

UNAMI Herald

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UN envoy urges dialogue to end political impasse in Iraq

New York, 4 October 2022 - The absence of a functioning government in Iraq one year after elections were held is hard to justify, the top UN official in the country said on Tuesday, urging political leaders to put aside their differences for the common good.

Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, UN Special Representative in Iraq, briefed the Security Council in New York, warning that “public disillusion is running sky-high”, as too many citizens have lost all faith in politicians.

Their protracted inaction has sparked protests and counter-protests, culminating in deadly clashes this past August.

Dire consequences, ongoing volatility

“These tragic developments are indisputably the result of the inability of Iraq’s political class to cast the die,” she told ambassadors.

“In other words: actors across the spectrum failed to place the national interest first. They left the country in a prolonged impasse, further fuelling already simmering anger.”

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert said the situation remains highly volatile. Although parliament resumed in late September, clashes occurred between protestors and security forces, among other acts of violence.

“And we have not seen the end of it yet. Last night, after three days of rocket attacks, Basra witnessed intense fighting, while smaller incidents were reported in other southern governorates,” she reported.

Despite renewed calls for elections, she wondered what guarantees are in place to ensure they will not again be held in vain.

Remembering 2019 protests

This past Saturday, 1 October, marked three years since thousands of Iraqis took to the streets in nationwide anti-corruption protests. Several hundred people were killed and many more were severely injured, abducted, threatened, or intimidated.

The protests resulted in the previous government stepping down, and in early elections held last October.

“In other words, and I said it often: last year’s elections were extremely hard-earned. And with this in mind, the absence of a functioning government 12 months later is hard to justify,” she said.

Although new protests were expected on Saturday, turnout remained relatively low, the envoy reported, “not because Iraqis are now suddenly content, but because they do not wish to be instrumentalized in the ongoing power struggle - as made abundantly clear by many of those who took to the streets in 2019.”



No ‘magic wand’

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert, who also heads the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), has been supporting national dialogue.

While reluctant to discuss initiatives publicly, the envoy revealed that she has held “intense engagements” with the parties, including holding bilateral meetings on potential roadmaps and conducting shuttle diplomacy.

“Believe me, we tried. Non-stop. That said, we do not have a magic wand. Ultimately, it all comes down to political will,” she told the Council.

Appeal for dialogue

All sides have made “strategic mistakes and miscalculations” in the period since the election, she said, and they have missed valuable opportunities to resolve their differences.

“And with risks of further strife and bloodshed still very tangible, dwelling on who did what when is no longer an option,” she stressed.

“Hence, it is time for Iraq’s leaders - all of them - to engage in dialogue, collectively define core Iraqi needs and pull the country back from the ledge. In other words, all leaders should assume responsibility and return the spotlight where it must be: on the people of Iraq.”

Address critical issues

Regarding solutions, Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert highlighted the need for “genuine and timely dialogue” alongside willingness to compromise. Delivering a functioning government is merely the first step to overcoming the current crisis, she said.

The UN envoy added that a wide range of critical issues also must be addressed, chiefly adoption of a federal budget, while action towards transformative change must begin.

She pointed to 20 years of wasted opportunities for meaningful dialogue and badly needed reforms in Iraq, saying leaders must acknowledge that systemic

change is vital for the country’s future.

Fight corruption, political patronage

This is also critical to fight corruption, which she described as being “a core feature of the current political economy”. Previous reform efforts have been “actively undermined or obstructed”, she said.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert also addressed the related issue of reliance on patronage and clientelism, which has resulted in a ballooning, inefficient public sector. Oil-rich Iraq is also a country where private and partisan interests have led to resources being diverted from investment in national development.

“What I am saying is Iraq’s political and governance system ignores the needs of the Iraqi people, or even worse, actively works against them. Now, pervasive corruption is a major root cause of Iraqi dysfunctionality. And frankly, no leader can claim to be shielded from it,” she said. “Keeping the system ‘as is’ will backfire, sooner rather than later. That said, it is important to frame it as precisely that: a system, rather than a collection of individuals or a series of events.”

Respect Iraqi sovereignty

Turning to other matters, Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert condemned an Iranian attack in northern Iraq last week targeting Kurdish opposition groups.

Iran and Turkey have been conducting shelling in the region, establishing a “new normal” for Iraq, and she called for an end to these “reckless acts” which have caused deaths and injuries.

“No neighbour should treat Iraq as its backyard,” she said. “No neighbour should be allowed to routinely, and with impunity, violate Iraq’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. Yet it is happening. Time and again.”

By UN News.

The text of the briefing of the SRSR for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, at this meeting starts at page 3.

In this edition ...

Encouraging reintegration from Al Hol Camp to Salah al-Din and the Baghdad Belt in Iraq

Baghdad, 28 September 2022 - Following the defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), dedicated efforts are required to address the prolonged displacement of families across Iraq. The Government of Iraq, with support from UN agencies, is working to support the safe return and reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs), including families with perceived affiliation to ISIL... *More on page 11.*

A year after hard-earned elections: the time to act is now

Baghdad, 10 October 2022 - A year ago, Iraqis went to the polls with the hope of charting a new future for their country. It was a hard-earned election, brought about by public pressure from nationwide protests in which several hundreds of young Iraqis lost their lives and thousands were injured. ... *More on page 7.*

Calls for justice and solidarity with Yezidis: Iraqi Muslim religious and tribal leaders issued public statements denouncing ISIL atrocities and violent extremism, urging action

Baghdad, 6 September 2022 - At the occasion of the 8th anniversary of the Yezidi genocide, Iraqi Muslim religious leaders and tribal leaders from Ninewa Governorate issued public statements aiming to support the return of displaced Yezidi survivors to their areas of origin by reaffirming their commitment to support justice for genocide survivors and foster religious and ethnic diversity and co-existence. *More on page 9.*

DSRSG Cordone: "Efforts should be encouraged to bring women to the table in current and subsequent national dialogue sessions and to participate in finding solutions to address the current political impasse"

Baghdad, 27 August 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Mr. Claudio Cordone, participated today at the 14th Annual Islamic Conference to Address Violence Against Women and Girls. *The text of his speech starts at page 20.*

Security Council unanimously renews UNITAD's mandate

New York, 15 September 2022 - The United Nations Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) through resolution 2651.

Resolution 2651 renewed UNITAD's mandate until 17 September 2023, first established by resolution 2379 (2017) upon the request of the Government of Iraq. *More on page 42.*

UNAMI HRO had a roundtable discussion with the High Judicial Council and Iraqi Bar Association delivering on accountability for corruption and upholding fair trial rights lessons learned in Iraq's Judiciary

Baghdad, 10 September 2022 - UNAMI Human Rights Office had a roundtable discussion with the High Judicial Council and Iraqi Bar Association delivering on accountability for corruption and upholding fair trial rights lessons learned in Iraq's Judiciary. *More on page 31.*

UNAMI welcomes confirmation of Iraqi government, reaffirms readiness to support

Baghdad, 27 October 2022 - The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) welcomes the confirmation of Prime Minister Mohammed S. Al-Sudani's government by the Council of Representatives. The swift completion of his cabinet is now an essential next step. *More on page 7.*

SRSG on Twitter

Baghdad, 17 October 2022 - United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative (SRSG) for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: "What can Iraq do with its missing billions USD? Invest in schools, hospitals, energy, water, roads etc. Retrieve these funds and return them to their rightful owners. Support the GoI in its investigations. Protect those who uncover. Ensure accountability." #TheftOfTaxDeposits

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

SRSB Hennis-Plasschaert: "It is high time for Iraq's leaders - all of them - to engage in dialogue, collectively define core Iraqi needs and pull the country back from the ledge."

