of Health in Sulaymaniyah, UNICEF launched new Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) intervention.

With funding from the Czech Republic,

2500 individuals have engaged in community dialog on vaccination with the aim of strengthening community voices and combatting misinformation;* the intervention also focuses on enhancement of coordination, increasing demand on vaccination, and raising awareness.



Healthcare

IOM Iraq's health team delivered essential medicine to a primary health care centre in Hawija, Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 02 May 2022 - Internally displaced persons and returnees in locations across Iraq with the greatest vulnerabilities – such as IDP camps, informal sites, and remote or underserved communities – urgently need humanitarian assistance and ongoing support. IOM Iraq carries out programming in these areas, including through the provision of essential medicine and operational support (such as staffing and basic health facility equipping) to improve continuity of

quality primary healthcare services in targeted communities. IOM health interventions also include health promotion and awareness raising activities as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response.

In late May, IOM Iraq's health team delivered essential medicine to a primary health care centre in Hawija, Kirkuk.

These activities were made possible with support from the Government of the Republic of Korea.



Health facilities in Al-Karma officially reopen after destruction by ISIL

Baghdad/Al Karma, 4 May 2022—Two newly-rehabilitated health facilities – the External Consultancy Clinic and Al-Sijr Public Health Centre were officially reopened by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Government of Australia and Anbar Governorate.

When ISIL captured Al-Karma, the health facilities across the region suffered extensive damages. Equipment was stolen and infrastructure was left destroyed. Prior to rehabilitation of the health facilities, residents were forced to travel more than fifteen kilometers to Fallujah Teaching Hospital for treatment and medical services.

The two facilities were rehabilitated by UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) with generous funding provided by the Government of Australia. In addition, the Government of Denmark provided furniture and USAID supplied equipment to the Al-Sijr Public Health Centre.

"The reopening of the External Consultancy Clinic and Al-Sijr Public Health Centre in Al-Karma is an important milestone to restoring essential health services across the

region. However, our commitment to building Iraq forward better and stabilizing areas affected by ISIL do not end here. We have also supported the rehabilitation of over 50 health facilities in Anbar alone. This includes clinics, public health centers, hospitals and even specialty hospitals such as maternity and dental clinics," says UNDP Resident Representative in Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"We are here today because of the generous funding and longstanding partnership with the international community. The rehabilitation of the two facilities would not have been possible without the support provided by the Government of Australia. I would also like to thank Government of Denmark for providing the furniture and USAID for supplying the equipment at the Al-Sijr Public Health Centre," she added.

"Australia values our longstanding partnership with the Government of Iraq and UNDP and is proud to support recovery efforts in this country. The conflict with ISIL left severe damage to vital infrastructure and impacted the lives of many Iraqis, says Ms. Paula



Ganly, the Australian Ambassador to Iraq.

"The Australian Government believes that access to adequate health care is a basic human right. The rehabilitation and functioning of these clinics will provide essential health services to Karma district and surrounds," she added.

Since 2015, through the Funding Facility for Stabilization, UNDP has completed around 3,100 stabilization projects across the liberated areas of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salah Al-Din. To date, the programme has supported the return of more than 4.8 million people back to their place of origin.

Ministry of Health and WHO introduce environmental surveillance for poliovirus in Iraq



Baghdad, 9 May 2022— The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have launched the environmental surveillance (ES) for polioviruses to further strengthen the nationwide polio surveillance system in Iraq.

The establishment of ES for polioviruses will complement AFP surveillance for more robust polio surveillance that ensures early detection of polioviruses in humans or the environment.

“The environmental surveillance is a milestone in enhancing polio surveillance in Iraq,” said Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq. “Maintaining polio-free status in Iraq is only possible with effective and continued environmental surveillance,” “This is just an initial stage of our quest to advance ES in Iraq. We’re planning to expand the number and locations of ES sites in high-risk areas,

including religious mass gathering sites such as in the holy sites of Karbala and Najaf and high-population movement areas like Basra and Erbil,” he added.

Wild polioviruses have been detected in the environment in the absence of reported AFP cases. Environmental surveillance is also a potential tool for monitoring circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV2). ES has been used successfully to monitor enteric virus circulation and assess the extent or duration of epidemic poliovirus circulation in a specific population.

In coordination with the MoH and National Polio Lab (NPL), WHO has supported NPL renovation and procured supplies, including equipment, kits and reagents. Prior to the launch of the ES, WHO conducted intensive training on sewage sample collection, and surveillance monitoring for efficient collection and transportation of the samples.

In addition, WHO has held ten-day on-the-job training for the NPL staff on laboratory techniques for poliovirus isolation from sewage samples and the best practices for the storage, testing, interpretation of results and data reporting. The training, conducted by one of the WHO regional polio experts, included testing the fresh samples collected from one of the two assigned sites in Baghdad (Al-Rustumia Sewage Station) as well as biosafety measures and waste management microscopic observation.

“This step came as part of the National Polio Outbreak Preparedness and Response Plan. It’s crucial to be vigilant to detect any possible emerging of vaccine-derived poliovirus circulation and/or wild poliovirus importation,” said Dr Firas Al-Khafaji, the National Professional Officer of EPI and polio surveillance for WHO Iraq.

Iraq has been free of vaccine-derived polioviruses (VDPV) and wild poliovirus (WPV) since 2014, when two cases of wild poliovirus were confirmed after a 14-year absence. However, Iraq is still at high risk for the importation of WPV or the emergence or importation of VDPVs due to a high level of internal and external population movement, relatively low routine immunization coverage and limited access in some areas.

The MoH, in cooperation with WHO, initiated a comprehensive multi-year plan (cMYP) to reach every child through routine immunization and other immunization strategies, including the National Basic Health Services Package and supplementary immunization activities (SIAs).



Baghdad, 10 May 2022 – WHO Representative in Iraq, Dr Ahmed Zouiten, addressed the medical students during the Scientific Conference organized by the College of Medicine at the University of Baghdad. He was impressed by the enthusiasm of students both in medical scientific research as well as in public health considerations in Iraq.



Baghdad, 11 May 2022 – Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq, met H.E. Maurizio Greganti, Italy's Ambassador to Iraq. They discussed the collaboration between Embassy of Italy in Iraq and WHO Iraq in favour of strengthening the health system in Iraq.

Ba'aj General Hospital reopens: Restoring essential health care services to Western Ninewa

Ba'aj, 12 May 2022 – The newly rehabilitated Ba'aj General Hospital was officially inaugurated today by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ninewa Governorate, with generous funding by the Federal Republic of Germany, provided through KfW Development Bank. The reopening of this critical health facility marks a significant moment for the recovery of Western Ninewa after years of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) occupation. Before ISIL, built in the mid-seventies, the hospital had 50 beds and several departments servicing a catchment population of 30,000 people. The hospital was left significantly damaged during the ISIL conflict, and residents had to travel more than 150 kilometers to reach the nearest hospital in central Mosul.

Through the Funding Facility for Stabilization, UNDP rehabilitated the entire building, including civil, sanitary, mechanical, and electrical works. Today, the newly revamped hospital has added facilities such as more wards for women, a premature delivery hall, a hemodialysis and blood bank, an oxygen and medical gas system, and a reverse osmosis water purification system. UNDP will further supply medical equipment in the coming months.

Currently, the hospital is operated and managed by the Ninewa Directorate of Health and serves over 30,000 residents. The hospital is expected to reduce preventable deaths, particularly among pregnant women and newborn children, as patients will no longer need to travel far to receive care.

“Since work on the hospital began in



Photo: UNDP Iraq

December 2020, 80 percent of the pre-ISIL population have returned to the area, stating the hospital's rehabilitation as their main reason for returning. This stands testament to UNDP's commitment to supporting the people of Iraq, and we will only continue to do so,” says UNDP Resident Representative for Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

“This project would not be possible if not for the generous support from one of UNDP's longest-standing partners, the Federal Republic of Germany. Together with Germany, we have made tremendous contributions towards stabilization in Iraq,” she adds.

“The provision of good living conditions is fundamental to sustainable peace and stability. It is important that people who want to return to their home areas can do so with a decent

perspective of finding the necessary conditions, including a certain standard of health care services in the city. This is why Germany supported the reconstruction of the Ba'aj Hospital, to provide the basis for returns, peace and stability,” says Mr. Peter Felten, the German Charge' d'Affairs in Baghdad.

The rehabilitation of the Ba'aj General Hospital is funded through a significant contribution by the Federal Republic of Germany, provided through KfW Development Bank.

UNDP is the leading implementer of stabilization activities in Iraq. To date, UNDP has completed around 3,100 stabilization projects across the liberated areas of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din. The programme has assisted 4.95 million internally displaced people to return home.



Baghdad, 12 May 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq, met with the Iraqi Minister of Environment, H.E Dr Jassem Al-Falahi. They discussed ways of building a strategic partnership between WHO Iraq and the Ministry of Environment to reduce the impact of climate change on the health of the people in Iraq.



Erbil, 22 May 2022 - The effective collaboration between WHO and U.S. Department of State (Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration) has helped provide thousands of Syrian refugees in Darashakran Refugee camp in Erbil governorate with access to quality healthcare services, including primary and referral services.

Japan and UNOPS enhanced access to primary health services in Anbar Governorate

Baghdad, 15 May 2022 - With the continued support from the Government of Japan, UNOPS handed over Al Adel Primary Health Center in Anbar, along with other six primary health centers in Al Ramadi, which were rehabilitated under the "Restoration of Access to Urgent Primary Health Services in Anbar Governorate" project. In addition to the rehabilitation works, the project procured 25 pieces of medical equipment, 248 pieces of furniture, and more than 2000 supplies.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, Dr. Wisam Salah, Deputy Director of General Office in the Directorate of Health in Anbar, said: "The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in Iraq came at a time when the Government of Iraq was working to improve the living conditions of its citizens, who in previous years suffered from lack of basic services and infrastructure, especially health services, due to instability, conflict and many challenges. Not only this project improves the health services for the people in Al Ramadi, but also contributes to reducing the pressure on the hospitals designated for treatment of COVID-19 and severe cases."

