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Iraq resort shelling a 'shocking disregard for civilian life', UN envoy says



New York, 26 July 2022 - The deadly shelling of a mountain resort in northern Iraq last week represented a shocking disregard for civilian life and international obligations on civilian protection, the UN Special Representative for the country, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, told an emergency session of the Security Council on Tuesday.

Ambassadors convened late in the afternoon New York time, to discuss the 20 July attack in Zahko, a city in the Kurdistan region near the border with Türkiye, in an area where Turkish forces are conducting counter-terrorism operations against outlawed militant groups.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert provided a timeline of developments since five artillery rounds struck the Parkha resort, which was packed with visitors, including children. Nine people were killed and 33 injured.

Precautions disregarded

Iraq attributed the attack to Turkish forces and called for an investigation, but Ankara issued a press release stating that it is "against all kinds of attacks targeting civilians" and "ready to take all steps to reveal the truth", she reported.

"This horrific attack on a well-known and clearly identifiable tourist site demonstrates a shocking disregard for civilian life and for the universally accepted standards of international humanitarian and human rights law which seek to protect civilians," said Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert, speaking via videolink.

"While all parties to any conflict must

take all feasible precautions to avoid harm to civilians at all times, this was clearly not adhered to."

The UN envoy said she spoke with Iraq's Prime Minister on Monday, who again emphasized the importance of conducting a transparent and thorough investigation into the incident, whether independently, or jointly.

"It is vital, he said, to put a stop to speculations, denials, misunderstandings and rising tensions," she told ambassadors. "Meanwhile, I understand that Türkiye is also ready to address the issue jointly, with Iraq, in order to determine exactly what happened."

Attacks must cease

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert stressed that it is of the greatest importance that all attacks on Iraqi territory cease.

"Such aggression not only recklessly heightens national and regional tensions but also causes, as we have seen, grave human tragedies," she said.

"As I have said many times in past years, Iraq rightfully rejects the notion that it can be treated as an arena for external and regional rivalries - as an arena where neighbours, and any other actor for that matter, routinely, and with impunity, violate its sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Iraq: Attack against sovereignty

Iraq has categorically condemned the attack, the country's Foreign Minister, Fouad Hussein, told the Council.

"This is a military aggression against

the sovereignty and security of Iraq and its territorial integrity. It is a violation and a threat to regional and international peace and security," he said, speaking through an interpreter.

Mr. Hussein urged ambassadors to adopt a resolution that calls for Türkiye to withdraw its forces from all Iraqi territory.

The aggression must also be strongly condemned and the perpetrators held accountable, he added, while an international independent inquiry should be established to look into the incident.

The Foreign Minister further called for the situation between Iraq and Türkiye to be included on the Security Council's agenda, and for the Turkish government to provide recompense for the damage caused in the wake of the aggression.

Türkiye: Terrorists breaching sovereignty

Öncü Keçeli, Türkiye's Deputy Permanent Representative, said his country was in contact with the Iraqi authorities and the Kurdistan regional authorities immediately after the attack.

"We made it clear that Türkiye is ready to take all the steps to unveil the truth," he said.

"Therefore, we believe that this meeting is very important to set the record straight - not only with the members of the Council, but also with our brothers and sisters in Iraq."

Mr. Keçeli said Türkiye has always maintained its strong support for Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity, stability and prosperity, adding that any claims to the contrary are untrue and ill-intended.

"Let us make it very clear. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq are breached by terrorist organizations, not by Türkiye."

By UN News

The text of the briefing of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, at this meeting starts at page 3.

In this edition ...

Mr. Claudio Cordone of Italy assumed his responsibilities as Deputy Special Representative for Iraq



Baghdad, 14 August 2022 - Mr. Claudio Cordone of Italy assumed his responsibilities as Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) on 14 August 2022.

Appointed by Secretary-General António Guterres on 11 July 2022, Mr. Cordone brings to this position more than 35 years of experience in international relations, international human rights and humanitarian law, including as Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Lebanon, where he has been serving since 2017. During this time, he also briefly served as the interim Resident and Humanitarian

Coordinator in Lebanon.

Previously, he served as Director of the Human Rights, Transitional Justice and Rule of Law Division with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), as well as Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the country (2013-2017). He worked with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) and spent over 25 years with Amnesty International in multiple capacities, including a six-month tenure as interim Secretary General in 2010. From 1997 to 1998, he served as Chief of the Human Rights Office with the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH).

Mr. Cordone holds a law degree from Sapienza University of Rome and completed a Master of Arts in Arab Studies at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. Mr. Cordone speaks English, French, Italian and Arabic.

Secretary-General appoints Mr. Ghulam Isaczai of Afghanistan as Deputy Special Representative and Resident Coordinator for Iraq



New York, 19 July 2022 - United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres today announced the appointment of Ghulam Mohammad Isaczai of Afghanistan as his new Deputy Special Representative for Iraq in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and Resident Coordinator. Mr. Isaczai will also serve as the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator.

Mr. Isaczai succeeds Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano of Germany to whom the Secretary-General is grateful for her leadership and dedicated service during her tenure.

Mr. Isaczai brings to this position more than 28 years of experience in preventive diplomacy and complex humanitarian, development, recovery and peace-building settings. He is currently serving as the ad interim Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Jordan since January 2022. Previously, he served as Afghanistan's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York. Prior to this, he served as Resident Coordinator in Azerbaijan (2016-2021) and in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (2013-2015), posts he combined with the positions of Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). From 1997-2013, he served in various policy, development and humanitarian positions with the United Nations system in Germany, Nepal, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and Iraq, including as UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Nepal and Chief of Programme Division with the United Nations Volunteers in Bonn.

Mr. Isaczai holds a Master of Arts degree in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School, Tufts University in Boston and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Midland University in Nebraska. Mr. Isaczai speaks English, Arabic, Pashto, Persian and Urdu.

Staggering scale of grave violations against children in conflict revealed in new UNICEF analysis

New York/Geneva/Baghdad, 28 June 2022 – Iraq is one of the top eight countries in the world with more children in detention as a result of armed conflict, according to the latest UNICEF report ... *More on page 20.*

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

SRSB Hennis-Plasschaert briefs UN Security Council on the latest developments in Iraq

New York, 26 July 2022 – Today, the United Nations Security Council had its 9100th session and discussed the situation concerning Iraq.

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

“Mr. President,

Distinguished members of the Security Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on recent tragic events in Zakho District, Dohuk Governorate, resulting in the loss of nine civilian lives and injuring 33 others.

In my most recent briefing to this Council, I questioned - and not for the first time - the use of “shelling and missiles as the new normal for Iraq”, warning that this was a “very risky way to advance interests, and one which further weakens the State of Iraq”.

Well, here is what we know so far.

In the early afternoon of 20 July, five rounds of artillery struck Parkha resort. This resort is a well-known tourist destination. And as would be expected at this time of year, it was packed with visitors - including children.

The first round impacted on an unpopulated hillside overlooking Parkha. However, the next rounds hit the centre of the resort, killing - as I said - nine civilians (including three children, one of whom was a one-year-old infant) and injuring 33. Eleven of the injured have reportedly undergone surgery and three remain in critical condition.

Immediately following the attack, Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi established a committee. The same day, this committee visited the site of



the attack to witness the devastation, to collect evidence and to engage with witnesses and local authorities.

Based on its assessment of the evidence collected, the Government of Iraq, in the clearest of terms, attributed the tragic events to Turkish armed forces. In the meantime, the Turkish Foreign Ministry issued a press release, stating that “Türkiye is against all kinds of attacks targeting civilians”, that it “is ready to take all steps to reveal the truth”, inviting “Iraqi government officials not to make statements under the influence of the rhetoric and propaganda of the treacherous terrorist organization and to cooperate in bringing the real perpetrators of this tragic incident into light”.

The next day, on social media, the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad stated, “we join our condolences for our Iraqi brothers who were martyred at the hands of the terrorist organization PKK”.

Meanwhile, also on 20 July, the PKK issued a statement denying presence in the area, blaming Türkiye for the attack.

Mr. President,

In response to the tragic events, Iraq’s National Security Council held an emergency session the same day. This Council strongly condemned the “Turkish attack” and rejected the use of Iraqi territory as a base to attack neighbouring countries and “settle accounts”.

Among other directives issued, the Foreign Minister was tasked with preparing an integrated file on the “repeated Turkish attacks” against Iraq as well as to summon the Turkish Ambassador and recall the Iraqi Chargé d’Affaires from Ankara, without sending a new ambassador to Türkiye.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that Iraq’s government would “resort to the highest levels of diplomatic response”, including the UN Security Council.

On 21 July, Iraqi leaders from across the political spectrum held a high-level meeting and issued a joint statement condemning the “Turkish attack” and “supporting the procedures for international complaints”.

On 23 July, Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi met with KRG Prime Minister Masrour Barzani. In a joint statement issued after the meeting, the two sides expressed their “strong condemnation of the Turkish aggressions on Iraqi territory”.

Also on 23 July, the Council of



SRSJ Hennis-Plasschaert briefs UN Security Council on the latest developments in Iraq *(continued)*

Representatives convened to discuss the incident in the presence of the Foreign and Defence Ministers, the Army Chief of Staff as well as the Deputy Commander of Joint Operations.

In his presentation to parliament, the Foreign Minister noted that more than 22,700 Turkish violations of Iraqi sovereignty had been recorded since 2018. He also stated that the Foreign Ministry had submitted 296 memoranda of protest against Turkish "interference" since 2018.

During the same meeting, the parliamentary Security and Defence committee recommended the expulsion of PKK elements from Iraq, the withdrawal of all Turkish forces, the redeployment of federal forces along the border with Türkiye, the abolition of security agreements - if any - with Türkiye, and a review of the defence budget to enhance its military capabilities.

In essence: while no one wishes for further escalation, Iraq demands that Türkiye withdraws its forces from all Iraqi lands and calls for an investigation.

Mr. President,

This horrific attack on a well-known and clearly identifiable tourist site



demonstrates a shocking disregard for civilian life and for the universally accepted standards of international humanitarian and human rights law which seek to protect civilians. While all parties to any conflict must take all feasible precautions to avoid harm to civilians at all times, this was clearly not adhered to.

In my conversation with Iraq's Prime Minister yesterday, he once again emphasized the importance of a transparent and thorough investigation: independent or jointly. It is vital, he said, to put a stop to speculations, denials, misunderstandings and rising tensions. Meanwhile, I do understand that Türkiye is also ready to address

the issue jointly, with Iraq, in order to determine exactly what happened.

In conclusion, Mr. President, and as I have said many times in past years, Iraq rightfully rejects the notion that it can be treated as an arena for external and regional rivalries - as an arena where neighbours, and any other actor for that matter, routinely, and with impunity, violate its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Indeed, it is of the greatest importance that all attacks on Iraqi territory cease. Such aggression not only recklessly heightens national and regional tensions but also causes, as we have seen, grave human tragedies.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Security

UNAMI condemns attack in Duhok causing civilian casualties

Baghdad, 20 July 2022 - The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) strongly condemns the deadly artillery shelling today in the Zakho district of Dohuk Governorate, Kurdistan Region, that reportedly killed 8 civilians and injured 23 others. The Mission expresses its deepest condolences to the families of the victims and wishes the injured a speedy recovery.

Civilians are once again suffering the indiscriminate effects of explosive weapons. Under international law, attacks must not be directed at the civilian population. UNAMI therefore calls for a thorough investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the attack, and emphasizes that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq must be respected at all times.

As UN Iraq Special Representative Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert stated in her latest briefing to the UN Security Council: "What are we looking at? 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". UNAMI urges all parties to cease these violations without delay.

The Secretary-General condemns the deadly artillery shelling yesterday in the Zakho district of Dohuk Governorate

New York, 21 July 2022 - Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on deadly artillery shelling in Iraq by Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesman for the Secretary-General:

"The Secretary-General condemns

the deadly artillery shelling yesterday in the Zakho district of Dohuk Governorate, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, that reportedly killed eight civilians and injured 23 others. The Secretary-General calls for a prompt and thorough investigation into the incident to determine the

circumstances surrounding the attack and to ensure accountability.

The Secretary-General expresses his deepest condolences to the families of the victims and wishes the injured a speedy recovery."

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas must STOP - UNICEF strongly condemns the killing of three children in Iraq

Baghdad, 20 July 2022 — Statement attributable to Ms. Sheema SenGupta, UNICEF Representative in Iraq:

"At least three children were killed and several wounded in Zakho (Iraq), today. This is the devastating proof of the need to stop the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. UNICEF is deeply troubled by the killing of three girls, one 1-year-old, one 12-year-old and one 16-year-old, in the attack today in Dohuk Governorate in Iraq.

"UNICEF condemns all acts of violence against children and joins the families in mourning the killing of their

children and wishes those wounded a fast recovery. Being a victim of, witnessing or fearing violence should never be part of any child's experience.

"All children in Iraq deserve to live their lives without the constant threat of violence exacerbated by the use of explosive weapons. UNICEF calls on all parties to fulfill their obligations, under international law, to protect children at all times and without delay.

"The usage of explosive weapons in populated areas has been increasing in Iraq. This attack follows a recent one on 15 June in Sinjar area in Ninewa

Governorate, that killed one 12-year-old boy.

"These attacks put children's lives at stake not only today but threatening the lives of future generations. In the last five years, at least 519 children were killed or maimed by explosive ordnance.

"Once again, 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 of violence at all times."

Security Council press statement on attack in the Dohuk Province of Iraq

New York, 25 July 2022 - The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the attack in Dohuk province of Iraq on 20 July, 2022. The attack resulted in at least nine civilian deaths, including children.

The members of the Security Council expressed their deepest sympathy and

condolences to the families of the victims and to the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, wished a speedy and full recovery to those who were injured, and expressed their support for the Iraqi authorities in their investigations.

The members of the Security Council urged all Member States to cooperate

actively with the Government of Iraq and all other relevant authorities in support of these investigations.

The members of the Security Council reiterated their support for the independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, democratic process and prosperity of Iraq.

Political Situation

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 27 July 2022 - The right to peaceful protest is essential to democracy. However, it goes hand in hand with respect for state institutions and the safeguarding of public and private property. It is imperative that protests remain peaceful and in compliance with the law.

Note to Correspondents on Protests in Iraq

New York, 28 July 2022 - The Secretary-General is closely following developments in Iraq. He notes that freedom of expression and peaceful assembly are fundamental rights that must be respected at all times. The UN

has consistently called for demonstrations in Iraq to be peaceful and on the security services to exercise restraint. It is further incumbent upon all security actors to cooperate with the Government of Iraq in its efforts to ensure peaceful assembly

and the protection of all state institutions, diplomatic missions and personnel in Iraq, and to deal with any verified security breaches in an effective and appropriate manner, while guaranteeing full respect for human rights.

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 30 July 2022 - The ongoing escalation is deeply concerning. Voices of reason and wisdom are critical to prevent further violence. All actors are encouraged to de-escalate in the interest of all Iraqis.

The Secretary-General is following with concern the ongoing protests in Iraq

New York, 30 July 2022 - Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on continued protests in Iraq:

"The Secretary-General is following with concern the ongoing protests in Iraq today, during which many people have been injured.

He notes that freedom of expression and

peaceful assembly are fundamental rights that must be respected at all times. He appeals to all relevant actors to take immediate steps to de-escalate the situation, avoid any further violence, and ensure the protection of peaceful protesters and state institutions.

The Secretary-General urges all parties

and actors to rise above their differences and form, through peaceful and inclusive dialogue, an effective national government that will be able to deliver on longstanding demands for reform, without further delay.

Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for the Secretary-General

UNAMI welcomes calls for national dialogue: leaders must prioritize national interest to find urgent solutions to crisis

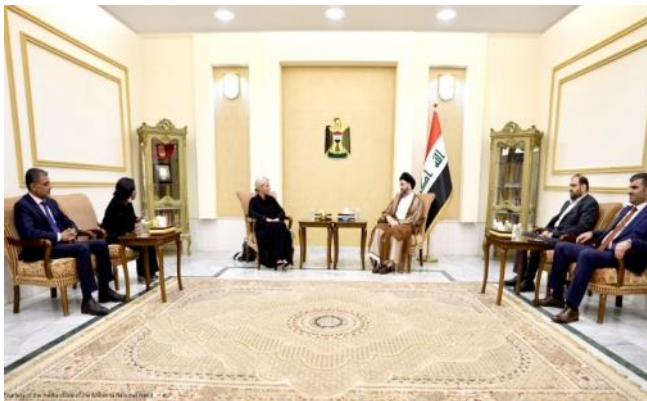
Baghdad, 3 August 2022 - In recent months and weeks, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has consistently called for dialogue as the most effective way out of the protracted political crisis. Meaningful dialogue among all Iraqi parties is now more urgent than ever, as recent events have demonstrated the rapid risk of escalation in this tense political climate. While parties assert the importance of democratic basics such as constitutional compliance and respect for state institutions, these are increasingly not observed. Their failure to move forward has had a clear adverse effect on public trust. No party or group can claim that the

crisis does not involve them or affect them. The need to find solutions through an all-inclusive dialogue is evident. In its absence, the state of Iraq will continue to be dominated by competing interests, leading to further instability, with the people paying the price. Such a scenario is simply intolerable. Within this context, UNAMI welcomes recent calls for national dialogue, and commends the expressions of support from across the political spectrum. We appeal to all actors to commit, actively engage and agree on solutions without delay. Moreover, moving from words to deeds will now prove essential. Iraq cannot afford another national dialogue to go

in vain. Iraqis do not need continued power struggles or stand-offs. They need solutions, and a commitment to implementing them, to draw their country out of its political crisis.

Iraq is facing an extensive list of outstanding domestic issues: it is in desperate need of economic reform, effective public service delivery as well as a federal budget - to name a few. Hence, it is past time for political stakeholders to assume their responsibilities and act in the national interest.

The United Nations stands, as always, ready to support and assist.



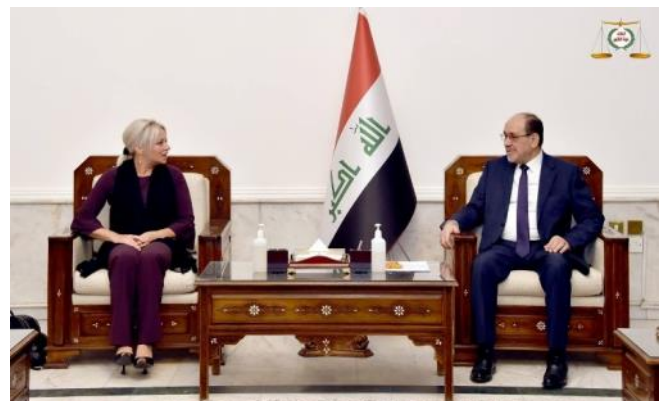
Baghdad, 19 July 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with the leader of the Al-Hikma National Trend, Mr. Sayyed Ammar al-Hakim. They discussed recent political developments in the country, with emphasis on government formation. Photo courtesy of the Al-Hikma National Trend.



Baghdad, 20 July 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with Dr. Haider Al-Abadi. They discussed the political situation in the country, with emphasis on government formation efforts.



Baghdad, 20 July 2022- The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with Mr. Qassim Al-Araji, Iraq National Security Adviser. They discussed the political and security situation in the country and the region, including the need to swiftly implement the Sinjar Agreement. Photo courtesy of the NMA.



Baghdad, 20 July 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Baghdad with the head of the State of Law coalition, Mr. Nouri al-Maliki. They discussed the political situation in the country, including the need to form a government that meets the expectations of the Iraqi people. Photo courtesy of the State of Law Coalition.



Baghdad, 25 July 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Iraqi Prime Minister, Mr. Mustafa Al-Kadhimi. They discussed the current political and security situation in the country, including the formation of a new government.
Photo courtesy of the Media Office of the Prime Minister.



Baghdad, 26 July 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Secretary-General of the Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq movement, Mr. Qais Al-Khazali. They discussed the current political situation in the country, including the formation of the new government.
Photo courtesy of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq movement.



Erbil, 1 August 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, Mr. Masoud Barzani. They discussed the current political situation in the country and the forthcoming elections in the Kurdistan Region.
Photo courtesy of KDP.



Baghdad, 3 August 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today by the President of the Republic of Iraq, Mr. Barham Salih. They discussed the protracted political crisis in the country, and the urgent need to find solutions through an all-inclusive dialogue.
Photo courtesy of the Media Office of the Presidency.



Baghdad, 4 August 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the leader of the Fateh Alliance, Mr. Hadi Al-Amiri. They discussed the political situation in the country, including the need for all actors to prioritize the national interest and find solutions to the ongoing crisis.
Photo courtesy of the Fateh Alliance.



Najaf, 5 August 2022 - UNIraq SRSg Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert was received today by Sayyid Muqtada Al-Sadr at his office in al-Hanana, Najaf. SRSg said: "It was a great honour to speak with him again in person; and to discuss the importance of finding solutions to the many challenges facing Iraq."

Moving forward together: Town Hall meeting toward reintegration in Tuz Khurmatu



Baghdad, 16 June 2022 - Combatting disinformation by raising awareness on the plight of returning displaced families perceived as affiliated with ISIL to Iraqi communities helps to reduce fear of the unknown. UNDP Iraq's Community-based Reconciliation and Reintegration Project, funded by the Government of Japan, is currently underway to support reintegration of 4,000 families in four areas of Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din governorates with a comprehensive package of livelihood support, housing rehabilitation, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for previously displaced returnees and community

members.

A Town Hall meeting in Tuz, Salah al-Din was held on 16 June 2022, following similar meetings in Habbaniyah and Qaim, Anbar to raise awareness among the community and encourage reconciliation and acceptance among returning internally displaced families and existing community members. These Town Hall meetings are being rolled out in partnership with local authorities and local peace mechanisms supported by UNDP to ensuring information in shared regarding the projects occurring in the four areas. Doing so helps to reduce stigma surrounding the return

of families and shares information on how the projects benefit all community members.

"This program greatly contributes to encouraging families to return to their villages and directly assists their rehabilitation and integration into society." - Dr. Muhammad Abdul Wahed Khoja, Chair of the Dialogue and Community Peace Committee, Tuz Khurmatu and Amerli districts.

"We hope that these families will return to their homes soon, especially the women and children who are all mentally and physically tired. The return of the displaced will inevitably lead to stability, security and peaceful coexistence between us and the ISIL-affiliated families, especially as our region is so diverse." -Khaleda Ibrahim Khalil, teacher and community member, Tuz Khurmatu.

"Families are now returning to their villages in this region. The rapid response forces, emergency forces and police have all said they will provide security and services to these returning families." - Hussein Youssef Hussein, Director of the Governor's Office of Tuz Khurmatu.

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

Women in the MENA region play crucial, yet unrecognized, conflict mediation roles in their communities, a new UN Women report finds

Cairo, 27 June 2022 - Grossly underrepresented in formal conflict mediation processes, women in the MENA region have been instrumental in mediating and resolving conflict in their own communities. Supporting their efforts is essential to peace prospects.

Many countries across the Arab States region have suffered protracted conflicts that have taken a terrible toll on millions of people, particularly women and girls. Formal mediation efforts to broker peace have largely stalled due to many reasons, including the fragmented and localized nature of these conflicts. Indeed, many of the region's crises are driven by local dynamics that are often overlooked by formal mediators. Addressing local disputes, concerns, and grievances is thus essential to the success of peace processes.

Largely excluded from formal

mediation roles, women across conflict-affected countries in the Arab region have been instrumental in diffusing tensions and mediating conflicts in their own communities. UN Women's new report "Women's Participation in Local Mediation: Lessons from Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen" sheds light on the diverse mediation roles women have played to resolve conflict and restore social cohesion in their communities. Drawing on various case studies from the four conflict-affected countries, the report demonstrates how women have mediated ceasefires and a halt to violations against civilians, brokered the release of political prisoners, prevented and resolved tribal conflicts, and engaged in crossline negotiations to secure access to water and other vital resources. Skillfully navigating social norms, political sensitivities, and security risks, women have initiated and facilitated dialogues between

disputing parties and spearheaded inter- and intra-community reconciliation efforts. Yet, their contributions to peace go largely unrecognized. The invisibility and marginalization of women's efforts mean their work is less documented



WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION
IN LOCAL MEDIATION:
Lessons from Iraq, Libya,
Syria and Yemen



UN
WOMEN

Women in the MENA region play crucial, yet unrecognized, conflict mediation roles in their communities... *(continued)*

and understood, posing a challenge for those wishing to support them.

“By documenting women’s mediation efforts, we aim to build greater understanding of and confidence in women’s abilities and identify strategic ways to support women mediators in the region,” says Aleksandra Dier, Regional Advisor for Women, Peace, and Security at UN Women Regional Office for the Arab States.

The new report illustrates how women’s local mediation efforts have addressed issues that the formal peace processes (or Track I) could not, such as the release of political detainees and

prisoners of war and the return of the displaced. Women mediators have also raised issues drawn from their own local mediation experiences at the formal negotiation table, such as transitional justice and accountability for human rights violations.

“It is time we heeded the accumulating evidence that women’s active participation in mediation increases both the likelihood of reaching a peace agreement and its successful implementation,” says Susanne Mikhail, UN Women Regional Director for the Arab States. “Crediting women for their achievements is an important

first step towards tapping into their conflict mediation potential and increasing prospects for inclusive and lasting peace in the MENA region.”

The report makes a series of recommendations to support women’s local mediation while stressing the importance of understanding the local contexts where women mediators operate and providing assistance in a way that ensures their safety and security.

To learn more, read the full report at: <https://bit.ly/3I1NMSj>

Championing community acceptance for returning families in Muhalabiya, Ninewa



Baghdad, 6 July 2022 - Over 400 community members have attended Town Hall-style meetings held in four locations of Anbar, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din as part of UNDP’s Community-based Reconciliation and Reintegration in Iraq project. The project, supported by the Government of Japan, encourages the reintegration of 4,000 families in four areas of Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din governorates with a fulsome package of livelihood support, housing rehabilitation, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for previously displaced returnees and community members. Many of the families supported to reintegrate are perceived to be affiliated with ISIL, due to a family member’s association with the terrorist organization.

“We encourage all families who have not yet returned to do so, even if one of their members has joined ISIL. Women, children and the elderly should not pay

the price for the acts committed by one of their sons.” - Manal Al-Haidari, Lecturer, Muhalabiya District.

The most recent Town Hall meeting was held on 06 July 2022, in Muhalabiya, bringing together over 140 area youth and women leaders, Local Peace Committee members, local authorities, Community-Based Organizations, and international organizations. The Town Hall meetings are being rolled out in partnership with local authorities and local peace mechanisms supported by UNDP to reduce stigma surrounding returning families, discuss important topics related to Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE), and provide a transparent platform for the local community to raise concerns and discuss any related issues.

“We have agreed that displaced citizens should not be left alone, and we are working to fully support reintegration

in Ninewa.” - Amjad Yassin, member of the Mosul Local Peace Committee.

“We welcome the families who were displaced from their areas in Muhalabiya due to war and terrorism by ISIL, and we call on all these families to return to their areas in order to reintegrate them into their communities.” - Lieutenant Jassim Bakr, Director of the Muhalabiya Security Office.

While reintegration processes have been smooth to date in Muhalabiya, Ninewa, with many displaced returning through local peace agreements brokered by the Local Peace Committees supported by UNDP, residents from rural villages expressed concern with lack of infrastructure and long commute times for children to reach schools. UNDP’s integrated approach to the reintegration process ensures all voices are heard to tailor development projects for lasting and meaningful community impact.

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



Participants discussed PVE strategies and worked to identify key drivers of violent extremism in the district

Basra, 12 July 2022 - Violent extremism has contributed to war, mass displacement, and infrastructure devastation in Iraq. This catastrophic impact on the country's stability and development has made the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) a key priority for IOM.

In partnership with the National Committee for the Implementation of the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism and local government officials from Al-Zubair district in Basra Governorate, IOM Iraq held a four-day workshop with Al-Zubair government counterparts and community leaders. Participants discussed PVE strategies and worked to identify key drivers of violent extremism in the district.

"The workshop is a part of our effort to analyze factors and conditions that

could lead to extremism and to develop government-led indicators on several areas," stated Mr. Abbas Maher, the Mayor of Al-Zubair district.

Following discussions on participant-proposed approaches to address

potential drivers of violent extremism, a set of recommendations were developed to shape a local PVE plan of action.

The workshop was made possible with the support of USAID Iraq.



IOM arranged for the 'National Committee for the Implementation of the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism' to visit Bosnia and Herzegovina



Baghdad, 21 July 2022 - As part of support provided to the Government of Iraq for the implementation of its national prevention of violent extremism (PVE) strategy, IOM arranged for the 'National Committee for the Implementation of the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism' to visit Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to exchange expertise and best practices in PVE

with local counterparts, paying special attention to gender-inclusive strategy, local-national coordination and the role of civil society in PVE.

"This exchange comes as a part of the National Committee's interest and effort to communicate and look into international experiences relevant to countering and preventing violent extremism and hate speech. The visit facilitates the exchange of expertise and experiences between relevant stakeholders and institutions in BiH, in cooperation with IOM," stated Ali Abdullah, President of the National Committee.

The itinerary has included discussions with national-level government officials on the BiH's national PVE strategy; talks with representatives from across levels of government on their efforts in PVE, as well as challenges in and

opportunities for implementation; and meetings with local government officials on budgeting and the participation of local communities in designing and implementing PVE programmes.

The delegation also attended a reception with the international community held jointly by the BiH Ministry of Security and IOM BiH, and visited communities where IOM BiH's PVE programme is active to meet with youth and community representatives.

"This study visit represents a unique opportunity for everyone involved in PVE to exchange knowledge and experience and create useful connections between the two countries. We, at IOM BiH, are happy to welcome the Iraqi delegation and our colleagues from IOM Iraq, to share our results and lessons learned, and to bring together representatives of the relevant institutions, individuals, organizations, inclusion champions, to the same table and engaging in a whole of society approach to the prevention of extremism," said Laura Lungarotti, IOM BiH Chief of Mission and Sub-regional Coordinator for the Western Balkans.

This exchange was made possible thanks to collaboration with Violence Prevention Network (VPN) within the SIMVEX project, IOM BiH, and the support of the Government of Canada.



Asmaa: “The participation of me and my sister was a contribution to community stability and peace“

Baghdad, 27 July 2022 - Asmaa, from Shirqat Center, Salah al-Din Governorate:

“I am 22 years old, a graduate of a teacher's institute, and I have a talent for drawing murals. I live in the neighboring areas, which IOM was [working in].

I had often heard about the peace initiatives and activities carried out by IOM within these areas, and I read through an announcement on social media about a voluntary initiative to paint murals on the walls of schools and public places.

I was hoping to participate in this initiative, but I had some apprehension about going to these areas because of the violent conflict that the region witnessed, but after researching and discussing, it became clear to me that the area is easily accessible, and that the community coexisted peacefully and supported each other.

I encouraged my sister, who has a

talent for drawing, to participate with me in this initiative to contribute to the return of life and tranquility to these marginalized areas.

Our participation with the volunteer teams in the village is an invitation to all groups from different societies to contribute to the return of integration and societal stability in these areas.

The participation of me and my sister was a contribution to community stability and peace, and the colors had a role in removing expressions of devastation so that the colors of peace and tranquility remained.”

This social cohesion activity was made possible by support from the Government of Germany.



Encouraging social cohesion and conflict resolution among local authorities and community leaders in Iraq

Baghdad, 2 August 2022 -

Communities across governorates liberated from ISIL in Iraq are working together to heal their fragmented social fabric following years of conflict. While local authorities, such as community police, exist across these communities, encouraging public trust in these officials and enhancing channels of mutual communication is vital. UNDP Iraq, in partnership with Public Aid Organization, and in cooperation with Alliance of Iraqi Minorities and Fight for Humanity, is currently working to empower and engage local authorities including police officials and community mechanisms to jointly promote social cohesion in twelve locations in Ninewa and Kirkuk with support from the Netherlands.

The twelve-month 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 Local Peace Agreements. Local authorities engaged in the project include security personnel, community leaders, police, and community police. Starting in April 2022, sessions have been held across various locations in Kirkuk and Ninewa, capacitating 542 participants to date.



“The work of the community police is proactive and preventive. It involves solving problems amicably between community members, without resorting to the judiciary.” -Hanaa Ahmed, Director of the Women's Section of the Community Police in Mosul. Hanaa attended a workshop of local government and security officials from Mosul on 28-30 May 2022.

“Involving local authorities and community mechanisms in these important trainings is vital, as we minimize and address problems before they occur and turn into conflict. Conflict causes social rifts and weakens confidence in social cohesion within the region.” - Sofian Hajji Selo, Member of the Community Police in Bashiqa district. Sofian attended a workshop for

local government and security officials from Bashiqa, Ninewa on 18-20 June 2022.

“Holding these workshops dedicated to trust-building and social cohesion increases our confidence in responding to the demands of citizens. We have discussed at length how we can empower youth, as they are the future.” - Rana Hussam Yassin Al Nuaimi, Certified Trainer at Nineveh Center for Consultation and Research. Rana also attended the Bashiqa workshop for local government and security officials from 18-20 June 2022.

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.

Diverse religious leaders from Kirkuk Governorate unite to support social cohesion in Iraq



Erbil, 14 August 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme in Iraq (UNDP) under the auspices of the Council of Ministers Secretariat (COMSEC), the Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Displaced (MOMD), and the Governor of Kirkuk, has today concluded an interfaith conference for over fifty religious leaders from Kirkuk Governorate.