New York, 4 October 2022 – On its 9145th meeting United Nations Security Council deliberated situation concerning Iraq.

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

"Mr. President,

Thank you very much,

Distinguished members of the Security Council,

Calls for Iraq's leaders to overcome their differences, and form a government, have abounded since elections were held a year ago.

Over the past 12 months, we underlined (time and again) the importance of maintaining calm, of maintaining dialogue, constitutional compliance, respect for democratic principles, the unimpeded working of state institutions, and a functioning government to effectively address the legitimate demands for better public services, jobs, security, an end to corruption, and justice and accountability - to name a few.

But regretfully, discord and power play prevailed over a sense of common duty. And as a direct result of protracted political inaction, Iraq experienced some very critical and dangerous hours.

With protests and counter-protests being staged, tensions were on the rise for months. Supporters of political parties, many of whom carry weapons, got increasingly worked up. And one did not need a crystal ball to see where this could lead. Meanwhile, the ordinary Iraqi citizen was being held hostage to an unpredictable and untenable situation.

A dire situation, that culminated on Monday August 29, when the country



stood on the brink of total chaos. Political tensions degenerated in armed clashes in the heart of the capital and elsewhere. The sad result: dozens of people killed, and hundreds wounded.

Now, these tragic developments are indisputably the result of the inability of Iraq's political class to cast the die.

In other words: actors across the spectrum failed to place the national interest first. They left the country in a prolonged impasse, further fuelling already simmering anger.

And while one would expect that recent events would have served as a wake-up call, the harsh reality is that, to date, intra-Shia strife has not abated, nor have Kurdish parties come closer to agreeing on a presidential candidate.

So where do we stand now? The situation remains highly volatile.

After more than two months of paralysis, parliament resumed its sessions last Wednesday, September

28, amid tight (very tight) security measures. These measures, however, did not prevent further incidents, including a number of IDF impacts as well as clashes between protesters and security forces.

To be clear: there is zero justification for violence. Yet in this instance again, many were injured, 11 civilians and more than 120 members of the Iraqi Security Forces - all sons of the country.

And we have not seen the end of it yet. Last night, after three days of rocket attacks, Basra witnessed intense fighting, while smaller incidents were reported in other southern governorates.

Mr. President,

On the first of October, last Saturday, we remembered the victims of the Tishreen demonstrations.

Three years ago, as you recall, Iraqis took to the streets to protest a lack of political, economic and social prospects. It was a mobilisation of an unprecedented scale, and it turned into a tragedy. Several hundreds of Iraqis died, and many more were severely injured, abducted, threatened or intimidated.

As a result of these protests, the previous government stepped down, and early elections were organized, a year ago. In other words, and I said it often: last year's elections were extremely hard-earned. And with this in mind, the absence of a functioning government 12 months later is hard to justify.

It has to be said that last Saturday, new protests were expected. The hope



SRSg Hennis-Plasschaert: "It is high time for Iraq's leaders ... (continued)"

was that they would be held peacefully. But in the early morning hours, we woke up to another call of our "sense and warn" alarm system. The day was not off to a promising start.

Throughout the day, however, protester numbers remained relatively low. Not because Iraqis are now suddenly content, but because they do not wish to be instrumentalized in the ongoing power struggle - as made abundantly clear by many of those who took to the streets in 2019.

The Iraqi Security Forces demonstrated great restraint in their response, adhering strictly to given orders. But regretfully, some disruptive elements were present on the streets. And I can only reiterate the importance of keeping any protest away from violence. The fact is: the smallest spark can suffice to trigger a major disaster.

Mr. President,

We brought our full support to the National Dialogue under the auspices of Iraq's Prime Minister. A forum that, so far, convened twice. For this initiative to bear fruit, however, it is crucial that all parties take their seat. I repeat, all parties.

As an aside, it is worth noting that none of the parties were represented by women.

That said, it is also incumbent on all to act responsibly in times of heightened tensions. This means refraining from making provocative statements and feeding into counter-productive, not to say harmful, discourses.

And while I am usually disinclined to air our initiatives publicly, I would like to emphasize our intense engagements during the past months and weeks; from participating in dialogue and holding countless bilateral meetings to drafting roadmaps and conducting shuttle diplomacy in various forms. Believe me, we tried, non-stop.

That said: we do not have a magic wand. Ultimately, it all comes down to political will.

Equally important is the understanding that, at the end of the day, one can only be influential if you accept the influence of others. If only there was a willingness to compromise.

One thing is clear: the persistent and overt lack of trust perpetuates a zero-



sum game, a game in which commitment to concrete solutions is being avoided.

Having said this, Mr. President: there are solutions.

Of course, every situation has its own history and idiosyncrasies. But let me be clear: since the elections were held a year ago, all sides - and I mean all sides - made strategic mistakes and miscalculations. More importantly still, they missed many valuable opportunities to resolve their differences. And with risks of further strife and bloodshed still very tangible, dwelling on who did what when is no longer an option.

Hence, it is high time for Iraq's leaders (all of them) to engage in dialogue, collectively define core Iraqi needs and pull the country back from the ledge.

In other words, all leaders should assume responsibility and return the spotlight where it must be: on the people of Iraq.

Make no mistake, public disillusion is running sky-high. Too many Iraqis have lost faith in the ability of Iraq's political class to act in the interest of the country and its people. And a continued failure to address this loss of faith, will only exacerbate Iraq's problems.

Focus is equally important. We have seen the announcement of a plethora of initiatives since the elections in October last year. But too many tracks and too many cooks distract, confuse and blur the picture.

As I said, there are solutions. But for solutions to see daylight, genuine and timely dialogue is essential, including a willingness to compromise.

And yes, it goes without saying: delivering a functioning government is merely the first step to overcoming the current crisis in a sustainable

way. A wide range of critical issues must be addressed. Chief amongst them is the adoption of a federal budget, absent which state spending could come to a halt by the end of the year.

And work towards transformative change has to kick off.

Let us face it: since 2003, too many opportunities to conduct meaningful and much needed reform have been wasted. Nearly 20 years on, Iraq's leaders must acknowledge that systemic change is vital for the country's future.

Attempts to push through incremental reform, including in the fight against corruption, have failed so far - having been actively undermined or obstructed.

I said it many times, also in your chamber: corruption is a core feature of Iraq's current political economy, built into everyday transactions. This is not just me saying it. It is widely recognized.

A related feature is Iraq's reliance on patronage and clientelism. This has resulted in a ballooning, inefficient public sector that functions more as an instrument of political favour than as a servant of the people.

And while Iraq is by no means a poor country, private and partisan interests conspire to divert resources away from critical investment in national development.

What I am saying is: Iraq's political and governance system ignores the needs of the Iraqi people, or even worse, actively works against them.

Pervasive corruption is a major root cause of Iraqi dysfunctionality. And frankly, no leader can claim to be shielded from it.