H.E. Mr. SUZUKI Kotaro, Ambassador of Japan to Iraq, congratulated on the completion of Al Adel Primary Health Center and said: "The mission and activities of medical professionals dedicated to protecting people's health and saving lives in the most difficult situation should be lauded". He went on to say: "I would like to express my gratitude and respect to the people of UNOPS, who play indispensable roles in these operations".

Mr. Muhammad Usman Akram, the



Al Adel Primary Health Center in Ramadi, Iraq @UNOPS

Director of UNOPS Multi-Country Office in Amman, said, "Thanks to the generous funding from the Government of Japan, UNOPS worked hand in hand with the Directorate of Health in Anbar to serve approximately 123,000 beneficiaries and make a difference in the health sector for the people of Iraq. UNOPS remains committed to supporting our Iraqi partners and the people of Iraq in their efforts to address the challenges in the health sector, and enhance their resilience to counter the future challenges."

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the health conditions in Iraq and increased the need to enhance the health centers' infrastructure and to improve their capacities in the

provision of inclusive healthcare to the Iraqi people. The project supported the health sector through enhancing access for all to medical services in support of the COVID-19 response in the targeted areas of Anbar Governorate. Through gender-sensitive rehabilitation of primary health centers, and the provision of medical equipment, supplies and furniture, the project contributed to improving the overall living conditions of the beneficiaries including vulnerable and marginalised populations, returnees, and internally displaced persons.

The project supported Sustainable Development Goal 3 - "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages".

Enhancing and developing the staff's digital skills

Basra, 19 May 2022 - On May 15-19 May, UNICEF conducted with the support of INSM Network organization an intensive two workshops to the teams of the Ministry of Health - Public Health Department in Basra. It aimed to enhance and develop the staff's digital skills and increase the level of awareness and knowledge in creative writings, social media campaigns, digital marketing and increase the digital security skills to protect the social media pages they are responsible for and protect the user's data for the COVID-19 campaigns.



UNFPA held a session for 39 healthcare workers on reporting and referrals

Baghdad, 23 May 2022 - Legal awareness of health workers, including regulations, legislations and accountability mechanisms, will allow for effective participation of health workers in strengthening reporting system to be more survivor-centered approach.

UNFPA with funding from Rural Development Program of Peoples (RDPP) held a session for 39 healthcare workers on reporting and referrals. The aim was to familiarize healthcare providers about national policies and practices on referrals and reporting.



Opening of new primary health care centre in Kawergosk to support the local and refugee communities

Erbil, 24 May 2022 - UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and the General Directorate of Health (DoH) of the Kurdistan Regional Government inaugurated the new Primary Health Care Centre (PHCC) in Kawergosk sub-district in Erbil governorate, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The new Kawergosk Public PHCC will provide primary health care services to over 20,000 people from the Syrian refugee and Iraqi displaced communities living in Kawergosk town and surrounding areas. As a result, UNHCR is contributing to give better access to quality health services to all without discrimination. The newly-established health care centre has the capacity to take 150 to 200 consultations per day.

The construction of the PHCC was made possible through a generous contribution from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), one of the largest professional services networks in the world. The land for the project was generously provided by the municipality of Kawergosk, and the Directorate of Health will be managing the PHCC and providing the necessary staff, medical equipment, and medicines.

Mr. Hussain Kalari, the Director General of Joint Crisis Coordination Centre, Ms. Nicole Epting, Deputy Representative of UNHCR in Iraq, Ms Kwestan Ahmed, the Mayor of Khabat district, Mr. Suhaib Asad, Tax Partner at PwC, and Jaivir Singh, Leader of the Global Office for Humanitarian Affairs at PwC, cut the ribbon to announce the opening of the new health centre. The



PHCC provides comprehensive primary health care services, including consultations, provision of medicines, laboratory services, emergency referrals, immunization and growth monitoring, reproductive health services and dental care.

“We are grateful for the support and hospitality that the local communities in Kawergosk town have extended to the refugee communities in the nearby Kawergosk camp. In return, we are pleased to now support the national health services for the benefit of all, refugees and Kawergosk local communities alike.” said Nicole Epting. Jaivir Singh “At PwC, we are committed to supporting and empowering those most in need in a

sustained manner. The newly inaugurated primary health centre at Kawergosk will significantly improve the quality of care and services provided to the surrounding communities, making a positive contribution to their lives. I extend my thanks to our partner UNHCR Iraq and the General Directorate of Health (DoH) of the Kurdistan Regional Government for their efforts, as well as our teams at PwC for bringing our values to life.”

UNHCR extends its sincere gratitude to the people and Government of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, PricewaterhouseCoopers and all the stakeholders who participated in making this project a success.

WHO continues to provide healthcare services for more than 15,000 Yazidi IDPs in Sardashti informal settlement on Sinjar Mountain

Baghdad, 30 May 2022 - With support from the European Union and USAID, WHO continues to provide healthcare

services for more than 15,000 Yazidi IDPs in Sardashti informal settlement on Sinjar Mountain of Ninewa Gov, with the

provision of consultations, routine vaccination, psychosocial support and referral services.

WHO strengthens health information systems in Iraq

Baghdad, 2 June 2022 – The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the Iraqi Ministry of Health, is continuing to strengthen the health management information system through the implementation of the District Health Information System (DHIS-2) to enhance the quality of data collection, processing and reporting.

WHO is leading the implementation of DHIS2 in Iraq by supporting health information system stakeholders at different levels to develop a national implementation action plan addressing the prerequisites for governance/leadership, hardware, building human resource capacities and managing implementation modalities. Over the past three months, WHO has trained 110 health professionals and data specialists from national and subnational levels in using the DHIS2 platform to streamline the process of data entry, validation, analysis, report generation, use and dissemination.

The demand to enhance data collection and reporting systems at both health facility and national levels is growing among policy-makers, programme managers and development partners. Implementing DHIS2 will help reduce the unnecessary burden on those working in data management and help data to be used efficiently for planning and decision-making.



"Effective health information systems can provide us with the knowledge and indicators we need to improve the population's health, advance the health system and achieve universal health coverage," said Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq.

"It's crucial to bridge the gap between policy-makers, health personnel and researchers to ensure the quality and accuracy of data. Narrowing this gap is not possible without a robust health information system."

In addition, to capacity-building activities, the WHO country office, with support from the WHO Regional Office and experts in DHIS2, conducted a rapid assessment and visited over 20 sites in Iraq in January 2022, including the Ministry of Health, primary health care centres, hospitals and other

programmes.

"Improved collection, processing, analysis, dissemination and health information is a key step in achieving better health outcomes in Iraq," said Dr Aamr Bebany, the health system officer for the WHO country office in Iraq.

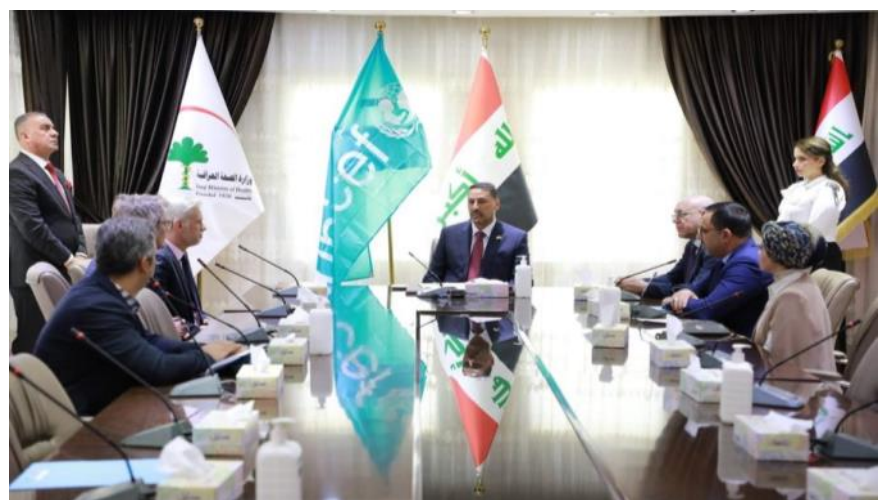
"DHIS2 will also provide us with a holistic picture for decision-makers and improve the quality and timeliness of data for better control of outbreaks," added Bebany.

DHIS2 has all the tools needed for most health information systems in one open-source and fully customizable software platform. It can be used either for a single purpose – like health, logistics or education data – or to triangulate aggregate and individual data from multiple sources and programmes in one integrated system.

UNICEF and Ministry of Health discuss bilateral annual work plan

Baghdad, 4 June 2022 - A UNICEF delegation, represented by Mr. Ken Legins, Deputy Representative of UNICEF in Iraq and David Hipgrave, UNICEF Chief of Health and Nutrition, visited the Minister of Health in Iraq, Dr. Dr. Hani Alaqabi, in the presence of the Director General of the Public Health Department and the Director of the International Health Department.

The two sides discussed the implementation of a bilateral annual work-plan between the two sides for the years 2022-2023, which includes UNICEF's work in Iraq in public health programs such as immunization, newborn and maternal health, primary health care and nutrition, which will enhance the level of health for the community.



Regaining strength: more must be done to curb TB in Iraq



Duhok, 11 Jun 2022 - There was a knock at the door. It cracked open, and 64-year-old Abdi peered out from behind it. His eyes glowed when he saw Salar and Adil standing at the gate. “Come in, come in, brothers,” said Abdi, leading them into his home with a big smile on his face.

“Salar and Adil have visited me so many times that they have become part of the family,” he explains.

The two are part of IOM’s Duhok-based Mobile Medical Team (MMT)—a service designed to deliver essential medicine and healthcare to vulnerable populations across Iraq. Abdi and his family were displaced during the ISI conflict in 2014. The family now lives in Sheikhka, a remote village nestled in the western region of Iraqi Kurdistan’s Sheikhhan district in Duhok Governorate.

Salar and Adil have been in touch with Abdi on a daily basis for almost six months. They met in early January 2022, when the medical centre in Sheikhhan referred Abdi to Salar’s team because he was coughing up blood and phlegm, and constantly vomiting.

“I didn’t know what it was. I felt sick to my stomach. I lost my appetite—whatever I ate, I would immediately throw it up. In a few weeks I went from 76 kg to just over 40 kg,” Abdi recalls of the first few weeks before he was referred to the MMT.