The two-day conference is the fifth in a series targeting governorates liberated following the defeat of ISIL. Key religious sects from Kirkuk were represented in their diversity, including Sunni and Shia Muslims, Christians, Sabeen Mandaeism, Kakai, and Baha'i. The religious leaders agreed to support community readiness for reintegration of displaced families and to work together to prevent violent

extremism in Kirkuk Governorate, forming a collaborative network.

Conferences for religious leaders across the governorates of Anbar, Diyala, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din were held in 2021 and 2022, within the UNDP religious leaders programme, supported by Denmark and Germany, ultimately contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (Goal 16).

UNDP Iraq Resident Representative, Zena Ali-Ahmad, states, "This conference celebrates diversity and encourages a sense of unity across Kirkuk Governorate. UNDP's partnership with the Iraqi government to enhance social cohesion and prevent violent extremism across these governorates and among key

community figures is vital to ensuring a favourable environment for co-existence and sustainable reintegration."

According to Dr. Abdul Karim Kazem Ajil, representative of the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, "Today's conference is to highlight the major role of the clergy in restoring societal peace, spreading tolerance, and rejecting violence in Kirkuk governorate. With the support of their moderate voices, many of the displaced have been able to return."

Mr. Ali Abbas Jahankir, Director General of the Branches Department, Ministry of Migration and Displaced, emphasizes, "Iraqi society is represented by many different sects, which is why it is necessary for us to meet with religious leaders and scholars and discuss their role to support stability and address the problems that have occurred as a result of displacement of a large number of families."

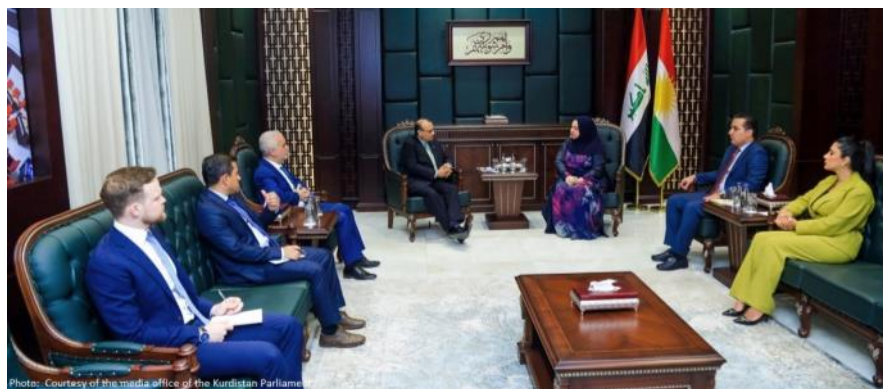
Mr. Ali Hammadi Abed, Technical Assistant to the Governor of Kirkuk, states, "We need to focus on strengthening the social fabric to enhance the spirit of coexistence, especially among the diverse community in the governorate of Kirkuk. We expect that this coordination will encourage societal cohesion."

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.

Electoral Assistance

Re-activation of the Kurdistan Electoral Commission and the ongoing efforts to hold elections in the Kurdistan Region discussed in Erbil

Erbil, 6 July 2022 - Dr. Aamir Arain, Director, UN Integrated Electoral Assistance and UN Principal Electoral Advisor, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), was received today in Erbil by the Speaker of the Kurdistan Parliament, Dr. Rewaz Faeq. They discussed re-activation of Kurdistan Electoral Commission and the ongoing efforts to hold elections in the Kurdistan Region.



Photos: Courtesy of the media office of the Kurdistan Parliament

UNAMI OEA delivers training on communication and public outreach for the IHEC staff from Governorate Electoral Offices

Baghdad, 6 July 2022 - UNAMI's Office of Electoral Assistance, in the frame of the Support to Iraq's Electoral Process project, held a training on 3-5 July 2022 for staff of the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) in the Governorate Election Offices (GEOs) that are responsible for public outreach and communications. The training on the topic "Understanding communication and outreach plans and adjustments to the local environment" covered the essential information on awareness and public outreach plans, its adaptation to the local contexts, the development of messages to target different electoral audiences, the importance of conducting a comprehensive campaign and crafting communication and public outreach

strategies. The training provided an opportunity for the IHEC staff in Governorate Election Offices to work together on practical assignments and exercises, developing strategies and timelines for future elections and drafting awareness messages. The training was also an opportunity for

GEOs' staff to analyze the challenges they faced while working under the Public Outreach Department of the IHEC. For its part, the IHEC Public Outreach Department management used the occasion to discuss the needs and raise ideas to enhance the capacity of the staff for future electoral cycles.



Office of Electoral Assistance delivers capacity-building trainings for IT staff of the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq

Erbil, 7 July 2022 - Information and Communications Technology (ICT) advisors from the UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance held a three-day training on Microsoft SQL Server 2019 Fundamentals in Erbil from 4 to 6 July 2022. Fifty-three IT, Database and Voter Registration staff members from the headquarters of the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC HQ) and Governorate Election Offices (GEOs) participated, learning how to query a database, join tables, use functions, and perform mathematical calculations using Transact-SQL. As part of the capacity-building phase within the project, Support to Iraq's Electoral Process, the training helps the IHEC enhance the skills of its staff in managing complex databases,



data analysis, data processing and extraction of statistics and reports from various data sets within IHEC. A pre- and post-training assessment results showed significant improvement in the

participants' comprehension of the subjects (from 6.0 to 8.9 out of 10). Trainings supporting the IHEC in strengthening its ICT capacity will continue throughout this year.

UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance organized a roundtable for the Election Judicial Panel and the Independent High Electoral Commission

Baghdad, 20 July 2022 - The UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance (OEA) Legal Team organized a roundtable for members of the Election Judicial Panel and the IHEC Commissioners, led by Judge Jaleel Adnan Khalaf, the Chair of the IHEC Board of Commissioners. The discussions focused on the issues pertaining investigation of electoral appeals, burden of proof, IHEC's role in providing the required evidence to the EJP on the appeals and the administrative proceedings between the IHEC and EJP.

The UNAMI OEA continues support to

the engagement between IHEC and EJP to strengthen the electoral legal framework and the election dispute

resolution process, providing guidance to the institutions in following the international standards and practices.



UNAMI OEA advisers held an information sharing session with IHEC counterparts on reporting of electoral activities and processes

Baghdad, 25 July 2022 – UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance (OEA) reporting advisers held a session for the IHEC reporting team as a kick-off activity in supporting IHEC in enhancing its set up for reporting electoral activities and processes. Upon the request of the IHEC BoC Chairman, OEA advisers started working on the topic with a group of 15 IHEC reporting staff from various sections and departments. During the first session, OEA provided a presentation on samples, considerations, and steps in preparing regular internal narrative reports.



Follow up and on the job learning sessions will continue as part of this initiative for enhancing IHEC’s electoral reporting process.

UNAMI OEA facilitated a workshop titled ‘Gender mainstreaming in elections’ for IHEC staff

Erbil, 1 August 2022 - The UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance Field Office advisors recently organized and facilitated a two-day workshop titled ‘Gender mainstreaming in elections’ for the Independent High Election Commission (IHEC) staff in Erbil, Duhok and Sulaymaniyah Governorate Election Offices (GEOs).

The workshop was held in Erbil from 1 - 2 August and covered several important topics on gender in elections including equality, equity and gender in general, electoral legislation, gender quota and violence committed against women in elections. Through this training, participants gained knowledge and understanding on the experiences of men and women in the electoral process, emphasizing the importance of women's participation in electoral processes and democracy building, providing the tools for the GEOs’ staff to analyse electoral



processes and elections from the gender perspective.

Workshop hosted total of 16 participants of which six were female staff. The IHEC GEO staff included GEO managers, heads

of training units and public outreach staff. In addition, five Field Coordination Officers from IHEC HQ and two from the Kurdistan Regional Electoral Office (KREO) attended the training.

UNAMI OEA legal advisors commenced a training on Electoral Legal Framework and Election Dispute Resolution for IHEC legal officers

Baghdad, 1 August 2022 - Today, UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance legal advisors commenced a four-day training on Electoral Legal Framework and Election Dispute Resolution for the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) legal officers, Governorate Electoral Office (GEO) deputy managers, training, and procedures staff from IHEC headquarters and GEOs. Through this training, participants will broaden their understanding of the electoral legal framework, key international obligations, electoral cycle, hierarchy and levels of legal framework, electoral

cycle, electoral justice, international standards of Election Dispute Resolution, types of dispute resolution systems and mechanisms, standard of

evidence and burden of proof, effective investigation, rights, and remedies and educating stakeholders on Election Dispute Resolution.



UNAMI OEA organized a workshop on the logistics management and planning for 35 logistics and procurement staff of IHEC

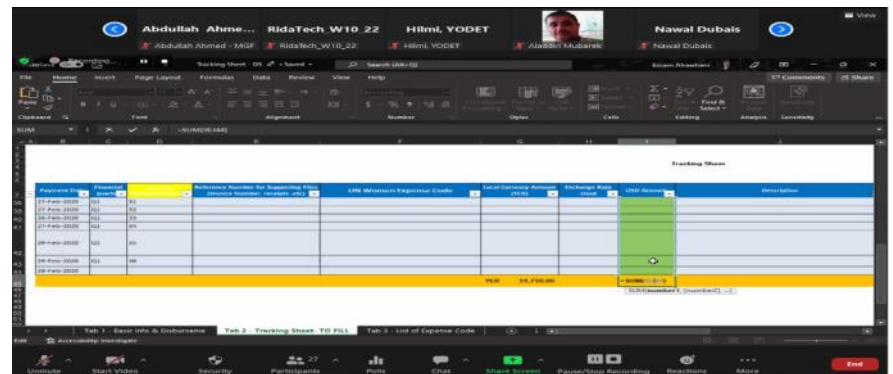
Baghdad, 4 August 2022 - From 1-4 August 2022, the UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance (OEA) organized a workshop on the logistics management and planning for 35 logistics and procurement staff of the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC). Participants included logistics officers and the head of the procurement office at IHEC headquarters, heads of logistics in the Governorate Electoral Offices and the head of logistics in the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Office. IHEC staff engaged in discussion for improving its operations and planning processes. UNAMI OEA continues to support the capacity development of IHEC staff in logistical operations, ensuring technical transparency and efficiency for future elections.



Gender

An online training on financial procedures needed to support UN Women partners in effectively implementing their projects was held recently

Baghdad, 21 June 2022 – UN Women partners under the Women Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) received an online training on financial procedures needed to support them in effectively implementing their projects and in ensuring that they comply with any audit requirements. The training aimed at enhancing the partners' financial and operational capacities to submit essential documents required to request for advances and liquidate any future expenses.



Yazidi women box their way to recovery

A boxing project implemented by the Lotus Flower, the winners of UNHCR Innovation's global NGO Innovation Award, is empowering displaced Yazidi women and girls in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Erbil, 23 June 2022 - When Nathifa Wadie Qasim was a young girl back in Sinjar, in Iraq's Nineveh Governorate, her school had a punching bag that was used by male students for boxing practice. Nathifa punched it almost every day. "I remember I was the only female among my friends who had the courage

to get close to that red bag and land some hard punches at it," she recalls. "It helped me to take my stress out." At home, Nathifa was the main carer for her sick mother and younger siblings while her father was out working the family's fields. Her mother died just days before ISIS militants attacked Sinjar in August 2014. The militants targeted Sinjar's majority Yazidi population, whose ancient religion draws on both Christianity and Islam, subjecting them to a reign of terror that the UN has called a genocide. Thousands of Yazidi men were executed while women and girls

were abducted and often sold into sexual slavery. Nathifa and her family managed to escape, eventually ending up in Rwanga, a camp for some 12,000 internally displaced people, most of them Yazidis, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Eight years later, they are still there, although Nathifa's father has since remarried leaving Nathifa, now aged 28, as the sole provider for her four teenage siblings. The punching bag came back into her life after she began working for The Lotus Flower, a community-based organization that supports internally

Yazidi women box their way to recovery *(continued)*



displaced women and girls in northern Iraq. When she was asked to think of a sports activity for girls in the camp, the one that immediately sprang to Nathifa's mind was boxing.

"The majority of the women and girls in the camp were ISIS survivors who had trauma as a result of what they had been through in captivity," she says. "I thought, if those women and girls were physically strong, they might have had a better chance of escaping from ISIS or defending themselves."

By chance, The Lotus Flower's founder Taban Shores, was thinking along similar lines. Herself a survivor of violence, she had also observed the high levels of trauma among Yazidi women and their need for mental health support, and an outlet for their emotions.

"I met a lot of Yazidi women and girls who were impacted by ISIS," she says. "I could see the anger and the emotions trapped inside them.

"I thought, what will help rebuild their confidence and bring back that power that was taken away. What sport is there? And it was boxing that just came out."

In 2018, Taban brought Cathy Brown, a former professional boxer and cognitive behavioural therapist, to Rwanga to train Nathifa and other young women how to box and become trainers themselves.

The "Boxing Sisters" programme was born and since then, Nathifa says she has trained over a hundred girls and women.

During a recent class, around 15 young women don boxing gloves and practise jabs and cross punches with sparring partners as Nathifa shouts instructions.

Shaare Sharaf Sameer, 21, is among them. She has been attending Nathifa's boxing classes since they started and says she feels bored if a day passes without a class.

"It is very good for our health and psychology," she says, after taking her turn to high kick a punching bag. "No matter how sad or bored we are, we forget everything as soon as we attend the classes."

Nathifa says that any early resistance from the community to the idea of girls learning to box, fell away once the benefits became clear. "They used to

say that boxing was not for girls, but they witnessed that the participants got stronger and there is nothing wrong with it."

The Boxing Sisters programme is just one of many projects run by The Lotus Flower aimed at empowering Iraqi women and girls affected by conflict to rebuild their lives. They include adult literacy classes, support for women-led small businesses, art therapy and training for women to become mediators and peace defenders.

Taban founded the organization in 2016, two years after leaving her job in London and returning to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to help respond to the humanitarian crisis unfolding there. She noticed a gap in services to support displaced women.

"The gap was more around having a space where women can heal, learn and grow," she says. "The men and boys could leave the camps, they could move around freely, but the women and girls, because of social pressures, they couldn't leave their camps or tents without a reason. So, we created a reason for them to leave."

This month, The Lotus Flower was one of seven organizations to win UNHCR's annual NGO Innovation Awards. This year's winners were all women-led organizations working with refugees, internally displaced people, and their host communities.

Back at Rwanga camp, Nathifa says boxing has helped the girls in her classes "kick their grief and pain away".

"Now, I feel proud of them. They have become what they and I wanted them to become – strong both physically and psychologically."

By Rasheed Hussein Rasheed and Kristy Siegfried, UNHCR

A new agreement between UNDP and UNFPA in Iraq establishes and implements critical protection measures tackling Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Baghdad, 19 July 2022 - Conflict, traditional norms and the aftermath of COVID-19 have increased both the rate and intensity of violence against women and girls in Iraq and in Kurdistan Region-Iraq. A new agreement between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Iraq, which was signed on 18 July, establishes and implements critical protection measures tackling Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).



A workshop to train leaders on the reduction of violent extremism through awareness held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 24 July 2022 - Within the framework of the implementation of the project "Gender perspective to reduce violent extremism through education in Iraq", with the support of the Government of Canada, UNESCO and its partners, in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, organized a workshop to train leaders on the reduction of violent extremism through awareness, on 19-20 July in Baghdad. The training workshop was attended by 36 trainers (including 14 females) from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research from Nineveh and Anbar governorates, Qar, Salahuddin and Baghdad.

The workshop aimed at strengthening the cognitive, skills and behavioral abilities of leading trainers from



various universities who in turn will transfer this knowledge to their student to enable them to handle media content critically, reduce hate speech, extremism, intolerance and

contribution In promoting peaceful coexistence, especially via social media. Participants will train over 250 students from their provincial universities in the next two months.

With support from KOICA, UNFPA conducted two out of five CMR trainings in July

Baghdad, 29 July 2022 - If not well equipped, some doctors might not be aware of what to do if they encounter sexual violence survivors. Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) trainings provides medical staff with the resources, knowledge, standard

operating procedures and guidance on how to deal with survivors of gender-based violence, in particular sexual violence. Thanks to KOICA Iraq Office, Baghdad, UNFPA conducted two out of five CMR trainings this month. One additional training was held in June.



Baghdad Women Association carried out an awareness-raising session for women and girls in the Shariya-non camp

Baghdad, 25 July 2022 - Baghdad Women Association carried out an awareness-raising session for women and girls, with the participation of 12 women and girls in the Shariya-non camp, in coordination with the Sharya women union.

The session included many topics such as domestic violence against women and girls; how we deal with violence in a safe way, and in addition a lawyer provided legal information to them about the threat and extortion and bullying and



how to report the cases. Earlier this month, with the

participation of 10 women and girls another session was held that covered several important topics, namely dealing with teenage girls, the stages of adolescence, the positives and negatives, the impact of adolescence on the girl's personality, and ways to deal with this stage.

This activity was done under the project "Women Peace and Security in the Arab states - Phase II", in partnership with UN Women and with funding by Government of Finland.

How to prevent, report and respond to gender-based violence in schools

Baghdad, 12 August 2022 - As part of the Funding Facility for Stabilization's work with the Directorate of Education, UNDP trained 24 representatives from Anbar, Diyala and Salah al Din. They were provided with guidance on how to prevent, report and respond to gender-based violence in schools.



The first Steering Committee meeting of the project “Enhance government capacity for quality and effective GBV response services in Kurdistan Region of Iraq” held in Erbil

Erbil, 26 July 2022 – UN Women in partnership with UNFPA and in coordination with the High Council of Women Development in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq conducted the first Steering Committee meeting on the project “Enhance government capacity for quality and effective GBV response services in Kurdistan Region of Iraq” funded by Government of Italy through Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo #AICS

During the meeting, the Steering Committee Terms of Reference and the Project Workplan were presented and endorsed by the Steering Committee

members which is represented by the High Judiciary Council, Presidency of Public Prosecution Office, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Interior / Director General for Combatting Violence Against Women and AICS.

Dr. Khanzad Ahmed, Secretary General of HCWD focused on the importance of the project in strengthening the Kurdistan Regional Government in responding to all kind of Gender Based Violence. While the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in KRI focused on the importance of this



project to strengthen the synergy between KRI government institutes that provide services to women subjected to violence.

UNICEF and partners established 3 comprehensive centers to prevent and respond to GBV and promote girls and women’s rights



Baghdad, 29 July 2022 - “UNICEF remains committed to supporting the

Government and civil society organizations to prevent and respond to

gender-based violence and promoting girls and women’s rights to end violence,” says Paula Bulancea, Deputy Representative, UNICEF during the hand-over of the three one-stop centres. With funding from the Government of Germany (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)), UNICEF and partners established these comprehensive centers, trained more than 750 service providers on case management services and referral, provided a comprehensive response to more than 470 women and girls and raised the awareness of more than 7,500 people on women and girls’ rights.

Coordination was strengthened between the Department of Women Empowerment and the High Council of Women and Development



Erbil, 21 July 2022 - Coordination was strengthened between the Department of Women Empowerment (DWE) and the High Council of Women

and Development (HCWD) through a meeting done in Erbil on 20-21 July 2022. Meeting topics discussed were: Progress of the INAP II

implementation in 2022, INAP II Monitoring framework, The National Strategy for Iraqi Women for 2023, and the work of committees involved and supporting peace mediation, Anti-Domestic Violence Law and Women Political Participation in Elections. In addition, civil society engagement and work on the WPS agenda through the WPHF fund was highlighted and linked to INAP II interventions. The meeting was attended by Dr. Yusra—Director General of the DWE, Dr. Khanzad—Secretary General of the HCWD, Dr. Ammar—UNWomen Programme Management specialist and representatives from DCVAW and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) in Kurdistan.

SRSR Hennis-Plasschaert: “A ceremony like this also serves as a stark reminder to all. A stark reminder that such horrific acts are never to be repeated.”



Erbil, 30 July 2022 – Here is the text of the speech by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, at the commemoration ceremony for remembrance of the 1983 Barzani Disappearance:

“Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are here to commemorate, with great sadness, the enforced disappearance - 39 years ago - of 8000 Barzani men and boys. They vanished, never to be seen again.

And as we remember those who tragically lost their lives, our thoughts are also with their families and friends. To date, many of them are still waiting for the truth to come out, having cruelly been denied the opportunity to lay their loved ones to rest.

The pain of not knowing what happened. The pain of waiting and hoping. There are no words to capture what these families have suffered.

None. There are simply no words that can describe the feelings of profound despair.

Today, we also memorialize the return of 100 Barzanis, the third of its kind. Between 2004 and 2005, 500 missing loved ones were returned to their ancestral homes. In 2011, another 93 were brought home to their final resting place. And while the search goes on, we express our hope that every last father, brother, uncle and son will be found.

As we all know, the immense tragedy does not stop here. These horrific events preceded the Anfal Campaign, a genocidal campaign with the intent to destroy countless innocent people, and the wounding and maiming of many more. Few Kurdish families were spared.

Commemoration ceremonies, such as this, are meant to remember the lives of loved ones lost, or forever changed. Having said this, a ceremony like this also serves as a stark reminder to all. A

stark reminder that such horrific acts are never to be repeated.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, 100 men and boys have come home. To rest. At last. Surrounded by their families and friends. We honour them. And we can only hope that their return brings some measure of peace to those who have searched for them all these years.

You know, the diversity of the Kurdistan Region, and indeed the Republic of Iraq, is often described as one of its greatest strengths.

Having said this: it is also well-known that we are reaching an important crossroads for the well-being of all: here in the Kurdistan Region and in Iraq at large. Hence, I can only emphasize the magnitude of what is at stake: the ability for every citizen to live in peace, prosperity and dignity.

So, let us honour the many lives lost. Let us honour them by working together. It is the only way to begin to heal the deep wounds left by decades of conflict and division, to set the conditions which allow all people to prosper, in safety and security, with respect for one another.

In closing, ladies and gentlemen, and in living memory of the victims, I wholeheartedly reaffirm our support and solidarity with those who continue to bear the scars of monstrous inhumanity. And I again extend our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the missing and our condolences for the lives lost.

Thank you.”

UNAMI on Twitter

Muthana, 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, “Update on Accountability in Iraq”. We will continue to work together to promote freedom of expression and civic space in Iraq. Access the report at: EN <https://bit.ly/3u7XFrM> AR: <https://bit.ly/3ONs06I>

Basra, 4 July 2022 - The United Nations Iraq Human Rights Office held a roundtable today in Basra with civil activists to discuss UNAMI’s recently issued report, “Update on Accountability in Iraq.” We will continue to work together to promote freedom of expression and civic space in Iraq.

Basra, 19 July 2022 - The UNAMI Human Rights Office held a roundtable in Basra with civil activists to discuss UNAMI’s recently issued report, “Update on Accountability in Iraq”. We will continue to work together to promote freedom of expression and civic space in Iraq.

Staggering scale of grave violations against children in conflict revealed in new UNICEF analysis



Iraq is one of the top eight countries in the world with more children in detention as a result of armed conflict, according to the latest UNICEF report

New York/Geneva/Baghdad, 28 June 2022 – Between 2005 and 2020, the United Nations verified over 266,000 grave violations against children committed by parties to the conflict in more than 30 conflict situations across Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America, including Iraq, UNICEF said today in a new report.[1] This figure is a fraction of the violations believed to have occurred, as access and security constraints, among others, and the shame, pain, and fear that child and family survivors suffer often hamper the reporting, documentation, and verification of grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict. The report – 25 years of children and armed conflict: Taking action to protect children in war – found that between 2005 and 2020 more than 104,100 children have been verified as killed or maimed in situations of armed conflict; more than 93,000 children have been verified as recruited and used by parties to the conflict; at least 25,700 children have been verified as abducted by parties to the conflict; parties to the conflict have raped, forcibly married, sexually exploited, and committed other grave forms of sexual violence against at least 14,200 children. The United Nations verified more than

13,900 incidents of attacks against schools and hospitals and verified no fewer than 14,900 incidents of denial of humanitarian access for children since 2005.

“This report lays out in the starkest possible terms the world’s failure to protect its children from grave violations during times of armed conflict,” said UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell. “Grave violations devastate children, families, and communities – and they tear at the fabric of society, making it even harder to restore and sustain peace, security, and stability. We must refuse to accept violations against children as an unavoidable outcome of the war.”

Based on sixteen years of data from the Secretary-General’s Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, the report illustrates the impact that armed conflicts have had on children, by presenting trends of grave violations across the world and over time. The report examines how information on the documented patterns of grave violations is being used to respond to children’s needs and how engagement with parties to the conflict – State and non-State actors alike[2] – enables ending and preventing grave violations. In Iraq, the report showed that children from poorer backgrounds and children of specific status or characteristics – including refugee, and internally displaced children, among others – remain at heightened risk of grave violations. According to the report, available sex-disaggregated data indicates that verified incidents of grave violations have predominantly affected boys and that one child is at risk of multiple violations. It also showed that explosive remnants of war (ERW) became one of the main causes of killing and maiming of children, where the use of children to plant or carry explosive devices has become a trend of serious concern. It was reported that numerous cases of children abducted and forcibly taken across borders for the purposes of recruitment and use, or sexual exploitation was documented, and practices of child marriage and sexual exploitation have also been widely used by armed groups. Children also died as a result of torture following accusations of spying and/or being associated with opposing parties.

“We are working with a broad range of partners to strengthen the monitoring and reporting mechanisms of grave

violations against children in Iraq,” says Ken Legins, Officer-in-Charge Representative, of UNICEF in Iraq. “But as grave violations continue, our work to protect children remains urgent.”

Globally, the annual number of verified violations has gradually increased since 2005[3], surpassing 20,000 in a year for the first time in 2014 and reaching 26,425 in 2020. Between 2016 and 2020, the daily global average of verified grave violations stood at an alarming 71 violations. The elevated number of violations observed in recent years demonstrates the dramatic impact that armed conflict – and increasingly complex and protracted protection crises[4] – have on children.

In order to bolster accountability, parties to conflict listed in the Secretary-General’s annual report on children and armed conflict develop and implement Action Plans with specific, concrete, and time-bound actions to establish sustainable measures to protect children from the impact of conflict. The report lays out several examples highlighting the critical value and impact of Action Plans in bringing about positive change for children, both in the immediate and long terms, as well as outlining challenges and obstacles.

It is important to note that the increase in verified violations over time also underscores the increasing strength of the monitoring and reporting mechanism over the years. The development of guidance on monitoring and reporting, the training and capacity building of the UN and its partners’ staff on documenting grave violations, and the awareness-raising of families and communities on the protection risks for children, have all contributed to strengthening the mechanism and enabled it to collect increased information on grave violations against children.

Whilst the overall ability of the United Nations to document and verify incidents of grave violations has increased over time, it has fluctuated from one year to another, from one situation to another, and from one violation to another. In this regard, and based on all of the above, direct comparisons between situations, years, or violations should be undertaken with caution.

The report is available at:
EN: <https://uni.cf/3ythQD9>
AR: <https://uni.cf/3bCTJsD>

UNAMI Human Rights Office held a workshop with the IHCHR Ninewa office on monitoring and documenting human rights in the Ninewa governorate

Ninewa, 29 June 2022 - UNAMI Human Rights Office held a workshop with the IHCHR Ninewa office on monitoring and documenting human rights in the Ninewa governorate. UNAMI HRO is committed to building capacity of the national institutions and supporting existing mechanisms in Iraq that assist victims of human rights violations.



School children appreciate diverse cultures, promoting respect for each other

Baghdad, 30 June 2022 – “We built our country with love, we are Iraq”, sang 32 primary school children from Latifiya district of Baghdad at the UN Iraq. “We will plant flowers from the highest mountains of Erbil to the beautiful lands of Basra”.

Today, UNAMI Human Rights Office welcomed a group of 19 girls and 13 boys, tribal elders, government officials, teachers and civil society representatives to appreciate Iraq’s rich cultural diversity, demonstrating how young children can inspire adults to respect differences, live in harmony, promote tolerance and respect for each other.

The event generated a spirit of unity among adults and children alike,



sending a powerful message that Iraqi societal components have the will and spirit to live together in peace through mutual respect and celebration of diversity. During the event, children sang, danced, recited poetry, presented Iraqi governorates on a jigsaw puzzle, and performed a silent play conveying the consequences of hate speech.

UNAMI Human Rights Office facilitated the We are Iraq event as part of efforts to promote diversity, foster inclusion and celebrate Iraq’s uniqueness.



UNAMI HRO organized a workshop on international criminal law with the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR) Ninewa

Ninewa, 4 July 2022 - At a UNAMI Human Rights Office workshop on international criminal law with the Iraqi High Commission For Human Rights (IHCHR) Ninewa, participants discussed how and where such crimes can be prosecuted, including those violating human rights or Iraq-related. Human Rights Office is committed to strengthening #RuleOfLaw approach among national stakeholders.



UNAMI HRO organized a workshop to raise awareness on the role and functioning of the Human Rights Court

Kirkuk, 18 July 2022 – Today, the UNAMI Human Rights Office in Kirkuk organized a workshop and round table discussion to raise awareness on the role and functioning of the Human Rights Court. The Kirkuk Investigating Human Rights Judge, members of the Kirkuk Bar

Association, lawyers, women's and human rights activists discussed the court's role, which can be instrumental in achieving accountability and redress for human rights violations. They formulated recommendations on the challenges and opportunities.



UNAMI HRO held a workshop with NGOs, women's organizations and civil society to discuss accountability for gender related killings

Erbil, 26 July 2022 - Today, the Human Rights Office of UNAMI held a workshop with NGOs, women's organizations and civil society to discuss accountability for gender related killings. It was noted that despite legislative reforms geared towards the protection of women, there has been little progress in holding perpetrators accountable.

Participants proposed strategies on how to engage with government authorities, courts and other relevant actors, not only to ensure that perpetrators of gender related killings are held accountable for their acts, but also on how to systematically monitor cases and effectively raise awareness on the issue at the community level.



UNAMI Human Rights Office convened the third in a series of workshops on accountability for gender-related killings

Sulaymaniyah, 9 August 2022 - The UNAMI Human Rights Office convened the third in a series of workshops on accountability for gender-related killings. The workshop, which was held in Sulaymaniyah, brought together representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Women's Organizations, and aimed at enabling a structured forum to identify challenges that hinder the prosecution of

perpetrators and provide concrete recommendations on the advocacy needed to ensure that they are brought to justice. Participants gave their views on measures to be taken by government authorities, courts and other relevant actors to overcome the political, economic, socio-cultural challenges that prevent successful criminal investigation, prosecution and conviction of perpetrators of gender-related killings.



UNAMI representatives visit New Generation Movement

Sulaymaniyah, 8 August 2022 – UNAMI Head of Regional Office in Erbil, Mr. Ricardo Rodriguez, met today with the head of the New Generation Movement, Mr. Shaswar Abdulwahid. They discussed the political developments in the country, including the latest protests in the Kurdistan Region.



METRO Center meets with UNAMI representatives for talks on recent protests

Sulaymaniyah, 9 August 2022 - The head of the United Nations Human Rights Field Office in Erbil, Ms. Annette Lyth, met with journalists who were arrested in connection with the August 6 protests in the Kurdistan Region.

Journalists working in the Kurdistan Region spoke on human rights violations they have faced during the discussion, which was held at the Metro Center for Journalists' Rights and Advocacy office in Sulaimani.

News and photo courtesy of NRT TV.



UNESCO trains Iraqi female journalists on digital safety and digital journalism tools

Baghdad, 28 July 2022 - In the context of the Multi-Donors Programm MDP, on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, UNESCO Iraq Office launched an intensive training course for female journalists on the contents of digital safety and digital tools for journalists.

In the three-day training course, which addressed important issues for female journalists in the fields of digital security, the creative content industry, safety and security, and how to benefit from digital tools in developing a career, 60 Iraqi women journalists from different media outlets, as well as 10 new graduates from media colleges, participated in the training.

The Iraqi Media and Communications Commission CMC and the Iraqi Media Network IMN, were the institutions targeted by this activity, as well as the other Iraqi media institutions represented by a diverse group of female journalists with many

specializations: radio, television, newspapers, and websites. This activity comes within a series of activities designed in the MDP Work Plan to support the Iraqi female journalists, considering a clear decline in the rights of this group and the presence of male domination over the media and communications sector in Iraq.

The journalist and lawyer, Thanaa Al-Kinani, said, "The Iraqi women journalists face a number of risks and challenges while doing their work, including online threats, the weak legal culture of female journalists, which puts them into legal traps, as well as their lack of digital skills in the media content industry." Al-Kinani adds, "This training came in a very appropriate time because it covers the challenges I mentioned and gives us a boost in the midst of the chaos we live in the country."

UNESCO, through the National Mechanism for the Safety of

Journalists in Iraq, seeks to secure all its capabilities and efforts to support capacity-building, raise awareness, and arm journalists with basic skills that enable them to keep pace with global developments, as well as to remain safe in a dangerous environment. During this month, an initiative was launched to train the largest possible number of police, judges, academics, human rights defenders, as well as the journalistic and media community, via the online through the MOOC curriculum, which extends for eight weeks and focuses on all aspects of safety, security and protection for journalists.