Keeping the system "as is" will backfire, sooner rather than later. That said, it is important to frame it

SRSR Hennis-Plasschaert: "It is high time for Iraq's leaders ... (continued)"

as precisely that: a system, rather than a collection of individuals or a series of events.

Mr. President,

As calls for early national elections have become more pronounced, let me elaborate further on this topic.

Besides the obvious benefits for political parties to clarify a number of matters in advance, we emphasized the importance of following established (legal) procedures and mechanisms.

We also made clear that - at this point in time - we would not be able to confirm UNAMI's ability to assist in new elections, as this would depend on a formal request of the Iraqi Government addressed to your Council, and (of course) subsequent deliberations.

Other questions are also worth raising, for instance:

What are the guarantees that new national elections will not be held in vain once again?

How will Iraqi citizens be persuaded that it is worth casting their vote?

And what reassurances would the international community need for them to support new elections?

Mr. President,

On the topic of elections, we have also actively engaged Kurdistan Region authorities and political parties on several outstanding issues related to the 6th Kurdistan Region parliamentary elections.

These elections were initially scheduled for the first of October, that is, three days ago. To date, however, Kurdistan Region political parties are yet to find common ground, with again the "yellow and green" divide as the single most disruptive factor impeding progress.

In no uncertain terms, we made clear that, here also, we do not have a magic wand. Here also, it comes down to political will. Here also, party leaders should understand that one can only be truly influential if they accept the influence of others. Hence, a willingness to compromise is



essential. More generally: monopolizing power breeds instability. That goes for both Iraq as a whole and for the Kurdistan Region.

Now, let me stress the following: the political fallout of not conducting timely Kurdistan Region parliamentary elections, of not properly managing public expectations, of neglecting basic democratic principles, will bear a high cost. And if that were to happen, it would not be for lack of warning.

Hence, we are impatiently waiting for parties to fulfil their many promises and to act in the service of the peoples of the Kurdistan Region.

Mr. President,

Addressing the Council in May, I raised the alarm at Turkish and Iranian shelling in the North having become the "new normal" for Iraq. And with last week's Iranian attacks, I can now only repeat myself.

These reckless acts, which have devastating consequences, killing and injuring people, must cease.

No neighbour should treat Iraq as its backyard. No neighbour should be allowed to routinely, and with impunity, violate Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Yet it is happening. Time and again.

Mr. President,

On the issue of missing Kuwaiti and

third-country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, including the national archives:

We are pleased to see that Iraq's efforts to reach new witnesses continue unhindered. These witnesses are of great importance to help locate new potential burial sites. Equally important is the contribution of Tripartite Member states through their provision of satellite imagery analysis.

The handover by Iraq on July 4 of additional missing Kuwaiti property, including a historical sword, two historical copies of the Holy Quran, and items belonging to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information, marks another positive step.

It is hoped that, with persistence, determination and commitment from all, more results will soon emerge.

Mr. President,

To conclude my remarks, let me again emphasize the importance of embarking on a path towards political stability. And let me say it once more: there are solutions.

It is in the power of any Iraqi leader to drag the country into a protracted and deadly conflict, as it is in their power to place the national interest first and lift the country out of this crisis.

Thank you, Mr. President."

UNAMI on Twitter

New York/Baghdad, 04 October 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission

for Iraq (UNAMI), Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: "After today's session in the #UNSC, there is only one conclusion: it is high time for all parties to sit at the dialogue table,

collectively commit to concrete solutions and pull the country back from the ledge".



UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 23 August 2022 - The right to peaceful protest is an essential element of democracy. Equally important is the assertion of constitutional compliance and respect for state institutions. State institutions must operate unimpeded in service of the Iraqi people, including the SJC.

UNAMI calls on all protesters to leave the IZ and vacate governmental buildings, urges maximum restraint

Baghdad, 29 August 2022 – The United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) calls on all protesters to immediately leave Baghdad's International Zone, to vacate all governmental buildings and to allow the government to continue its responsibilities of running the State in service of the Iraqi people. Today's developments are an extremely

dangerous escalation. State institutions must operate unimpeded in service of the Iraqi people, under all circumstances and at all times. Respect for constitutional order will now prove vital.

UNAMI urges all to remain peaceful, cooperate with security forces and refrain from acts that could lead to an unstoppable chain of events. UNAMI

also calls on all (political) actors to work towards de-escalating tensions and resort to dialogue as the only means to resolve differences. Iraqis cannot be held hostage to an unpredictable and untenable situation. The very survival of the State is at stake.



UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 29 August 2022 – UNAMI: "We call on all parties to refrain from violence immediately. Restraint and calm is necessary for reason to prevail.

Baghdad, 29 August 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: "All parties have a moral imperative to prevent violence and bloodshed."

Baghdad, 30 August 2022 - UNAMI welcomes the most recent moderate declaration by Sayed Muqtada al-Sadr. As stated yesterday: restraint and calm are necessary for reason to prevail.

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

New York, 29 August 2022 - Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on Iraq: "The Secretary-General has been following with concern the ongoing protests in Iraq today, during which demonstrators entered

government buildings. He is particularly concerned about reports of casualties. He appeals for calm and restraint, and urges all relevant actors to take immediate steps to de-escalate the situation and avoid any violence.

The Secretary-General strongly urges

all parties and actors to rise above their differences and to engage, without further delay, in a peaceful and inclusive dialogue on a constructive way forward." - Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General.

Security Council press statement on Iraq unrest

New York, 1 September 2022 - The members of the Security Council condemned the violence throughout Iraq on August 29 and 30 and expressed deep concern over reported deaths and injuries. They took note of the Iraqi government's efforts to restore order.

The members of the Security Council appealed for calm and restraint and welcomed statements by parties calling for all to refrain from further violence. They urged all parties to peacefully resolve their political differences, to respect the rule of law, the right of peaceful assembly, and Iraqi

institutions, and to avoid violence.

The members of the Security Council strongly urged all parties and actors to engage, without further delay, in a peaceful and constructive dialogue to advance reforms and chart a constructive way forward.

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 1 October 2022 - As we remember the victims of October 2019, we reiterate that the right to peaceful protest is essential in a democracy. While we salute Iraqi Security Forces for handling the current protests professionally so far, we call on all to refrain from violence and prevent escalation.

A year after hard-earned elections: the time to act is now

Baghdad, 10 October 2022 - A year ago, Iraqis went to the polls with the hope of charting a new future for their country. It was a hard-earned election, brought about by public pressure from nationwide protests in which several hundreds of young Iraqis lost their lives and thousands were injured. Regretfully, this reaffirmation of democracy was followed by divisive politics, generating bitter public disillusion.

Today, Iraq is running out of time. The protracted crisis is breeding further instability, and recent events are a testament to that. In addition, it threatens people's livelihoods. The adoption of a budget for 2023 before the end of the year is imperative. Relentless efforts were undertaken in the past weeks and months for all actors to embark on a path towards political stability, but to no avail. It is now time for the political class to

assume responsibility and match words with action.

All actors must engage in dialogue without preconditions. Through compromise, they must collectively agree on key outcomes that reaffirm their publicly stated objective, which is to service the needs of the Iraqi people and establish a fully empowered and effective government. The time to act is now.