Having seen such symptoms before, Salar—a nurse by training and IOM Iraq’s tuberculosis (TB) focal point in Duhok Governorate—had a strong suspicion about what was ailing Abdi. He immediately transported Abdi and his wife to the TB centre in Duhok city for urgent examination. Sure enough, Abdi tested positive for TB.

Iraq has one of the highest rates of TB in the Middle East and North Africa. Since 2014, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) crisis and subsequent military operations to

retake the areas under ISIL control further deteriorated the capacity to manage TB across the country.

The humanitarian situation in the country continues to be volatile, and over one million people remain in displacement, with around 180,000 still living in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

There are six districts in Duhok Governorate, but only four TB management centres. Sheikhhan district—home to many IDPs and vulnerable host communities—doesn’t currently have an active TB management facility.

Although TB is curable, Abdi’s case was particularly challenging due to his diabetes and heart problems.

“This is a problem for a patient with TB because sometimes, the TB medication may interfere with his heart or diabetes medicine. Patients have to be on a very rigorous and continuous treatment course for it to be effective,” explained Salar.

“Another issue is that since the patient is diabetic, he cannot eat many types of foods that are very important for a patient because they need to go on the TB medication course.”

Nevertheless, Abdi made a remarkable recovery in a mere six months.

“My coughing has stopped, there is no blood or phlegm, and I have regained my strength. I can eat normally without fear of vomiting; I am just under 70 kg now. I am really grateful for all the support IOM’s MMT has provided me. They have been with me one way or another every single day for the past six months.”

“We have over 60,000 IDPs and over 60,000 refugees in camps in Duhok, not including those from the host communities that we cover, and this is a huge area. It has been easy doing surveillance and contact tracing in the camps because there are frequent awareness-raising campaigns and mass

screenings to look for suspected cases,” Salar noted.

“But there are so many locations that we simply cannot get to because they are in remote areas and since we already have a large number of cases to deal with in the camps and certain communities.”

IOM maintains seven MMTs in five crisis-affected governorates with high numbers of IDPs, returnees and vulnerable host community members: Ninewa, Duhok, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din and Anbar. Due to a high number of cases, Duhok Governorate’s Khanke camp has become a hot spot for TB, Salar tells us.

IOM’s MMT in Duhok and other locations assist Iraq’s National Tuberculosis Program (NTP) in implementing activities to curb TB, including through awareness-raising campaigns, initial screening, sputum sample collection, presumptive TB case transportation for investigation, contact tracing, Directly Observed Therapy (DOT) interventions, food package distribution, and TB treatment follow up.

IOM also supports the NTP with joint supervision visits to all NTP clinics across Iraq, on the job training for lab staff, procurement of TB medication and laboratory supplies, updating and printing guidelines, providing Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs) and Infection Protection and Control (IPC) materials, providing diagnostics tools such as GeneXpert machines, capacity-building trainings and more.

Efforts by the NTP and IOM to curb the spread of TB have been fruitful in treating thousands of patients across Iraq since 2017, when the Global Fund started supporting the Government of Iraq’s programme, but more needs to be done.

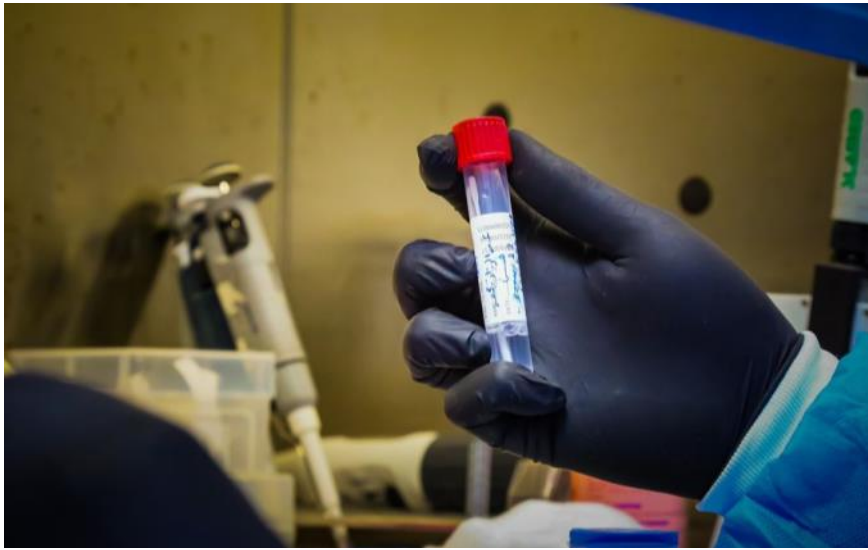
This includes increasing the number of MMTs across the country to widen the geographic coverage and deal with cases among vulnerable populations in camps, returnee communities, and host communities; increasing TB management units and opening diagnostic centres in each governorate (currently there are 135 functional TB management units in Iraq); making more TB medication supplies available; and organizing more mass awareness raising campaigns.

TB is a curable illness. Steps like these would lead to more patients like Abdi being saved.

IOM’s TB response in Iraq is possible thanks to the support of the Global Fund.

By Raber Y. Aziz, IOM

With support from the Global Fund, IOM Iraq carried out an emergency response to assist Iraq's National Tuberculosis Program



Baghdad, 19 June 2022 - Years of conflict and sanctions have taken a toll on the Iraqi health care system. The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on this already weakened infrastructure – stretching already limited human and financial resources, and affecting efforts aimed combatting other

illnesses, including tuberculosis.

With support from the Global Fund, IOM Iraq carried out an emergency response to assist Iraq's National Tuberculosis Program (NTP) and the Central Public Health Laboratory in providing continued TB treatment and other health services during the

COVID-19 pandemic. Through the field teams working on the Middle East Response (MER) TB and C19RM projects, IOM was able to deliver modern COVID-19 testing kits and PCR testing devices to health centres in need.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic the Ministry of Health had a major role in providing materials, alongside organizations such as IOM and the World Health Organization. IOM Iraq provided us with modern devices [to reduce PCR testing time significantly]; this is a very good achievement, so we are happy with this useful and fruitful cooperation,” said Dr. Muhammad Issa Al-Dafai, Director of the Central Public Health Laboratory, in the Public Health Department at the Ministry of Health.

“We are pleased with the ongoing work between the Ministry of Health, the Public Health Department, the Central Public Health Laboratory and IOM Iraq and the future cooperation will remain, equipment, supplies and devices that will also arrive soon to the center.” Dr. Muhammad added.

Polio transition: integrating polio assets to strengthen health system in Iraq

Baghdad, 16 June 2022— A country, regional and global team from the World Health Organization (WHO) concluded today a five-day support mission to Iraq to advance the polio transition process and integrate polio programme capacities into overall public health functions.

WHO's global, regional and country support mission on polio transition recently visited Al-Thubat Primary Health Centre in Baghdad. The team

witnessed firsthand how immunization services are sustained and adequate to protect children against polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

The polio transition process in aims to maintain and further strengthen the capacity of the polio assets to prop up the health system, including: maintaining essential immunization services, disease surveillance, outbreak preparedness and response and primary health care.



WHO works to ensure equal access to quality healthcare services for refugees and IDPs

Erbil, 13 June 2022 - To ensure equal access to quality healthcare services for 363,000 refugees and internally displaced persons, the World Health Organization, in collaboration with U.S. State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), is working on the renovation and expansion of the neonatal care unit in maternity Hospital and establishing a triage unit in East Emergency Hospital in Erbil Governorate.



WHO Provides Sulaymaniyah with urgent medical supplies to prepare for and respond to the recent Cholera outbreak



Sulaymaniyah, 20 June 2022 - The World Health Organization (WHO) dispatched an urgent consignment of medicines and medical supplies to Sulaymaniyah governorate in the (KR-I) to support the Regional Ministry of Health in KR-I step up its response to the sudden cholera outbreak in the region.

The consignment comprised 4 pallets of medicines and medical supplies, including infusion sets, antibiotics, and intravenous fluid (ringer lactate) to cover the needs of a population of approximately 5000 people for a duration of 3 months.

The Minister of Health in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq Dr. Saman Hussain Barzangy attended the handover and expressed concern over the sudden increase in acute diarrhea cases in Sulaymaniyah and a few other Iraqi governorates. "13 Cholera cases were confirmed by the laboratory among which 10 are in Sulaymaniyah. We are following the situation closely and have scaled up surveillance, preparedness and response activities, and hope to be able to contain the outbreak in the coming weeks in close collaboration with WHO and other partners" Dr. Barzangy said.

The Ministry of Health in KR-I is working with the Central Public Health Laboratory (CPHL) and have requested support to test 56 additional samples taken from Sulaymaniyah. As of 20 June 2022, 13 cholera cases from Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, and Muthanna, were confirmed by the CPHL.

"The increase in new Cholera cases in Sulaymaniyah and other governorates is a reason for concern for WHO and the MOH, as it is coming on the backdrop of the COVID19 pandemic and other epidemic-prone outbreaks that the country is still battling. However, WHO is committed to supporting the Ministry of Health both in Baghdad and in Kurdistan, to prepare for and respond to this outbreak and lower the impact on the population, including on the vulnerable groups of women, children, and the low-income communities," said Dr. Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative and Head of Mission in Iraq.

"We are also calling upon our funding partners, stakeholders, WASH sector, and health cluster members to enhance collaboration with the local health authorities to ensure a proactive and coordinated approach to cholera response across Iraq," Dr. Zouiten added.

It is worth mentioning that cholera is a waterborne bacterial infection that can spread quickly through a population. The disease is primarily contracted by consuming water or food contaminated with the cholera bacteria, *Vibrio cholera*. It causes uncontrollable diarrhea that, if left untreated, can result in dehydration or death.

WHO reaffirms its commitment to support the government's efforts to strengthen health systems in Iraq and achieve Universal Health Coverage

Najaf, 25 June 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq, addressed the high-level International Forum for Health Governance and Health Insurance in the holy city of Najaf.

He reaffirmed the commitment of WHO to support the government's efforts to strengthen health systems in Iraq and achieve Universal Health Coverage.