UNESCO recently also launched a 5 week massive open online course on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists for police, CMC, judges and journalists. This project is funded by the Government of The Netherlands.



UNITAD



New York, 27 June 2022 – Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, met with the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations, Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr Al-Uloom, to discuss her recent visit to the country, including the importance of accountability for atrocity crimes.



Baghdad, 30 June 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was delighted to receive H.E. Éric Chevallier, Ambassador of France in Iraq. They discussed UNITAD's work and in particular forensic capacities in support of investigations of ISIL international crimes.

UNITAD visited Iraqi Medical Legal Directorate

Baghdad, 30 June 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met today Dr. Zaid Ali Abbas, Head of Iraqi Medical Legal Directorate-MLD. They discussed UNITAD's recent support by providing LIMS technology to MLD along with a two-day training on DNA identification to identify ISIL victim remains.

Special Adviser Ritscher and Dr. Abbas also discussed mutual partnership and information sharing with MLD pertaining to families and living relatives of missing persons to promote the efficiency of Ante-Mortem campaigns' outreach to victims' families to collect DNA samples for identification.

Touring MLD, Special Adviser Ritscher stated he was impressed by the capacity of the labs and the remarkable

work of the staff as well as the complexity of the forensic process in identifying excavated remains.

More information about UNITAD support to MLD with LIMS are available at: <https://bit.ly/3Nx32T>



Erbil, 03 July 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was delighted to meet today in Erbil with KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy, Dr. Dindar Zebari. They discussed Kurdistan Regional Government's support to UNITAD's work in pursuing justice for victims and survivors of ISIL international crimes.



Tikrit, 05 July 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher and H.E. Mr. Martin Jaeger, German Ambassador to Iraq, joined by Governor of Salahaddin Mr. Ismail Al-Hlob, visited today the Tikrit memorial dedicated to the victims of ISIL crimes against the Tikrit Air Academy personnel, known as Camp Speicher. The visit comes shortly after 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 in June 2014.

IOM Iraq supported efforts by the Government of Iraq's Mass Graves Department and the Ezidi Organization for Documentation to erect fencing around and protect six mass graves

Baghdad, 15 July 2022 - Lives irreparably changed by ISIL's 2014 genocide, Yazidi survivors are without the means to mourn lost family members, friends, neighbours – most of whom lie in the over 80 mass graves located across Sinjar, still awaiting exhumation eight years later.

Trauma kept fresh by this unresolved issue, those who suspect that remains of their family members can be found in these mass graves continue to wait for the opportunity to properly bury their loved ones. Families have requested protection for these locations until official excavation and identification processes start.

This June and July, IOM Iraq supported efforts by the Government of Iraq's Mass Graves Department and the Ezidi Organization for Documentation to erect fencing around and protect six mass graves: Barbrosh; Qizlakiand 1, 2 and 3; Hamdan; and Al-

Zulaylia — protective measures made possible by support from USAID and the Government of Germany.

Continued advocacy and assistance are necessary to promote justice for and address the outstanding needs of the Yazidi people.



UNITAD releases a new multimedia video analysis constituting evidence of Da'esh/ISIL crimes against the Tikrit Air Academy personnel



Baghdad, 06 July 2022 – UNITAD released a video narrating the accounts of the events of the Tikrit Air Academy massacre in Tikrit, Iraq. The new video analysis chronicles crimes committed by Da'esh/ISIL in June 2014, in which thousands of unarmed, predominantly Shia, military cadets and personnel of the Tikrit Air Academy (also known as Camp Speicher) were killed.

Developed in collaboration with SITU Research, a visual investigations practice, the video combines key assets from the diverse body of evidence collected by UNITAD, as well as the Iraqi authorities, to create a coherent narrative and spatial reconstruction of the sequence of events that unfolded. Satellite imagery, geospatial data, eyewitness testimony, and Da'esh/ISIL propaganda footage—filmed during the events by the perpetrators themselves—are synthesized to provide a detailed and exacting account of these grave crimes.

The publication of UNITAD's video about the massacre comes after the

release of the Team's eighth report to the United Nations Security Council, and a Special Event on the massacre, organized at the UN Headquarters on 10 June 2022, during which the video was screened for the first time. The video is made public as part of UNITAD's commitment to promote accountability for Da'esh crimes, and provides an opportunity for the wider public to learn about the scale and magnitude of these international crimes.

Special Adviser Christian Ritscher noted, "The Tikrit Air Academy massacre represents one of the most brutal examples of violence inflicted by ISIL on the Iraqi people", adding that progress in investigations on the Tikrit Air Academy massacre has been built on close cooperation and engagement with Iraqi national authorities, in particular the Iraqi Judiciary.

Special Adviser Ritscher also confirmed that "by completing a case brief on this massacre, the detailed evidence provided can be used to support

prosecutions of ISIL members, some of whom are most responsible for those crimes."

Brad Samuels, Director of SITU Research said that "this video assembles a range of evidentiary material to deliver a clear and coherent account of these horrific events. While the investigative work follows the highest standards of rigor, it is important that this work does not become clinical and abstract. It is only through the convergence of witness testimony and forensic documentation into visual production that the scope and scale of this event can be understood."

In this context, SITU Research has developed a digital evidentiary platform used to manage, analyze, and present the associated multimedia, making it available to forums of accountability in Iraq, and all over the world.

The Tikrit Air Academy Massacre video is an extension of UNITAD's broad effort to harness advanced technology and innovative methods for the Team's investigations into crimes committed by Da'esh/ISIL. It is also a part of an initiative to present multimedia products detailing Da'esh/ISIL's international crimes investigated by UNITAD. In May 2021, UNITAD released a similar multimedia presentation about the genocide committed against the Yazidi community in Kojo-Sinjar.

Special Adviser Ritscher noted that "there is a collective responsibility globally to ensure that the evidence collected is put before national courts to prosecute perpetrators. Criminal accountability is achieved only if those responsible are identified, tried, and convicted, and when victims' voices are heard".

Iraqi authorities in cooperation with UNITAD excavated multiple mass grave sites near Qeni in Sinjar

Sinjar, 15 July 2022 - Iraqi authorities in cooperation with UNITAD excavated multiple mass grave sites near Qeni in Sinjar. Excavations are conducted according to a joint strategy adopted by Iraq and UNITAD on mass graves of ISIL victims in Iraq.

UNITAD works closely with the Iraqi Mass Graves Directorate, Medical Legal Directorate and other Iraqi counterparts to support excavations in

line with international standards.

In Qeni, our experts worked hand in hand with Iraqi experts throughout the

entire process. Excavated remains were moved to the Medical Legal Directorate for further examination.





Baghdad, 19 July 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was very delighted to receive MoFA Undersecretary for Multilateral and Legal Affairs, Chairman of the National Coordination Committee H.E. Qahtan Al Janabi at UNITAD in Baghdad. They discussed continued partnership and latest developments in the Team's work.

H.E. Al Janabi visited UNITAD's forensics laboratory and got an insight into technical forensic procedures done in line with highest international standards, which is key in investigative work aiming at prosecuting ISIL members for their international crimes.



Baghdad, 24 July 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was very delighted to meet today with H.E. Qassim Al Araj, National Security Adviser of Iraq, to discuss ongoing cooperation between UNITAD and the National Security Advisory. Special Adviser Ritscher thanked H.E. Al Araj for the continued support for UNITAD's work.

The Special Adviser reiterated the importance of furthering cooperation between UNITAD and Iraqi institutions, which is key to achieve the common goal of holding ISIL members accountable for their international crimes in Iraq in line with international standards.

UN renews commitment to Yazidi community eight years after ISIL onslaught

New York/Baghdad, 3 August 2022 - Every effort must be made to support the Yazidi community in Iraq, the United Nations said on Wednesday, marking eight years since the extremist group ISIL launched a brutal assault on the religious minority.

ISIL, also known by the Arabic moniker, Daesh, conducted a genocidal campaign against the Yazidis, whose historic homeland is the northern town of Sinjar.

The atrocities they committed included sexual violence, mass executions, forced conversions, and other crimes.

Trauma and perseverance

"As we commemorate this traumatic page of Iraqi history, we renew our commitment to peace and stability for the Yazidis and the people of Sinjar," the UN Office in Iraq said in a statement.

"We salute the Yazidis' resilience in preserving their culture and heritage despite ISIL attempts to erase them, and in spite of the countless challenges the community continues to face. We shall not forget those who were killed, injured or traumatized, nor those who remain missing: the search for them must continue until this painful chapter is closed."

Eight years on, thousands of Yazidis have yet to return to their families and loved ones. Many continue to suffer mental anguish after years of captivity, torture, sexual violence and slavery, as well as profoundly inhumane treatment.

Countless more are still struggling to come to terms with the loss of beloved relatives, or even their entire families.

Homeland still unstable

"Meanwhile, many Yazidis remain displaced from their places of origin. Due to continuing tensions, their ancestral homeland in Sinjar is still deprived of the essential stability needed to rebuild their lives, free of fear and intimidation," the statement said.

The UN has stressed that peace, development, and accountability are key for the Yazidi community to flourish, while also highlighting the Iraqi Government's role.

"It must be clear that it is everyone's responsibility to work relentlessly to ensure that the ongoing plight of the Yazidis ends now, and that every effort is made to provide the people of Sinjar with opportunities for a better future,"

said the statement.

"The State is an umbrella for all, and its authority is the guarantor for every citizen of this country, irrespective of political affiliation, religion, or ethnic group. No Yazidi, nor any other Iraqi, should be a pawn in local or regional power competition."

In October 2020, the Iraqi authorities and the Kurdistan Regional Government in the north, signed an agreement on the status of Sinjar district. Since ISIL's military defeat, victims and survivors have faced obstacles due to discord over security arrangements, provision of public services, and the lack of a unified administration.

The Sinjar Agreement must be fully implemented, the UN Office said. "Stable governance and security structures are vital. It will allow the displaced to finally return home,



UN renews commitment to Yazidi community eight years after ISIL onslaught *(continued)*

reconstruction efforts to be accelerated, and public service provision to be improved.”

Momentum for accountability

The UN will continue to promote accountability for ISIL crimes against the Yazidis, noting that “freedom and justice go hand in hand with peace and development.”

There has been increased momentum for prosecutions, the UN team investigating ISIL crimes, known as UNITAD, reported on Wednesday.

“Since last year’s commemoration, we see progress in the form of legal precedents for prosecution for the crime of genocide in German courts, the opening, and excavations of additional mass graves of Yazidi ISIL victims in Qeni and Hardan, Sinjar; and the completion of the second return of remains, while the work continues to identify the remains of more victims.”

Courage and resilience

Christian Ritscher, Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD, stressed that this momentum was mostly inspired by the courage and resilience of Yazidis themselves, in Iraq and around the world.

The courage and perseverance of Yazidi

women and girls, in particular, has been exceptional and humbling, he said, adding that their determination for justice and accountability is driving efforts towards investigations.

Mr. Ritscher recalled a visit to Sinjar in May, where he met with “brilliant” young Yazidis.

“I was truly inspired by the steadfastness and the persistence of those young women and men, who have survived unimaginable horror, to come forward and speak up about the gravity of the brutalities that befell them, as well as their trust and belief in the path of accountability and justice,” he said.

“The young women and men of the Yazidi community deserve to be recognized for what they have endured and continue to endure, yet their ability to rise, develop, and take their future into their own hands is genuinely impressive.”

International support for justice

According to a post on Twitter, Mr. Ritscher was in Stuttgart, Germany, on Wednesday, where he met with Nobel Laureate Nadia Murad, the Yazidi survivor who has long advocated for justice for her community,

UNITAD believes the momentum towards justice and accountability will continue to increase through the unanimous support of the international community, which stands strong behind the pursuit of accountability for ISIL crimes.

The Iraqi Government and numerous countries have shown unwavering support for their investigations throughout the past year.

Last November, a regional court in Germany delivered the first conviction of an ISIL member for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. UNITAD supported prosecutors by engaging with witnesses in Iraq and helping to confirm the fraudulent documents presented by the defendant. Mr. Ritscher stated that as collaborative efforts grow, victims and survivors will be brought closer to getting the justice they so deserve.

“Through partnerships across national authorities, UNITAD, impacted communities and non-governmental organizations, we can overcome the many hurdles faced in delivering justice for ISIL crimes” he said.

By UN News.

UN Iraq on commemoration of 2014 atrocities against Yazidis in Sinjar: peace, development, and accountability key for the community to flourish

Baghdad, 3 August 2022 - Eight years after facing an atrocious onslaught by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Yazidi community has still not achieved the peace and prosperity it truly deserves.

Thousands of Yazidis are yet to return to their families and loved ones. Their whereabouts remain unknown. Many continue to suffer mental anguish after years of captivity, torture, sexual violence and slavery, as well as profoundly inhumane treatment. Countless others are still struggling to come to terms with the loss of a beloved family member, if not the entire family. Meanwhile, many Yazidis remain displaced from their places of origin. Due to continuing tensions, their ancestral homeland in Sinjar is still deprived of the essential stability needed to rebuild their lives, free of fear and intimidation.

It must be clear that it is everyone’s responsibility to work relentlessly to

ensure that the ongoing plight of the Yazidis ends now, and that every effort is made to provide the people of Sinjar with opportunities for a better future. The State is an umbrella for all, and its authority is the guarantor for every citizen of this country, irrespective of political affiliation, religion, or ethnic group. No Yazidi, nor any other Iraqi, should be a pawn in local or regional power competition.

This is why the Sinjar Agreement must be fully implemented, without further delay. Stable governance and security structures are vital. It will allow the displaced to finally return home, reconstruction efforts to be accelerated, and public service provision to be improved.

The United Nations will continue to promote accountability for ISIL crimes against the Yazidis to reinstate justice for all who have suffered from these heinous crimes. Freedom and justice go hand in hand with peace and development.

We salute the Yazidis’ resilience in preserving their culture and heritage despite ISIL attempts to erase them, and in spite of the countless challenges the community continues to face. We shall not forget those who were killed, injured or traumatized, nor those who remain missing: the search for them must continue until this painful chapter is closed.

As we commemorate this traumatic page of Iraqi history, we renew our commitment to peace and stability for the Yazidis and the people of Sinjar.



Increased faith in the path of justice, eight years on ISIL crimes against the Yazidi community

Baghdad, 03 August 2022 –As we commemorate the 8th anniversary of ISIL crimes against the Yazidi community, we stand at the beginning of a new chapter that brings faith in the path of justice for victims and survivors; as an increased momentum for the prosecution of ISIL perpetrators for their international crimes, in particular the crime of genocide against the Yazidi community.

Since last year's commemoration, we see progress in the form of legal precedents for prosecution for the crime of genocide in German courts, the opening, and excavations of additional mass graves of Yazidi ISIL victims in Qeni and Hardan, Sinjar; the completion of the second return of remains, while the work continues to identify the remains of more victims.

This momentum which Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD Christian Ritscher has stressed is inspired most of all by the courage and resilience of the Yazidi community in Iraq and in many places around the world. The courage and perseverance of Yazidi women and girls, in particular, has been exceptional and humbling. It is their determination for justice and accountability that drives these efforts, aiming to investigate all the crimes that ISIL perpetrators committed against the Yazidi community.

Special Adviser Christian Ritscher stressed: "I had the chance to meet with brilliant Yazidi youth on my latest visit to Sinjar in May of this year. I was truly inspired by the steadfastness and the persistence of those young women

and men, who have survived unimaginable horror, to come forward and speak up about the gravity of the brutalities that befell them, as well as their trust and belief in the path of accountability and justice." he also added that "the young women and men of the Yazidi community deserve to be recognized for what they have endured and continue to endure, yet their ability to rise, develop, and take their future into their own hands is genuinely impressive."

The momentum towards justice and accountability will continue to increase through the unanimous support of the international community that stands strong behind the pursuit of accountability for ISIL crimes. The Government of Iraq as well as numerous member states have shown unwavering support to UNITAD's investigations throughout the past

year.

The fruits of this relentless work became visible in November 2021, with the first conviction of an Iraqi ISIL member for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide by the Higher Regional Court following a 19-month trial in Frankfurt, Germany. UNITAD supported German prosecutors by engaging with witnesses in Iraq and was able to help confirm the fraudulent documentation presented by the defendant.

This collaborative effort, as it continues to grow, will bring the victims and survivors closer to the justice they deserve. "Through partnerships across national authorities, UNITAD, impacted communities and non-governmental organizations, we can overcome the many hurdles faced in delivering justice for ISIL crimes" concluded Special Adviser Ritscher.



I had the chance to meet with brilliant Yazidi youth on my latest visit to Sinjar in May of this year. I was truly inspired by the steadfastness and the persistence of those young women and men, who have survived unimaginable horror, to come forward and speak up about the gravity of the brutalities that befell them, as well as their trust and belief in the path of accountability and justice.



Christian Ritscher
Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD
On the 8th commemoration
of the Yazidi genocide



Stuttgart, Germany, 3 August 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher took part in Nadia's Initiative and Farida Global Organization's event today in Stuttgart, Germany commemorating the 8th anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide.

In his remarks, Special Adviser Ritscher reiterated UNITAD's commitment to work relentlessly to ensure justice is served to Yazidi victims of ISIL international crimes through careful investigation and evidence-based trials and in line with international standards.



Stuttgart, Germany, 3 August 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met today with Nobel Prize laureate and UNODC Goodwill Ambassador Nadia Murad-Basee, in Stuttgart, Germany, as the Yazidi community in Iraq and around the world commemorates the 8th anniversary of the Yazidi Genocide. Special Adviser Ritscher and Ms. Murad-Basee discussed the latest investigative and legal developments in pursuit of accountability for ISIL crimes, including the victim-centred approach applicable to interviewing victims and survivors.

UNFPA continues providing psychosocial support to the Yezidi community, especially women and girls survivors of sexual violence

Baghdad, 4 August 2022 - Eight years have passed since the genocide against the Yezidi community. “Maybe the world has moved on, but we have not forgotten. Our wounds remains fresh and we continue to mourn those we have lost,” said Nadia, Yezidi survivor.

Yesterday, the Yezidi community came together to cry the innocent and the brave who have been brutally killed and tortured by ISIL.

UNFPA continues providing psychosocial support, individual and group sessions, to the #Yezidi community, especially women and girls survivors of sexual violence. These sessions allow them to cope with the painful memories and find healthy outlets to alleviate anxiety and heal trauma.

In Bajed Kandala camp, Yezidis remembered their loved one and attended awareness sessions on sexual

harassment.

In Chamishko camp, social workers organized group sessions paving the way for survivors to share their stories, and talk about the obstacles they faced in the recovery period and what are their coping mechanisms to move

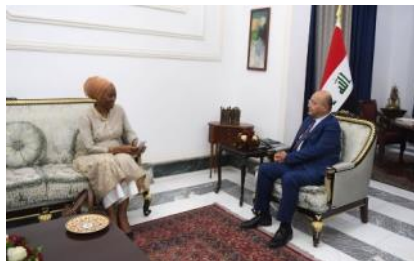
forward.

In Duhok, the UNFPA-supported one-stop assistance centre organized group art therapy sessions helping women and girls express their feelings and remember their loved ones through painting and handicrafts.



Migrations

IOM Deputy Director General for Operations (DDG) Ugochi Daniels visits Iraq



Baghdad, 29 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.

During her 3-day visit to Iraq, Deputy Director General for Operations (DDG) Ugochi Daniels commended the Kurdistan Regional Government for its ongoing coordination and support for those internally displaced, including

during IOM’s recent facilitation of voluntary movements from displacement camps in Duhok Governorate.

Among Duhok’s displaced people are a significant number of Yazidis who survived a horrific genocide at the hands of ISIL in 2014, and who continue to face acute challenges to achieving durable solutions to their displacement.

Daniels reiterated IOM’s ongoing commitment to supporting Yazidi survivors through multi-level interventions, including by bolstering the capacity of the newly established Directorate of Survivors Affairs to ensure timely implementation of the landmark Yazidi Female Survivors Law, which seeks to provide redress to female survivors of ISIL’s genocide.



Iraq pledges on Migration Governance bear plans, action at national level

Baghdad, 24 July 2022 - On 21 July, the UN Network for Migration, in coordination with the Ministry of Migration and Displaced (MoMD), briefed partners on Iraq's participation at the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) – held under the auspices of the UN General Assembly in New York from 17-21 May – and discussed future coordination on migration governance.

Opened by Deputy Minister for MoMD, Dr. Karim Al Nouri, the two-part event was convened by the Inter-Ministerial Technical Working Group on Migration (TWG), which provided a detailed overview of the key areas of progress made in migration governance since the passing of the Global Compact for Migration resolution in 2018, in addition to priorities and commitments for the future. In attendance were TWG members representing the Ministries of Migration and Displaced; Interior; Foreign Affairs; Justice; Labour and Social Affairs; and Planning, as well as representatives from the Kurdistan Regional Government.

In May, the chair of the TWG, Director General for Migration Affairs under MoMD, Mr. Ahmed Rahim, led the Iraqi delegation to the IMRF to participate in thematic roundtables, policy debates and a general debate that led to the adoption of the final progress declaration. Iraq also submitted a Voluntary National Review and committed to a set of forward-looking policy pledges.

“Following Iraq's successful participation at the IMRF, this briefing helps us take stock at the national level of how far Iraq has come and what openings exist for continued progress and collaboration,” said Mr. Giorgi Gigauri, Chief of Mission for the



International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iraq and Coordinator of the Iraq UN Network on Migration. “This is central to better understanding the evolving role of the Network in supporting the Government of Iraq toward improved migration governance.”

With support from IOM and the UN Network on Migration, the TWG has been able to make progress in implementing the National Migration Management Strategy, enabling Iraq to become a leading member of the Champions Country Initiative.

“Looking ahead to the next IMRF in 2026,” continued Mr. Gigauri, “the UN Network on Migration provides an opportunity for joint coordination over the next four years on migration-related issues in Iraq that may not have received the attention and investment they deserve.”

Representatives of donor governments attended the second part of the event for a discussion on the role of the UN Network on Migration in Iraq and opportunities for collaboration on pilot initiatives and key thematic areas such

as Migration, Environment and Climate Change (MECC). Governments represented included Australia, Canada, the EU (Delegation of the European Union to Iraq and DG INTPA), Denmark, Germany, Finland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden, alongside Network members including the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).

Updates were applauded by partners, and the TWG was congratulated on the progress undertaken in the ongoing implementation of the National Migration Management Strategy.

Dr. Karim Al Nouri closed the event by thanking all those who attended: “Almost four years have passed since Iraq signed the Global Compact for Migration in 2018. With the new progress declaration of the IMRF, we fully support a joint approach and partnership between the Iraq UN Network on Migration and the TWG, and welcome other stakeholders, in effectively addressing the challenges to migration governance in Iraq.”

UNHCR commemorates World Refugee Day in Iraq



Duhok, 23 June 2022 - UNHCR Duhok together with the government authorities and humanitarian partners in Duhok governorate commemorated

the World Refugee Day under the theme of “Everyone has the right to seek safety: Whoever they are, wherever they come from, and whenever they are forced to flee”.

The events conducted in camps and urban areas included dance, music, singing, discussion forums, and viewing of documentary films. The events were attended by humanitarian and government partners, represented by Deputy Duhok Governor and respective mayors and heads of government entities as well as heads and staff of humanitarian partners.



UNAMI and Iraqi authorities discussed support for the reintegration of displaced populations, who will need special assistance from the MOLSA in getting social benefits

Baghdad 2 July 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, met with the Head of the Commission for the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities, Mr. Ahmed Hadi Banieh, Director-General of the Department of Labour and Vocational Training, Mr. Raid Jabaar Bahad, and Director of Social Protection Department, Ms. Thikra AbdelRaheem. During the meeting, they discussed support for the reintegration of displaced populations, who will need special assistance from

the MOLSA in getting social benefits. They were joined by the ILO Country Coordinator, Ms. Maha Kattaa and

WFP Representative and Country Director in Iraq, Mr. Ally-Raza Qureshi.



As food prices rise, Japan helps WFP continue support to vulnerable displaced families in Iraq



Baghdad, 3 July 2022 – The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) received a contribution of US\$ 6.4 million from the Government of Japan, which is helping WFP support up to 255,000 crisis-affected displaced Iraqis who remain unable to return home, plus emergency transition support for 12,000 vulnerable and food-insecure people. All are confronting higher food prices that are threatening the food security of families.

“It is very distressing that vulnerable displaced families are now exposed to even harsher conditions in Iraq, one of the countries most severely affected by

climate change at the moment, and also by the global food security crisis,” said the Japanese Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Suzuki Kotaro. “I would also like to express my respect to WFP for its rapid implementation of activities that are directly helping displaced people rebuild their lives and regain their dignity, through the full application of its experiences and knowledge.”

As prices of essential foods have risen around 12 percent in Iraq since the onset of the war in Ukraine, and humanitarian funding is stretched as needs around the world soar, Japan’s timely contribution is helping vulnerable families meet their food needs. Alongside monthly food assistance for families in camps, Japan’s contribution is helping vulnerable communities where families have been able to return home, through durable solutions projects to support restoring livelihoods, vital at this critical period of transition.

“As the country transitions from

emergency response to development and resilience building, Japan is helping WFP both support families in most need of assistance until they are safely able to return home and rebuild their livelihoods, alongside emergency transition support for communities in need,” said WFP Iraq Representative Ally Raza Qureshi. “We thank the government and people of Japan for their commitment and support at this critical time.”

With the support of partners such as Japan, WFP’s role in the Iraq crisis has been critical in providing life-saving food and cash assistance to the millions displaced by conflict, building on years of experience in supporting those in need. WFP continues to provide this assistance and support to the Iraqi Government, while also working to change lives through resilience-building activities and social protection reform. Towards longer-term social cohesion, peace and development, WFP is helping the Government of Iraq build people’s self-reliance and food security.

IOM Iraq collaborates with the Ministry of Health to support essential health services in IDP camps

Erbil, 04 July 2022 - There are still Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in camps in Iraq, and they are urgently in need of humanitarian assistance.

IOM Iraq’s Migration Health Division collaborates with the Ministry of Health to support essential health services in IDP camps. In Debaga camp clinic, Erbil Governorate, IOM provides essential

medicine required to manage the most common acute and chronic diseases. IOM also holds capacity building activities for healthcare workers and provides operational support, including equipping basic health facilities with necessary supplies and equipment.

These activities were made possible with support from the German Government.





Anbar, 4 July 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq/Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano attended the Area-Based Coordination meeting together with officials from the office of the Governor of Anbar to do a gap analysis of current needs and strengthen coordination efforts of humanitarian and development actors in Anbar to ensure no one is left behind.



Anbar, 4 July 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq/Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, met in Anbar with Dr. Ali Farhan Al-Dulaimi, Governor of Anbar. The discussion focused on the development and stabilization projects and the restoration of essential services in the province. The United Nations will continue to further support the efforts of the governorate for reconstruction, reconciliation and reintegration in Anbar. The United Nations is committed to support the people of Anbar to build forward better.

Everyone should be aware of general fire safety precautions

Kirkuk, 03 July 2022 - Everyone should be aware of general fire safety precautions regardless of where they live, but this is especially important in areas where people live in close quarters or substandard structures. This June, IOM Iraq's Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Mobile Response Team coordinated with the Kirkuk Civil Defense Department to facilitate five days of fire safety awareness and fire response trainings for displaced persons in the Hay al-Askary informal

site.

Sixty-one women and fifty-one men from Hay al-Askary informal site attended the trainings, which aimed to increase their understanding of existing fire risks, precautionary measures and tips to respond to an incident of fire using IOM-provided fire extinguishers – of which 90 were distributed by the Mobile Response Team.

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



IOM Iraq provided vulnerable families with vouchers to purchase essential household items

Kirkuk, 04 July 2022- Ali is a father of 6 and the head of his household. His family lived quietly in a village by the town of Sulaiman Beg, Salah al-Din Governorate, until ISIL attacked. He, his wife, and their children left everything behind and headed to Baghdad. When they arrived in the capital, they had only the clothes on their backs.

For four years, he worked as a daily labourer, but his income barely covered his family's basic needs with Baghdad's high cost of living.

Forced to relocate due to high rental prices, Ali moved his family to Kirkuk in search of better job opportunities. In only two years, he moved from location to location in Kirkuk city – more than 5 times total – looking for cheap rent and a good opportunity to establish a

livelihood.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ali, like many others, lost his job and couldn't pay the rent. As a result, the family moved to Hay al-Askary and settled in an informal critical shelter that he built using his remaining savings. Once the official COVID-19 curfew was lifted, the unemployed went to work as daily labourers, and Ali was one of them. His earnings were still not enough to cover his family's needs.

In April 2022, Ali was included in an IOM Iraq activity providing vulnerable families in Kirkuk's Hay al-Askary neighborhood with vouchers to purchase essential household items. He received an E- voucher with 217,500 IQD (150 USD) to buy what he and his family most needed from dedicated

shops inside Kirkuk city.

The distribution took place during the Holy Month of Ramadan, which meant he was also able to buy clothes for his children just before Eid – a traditional Eid gift that absolutely delighted them. "I would like to thank you all and thank IOM for this assistance. You guys allowed me to bring happiness to my children – they haven't gotten new clothes since last Eid, meaning it's been a year! My family is very happy now," said Ali.

IOM was able to provide these e-vouchers thanks to support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).



UNHCR, with the Unified National Cards Committee, conducted a mobile mission to help hundreds of Iraqis obtain their civil IDs

Baghdad, 08 July 2022 - Majid is getting an iris scan to obtain his civil documents! It's one step closer to returning to his hometown. UNHCR in Iraq, with the Unified National Cards Committee, conducted a mobile mission to help hundreds of Iraqis obtain their civil IDs. In cooperation with

INTERSOS, the mobile mission processed the civil documentation requests of around 180 Iraqis originating from Anbar, Ninewah and Sala Al-Din. The joint cooperation between all parties helped speed up the registration process, which could have taken months.



IOM Iraq deployed a mobile caravan health center in response to demands

Baghdad, 14 August 2022 - In Salah al-Din Governorate's Al-Eitha area, a health crisis and quickly growing population combine for an urgent need to build a health facility. Community members are forced to walk long distances to reach the nearest health center – something that is not an option for those needing immediate attention, and an untenable situation that disproportionately impacts persons with disabilities, leaving them frequently

unable to access the care they need. As part of its quick impact project programming, IOM Iraq deployed a mobile caravan health center in response to demands collected through IOM's monthly consultation sessions with community members and stakeholders from the Shirqat Department of Health. This was made possible with support from the Government of Germany.



UNFPA continues to provide essential services to more than 316,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq

Baghdad, 06 August 2022 - In Iraq, UNFPA continues to provide essential services to more than 316,000 Syrian refugees, with 1.2 million people remaining displaced nationwide. Since the beginning of the year, 9,321 women and girls were reached with reproductive health services through 10 UNFPA-supported facilities and mobile teams in refugee camps. These services include family planning, antenatal care, primary health care, and normal and C-section deliveries among others.



UNHCR welcomes the generous contribution from the United States of America to support and strengthen critical assistance in Iraq

Baghdad/Erbil, 7 August 2022 - As the largest supporter of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in Iraq, the United States of America (USA) recently contributed USD 27.8 million to help Syrian and other refugees and Iraq families displaced by Da'esh/ISIS (internally displaced persons/IDPs). This generous contribution demonstrates the US's continuous commitment to help UNHCR address the most urgent humanitarian needs. Five years after the defeat of ISIS and 11 years after the beginning of the Syria crisis, displaced populations and their host remain in need of support. Still in 2022, 1.2 million Iraqis have not

been able to go back to their communities. Meanwhile, Iraq generously also hosts close to 300,000 refugees, most of whom are from Syria and live in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).

The US's generous support allows UNHCR to promote the integration of refugees and displaced Iraqis, including those who have now returned to their home, into local communities and public services. To do this, UNHCR is working, along with local partners and authorities on long-term support interventions such as the rehabilitation of schools, health care centres and water and electricity networks. These

interventions aim to build the capacity of public institutions to deliver quality and accessible services to their own population and refugees.

UNHCR also seeks to promote community interactions and social cohesion through the creation of public spaces and community centres where mental health, especially for women and children survivors of violence, and legal services help them rebuild their lives, not least by acquiring identity documents.

In this respect, it is estimated that a quarter of IDPs lack civil documentation, as they lost them while fleeing violence and could not renew

UNHCR welcomes the generous contribution from the United States of America *(continued)*

them in places controlled by ISIS. As a result, those lacking civil documentation face challenges accessing essential public services, as they cannot enrol their children in schools or access healthcare. They are also deprived of social safety nets and at risk of being arrested at checkpoints. H.E. Alina L. Romanowski said “The United States remains committed to helping Iraq’s most vulnerable populations. This contribution will help Iraqis displaced by ISIS reintegrate into their communities while also

providing valuable support for education, health care, and other critical needs to Syrian refugees in Iraq.”

UNHCR’s Representative in Iraq, Jean Nicolas Beuze stated that “while the current situation in Iraq gradually stabilises and presents opportunities for prosperity, we need to continue working with the authorities in Baghdad and KRI to strengthen communities’ resilience and self-reliance. The generous, flexible contribution of the US allows UNHCR

to prioritize those most in need and to improve key public services in Iraq.”