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 17 October 2022 - United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative (SRSG) for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert: "What can Iraq do with its missing billions USD? Invest in schools, hospitals, energy, water, roads etc. Retrieve these funds and return them to their rightful owners. Support the GoI in its investigations. Protect those who uncover. Ensure accountability." #TheftOfTaxDeposits

UNAMI welcomes confirmation of Iraqi government, reaffirms readiness to support

Baghdad, 27 October 2022 - The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) welcomes the confirmation of Prime Minister Mohammed S. Al-Sudani's government by the Council of Representatives. The swift completion of his cabinet is now an essential next step.

The new government faces many serious challenges that require decisive

action. These will include addressing Iraq's systematic corruption; implementing desperately needed reforms and delivering adequate services to all citizens; diversifying the economy; encouraging the meaningful participation of women and youth; tackling the effects of climate change; ending impunity and making perpetrators accountable; and reining

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

A strong resolve, across the spectrum, to provide concrete solutions will prove vital. The United Nations reaffirms its steadfast commitment to supporting the government and people of Iraq.



The Secretary-General welcomes the formation of a new Government in Iraq

New York, 28 October 2022 - Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General – on Iraq:

"The Secretary-General welcomes the formation of a new Government in Iraq, led by Prime Minister Mohammed S. Al-Sudani. He takes note of the

appointment of women to three of the 21 ministerial positions filled on 27 October. The Secretary-General hopes the remaining two cabinet positions will be filled swiftly.

The Secretary-General urges the new Government to deliver on the long-standing demands of the people of Iraq

for reform, accountability and a better future.

The Secretary-General reaffirms that the United Nations remains fully committed to supporting the Government and people of Iraq." - Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General.

Security

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 22 August 2022 - Our sincere condolences to the families of the victims of the landslide in Karbala. We wish the injured a speedy recovery. As news of the disaster continue to roll in, we appreciate the extensive search efforts by the rescue teams.

Baghdad, 28 September 2022 - We call on all to refrain from intimidation, threats and violence. There are solutions. But for solutions to see daylight, constructive and timely dialogue is essential.

Baghdad, 1 October 2022 - As we remember the victims of October 2019, we reiterate that the right to peaceful protest is essential in a democracy. While we salute Iraqi Security Forces for handling the current protests professionally so far, we call on all to refrain from violence and prevent escalation.

The Secretary-General is following with concern the reported shelling of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

New York, 28 September 2022 - Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General - on Iraq: "The Secretary-General is following with concern the reported

shelling of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, including in civilian areas. He calls for an immediate de-escalation and urges respect for Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the

principle of good neighborly relations." - Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General.



UNICEF condemns attack on school in Koya and calls on all parties to respect the Safe Schools Declaration

Baghdad, 28 September 2022 - Statement attributable to Ms. Sheema SenGupta, UNICEF Representative in Iraq:

"UNICEF abhors and condemns the attack which impacted a school today in a refugee settlement in Koya, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

"At least two children were injured, and

one pregnant woman was killed, according to initial reports. UNICEF extends its sincere condolences to the families and friends of those killed and wishes the injured children a fast and complete recovery.

"Attacks on children and their school facility are unacceptable and can be a grave violation of children's rights.

School facilities should always be a safe place for every child, where children can learn, play and grow to reach their full potential.

"UNICEF reiterates its call on all parties to protect children from all forms of violence at all times and under all circumstances, and to respect the Safe Schools Declaration."

UNHCR is gravely concerned about today's attack, which impacted the Iranian refugee settlements in Koya, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Erbil, 28 September 2022 - UNHCR is gravely concerned about today's attack, which impacted the Iranian refugee settlements in Koya, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The attack is reported to have resulted in a number

of civilian casualties and injuries, including Iranian refugees – among them are women and children.

UNHCR extends our deepest condolences to all those affected.

The attack had reportedly impacted a

primary school where refugee students were present.

UNHCR is in close dialogue with the authorities concerning the immediate needs of the most affected.

UNAMI on Twitter

Baghdad, 29 October 2022 - Our heartfelt condolences to families of those killed by explosion of a tanker near a Baghdad sports field tonight and we wish the injured a speedy recovery. Thorough investigation into cause and circumstances of this horrific incident must lead to accountability and prevention.

Social Cohesion

Promoting community engagement in dialogues around the relationship between health and social cohesion

Baghdad, 28 August 2022 - Social divisions, such as those that can emerge in displacement-affected populations, have a negative impact on social cohesion and community health.

To promote community engagement in dialogues around the relationship between health and social cohesion, IOM Iraq organized a series of workshops with youth in the areas of Baaj (Ninewa Governorate) and Shariaa (Dohuk Governorate). Four highly interactive workshops took place during August; two were attended by 30 young women and tackled topics including access to health services, young women's health and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). The two other workshops were attended by

30 young men and focused on managing emotions, healthy masculinity and prevention of GBV.

Not only did these sessions offer an opportunity for youth to discuss these topics that are seldom tackled in their communities, they also provided platforms for dialogue and interaction between youth from different socioeconomic backgrounds, further contributing towards improving social cohesion in Baaj and Shariaa.

With support from IOM Iraq's health team, the workshops were delivered by local civil society organizations (CSOs), whose staff members were first engaged through a Training of Trainers. The CSOs expressed hopes to lead similar workshops in the future.

These workshops were made possible with support from the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.



Calls for justice and solidarity with Yezidis: Iraqi Muslim religious and tribal leaders issued public statements denouncing ISIL atrocities and violent extremism, urging action



Baghdad, 6 September 2022 - At the occasion of the 8th anniversary of the Yezidi genocide, Iraqi Muslim religious leaders and tribal leaders from Ninewa Governorate issued public statements aiming to support the return of displaced Yezidi survivors to their areas of origin by reaffirming their commitment to support justice for genocide survivors and foster religious and ethnic diversity and co-existence.

On July 28, Shia and Sunni religious leaders* representing Muslim religious authorities from all over Iraq addressed the Yezidi community in a joint statement announced in Mosul – a city regarded as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) capital only five years ago. The statement denounces ISIL's crimes with specific attention to those experienced by the Yezidi community, rejects violent extremism and reaffirms their support to all efforts to provide justice to Yezidis.

The religious leaders outlined practical steps they plan to take in order to embrace ethnoreligious diversity as a source of wealth and foster community cohesion and reconciliation. These include increasing interreligious collaboration to address issues of mutual interest – such as achieving justice for survivors of ISIL's crimes – and bolstering messages of peace and tolerance through networks of imams. "The outcomes of this statement will be a beginning for supporting security, stability and peaceful coexistence," said Director of the Joint Center for Security and Intelligence in Ninewa, Mr. Abdul Khaleq Khigani.

On August 2, following the statement of religious leaders, seventy tribal leaders representing over forty tribes across Ninewa issued their own statement officially declaring their support to Iraqi government authorities in the

identification and prosecution of members of ISIL. The statement affirms the leaders' commitment to the rule of law and denounces ISIL's atrocities, including those perpetrated against Yezidis in particular.

"Genocide against Yezidi component in Sinjar is a disgrace in the history of humanity," said Mr. Ali Omar Gaabo, Governorate Advisor for NGO Affairs in Ninewa, during an event to mark the release of the joint statement. "As the message of religious leaders was delivered a few days ago, your message, tribal leaders, will be delivered today: ISIL do not represent anyone; they are a group of rogue criminals who committed crimes against everyone and that only represent themselves. Tribal sheikhs support the implementation of transitional justice and the accountability of all those whose hands are stained with the blood, honor and money of Iraqis."