He also stressed the importance of increasing the government budget allocations to the health sector in Iraq, adopting prepaid compulsory or voluntary insurance plans and creating effective partnerships with the private sector to ensure Health for All Iraqis.



UNFPA commemorates the International Day of Families in Basra



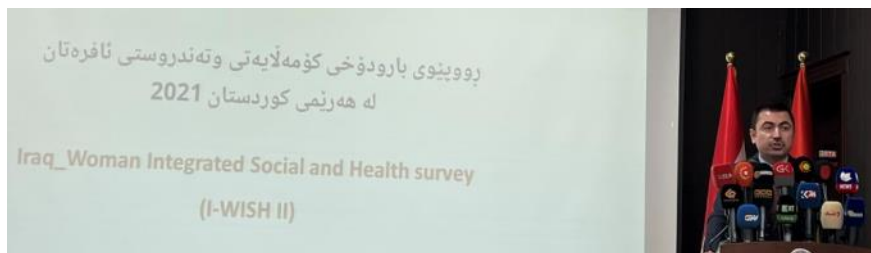
Basra, 15 May 2022 - 15 May of every year is observed as the International Day of Families. The theme for 2022 International Day of Families is

“Families and Urbanization”, which aims to raise awareness about the importance of urbanization on the life and well-being of families.

On this day UNFPA jointly with the Basra Municipality, Directorate of Youth and Sports and the Business Women Association of Southern Iraq, launched a youth volunteerism campaign focused on protecting the environment in Basrah city in response to climate change.

Families and young people were mobilized to clean their neighbourhood, Al-Muhandisin, and increase awareness about the importance of keeping the community environmentally healthy.

Kurdistan Ministry of Planning, UNFPA launch results of the second Iraq Women Integrated Social and Health (IWISH) survey



Erbil, 28 June 2022 - The Ministry of Planning, the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office and UNFPA launched today the results of the second Iraq Women Integrated Social and Health (IWISH) survey in the Kurdistan Region, conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning of the Federal Government and Central Statistical Organisation and with funding from Sweden.

The survey covers the topics of women empowerment, violence against women, early marriage, family planning and

maternal health, COVID19, education, employment and other relevant social factors influencing women's rights in Iraq. It also offers integrated data showing the change in women's economic and social status in Iraq since 2011.

Speaking at the event, Dr Dara Rasheed, Minister of Planning of the Kurdistan Regional Government, reiterated the importance of data and statistics and stated that: “the Ministry of Planning prioritises making reliable data and new statistics available to

governmental institutions to ensure that regulations and policies are developed based on evidence. We also encourage the government to utilise the data collected to develop their programmes and projects to empower women and girls in the Kurdistan Region.”

Dr Rita Columbia, UNFPA Representative to Iraq, during the launch reiterated that “availability and use of reliable data for policy and decision making is vital for the regional sustainable development, where the rights of all especially women and girls as the most vulnerable are protected and fulfilled”.

The representatives of ministries in KRI, the High Council for Women Development, CSOs and international partners expressed their interest in studying the findings of the survey and using them for improving legislation, policies and programmes in KRI.

The Ministry of Planning with the support of UNFPA conducted a workshop on the importance of demographic dividend for development

Baghdad, 21 June 2022 - The Ministry of Planning with the support of UNFPA conducted a workshop on the importance of demographic dividend for development. During the workshop, updating the national population policy document was discussed to consider partnering with young people to effectively contribute to the achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Young people are the driving force behind development and change for a better tomorrow.



IOM Iraq programme offers livelihood assistance together with mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services to empower participants to build social, life and other soft skills



Baghdad, 30 May 2022 - A widowed mother of four, 34-year-old Atab owns her own small shop selling women's accessories and kitchen items in her hometown of Hawija. In 2022, she participated in an IOM Iraq programme offering livelihood assistance together with mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services to empower participants to build social, life and other soft skills in order to strengthen their ability to work in a healthy and productive way.

"Hawija is a closed community. It is not easy to be here. Mustafa [the MHPSS session facilitator] helped us learn about new things, how to break down different problems in order to deal with them and how to manage when we are angry. It was also useful for me to learn about time keeping and how to keep time for my business, my family and myself.

"I have 4 children, they are all students. I don't want them to go through what I went through, so I need to build my skills to achieve my ambitions and help them. The sessions help me do that.

"During the session on self-care and focusing on yourself, I learned how to take time for myself. I usually have no time for myself, but now I have the ability to work hard to be more present. The session taught me that — to be more present at home and in the community.

"The sessions helped me feel more independent as a woman; they enabled me to do things by myself. My motivation is my family. I wanted to learn more about myself, and now I

have improved myself.

Money is essential, but it is not everything. We need to focus on mental well-being, too. Here, women cannot go outside; everyone is suffering. My 5-year-old girl is stressed and cannot breathe normally because of an ISIL attack, she has so much fear. We need greater awareness about how to feel better."

This support was made possible thanks to the Government of New Zealand.

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Badriyah is the head of a family of six living in Hassan Sham camp for the internally displaced:

"After years of living in displacement camps, I got really tired of everything. My husband suffered from kidney failure and needed frequent dialysis. He passed away in the camp; I was left with the responsibility of taking care of my children and three of my orphaned grandchildren as well. I often sat at home and just thought — over and over — about things I no longer had or could control, like my previous life, my difficult situation in the camp, the burden of taking care of the family alone.

"Life in a camp has been suffocating. There is an electricity shortage, a water shortage, a lack of services. In summer it is too hot and in winter it is too cold, and the tent needs to be reinforced with new covers. This year we had to buy reinforcements for 120,000 IQD. That's a lot of money for us. I really needed a change.

"I heard from a friend that IOM was offering a bakery training and mental health and psychosocial support

(MHPSS). I immediately signed up. And ever since I joined, I have been loving every bit of it. In this bakery workshop, we come together with other women to learn and bake together. We talk, we laugh, we listen to each other. We spend our time on something useful. This helps us cope with our lives better. It helps me alleviate and release my tension and stress.

"I really like coming here because there is a dedicated space with equipment and all the necessary bakery items for us to use. We don't have ovens and pastry items in our tents. I used to do sweets and pastries at home, but it was very basic, and I did not have a good understanding of how the ingredients work — the measurements, the oven degrees, etc. I could not make baklava. I learned these things here during the training. Now I can do baklava, lahmajun, sweets, pastries and more. And at the end of each day's training, we take home what we have baked for the day, and it makes the children really happy."

In addition to the bakery training, Badriyah and other trainees participated in MHPSS sessions to develop soft skills and coping mechanisms to mitigate and manage work-related psychosocial challenges and stressors.

"I am very happy that I took part in this MLI training because I learned not only bakery skills, but also other skills that I can apply in my family life to cope with my frustrating life in displacement— for example, problem solving and dealing with difficult situations. These are skills I can apply in every aspect of my life.

"This training has helped me develop a positive routine in my daily life: every day, I wake up early in the morning. After morning prayers, I head to the bakery workshop at 8 am, and I don't come back until 11 am. I learn, I chat with my friends, and I take something home for my kids when I return. At the end of the day, I feel I have accomplished something. I have had the chance to get out of the tent a bit and socialize with my friends and, for a moment, forget about my frustrating life, while bringing home cookies and pastries I made at the workshop for my kids, which makes them really happy."

This MLI initiative was made possible with support from the Government of the Republic of Korea.

A climate change seminar held in Baghdad



Baghdad, 01 June 2022 - UNICEF, the Ministry of Environment and the University of Technology today hosted

a climate change seminar in Baghdad, Iraq.

The event brought together

representatives from the government, private sector, academia, and young people to discuss the impact of climate change in Iraq on health, nutrition, education and child survival and ways to mitigate the impact of climate change in children and young people.

As the first of several planned meetings, the seminar laid the ground for significant climate action by all stakeholders for a better Iraq for children and young people.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Ahmed Al-Ghabban, President of the University of Technology in Iraq, Eng. Ammar Musa Kadhum, Mayor of Baghdad, Mr. Yilmaz Al-Najar, Deputy Minister Ministry of Construction, Housing and Municipalities, and the Deputy Representative of UNICEF in Iraq, Mr. Ken Legins.

IOM supports homes and municipalities with the removal of debris



Baghdad, 05 June 2022 - During the conflict with ISIL, many cities across Iraq witnessed widespread infrastructure damage. IOM supports homes and municipalities throughout the country with the removal of debris,

to allow for new construction. The debris is transported to a processing site, where it is crushed and sorted by employees taking part in Cash for Work projects. Some of the debris is then crushed into even smaller pieces

and sorted through a machine; the three different sizes of debris can then be reused to pave roads and in other construction projects, according to the needs of the municipality.

The presence of large amounts of debris on families' properties is one of the main obstacles to return for internally displaced persons. This process can provide a sustainable solution to the debris problem, and support ongoing efforts to help displaced families achieve durable solutions, including through returns to their areas of origin. This programming is supported by USAID Iraq, the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the UN Environment Programme.

Let's beat the dust!

Kirkuk, 04 June 2022 - In preparation for World Environment Day [5 June], the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) office in Kirkuk visited a tree nursery run by the Kokar Foundation. Kokar is an Iraqi NGO, established by young people who are concerned about the environment. Director Ishmael is only 36 years old, but has grand ambitions: to plant and nurture 1 million trees! These trees will form a 'Green Belt' around Kirkuk to stop dust storms and mitigate the effects of climate change. The volunteers (whose numbers swell with every haboob) are well on their way: 70,000 trees have already been planted. UNAMI staff in Kirkuk also helped the cause and have committed to plant 100 trees on Tree Plant Day on 25 September 2022, bringing the grand total to 100,000 new trees in Kirkuk.



FAO Representative in Iraq meets the Minister of Environment

Baghdad, 7 June 2022 - Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq met today with H.E Dr. Jassim Al-Falahi, Minister of Environment in the presence of representatives from Ministries of Agriculture and Water Resources. He discussed the implementation of the project funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF)

focusing on sustainable land and water management to mitigate the impact of climate change and to improve livelihoods in southern Iraq in addition to organizing a joint workshop on dust storms with relevant stakeholders and FAO.

Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Environment.