UNHCR is grateful for the generous and long-standing support of the United States of America to UNHCR. Since 2013, the US, through the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of the State Department, has provided USD 484 million to the refugee response. This support means that UNHCR can continue to offer protection and pursue durable solutions for internally displaced people and refugees in Iraq.

IOM Iraq supports the voluntary returns of IDPs to their areas of origin by conducting pre-departure health assessments

Anbar, 10 August 2022 - Following the closure of Anbar Governorate’s Amriyat Al Fallujah (AAF) camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 2021, several camp households expressed interest in returning to their areas of origin.

IOM Iraq supports the voluntary returns of IDPs to their areas of origin by conducting pre-departure health assessments for households preparing to leave AAF. During the health assessments, medical staff check that

returnees are fit to 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.

During the first week of August, IOM Iraq conducted pre-departure health assessments for 109 individuals.

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



Funding for humanitarian assistance in Iraq is in decline, but urgent needs still remain and support must continue

Baghdad, 11 August 2022 - Many displaced families who return to their areas of origin find that their homes were destroyed during ISIL conflict. With limited financial resources to rebuild, returnees can end up living in unfit housing conditions.

This already difficult situation is even harder for female-headed households, who face more complex obstacles to securing adequate shelter.



Um Abdulrahman found herself in this position when she and her family returned home to Shirqat in Ganous area at the end of 2017, living informally in a damaged building that left them vulnerable to the summer heat, winter cold and seasonal sand, rain and snow storms. Many nights, Um Abdulrahman stayed up to keep an eye on her children and protect them from hazards including snakes and insects.

With support from the Government of

Germany, IOM Iraq was able to build Um Abdulrahman and her family a safe shelter to live in.

“It’s a dream come true for me and my children,” she says. “We are now sleeping at night without any fear.”

Umm Ayman is a widowed mother of three. The ISIL conflict took her husband and home and left her with a physical disability and the responsibilities of heading her household.

In her village, Umm Ayman witnessed all stages of the devastating conflict, remembering: “We had many days during which we neither ate nor drank because of the bad security, economic and social conditions.”

She participated in many of IOM Iraq’s community awareness sessions and workshops on building peace and reducing violence and extremism, telling us that these made her want to “forget the past for a better future.”

“I heard through the village peace committees that IOM would take the initiative to make kleija [Eid pastries], a well-known holiday tradition to express love and peace between neighbors and

relatives. I asked one of the members of the peace committees if we could make the kleija in my home with the participation of women volunteers from all groups in the village,” Umm Ayman recounts. “[The cookies] were then presented to returning and needy families to contribute to peace, the renunciation of violence and extremism and spread the spirit of love and tolerance in the village.”



She concluded with, “Gathering all segments of society in one place to serve each other is a defeat for extremism and hatred.”

Funding for humanitarian assistance in Iraq is in decline, but urgent needs still remain – for even the most fundamental rights, like shelter – and support such as that provided to Um Abdulrahman must continue.

These social cohesion activities were made possible by support from the Government of Germany.

IOM Iraq has been supporting displaced families in Erbil Governorate's Hassan Sham camp since 2020 to meet their protection needs

Erbil, 14 August 2022 - Feeling safe is essential to living a decent and dignified life. When the ISIL conflict caused mass internal displacement across Iraq, many people found themselves vulnerable to new or worsened risks.

IOM Iraq has been supporting displaced families in Erbil Governorate's Hassan Sham camp since 2020 to meet their protection needs, including through the provision of protection services such as gender-based violence (GBV) case management and recreational activities that bring together psychosocial and educational support.

Amira*, who was displaced to Hassan Sham camp from Mosul in 2017, participated in an IOM knitting course. She says, "It was a month ago; I first visited this centre when the trainer came to our tent and registered our names. I decided to participate". In addition to providing learning opportunities, recreational activities often represent an entry point for protection teams to build trust within communities and create a safe space where beneficiaries can share their experiences. Activities are selected based on consultations with communities and best practices from previous years. "I learned to knit and got to know a lot of women who have since become like sisters to me. I now hope to become a trainer, training

women to knit. I've knitted many things – some bags and some small baskets – and these kinds of activities took a lot off my chest."

"There is nothing to occupy my time with," says Zahraa*, a Hassan Sham camp resident who also participated in an IOM knitting course. "At first, I didn't know how to hold the [knitting] hook, but when I came here, I received training – enjoying my time and learning how to knit. During the training, we had discussions that made us feel safe, too. They spoke to us and told us that we could talk freely. Of course, all the participants and I feel freer to speak and share our lives in these trainings."

IOM Iraq also hosts awareness sessions on GBV and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in order

to introduce attendees to GBV and PSEA concepts and definitions, and equip them with the information needed to recognize, report and seek assistance for and protection against GBV and sexual exploitation and abuse.

When community members, especially women and girls, become comfortable accessing IOM's safe spaces for recreational purposes, this trust often translates to enhanced and unhindered access to services provided by IOM and partners in camps and informal settings.

These activities were made possible with support from the Government of USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance

*Names have been changed to protect identities



Stabilization and Development

UN-Habitat is currently building in Tal Banat 32 low-cost housing units to accommodate 350 vulnerable returnees

Sinjar, 3 July 2022 - The widespread destruction of homes by ISIL are preventing two thirds of displaced families from returning to their areas of origin in the district of Sinjar. In early 2022, clashes erupted again, forcing over 10,000 people run from their homes, many for the second or third time. Mr. Barakat Qasim Hamad, a man with disabilities, described the events that forced him and his family to leave their home in Tal Banat, Sinjar District, and seek safety in the mountains with his family for almost two years in Sharya village, near to Duhok city.

"When we were displaced, we faced many difficulties – recounted Mr.

Barakat Qasim Hamad, – many bullets were fired at us when we tried to escape, conditions were really challenging. We settled in one of the unfinished buildings with no water and no electricity, without any doors or windows. We had to cover the openings with nylon sheets to prevent cold or heat."

Mr. Barakat Qasim Hamad and his family will soon be moving into one of the 32 low-cost housing units that UN-Habitat is currently building in Tal Banat to accommodate 350 vulnerable returnees. With this latest batch, UN-Habitat will have delivered a total of 127 new homes to people in need. Throughout its projects, UN-Habitat

prioritizes not only the reconstruction and repair of damaged houses, but also the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure and public services to support dignified and durable returns of IDPs to their areas of origin.

UN-Habitat is grateful to the Government of Japan for improving access to housing and supporting the rights of displaced families and aspiring to a prosperous life in Sinjar.



Multi-stakeholders committee, convened by the Government and the UN, holds its first meeting to discuss integrated social protection approach in Iraq

Baghdad, 30 June 2022 - The Social Protection Sector Coordination Committee (SPSCC) held its first meeting in Baghdad today to discuss coordination and alignment among government and international partners to strengthen the social protection system in Iraq.

Led by the Government of Iraq, the SPSCC brings together various partners including United Nations' agencies, international partners, donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to ensure synergies between different social protection programmes and tools. It is a coordination mechanism intended to contribute to specific social protection outcomes through coordinated and collaborative planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It serves as a consultative platform for a broad range of partners and stakeholders involved in social protection programmes, including national and sub-national authorities, and bilateral and multilateral partners, and local NGOs, civil society organizations and communities.

The SPSCC builds on a Joint Programme implemented by the International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) in Iraq, with the support of the European Union (EU), to accelerate the reform of social protection within the collaboration framework with the Government of Iraq.

Recognizing that the growing momentum and engagement in the reform of social protection calls for stronger coordination and alignment between government and international partners, the EU supports the SPSCC as part of the implementation of its Joint Programme. The proposal of establishing a SPSCC had been agreed with the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Ministry of Trade.

"The European Union is pleased to support the Government of Iraq in strengthening the social protection system which is instrumental to ensure equitable access to integrated social protection for all Iraqis. The sector coordination committee established today and jointly led by the Ministries of Planning, Labour and Social Affairs, and Trade, provides an excellent Government-led platform for coordinating the reform efforts among



all stakeholders. In line with the EU-funded project for social protection reform, the Committee will promote synergies between different social protection programs and enhance the effectiveness of the social protection system, ensuring the Government of Iraq reaches those in need", said Barbara Egger, Head of Cooperation at the European Union Delegation to Iraq. "Almost 2 out of 5 children in Iraq live in monetary poverty. The SPSCC is a cornerstone in the development of a social protection system in Iraq ensuring that no child is left behind. UNICEF will continue working with the Government of Iraq, the EU and will support a coordinating role among the UN partners to promote equitable access to an integrated social protection system that is inclusive and child sensitive", said Ken Legins, Officer-in-Charge UNICEF Representative in Iraq.

"The ongoing global socio-economic shocks which have also impacted Iraq have served to highlight the criticality of efficient and responsive social protection systems to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people. Through the existing partnership, and engagement through the SPSCC, WFP shall continue to provide extensive support to the Government of Iraq towards social protection reforms through evidence generation, building on digitalization of social safety net programmes such as the Public Distribution System and establishing single registry with interoperable platforms," said Ally Raza Qureshi, Representative, World Food Programme in Iraq.

"With two out of three workers in Iraq engaged in informal sector employment, addressing the decent work deficits in the informal sector is instrumental. With the support of the

EU, the ILO is working with the government and social partners to close the social security coverage gap and provide protection for workers and their families against life-cycle risks, such as unemployment, maternity, old-age, work-related injuries, sickness, and disability, in line with ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)," said Maha Kattaa, ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq.

In the first year of the implementation of EU-UN Joint Programme for the reform of social protection in Iraq, the three UN agencies - ILO, UNICEF, and WFP - have secured highest level national ownership for the Joint Programme and its implementation both at the federal and Kurdistan Region of Iraq, focusing on integrated social protection reform roadmap.

The SPSCC will ensure close linkages with the Joint Programme to reform social protection, as well as coordination between social protection and other priority sectors and ministries. It will also provide overall policy guidance on the development of social protection strategies, policies and implementation plans in accordance with the Government of Iraq's White Paper for economic and financial reforms launched in October 2020 and other national strategic frameworks.



The World Food Programme (WFP) in Iraq participated in HITEX 2022

Erbil, 29 June 2022 - The World Food Programme (WFP) in Iraq is participating in HITEX 2022 - the largest technology exhibition in Iraq showcasing innovation - which is being held at the Erbil International Fairground. WFP was at booth ST27. Visitors could get information about

EMPACT digital skills training and WFP digitalization work on the Public Distribution System for food rations and single registry of families in need.



UNDP Iraq and USAID Iraq are working together to support micro, small and medium enterprises and developing Iraq's economy

Baghdad, 3 July 2022 - UNDP Iraq and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Iraq are working together to support micro, small and medium enterprises and developing Iraq's economy.

UNDP Iraq participated in the panel discussion "Foundations for Support and Understanding of Access to Finance" during the Access to Finance Conference held in Baghdad under the auspices of

USAID 29-30 June 2022.

The session included a discussion of credit gaps and obstacles to financing Micro, small and medium enterprises, and the roles of government, donors and relevant institutions in solving the challenges and ensuring increased access to finance and set recommendations that can be implemented to improve the current situation.



15 young people have graduated from Toyota Iraq and UNDP in Iraq on-the-job training!

Erbil 4 July 2022 - 15 young people have graduated from Toyota Iraq and UNDP in Iraq on-the-job training!

They were trained in automotive mastery, customer service and warehouse management. To date, 7 cohorts have successfully completed the Toyota-certified training, bringing the total people trained under the partnership to 85.

Following the completion of classroom training, they received on-the-job training for one month with Toyota Iraq's Authorized Dealers in Erbil and Dohuk. This year's cohort was supported by the Federal Republic of Germany, provided through KFW Development Bank.



Workshops covering key concepts in the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) held across Iraq

Baghdad, 7 July 2022 - In the lead up to the launch of IOM Iraq's civil society fund WASL, prospective applicants had the opportunity to prepare and build their technical capacity by attending workshops covering key concepts in the prevention of violent extremism (PVE); project development steps; and the Wasl application process.

About 200 individuals representing 108 civil society organizations (CSOs) participated in the workshops, which took place in Halabja, Mosul and

Baghdad.

The Wasl Civil Society Fund is open for CSOs in Zubair, Fallujah, Hawijah, Halabjah, Mosul and Telafar to apply.

Successful applicants will receive grants to implement projects on the prevention of violent extremism, including but not limited to peacebuilding, capacity building, education, social cohesion, legal advocacy, community resilience and dialogue, stabilization and advocacy.

These workshops were made possible

with support from USAID and the Governments of Canada and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



Embassy of Japan in Iraq visited the city of Garma in Anbar Governorate to meet beneficiaries of a local Japan-funded IOM project

Anbar, 12 July 2022 - Last week, a delegation from the Embassy of Japan in Iraq visited the city of Garma in Anbar Governorate to meet beneficiaries of a local Japan-funded IOM project dedicated to supporting the area's returnees.

The delegation paid a visit to a library rehabilitated under the project, where Japanese Ambassador to Iraq, Mr. Suzuki Kotaro, spoke with youth participants in an IOM-organized Debate Club, commending their courage in speaking up to make their communities better. Garma's Qaim Maqam, Mr. Ahmed Mukhlef, encouraged holding more such activities for local youth.

Ambassador Suzuki and the other delegates also met with the owner of a microbusiness supported under Japanese funding through IOM's Information Counseling and Referral



Service. They encouraged her to expand her shop using money saved from her profits, sharing with her a story of a Japanese company that also started as a small, family business and later became large enterprise with global

reach.

IOM Iraq is pleased to work with the Government of Japan toward supporting displaced and returned communities to achieve durable solutions.

How one Halabja cafe is moving the needle on social change and cultural evolution

Halabja, 12 Jul 2022 - In the recent history of Iraq, every city has its own disaster story. The city of Halabja's story is that of a horrific chemical attack and the massacre of Kurdish people. Carried out by the regime of Saddam Hussein, the 1988 attack killed approximately 5,000 people and injured around 10,000 more – causing mass displacement, leaving long-term psychosocial scars and lapsing the city into years of economic turmoil. Then in 2014, the ISIL war and economic crisis in Iraq and the Kurdistan region of Iraq sent the situation in Halabja into further decline and stunted progress in the city.

Today, 34 years after the chemical attack, the citizens of Halabja suffer

from a lack of basic services and a stagnant economy. Many government projects that were halted due to the ISIL war have yet to be resumed, and the city has seen an absence of public investment since 2014.

And yet, amidst the city's dark history and formidable challenges, a young man's endeavour to make a living is transforming Halabja's culture and community.

26 year old Sary has recently set up a café that has become a landmark in his city. Located in the city center and characterized by its unique aesthetics and design, Mekhak café is a breath of fresh air for the residents of Halabja.

"I've always wanted to own and manage my own café, and I wanted to

make something different – something that hasn't been done before in the city," Sary says.

Indeed, Sary's café is unique, bringing together the old and the new in a distinctive harmony – on the outside, a façade comprised of aged bricks from an old home in a now-abandoned local neighbourhood; wood of a variety commonly seen around the city; bright steel roofing and modernly-placed swathes of glass separates the café from the surrounding concrete block architecture.

"I think a business must do some things differently, otherwise it won't succeed," Sary explains about his design choices. "I have an eye for detail. Everywhere I go, I notice the subtle elements of the place."

While the design is visually refreshing — it's rare to find a place in Halabja where one can sit under a framed black and white photo of Marilyn Monroe and sip a cup of espresso — that's not all there is to the café. Sary's decision not to serve shisha (a waterpipe for smoking mixtures of flavoured tobacco) and to ban cigarettes has rendered the café a less male-dominated space compared to other cafés around town and a key destination for families to spend leisure time. Indeed, most traditional tea houses in the region restrict entry to men alone; families are



How one Halabja cafe is moving the needle on social change and cultural evolution *(continued)*

rarely seen in such settings.

“There are only four other cafés in the city where one can bring his wife and children,” Sary says. “Many people tell me to serve shisha because it is very profitable, but I don’t want to do that because many of my regular customers are families, and I don’t want to lose them.”

Though the design pays tribute to the city and its culture, it is also considered an innovative new social space in Halabja. Sary thinks the place will positively contribute to the development of local culture. Though he sometimes receives negative comments from people who disapprove of places where girls and boys can meet, Sary says more and more people are praising the café.

Despite attempts to modernize the city and bring more economic prosperity to its people, much of Halabja’s progress was interrupted by the ISIL war and subsequent economic crisis.

“In Halabja, there aren’t many entertaining places or activities that youth can attend,” Sary tells us. “I have a friend who comes here every single night; I think it’s sad that he has no other place to spend his youth.”

Getting the café on track wasn’t an easy task for Sary. After receiving his

diploma in 2018, Sary wanted to do something he felt was special— he couldn’t opt for a conventional job. Two years and one COVID-19 lockdown later, he was thrilled to start his own caravan café. He served cold drinks and ice-cream at small wooden tables on the sidewalk. Two months later, winter arrived in Halabja, and customers shifted away from the caravan’s open atmosphere. That was the end of the caravan.

Still, Sary didn’t give up. He rented a vacant lot and built Mekhak café from the ground up. He didn’t have much money to set up the place, and despite doing most of the handiwork himself and producing all the tables and chairs with his own hands, he was still forced to take on a lot of debt to make things work.

However, a few months after opening Mekhak café, his expensive espresso machine broke, and, dismayed, Sary was in too much debt to afford to buy another one. A friend told him about IOM Iraq’s Individual Livelihood Assistance (ILA) programme and suggested that he apply. Sary’s application was successful, and he received the ILA in September of 2021.

The ILA programme aims to support the development of human capital

through vocational training, on-the-job trainings, job referrals and provision of business start-up or business expansion packages.

“I was very happy when I received the support from IOM,” Sary smiles. “Not only did it come at the right time, and I was able to buy another espresso machine, but it was also a big moral support for me and pushed me to continue.” This support helped him to keep Mekhak’s doors open and maintain the distinct quality that makes the café so unique.

Six months after Mekhak’s grand opening, Sary and Rezhin married. It is fitting, then, that Mekhak means “clove” in Kurdish, a symbol for love in Kurdish culture.

Today, Rezhin is still one of the three staff that serve the 50 seats of the busy café.

Sary plans to expand Mekhak and hire more employees to help him grow his thriving business.

“I want to introduce food to the menu as well, but I don’t want conventional food like pizza or burgers, I want the food to be different and special,” he says.

“If I have enough money, I will build the most extraordinary place.”

By Yad Abdulkader

Bab Sinjar Housing Complex is comprised of nine medium-rise residential buildings, including 324 apartments for approximately 2,300 returnees

Sinjar, 13 July 2022 - UN-Habitat Iraq team conducted a visit to Bab Sinjar Housing Complex in Mosul which was inaugurated in May 2022. The ceremony was attended by Senior Government Officials and Dr Erfan Ali, UN-Habitat Regional Representative for Arab States.

Bab Sinjar Housing Complex is comprised by nine medium-rise residential buildings, including 324 apartments for approximately 2,300 returnees, funded by the Government of Japan, to ensure returnees have access to adequate and dignified housing. Female headed households

specifically highlighted the importance of solid walls and gates to protect them and their children and that safe place are very critical for their dignified living.

At the territory of the complex, UN-Habitat and UNICEF are jointly working on the sewage system that will significantly improve living conditions of residents and the reduce their health risks. Lack of proper sewage systems, including sewage collection networks and treatment plants, causes a huge contamination of drinking water sources. In Mosul, an access to safe drinking water remains concern for residents and seriously inadequate, and many water and sanitation networks are in poor repair.

UN-Habitat recognizes the urgent assistance needed by residents, and projects aim to improve access to basic infrastructure and increase the residents’ sense of safety and security.



An ILO two-day workshop on social security governance was held in Sulaymaniyah

Sulaymaniyah, 14 July 2022 - A two-day workshop on social security governance took place in Sulaymaniyah, bringing together Members of Parliament of the federal government of Iraq and senior government officials. The workshop equipped key stakeholders with the necessary knowledge to better oversee the current social protection reform process in the country and the

implementation of new contributory programmes. This will be followed by a workshop bringing together social partners - government, employer, and worker representatives - as well as MPs, to review the draft social security law.

Supported by the European Union in Iraq, the training was implemented by the ILO in Iraq and its International Training Center ITCILO.



WFP Iraq partners with the directorate of information technology at the Kurdistan Regional Government towards improving social protection for the people



Baghdad, 19 July 2022 - The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) signed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) with the Kurdistan Regional Government, Department of Information technology (KRG-DIT) to formalise their collaboration on improving and reforming the Social Protection System in the Kurdistan Region.

The LoU aims to drive efforts to ensure that vulnerable groups, including children, youth, women, the elderly, the disabled and internally displaced people inside Iraq will benefit from fair access to a comprehensive and inclusive Digital Social Protection systems that is more responsive shocks.

The partnership will include focus on supporting the digitalization of the

national Public Distribution System (PDS) for food rations which, which will integrate with the National single registry; improving public awareness on the newly digitized processes; strengthening the capacity of KRG-DIT staff on e-governance; establishing data infrastructures at the KRG-DIT to improve administration of social protection schemes and reviewing and ensuring that social protection schemes are aligned with the government's strategies.

"The collaboration between the World Food Programme and the Kurdistan Regional Government Department of Information Technology is an important step towards making meaningful change to improve the social protection systems in the region.

Through this partnership we will jointly scale up digitalization of the social protection programmes and further support e-governance in the KRI to enable more efficient delivery of services to the most vulnerable families and improving their lives," said WFP Iraq Representatives, Ally-Raza Qureshi.

"Data governance is one of our core strategic directions where trusted data from various sources need to be consolidated, managed and shared with the right internal and external entities empowering them to execute their functions. We are committed to make our systems and databases such as population information system and identity management system securely available to Social Protection System and are grateful to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) for their commendable coordination and tireless efforts," said KRG-DIT Head, Mr. Hiwa Afandi.

WFP in Iraq is committed to supporting digital transformation as a vehicle for Social Protection reform in Iraq. The cooperation with KRG-DIT will ensure that digitalization initiatives are aligned with the KRG digital transformation objectives, and that social protection systems are interoperable with other government technology platforms.

Over 20 days, participants installed glass in and rehabilitated the windows of 175 houses

Kirkuk, 20 July 2022 - Across Iraq, displacement-affected persons are reckoning with a lack of livelihood opportunities and adequate shelter.

In order to reduce risks and hazards in Hay Al-Askary, an informal site in Kirkuk Governorate, an IOM Iraq Mobile Response Team engaged community members through a cash-for-work (CfW)

activity - CfW offers short-term employment to economically vulnerable groups as a means to sustain themselves and their families - to rehabilitate windows for the site's internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host community families - most of whom live in structures with windows that lack glass. This exposes them to the elements, including

the merciless heat and sandstorms of the Iraqi summer. Over 20 days, participants installed glass in and rehabilitated the windows of 175 houses.

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



Denmark contributes up to \$7.5m to Iraq's transition to stability, security and recovery



Baghdad/Copenhagen, 24 July 2022 – Denmark has reconfirmed its commitment to strengthening Security Sector Reform in Iraq, providing

approximately \$US 1.6 million to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq. In total, Denmark plans to contribute up to \$US 7.5 million until 2025.

Activities under the agreement include providing technical assistance to the Office of National Security Advisor (ONSA) to draft and implement the National Security Strategy; training of mid-ranking local police officers to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement, criminal justice and security actors; and fostering social cohesion by offering vocational training to disengaged former volunteer fighters who fought against Daesh.

Danish Ambassador Stig Paolo Piras said

“Denmark maintains its commitment to supporting Iraq's transition to stability, security and recovery. The strengthening of local police is important in the transition from green to blue security.”

“From social cohesion and preventing violent extremism, to stabilization, and reforming Iraq's security sector, Denmark has been a longstanding supporter of UNDP Iraq's work. We are extremely grateful for this additional contribution which will be instrumental in helping to build a peaceful and more secure Iraq, strengthening the many services and institutions that the Iraqi people are increasingly relying on,” says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq Ms Zena Ali Ahmad.

UNHCR project supports electricity network in Qushtapa; stability and more hours of electricity for local population

Erbil, 26 July 2022 - Under the patronage of HE Governor of Erbil and in the presence of the Director of the General Directorate of Electricity and the UNHCR Officer-in-Charge, a new electricity feeder-line and transformer were inaugurated in Qushtapa sub-district on 25 July.

The project, which was designed based on community needs, came to fruition as a result of collaboration among UNHCR, the Erbil Directorate of Migration and Crisis Response and the General Directorate of Electricity. The initiative included installation of a feeder-line as well as the provision of a transformer, which will prevent recurrent shutdowns due to overload on the existing feeder line. It will also

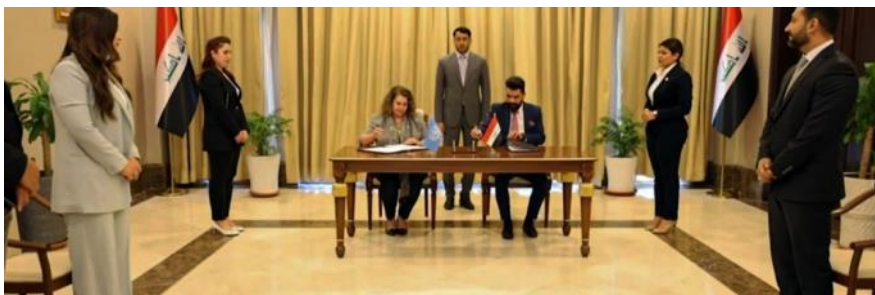
result in improved stability and an increase the provision of hours of electricity provided to the local community as well as refugees and IDPs, benefiting over 30,000 individuals in the area.

The project consists of the installation of a 7 km feeder line from the Gird Mala sub-station of Qushtapa which goes in two directions, one to Kawa settlement, and the other to Dukalla village, which is the last point. Most of the line is underground following safety and environmental government guidelines. The project cost over 600,000 USD and took 106 days to complete, under the supervision of the General Directorate of Electricity of Erbil and UNHCR.

UNHCR would like to extend its sincere gratitude to all the stakeholders who participated in making this project a success.



New MoU supports digital transformation in Iraq



Baghdad, 27 July 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is supporting the government of Iraq to strengthen its digital services and build its e-governance capabilities under a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed today with Iraq's Council of Ministers Secretariat (ComSec). The MoU focuses on harnessing and increasing the use of information and communication technology to modernize

government processes and systems, improving services for citizens and boosting the digital economy.

Under the MoU, an assessment of the digital landscape in Iraq and a subsequent roadmap for the main priorities of digital transformation will be developed. Forging new partnerships with the private sector to support for future digital transformation and e-governance projects is also highlighted in the MoU.

“For the people of Iraq, this MoU means increased efficiency and engagement with both the public and private sector, resulting in greater government transparency and accountability. The advancement in digital transformation will offer reliable, optimized, and seamless access to public services and consequently decrease the need for visiting public offices in person. When automated and standardized processes are introduced, corrupt behavior will be limited,” says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

The Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, His Excellency Mr. Hamid Al-Ghazi said: “This MoU is a step forward towards further digital transformation in Iraq, in line with our national strategies and goals. By enhancing e-governance processes, we are creating a more efficient, modern, and reliable civic system for all Iraqis.”

UN-Habitat and the Government of Japan facilitate supply of clean water to Sinjar communities



Sinjar, 01 August 2022 – “We are so grateful for the UN Habitat’s response to our needs of water supply, which allowed us to resume our daily lives and eventually renewed our hopes. We have

faced so many challenges including shortage of clean water and sanitation,” said Mr. Abdullah, the community member of the Rambosi village of the Sinjar district who sincerely thanked UN-Habitat and the Government of Japan for standing by them, as the neighborhood has suffered for a long time from the lack of clean water availability.

After the 2014 attacks, the existing WASH servicing in Sinjar villages were significantly damaged and all WASH activities were stunted. Mr Abdullah and his family endured many hardships in displacement, “We had many problems and obstacles due to a lack of essential services, particularly water and now I can even water my small garden” said Mr

Abdullah.

Mr. Ahmed, UN-Habitat engineer, explained that “the neighborhood relied on random water pipes connections on the surface for a long-time causing water pollution and different diseases.” The lack of clean drinking water and unsanitary conditions seriously affects the daily life and causes serious harm to the entire communities and to returnees and their families. The restoration work facilitates access to clean water for around 150 residents of the village, helps to re-establish their lives in the area, including vulnerable women and children and contributes to improving living conditions in Sinjar as well as the water infrastructure.

UN-Habitat believes in the power of sport as a tool for peace and community development; rehabilitated a football park

Baghdad, 07 August 2022 - UN-Habitat believes in the power of sport as a tool for peace and community development to unite youth and strengthen social cohesion in post-conflict areas. To improve the quality of returnees' life and support 15 local football teams in Ayadiah Sub-District,

UN-Habitat Iraq has rehabilitated a football park with lighting and the construction of changing rooms and WASH facilities as one of its interventions to help urban recovery and sustainable returns. This project is funded by the European Union and implemented by UN-Habitat.



IOM Iraq with the Government of Germany through KfW continues to support post-conflict recovery and the achievement of durable solutions to displacement in Iraq



Dohuk, 10 August 2022 – Today, a delegation from KfW Development Bank visited a variety of KfW-supported IOM Iraq projects in Dohuk Governorate. The delegation toured a rehabilitated oxygen factory rehabilitated that provides oxygen to public hospitals in Duhok – demand is high due to COVID-19. The delegation also met with unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the Sharia community who are rehabilitating Sharia Park through IOM Iraq’s Cash-for-Work (CfW) programming. The team then visited a beneficiary of IOM Iraq’s Individual Livelihoods Assistance (ILA) programme in Sumel, who received a Business Support Package to expand his

barbershop.

Finally, the delegation visited Honar Factory in Sumel, a shoe manufacturing business that has benefitted from IOM Iraq’s Enterprise Development Fund (EDF). Through an EDF grant, the factory owner was able to purchase the machinery necessary to expand the factory and create new job opportunities for the local community.

On 7 August a similar visit was organized to IOM Iraq’s EDF programme projects in Erbil. Thanks to generous KfW funding, these businesses were able to expand, increase production, and create job opportunities through IOM’s #EDF grant assistance.

A week before, the delegation visited a number of KfW-supported IOM projects and businesses across Ninewa Governorate. The visit included a tour around a local historical market in Old Mosul that had been severely damaged during the conflict with ISIL and was rehabilitated by IOM Iraq. This project improved the accessibility of the market, promoting job creation and reintroducing cash flow in the area.

The delegation met two men who benefitted from IOM Iraq’s Individual Livelihoods Assistance (ILA) programming, as well as two women who were able to expand their businesses, increase production and create job opportunities through IOM Iraq #EDF grants.

The delegation also visited an IOM-rehabilitated water treatment facility that provides water to around 60 per cent of Mosul.

IOM Iraq is pleased to work with the Government of Germany through KfW to contribute to the economic recovery and revitalization of the private sector in Iraq through dedicated support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the achievement of durable solutions to displacement in Iraq.

New agreement between Ministry of Water Resources and FAO introduces innovative tools to monitor water productivity in Iraq

Baghdad, 11 August 2022 – The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq and the Ministry of Water Resources launched yesterday the project Monitoring Water Productivity using Remote Sensing, as part of a global programme, WaPOR phase II, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. WaPOR, the FAO portal, to monitor Water Productivity through Open access of Remotely sensed derived data, aims to assist partner countries in developing their capacity to monitor and improve water and land productivity in agriculture, both rainfed and irrigated, responding therefore to the challenges that are posed by the dwindling of freshwater resources and the need to sustain agricultural production to ensure food security in the face of a changing climate.

In Iraq, FAO and the Ministry of Water Resources will be monitoring water productivity with data derived from open-access remote-sensing data and open source algorithms in the area of West Al-Gharraf irrigation project scheme in Wasit and Thi-Qar Governorates and in the Kurdistan Region for rainfed and irrigated areas. Trainings of relevant stakeholders to enable the WaPOR database's use for practical field applications are also being held.

The Director General of the of Planning and Follow-up Office in the Ministry of Water Resources, Mr. Zaid Hamoudi says, “We are pleased that Iraq is involved in this project to monitor the

land and water productivity in agriculture using remote sensing techniques. This intends to respond to the challenges posed by dwindling water resources and the need to sustain agricultural production to ensure food security in the face of climate change”.

“We call for further cooperation to enhance coordination between FAO and other stakeholders to meet the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to ensure the effective integration of water and food security into sustainable development strategies,” Mr. Hamoudi adds.

FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan emphasizes, “This partnership between the Ministry of Water Resources and FAO Iraq will ensure that tangible solutions are being assessed and implemented by using innovative techniques to tackle the serious challenges faced by Iraq such as the excruciatingly increase of

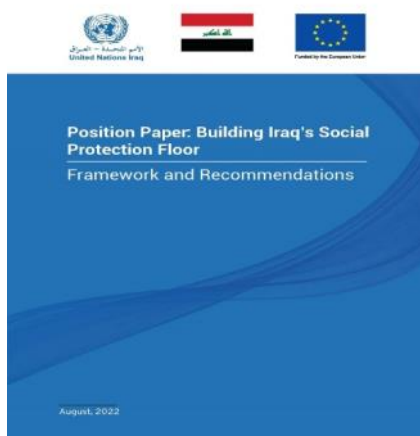
temperature, lack of rainfall and the country's life-threatening water crisis”.