Leaders identified actions they intend to take to realize their commitment, including the provision of assistance to security and judicial authorities toward the prosecution of ISIL members who committed crimes, as well as direct collaboration with Yezidi leaders to enable the safe and voluntary return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from all ethnoreligious groups to the Sinjar region. The statement was developed in close collaboration with the Tribal Affairs Office of Ninewa.

Both statements are result of process of local consultations and multi-party dialogues facilitated by Peace Paradigms Organization (PPO), supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

"This is a great achievement, but it is not where the story ends," said Haider Al Ibrahim, CEO of PPO. "A lot still needs to be done to materialize the

terms in both statements, to repair trust and constructive relationships between Yezidi and Muslim communities, as well as between them and local and federal authorities, to push forward the reconciliation agenda in Sinjar."

"The statements of Iraqi Muslim religious and tribal leaders echo the requests of Yezidis and other communities of survivors – that justice and solidarity are the most important pillars of the process of healing and building lasting peace after ISIL's genocide in Iraq," said IOM Iraq's Head of Peacebuilding and Stabilization, Siobhan Simojoki. "We hope that the symbolic power of their words and their planned concrete actions will feed into wider efforts to address the impact of the genocide on Yezidi and other communities."

*The religious leaders who participated to the development of the joint statement represent the following figures, institutions and authorities:

Sunni Endowment in Nineveh

Shia Endowment in Nineveh

Ayatullah Bashir Al Najafi

Ayatullah Ali Al Sistani

Ayatullah Kamal Haidari

Ayatullah Al Hakim

Al Hussein Ataba العتبة الحسينية

Al Kho'ei School in Maissan مكتب المرجع الديني الامام الخوئي

Religious School in Najaf الحوزة العلمية في النجف

Moderation Ullama in Iraq تجمع علماء الاعتدال في العراق

Al Ullama Association in Nineveh

CVE Department of the Sunni Endowment

Anbar Central Reconciliation Committee

Sunni Endowment in Anbar

They also include other distinguished imams and religious leaders from Ninewa, Anbar, Basra, Karbala, Najaf and Baghdad Governorates.

By IOM Iraq



Preventing Violent Extremism is a focus of UNDP Iraq

Baghdad, 22 August 2022 - Preventing Violent Extremism is a focus of UNDP Iraq, especially in communities of return.

Today, UNDP continues a series of meetings to support Iraqi governorate sub-committees in planning their localized PVE plans. These sessions are being held in partnership with the Office of the National Security Advisory, with support from the governments of Japan and Denmark, covering Anbar, Diyala, Najaf, Basra, Ninewa, Karbala and Kirkuk.



“Conflict prevention” workshop held in Basra

Basra, 8 September 2022 - Al-Manahil Association for Women strengthened the capacities of 10 staff members on conflicts life cycle, diagnosing conflicts and conflict prevention tools through a workshop conducted in Basra entitled “Conflict prevention”. The event was done in partnership with UN Women and funded through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.



Prevention of violent extremism (PVE) a key priority for IOM

Anbar, 11 September 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 Fallujah district in Anbar Governorate, IOM Iraq held a four-day workshop with Fallujah government counterparts and community leaders. Participants discussed PVE strategies and worked to identify key drivers of violent extremism in the district.

“Despite the stability, some drivers of

violent extremism can be found in Fallujah. We must work collectively to address these concerns and create a better future for the district,” stated Mr. Juma Al-Mhmaddy, Mayor of Fallujah 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.



Promoting dialogue between youth and local authorities

Basra, 19 September 2022 - Direct and influential communication and dialogue between local authorities and youth plays an important role in empowering young people across Iraq to become involved in their communities.

For the purpose of addressing the

aspirations of youth through local development, UNDP implemented, between July and September, two workshops on designing youth deliberations for young men and women from Missan, Thi Qar and Basra governorates, to encourage them to directly communicate with local

authorities, developing their understanding and raising awareness on their roles in the community as well as building a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with decision-makers.

“These days, youth are considered as the largest segment of society, therefore

Promoting dialogue between youth and local authorities *(continued)*

their influence is powerful because they have the will to make change, and because of that spirit we can see that lots of these youth entering the parliament and various private and governmental sectors. Youth can be encouraged by empowering them to be role models for other young men and women. We must believe in the capabilities of youth and shed light on their projects, empowering them to sustainability influence change for the better,” Russell Abdul Karim, a youth participant from Basra Governorate. This initiative aims at developing models of direct communication and

dialogue between youth and decision-makers in Iraq through the creation of youth committees and advisory councils. Youth in Iraq are directly involved, identifying methods to address their obstacles and to achieve their future goals while building a sustainable relationship with local authorities.

The workshop participants presented their ideas, including their future plans towards achieving a strong relationship with local authorities and ways to sustain effective communication.

This series of workshops is

implemented under the Supporting Recovery and Stability in Iraq through Local Development Programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP.



Encouraging reintegration from Al Hol Camp to Salah al-Din and the Baghdad Belt in Iraq



Baghdad, 28 September 2022 - Following the defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), dedicated efforts are required to address the prolonged displacement of families across Iraq. The Government of Iraq, with support from UN agencies, is working to support the safe return and reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs), including families with perceived affiliation to ISIL.

In support of efforts to end protracted displacement through proactive measures to facilitate access to durable solutions, UNDP and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are working with the Government of Iraq to support the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqi families with perceived affiliation to ISIL, including those returning from Al Hol Camp in North-east Syria.

On 27 August 2022, more than 65 participants – including community and tribal leaders and local authorities from Salah al-Din and the surrounding Baghdad area (Baghdad Belt) - took part in a workshop organized by UNDP and IOM Iraq, in partnership with the Office of the National Security Advisory (ONSA). Representatives from the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MOMD) and other

relevant government agencies also took part in the session, hosted in Erbil. The workshop aimed to foster understanding and enhance community readiness among local leaders to facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqis in their communities of origin. Previous workshops have encouraged similar reintegration in Anbar and Ninewa governorates.

During the workshop, the importance of community acceptance in facilitating the return and reintegration of Iraqi families currently in Al Hol Camp in their areas of origin - in Salah al-Din Governorate and the Baghdad Belt area - was emphasized. This includes an important task for community leaders and local government: taking the lead in supporting and encouraging the reintegration of returnee families, with support from UNDP and IOM.

“In partnership with the Iraqi government, UNDP’s approach to ensuring community readiness for reintegration is focused on setting the stage for holistic and sustainable community returns,” said Nadia Alawamleh, Team Leader of the Social Cohesion Pillar at UNDP Iraq. “As these meetings continue and expand to more Iraqi governorates, our joint efforts for durable solutions are contributing to a vision of reconciliation

and social cohesion across Iraqi communities.”

“Identifying durable solutions for displaced Iraqis, including those with perceived affiliation to ISIL, is crucial and will require support from communities in areas of origin or areas of resettlement. IOM, in partnership with the Government of Iraq (GoI) and in coordination with our partners, will continue to support communities and local authorities in addressing critical social tensions and community-level barriers to the return of internally displaced persons,” said Robert Natiello, Head of IOM Iraq’s Peacebuilding and Stabilization Division.