Mosul Engineering Week celebrated in Mosul



Mosul, 13 June 2022 - UN-Habitat strongly believes in our collective responsibility towards a more sustainable urban future, starting from how we build our cities and buildings.

Mosul, 13 June 2022 - Following the successful delivery of the Mosul Engineering Week last year, UN-Habitat Iraq partnered with the Faculty of Engineering of Mosul University for the 2nd year in a row to hold the 2022 edition under the theme “Environmental sustainability” with funding from the European Union.

The opening ceremony, held at the recently renovated Grand Theatre Hall, was attended by high officials of the University, a senior representative of the European Union, local authorities

and numerous students.

The event included a dense programme of lectures, a Building & Construction Fair promoting renewable energy solutions and greener construction materials, and an exhibition of projects by 45 students in their final year.

Among the first series of lecturers who took the stage on Day 1, Dr Shakir Mahmood Al-Safi of Tikrit University offered an in-depth insight into the plastic recycling industry in Mosul city, and Dr Sara Mahmoud Al-Jawary of Kufa University showcased the innovative technologies applied to build Masdar City in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

In the afternoon, Senior Eng. Osama Khalili presented the most innovative

aspects of projects implemented by UNDP’s Funding Facility for Stabilization in Nineva governorate.

To promote green, inclusive and resilient urban recovery, UN-Habitat Iraq invited 12 local companies to partake to the Mosul Engineering Week, where they exhibited innovative materials and equipment, including solar panels, waterproofing materials, environmental paints, insulation technologies, air purification and eco-friendly building techniques.

On Day 3, the local NGO Eco-Vital presented their “plastic-to-paper” initiative for bakeries.

The event was funded by the European Union under the programme ‘Supporting Recovery and Stability in Iraq through Local Development’ implemented by UNDP Iraq in partnership with UN-Habitat.

On the last day of the week-long Mosul Engineering Week 2022, professors and students visited Yarmouk Park where they learned about the solar-powered irrigation and lighting system that was built last year with funding from the European Union. Three teams of students competed in a lively football match. The overall event was attended by nearly 2400 people.

On World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, UN and NGOs call for action to support Iraq in managing water and adapting to climate change

Baghdad, 17 June 2022 – As Iraq confronts multiple challenges caused and exacerbated by climate change, including prolonged heat waves, declining precipitation, loss of fertile land, salinisation, insufficient infrastructure investments, transboundary water shortages and a prevalence of dust storms, the UN and NGOs in Iraq mark World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought with a call for action to protect the country from the devastating impacts. Iraq is among the top 5 countries most

affected by climate change, and the 39th most water stressed. Last year’s record low rainfall – the second driest season in 40 years – has led to water shortages, desertification, and soil erosion due to unsustainable agricultural practices and shrinking, damaged vegetation cover. Conflict has devastated land and water sources in Iraq, causing further soil erosion and contamination, while political uncertainty poses challenges to environmental governance.

The drastic decrease in farmland and

biodiversity in agriculture, land degradation and the increase of sand dunes have all added to the strain, leading to animal migration and deaths. Some examples are the multiple dust storms experienced so far in 2022, which have even caused human fatalities, or Sawa Lake in Muthanna governorate drying up this year due to the water crisis. Left unattended, projections to 2040 show increasing stress on Iraq’s water sources, which also face significant challenges from pollution caused by the

On World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, UN and NGOs call for action to support Iraq... *(continued)*



oil industry and sewage, weak environmental governance, and fires. Coupled with water scarcity, the removal of topsoil and decline in land productivity have led to reduced food production in Iraq. A 2021 survey, covering 7 governorates, found 37% of wheat farmers and 30% of barley farmers suffered crop failure. At the same time, incomes have plummeted as farmers do not have the harvested crops to sell, which directly impact upon food security.

The 4 million people living in Iraq's downstream Basra governorate are most affected by water scarcity. The marshlands of Iraq, with their deep cultural and human heritage, and natural resources for livelihoods, once represented the first line of defence against climatic changes and environmental damage. Reduced river water levels in the once great Tigris and Euphrates have led to rising salt levels and deteriorating water quality. With annual evaporation up to 3 metres and lower river water, sea water has moved upriver to al-Qurna, destroying 60,000 acres of agricultural land and 30,000 trees.

As of March 2022, the displacement of an estimated 3,000 families due to drought and environmental degradation had been recorded across 8 governorates in central and southern Iraq. Recent studies have shown water scarcity to be one of the primary drivers of migration from rural to urban areas, alongside challenges to sustainable agriculture and food security.

Desertification and water scarcity disproportionately affect the most vulnerable. Vulnerable families who have already suffered from conflict and displacement now risk being caught in the cycle of poverty for longer. Of particular concern are children in rural areas, who missed education opportunities due to conflict and

COVID-19, that may now be forced to turn to child labour and early marriage to financially help their families meet their basic water and food needs.

Girls and women also face heightened vulnerability due to water scarcity, in large part due to gender inequality. Indeed, limited access to clean water affects menstrual hygiene, compromising the health and dignity of women and girls. Climate-related disasters also strain Iraq's already stretched health systems. Without medical support during child delivery, the risk of preventable maternal death increases. Heightened tensions along with a breakdown in social cohesion may lead to increased gender-based violence, including sexual-based violence.

With the combined support of local and international actors, Iraq can work to overcome national and regional political uncertainty to mitigate the effects of climate change and land degradation, and address transnational water management. National and local authorities can urgently pursue the legislation and improved practices required for sustainable water management and consumption.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration aims to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide. The UN and NGOs in Iraq are working with the government and Iraqi universities on smart monitoring systems to track progress or regression on environmental targets, climate, water resources and land use. Such data is critical to equip decision-makers with the knowledge required to take action and form policy. Information is shared with communities to publicly support action planning and community-led decision making on drought prevention.

Stabilizing the soil and protecting its vegetation cover by encouraging efficient water use, replenishing water reservoirs, rehabilitating irrigation infrastructure, planting more trees, bushes and shrubs, developing sustainable green belts around cities, controlling mining activities, improving the quality of the soil and protecting it from salinisation through more sustainable agricultural and farming techniques, are all required. Providing eco-friendly irrigation solutions, and re-skilling farmers, for instance, in drip and smart types of irrigation, saves water and has a transformative positive impact.

From local community, local authorities

and national government to international actors: only together, with the support of all, can we ensure a healthy future for Iraq's land and water and the people who depend on it.

Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq
 Ali Al-Karkhi, Managing Director, Humat Dijlah, Iraq
 Ally Raza Qureshi, WFP Representative, Iraq
 Brooke Gibbons, Country Director, Mercy Corps, Iraq
 Dr. Rita Columbia, UNFPA Representative, Iraq
 Dr. Salah ElHajjHassan, FAO Representative, Iraq
 Edward Santiago, Country Director, Mission East, Iraq
 George Gigauri, IOM Chief of Mission, Iraq
 Ishtiaq Mannan, Country Director, Save the Children, Iraq
 James Munn, Country Director, NRC, Iraq
 Jean-Nicolas Beuze, UNHCR Representative, Iraq
 Katie Thomas-Canfield, Country Director, ACF, Iraq
 Khalid Aswad, Country Director, Al-Zahaa Association for Environmental Development, Iraq
 Mads Oyen, OIC UNICEF Representative, Iraq
 Sami Dimassi, Representative, Regional Director UN Environment West Asia
 Sharon Thangadurai, Country Director, WVI, Iraq
 Toon Bijmens, Chair, Save the Tigris
 Wael Al-Ashhab, Head of Iraq Country Programme, UN-HABITAT, Iraq
 Zena Ali Ahmad, UNDP Resident Representative, Iraq



FAO Iraq mobilizing efforts to prevent the extinction of reem gazelles in Southern Iraq

Al Muthanna, 26 June 2022 – A delegation from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United (FAO) in Iraq visited last week Sawa Nature Reserve in Al Muthanna. This came as a follow-up to the urgent and current situation where reem gazelles are endangered due to starvation and thirst.

These gazelles have long existed in Iraq but they are nowadays threatened to extinct due to climate change and other challenges, mainly severe successive droughts, which are resulting in poor grazing areas. In the last months, 41% of Reem gazelles died where the numbers decreased from 148 to 87 heads in the reserve.

During this visit, FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan with a team of experts from FAO met with the local authorities in Al Muthanna Governorate along representatives from Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and University of Al Muthanna to discuss these issues. FAO urged to put an action plan for the immediate and long-term sustainable interventions.

FAO Iraq Representative, Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan says, “FAO is committed to work closely with the local authorities, Ministries of Agriculture



and Environment to prevent the extinction of animals in Sawa Nature Reserve and to protect the rich biological diversity in Iraq. We will put in action short and long term sustainable plan.”

The key actions to be implemented are:

- Use the grant support from H.E president of Iraq to have long lasting sustainable solutions.
- FAO to provide urgently 15 tons of concentrate feeds and 5 tons catalytic feed supplements (Sugar molasses and multinutrient feed blocks).
- Al Muthanna Electricity Department and the local government to provide electricity to the protected site.
- Rehabilitate the reserve’s

fence and set a solar energy model with FAO’s support for irrigation facilities.

- Introduce the cultivation of drought and salt tolerant fodder crops (Alfalfa and Sudanese Sorghum) and shrubs (Atriplex Nummularia), FAO will provide seeds and technical expertise,
- Train employees in the reserve as well as neighboring farmers in collaboration with the colleges of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine at the University of Al-Muthanna.
- Incorporate an area of the reserve and its neighboring villages including protected dromedary areas with FAO to be planted with fodder seeds and train the farmers.
- Close follow-up to implement these actions as soon as possible.

Culture

The delegation of the European Parliament visited Erbil citadel

Erbil, 26 May 2022 - The European Parliament delegation from the Subcommittee on Security and Defense has visited Erbil Citadel, where Mr. Nihad Qoja, Head of High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization-HCECR, and Mr. Paolo Fontani, UNESCO representative to Iraq, gave an overview of the EU-funded projects and restoration plans of the world heritage site of Erbil Citadel.