“It will support the country in monitoring water productivity, identifying water productivity gaps while suggesting solutions to reduce these issues and contributing to a sustainable increase of agricultural production. This will lessen water stress while taking into account ecosystems and the equitable use of water resources”, Dr. El-Hajj Hassan adds.

Following the signing ceremony, FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan met with his Excellency Minister of Water Resources Dr. Mahdi Rashid Al-Hamdani to discuss the current water crisis in Iraq and ways forward to address effectively these challenges. The discussion focused on the strategic approach needed in response to water scarcity prioritizing affected areas notably the Marshes in the south.



Building Iraq's Social Protection Floor: Joint UN paper proposes recommendations to strengthen the adequacy, coverage and equity of the social protection system in Iraq



Baghdad, 17 August 2022 - A new working paper has been developed by the United Nations in Iraq, which proposes a set of key recommendations that would contribute to strengthening the adequacy, coverage and equity of the social protection system and enhancing its effectiveness in reaching the most vulnerable groups of society – including children, youth, women, elderly, informal workers, persons with disabilities and Internally Displaced Persons.

The paper, “Building Iraq's Social Protection Floor – Framework and recommendations,” looks at some of the

gaps and challenges in Iraq's social protection system and identifies operational, country specific, costed interventions that “should be considered to achieve an inclusive social assistance system in Iraq that ultimately leaves no one behind.”

Developed by the ILO, in partnership with UNICEF, WFP, IOM and UNHCR and the European Union, in close coordination with the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, the paper is part of efforts to facilitate the transition and reform of the social

Building Iraq's Social Protection Floor: Joint UN paper proposes recommendations to strengthen ... *(continued)*

protection system in the country. The paper highlights Iraq's commitment to social protection, as "demonstrated clearly in the 2018-2022 Poverty Reduction Strategy, in which the establishment of an effective social protection system was recognized as a strategic priority." Yet, implementation is undermined by high fragmentation in the current system and complexity and ineffectiveness of current targeting approaches, among other challenges. The paper focuses on non-contributory social assistance, which according to the ILO, includes "schemes that normally require no direct contribution

from beneficiaries or their employers as a condition of entitlement to receive relevant benefits."

The recommendations include shifting from charity-based social assistance to a rights-based, developmental approach; consolidating all fragmented social assistance programmes into a life-cycle social protection floor (SPF); and using the SPF as the basis for a shock-responsive cash transfer programme. Recommendations also focus on equipping the working-age population with modern economy skill-sets and integrating them in the contributory social insurance;

establishing a shared service centre (SSC) for unified service delivery (one-stop shop) for all social protection benefits; and strengthening nutrition, health and education by providing healthy school meals.

Social Protection programmes are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically, the elimination of extreme poverty in the world; full and productive employment and decent work for all; and the reduction of inequalities.

Agriculture

WFP handed over mechanized farming equipment to support small holder farmers

Baghdad, 6 July 2022 - WFP is contributing to the Ninewa Directorate of Agriculture's plan for supporting farmers. WFP handed over mechanized farming equipment to the directorate to support small holder farmers. "Mechanized farming and climate smart agriculture inputs and equipment is essential to adapt to climate change. The equipment will help small holders in Baaj, Sinjar,

Hamdaniya, Tal Afar and Nimrud. Restoring Agriculture and addressing climate change is vital to ensure food security and peace in Iraq and it is everyone's responsibility to take part in this endeavour to keep Iraq green," said WFP Iraq Representative, Mr. Ally Raza Qureshi during the handover of the tractors to the Directorate of Agriculture.



Through EU support, FAO Iraq concluded a training on climate-smart livestock practices in the south

Basra, 07 July 2022 – The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq through the European Union funded project and, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), concluded a two-day training for 20 extension workers from Basra, Missan and Dhi Qar governorates.

This training was held under the "restoration and strengthening the resilience of agri-food systems in Southern Iraq" project to empower the small farmers and vulnerable rural families in the three targeted governorates through the development of crop and livestock value chains.

The training will enable to develop training curriculum and strengthen capacities by coaching the participants on methodologies to be applied as part of Training for Trainers (ToT) and Farmer Field Schools (FFS) to support

ultimately the capacity of 6000 livestock producers in Basra, Dhi-Qar and Missan.

The training, conducted by FAO Team chaired by International Livestock Expert Dr. Chedly Kayouli, covered good techniques to improve the Buffalo feeding through using locally produced materials such as molasses to increase the nutritional value of local feed resources such as reeds, papyrus, wheat, rice straw and corn cobs. It also focused on progress made on fodder crops (Alfalfa and Sudanese Sorghum) highlighting successful plots of saline-tolerant fodder. Likewise, the participants discussed the concrete work plan to implement this project's activities.

FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan said, "We are working to strengthen the agricultural sector in Iraq and to create job opportunities for

the rural families."

"FAO has responded to the impact of drought season resulting in water decrease, increase of salinity and of feed prices in the Iraqi Marshes by purchasing 5000 tons of feeds including 1000 tons of wheat bran, 1000 tons of corn maize silage and 3000 tons of sugar molasses to support the buffalo breeders in the region. These efforts wouldn't have been possible without the generous contribution from the European Union and the close partnership with MoA", Dr. El-Hajj Hassan added.



Sustainable development strategies to transform Iraq's tomato and poultry sectors

Baghdad, 7 July 2022 - H. E. Mohammed Kareem Al Khafaji, Minister of Agriculture, officially launched, on behalf of the Government of Iraq, the country's Poultry and Tomato Sustainable Development Strategies (2022-2026).

Consumer demand for Iraqi poultry and tomato products is on the rise, particularly in the domestic market. Together, these value chains hold a projected import demand of over \$1.7 billion combined by 2025. Furthermore, both sectors exert significant potential for value chain development, value addition and commercialization.

Enhancing Iraq's competitiveness in these value chains contributes to national development goals of food security, inclusive growth, and job creation, particularly for women and youth. According to the International Trade Centre (ITC), reforms in the agribusiness sector could lead to more than 170,000 additional jobs in a moderate growth scenario by 2030.

Despite this considerable potential, Iraq's poultry and tomato value chains see a variety of impediments. All key actors along the value chains need to work together to address challenges, such as weak market connectivity and a challenging business environment, restraining the sector's ability to compete with imported products, upgrade their offering and connect to rewarding markets.

To tackle these constraints and seize on the growing domestic market potential, the Ministry of Agriculture developed the Poultry and Tomato Sustainable Development Strategies to guide the efforts of the government, private sector, and development partners and

thus, to improve the competitiveness of farmers and small and medium enterprises in these two sectors.

The launch in Baghdad marks the official implementation phase of the strategies and the culmination of a participatory approach during which over 400 Iraqi industry leaders, small business owners, farmers and public-sector representatives held consultations to reach consensus on sector competitiveness issues, strategic considerations and activities. These meetings were complemented by assessments of production sites and factory supply chains as well as bilateral interviews with industry experts and major market actors. The strategies also rely on extensive research and survey work during which hundreds of farmers and SMEs were interviewed, as well as thousands of Iraqi consumers.

Quotes

"The strategies are aligned with the government's priorities. They complement the Ministry of

Agriculture's efforts to support the poultry and tomato value chains, develop Iraq's agri-food industries and enhance food processing and marketing capacities in the country." - H. E. Mohammed Kareem Al Khafaji, Minister of Agriculture, Iraq

"The European Union is taking concrete action towards the implementation of these strategies and further advancing the agriculture and agri-food sectors in Iraq for inclusive growth and job creation." - Barbara Egger, Head of Cooperation, European Union Delegation

"ITC commends the leadership of the Government of Iraq and the committed engagement of the private sector, farmers groups and development partners in the design of these strategies. It is important to move to concrete actions now. ITC stands ready to continue accompanying Iraq during the strategies' implementation phase." - Eric Buchot, Head of Country Programme, International Trade Centre



Amid unprecedented water decrease, FAO is warning of threat to the communities in the Marshes and call for action to help buffalo producers overcome climate change and water shortage

Baghdad, 14 July 2022 -The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq renews its commitment to support the local communities particularly buffalo producers in the Iraqi Marshes, calling for action to tackle water shortages and climate change.

During the recent FAO following up mission under the EU-FAO project activities in the marshlands in July 2022, it was witnessed the dire situation of the local rural communities, mainly buffalo producers

who are in distress taken the unprecedented low water levels in the areas threatening their livelihoods and communal existence. FAO Iraq has already launched an emergency support in coordination with Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) targeting 5000 farmers with feeds provision thanks to the support from the European Union (EU).

Still, the Marshes are one of the poorest regions in Iraq and one of the most affected by the climate change and water shortage causing disastrous

impact on livelihoods for more than 6000 rural families since they are losing their buffalos, their unique living asset.

More and more buffalo breeders are leaving these areas taken the hostile environmental for them and their animals to live in. Some have been migrating to close by areas and governorates such Kut, Samawah, Najaf, Karbala and Shatrah where water is available for them and their animals. A couple of buffalo producers sold their animals at low prices to buy

Amid unprecedented water decrease, FAO is warning ... (continued)

feeds for the saved animals and others shifted to other livelihoods opportunity since they have been losing their unique livelihoods assets i.e. buffalos are increasingly dying since they are stuck in the swampy mud when they try to swim or to reach the grazing reeds. In addition to the decrease in the buffalos' milk production, the low prices to sell them and their poor health situations due to lack of food in the Marshes.

We must step up efforts to meet these challenges. In this context, FAO Iraq calls for:

- Urgent and consistent support to buffalo producers such as providing water, water storage tanks, feeds and diesel for boats in Iraqi Marshes. Without rapid intervention from national and international communities, the farmers who lived there for generations will ultimately

have to abandon their lands forever.

- Implement medium and long-term strategy with sustainable activities that show good prospects of giving relief to the areas and its vulnerable buffalo farmers so that they can continue to live in these areas.
- Further resource allocations

from the donors and international community to assist the vulnerable communities impacted severely by the climate change in the Iraqi Marshes and to collaborate further with the governmental partners to reduce the impact of the crisis.

The Iraqi Marshes cannot wait!



Labor Issues

ILO introduces key entrepreneurship training package for Iraqi women



Basra and Dohuk, 27 June 2022 - The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched its GET Ahead training programme in Iraq, to provide hundreds of women with the skills and knowledge needed to start a small-scale business or improve an existing one.

GET Ahead, which is short for "Gender and Entrepreneurship Together – GET Ahead for Women in Enterprise" is a global training package, which seeks to develop entrepreneurial skills from a gender perspective – supporting women of low income.

For the first time, the programme is being rolled out in Iraq, targeting women working in the agricultural sector. The programme, which was launched earlier in June, is seeking to reach over 500 entrepreneurs and 50 potential trainers in Basra and in Dohuk.

The trainings are taking place under the framework of an ILO project titled "Enhancing labour governance, inspection and working conditions in response to COVID-19," which is supported by the European Union. The project builds the capacities of rural women in entrepreneurship and decent employment in the field of agriculture through these training, which are being implemented with The Swedish Development Aid Organization (SWEDO) and Al-Meameen Humanitarian Foundation.

Khadija Ashour Abbas, who works in the date sector and attended the training in Basra, explained: "Life is very expensive and I have five children to support," said the agricultural engineer. "I have a business idea and I have some background in setting up a business, but I need more information

on how to start a business and manage my finances."

The programme addresses some of the barriers that women face in the world of work, particularly in relation to business development, through the delivery of various modules that focus on business management and soft skills.

Sivan Shawkat lives in Zakho in the Dohuk Governorate and is looking to start her own business. "The training taught me how to plan and expand a business," Shawkat said. "I also acquired communications skills through this training."

Israa Adnan Yousef, is a twenty-three-year-old doctoral student in agricultural engineering. She wants to set up a business producing and selling fertilisers. She also took part in the training in Basra. "This training was useful as it introduced us to some very important information; such as how to create a business plan, the risks associated with setting up a business and what some of the legal requirements are in setting up a business."

The entrepreneurs are being trained by potential trainers, who have embarked on becoming ILO certified trainers. This process for the trainers entails a series of training of trainers' workshops, in addition to conducting at

ILO introduces key entrepreneurship training package ... (continued)

least three of their own trainings of entrepreneurs and developing an action plan specific for the Get Ahead programme. Those who successfully complete the requirements, will become certified trainers - responsible for adapting the training material and providing further training and coaching to potential entrepreneurs or current owners of small businesses.

"I took part in the Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions because I do not have a TOT certificate," said Mahmoud Mohammed Amin, a business management professor at the University of Dohuk and owner of a company supporting business development. "I benefited from the

sessions and now I am implementing this knowledge through the current training (of entrepreneurs)."

Zainab Rahim al-Mousawi has been a trainer for around ten years in business management and marketing. She took part in the ILO's Training of Trainers workshop in Basra. "This training had elements which can complement my way of working, such as the interactive activities - the games and the exercises, which were introduced to us. These activities enhance the knowledge of trainees in the material that is being taught."

The EU-funded project places emphasis on improving working conditions in Iraq's agricultural sector by promoting

workers' skills development, encouraging more women to set up small businesses, and by improving the working conditions on farms through the application of International Labour Standards and national labour legislation.

The project will continue to provide women with post-training support, such as mentoring and linkages to non-financial and financial service providers to build their management and soft skills to start and run their business, and enlarging the pool of institutions that can better serve women entrepreneurs through targeted capacity building interventions.

By ILO News.

Iraq and ILO launch first national Labour Force Survey in a decade

Baghdad, 5 July 2022 – Iraq's Ministry of Planning, the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), together with the International Labour Organization (ILO) have launched a national Labour Force Survey, the first of its kind to be conducted in Iraq in the last decade. The survey presents estimates at the national, governorate, urban and rural levels and covers a broad array of indicators on the labour market and demographic characteristics of residents in Iraq.

The CSO and the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office (KRSO) conducted the Iraq Labour Force Survey in 2021, with technical and financial support by the ILO.

The main objective of the survey was to collect current data on the size and characteristics of the labour force, employment, unemployment and other labour market characteristics of the population, including working time, income from employment of employees at main jobs and informality of employment.

The survey was also designed to measure different components of labour underutilization, including time-related underemployment and potential labour force, and other forms of work, in particular, own-use production of goods and services, in line with the latest international standards adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

The findings of the survey were presented at an event in Baghdad on Tuesday (July 5), which was attended by the Minister of Planning Dr. Khaled Battal Al-Najem, and ILO Country Coordinator Maha Kattaa.



"The survey provides estimates at the national and governorate level and provides important indicators on the labour market and demographic characteristics of Iraq's residents," said Minister of Planning Dr. Khaled Battal Al-Najem. "The survey will pave the way for the quick identification of needs relating to the creation of employment for Iraq's citizens. It will also provide indicators that will help develop important long-term policies that address the needs of the labour market," Minister Al-Najem added.

"The findings show that 13 million women are in the age of the employment, yet only around one million are working. The findings also show that more than one-third of the youth population is not in education, nor in employment or training," said ILO Country Coordinator Maha Kattaa. "There is an urgent need to create more decent job opportunities that can attract women to the labour market, and attract youth towards the private sector and entrepreneurship, as the public sector cannot absorb the growing number of youth entering the labour market each year."

Main Findings

The Labour Force Survey, with a sample size of 16,400 households covering Iraqi and non-Iraqi households, presents estimates at the national and governorate level, covering Iraq's 18 governorates.

The survey was conducted in line with the latest international standards adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

The survey results reveal that the national labour force participation rate (LFPR) – the percentage of people who are active in the labour market, either employed or unemployed – stood at 39.5 per cent in 2021. According to the survey results, about 30.2 per cent of the total working age population were outside the labour force in 2021. The great majority of persons outside the labour force were female.

The female labour force participation rate was particularly low standing at 10.6 per cent in comparison to 68 per cent for males.

The data further show that the LFPR of young people (aged 15 to 24 years) was 26.5 per cent, and that of adults

Iraq and ILO launch first national Labour Force Survey ... (continued)

(aged 25 years and above) was 45.8 per cent.

The employment-to-population ratio – or the percentage of the working-age population that is currently employed – is often used as an indicator of the performance of the national economy in providing employment to its population. In Iraq, it stood at 33 per cent indicating that only about one-third of the working age population (15 years old and over) were employed in Iraq in 2021. The ratio is lower among women (7.6 per cent) compared to men (58 per cent), and lower for youth (17 per cent) than for adults (40.6 per cent). The data show that the unemployment rate stood at 16.5 per cent, indicating that for every five employed persons there was roughly one unemployed person. The female unemployment rate (28.2 per cent) was about twice the male unemployment rate (14.7 per cent) and the youth unemployment rate (35.8 per cent) was more than three times that of the adult unemployment rate (11.2 per cent).

The survey presents results by geographical distribution, disaggregated by urban and rural, and

by governorate. The data show that the labour force participation rate was higher in urban areas (40.3 per cent) than in rural areas (37.3 per cent). Similarly, the unemployment rate was higher in urban areas than in rural areas, standing at 17.6 per cent and 13.3 per cent respectively.

The survey measures informal employment, which is employment that is not covered or is insufficiently covered by formal arrangements and protections, and employment in the informal sector, which is employment in establishments that are not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements. The results show that around 54.8 per cent of total employment was in the informal sector and the number of persons with informal jobs represented 66.6 per cent of total employment.

The results show that most employed persons usually worked between 30 and 59 hours per week at their jobs (61.1 per cent). The number of persons usually working short hours, that is less than 30 hours per week, was relatively low (20.5 per cent), but significantly higher among women

(41.8 per cent) in comparison with men (17.7 per cent). At the other extreme of the distribution, the survey results show that some 17.9 per cent of employed persons usually worked long hours – more than 60 hours per week. The rate of those working long hours was much higher among men (19.8 per cent) than among women (3.1 per cent). The survey finds that almost one-third of Iraq's extended labour force – the labour force and the potential labour force combined – was affected by some form of labour underutilization. The data reveals that the composite measure of labour underutilization, which combines unemployment, time-related underemployment and potential labour force, stood at 31 per cent. In general, labour underutilization affected women (49.5 per cent) much more than men (27.3 per cent), and youth (53.3 per cent) much more than adults (24 per cent).

The results show that women tend to be more concentrated in services (73.1 per cent) and agriculture (14.4 per cent) than men in the corresponding broad branches of economic activity (62.2 per cent and 7.7 per cent, respectively).

ILO and partners introduce key global toolkit to respond to child labour in Iraq

Erbil, 28 July 2022 - The International Labour Organization (ILO), in collaboration with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, conducted a five-day training to introduce a new global interagency child labour toolkit in Iraq. The training on the toolkit was co-facilitated by Bent Al-Rafedain Organization (BROB), bringing together representatives from national and international organizations from across Iraq, who are working in the field of child protection and child labour.

The toolkit "Preventing and Responding to Child Labour in Humanitarian Action" is based on evidence from multiple contexts and encompasses practical tools and case studies from different countries, including Iraq. It was developed by the Global Child Labour Task Force of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, to guide humanitarian actors and other agencies in their response to child labour. The Task Force is co-led by Plan International and the ILO.

The training is part of a series of

capacity building efforts that the ILO has been providing under its Tackling the worst forms of child labour amongst IDPs, refugees, and vulnerable host communities in Iraq project, which is supported by the European Regional Development and Protection Programme for Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq (RDPP II).

"We would like to welcome the practitioners who have been active in the child protection arena and who are advocates in tackling child labour across Iraq," said ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq Maha Kattaa. "Iraq is the first country in the region to roll

out this very important toolkit. We are looking forward to collaborating with the participants in addressing child labour and supporting the development and education of children, taking into consideration the priorities and needs of the IDPs and refugees."

The training focused on a number of issues related to child labour, including a review of current national and international legal frameworks, and identified legal and policy gaps related to addressing children labour.

It also covered topics on core action to prevent and respond to child labour in Iraq, including identifying risks, and



ILO and partners introduce key global toolkit to respond to child labour in Iraq *(continued)*

proactive factors across each of the socio-economic levels which impact children's vulnerability to child labour. The training also highlighted the importance of implementing awareness raising and advocacy campaigns through group activities and how to tailor messaging and advocacy on child labour.

"We had a very good group of child protection actors from various parts of Iraq," said Peter Matz, a consultant with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. "We discussed how to coordinate on child labour issues, what are some of the programmatic actions that can be taken, all with the idea of rolling this toolkit on child labour in humanitarian situations out."

"This is the first time this training is taking place in Iraq," added Aliaa Al Ansary, the Executive Director of BROB. "The training sheds light on child labour specifically and this is important because child labour is usually looked at as part of child protection but here we are, with our partners, ensuring that child labour is dealt with as its own area of specialization."

The participants of the training will act not only as trainers, but also as advocates to ensure a wide and comprehensive national roll out of the toolkit.

"This was a great opportunity for us to establish a closer collaboration and coordination with different actors aiming to respond to different child

protection issues, especially child labour," said Ramon Bzheo, Child Protection Coordinator with the International Rescue Committee.

Under its RDPP-support project, the ILO is tackling the worst forms of child labour in Iraq, through various activities. They include the establishment of a Child Labour Monitoring System, increasing access to quality education for children, providing skills training and income-generating activities to older siblings and caretakers of vulnerable children, and supporting the development of a National Action Plan against child labour, in collaboration with ILO's tripartite partners and other relevant partners.

By ILO News.

Effective measures are needed to ensure adequate Occupational Safety and Health for workers during extreme heat in Iraq

Baghdad, 8 August 2022 - ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq, Ms. Maha Kattaa, highlights the importance of adequate measures to mitigate some of the risks workers are exposed to due to soaring temperatures in Iraq:

"With temperatures in Iraq soaring up to 50 degrees Celsius in recent weeks, the ILO in Iraq is calling on its tripartite partners – the government, employers' and workers' organizations - to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to mitigate some of the risks associated with working under extreme heat and ensure that workers are provided with adequate care at their workplace.

The extreme heat is increasing concerns in relation to the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) conditions of workers, especially those employed in construction and agriculture - a sector which is already considered as one of the most hazardous in the world.

According to the recent Labour Force Survey, one in four workers in Iraq is employed either in construction or agriculture – an extremely significant number.

The ILO released a report in 2019 which stated that the "rise in global temperatures caused by climate change will make the phenomenon of "heat stress" more common," adding that "the higher heat levels caused by climate change threaten progress towards decent work by leading to a deterioration of working conditions and undermining the security, health and

well-being of workers."

Workers in some parts of the country have been given time off due to the heat. Yet, for workers who cannot afford to miss a day of work, such as those in informal, temporary, seasonal or day labour, measures must be taken to ensure their protection.

On the practical level, this could include ensuring workers are provided with appropriate clothing, access to drinking water and shaded areas; and are encouraged to work during cooler hours with appropriate break times.

It also includes ensuring that legislation related to OSH are being enforced through labour inspections – especially in sectors which face most risks.

Iraq has ratified a number of ILO Conventions which focus on the needs to ensure protection for workers in different sectors, and most recently through the ratification of the Safety

and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), which re-affirms the country's commitment to decent work and International Labour Standards.

The ILO is committed to supporting its partners in the development of Occupational Safety and Health and Labour Inspection polices and systems, that will contribute to modernizing those systems and improving conditions for workers and their employers, in line with International Labour Standards.

While these efforts are not specific to heat stress at work, they will nonetheless contribute to ensuring a more and better working environment for all workers in Iraq.

The safety and health of workers is the responsibility of everyone. We all have a role to play - even if small - to ensure that working conditions are decent and safe and that our environment is protected from further degradation."



ILO and Iraq Post Office exploring options for collaboration on supporting jobseekers to find decent employment

Baghdad, 30 July 2022 - ILO Country Coordinator Dr. Maha Kattaa and her team met recently with the Director General of Iraq Post Office Mr. Idris Khaled Abdulrahman, Deputy Director Mr. Yasir Amer Al-Jawhar as well as other officials in Baghdad. The meeting represented an opportunity to discuss the Post Office's ongoing initiatives and projects, and to identify options for collaboration on supporting jobseekers to find decent employment, supporting small businesses to grow, and extending access to financial services.



Counterterrorism

UN counterterrorism officials confirmed that the threat posed by Da'esh terrorist fighters and their affiliates remains “global and evolving”

New York, 9 August 2022 - In a joint briefing to the Security Council on Tuesday, UN counterterrorism officials confirmed that the threat posed by Da'esh terrorist fighters and their affiliates remains “global and evolving”. “Da'esh and its affiliates continue to exploit conflict dynamics, governance fragilities and inequality to incite, plan and organize terrorist attacks,” said UN counter-terrorism chief Vladimir Voronkov, presenting the Secretary-General's fifteenth report.

They also exploit pandemic restrictions, misuse digital spaces to recruit sympathizers and have “significantly” increased the use of unmanned aerial systems, as reported in northern Iraq.

Decentralized structure, methods

In charting the of Da'esh expansion across Iraq, Syria and through areas of Africa that until recently had been largely spared from attacks, Mr. Voronkov attributed their success in part to a decentralized structure focused around a “general directorate of provinces” and associated “offices”.

These operate in both Iraq and Syria, as well as outside the core conflict zone – notably in Afghanistan, Somalia and the Lake Chad Basin.

Better understanding and monitoring, including through global and regional cooperation, are vital to counter the threat.

Vulnerabilities across the world

Providing an overview, Mr. Voronkov said that the border between Iraq and Syria remains highly vulnerable, with an estimated 10,000 fighters operating in the area.



Resolving the conflicts in which Da'esh and its Al-Qaida forebear thrive is necessary for creating the conditions to bring about their defeat. But if we are to rid ourselves of this scourge, we must also address the vulnerabilities, societal grievances and inequality exploited by the group in the first place, as well as promoting and protecting human rights and the rule of law.



Mr. Vladimir Voronkov
Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism



In April, the group launched a global campaign to avenge senior leaders killed in counter-terrorism operations.

While the number of attacks claimed or attributed to the local Da'esh affiliate has decreased in Afghanistan, since the Taliban assumed control last year, its presence has expanded into the north-east and east of the country.

In Europe, Da'esh has called on sympathizers to carry out attacks by exploiting the easing of pandemic restrictions and the conflict in Ukraine.

Africa in crosshairs

In Africa, meanwhile, the senior UN official described the expansion of Da'esh across the Central, Southern and Western reaches of the continent.

From Uganda, one affiliate widened its operations into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while another – after being knocked out by military action in 2021 – intensified small-scale

attacks in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province.

The expansion has even affected littoral countries in the Gulf of Guinea, which had previously been spared from violence.

Managing millions

In terms of financing, Mr. Voronkov said Da'esh leaders manage between \$25 to \$50 million in assets, significantly less than estimates three years ago.

However, the diversity of both licit and illicit sources underscores the importance of sustained efforts to cut terrorism funding.

While he welcomed recent repatriations by Iraq, Tajikistan and France, he expressed concern that the limited progress achieved so far in repatriating foreign terrorist fighters and their family members is “far overshadowed by the number of individuals still

UN counterterrorism officials confirmed that the threat posed by Da'esh terrorist fighters and their affiliates remains ... (continued)

facing a precarious and deteriorating situation”.

Calls to repatriate foreign fighters

Tens of thousands of individuals – including more than 27,000 children – from Iraq and some 60 other countries remain subject to enormous security challenges and humanitarian hardship. The counter-terrorism chief reiterated the Secretary-General’s call for Member States to further their efforts in facilitating the safe, voluntary and dignified repatriation of all individuals who remain stuck in camps and other facilities.

“Terrorism does not exist in a vacuum,” said Weixiong Chen, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, which was established in 2001 following the 11 September terrorist attacks in the United States.

Describing gains, he said that the Executive Directorate, which is a special political mission, was able to resume its on-site assessment visits after two years of virtual and hybrid formats brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among other efforts, his team issued a

report synthesizing its extensive consultations with African civil society groups on trends related to ISIL in Africa, as well as a study on the links between counter-terrorism frameworks and international humanitarian law.

In closing, he called for a comprehensive, coordinated “All of UN” approach tailored by age and gender, and human rights compliant as the only way to push back against a global terrorist threat like Da’esh.

By UN News.

Security Sector Reform

Policing for the people: new initiative to boost local police services in Iraq



Baghdad, 21 June 2021 – Police stations across Iraq will become more service-oriented and will better respond to the needs of citizens thanks to a new initiative between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq and the Ministry of Interior (MoI), generously funded by the governments of Canada, Germany, and the Netherlands.

The Model Police Station Pilot establishes a policing model that increases trust between citizens and local police, restores responsive, effective, and accountable local police services that are accessible to both men and women. It incorporates recommendations and priorities from Iraq’s Local Police Service RoadMap launched in November 2019 and reflects the results of assessments that address challenges within the existing system.

The Pilot has a strong focus on crime

management, police-community relations and gender responsive policing, including investigating the presence and role of female police officers in Iraq, as well as increased accessibility to local police stations by women, girls, and youth from minority ethnic groups. The Model Police Station ‘design outline’ has been developed in consultation with the MoI to inform what a Police Station in Iraq should look like. Recommendations from the pilot will be trialed across six police stations in Anbar, Baghdad, Basra, and Ninewa governorates.

This initiative compliments a series of trainings that have been delivered with UNDP’s support over several years, including improving the effectiveness of local police for mid-level managers in the Iraqi local police, basic leadership training, and criminal investigation.

“I welcome the model police station pilot initiative implemented in

partnership between UNDP and MoI. This initiative is essential to advance the local policing in post-Daesh Iraq. The model police station initiative complements the ongoing support that is already provided by UNDP to strengthen local policing in Iraq, including specialised trainings, development of the Local Police Service Road Map and Standard Operating Procedures for Criminal Investigation. This initiative is another milestone for the UNDP and MoI partnership, to further improve local policing services to local communities. This is essential for Iraq’s long-term stability and development.” says Deputy Minister of Interior for Police Affairs, Lieutenant General Emad Mohammed.

“As Iraq recovers from the ISIL conflict, now is the time to implement a new local police approach that is more citizen-responsive, and service-orientated, and addresses the needs of women and girls, both inside the police service, and within communities.” says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

“UNDP is committed to working alongside the Ministry of Interior to ensure the recommendations made under this pilot – such as increasing the number of female police officers and improving access to vulnerable women – are implemented as soon as possible,” she adds.

The Model Police Station Pilot was supported by the governments of Canada, Germany, and the Netherlands.

IOM Iraq enhances the capacity of key stakeholders to develop procedures and a national referral mechanism to assist and protect victims of human trafficking

Baghdad, 28 June 2022 - Human trafficking has become an increasingly urgent issue in Iraq, with children being especially vulnerable to risks.

To support Iraqi authorities in combatting trafficking in persons, IOM Iraq conducted a two-day training on 26 and 27 June to enhance the capacity of key stakeholders from the KRI and Baghdad to develop procedures and a national referral mechanism to assist and protect

victims of human trafficking, focusing on the unique needs of child victims of trafficking and other vulnerable migrant children. This is part of IOM's holistic response towards the prevention of trafficking, protection of victims and prosecution of offenders.

This training was made possible with the support of the European Union, as part of the Glo.Act project implemented by UNODC in coordination with IOM Iraq.



Thirteen law enforcement facilities in Ninewa officially reopen after destruction by ISIL

Ninewa, 30 June 2022 – Thirteen law enforcement facilities across Ninewa that were damaged during the ISIL conflict have been officially opened by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Ninewa Governorate.

The thirteen law enforcement facilities include ten police stations and three national security buildings across Ninewa. The spacious and purpose-built facilities have the capacity to serve around 420,000 citizens. The facilities were rehabilitated through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization with generous support from the Netherlands.

In addition, through the Netherlands' support, UNDP will complete the rehabilitation of three court houses, two national security buildings, fourteen police stations and eleven police directorate offices by the end of this year, taking the total number of law enforcement facilities supported by the Netherlands in Ninewa, Kirkuk and Salah Al Din to forty-four. This also complements UNDP's ongoing security sector reform initiatives, including training for law enforcement and police officers across Iraq that focuses on improving the effectiveness of local police, basic leadership, and criminal investigation. Since 2018, around 1,160 officers (94 women officers) have been trained across fifteen governorates, of which 112 are from Ninewa.

"The reopening of these facilities is an important milestone in the journey to rebuilding Iraq after years of conflict and instability. Ensuring quality and inclusive police services and establishing trust between law enforcement and citizens is one of the foundations of a strong and resilient society. Therefore, UNDP is proud to



support initiatives that strengthen the security sector and play a key role in fostering Iraq's long-term stability and development," says UNDP's Resident Representative in Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"This would not be possible without the support from our longstanding partner, the Netherlands. We look forward to continuing our work together to build a stable and prosperous Iraq," she added. "It is essential that Iraqi police can take up its role as the first responders for the security of Iraqi citizens. The Netherlands supports the Iraqi authorities in this, through both rebuilding the police stations, as well as investing in the Iraqi police officers.

We remain committed to the Iraqi people together with our United Nations partners," says Rochus J.P. Pronk, Deputy Ambassador, Chargé d'Affaires at the Netherlands Embassy to Iraq.

Since 2015, the Netherlands has contributed over US\$ 107 million to the Funding Facility for Stabilization and US\$ 8.5 million to security sector reform, making it one of UNDP's largest contributors in Iraq. The funding has focused on supporting infrastructure rehabilitation, restoring local police services, and placing a greater focus on building the ability of the Government for Iraq to better respond to the needs of citizens.