“This meeting included representation from various components of society including tribal sheikhs, dignitaries, and key stakeholders from Salah al-Din and the Baghdad area,” added Mr. Saeed Al-Jiashi, Strategic Advisor at the National Security Advisory. “The return of women and children from Al Hol Camp to Jeddah 1 Rehabilitation Center and eventually their communities was discussed, including concerns from community members, and this level of coordination and related meetings will continue.”

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

IOM Iraq held a validation session for the Mosul District Prevention of Violent Extremism Plan of Action



Mosul, 05 October 2022 - Violent extremism has led to an immense degree of violence and destruction in Iraq, especially in governorates like Ninewa, with Mosul district particularly affected. Today, potential drivers of violent extremism in Mosul continue to threaten stability and

recovery.

In partnership with the National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism and the Mosul District Government, IOM Iraq held a validation session for the Mosul District Prevention of Violent Extremism Plan of Action. The session

saw the review, revision and approval of key recommendations outlined in the plan, as attendees set the course for the implementation of programmes to address key drivers of violent extremism in the district. The event was attended by the Governor of Ninewa, the Mayor of Mosul and representatives of security forces, civil society organizations and both national and international government and non-government agencies and organizations.

The joint development of this Plan of Action is part of IOM's support to the Government of Iraq to implement its National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism on a local level.

This event was made possible by support from the Government of Canada.

Enhancing community acceptance for reintegration in Iraq

Baghdad, 13 October 2022 - A key priority of the Government of Iraq is ensuring the return of those who have been left behind, isolated from their communities, following conflict with ISIL. A vital part of this is ensuring community readiness for acceptance, including spreading awareness and understanding about families who are perceived to be affiliated with ISIL and remain stigmatized. UNDP Iraq works in partnership with the federal government, local governments, community leaders, tribal and religious leaders, youth, women, and activists to facilitate the return of the displaced and their reintegration back into their areas of origin in the liberated governorates of Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din.

Supported by the Government of Japan, from 17 to 29 September, a series of workshops were held for a total of almost 200 participants from Rommanah and Qaim in Anbar, Tal Afar in Ninewa, and Baiji and Shirqat in Salah al-Din.

Each governorate received extensive training on mediation and conflict transformation through two workshops, the first one targeting community members, local leaders, and women leaders, and for the other targeting local authorities and Local Peace Committees to build their capacities in encouraging reintegration and Preventing Violent Extremism. This two-fold approach ensure all segments of society involved in reintegration process in the community receive the

training and capacity building they need.

"This training is spreading knowledge on the steps to accept returnees for reintegration. Focusing on the skills related to mediation is very important for this process." - Ahmed, Imam and teacher (Attended training on mediation and conflict transformation from 17-18 September from Rommanah, Anbar.)

"These topics are very important for community influencers. The role of women is especially important in awareness raising, since most returnees are women and children." - Mayor Khaled Al Mehana, Rommanah, Anbar (Attended training on mediation and conflict transformation from 17-18 September from Rommanah, Anbar.)

"These workshops build the skills of women to negotiate and find resolutions to community issues, especially related to families returning to their original places. This is a good opportunity to involve women in community reintegration." - Israa, Deputy Manager of a Youth Volunteer Group, Baiji, Salah al-Din. (Attended

training on mediation and conflict transformation from 19-20 September from Baiji, Salah al-Din.)

"We must ensure that there are community members who are properly trained to ensure the safe return and reintegration of displaced families." - Colonel Omar, local police officer. (Attended training on reintegration and PVE from 24-25 September, from Qaim, Anbar.)

"We have encouraged many to return to Tal Afar – both individuals and groups. We must give those who wish to return confidence and encourage other families to come back. Now most of returnees live normal lives, children are back to school, adults get married, and find jobs." - Mayor Qasim Mohammed Sharif, Tal Afar, Ninewa (Attended training on reintegration and PVE from 28-29 September, from Tal Afar, Ninewa.)

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.





Erbil, 22 August 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Erbil with the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, Masoud Barzani. They discussed the political situation in the country, including the need to overcome the ongoing crisis through a dialogue and within the constitutional framework.
Photo courtesy of KDP.



Erbil, 22 August 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Erbil with Deputy Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region, Qubad Talabani. They discussed the current political situation in the country, including the need to overcome the ongoing crisis for the benefit of the Iraqi people.
Photo courtesy of the Media Office.



Sulaymaniyah, 23 August 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Sulaymaniya with the president of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, Mr. Bafel Talabani. They discussed the political situation in the country, including the need to overcome the ongoing crisis through a dialogue.

Photo courtesy of PUK.



New York, 27 August 2022 - Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Head of the Office of Counter-Terrorism met with the newly appointed Deputy SRSG for Iraq and Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, Ghulam Isaczai, to exchange views on strengthening cooperation.



New York, 25 August 2022 - Permanent representative of Iraq to the United Nations, Ambassador Mohammed Hussein Bahr Al-Uloom, met today with Mr. Ghulam Isaczai, newly appointed Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

Photo courtesy of PM of Iraq to UN.



Baghdad, 28 August 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today in Baghdad by the President of the Republic of Iraq, H.E. Dr. Barham Salih. They discussed the protracted political crisis and the urgent need to find solutions.
Photo courtesy of the Media Office of the Iraqi Presidency.



Erbil, 4 September 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Claudio Cordone, met today with Réber Ahmed, Minister of interior- Kurdistan Regional Government. They discussed latest political and security developments in Iraq, obstacles in implementing of Sinjar Agreement and further cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Interior.



Baghdad, 5 September 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Baghdad with Mr. Ahmed Al-Asadi of the National Support Bloc. They discussed the political situation in the country and stressed the need to end the ongoing political crisis through dialogue.

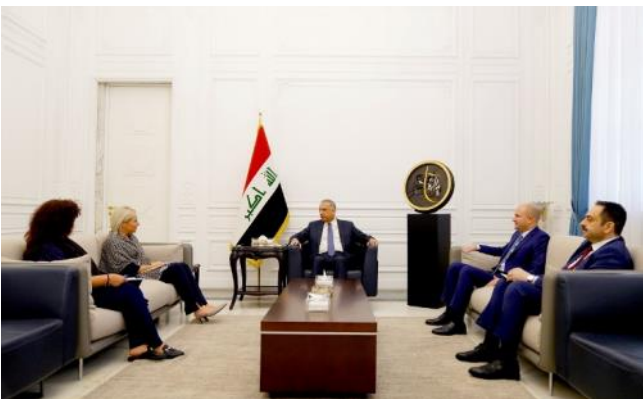


New York, 6 September 2022 - Ghulam M. Isaczai: “Delighted to meet UN SG @antonioгутerres recently in NY and honored to serve as his Deputy Special Rep/RC/ HC in Iraq. I thank him for his guidance and support and look forward to joining @UNIraq team under SRSG Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert’s leadership soon.

UN Photo.



Baghdad, 6 September 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, received today in Baghdad the new Head of the European Union Assistance Mission for Iraq (EUAM), Mr. Anders Wiberg, and Chargé d’Affaires of the European Union Delegation to Iraq, Ms. Agne Glevackaite. They discussed collaboration between the EU and the UN in support of Iraq and its people.



Baghdad, 7 September 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAM), Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today in Baghdad by H.E. Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq. They discussed recent developments in the country and emphasized that engagement and inclusive dialogue will prove vital. Photo courtesy of the PM Media Office.