UNESCO Representative to Iraq visited the Mosul Central Library

Mosul, 25 May 2022 - UNESCO Representative to Iraq visited the Mosul Central Library where he was welcomed by Saif Al-Ashqar, Secretary General of Libraries at the University of Mosul. As part of the #ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul initiative, UNESCO is working with the Government of Iraq, the University of Mosul to mobilize international partners to revive the Mosul Library to its former glory as a center of safe learning environment and peaceful coexistence among the youth of Mosul.



The EMIS dream has become a reality



Baghdad, 19 April 2022 - “The EMIS dream has become a reality” said H.E. Dr. Falah Al Qaisi, Deputy Minister of Education while chairing the second Steering Committee of the “System

Building and Capacity Strengthening for Quality Education Outcomes” project on 19 April 2022 in Baghdad. The meeting was attended by Dr. Abdul Kareem Al-Faisal, Head of the Prime

Minister’s Advisory Commission, Ms. Barbara Egger, Head of Cooperation at the Delegation of the European Union to Iraq, Director Generals from the Ministry of Education and Governorate-level General Directorates of Education, Director General from Ministry of Planning, and representative from Communication and Midea commission and representatives from UNICEF and UNESCO in Iraq.

The meeting celebrated the successes and key milestones in project implementation to date and reviewed the workplans for the rollout of EMIS and capacity building interventions in Iraq during the coming year. The EMIS and capacity development interventions to improve the quality of education in Iraq is funded by the European Union.

UNESCO delivered 3,000 laptops to the schools for the rollout of tailor-made digital Educational Management Information System

Baghdad, 16 June 2022 - UNESCO has delivered 3,000 laptops to the schools in Karkh-1 and Rasafa-3 in Baghdad, Basra, Anbar, Thi Qar, Qadissiyah, Najaf, Missan and Muthana for the rollout of tailor-made digital Educational Management Information System (EMIS) for the Ministry of Education (MoE).

As part of the EMIS roll-out, capacities of the technical staff of the MoE, General Directorates of Education at the Governorates and Schools will be further strengthened to use and maintain the EMIS. EMIS roll-out also includes provision of servers and internet connectivity.

UNESCO is implementing the EMIS in partnership with UNICEF Iraq and is funded by the European Union.

On 30 May, UNESCO and UNICEF visited the Anbar Directorate General of Education to observe the implementation of the Educational Management Information System for Quality Education in Iraq (EMIS4QE).

EMIS4QE project is funded by EU to strengthen the capacities of the Ministry of Education, DG’s of Education at the



Governorates, Districts and schools to manage and monitor the delivery of quality education in 3000 schools in, Karkh-1 and Rasafa 3 in Baghdad, Basra, Anbar, Thi qar, Qadissiya, Najaf, Missan and Muthana.

On 16 May UNESCO Education Team visited the training sessions on Education Management Information System (EMIS) and ICT based Distance Learning in Rasafa–3. To date, 1120 trainees from 560 schools have been trained on EMIS,

and 400 Teachers on ICT based distance learning. Both trainings are part of “System Building and Capacity Strengthening for Quality Education Outcomes” funded by the European Union in Iraq. Under the project, UNESCO has developed the system, training packages and trained the Master Trainers, and UNICEF is conducting the school-level trainings on EMIS and distance learning to ensure equitable and inclusive learning outcomes for all girls and boys in Iraq.

UN-Habitat provided vocational training for 411 men and women

Tel Afar, 18 May 2022 - As a part of the European Union-funded project, “Support for Urban Recovery and Peacebuilding in Western Ninewa,” with its implementing partner, Caritas Czech Republic, UN-Habitat provided vocational training for 411 men and women in Tel Afar District. In celebration of EU Day, 26 women who participated in this vocational training planted 72 trees in Ayadiah. Un-Habitat hopes all those who participated in the vocational training will use their skills to improve their environment in Tel Afar.



UNICEF and the Ministry of Education signed a joint action plan to unite efforts to improve the quality of education in Iraq



Baghdad, 20 May 2022 - UNICEF and the Ministry of Education signed a joint action plan to unite efforts to improve the quality of education in Iraq for the years 2022-2023.

A signing event was held in the presence of His Excellency the Minister of Education, Dr. Ali Hameed Al-Dulaimy, the Deputy Representative of UNICEF

Iraq, Mr. Ken Legins, the Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Falah Al-Qaisy and members of the Steering Committee. The Minister of Education stated, "We welcome UNICEF's support and realize that we need to provide high-quality standards for our children in the field of education."

Mr. Ken Legins added, "We are very pleased to respond to the needs and requests of the Iraqi government and to sign this action plan to activate it in providing formal, non-formal and early childhood education for children aged 3-18 years, including in the humanitarian situations. UNICEF with key development partners will provide the necessary support to the Ministry to enable it to achieve its goals."

Teacher training sessions on E-Pedagogy (distance learning) held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 26 May 2022 - A delegation from the European Union, UNICEF and UNESCO visited Rsafa3 Directorate of Education in Baghdad to monitor teacher training sessions on E-Pedagogy (distance learning), which aims to strengthen access to quality education for all. 1,000 teachers have so far received this training in

Baghdad.

With funding from the European Union (EU International Partnerships), UNICEF and UNESCO Iraq support the Ministry of Education with EMIS, training of teachers and capacity development.



Italy supports UNESCO Iraq to improve access to quality and inclusive education with gender equality for out of school children



Baghdad, 6 June 2022 - UNESCO Iraq welcomes a new generous contribution from the Directorate General for Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, through the Italian Agency for

Development Cooperation (AICS). During the visit to the Alimam Almunazar School today, the Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H. E. Marina Sereni, and the UNESCO Representative to Iraq, Paolo Fontani,

signed a partnership agreement between Italy and UNESCO for the enrollment of out-of-school children in schools in Baghdad and Babil governorates, in the presence of the Director of the AICS Office for Jordan and Iraq, Emilio Cabasino.

With the funding support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, five schools have been rehabilitated in Salah Al Din governorate and eight more schools will benefit from rehabilitation in Baghdad Governorate. More than 17,000 students have been re-enrolled to date.

This new phase of the project aims to provide further 10,000 Out of School Children (OOSC) in Babil and Baghdad governorates with learning opportunities, safer and more conducive learning environment and enhanced quality of education. Special attention will be given to offer equal opportunities to boys and girls to access quality education.

A delegation of Erbil Polytechnic University attended a workshop about Quality Assurance Process

Erbil, 14 June 2022 - A delegation of Erbil Polytechnic University participated in a workshop about the Quality Assurance Process on the 12th and 13th of June 2022 at the Royal Hotel. In collaboration with European Union, UNESCO Organization managed the workshop.

This workshop is a part of (TVET-2) project activities to develop the Quality Assurance Process in which the three Polytechnic University Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaymaniyah, and four Iraqi

Technical universities attended.

The EPU Quality Assurance Board delivered a presentation about (ECTS) and Quality Assurance works in the university and explained the Quality Assurance plan to the audience.

It is worth mentioning that the European Union funds (TVET-2) and UNESCO Organization supervise it. It aims to develop and enhance the Quality Assurance Process and ECTS System in polytechnic universities.



EU and UNDP held a workshop "Corruption Risk Assessment in the Higher Education Sector"

Erbil, 14 June 2022 - Recently EU and UNDP held a workshop, "Corruption Risk Assessment in the Higher Education Sector", for thirty experts of KRI CoI, KRI Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research Ministry, where the participants learnt about the internationally recognised corruption risk assessment tools, the corruption manifestation and global integrity standards in higher education – a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.



UNESCO and the EU strengthen links between public and private sectors in Basra

Baghdad, 26 June 2022 - UNESCO works to strengthen links between the public and private sectors under "Reviving Mosul and Basra Old Cities" project, funded by European Union.

The project aims at facilitating Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) mechanisms between the Vocational Centers in Basra and the private Construction sector for improvement of high quality vocational education and training, to facilitate the establishment of a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mechanism/platform.

As of today, 66 cooperation and partnership agreements for five years have been signed between the Vocational Training Centers in Basra and companies/employers.

The Chief of Education Unit, Santosh Khatri, highlighted the importance of TVET, PPPs for the development of a high quality vocational education and training, because they foster regular communication between employers and TVET providers. Such communication is critical in TVET practice because on one hand, it enables TVET providers to learn more about the skills demanded by the employers, and on the other hand, it

allows the employers to have an input in the curricula of TVET, in addition, it gives them a recruiting tool to employ skilled workers.

The Chief of Culture Unit, Junaid Sorosh-Wali, praised the excellent work done by DoLSA and the vocational training facilities in training 302 young unemployed Basra residents and giving them the construction skills that is required to help restore Basra's historic homes.

UNESCO Project Officer, Bilal Al Hamaydah, emphasized that UNESCO is supporting the Vocational Training Centre in Basra to develop and implement a business linkage programme between the Centers and the employers from the construction sector. The programme will create links to the Public and Private Partnership guide for TVET that was developed under the TVET Reform and the rapid assessment of the local construction sector for Iraq.



66 cooperation and partnership agreements

IOM and WFP participated in Career Festivals in Mosul and Erbil

Mosul, 18 May 2022 - As an inclination towards entrepreneurship grows in Iraq, the ingenuity and drive of Iraqi youth can triumph over the country's struggling economy and limited job prospects — with the right kind of support.

IOM Iraq was pleased to participate in a 3-day Youth Career Festival from May 15-17 at the University of Mosul as part of the European Corner organized by Expertise France in Iraq's Yanhad project.

Senior students and alumni were introduced to the activities of the Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) and the opportunities for support

available to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Mosul and Ninewa Governorate more broadly.

This was made possible thanks to support from the European Union.

WFP participated in a careers fair organized by the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr (UKH) in Erbil alongside several other non-government organizations and private sector companies.

Alumni Tara, Sana, Rezhiar and Andy were more than happy to reconnect with some of their academic acquaintances, while also interacting with attendees who expressed interest in WFP Iraq and the work it does to

help those in need.

WFP staff also connected with young driven people at UKH and elaborated about jobs and development opportunities.



UNFPA and the Ambassador of Finland visited Al-Zahraa Centre in Basra

Basra, 22 May 2022 - UNFPA and the Ambassador of Finland visited Al-Zahraa Centre in Basra within the framework of the Finnish Government support to the vulnerable youth in Iraq. UNFPA is proud collaborating with female leaders in Al-Zahra Youth Centre for young women and girls and the Directorate of Youth and Sports to change the lives of girls by providing them with life skills education and livelihood opportunities.