IOM Iraq conducted a workshop in Baghdad to review the Community Policing architecture in Iraq

Baghdad, 30 June 2022 - Across Iraq, relations between community members and law enforcement have deteriorated over years of cyclical conflict. IOM Iraq's Community Engagement and Policing (CP) programming supports (re)building trust between communities and legitimate law enforcement actors to strengthen safety and security and shift towards a democratic, people-centric, proactive and preventative approach to policing, centered on promoting human rights and the rule of law.

IOM Iraq conducted a workshop in

Baghdad for Community Policing officers, civil society organizations and members of the Strategic Centre for Community Policing and the National Advisory Forum to review the CP architecture in Iraq.

Participants presented their activities, successes and challenges in performing their roles within the CP framework. At the end of the workshop, they incorporated their inputs, finalized and endorsed the national CP architecture, which is aimed at strengthening connections amongst CP Forums across the country on local and national levels,

and mainstreaming the CP methodology across Iraq's law enforcement sector.

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



Through HLP Assistance Centres and Women Legal Counseling Offices vulnerable and marginalized groups are better able to access justice

Baghdad, 30 June 2022 - Through HLP Assistance Centres and Women Legal Counselling Offices (WLCOs), vulnerable and marginalized groups are better able to access justice.

CPF's and CPOs cooperate with these specialized assistance centres to meet protection needs and address issues that could lead to tensions and 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.



Iraq is in need of support to secure its highly porous border with Syria

Baghdad, 1 July 2022 - IOM Iraq delivered a ten-day integrated border management and standard operating procedures training in Baghdad from 12 to 23 June for [for relevant Government personnel].

The objective of the training was to strengthen their understanding of and capacity to utilize integrated border management instruments for the protection of human rights while preventing cross-border movement of suspected or known terrorists, and facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration. This is part of a broader project to enhance the border

management capacity of the Government of Iraq at the Iraq-Syria border.

This training was made possible with the support of U.S. Department of State.



Gender-responsive and -inclusive programming is a shared priority of IOM and the Government of Canada

Anbar, 18 July 2022 - The Canadian Ambassador to Iraq, HE. Mr. Gregory Galligan, traveled to Anbar Governorate with a Canadian delegation and a delegation from IOM Iraq to visit Fallujah district's Community Police Station, a dedicated safe space with trained officers to respond to the concerns of community members.

There they discussed the achievements of local Community Policing Forums – collaborative, whole-of-community spaces where security and safety concerns are discussed – as well as challenges to creating a safe community environments and potential solutions.

Gender-responsive and -inclusive programming is a shared priority of IOM and the Government of Canada, and the delegation joined a focused discussion session in Fallujah's Women's Cultural Center Organization

with a group of women from the community. The attendees discussed gender equality, the role of women in the framework of a collaborative community policing partnership, the specific threats faced by women and ways toward greater empowerment.

IOM Iraq is pleased to partner with the Government of Canada to support inclusive, gender-responsive community engagement and policing activities aimed at rebuilding trust between communities and law enforcement actors.



IOM Iraq held a workshop on developing a roadmap for the implementation of a gender-sensitive Community Engagement and Policing plan



Baghdad, 20 July 2022 - Iraq's Community Engagement and Policing programme recognizes that gender norms, roles, and relations have to be taken into account to achieve peace and stability.

That's why IOM Iraq recently held a workshop on developing a roadmap for the implementation of a gender-sensitive Community Engagement and Policing plan.

The workshop was opened by the Director of the Community Police, Brigadier General Ghaleb Al-Attayah,

and attended by a number of representatives from the Government of Iraq's Women's Branch, the National Strategic Centre for Community Policing and the National Advisory Forum, as well as civil society organizations, and members of Community Policing Forums (CPF's) and media outlets.

The participants discussed:

- Ways to increase the number of female officers and enhance the creation of a supportive working environment.

- Ways to strengthen cooperation between the Community Engagement and Policing programme and civil society to prevent and respond to gender-based and domestic violence cases.

- Protection and referral mechanisms and how they could be strengthened with the involvement of Women's Legal Counselling Offices.

- Women's participation in CPF's and how to ensure that their safety and security concerns are recognized and addressed.

"Women should have an important role in Community Policing so that they can help reduce violence and directly achieve the goal of easily responding to these situations in order to reduce existing cases [of violence and blackmail] in society. As the role of women in these situations is very important and sensitive, they must also have an effective role in and imprint on society [at large] so that they can interact with these problems [to] get results quickly," said Ms. Jenan Alani, head of the Jawlan Community Policing Forum in Anbar Governorate. This workshop was made possible with support from the Government of Canada.

Enhancing crime management: training improves interviewing techniques for Iraqi investigators

Baghdad, 21 July 2022 – Iraq’s security and justice sector institutions will be further strengthened under a training programme for Iraqi investigators that enables them to interview suspects and witnesses by using effective and non-coercive interviewing techniques.

The initiative is a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Iraq’s Ministry of Interior (MoI), with funding generously provided by the German Government’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Training will be rolled out across the six model police stations of Iraq, which serve as key learning and development hubs for all police stations across Iraq. The training will emphasise the importance of maintaining human rights at every stage of suspect and witness treatment, ensuring best practice interviewing techniques are embedded into the model stations.

Participants will include local police, as well as employees from Anti-Crime directorates, the Police Affairs Agency, Training and Qualifications Directorate, MoI, and the Federal Investigation and Intelligence Agency. “Germany joins forces with the Government of Iraq and UNDP to support security and justice sector reforms across the country. Establishing best practice interviewing techniques in line with international standards will help create efficient and transparent law enforcement and

criminal justice institutions that the Iraqi people can rely on, while at the same time creating a safe and secure environment,” says German Ambassador to Iraq, H.E Martin Jaeger.

“Effective, non-coercive interviewing will ensure respect for human rights. It will motivate police officers, instil pride in their professional skills, produce more reliable evidence, create a healthier environment in police stations, and enhance trust between the police and the population. This means more communities will support police investigations and more citizens will feel empowered to come forward as witnesses,” says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq, Ms Zena Ali Ahmad.

“We are extremely grateful to our longstanding partners Germany for this important contribution, which compliments many other initiatives they have funded for strengthening the security sector in Iraq, including the development of a local police reform strategy and standard operating procedures for criminal investigations, as well as the two model police stations in Baghdad and Basra,” she adds.

The initiative is part of UNDP Iraq’s Security Sector Reform and Rule of Law Programme under the Governance portfolio, which aims to restore citizens’ confidence in governance institutions and state legitimacy, by supporting accountable, transparent, efficient institutions that meet community needs.



A Community Policing Office (CPO) and Referral Guidance Center (RGC) opened in Shatt Al-Arab district, Basra Governorate

Basra, 7 August 2022 - Peacebuilding in Iraq means restoring trust between communities and legitimate law enforcement actors, and creating the conditions for them to identify and address security issues collaboratively – IOM Iraq contributes to this through its community engagement and policing programming.

On 7 August, IOM Iraq celebrated the opening of a Community Policing Office (CPO) and Referral Guidance Center (RGC) in Shatt Al-Arab district, Basra Governorate, together with local community police and government officials.

This CPO-RGC will help facilitate vulnerable groups’ access to protection and law enforcement services aimed at reducing crimes such as drug trafficking, electronic extortion and other issues

identified by community members in cooperation with community police.

This opening was made possible with the support of the Government of Germany.



Community Safety Initiatives address local safety and security concerns

Baghdad, 07 August 2022 – Community Policing is helping to (re)build trust between communities and law enforcement actors and find local solutions to complex security issues following the ISIL crisis.

Recently, IOM Iraq conducted a workshop in Baghdad on how to connect community policing offices (CPOs) and referral guidance centres (RGCs) with appropriate service providers to refer cases to. Community police officers from across the country attended the workshop, in addition to members of community policing forums and representatives from civil society organizations. Participants discussed how to refer cases and to whom, as well as successes and challenges in implementation, and mechanisms for soliciting feedback.

This workshop was made possible with the support of the Government of Germany.

To reduce car accidents in Baaj, Ninewa, the Community Police, in



coordination with the local Community Policing Forum and with IOM Iraq's support, installed speed bumps as part of their Community Safety Initiative.

Community Safety Initiatives address local safety and security concerns and contribute to rebuilding trust between law enforcement and community members.

This activity was supported by the Government of Canada.

IOM, in partnership with PI Social Media Agency, organized a 3-day training in photography for members of

Community Policing Forums (CPF) from Ninewa, Anbar and Diyala Governorates.

The training aimed to enable CPF members to utilize photography as a storytelling tool to document Community Engagement and Policing in action, including Community Safety Initiatives that address local safety and security concerns.

Supported by the Government of Canada, the training included theoretical and practical exercises on photography as well as photo editing.

Mine Action

UNMAS Iraq with German support works to enable humanitarian and development efforts in post-liberated areas

Baghdad, 27 June 2022 - Since its inception, UNMAS Iraq has worked to enable humanitarian and development efforts in post-liberated areas, driving change and empowering the national mine action authorities and national operators.

Since 2016 and throughout the years, the Government of Germany has consistently remained the major supporter of UNMAS Iraq and has provided USD 73 million of funding in support of UNMAS activities. Germany has supported a broad spectrum of UNMAS Iraq core activities, including technical support to the Ministry of

Interior police officers through essential mine action courses and clearance of agricultural areas in Tel Kaif, Tal Afar, Sinjar, Makhmur, Fallujah and Anbar.

Recently, Germany generously contributed to support the clearance of residential units in Sinjar to enable the return of IDPs to their homes.

In June 2022, UNMAS Iraq Chief Mine Action Programme, Mr Pehr Lodhammar, met with His Excellency Mr. Martin Jaeger, the German Ambassador, to discuss UNMAS Iraq operations. H.E. Mr. Jaeger highlighted the continued interest of the Government of Germany to support

mine action in Iraq.

UNMAS would like to express its utmost appreciation to the Government of Germany for its continued support to Iraq and the Iraqi people.



Increased coordination vital at all levels of the country to ensure a sustained mine action response

Baghdad, 29 June 2022 - UNMAS Iraq recently held the second steering committee meeting for the European Union (EU) funded project: "Supporting the Government of Iraq: Protecting civilians impacted by explosive ordnance and enabling humanitarian action, socio-economic development and welfare", with representatives from the EU and the Iraq Directorate for Mine Action (DMA).

UNMAS Iraq presented its achievements of the first year of the 18-month EU project along with the workplan for the

final six months of the project. Discussions were held among the three stakeholders on the increased coordination at all levels of the country to ensure a sustained mine action response. Discussions also covered the successful pilot clearance project in Southern Iraq, which has led to increased international support for further clearance in the South, which is vital to improve agriculture and residential development.





Baghdad, 4 July 2022 - Mr. Pehr Lodhammer, UNMAS Chief Mine Action Programme for Iraq, met today with the Assistant Director-General of Directorate for Mine Action (DMA), Mr. Bakir Sahib. They discussed various issues related to mutual cooperation in mine action in Iraq including the issue of advocating support for victims of mines and explosive ordnance.

Tokyo, Japan, 14 July 2022 - Shinobu Mashima, UNMAS Iraq Programme Team Lead, was invited by the Central Readiness Regiment, of the Japan Self Defense Forces, to present on the UNMAS Iraq programme and mine action activities. Shinobu spoke of UNMAS activities in Iraq, the risks of IEDs that prevent the safe return of 1.2 million IDPs, and how UNMAS contributes to safe and dignified returns through survey and clearance of IEDs and lifesaving messages through Explosive Ordnance Risk Education.

Improvised Explosive Device struck demining team; UN calls for an investigation

Baghdad, 6 July 2022 – An IED struck a vehicle carrying a demining team in northern Iraq on Tuesday 5 July 2022, slightly injuring seven personnel.

The IED exploded under a minibus that was transporting a demining team of Iraqi men and women from Global Clearance Solutions (GCS), to a work site in Tel Keif, northeast of Mosul,

Ninewa Governorate. The injured were transported to hospital and reported to be in stable condition. The Iraqi authorities have been notified.

Wishing the injured a speedy recovery, the United Nations in Iraq urged the authorities to thoroughly investigate the incident and ensure adequate security for the deminers.

GCS has been a partner of the UN

Mine Action Service (UNMAS) for the last three years for its clearance operations in Ninewa. These operations are essential to enable safe and dignified returns and the safety of communities. The United Nations stresses that clearance work will continue in Ninewa with added risk mitigation measures in place.

Focus on creative approaches to explosive ordnance risk education

Baghdad, 22 July 2022 - On 20 June, UNMAS Afghanistan and Iraq Programmes jointly organized a side event during the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention intersessional meetings, focusing on creative approaches to explosive ordnance risk education.

The event highlighted the methods used by UNMAS Afghanistan in partnership with BBC Media Action to deliver effective risk education messaging through television, radio,

and social media that reached 6.8 million audience in two months.

During the Q&A session, Mr. Wakil Jamshidi, Head of Project Unit of the UNMAS Afghanistan Programme, shared the inter-agency collaborations between UNMAS and IOM - UN Migration, UNICEF, and UNFAO in the dissemination of explosive ordnance risk education messages to IDPs, returnees, women, children, and other people at risk in Afghanistan.



COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over

Baghdad, 24 July 2022 - The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over.

The only way to combat the pandemic and the new variants is to take the vaccine and respect the precautionary measures.

With EU Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid, UNFPA is

conducting awareness campaigns to communities in schools and universities, at the marketplace and in the streets of Kirkuk, Anbar, Nineveh, and Salahuddin.



Too numb for a handshake



Debaga, 15 Jun 2022 - It was shortly after sunset on an early April evening when Ahmed* paid a visit to his friend Saleh – just another evening for them in Debaga IDP camp. But when Ahmed extended his hand for a handshake, Saleh did not reciprocate. Ahmed was heartbroken, believing he was no longer welcome in Saleh's home. What he did not know was that at that moment, Saleh simply could not move his arm – nor any other part of the entire right half of his body. Neither of them realized what was happening.

Ahmed soon understood that something was very wrong. He immediately took Saleh to the camp's medical center, which is managed and supported by IOM Iraq's medical team. Though the hour was late, the medical team on duty received Saleh and ran him through some tests.

"I could not move my hand at all. I was just sitting there looking at him," Saleh said of the terrifying experience with Ahmed. "My lips, tongue, my right arm and leg were all numb. I couldn't feel them. Even my breathing was difficult. My friend thought I was angry at him or that I did not want to see him anymore. I had no idea what was going on with me at that moment. And with much difficulty, I was trying to explain to him."

A fifty-year-old father of six, Saleh and his family have been living in Debaga camp since 2015, when they were displaced from the town of Shirqat. Like many others, Saleh has not been able to return due to security reasons and a lack of basic support services in his area of origin.

"After the check-ups, the team realized that Saleh had had a transient ischemic attack (TIA)," explained Dr. Hiwa Muhammed Amin, Erbil Interim Medical Team Leader. "His blood

pressure was 190 over 150, which is considered very high. He was given a shot to normalize his blood pressure immediately. Shortly after that, his condition was much better. He was advised to go to a hospital in Erbil right away to visit a specialist for immediate follow-up, and that IOM would support his transportation via ambulance."

However, Saleh – who felt much better after the shot and whose body movements were back to normal – decided against taking the advice of the medical center. He went back home thinking everything was ok.

"But one hour later, it hit me again. I lost all body movement and the right side of my body felt numb. Thank God Ahmed was still there. He rushed me to the camp health center again, where they gave me another shot to bring down my blood pressure. This time I realized the risk. I have six kids and they are young and depend on me," said Saleh, whose children range between six and fifteen years of age. "I chose to go to the hospital in Erbil. I was put in an ambulance and immediately transferred to a hospital in Erbil where they did checkups including a CT scan, and gave me medication."

IOM Iraq works in close coordination with hospitals in Erbil to refer cases that require a higher level of specialized care.

The doctor at the hospital confirmed to Saleh that he had sustained a TIA and that if he had not immediately been given the shots at the Debaga medical center to bring down his blood pressure, it would have led to in a complete block of blood circulation to his brain, resulting in complete and permanent paralysis of the entire right side of his body.

The Debaga camp medical center is the main health care provider in the area – and the only one that provides emergency services 24 hours a day, services that the IDPs and host community can rely on for life-saving care.

The center provides primary health care services, chronic disease management and COVID-19 services, as well as emergency services such as ambulatory referrals. On average, the health center receives about 150 - 200 daily visits by patients, not only from among the 7,500 camp residents, but also from its surrounding villages.

At the height of its operations, when the camp had a population of 45,000 (between 2015 and 2018), the center managed a staggering 600 - 800 daily visits, with two stationary clinics and a mobile team.

The Debaga camp medical center is the main health care provider in the area. Saleh is one of the many individuals whose lives have been saved through the continuous support of the medical center in Debaga camp. Indeed, thousands depend on the center for its life-saving services, and its continued functioning is crucial to protecting the lives of not only the camp's IDPs, but also the lives of Debaga host community members and those living in the area's surrounding villages.

The medical center in Debaga camp is able to provide this critical care thanks to the support of USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the Government of Germany.

*The name has been changed for privacy reasons.

By Raber Y. Aziz, IOM Iraq



A foundation stone laid for the rehabilitation of Akre Pediatric and Maternity Hospital in Duhok Governorate

Akre, 28 June 2022 - The World Health Organization (WHO) in Iraq, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health in the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) of the U.S. State Department, and AISPO – Associazione Italiana per la Solidarietà tra i Popoli, laid a foundation stone for the rehabilitation of Akre Paediatric and Maternity Hospital in Duhok Governorate. The project, which costs around US\$400,000, will serve Syrian refugees and other vulnerable populations in Akre.



Raising IT literacy to help healthcare management

Baghdad, 01 July 2022 – WHO Iraq, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and USAID, concluded three workshops to train 168 data specialists across Iraq on applying the Health Resources & Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS) to advance health management information systems in Iraq.



World Health Organization, Iraq Ministry of Health and partners held a mid-term review of the national NCDs strategy

Baghdad, 1 July 2022 - Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) represent a growing burden in Iraq, causing 45% of the deaths reported. The World Health Organization, Iraq Ministry of Health and partners held a mid-term review of the national NCDs strategy and formulated recommendations for further improvement of the prevention and control of NCDs.



Training on using WHO's emergency care toolkit held in Erbil

Erbil, 7 July 2022 - WHO and the Kurdistan Ministry of Health recently trained 40 doctors and physicians from East and West emergency hospitals in Erbil on using WHO's emergency care toolkit to ensure the most organized and proper emergency services are provided for patients, especially during mass casualties.



A tear and a smile: recovery from TB

Baghdad, 4 Jul 2022 - "I was afraid and thought I was going to die," Shukria says in a hoarse voice, a tear escaping her eye as she remembers more difficult days. "It was horrifying to see my two brothers crawling on their hands – I thought they were dying, [too]. It was sad to receive looks of pity from the eyes of others as they watched us cautiously from afar. It was painful to feel sick. It robbed me of my health and my physical abilities. It made me decline psychologically [such that I was ready] to succumb to the disease."

Shukria is in her 30s. The eldest sister of three brothers, she lives with her family on the outskirts of the Al-Alam area of Salah al-Din Governorate.

"In the winter of 2018, my brother came home with a cough. His illness worsened within days. With continuously increasing heat in his body and a loss of the desire to eat, his body was completely helpless. Within weeks, his weight decreased to such a large extent that he lost the ability to stand and walk. We didn't know what was happening to him – though we went to many doctors, they were unable to diagnose his condition," Shukria tells us.

"During that period, I caught the infection, along with my younger brother. The same symptoms started to appear in us. I was feeling pains in different parts of my body, I was hallucinating because of my body's high temperature. We were taking quick steps towards death before we were

identified by a team of doctors working with IOM and diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB)."

Iraq is considered to have 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 Iraq's 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). IOM works in IDP, returnee and host communities to support Iraq's National Tuberculosis Programme (NTP) to curb TB across the country.

Shukria and her brothers were referred and transported to a specialized TB centre for examination. Doctors

prescribed them doses of medicine on precise dates according to the NTP treatment guidelines, and they received periodic examinations during the course of treatment, all free of charge. IOM Iraq's medical team also supported them with directly observed therapy (DOT), treatment follow up and care, as well as food packages to improve their overall health.

Initially, Shukria's brothers were resistant to taking the medicine, but she was determined that they all make it through this together. Despite her weakened state, Shukria successfully worked with medical team members to support her brothers through treatment.

"We started to feel our health gradually return and [saw] a noticeable improvement in our body weights," Shukria recalls.

After six months of treatment and follow up by IOM Iraq's medical team, Shukria fully recovered from TB. Two months later, her two brothers were completely cured, too.

Shukria smiles, "After recovering from the disease and surviving that bitter experience, I feel that we have been born again."

In conjunction with the NTP, IOM Iraq's MMTs were able to assist Shukria and her brothers thanks to support from The Global fund Continued support is needed to bolster the NTP's ability to respond to TB cases and reduce TB rates across the country.

Story by Sarah Ali, IOM Iraq



Training on sewage sample collection and transportation of samples held in Najaf

Najaf, 10 July 2022 - To ensure effective environmental surveillance and early detection of the possible polioviruses in the environment, WHO and Iraq Ministry of Health trained

surveillance and municipality staff in Najaf Governorate on sewage sample collection and transportation of samples to the National Polio Laboratory.



Essential medicines, medical equipment and supplies delivered to eight refugee camps and primary healthcare facilities

Erbil, 10 July 2022 - To cover the health care needs of thousands of refugees in Iraq, the World Health Organization, with support from the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the U.S. State Department, recently delivered several shipments containing 5.4 tonnes of

essential medicines, medical equipment and supplies to eight refugee camps in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Duhok governorates.

WHO also, with support from the Government of Canada and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), delivered over 5 tons of much-

needed medicines, medical equipment and supplies worth about US\$222,000 to support primary healthcare services and cover the health needs of thousands of vulnerable people in Kirkuk, Hawija and Basra governorates.

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO, releases the assessment results of WASH and infection prevention

Baghdad, 6 July 2022— The Ministry of Health in Iraq, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, released today the results of the comprehensive assessment of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and Infection Prevention Control (IPC) services in health care facilities in Iraq, with the financing from the Government of Germany.

The assessment was conducted on 3,624 health facilities in Iraq. The findings of the assessment indicated that the provision of water, sanitation, hand hygiene, environmental cleanliness, health care waste management, and IPC services in health facilities is largely hindered by a lack of financial resources, conflicts and the absence of monitoring and preservation of public property.

The progress of healthcare system rebuilding in Iraq has been hindered by many factors of conflict and instability, including the COVID-19 pandemic. The public healthcare system faces chronic

impediments, with around half of the primary care facilities in the country not staffed by doctors and most of these buildings have no running water. This indicated the necessity of an assessment of the availability and status of WASH-IPC services within health facilities to inform policy and WASH programming.

The assessment aims to enhance monitoring of WASH & IPC measures in health facilities and find gaps analysis, which could lead to implementing possible mitigation or required corrective action and draw the decision-maker's attention to the WASH and IPC situation in health facilities throughout Iraq.

"This assessment is critical as it enables mapping, analysis and the formulation of recommendations that will enable all stakeholders and decision-makers to take evidence-based decisions and implement the necessary interventions to enhance infection prevention controls in order to achieve comprehensive WASH coverage in

health facilities," said Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq.

"Systematic monitoring and assessment are vital for providing safe and quality health care, and to improve our accountability to the affected population. Guided by the assessment results, UNICEF will work alongside WHO and the Government at federal and KRI level to ensure our collective contribution to provide safe water and mitigate preventable infections," said Ms. Janet Kamau, Officer-in-charge UNICEF Representative in Iraq.

A digital online monitoring and analysis dashboard was also designed to help the Ministry of Health, WHO and UNICEF to enhance the infrastructure of WASH services and health facilities in general.

Improved WASH and IPC services in health care facilities are of significant public health importance as these are associated with reduction in the transmission of healthcare-acquired infections.

IOM Iraq is supporting the Ministry of Health to provide quality health care services in areas of return

Erbil, 13 July 2022 - Under its ongoing support for durable solutions in areas of return, which aims at bolstering returnees' access to basic services, IOM Iraq is supporting the Ministry of Health to provide quality health care services in areas of return. The Erbil, Makhmur and Qarachukh Primary Health Care Centers (PHCCs) received medical devices and

equipment to help them provide essential healthcare services. IOM Iraq is also working with clinic health personnel who will be operating this equipment through trainings on the optimum use of the devices.

These activities were made possible with support from the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)."



IOM Iraq's Migration Health Division collaborates with the Ministry of Health to support essential health services in IDP camps

Baghdad, 16 July 2022 - There are still Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) living in camps in Iraq, and they are urgently in need of humanitarian assistance. IOM Iraq's Migration Health Division collaborates with the Ministry of Health to support essential health services in IDP camps. In Debaga camp clinic, Erbil Governorate, IOM provides essential medicine required to manage the most common acute and chronic diseases. IOM also holds capacity building activities for healthcare workers and provides operational support, including equipping basic health facilities with

necessary supplies and equipment. These activities were made possible

with support from the Auswärtiges Amt.



Ministry of Health and UNDP partner to address medical waste management challenges under \$25m agreement



Baghdad, 20 July 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq has today signed a US\$25 million agreement with Iraq's Ministry of Health (MoH) to strengthen medical waste management in the country. The agreement is part of the \$100 million Iraq Covid-19 Vaccination Project (ICVP), a loan financed by the World Bank to support the Government of Iraq's rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Under the agreement, UNDP will procure and install approximately 180 shredder autoclaves which convert medical waste – largely from COVID-19 vaccinations – such as syringes, ampules, dressings and personal protective equipment like masks and gloves into ordinary waste for safe disposal. These efforts support MoH's safe deployment of the vaccine throughout Iraq.

"We confirm the ongoing partnership

between the Federal Ministry of Health and all local and international supporting bodies for their technical support, and for developing infrastructure to strengthen the provision of health services across all levels of government and the Kurdistan Region. We are grateful for all the efforts supporting the Federal Ministry of Health and its departments in addressing health sector challenges," says the Federal Minister of Health, Dr. Hani Musa Badr Al-Uqabi, "As the development partner of choice, UNDP is proud to have been selected by the Ministry of Health and the World Bank to implement this critical project. The established and successful mechanisms UNDP Iraq has in place ensure agility, adaptability, flexibility, and transparency in our delivery," says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq Ms Zena Ali Ahmad. "We also welcome the new collaboration with the World Bank who has provided the funds for this much-needed support for medical waste management in the country," she adds.

WHO's mobile medical clinics provide essential health care services across Iraq

Kirkuk, 21 July 2022 - With support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance and EU Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid, around 4600 IDPs and returnees in Abada village of Kirkuk governorate continue to receive essential health care services through one of the WHO's mobile medical clinics.



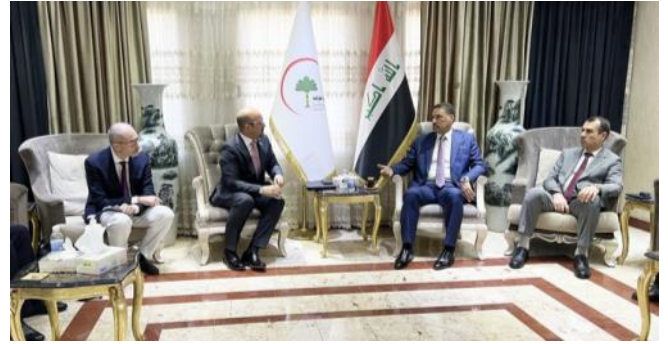
WHO team is visiting governorates most affected by the CCHF outbreak in Iraq to scale up preparedness and response activities

Baghdad, 26 July 2022 – WHO team representing the country, regional and global levels is visiting governorates most affected by the Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) outbreak in Iraq to scale up preparedness and response activities and advance the multisectoral intervention efforts to control the disease.





Sulaymaniyah, 29 June 2022 - WHO Representative in Iraq, Dr. Ahmed Zouiten, met with the Governor of Sulaymaniyah, Dr Haval Abubakr, and health and water sector officials in the governorate. Dr. Zouiten noted that "It was a pleasure meeting with Dr Haval Abubakr, along with health and water sector officials in the governorate. We had a fruitful discussion about enhancing coordination between relevant stakeholders to urgently respond to the surge in cholera cases".



Baghdad, 28 July 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq, had a fruitful meeting with Dr Hani Al-Aqabi, Iraqi Minister of Health. They discussed public health considerations for the upcoming Ashura and Arbaeen events. They agreed on a high-level multisectoral coordination to ensure reducing the impact of mass gatherings on public health.

The Ministry of Health, WHO and UNICEF jointly close the World Breastfeeding Week in Iraq

Baghdad, 08 August 2022 - The Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF announced the closure of the World Breast Feeding Week, organized from 1 to 7 August, with a focus on the importance of breastfeeding.

Under this year's theme, "Step up for breastfeeding: educate and support," the three organizations promoted education and the transformation of existing systems to ensure breastfeeding-friendly health care facilities, supportive communities and workplaces.

The Breast Feeding Week in Iraq included outreach and awareness-raising activities at shopping malls, hospitals, health facilities and through mass and social media platforms. A U-report poll served to discover young people's knowledge of the importance of breastfeeding.

"The Ministry of Health continues to prioritize protection and promotion of breastfeeding to reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030," said Dr. Hani Al Aqabi, Minister of Health.

In Iraq, while more than 9 out of 10 children were breastfed at some point in their young lives, only 25.8 per cent[1] of children were exclusively breastfed[2] during the first six months of life. This rate is much lower than the Middle East and North Africa regional average of 33 per cent[3].

"Breastfeeding provides children the best start in life. It is a baby's best source of nutrition, bolstering brain development and with lifelong benefits for the mother and the baby," said Dr. Paula Bulancea, UNICEF Deputy Representative in Iraq. "UNICEF remains committed to supporting the



Ministry of Health and others to expand breastfeeding support systems beyond pre-pandemic levels and strengthen the capacity of these systems to achieve the global nutrition targets."

Early initiation of breastfeeding, in the first hour of birth, exclusive breastfeeding between 0-5 months, and continued breastfeeding for 6-23 months offer a powerful line of defence against infection and malnutrition.

In contrast, infants who are not fully or partially breast-fed have a higher risk of diarrhea and are more likely to die from severe malnutrition if they don't get lifesaving treatment.

"The best gift that parents could give to their new-borns is breastfeeding. It gives the baby a good start in life, provides the right nutrients for adequate growth, and the right protection against childhood diseases. Breastfeeding also allows for a strong bond with the mother, ensuring balanced physical and emotional growth," said Dr. Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq. "Breast milk is a miracle product that no child should

be deprived of."

In order to maintain the progress achieved in promoting and supporting breastfeeding in Iraq, UNICEF and WHO call on the Government of Iraq, civil society, donors, and the private sector to step up their support to:

- Prioritize investing in breastfeeding support programmes - as part of a minimum package of health and nutrition interventions;
- Build the capacity of the health workforce to enable them to provide quality counseling and practical support to mothers to successfully breastfeed;
- Protect caregivers and health care workers from the unethical marketing influence of the formula industry by fully adopting and implementing the International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes, and its legislation.

[1] Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Iraq, 2018

[1] Fed nothing but breast milk

[1] UNICEF Data, 2021. <https://data.unicef.org/resources/dataset/breastfeeding/>



Baghdad, 07 August 2022 - WHO Iraq and UNHCR Iraq, with support from the Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau of the U.S. State Department, continue to provide thousands of Syrian refugees in Darashakran camp in Erbil Governorate with essential healthcare services, including medical consultations, on-site pharmacy, referral, laboratory and mental health/psychosocial services.



Baghdad, 09 August 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq, met with Mr. Greg Galligan, Canada's ambassador to Iraq. They discussed ways of further enhancing the solid partnership and collaboration between Canadian Embassy in Iraq and WHO in Iraq in continuing to provide lifesaving interventions and advancing the health systems in Iraq.

IOM Iraq conducted a series of non-medical PCC trainings for health care workers in order to improve care provision and patient-provider relationships

Baghdad, 10 August 2022 - As part of IOM's work on improving quality of care and enhancing patient-provider relationship at health facilities, a Training of Trainers on Person Centered Care (PCC) for health care professionals was implemented in Anbar Governorate. The PCC approach focuses on the needs of the patient, mitigates discrimination in the clinic setting and promotes effective patient-provider communication, shared decision making and trauma-informed care.

The Training of Trainers on Person reached 12 Directorate of Health (DOH) staff, who will subsequently roll out PCC trainings for health care providers at primary health care centers in different regions of Anbar.

This initiative is part of IOM's work toward building DOH staff capacity through the transfer of these

specialized skills and knowledge, thus creating a pool of PCC trainers at national level.

As part of its work on durable solutions in locations witnessing high influxes of returnees, IOM Iraq conducted a series of non-medical PCC trainings for health care workers in order to improve care provision and patient-provider relationships at health facilities in areas of return.

Health teams conducted 6 trainings in Dohuk and Erbil Governorates, reaching 90 healthcare professionals from the Directorates of Health and the areas' primary healthcare centres. Such capacity-building interventions not only improve the quality of health care but also aid in building trust between communities and the health system.

Participants reported positive feedback on the importance of such workshops for their clinical practice, and other



sessions are planned in the coming weeks for Baghdad and Ninewa Governorates.