Readout of the Secretary-General’s meeting with H.E. Mr. Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq
New York, 22 September 2022 - The Secretary-General met with H.E. Mr. Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq. They discussed the political situation in Iraq and the region. The Secretary-General welcomed the Prime Minister’s efforts to overcome the current political crisis through national dialogue. The Secretary-General commended the Iraqi Government’s efforts to de-escalate regional tensions. The Secretary-General offered support to Iraq’s efforts to address environmental issues. UN Photo.



Baghdad, 25 September 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Claudio Cordone, after meeting Ambassador of Italy to Iraq, Maurizio Greganti: "Looking forward to further good discussions with Italy's ambassador and colleagues @ItalyinIraq". Photo courtesy of the Embassy of Italy.



Baghdad, 26 September 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Baghdad with the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Mr. Mohammed Al-Halbousi. They discussed the latest political developments in the country. Photo courtesy of the CoR Media Office.



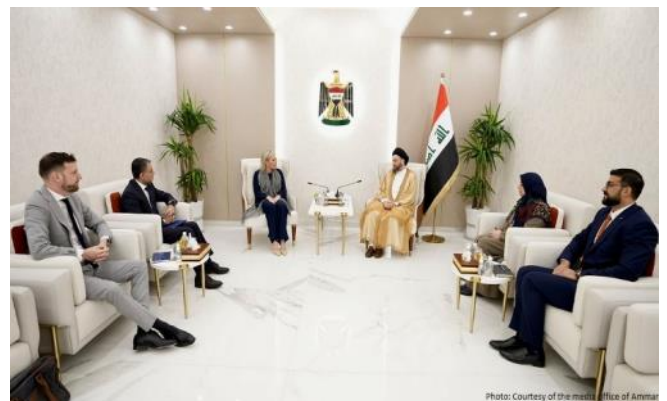
Baghdad, 27 September 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with the Head of al-Seyada (Sovereignty) Alliance, Sheikh Khamis Al-Khanjar. They discussed the latest political developments in the country.



Baghdad, 28 September 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Mr. Claudio Cordone: "Thanks to the Bahr Alolom Forum for Dialogue for arranging an engaging discussion on the climate change challenges in Iraq. Looking forward to further cooperation".



Baghdad, 02 October 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today in Baghdad by the President of the Republic of Iraq, H.E. Dr. Barham Salih. They discussed the current political and security situation in the country. Photo courtesy of the Media Office of the Presidency.



Baghdad, 03 October 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Baghdad with the Head of Al-Hikma National Trend, Sayyed Ammar al-Hakim. They discussed the latest political developments in the country. Photo courtesy of the Al-Hikma National Trend.



Baghdad, 10 October 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennes-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad with the President of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, Bafel Talabani. They stressed the need for an inclusive dialogue to live up to the aspirations of the Iraqi people.

Photo courtesy of PUK.



Baghdad, 10 October 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennes-Plasschaert, accompanied by her Deputies Mr. Claudio Cordone and Mr. Ghulam Isaczai, was received today in Baghdad by the President of the Republic, H.E. Dr. Barham Salih. They discussed the need for Iraq's political leaders to engage in an inclusive dialogue in order to meet the needs and expectations of the Iraqi people.

Photo courtesy of the Media Office of the Presidency.

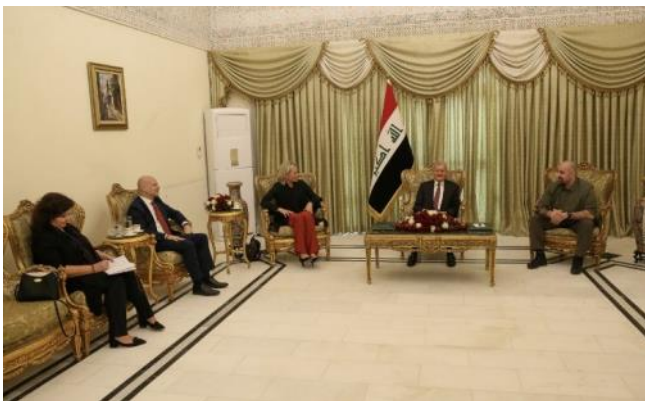


Kuwait City, 11 October 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq (for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance), Claudio Cordone, was received in Kuwait by Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Organizations, Abdulaziz Saud Mohammad Al Jarallah and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Head of the Prisoners of War and Missing Affairs Committee, Mr Rabe'a al-Adsani. Discussions focused on Kuwait-Iraq relations with an emphasis on the file of Kuwaiti Missing Persons and Property. DSRSG Cordone also visited the Kuwaiti Forensics Laboratory with a delegation of the Tripartite Mechanism.



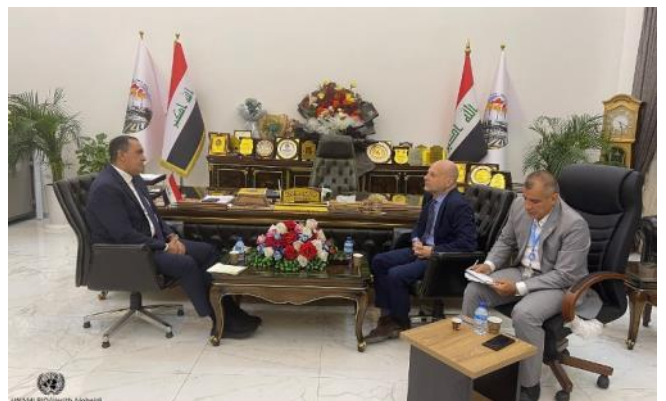
Baghdad, 16 October 2022 - The United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative (SRSG) for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennes-Plasschaert, and Deputy SRSG Claudio Cordone met today in Baghdad with Prime Minister-designate Mohammed S. Al-Sudani. We renewed UN support for Iraq, wished Mr. Al-Sudani success in his mission and urged all actors to ensure formation of an effective government that can address Iraq's many challenges.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Prime Minister-designate.



Baghdad, 17 October 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennes-Plasschaert, and the Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Claudio Cordone, were received today by the President of the Republic, H.E. Mr. Abdul Latif Rashid, to congratulate him on his election and to wish him success. They reiterated United Nations support for Iraq, stressed importance of collaboration of all actors to ensure political stability and economic prosperity.

Photo courtesy of the Media Office of the Presidency.



Kirkuk, 18 October 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq (for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance), Mr. Claudio Cordone, met in Kirkuk today with the Acting Governor, Mr. Rakan al-Jubouri. They discussed the general political, security and humanitarian situation as well as the continued cooperation between the UN and the Governorate.



Kirkuk, 18 October 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq (for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance), Mr. Claudio Cordone, met in Kirkuk today with the Commander of Kirkuk’s Joint Operations Command, Lieutenant-General Ali al-Fireji. They discussed the security situation in the Governorate.



Baghdad, 19 October 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq (for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance), Claudio Cordone, met with the Iraqi Minister of Defence, Juma Anad Sadoon. They discussed the general security situation in the country and cooperation on matters of mutual interest.