The Regional high-level meeting on “Young People’s Learning, Skilling and Transition to Decent Work” was held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 24 May 2022 - The Regional High-Level Meeting on Young People's Learning, Skilling and Transition to Decent Work was co-organized by UNICEF MENA, International Labour Organization, UNFPA, and United Nations Development Programme - UNDP on 23-24 May.

Youth from different backgrounds came together from all over the region and exchanged good practices and their vision to support other young people to transition from learning to decent work.

Ali, who represented the Iraq delegation shares their learning:

“The future of these countries all depends on the youth. We constantly need the energies and ideas from the youth for the success and progress of the countries that participated in the conference. We put forward our ideas, visions and energies to support and invest in Iraq and the rest of the countries participating in the conference in order to create a healthy work environment for young people to build their societies.”

Amna, who represented Iraq shares her learning:

“We are not different, we have the same challenges, the same difficulties, but as

youth we showed that we can deal with these challenges in different ways. It was a great opportunity to meet peers, share ideas, and make friends. Maybe one day we will create some business together.”



A three-day life-skills training on handicrafts held in Basra

Basra, 30 May 2022 - Young entrepreneurs from Julia Dolls and young girls from Basra's Al-Zahraa Youth Centre for young people had the chance to exchange information and build friendships during a three-day life-skills training on handicrafts. They learned how to make dolls, bears and other accessories with knitting. These energetic young girls will conduct further training at the Al-Zahraa Centre to teach more young

women and girls these skills and encourage them to open their own businesses.

UNFPA strengthens and empowers young women and girls to acquire life skills that will enable them to be self-reliance and productive.



Iraq launches, with the support of UNICEF, the National Strategy on Early Childhood Development



Baghdad, 26 May 2022 - The Government of Iraq, in collaboration with UNICEF, launched today the National Strategy on Early Childhood Development (ECD). The Strategy represents a comprehensive and coherent approach to ECD and acknowledges different stages in child development up to age 8 years. It puts accountability on relevant authorities, providers, and communities to ensure the promotion and protection of the needs of young children.

During the launch, UNICEF OIC Representative, Janet Kamau noted that: “The new National Strategy on ECD is closely aligned with the global Nurturing Care Framework, developed by UNICEF and other partners, and will be key for benefiting Iraqi children in two ways: first in relation to early life influences on their health during the critical first 1,000 days, from conception and continuing through at least the first two years of life, and

second through a stronger focus, up to age 8, on maintaining growth, ensuring psychosocial and physical well-being and early childhood education (ECE).”

In recent years, Iraq has made progress on key child survival and nutrition indicators, but progress on access to ECE and sensitive child-rearing has been slower. Participation in formal ECE programs such as kindergarten is below 10%, and almost 90% of children aged 1-14 years have been exposed to some type of violence. This new ECD Strategy represents a major milestone on the road to develop the “thrive agenda”, with a focus on healthy development and well-being for Iraq’s children in a safe and stimulating environment, giving them the strongest foundation for educational achievement, successful socialization, and a long and productive working life. The Strategy is based on the vision of a safe, stable, and happy childhood within a supportive family, society, and

a safe environment to ensure the best opportunities for children well-being in Iraq. In addition, the executive framework of the ECD strategy has been developed covering the main five areas related to the rollout of the Strategy: management and planning; quality; curricula; training; family, children, and community participation. The framework also includes the adoption of basic goals for each field linked to the ministries involved in this strategy.

This new strategy will need to be matched with new investment to overcome related challenges. For example, while there is a national network of primary health care facilities and high rates of skilled birth attendance and immunization, the ECE network remains scarce, and limited priority is given to early stimulation at domestic level. UNICEF acknowledges the additional efforts of the Government of Iraq in the National Development Plan 2018-2022, but the goal of increasing ECE coverage to 30% by 2031 is ambitious and will require a higher budget share in coming years.

To ensure access to ECD services for all children, UNICEF, WFP, and the ILO, funded by the European Union, are working to ensure that children from the most vulnerable groups are prioritized through social protection programs, aiming to improve access to early child education (ECE).

With the additional support of other partners like the World Bank and Germany, and in coordination with UNESCO and other UN agencies, UNICEF will work to support the Government of Iraq on the implementation of the National Strategy on ECD, from conception until 8 years of age.

“Youth Voices in SDGs” is an initiative implemented by UNDP that raises awareness on the national development agenda

Basra, 30 May 2022 - “Youth Voices in SDGs” is an initiative implemented by UNDP in #Iraq in collaboration with youth groups and a number of Iraqi universities to provide a space to discuss how development initiatives accelerate achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The initiative raises awareness on the national development agenda. With the participation of 100 young women and men, the first event was

launched at Basra University on 30 May.

Participants have presented their campaign proposals on topics at the local level including environment and climate change, gender equality and justice, good governance and social cohesion.

A specialized technical committee will review the initiatives, with campaign implementation beginning in September 2022.



On this World Day against Child Labour, ILO and UNICEF call for joint work among all stakeholders to create a protective and inclusive environment for children in Iraq



Baghdad, 12 June 2022 - On this World Day Against Child Labour, with the slogan “Universal Social Protection to End Child Labour”, ILO and UNICEF are calling on stakeholders to work together to create a protective and inclusive environment for children in Iraq. Children make up the majority of 4.5 million Iraqis who are at risk of poverty due to impact of conflict and COVID-19, with one in two children (48.8%) facing high risk of multiple deprivations in education, health, living conditions, and financial security. Disruption to services and the adoption of negative coping mechanisms by poor households are set to increase deprivation and increase inequality. This will particularly impact the most vulnerable children – those affected by conflict and displacement, including in host communities.

Child labour has been on the rise in Iraq in recent years due to armed conflict, displacement, socio-economic challenges, and the pandemic; children were moved to remote learning, increasing the risk of drop out from school and entering the workforce. Scaling-up social protection and promoting equal access to quality social services, with a focus on education, health, and child protection are central policy directions to respond to drivers of child labour.

The Fifth Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour held in Durban last month concluded with a call for urgent action, stating that “the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, armed conflicts, and food, humanitarian and environmental crises threaten to reverse years of progress against child labour”.

Child labour, especially its worst forms, deprives children of their childhood and their education. It increases their risks to serious hazards, illness, and

exploitation.

On World Day Against Child Labour the ILO and UNICEF reiterate their partnership with the Government of Iraq to respond effectively and accelerate reforms to protect vulnerable children and their families from the worst forms of child labour and promote child well-being.

Iraq is a signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It has also ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), which are vital in the fight against child labour.

Furthermore, Iraq’s recent participation in the Durban Conference was encouraging, displaying strong national interest towards tackling the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Key in tackling child labour has been the development of an ILO-supported Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS), which is funded by the European Regional Development and Protection Programme for Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq (RDPP II) and implemented with the Government of Iraq. The monitoring system identifies vulnerable children who are in or at risk of child labour and provides them with needed support and services. It focuses on access to education and psycho-social services and providing the children’s parents and caretakers with opportunities that can improve their employability and livelihood. Also, ILO and UNICEF provide age-appropriate skills development programmes for 3,781 young people (10-24 years) including employability skills and educating targeted young people on labour law and human rights standards at work.

After the successful piloting of the system in Ninewa and Duhok, the ILO and UNICEF are jointly supporting the

government with capacity building and technical support to adopt and implement the system across the country and specifically in areas where child labour is most prevalent.

In addition, the ILO-RDPP II partnership has helped set up and revive centres in Mosul, Ninewa’s capital, and Dohuk to provide children with support tools to catch up on education and return to school. These centres provide a safe space for children who have been withdrawn from child labour, where they can engage in age-appropriate activities that can help them return to formal education.

Since 2021, ILO, UNICEF, and World Food Programme (WFP), with the support of the European Union and in partnership with the Government of Iraq are implementing Social Protection Reform programme to improve the quality and coverage of government-funded social protection programmes for the poorest and most vulnerable children and families. This will also reduce the risk of household economic hardship and children falling out of school and into the child labour force.

On this occasion, it is important to recognize the imperative of a multi-sectoral response, with a focus on scaling up social protection including social security to the most vulnerable families, and increasing investments in services such as education, health, child protection. This should ensure all children in Iraq enjoy equal opportunities to learn, thrive and live in a safe and friendly environment. This is vital to enable children to develop skills and imagination and prepare them to deal with the new challenges of the world in its current stages of transition.



United Nations Career Journey Podcast - Sanaa Kareem, Associate Public Information Officer (UNAMI), Baghdad



New York/Baghdad 15 May 2022 - Welcome to the United Nations Career Journey podcast brought to you by the UN Secretariat and the UN Development Programme.

In this series, we interviewed colleagues from around the world, working for the United Nations in many different ways. We asked about their career paths, and how they got to their current positions. But we also explore what career satisfaction means to them...what keeps them inspired and motivated in their daily work.

My name is Kate Doyle and today we'll hear from Sanaa Kareem, an Associate Public Information Officer based in Baghdad, at the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, also called UNAMI. UNAMI is a political mission that provides advice and assistance to the government and people of Iraq, on advancing political dialogue, reconciliation efforts, elections, human rights, gender equality, and much more.

Welcome, Sanaa, and thank you so much for joining me today.

Thank you Kate for having me.

So to get started, could you share a bit about yourself with our listeners?

Yes first of all, my name is Sanaa Kareem. I have the Iraqi nationality. And I live in Iraq, working for the United Nations, UNAMI since July 2010. When I joined the UN in 2010, I started as an Information Technology Assistant. And then I moved after finishing my degree in translation, I applied for another job with the UNAMI in the political office. I worked (there) also for two and a half years until I joined the public information office as an Associate Public Information Officer, in addition to my

other duties as the UNAMI Youth Advisor since 2012.

So you've had very different roles over a relatively short amount of time in the past 10 or 12 years. Before I ask you more about your various roles I wonder if you could share a bit about your own personal background. I know you're from Iraq, which is a beautiful country that has also seen a lot of strife in recent decades. I'm curious, what was it like growing up there?