Recently, IOM Iraq health teams conducted 2 PCC trainings reaching 29 healthcare professionals from the Directorates of Health and the Al Shouhada primary healthcare centre in Baghdad.

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

IOM Iraq deployed a mobile caravan health center in response to demands from community members

Baghdad, 04 August 2022 - After years of conflict, Iraq's deteriorated healthcare sector is struggling to meet need, particularly in communities affected by displacement.

Infrastructure is absent or destroyed, and human and financial resources are limited.

In Salah al-Din Governorate's Al-Eitha area, a health crisis and quickly growing population combine for an urgent need to build a health facility. Community members are forced to

walk long distances to reach the nearest health center – something that is not an option for those needing immediate attention, and an untenable situation that disproportionately impacts persons with disabilities, leaving them frequently unable to access the care they need.

Sheikh Faraj Hammad, member of the local Reconciliation Committee, says that “every day, the community members live in a state of anxiety and

exhaustion due to the lack of a health center.”

As part of its quick impact project programming, IOM Iraq deployed a mobile caravan health center in response to demands collected through IOM's monthly consultation sessions with community members and stakeholders from the Shirqat Department of Health.



IOM Iraq deployed a mobile caravan health center in response to demands from community members *(continued)*

Mr. Mohammed, who heads the caravan, explains: "After returning to the area, [we found that] most of the facilities were burned and unfit for storage. We were forced to store the

medicines in one of the houses belonging to the community due to the lack of health facilities."

With the caravan health center, it has become far easier for community

members to access care and receive treatment.

This was made possible with support

WHO maintains quality control of services provided

Baghdad, 1 August 2022 – WHO monitoring and evaluation missions continue to conduct field visits to WHO-supported primary health care centres and mobile medical clinics in six governorates with the aim of monitoring the quality of services provided and challenges faced by WHO implementing partners.



Over 100 media professionals trained on covering health emergencies and outbreaks in Iraq

Baghdad, 18 August 2022 – The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Commission of Media and Communications (CMC), concluded today in Baghdad a training workshop on media coverage for outbreaks and emergencies in Iraq.

The workshop aimed to equip more than 100 journalists and communication professionals from different Iraqi media outlets and relevant ministries with skills and techniques to accurately cover health issues related to outbreaks affecting Iraq, including COVID-19, cholera, and Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever (CCHF).

The workshop is an integral part of WHO's approach to establishing an effective partnership between the media/health sectors in Iraq to ensure that Iraqi women and men are provided with accurate and evidence-based information on health hazards.

"The role of the media people is pivotal in promoting health, educating communities and addressing rumours related to outbreaks. It is paramount to build an effective partnership between media and health sectors to ensure we raise awareness of Iraqi people on matters related to their health and based on scientific facts and evidence-based advice during emergencies and outbreaks," said Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq. "The role of media specialists in reducing the impact of outbreaks and saving lives is just as important as that of health specialists."

"The partnership with media professionals and journalists is very critical in ensuring accurate coverage of



disease outbreaks in Iraq, conveying the right message and raising awareness among the population," explained Dr Salah El-Hajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq.

The workshop included technical and practical sessions delivered by experts from WHO and FAO on ongoing outbreaks in Iraq and the methods for analyzing outbreak data to improve the media content and direct it towards raising awareness of the population. The participants were also equipped with tips

on "One Health" approach to control the diseases transmitted from animals to humans, notably CCHF.

Practical sessions were also conducted to allow participants to apply lessons learned in producing real-time, quality products for TV, radio and social media.

WHO, along with partners, will continue to build the capacity of media people, communication specialists and social media influencers to build their capacity on covering outbreaks and health concerns in Iraq.



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Centre in Khanke, Duhok Governorate was established two years ago

Khanke, 07 August 2022 - Last week IOM Iraq held an event marking the two-year anniversary of the establishment of a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Centre in Khanke, Duhok Governorate.

Community members exchanged stories and experiences, and exhibited some of the skills they acquired through activities at the centre, including sewing, knitting, drawing, painting and handicraft-making.

“White Shadow” was the highlight of the event – a theatrical performance drawing attention to the challenges faced by two families who were displaced from Sinjar on 3 August 2014, as well as their resilience and commitment to supporting each other as they each navigate displacement and trauma.

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



Environment

UK and Canada commit to combating climate change in Iraq



Baghdad, 29 June 2022 – A new project designed to accelerate climate action in Iraq has today been launched through a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) the Ministry of Environment with funding generously provided by governments of the UK and Canada.

The three-year Catalytic Climate Action in Iraq project is designed to strengthen Iraq’s capacity to mitigate the climate change and adapt to its impacts by managing natural resources, developing renewable resources, and increasing resilience to climate-induced hazards.

Activities are targeted at gaps that can deliver systemic change within Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Region of Iraq to help deliver their climate ambitions under the Paris Agreement. Technical assistance, knowledge building and operational support will be provided to Iraq to help implement its Nationally Determined Contributions, with a strong focus on renewable energy, transboundary water resources management, and

preparedness for drought and other disasters.

The Government of Iraq was proud to submit its NDC document in October 2021. This document serves as the country’s supreme policy for climate action and initiates the first steps towards a more diversified and green economy by encouraging the use of renewable energies, promoting nature-based solutions, strengthening integrated water resources management, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the oil and gas sector. This project is crucial to supporting the Government to mainstream its NDC across all Ministries and institutions in Iraq and the Kurdistan region with a strong focus on energy, drought preparedness and effective water management. The Ministry of Environment on behalf the Iraqi Government is grateful to the UK and Canada for generously supporting this important project which is a catalyst for increasing climate ambitions in Iraq,” says Minister for Environment, Dr. Jassim Abdulazeez Humadi.

“Climate Change is the one of the most significant challenges facing Iraq, impacting the lives of millions and threatening health and wellbeing, services and the economy. The UK is committed to partnering with Iraq to urgently address these challenges. The Government of Iraq and most of the world made clear commitments at the COP26 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow last year. Turning those commitments in to actions is key. That is why the UK is proud to be part of this new initiative,” says UK Ambassador to Iraq, Mark Bryson-Richardson

“Climate change is a collective crisis that we must all tackle together. Canada made a commitment to work with countries—such as Iraq—that are harshly impacted by the effects of climate change, to better address its challenges and to adapt to its harmful consequences. Our support for this project demonstrates our commitment to co-building a better future for the people of Iraq,” says Canada’s Minister of International Development, Harjit S. Sajjan.

“Iraq is classified as the fifth most vulnerable country in the world to climate change. The country faces serious challenges like increasing temperatures, declining rainfall, salinity, and persistent dust storms that we’ve experienced recently. Now is the time to invest in effective climate action; we cannot afford to wait any longer. Thank you to the governments of UK and Canada for not only funding this critical work, but for showing strong leadership and commitment to the fight against Climate Change in Iraq,” says Resident Representative of UNDP Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

Eyes in the sky for peace: geospatial data in conflict prevention

New York, 1 July 2022 - Most of us feel the effects of climate change most directly through water: when there's not enough of it or too much, or when it is unsafe to use. Competition over access to water, and the politics surrounding it, can compound the risk of conflict. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) has helped develop a tool to study the links between instability in access to water and unrest, with a view to improving the way we prevent the latter.

The salinization of water and soils, desertification and the disappearance of arable land have become existential concerns. Around the world, communities are increasingly facing off over access to water and other life-sustaining resources. One country that has often felt such tensions is Iraq.

With a combination of a lack of rainfall and poor water management, Iraq is acutely vulnerable, as its main source of water, the Tigris and the Euphrates are transboundary rivers.

"It is important for our conflict prevention work in the region to utilize modern, data-informed approaches to better address climate security related circumstances and factors," said Darko Mocibob, the Director of DPPA's Middle East Division (MED). "Iraq is no stranger to climate security risks and water-related instability, but quantitatively validating this relationship has been a challenge."

Drawing on the expertise and support of the MED, DPPA's Innovation Cell, together with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) over the course of three years, developed a tool that enables UN Missions and government counterparts to study the relationship between water diminishment and social unrest using

geo-temporal data. The collaboration with geospatial partners in the UN family, academia and the private sector has been crucial in this endeavor, which was globally recognized at the 2022 Geospatial World Forum in May, the main gathering of the earth observation industry, receiving the Geospatial World Excellence Award.

"All this was made possible by working together with our private sector partner — Element 84," Daanish Masood Alavi, from DPPA's Innovation Cell, said. "We turned to earth observation satellites and clever mapping techniques to make this geospatial data talk. The end result is an interactive data dashboard, displaying historical water availability across every district and governorate of Iraq."

"Indicators of water supply, such as precipitation, soil moisture, vegetation, and groundwater, are visualized and overlaid with conflict data so trends between the two can be analyzed over time," he added,

"When it comes to climate security and conflict prevention, the only way to anticipate the future is to first examine the past," says Trevor Skaggs, a Lead Engineer of Element 84. "Already, clear relationships between water diminishment — particularly of groundwater — and conflict surges can be observed. As we apply automation to our project, which would allow for near-real time data analysis, we will inch even closer to the predictive space. By understanding how the environment and human behavior intersect, we can keep a pulse on potential instability," Skaggs notes.

The tool leverages data sources in innovative and cost-effective ways to provide a competitive information-edge

for conflict prevention. Users can extract spatiotemporal trends on water insecurity with ease. This gives analysts an advantage when it comes to informing decisions that have the potential to affect millions of people.

"The innovative part of the project is that we are using uncharted geospatial methods for the good of peace," highlighted Allison Puccioni, a senior geospatial consultant to the DPPA's Innovation Cell and an affiliate at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation.

"There have been satellites collecting datasets such as rainfall and land temperature for decades. Both excess and scarcity of water as well as vegetation water have preceded localized conflict. If we collect all that data in one place and interpolate it to factor many different indicators together, we can calculate "water security" on a month-over-month, district-over-district basis," said Puccioni. "This allows us to monitor and find correlations between environmental severity and conflict. Now we have a map of how and when that happened."

Built after a series of interviews with on-the-ground teams in Iraq, the dashboard, currently available for the UN and the Government of Iraq, is designed to be accessible to scientists and policy analysts alike. This pilot project has inspired other geospatial DPPA projects in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The expansion of the tool underscores the need for more thorough geospatial analysis across an increasingly resource-scarce world.

By UN DPPA.

Women play a key role in preserving our environment!

Baghdad, 5 July 2022 - UNDP Iraq, with the Women Empowerment Department at the Council of Ministers Secretariat (ComSec) and the Ministry of Environment, yesterday concluded the Environment and Climate Change Conference on Equality and Empowerment for Women in Iraq.

The conference focused on the important role of women as a positive force for change in preserving the environment and combating the negative effects of climate change, including developing sustainable solutions.

Attendees included His Excellency the Minister of Environment, the Director

General of the Department of Women Empowerment in the ComSec, representatives of governmental and

non-governmental sectors, as well as academics and representatives of unions.



UNICEF conducted a boot camp to build capacity of young people to become community leaders on climate change

Erbil, 13 July 2022 - UNICEF conducted a boot camp with the Directorate of Youth and Sports in Erbil and Dohuk to build capacity of young people to become community leaders through designing and implementing youth led initiatives on climate change. This initiative, supported by the Government of Germany (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und

Entwicklung (BMZ)) and the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, promotes engagement initiatives of young people from 10-24 boys and girls among IDP, host communities and refugees. The participants received technical inputs from UNICEF to strengthen their initiative objectives, activities and community engagement components.



Mosul's recovery moves towards a circular economy



Mosul, 28 July 2022 – Five years since the end of the ISIL(so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant) conflict in 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iraq and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), with funding from the Government of Japan, has established a debris recycling centre in Mosul. After its initial use, the centre has now been handed over to Mosul Municipality for its continued, sustainable operation.

“On behalf of the Iraqi Government, the Ministry of Environment expresses its gratitude to the Government of Japan for generously supporting this important project and to UNEP and IOM for enabling the sustainable management of the huge quantities of conflict debris and restabilization of the liberated areas in an environmentally sustainable manner,” said Iraq’s Minister for Environment, Dr. Jasim Abdulazeez Humadi.

The handover of the Mosul debris recycling centre marks a significant step in the sustainable management of the huge volumes of debris — an estimated 55 million tonnes — created by the ISIL conflict. It also opens the way for the recycling of routine construction and demolition waste, contributing to ‘building back better’ and an increased circularity in Iraq’s development.

UNEP West Asia Regional Director, Sami Dimassi, emphasized that “by

reducing waste, stimulating innovation and creating employment, debris recycling also creates an important business opportunity.” Indeed, construction companies in Mosul have expressed interest in purchasing the recycled aggregate, thereby underscoring the longer-term sustainability of debris recycling.

“This project supports recovery and livelihoods by drawing on principles of a circular economy, wherein waste and land pollution is limited through production processes that reuse and repurpose materials for as long as possible,” explained IOM Iraq Chief of Mission, Giorgi Gigauri. “Collaboration and sustainability are key priorities in IOM’s work toward durable solutions to displacement, and we are pleased to have partnered with UNEP and the Government of Japan so that this is represented not only in the function of the plant itself, but also in its functioning, by supporting local authorities to be prepared to effectively operate the plant moving forward.”

On 28 July 2022, Mosul Municipality hosted an event to officially hand over the debris recycling centre, attended by senior government officials and academia, as well as representatives from IOM, UNEP and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

Masamoto Kenichi, Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of Japan to Iraq stated: “We

are glad to know that the project funded by the government and people of Japan has contributed to cleanup of debris and reconstruction of Mosul. We would like to commend UNEP, IOM and the city of Mosul for their tremendous efforts of turning the legacy of ISIL’s devastation into building blocks of reconstruction”.

Through the rubble recycling project, nearly 25,000 tonnes of debris have been recovered and sorted, of which around half was crushed into recycled aggregate. Material testing of the recycled aggregate endorsed by the National Center for Structural Tests of the Ministry of Planning confirms its compliance with the Iraqi State Commission for Roads and Bridges design standards for road foundational layers and its suitability for several low strength end-use applications such as concrete blocks and kerbstones.

The project created 240 much-needed jobs through cash-for-work schemes targeting vulnerable persons, including 40 women.

Building on this experience, IOM has set up two other debris recycling operations in Sinjar and Hamdaniya in Ninewa Governorate, and a third in Hawija in Kirkuk Governorate, where a pilot phase using a mobile crusher was implemented in al-Buwaiter Village in 2021. In addition, two other conflict-affected governorates — namely Salah al-Din and Anbar — have also shown a high-level of interest in replicating and scaling up debris recycling in their own regions.

UNEP has been supporting Iraq in cleaning up the huge volumes of debris created by the ISIL conflict since June 2017. Initially, this included carrying out technical assessments and planning workshops with UN-Habitat, and subsequently designing and implementing debris recycling pilot projects to support returns in Mosul, Kirkuk and other conflict-affected areas in cooperation with IOM.

Iraq on track in the preparation of its Climate Change National Adaptation Plan

Beirut, 28 July 2022 – The Republic of Iraq is considered one of the most vulnerable countries in the Arab region to the impacts of climate change. Recent years have witnessed a higher frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as heat waves, drought, sand and dust storms, leading to rising environmental degradation and socio-economic impacts throughout the country.

With the aim to assist Iraq in its planning for climate change adaptation, the UN Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia has concluded a 3-day capacity building workshop on climate change modelling and climate risk assessment that brought together representatives from the Iraqi government including technical teams from the Climate Change Center and Climate Modelling Unit that was recently established to serve as hub to access to data and information and enhance and strengthen Iraq's capacity to generate, analyse and disseminate climate information and climate research.

Held at the UN House in Beirut from 26 to 28 July, this workshop is a part of the Iraq National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Readiness project funded by Green Climate Fund (GCF), that aims

to strengthen institutional capacity to support decision-makers with climatic projections, scenarios, risk assessment and data. This will further enable institutions and decision-makers to integrate medium to long-term adaptation actions into national development planning in Iraq.

“UNEP Regional Office for West Asia has been working with the government of Iraq to strengthen institutional, technical, and financial capacities and assess and bridge existing gaps in climate knowledge in Iraq”, said Mr. Sami Dimassi, UNEP Representative and Regional director for West Asia. “Our technical support intends to assist Iraq in the formulation and implementation of the NAP process that is multi-sectoral and integrate climate change into its national decision making”, he added.

The workshop introduced the methodologies used for the modelling using the downscaling technique zooming into Iraq, scenario analysis and climate risk assessments. “The Iraq NAP project supported by UNEP has helped advancing the institutional capacity of the relevant teams engaged in the NAP process in Iraq”, said Mr. Al-Faiyadh, Director General at the Ministry of Environment. “This technical workshop will support national efforts that focus on increasing Iraq's adaptive capacity, increasing the resilience of affected sectors, increasing the awareness and preparedness of rural communities, supporting youth and women, and achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals” said Sahar Hussein, NAP Technical Manager from the Ministry of Environment.



WFP Iraq planted 200 mangrove trees

Basra, 31 July 2022 - WFP Iraq planted 200 mangrove trees on July 26th in celebration of the International Day for the Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems and to acknowledge the important benefits this type of tree can have on the local environment at Khor al-Zubair in Basra.

Mangroves are an endangered tropical tree that thrives in areas suffering from high salinity, which is a problem

plaguing a lot of land in southern Iraq. Should the mangroves grow and spread, they can create a unique ecosystem that not only provides livelihood opportunities to farmers and fishermen, but also have a resounding impact on the environment through the reduction of water salinity and pollution.

Join WFP in promoting a greener and cleaner Iraq.



Knowledge Exchange on sustainable agriculture

Sulaymaniyah, 18 July 2022 - As Iraq faces off with environmental degradation and climate change, IOM Iraq and IOM Netherlands brought a delegation from Sulaymaniyah's Ministry of Agriculture to the Netherlands for a study visit on sustainable agriculture. Sulaymaniyah economically depends on agricultural activities and has a dry climate. As a result of global warming, the

government and farmers have to think about saving water and preparing the region for an even dryer future. Our guests work at the Ministry of Agriculture and are in the perfect position to decide on the future of agricultural activities in Sulaymaniyah.

WUR and the delegation from Sulaymaniyah do not stop sharing knowledge once the exchange visit has

come to an end. On the contrary; the delegation will work on a pilot project afterwards to implement the newly gained knowledge from the Netherlands. We look forward to seeing the results!

By IOM Netherlands.



The UNICEF Participatory Action Research workshop accelerates youth's skills to plan their own initiatives to mitigate the impact of climate change and combat global warming

Basra, 3 August 2022 - "I want to live in a healthy and green environment because the earth is our home," Abdullah, 22, from Saladin.

Youth are actively learning how to conduct research, including data coding and analysis on water scarcity. This initiative has come as a necessary response to #ClimateChange issues in Basra. The Participatory Action Research (PAR) provides the youth with the opportunity to generate

evidence to influence decisions and advocate for access to safe and clean water #ForEveryChild.

The UNICEF Participatory Action Research (PAR) workshop, with the financing of the German Government (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)) accelerates their skills to plan their own initiatives to mitigate the impact of climate change and combat global warming.



Open Solar Contracts and the future of solar energy in Iraq

Baghdad, 3 August 2022 - An important day for Iraq in its journey towards green energy.

One of the essential tools Iraq has in its fight against climate change is the infinite potential of the sun as a source of energy. In a sun-rich country like Iraq, solar solutions are a cornerstone in the transition towards renewable energy and achieving the Paris Agreement commitments by 2030.

UNDP Iraq, in partnership with the United Kingdom, organized a 2-day workshop in Baghdad, with participation from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) to discuss with national stakeholders from the ministries of Environment and Electricity about Open Solar Contracts. Dr. Jassim Abdulzееz Hamadi, The Minister of Environment opened and chaired the meeting.

The Open Solar Contracts (OSC), created by IRENA, are globally standardized and simplified contracts to streamline the financing and implementation of solar power initiatives around the world. Bringing comparative experiences and best practices around these contracts to Iraq would support the investment

environment in solar energy and accelerate the transition towards green energy which would ultimately lead to less Green House Gases emissions.

The Iraqi Ministry of Electricity has been aiming at increasing the share of renewable energy in Iraq but was faced with several challenges including the contractual process for utility scale solar energy. The OSC are a potential solution that could be tailored to the Iraqi context.

"As we approach COP27 in Egypt, this is yet another significant milestone in the journey towards a green Iraq.

Sustainable solar solutions will play a vital role as Iraq adapts to the impacts of climate change," said UNDP Iraq's Resident Representative, Zena Ali Ahmad.

The aim of the workshop was to introduce the Iraqi stakeholders to these contract modules, contractual risks, and methods to procure affordable solar energy solutions through OSC and implement them.

This workshop was part of UNDP Iraq efforts to support Iraq find sustainable solutions for renewable energy in the country.



With EU support, FAO Iraq meets with the local authorities to discuss the challenges in the Marshes

Al Chibayish, Iraq, 16 August 2022 – The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq held a one-day meeting entitled "Our Marshes, Our lives" recently in Al Chibayish in Thi Qar with representatives from the local authorities from Basra, Thi-Qar and Missan Governorates and official representatives of Agriculture, Water

Resources, Environment and Health ministries and from farmers union to discuss the water crisis in the Iraqi Marshes and ways forward to assist farmers and buffalo breeds.

Through the European Union (EU)'s support, FAO is working closely with the local authorities to support the most affected people in the southern region of Iraq from water scarcity and

the impact of climate change threatening their lives and livelihoods. The discussions focused on the impact of water scarcity on buffalo breeders, fishermen and overall biodiversity in the Iraqi Marshes and came up with short, medium and long term plans to deal with these challenges. This meeting was possible thanks to the support from the European Union.

With EU support, FAO Iraq meets with the local authorities to discuss the challenges in the Marshes *(continued)*



FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan says, "FAO is following the excruciating situation in southern Iraq notably in the Marshes. We have already called for action to help buffalo

producers overcome climate change and water shortage in July and we continue to collaborate with the local authorities, Ministries of Agriculture and Environment to tackle these challenges

with the generous support from the EU."

During the meeting, Dr Chedly Kayouli, FAO Iraq Senior International Livestock Value Chain Expert, presented findings of an assessment conducted under the EU funded project on challenges faced by livestock owners and buffalo breeders in the given context.

In addition to recommendations and solutions proposed by participants during discussions, the meeting concluded with a call to participants to provide their suggestions and recommendations in written within seven days to be further compiled, reviewed and finalized for sharing with relevant public institutions and international organizations to initiate discussions for support.

Culture

Revive the Spirit of Mosul

Mosul, 21 July 2022 - The city of Mosul, which means "the linking point" in Arabic, is one of the oldest cities in the world. For millennia, it has been a strategic location due to its crossroads and bridge between north and south, east and west.

This has made it home to a large number of people with different origins, ethnicities and religious beliefs, but this in turn made it a target for ISIL/Daesh. In 2014, a three-year occupation (2014-2017) was carried out that ended with devastating results and these years passed before the shackles of violent extremism could be broken. Mosul was devastated and the city was left in ruins, its heritage sites reduced to rubble, religious monuments

and cultural antiquities damaged, and thousands of its inhabitants displaced, leaving them scarred and in immense humanitarian need.

Therefore, in February 2018, UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay launched the flagship initiative "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" as the Organization's response to the recovery of one of Iraq's iconic cities. Reviving Mosul is not only about rebuilding heritage sites, but also about empowering the population as agents of change involved in the process of rebuilding their city through culture and education.

UNESCO's "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" global initiative is based on three pillars:

- Heritage
- Cultural life
- Education

By creating 3,152 local jobs, providing professional trainings and developing an apprenticeship programme, UNESCO's #ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul encourages Mosulis to rebuild their city with their own hands.

Within UNESCO's "Reviving Mosul and Basra Old Cities" project, 760 graduates of professional training programmes and 340 unemployed youth, successfully completed the on-the-job training programme on the actual rehabilitation of 124 heritage houses in the Old City of Mosul.

On 8 July 2022 The Governor of Nineveh, Najm Al-Jubori, held an event to honor and appreciate the UNESCO team's good works in restoring heritage houses in the Old City of Mosul, within the #ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul initiative.

On 11 July 2022 the first group of apprenticeships successfully graduated from the vocational training course (VTC) in Mosul with a specialization in building carpentry and were involved in the reconstruction of Al-Ekhlash School, which UNESCO is rebuilding to be the first Child Friendly school in Mosul.



UNESCO and partners continue works on the restoration of Erbil Citadel

Erbil, 7 August 2022 - UNESCO in collaboration with ILO and the High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR) have started the restoration works on a historical complex (group of houses #7) in Erbil Citadel. The complex is composed of three houses and includes a Guesthouse (diwakhana) and the house- Haram. These heritage buildings have lost their distinctive architectural features due to alterations made by different residents and weather wear over the past decades.

The work will preserve the buildings from further deterioration, restore its original design and features and



prepare it for adaptive re-use while providing jobs for refugees and the host community.

This activity is part of UNESCO's

project "Support to Livelihoods through Culture Heritage Development" funded by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis.

Education

"Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on education through distance learning in Iraq" project achievements discussed in Baghdad

Baghdad, 30 June 2022 - UNESCO, in cooperation with the TV Directorate of Ministry of Education, conducted a workshop to share the achievements and lessons learnt and to discuss possible future cooperation at the end of 16-month-project "Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on education through distance learning in Iraq" funded by the Government of Japan to serve 6 million primary level students and children all over Iraq by enhancing the quality of learning opportunities.

30 participants from TV Directorate and the Ministry of Education, the Representative of the Embassy of Japan in Iraq and UNESCO

participated and shared ideas to improve the work of Education TV as well as distance education for the children of Iraq.

Prior to this workshop, a four-day training was provided to 25 teachers and supervisors on practical use of Mozabook application and the skills for improving the quality of production of the television lessons, including how to use smart devices and presentation skills. During the project UNESCO distributed 65 laptops with Mozabook for teachers and supervisors to produce more attractive and interactive lessons for children.



Subject Area Board members for the 7 institutions met to review their new degree profiles

Baghdad, 1 July 2022 - UNESCO, in cooperation with the EU, is working with the Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research to improve Youth Employment in Iraq for graduates from the Technical Universities and Polytechnics. This is being achieved by applying the "Bologna Process" and tools within Universities to enhance their Bachelor degree programmes in essential economic sectors such as Construction, ITC, Agriculture and Tourism.

As part of this drive, UNESCO is assisting Technical Universities and Polytechnics from Dahook, Suleimaniyeh, Erbil, Mosul, Baghdad,

Najaf and Basra to develop new and enhance existing degree programmes which are labour market focused, student centred and competency based. Subject Area Boards have been working in each institution to produce new courses applying the Bologna Process to develop Degree Profiles and new Degree structure in line with International best practice, which will be fully implemented in the next academic year. A two day workshop was held with the Subject Area Board members for the 7 Institutions to review their new degree profiles and share experience and ideas between the 7 Boards to produce final draft documents. The meeting was

attended by representatives of both Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research, namely the Minister's Advisor in Federal Iraq, Dr Ala'a Abdulhasan A'tiyah and the Head of Supervision and Quality Assurance in the KRG, Dr Mohamed Hussein. Both expressed their satisfaction with the work in progress.

The workshop is the last step in formalizing the degree profiles before representatives from the 7 Boards will travel to Pisa University in early July to present their final drafts for detailed feedback from subject area experts.

Priority to be given to graduates of vocational training when hiring workers for urban projects in the governorate

Mosul, 04 July 2022 - Within UNESCO's "Reviving Mosul and Basra's Old Cities" project, funded by the EU, the education team met with the Governor of Nineveh, Mr. Najm al-Jubouri, during the meeting the governor directed the contracts department to give priority to graduates of vocational training when hiring workers for urban projects in the governorate through contracts with construction and contracting firms. In

collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Vocational Training Center in Mosul, and other organizations, UNESCO has provided training in building specializations to 1,315 job seekers in the city of Mosul. Following the meeting with the governor, representatives from the departments of labor, contracts, social security, and the contractors union met in Nineveh to discuss how to put the governor's orders into practice.



UNESCO and state partners visit the Vocational Training Center and work sites of heritage houses in Mosul

Mosul, 6 July 2022 - UNESCO organizes a joint visit with the Department of Labor and Vocational Training- Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to the Vocational Training Center and work sites of heritage houses in Mosul.

In partnership between the Education Department- UNESCO Office in Iraq and the Department of Labor and Vocational Training at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, a field visit was organized to the Vocational Training Center and work sites of heritage houses in Mosul city to follow up on vocational training and employment activities within the "Reviving Mosul and Basra Old Cities" project, which is funded by the European Union.

On his part, Mr. Raed Jabbar Bahidh, Director General of Labor and Vocational Training, confirmed that this visit comes within the department's follow-up to the field project activities in Mosul city to be privy to the most important achievements and challenges facing the implementation of this important project, to contribute to reducing unemployment by providing training and employment opportunities for young people looking for jobs in Mosul and Basra cities.

In his speech during the visit to the Vocational Training Center in Mosul, he said: "The project was able to complete training, build capacities and provide skills in the construction sector for 1,550 young men and women looking for jobs in Mosul and Basra. These young men and women were already registered in the Ministry of Labor database. Today we celebrate the graduation of the last two groups at the center, by adopting a competency-based training and assessment approach, and through advanced curricula that were

designed and developed in partnership with the Curriculum Department."

During his visit to the old city, where work is underway to rehabilitate 124 historic houses in the vicinity of Al-Nouri Mosque, Mr. Raed said: "The process of providing work sites with vocational training graduates who received training in the center (where their number has reached 760 training workshops graduates so far) clearly reflects the success of this project, on the other hand the success of Mosul people in proving that they are the most capable of rebuilding and reconstructing their city after the great amount of destruction that occurred recently."

Mr. Mudhar Muhannad Mamdooh, the Assistant Director-General for Training Affairs, emphasized that one of the training success elements in the three centers came as a result of developing 114 training units for 7 disciplines in partnership with the Training and Curriculum Department within the first three levels of Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework, which was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2021. The areas chosen were (Bricklaying, Concrete, Plumbing, Electrical installations, PVC, Paint and decoration). Those curricula were used by qualified trainers in training centers who received training on delivering the competency-based training

methodology.

On his part, Mr. Bilal Al-Hamaydah, UNESCO Project Officer, indicated that the vocational training component in the project relied entirely on the labor market survey in Mosul in construction field and identifying the labor market needs of trained manpower and the required disciplines in construction field, which was an essential part of the program design in partnership with the Department of Labor and Vocational Training, the Labor and Vocational Training Departments in Mosul and Basra cities, and the Education Directorate in Nineveh Governorate. As part of ensuring the sustainability of the program, partnership agreements were signed between vocational training centers and companies working in construction field, whether in Mosul or Basra, in order to cooperate in training and employment fields for training workshops graduates held by the centers for young people looking for jobs in both Mosul and Basra.

Recently, the first group of Vocational Training successfully graduated from the Vocational Training Center in Mosul with a specialization in mold carpentry, and the group participated in the reconstruction of the Al-Khlas School, which is UNESCO rebuilding to be the first child-friendly school in Mosul.



Building links between the Private Sector and the Vocational schools is a key part of vocational school reforms



Baghdad/Erbil, 07 July 2022 - UNESCO is supporting reforms in Vocational Education, with the cooperation of the EU, in order to improve graduate employment. Building links between the Private Sector and the Vocational schools is a key part of these reforms. To help to build these links 5 Sectorial Councils have been established in key economic areas in Baghdad, Erbil, Mosul, Karbala and Basrah. The Councils are composed of representatives from the Private Sector, DoLSA, the Ministry and Departments of education and the schools.

Terms of Reference have been drawn

up for each Council and their work focusses on issues like On the Job Training opportunities for students, the relevance of the new curricula being developed and the employment of graduates.

The Baghdad Sectorial Council held their third meeting on 30 June, attended by UNESCO Staff, to review the terms of reference and plan their future activities. The meeting took place in the office of the Director of the Labour and Vocational training Directorate for Baghdad, Mr. Karim Yousuf Al Badri. This meeting is another step towards the TVET 2 Project's aim of increasing the

employability of Iraq's Youth.

The Erbil Sectorial Council held their second meeting on 7 July at KOSAR Company for Agriculture and Poultry. The meeting looked at the current curriculum used in the school and discussed ways of making it more relevant to the needs of the employers. The meeting also confirmed the upcoming summer 'On The Job' training being offer by The KOSAR Company to Erbil Agriculture Highschool final year students. The school Headmaster, Mr. Hazhar Khwada Ghulam said " this opportunity provided to us by KOSAR company will allow our students to gain valuable experience and practical skills working in the agriculture sector. This will prepare them for the world of work and increase their job prospects. We look forward to further agreements with Companies in Erbil Governorate to provide 'On The Job' training opportunities for our students."

This agreement between the Private Sector and the Erbil Agriculture highschool is an important step towards the TVET 2 Project's aim of increasing the employability of Iraq's Youth.

UNESCO and partners are working on enhancing universities' bachelor degree programmes in order to improve youth employment

Baghdad, 17 July 2022 - UNESCO, in partnership with the EU, is working with the Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research to improve Youth Employment in Iraq for graduates from the Technical Universities and Polytechnics. This is being achieved by applying the "Bologna Process" and tools within universities to enhance their Bachelor degree programmes in essential economic sectors such as construction, ITC, agriculture and tourism.

As part of this drive, UNESCO organized a Working Visit to Pisa and Bologna Universities from the 3rd to the 11th of July to meet with subject area experts from these Universities and to get valuable feedback on their draft Course outlines and Quality Plans.

Meetings were held with the relevant experts and a great deal of excellent feedback was obtained in order to fine tune the degree programmes for implementation in the next academic Year. The delegation worked in the afternoons on updating their proposal based on the feedback received



On the final day of the Visit a feedback and evaluation meeting was held with the delegated by UNESCO Senior Advisor Tim Mizen and Bologna process expert Dr Kathy Isaacs. The delegation expressed their appreciation to the many experts they had met with and judged the visit to have been very successful in assisting them in their aims to reform the structure of Higher Education in Iraq and Kurdistan through the application of the Bologna process.

Congratulations to the delegation for their hard work during the visit and for their implementation of the feedback into their final Course outlines and Quality Plans

At a meeting at the University of Pisa, Dahook Polytechnic University presented their new course outline for Food Processing. This is the first such Bachelor degree in Kurdistan.

A lively discussion then took place between the DPU representatives and the Agriculture expert, Professor Dr.

UNESCO and partners are working on enhancing universities' bachelor degree programmes ... (continued)

Alessandra Guidi on the structure of the proposed degree and how to improve it. Extremely valuable feedback and suggestions were received on how to enhance the course outline and ensure it was comprehensive, logically structured and fully up to international standards and would produce a new generation of graduates with the skills to grow the Food processing Industry in Kurdistan through fulfilling important roles in the Iraqi economy.

At a meeting at the Tourism and Hospitality school of Pisa University in Lucca, Al Furat Al Awsat presented their new course outline for Hospitality and Tourism. This is the first such Bachelor degree in Iraq. The delegation was warmly welcomed by the MD for Tourism and Research, Professor Enrica Lemmi and her team.



At a meeting at Pisa Middle Technical School, Southern technical Universities and the Polytechnics of Sulaimaniyah and Erbil presented their new course outlines in ITC and Data science.

A lively discussion then took place between the Al Furat Al Awsat representatives and the Tourism experts on the structure of the proposed degree and how to improve it.

A group of 14 Faculty members are currently visiting the University of Pisa as the final stage of the Bologna implementation process. There are two representatives from each of the seven Polytechnic and Technical Universities. The visit is the last step in formalizing the new degree courses and Quality plans, the final drafts of which are being presented to Subject area experts

from Pisa University for detailed feedback and improvement suggestions. The delegation was greeted in the Senate room by the Rector, Professor Paolo Mancarella, who warmly greeted them and expressed his happiness with the collaboration between the seven Iraqi Universities and his University. He looked forward to the successful completion of the first round of the Higher Education reform and the implementation of new degree programmes in Iraq and Kurdistan. He expressed his wish to see future meaningful cooperation with the University of Pisa.

TVET 2 is working with the Iraqi Government and the KRG to increase the employability of graduates across Iraq and Kurdistan.

In a pilot project 5 schools across Iraq are being developed into "Centres of Vocational Excellence"

Baghdad, 21 July 2022 - UNESCO, in cooperation with the EU and the Ministry of Education, is working to increase graduate employment from the MoE's Vocational schools. In a pilot project 5 schools across Iraq are being developed into "Centres of Vocational Excellence". This involves improving the links between the schools and the private sector, implementing new competence-based curricula, building the capacity of the teachers and administration and introducing Quality Assurance and school improvement plans. It also involves rehabilitating the schools and equipping their workshops with up-to-date practical training equipment.

Work has started on rehabilitating the Karbala Vocational school for Tourism and Hospitality. The initial phase is to create a safe and comfortable environment in the school by upgrading classrooms, offices and providing

modern sanitary services. Tenders are under preparation for the rehabilitation and equipping of 4 additional Vocational Schools in Erbil, Baghdad,

Ninewa, and Basra. UNESCO is working with the Ministries of Education for meaningful employment for Iraq's youth.



A workshop to train leaders on the reduction of violent extremism through awareness held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 24 July 2022 - Within the framework of the implementation of the project "Gender perspective to reduce violent extremism through education in Iraq", with the support of the Government of Canada, UNESCO and its partners, in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, organized a workshop to train leaders on the reduction of violent extremism through awareness, on 19-20 July in Baghdad. The training workshop was attended by 36 trainers (including 14 females) from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research from Nineveh and Anbar governorates, Qar, Salahuddin and Baghdad.

The workshop aimed at strengthening the cognitive, skills and behavioral abilities of leading trainers from various universities who in turn will transfer this knowledge to their

student to enable them to handle media content critically, reduce hate speech, extremism, intolerance and contribution In promoting peaceful

coexistence, especially via social media. Participants will train over 250 students from their provincial universities in the next two months.



1,790 staff members of the Ministry of Education were trained on EMIS

Baghdad, 31 July 2022 - "The European Union, in partnership with UNICEF and UNESCO Iraq are supporting the Ministry of Education in establishing an Education Management Information System (EMIS)," says Ghada Hameed, Project Manager, European Union in Iraq, during an EMIS training in Baghdad.

Thanks to the joint partnership, 1,790 Ministry of Education staff were trained on EMIS, to support planning and decision making for improved quality education #ForEveryChild.



School dropouts identified as one of the biggest issues that the community is facing

Mosul, 09 August 2022 - The Community Policing Forum in Al Qairawan, Ninewa, identified school dropouts as one of the biggest issues that the community is facing. The CPF members and the Community Policing officers in the community came together, with IOM's support, to conduct a campaign to raise awareness about the Ministry of Education's recently launched programmes supporting those who have dropped out to return to school, including the specifics of the programmes and how to enroll.

This activity was supported by the Government of Canada.



UNHCR is celebrating 30 years of excellence of DAFI scholarship program

Erbil, 27 July 2022 - Discussion is about language barriers, but there are no barriers for these young women and men DAFI scholars and graduates.

UNHCR is celebrating 30 years of excellence of DAFI scholarship program, which provides all refugee students with university scholarships in Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Federal Iraq.

This year marks 30 years of the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship programme. This program offers qualified refugee and returnee students all over the world the possibility to earn an undergraduate college degree in their country of asylum or home country. Since 1992, the programme has supported over 18,500 young refugees around the world to undertake tertiary studies.

UNHCR celebrated this anniversary with over 100 DAFI scholars and alumni in a day full of events, discussions, and exhibitions. Videos were presented at the event showing success and achievements of some of the graduates. Awards of Recognition were handed out to 5 DAFI scholars who exceeded expectations in their work.

The event was attended by representatives of the Kurdistan Regional Government, representatives of the diplomatic missions, NGO partners and UN agencies, as well as DAFI scholars and alumni.

Higher Education makes it possible for a generation of change-makers that can take the lead in identifying solutions for refugee situations. Higher Education is a priority for UNHCR, as outlined in Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Education, forming an integral part of UNHCR's protection

and solutions mandate.

The DAFI 30th Anniversary seeks to celebrate DAFI students and alumni excellence and thank the Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government, and all stakeholders who facilitate access to higher education opportunities for refugees and returnees in Iraq and contribute to UNHCR's 15by30 vision, the roadmap for which includes the aim of achieving enrolment of 15% of young refugee women and men in higher education by the year 2030.

Since 2016, 420 refugee students (of which 239 are women) have been sponsored by DAFI to study at 19 universities in Iraq, both in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) and in federal Iraq.

In 2021, UNHCR received 665 applications for the new DAFI program, and 249 students were sponsored and supported with scholarships. The program covers tuition fees, study materials, food, transportation, accommodation, and other expenses. To amplify academic achievement and skills development, UNHCR provides DAFI scholars additional support through close monitoring, academic preparatory and language classes, as

well as mentoring and networking opportunities.

UNHCR also supports access to higher education and the job market through the identification of other complementary pathways for refugee students.

UNHCR wishes to thank the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Education to ease the access to higher education to all students in the country and in the KRI, and NGO partners and UN agencies for their support to refugee students. UNHCR appreciates the dedicated support of the government of Germany, assistance from the governments of Denmark and the Czech Republic, as well as other private donors who contribute to this programme, in the promotion of refugee self-reliance; empowerment of students to build knowledge, skills, and leadership, facilitation of peaceful coexistence with host communities during displacement and upon return; strengthening of the protective impact of education and encourage lifelong learning; and the provision of role models for refugee children and youth to demonstrate the impact of education on individuals, communities, and societies.



IOM Iraq supported Mosul's Al Abour community to expand its mixed gender primary school

Mosul, 10 August 2022 - With the movement and return of displaced persons across the country, schools in Iraq are becoming more and more crowded.

To reduce such crowding, IOM Iraq supported Mosul's Al Abour community to expand its mixed gender primary school to include six more classrooms and a handwashing facility. The project engaged 10 men and 4 women from the community to work on the expansion through cash-for-work, which puts cash in the hands of those who need it while

also equipping participants with skills and experiences to increase their employability.

In addition to classrooms and a handwashing facility, a new reception centre was built in front of the school where community members gather to interact, participate in capacity-building activities and access key information about legal, protection and mental health and psychosocial support services.

This project was supported by the Government of Canada.



Supporting Iraq's preparations for the Transforming Education Summit 2022

Baghdad, 12 August 2022 - UNESCO Iraq, together with UNICEF, is supporting the Prime Ministers' Advisory Council (PMAC) to lead the national consultations processes in preparations for the Transforming Education Summit, convened by the UN Secretary General in September 2022 in New York.

On 8th August 2022, the PMAC convened the final National Consultation Meeting to review the draft national report leading to Iraq's National Statement of Commitment. The draft National Report is based on the Iraq National Education Strategy 2022 – 2031 (INES) and series of internal consultations. It highlights Iraq's education sector vision, mission, goals and thematic action tracks of the TES viz. Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools; Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development,

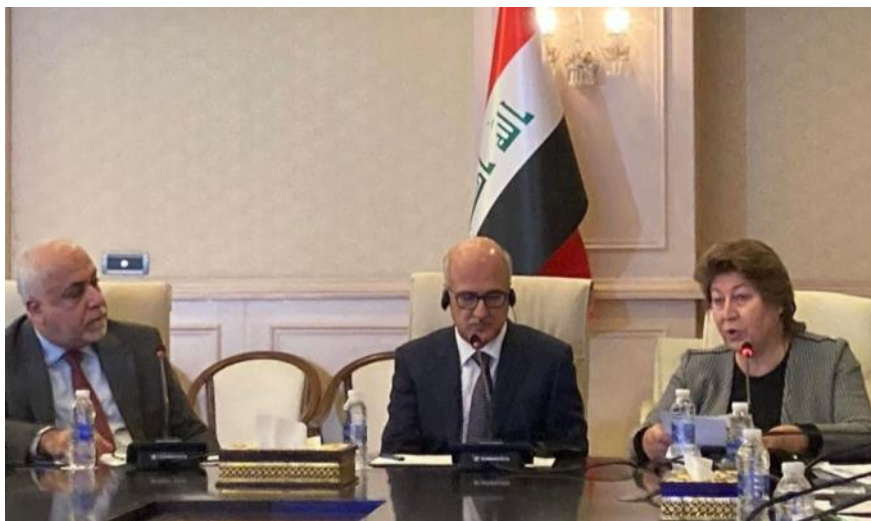
Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession, Digital learning and transformation; and Financing of Education.

The National Consultation Meeting was jointly chaired by the Chair of the PMAC Dr. Abdulkareem Al-Faisal, H.E. Minister of Education Dr. Ali Makhilif Hamed Dulaimi and UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General and UN Resident Coordinator Ms. Irena Vojackova-Sollorano, with participation of the Deputy Ministers of the Ministry of Education, Representatives of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Labor Social Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Heads of the Universities and Colleges of Education along with the development partners, World Food Programme and International Labour Organization in Iraq.

H.E. Minister in his opening remarks highlighted the ongoing efforts of the Ministry of Education in assuring access and quality education in Iraq. Speaking on behalf of the UN in Iraq, the DSRSG/UNRC acknowledged the efforts of the PMAC, Higher Committee for Education Development, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research for developing a comprehensive INES and called for its endorsement by the government and start of its implementation as soon as possible. On behalf of the Education Sector Coordination Group, Ms. Barbara Egger, Head of Cooperation of European Union in Iraq highlighted EU's and international partner's longstanding support to Iraq's education sector. Ms. Egger emphasized the need for the adoption of the INES and reiterated for national leadership as well as demonstrated commitment to education through allocation of adequate domestic resources in line with prior international commitments (at least 4% of the GDP and 15% of national budget).

The National Consultation resulted in a lively dialogue among the partners on the national priorities and actions backed-up by clear financing mechanisms.

PMAC as the National Convenor is working together with UNESCO and UNICEF to finalize the national report along with the National Statement of Commitment for submission to the Secretariat of the Transforming Education Summit by 15th of August 2022.



UNESCO and UNICEF commend Iraq's commitment to transform national education by engaging in the Transforming Education Summit

Baghdad, 17 August 2022 – UNICEF and UNESCO have commended today Iraq for the submission of the National Statement of Commitment for the upcoming Transforming Education Summit (TES), that will take place in New York from 16 to 19 September. This Commitment outlines a bold vision and concrete actions for the transformation of education to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and better prepare learners for the future.

The Statement was presented by the

Prime Minister's Advisory Commission (the national coordinator of the Summit), after holding a series of national consultations among the relevant ministries, higher education institutions, civil society organizations and development partners in Iraq, including the European Union as co-chair of the Education Sector Coordination Group, as well as UNESCO, UNICEF, the International Labour Organization International, and the World Food Programme.

In this regard, the submission of Iraq's

National Statement of Commitment is a major step forward in Iraq's efforts to respond to a global crisis in education, capturing national commitments and consensus on priority actions, building on existing plans, programmes, and initiatives.

“UNESCO congratulates Iraq for the National Statement of Commitment which reiterates the vision, strategic directions, policies and programmes for education detailed in the draft Iraq National Education Strategy 2022 - 2031 (INES), which UNESCO

UNESCO and UNICEF commend Iraq's commitment to transform national education ... (continued)

supported to develop," said Paolo Fontani, Director and UNESCO Representative in Iraq. UNESCO is committed to support the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in enhancing the institutional and technical capacities to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the INES and National Statement of Commitment.

"UNICEF welcomes Iraq's focus on the policy, planning and budgetary changes needed to recover learning losses, get the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on track and reimagine education into the future," said Sheema SenGupta, UNICEF Representative in Iraq. "UNICEF will continue to support the Government of Iraq, with a special focus on the Ministry of Education, to implement all the reforms reflected in the National Statement of Commitment."

The TES is organized at a critical moment, in which the COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the digital divide, as the global lockdown increased the risk of children being left

out of school. The Summit will focus in addressing issues related to educational exclusion, safety and health (especially mental health), transforming the teaching profession, renewing curricula and pedagogies and steering the digital transformation for just and equitable learning and ensuring availability of financing.

UNESCO and UNICEF have provided technical support to the Government of Iraq throughout the process leading to the TES, including the participation in the Pre-Summit in Paris on 29-30 June 2022 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, which served to capture the evolving discussions and generate greater momentum in the lead up to the Summit in September.

What is the Transforming Education Summit (TES)?

The Transforming Education Summit is a key initiative of Our Common Agenda launched by UN Secretary-General (SG), Antonio Guterres. TES brings together global, national and local education stakeholders and actors, it offers an opportunity for inclusive, networked and effective global dialogue on the types of coordinated actions

needed to reverse the slide on progress towards SDG4, to ensure that lessons are learned from pandemic responses for resilience, social prosperity and environmental sustainability in the post-COVID world, and to think big on how we imagine education systems of the future.

Taking place during the 77th session of the UN General Assembly on 16-19 September 2022, the Summit is an SG-convened event with a view to elevating education to the top of the global political agenda and to maximizing public awareness and engagement. It expects to fully mobilize the support of all UN Member States, development partners, civil society and youth organizations, and all other partners and stakeholders in education and beyond.



Around 60% of youth in Iraq lack digital skills needed for employment and social inclusion, new report says



Baghdad, 18 July 2022 – Nearly three quarters of youth aged 15 to 24 in 92 countries with available data, including Iraq, are off-track to acquire the skills needed for employment, according to a new report published last week by the Education Commission and UNICEF ahead of World Youth Skills Day.

The report *Recovering learning: Are children and youth on track in skills*

development? features analyses on skills development in early childhood, and among children of primary school age and youth. The data highlights low levels of skills among children and young people across all age groups, with youth in low-income countries the least likely to have the skills required to thrive, particularly in future employment opportunities, decent work, and entrepreneurship.

"An inspired, skilled generation of children and young people is critical for prosperity, progression, and the success of societies and economies. Yet, the majority of children and young people across the world have been failed by their education systems, leaving them uneducated, uninspired, and unskilled - - the perfect storm for unproductivity," said UNICEF Director of Education Robert Jenkins. "Investment in cost-effective, proven solutions to fast-track learning and skills development for today's generation and future generations is urgently needed to address this crisis."

In Iraq, where youth represent the largest segment of the population, the report indicates that 59.2% of the youth aged between 15-24 lack digital skills to perform basic computer-related activities. Youth also lack opportunities to access life-skills based education, employability, and entrepreneurial skills that will enable their smooth transition into the labour market. Moreover, there are limited opportunities to equip youth with necessary skills to increase their civic

Around 60% of youth in Iraq lack digital skills needed for employment and social inclusion, new report says *(continued)*

engagement and enable them to become active and informed citizens and promote their participation in decision-making processes.

With high rates of out-of-school young people, low attainment of secondary-level skills, and lack of learning opportunities, countries worldwide are facing a skills crisis, with the majority of youth unprepared to take part in today's workforce, the report notes.

Deep disparities across countries and among those from the poorest communities are increasing inequalities. In at least 1 in 3 low-income countries with available data, more than 85 percent of young people are off-track in the secondary-level, digital, and job-specific skills attainment, the report notes.

"To give young people the best chance to succeed and recover learning losses due to the pandemic, we need to support them holistically. But we can't recover what we don't measure. We need to know where children and youth are in building the range of skills they need and monitor their progress. That's why the Education Commission, UNICEF, and partners have been working to address critical data gaps, including the launch of the World Skills Clock to help track progress on and raise awareness around youth skills attainment around the world so we can target urgent action to prepare this generation to thrive in the future," said Education Commission Executive

Director Liesbet Steer.

Data from 77 countries show that less than three-quarters of children aged between 3 and 5 years old are developmentally on track in at least three out of the four domains of literacy-numeracy, physical, social-emotional, and learning. At approximately 10 years old, the majority of children in low- and middle-income countries are unable to read and understand a simple text. These foundational skills are the building blocks for further learning and skills development, the report notes.

Basic literacy and numeracy; transferable skills including life skills and socioemotional skills; digital skills, which allow individuals to use and understand technology; job-specific skills, which support the transition into the workforce and promote their social inclusion as agent of change; and entrepreneurial skills are essential for children and youth to thrive. These skills are also critical for the development of societies and economies. "It is critical to build skills of children and youth for them to achieve a deep sense of empowerment. Yet, prolonged school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have disrupted their skills development," says Ms. Sheema SenGupta, UNICEF Representative in Iraq. "UNICEF will continue to work with the Government of Iraq and other partners to ensure more comprehensive and inclusive skills development

initiatives are in place to realize the vision where every child and youth develops the full range of skills needed for success in school, work and life."

UNICEF and the Education Commission are urging governments to reach every child and youth with quality education and learning and break down the barriers that put them at risk of dropping out; assess children's and young people's learning levels and provide tailored catch-up classes and skilling opportunities to bring them up to speed; prioritize foundational skills to build a strong base for lifelong learning; and support psychosocial health and well-being by providing holistic support. The report outlines the need for more extensive data on the skills gap among children and young people across all age groups.



Unlocking the potential of vulnerable young people in Baghdad, Anbar and Basra, aged 10-24, by improving their skills for learning, employability, and civic engagement

Baghdad, 22 July 2022 - UNICEF, with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the support from Canadian Government (Canada's International Development – Global Affairs Canada), launched a new project on youth skilling and economic empowerment with the presence of Mr. Adnan Darjal, Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. Gregory Galligan, Ambassador of Canada to Iraq, Ms. Paula Bulancea, Deputy Representative UNICEF in Iraq, and youth representatives.

The ultimate goal of the new project is for 1,500 girls and boys to serve as equal and empowered community innovators, leading positive development and transition to decent jobs and entrepreneurship, as well as promote their social inclusion.



On International Youth Day, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and UNICEF officially launch the ‘Learning Passport’



Mosul, 13 August 2022 – Marking the International Youth Day, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, jointly with UNICEF, officially launched at Mosul University the ‘Learning Passport’, an online education platform, to respond to the learning crisis and bridge the digital divide in Iraq.

Under the theme, "The youth generations are the national treasure in recovery and reconstruction", the launch event included an opening speech by H.E. Mr. Adnan Darjal, Minister of Youth and Sports, followed by remarks by Mr. Najem Al-Juboori, Ninawah Governor, and Ms. Paula Balancea, UNICEF Deputy Representative in Iraq. Speeches were accompanied by a youth-led Learning Passport presentation, and an art show organized by youth groups.

"I am speaking to youth, don't give up, your country needs you! Youth has struggled over last years to get freedom and make their voices heard and for their needs to matter, including their educational needs. So many countries are suffering from such shortage, and here we are trying to push ourselves for youth to have the life they deserve and fulfill the SDGs," said the Minister of

Youth and Sports, Adnan Darjal. "It is our responsibility in the coming years to continue reforms needed for youth to ensure their engagement in social life and to fill the budget gap to cover their needs in education, health and prevention, and for youth to develop their skills, especially those needed in the labor market."

The Learning Passport is part of UNICEF's broader efforts to accelerate and improve access to quality education and learning for every child and young people. The platform supports the blended learning and skill-building opportunities for youth and adolescents from most vulnerable groups, including forcibly displaced and host communities.

"We must ensure that learning happens along multiple flexible pathways – with a vision of transitioning to jobs. When young people are provided with the support and resources they need, they will be the innovative problem-solvers able to design, lead and implement projects and services that can help their entire communities," said Ms. Paula Balancea, UNICEF Deputy Representative in Iraq, during her speech at Mosul University.

So far, the Learning Passport has reached 4,647 young people (40 per cent young girls) in Iraq from Anbar, Baghdad, Dohuk and Salahaddin with a wide range of learning and skilling resources, including Life Skills and Active Citizenship, the Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation, Gender Equality, and many others. After the national launch with the Ministry, the platform is expected to benefit 100,000 young people by 2024 in Iraq.

For International Youth Day, a survey was organized via U-Report Iraq. The poll on Learning Passport showed that 24% of the respondents have heard of Learning Passport and 27% have taken at least one course on the platform. The poll results also showed that the youth are interested in taking digital courses to improve their English, soft and hard skills, and advocacy courses on various topics including education, health, and nutrition.

The Learning Passport is a digital innovation developed by UNICEF in partnership with Microsoft and Cambridge University to enable access to quality and inclusive learning and skills development. The Learning Passport equips young people and children with necessary tools to support their learning whether in schools, homes or in hard-to-reach areas. The Learning Passport was deployed in Iraq in September 2020 and is currently available on web and mobile app for children and young people, soon also offline, to have continuous access to learning materials. It is constantly updated with the latest versions of contextualized content and features engaging and interactive tools developed by UNICEF to make learning fun and engaging.

Along with the Learning Passport, UNICEF has been working closely with donors, partners, and other UN agencies towards an inclusive future with active adolescent and youth participation and civic engagement. Funded by the Government of the Netherlands, UNICEF and International Labour Organization (ILO) have been collaboratively supporting vulnerable youth in Iraq under the Prospects partnership, to develop skills and transition from training to decent employment and economic opportunities. Through this programme, vulnerable youth, girls, and boys, are taught life, digital and entrepreneurship skills that are in demand in today's employment market.



International Youth Day commemorated in Iraq



Baghdad, 12 August 2022 - Children and families' needs come first. Financed by the Government of Germany, KfW Development Bank, UNICEF ensures community voices are heard when projects are implemented through the Beneficiary Voices Monitoring System, upholding the quality of services for children in Iraq. On International Youth Day - UNICEF Iraq celebrates Iraqi youth, who represent the largest segment of the country. They have wishes, aspirations and opinions regarding their lives and their future, their voice should always be heard.

Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative in Iraq: "Iraq is rich with a youth population and young energies. Across Iraq, I met many young health workers who continue to fight outbreaks and work tirelessly to serve the most vulnerable people. On International Youth Day, let's invest in young people to have a healthier and safer world".

With The HALO Trust, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in Iraq rehabilitated a safe space, "Green Community Park," for youth to gather and play away from the threat of explosive ordnance.

The World Food Programme in Iraq is a strong supporter of youth development and has provided thousands of vulnerable people in Iraq with training opportunities that helped them find work and earn a living.

UNHCR Iraq - On International Youth Day, refugees, host community and internally displaced youth in Erbil receive training by refugee volunteers, on CV writing, job interview skills, resources and more, to prepare them for the job market.

UNFPA Iraq - Adolescents and youth with disabilities equipped with proper tools and support are unstoppable.

International Youth Day, coincidentally, falls during the 'Al Asri Youth Athletics for Peace Festival' that UN-Habitat has launched earlier this

week in partnership with Sabe'a Sanabul Organization for Relief & Development (SSORD) to mark the establishment of an adjacent five-a-side football pitch and the completion of the rehabilitation of Al Asri Park by Janat Al-Frdaws Foundation For Relief and Development in the conflict-affected city of Baiji, both funded by the European Union.

Because of the extreme heat these days, the football championship, basketball and volleyball matches, and the running competition were held only after sunset. Children from the neighbourhood have been invited to two "Children Play Days" that were organised in the newly built playground and mini cycle route.

Team sports and athletics offer a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks, overcome mistrust, and reach across political divides and ethnic/religious differences, particularly effective for youth that have grown up in an environment of intolerance and conflict.

2022 Youth Day's theme emphasises how fostering inter-generational solidarity between generations is more than ever necessary to ensure an inclusive and sustainable recovery.



Timeline

UN Iraq Special Representative Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: Eid-ul-Adha an opportunity for Iraqis to mend their differences

Baghdad, 08 July 2022 – Eid-ul-Adha, the Feast of Sacrifice for Muslims, arrives this year at a sensitive time for Iraq.

Traditionally, the Eid is a time to give and forgive, to show compassion and celebrate. These virtues are more significant than ever this year, with the country engulfed in protracted political disputes, incessant dust storms, a new wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, and global tensions which impact the daily life of Iraqis, including their food security.

Eid-ul-Adha provides the opportunity for people to come together, open their hearts and to seek to heal their differences. In this spirit, I am confident that the people can overcome the challenges they are facing, and I hope that the political class will offer the necessary sacrifices for the good of their community and country, so that all Iraqis can look forward, united, to a brighter future.

Best wishes of peace and good health,

Adha Mubarak!



UNHCR and partners mark World Chess Day!

Erbil, 20 July 2022 - Every year on 20 July it is World Chess Day.

UNHCR and partners support communities that organize group activities, games and foster hobbies targeting youth especially among displaced communities.

UNHCR and SWEDO - The Swedish Development Aid Organization supported a chess contest at Khanzad Chess Club in Erbil.

Activities that we support are those that target host communities, internally displaced and refugees to promote cohesion and acceptance among different communities in Iraq, especially in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Youth clubs and youth centres as well as sports clubs that offer the three communities, host community, internally displaced and refugees a safe space to

play, interact, co-exist, and get to know each other is part of UNHCR's community-based protection program which enhances acceptance, integration, and social cohesion.

Siraj, 12, is an internally displaced child with his family, they had to move from Mosul when it was attacked by ISIS several years ago. He is now living with his family in Erbil.

Siraj is a clever student, one of the top in his school. He plays chess every day, because of COVID and restrictions he got used to playing online and against machines. This is his first participation in an open chess contest.

The contest had 20 players all adults, using the Swiss tournament style which is no players are eliminated. Every player will play every round, and the player with the highest number of points at the end of

the tournament is the winner.

Siraj was the winner and got the highest score. He was thrilled and when I asked him how he did it, he said, "I practice every day, I don't like to go out and play, especially now that it is very hot in Iraq during the summer".

Siraj's mother said that her wish is to see Siraj finish school and go on to college and demonstrate his skills and talent in everything he does and make the best of his future.



World Humanitarian Day

Statement by Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano on World Humanitarian Day

Baghdad, 18 August 2022 - On World Humanitarian Day, we recognize with appreciation and gratitude the efforts and contributions made by humanitarian workers in Iraq who have supported millions of Internally Displaced People in recent years.

With humanitarian needs decreasing, humanitarian partners in Iraq are

working jointly with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to ensure a smooth transition from humanitarian assistance towards durable solutions efforts within the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) to which the Government of Iraq and the UN Country Team are

committed to.

World Humanitarian Day pays tribute to the world's humanitarian workers who tirelessly provide life-saving assistance to people in need. It is marked annually to memorialize the 22 colleagues who lost their lives in the attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003.

Commemorating 19th anniversary of attack on its HQ in Baghdad, UNAMI reaffirms commitment to the people of Iraq

Baghdad, 19 August 2022 - The 19th of August is a day that is deeply etched in the collective memory of UNAMI and the United Nations as a whole. On this day in 2003, a bombing targeted the headquarters of the UN mission in Baghdad, killing 22 of our colleagues, including Special Representative Sérgio Vieira de Mello, and injuring about 150 others.

The victims were UN staff working to support the country's post-conflict

recovery. Since 2009, the day has been designated World Humanitarian Day, which is marked annually to recognize the essential work of humanitarians worldwide.

As we in the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) remember the souls lost, the injured and the families who continue to carry the scars of that tragedy, we also recall the goal behind their ultimate sacrifice, the same goal we reaffirm today: support to the people of Iraq.

Iraq has experienced countless difficulties in recent years, with the ongoing political crisis only the most recent protracted challenge. However, none of the current disagreements are impossible to resolve, nor can be considered more important than the national interest.

The many sacrifices made to restore Iraq's standing should not go in vain: all efforts should be mobilized towards dialogue and solutions for the greater good of the people.

19th Anniversary of the bomb attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq observed at the UN Secretariat in New York

New York, 19 August 2022 - Wreath laying ceremony for the observance of the 19th Anniversary of the bomb attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq.

□ UN Photo/Evan Schneider



United Nations staff in Iraq today commemorated the 19th anniversary of the attack on the UN HQ in Baghdad



Baghdad, 21 August 2022 - On 19 August 2003, a bombing targeted the headquarters of the UN mission in Baghdad, killing 22 of our colleagues, including Special Representative Sérgio Vieira de Mello, and injuring about 150 others. Today and always, we remember the souls lost, the injured and the families who continue to carry the scars of that tragedy, we also recall the goal behind their ultimate sacrifice, the same goal we reaffirm today: support to the people of Iraq.

Here is the text of the speech by Mr. Claudio Cordone, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance at today's Baghdad commemoration of the Canal Hotel Bombing and marking of the World Humanitarian Day and the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues, Friends,
Nineteen years ago, on 19 August 2003, just five days after UNAMI was established by UN Security Council Resolution 1500, the UN headquarters in Baghdad, known also as the Canal Hotel, was blown up in one of the first terrorist attacks in the capital. Twenty-two of our colleagues and friends were killed and more than a hundred people were injured.

A number of survivors of the Canal Hotel bombing are here with us today.



Many of them continue to serve the UN here in Iraq. Despite the horrors of that day and the many catastrophes that have befallen Iraq since, these colleagues remain committed to playing a role in building a peaceful and stable future for their country. Please join me in paying special tribute to these colleagues. I am honoured to be standing here with you on this solemn occasion.

I would like to salute those who were injured in the attack of 19 August 2003 and who have joined us here today. The UN and all those committed to humanitarianism appreciate your sacrifice and your continuing commitment to a peaceful and stable Iraq.

Although the attack on the Canal Hotel targeted the humanitarian community, Iraqi society was not spared: the attack was only a prelude to the terror that would engulf Iraq and claim countless victims in the following years. Today, we observe World Humanitarian Day, and pay tribute to all victims of terrorism.

In Iraq, as well as in other parts of the globe, we continue to witness threats and assaults against civilians, humanitarian workers, healthcare professionals, civil society actors, the staff of international organisations, and countless brave women and men who put themselves in danger to assist communities affected by conflict and disasters.

So it was a befitting tribute that the General Assembly designated 19 August, the day of the Canal Hotel bombing, as World Humanitarian Day, to honour humanitarian workers who have been killed or injured in the course of their work. This year, we draw attention to community engagement and joint action. The first people to respond to crisis are communities themselves, joined by local volunteers, emergency services, local and national authorities, NGOs, UN agencies and the Red Cross and Red Crescent, among many others. Humanitarian action is evidence that unity and solidarity are still alive and strong. Alone, our impact is limited, but together we make a greater difference.

I joined UNAMI one week ago as the new Deputy Special Representative. However, I also had friends who were either killed or injured in that attack. The 19th of August has always been a



date of reflection for me and for all of us in the United Nations and beyond. It gives me great honour as my first function in UNAMI to stand here with you today to remember the sacrifices of our twenty-two colleagues, fallen in the service of peace in Iraq. In paying tribute to them, we also commemorate and honour all those who lost their lives serving humanity, and all victims of terrorism. Our continuing commitment to peace and justice is their legacy and our inspiration. Thank you."