I was born in 1981. The first thing I remember was the Iraq-Iran war. I left with my family — we left the country when I was a baby. We left to the UK for my father to finish his PhD degree in psychology so for five years. I still remember when we came back in 1990, the other war started. So, I've lived in Baghdad ever since. Growing up in Iraq- in Baghdad particular — has a mix of good and bad memories.

The difficult situation was like you have to grow up and get used to that you have been from one war to another. And you don't know what you what's going to happen at any moment. So you don't know... we were just living our life day by day. The security situation was tense at that time and still is and other things and what I have remembered about my childhood memories....the good part is the family gatherings...playing in the streets. Which is not the case right now because girls are getting harassed more than before. This might side this might sound odd, but when the 1990 war started, we left Baghdad toward other provinces despite the sound of bombings and bad news, but as children we really enjoyed our gathering and long nights together.

And what I still remember that it was near the Hemrin mountains. And every day, we sit together from morning. And because we don't have studies...we don't have any other

commitments...and we were children. So we were just having fun not thinking about the war that much. While our families and parents were like, living day-by-day... tense, thinking what's going to happen, what's next, not like us.

And how did the wars affect your parents' ability to raise a family and keep jobs?

At that time, we were seven girls in our family and one boy only. And we were still young. And my father was the only one working. My father is a college professor with a PhD degree in psychology. And he worked at the university — like his entire life. But the money that he gained was not enough for him to feed the family for a week. So he had to leave the country for two years to work in Libya, as a college professor there. But after 2003, when he came back there was a wave of assassinations of academics. And my father was targeted three times. In two of the times, he lost his deputies. And the third time he got injured and lost one of his security guards. And I still remember one of the times they came to our house and they tried to break in and to kill my father.

Oh my goodness, that sounds absolutely terrifying. I'm so glad that he's okay? He's in good health today.

Yes.

Could you tell us about how your personal history might have shaped how you see the United Nations and your career there?

So, growing up in Iraq, made me see so many things that made me who I am. That was before joining the UN. But during the 11 years working for the UN, it changed me to a better person — my personality and career-wise — especially working as the Youth Advisor. I met so many people with different backgrounds, from different countries. And at the same time in my role as the youth advisor, I used to meet Iraqi young people outside. So to many other people, especially the females, I was a role model to them. I didn't know about that, until they told me like, three or four girls told me that you are our role model, we want to be like you when we grow up. So I always imagined myself working something that suits my personality — which is the case right now, I mean, working as the Youth Advisor — getting to interact

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with other people, young people and working in the media section.

It sounds like your role as youth advisor and becoming a role model for young women there has been really meaningful for you. Could you tell us a little bit more about that? What is involved in your role as Youth Advisor today?

So before talking about my role, we have to understand that the Iraqi population- half of it is more than more than half of it consists of the Iraqi youth. So the post-war affected the young people in a very bad way. UNAMI has in its in mandate to support the Iraqi youth. So in this position, my role was to advocate, support and pass their voices to the senior management. And I also advise senior management and other forces within the mission on youth issues. So we worked on many projects, having good engagement in the political process, social cohesion and other things related.

I'm really happy to be part of this. I created a group working with the UNICEF... it's called the Friends of UNICEF. It's a volunteer youth group. So I tried to attract as much as female as possible and to be part of this volunteer group. And I worked with them like more than four years before handing them over to UNICEF. I was really, really excited to work with the females and the males as well. But, but when they see me doing things that they were shy, or they were like, they don't have the courage to do it. I was happy to be that person that who supported them and show them that I can lead and you can follow. We can be all a team together as well. And I'm still in contact with the young people. So every year we have a gathering and each one has now their own career. I hear about several young females and what they did in life. I'm satisfied about it. But I have a lot to do more.

Today you are an Associate Public Information Officer for UNAMI, What does your average day look like?

I do a media monitoring report that covers the news in Iraq... all over Iraq...we usually do two a day, one in the evening and one day in the afternoon. A very thorough, a very detailed media monitoring report. At the same time, we respond to emails, we have an account — UNAMI has an account, to respond to emails from the

Iraqi community, or anybody that sends any kind of questions or queries to the UN. And we post on social media accounts: Twitter, Facebook... so social media accounts — we take care of them, do the kind of translations when necessary, from Arabic to English, or English to Arabic. In addition to the things that I mostly like...is going out for outreach activities are being invited to activities with the young people, then writing a story, a web story. Several web stories I wrote have been posted on our social media accounts and on our UNAMI web site as well.

And which achievements in the last few years would you say that you're most proud of?

I joined the Committee on writing the Youth Peace and Security handbook. I was nominated...contacted by FBA — the Folke Bernadotte Academy to be part of this committee. I'm really proud to be one of them. It will be delivered to the YPS — the Youth Peace and Security advisors and to support their work in their missions or agencies...with all the details that have to support them and all the details about the Youth Peace and Security agenda and also the Security Council resolution on youth.

When you faced times at work, in which you're not feeling so motivated, or engaged, we all have those times. What do you do to help yourself when you're going through that difficult period?

There were times I really gave up on myself, especially at the beginning. To be honest, I'm a positive person...I try to be optimistic all the time. But sometimes you just get fed up. I mean, we have these accumulated memories of war after war, security situations, tense kidnappings, assassinations... everything. So I tried as much as I can so this will not affect my daily life and my work. I tried to put each one in a different corner. So... my friends and family were there to support me. So also, knowing that this is not the end of the world and everything in life has a solution helped me motivate myself...to keep looking for more challenges in life. Going out with friends, having dinner gatherings, try to have fun as much as possible. These are the these are the things that helped to support me on a daily basis in difficult times.

And would you say as a woman, it's even more difficult to navigate one's

career, especially the low points?

Unfortunately, yes, it's really difficult for a woman — me as an Iraqi woman. But at the same time, me working for the UN, we always support female candidates to apply. It's written in the job title and the job vacancy, sorry. So but at the same time, what I do is like when they whenever there's a job vacancy open, I asked my female friends, I tell them apply, apply, you have to apply. You can see so many women in so many positions in the UN, within the mission, with the UN country team and even in the other governmental institutions. Things are changing slowly but in a positive way.

Now, I'm curious, where would you like to be career wise in the future, say in the next five years or so?

I actually I have two dreams that I want to fulfill in my life. I haven't done it yet, but I will. One of them is working in an international position to help those in need, not just the people in my country. I want to gain knowledge from other people from other countries and pass what I learned in life, in the past 20 years living here in Iraq, and show them that you're not alone, we are here to support you. So this is one of my dreams is to go for international posting in these countries.

I would love to work in Turkey. This is one of the places... I've been there several times. I'm trying to learn their language. The other country that I want to work in is South Africa. I want to see the people there. I've heard many stories...so about the people, about the landscape and everything.

My other dream, which is not related to the UN, but having my own specialty cafe, which is operated by females.

I like the smell of coffee. It really moves my senses. It's makes me relax all the time. I was thinking about having this cafe a couple of years ago, once I entered a cafe in New York. And the minute you enter that café — so it was a florist and a cafe at the same time — the minute you enter, you get disconnected from the outside world, the smell of the flowers, and green, green atmosphere and the smell of the coffee. This is what I want. This is what I want to think about every single day when I walk into my cafe. I want people to feel the same when they come. And I will tell you that last year when there was a lock-down and we working we

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were working from home. I learned how to make coffee — to be a barista. I asked one of my friends — he’s a barista at one of the cafes in Baghdad — I told him I need you to teach me how to do that. So I used to go like once a week, every Friday. I’d go to the cafe early in the morning. And we were following the steps one by one... I really, really enjoyed it. And I want to pass these senses and feelings of relaxation to other people here in Baghdad.

It sounds like you have very specific dreams and they’re very different from each other. But they both involve a foray into a new country or a new business and being part of a community there

and helping others. I love that you trained as a barista during the pandemic — that sounded like a lot of fun. My last question for you Sanaa — what makes you proud about working for the United Nations?

Its diversity. You can see people from all over the world. It’s a mini global place to work in. I mean, people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, all working together. They have one cause — one thing to do is to support the country that they are working in and to support their roles as United Nations staff. They are there knowing that they have the ability to make a change in the countries that they are operating in. It’s not much, but at least it’s step

by step they’re taking. and this is what I want to do in the future. So its diversity in the main place, first position...and I would like to work with people like who are really open-minded to accept each other and this is what I found in the United Nations.

Well, so not thank you so much for having this interesting conversation with me today. I really appreciate it and I learned a lot as well. And let’s keep in touch.

I hope that as well. Okay, thank you for having me. We’ll keep in touch inshallah.



UNAMI sends warmest wishes to Iraqis on Eid al-Fitr, calls for an urgent end to the political stalemate

Baghdad, 02 May 2022 – We extend our best wishes to you and your loved ones on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr.

On this blessed holiday, we reiterate the importance of overcoming the political stalemate, in the interest of all Iraqis.

Significant domestic vulnerabilities are being compounded by the ongoing effects of the pandemic and global geopolitical tensions. A sincere, collective will to resolve the political differences must now prevail for the country to move forward and meet the needs of its citizens.

While the United Nations remains a partner to all Iraqis, we urge Iraq’s political leaders to assume their responsibilities, accelerate the

government formation process, observe the constitutional timeframes and thus to agree - without further delay - on a government that is able to, swiftly and

decisively, address Iraq’s long list of outstanding domestic priorities.

We wish you and your loved ones peace, stability, prosperity and good health.



Al-Amal Iraq celebrates 30th anniversary

Kirkuk, 4 June 2022 - UNAMI Kirkuk attended today the 30th anniversary of al-Amal Iraq, which was celebrated with traditional music, dancing and speeches by founding members of al-Amal, local officials, women’s rights activists and survivors of gender-based violence. In its speech, UNAMI HRO expressed its deep respect for the grassroots work done by this NGO in actively protecting women and children against domestic violence as well as lobbying for women to gain access to decision-making processes and higher-level administrative positions in Kirkuk. HRO also presented the Director of al-Amal

Kirkuk, Surood Ahmed, with a plaque inscribed with the 1st Article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

in the Arabic and Sumerian languages, in recognition of her long-standing human rights work.