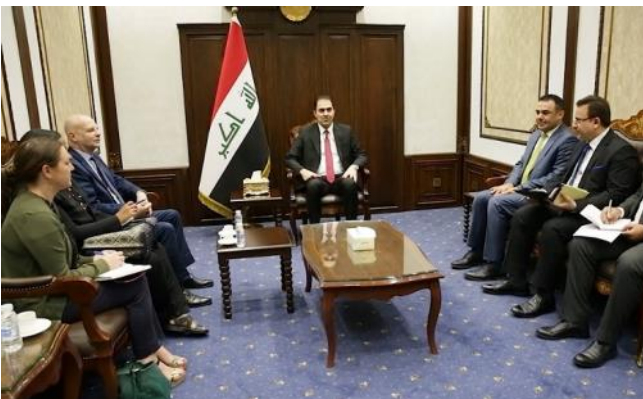
Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Defence.



Baghdad, 22 October 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Claudio Cordone, met today in Baghdad with NATO Assistant Secretary General, Tom Goffus, and the commander of the NATO mission to Iraq, General Giovanni M. Iannucci. They discussed various activities and ways for potential cooperation in areas of mutual interest.



Baghdad, 23 October 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Claudio Cordone, met in Baghdad with the head of the Siyada Alliance parliamentary bloc, MP Shaalan Al-Karim. They discussed the political and security situation in the country and ways to expand cooperation on matters of mutual interest.



Baghdad, 23 October 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq (for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance), Mr. Claudio Cordone, met today with the First Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Mr. Mohsen Al-Mandalawi. They discussed current political situation in the country.

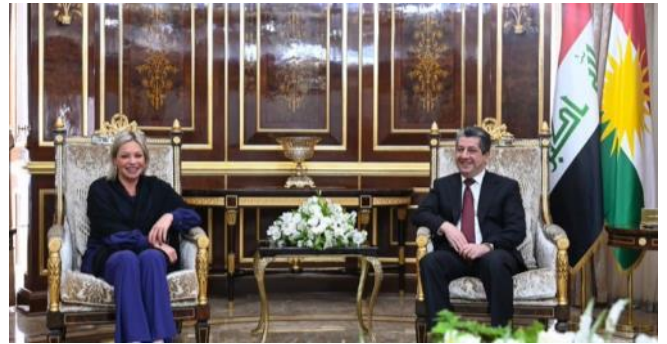


Baghdad, 27 October 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United National Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Claudio Cordone, met with Dr. Yossra Karim Mohsen, Director General, Department of Iraqi Women’s Empowerment. They discussed progress in implementing the second National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325, efforts to advance women’s political participation and opportunities to strengthen further engagement to promote women’s rights.



Erbil, 30 October 2022 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Speaker of the Kurdistan Parliament, Dr. Rewaz Faq. They discussed the current political situation, including the issue of deferred KR parliamentary elections.

Photo courtesy of the KR Parliament.



Erbil 31 October 2022— The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today in Erbil with the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region, Mr. Masrour Barzani. They discussed the current political and security situation.

Photo courtesy of the KRG.

DSRSG Claudio Cordone visits Mosul



Mosul, 25 October 2022 - Today, the Deputy Special Representative of the United National Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Mr. Claudio Cordone, visited Mosul, Ninewa Governorate, where he met with Mr. Najm Al-Jubouri, the Governor of Ninewa. They discussed the current political and security situation in the governorate, including implementation of the Sinjar Agreement. DSRSG Cordone also met

with the Mayor of Mosul, Mr. Ameen Ibrahim Fanash, with whom he discussed the current political situation, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Ninewa and United Nations support to these processes. DSRSG Cordone also visited Bytna Association youth project in the Old City of Mosul. He engaged with youth representatives and welcomed the discourse on priorities and challenges facing the youth in Ninewa Governorate. The DSRSG admired the works of art and cultural artefacts, as a result of youth project initiatives, and expressed appreciation for the originality and creativity of the works on display.

The DSRSG also toured the UNESCO sites of the rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Mosque, Al Tahera Church and Al Saa'a Church under the #RevivetheSpritofMosul initiative, and



commended UNESCO on the progress and ongoing work to restore Iraq's rich cultural sites and preserving the country's heritage. DSRSG Cordone also toured the UNESCO reconstruction site of houses in the Old City of Mosul. Restoring the identities within the communities of Mosul contributes to reconciliation and promotes more just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

UN SRSG meets women activists in Erbil, praises their role, reiterates support for Iraqi sovereignty

Erbil, 30 October 2022 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Erbil today with a group of women from various political parties and civil society organizations in the Kurdistan Region. The group raised its concerns over repeated violations of Iraqi sovereignty and sought stronger UNAMI support in addressing the issue.

The Special Representative welcomed the women's political engagement, commending their activism and sincere commitment to their country's sovereignty and the wellbeing of its people. She welcomed their role as agents of change and emphasized the importance of continuous advocacy for human rights in all fields.

The SRSG further explained UNAMI's mandate, the Mission's good offices and advisory role in support of the Government and people of Iraq on a wide range of issues, including promoting regional peace, human rights and the protection of civilians. Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert reiterated her

support for Iraqi sovereignty, which she said must be respected at all times. She also noted that 'messaging by rockets' is not the way to tackle disputes, rather actual diplomacy and dialogue are key to achieving peaceful and good neighborly relations.



Young women and girls play an important role in peace building

Ramadi, 17 August 2022 - Young women and girls play an important role in peace building and promoting dialogue.

To strengthen their leadership skills and encourage them to be more confident when they discuss peace and conflict resolution, UNFPA with the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) organized recreational activities for young girls in Ramadi. The activities included a learning session about the different forms of gender-based violence and how to establish dialogue to renounce violence and conflicts.



IOM Iraq held a capacity-building training for 34 high-ranking women officials from Sulaymaniah and Halabja

Sulaymaniyah, 23 August 2022 - In Iraq, women rebuilding society need support as they take on gender inequalities in their communities.

On 10 August, IOM Iraq held a two-day capacity-building training for 34 high-ranking women officials from across different ministries from Sulaymaniah and Halabja, located in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The training focused on a range of topics including women's rights; gender equality; legal assistance and housing, land and property rights; mental health in the workplace; and the role of women in the prevention of violent extremism. The training also included a session by Parween Sadiq, a member of the High Council of Women Affairs in the KRI, highlighting the challenges and barriers that disproportionately affect women in the KRI.

"Besides gaining a new understanding of the nature of struggles that women face in Iraq, we now know how to respond to such matters and how to raise awareness about



them in our offices and to our friends and relatives," said Lieutenant Bayan Jamal from the Sulaymaniah Passport Office, who participated in the training

This training was made possible with the support of the Governments of Australia, Canada and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Spreading knowledge about reproductive health and the dangers of child marriage

Baghdad, 24 August 2022 - Adolescent girls who are equipped with the right resources and opportunities are global change makers.

40 UNFPA-trained young girls have reach around 400 other girls in their respective governorates with knowledge about their reproductive health and the dangers of child marriage through multiple educational sessions and fun activities.

Thank you British Embassy Baghdad to giving the opportunity to these girls to become an army of female leaders to change their societies.



DSRSG Cordone: “Efforts should be encouraged to bring women to the table in current and subsequent national dialogue sessions and to participate in finding solutions to address the current political impasse”



courtesy of the Media Office of the Hikma National Movement

Baghdad, 27 August 2022 – The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Mr. Claudio Cordone, participated today at the 14th Annual Islamic Conference to Address Violence Against Women and Girls.

Here is the text of his speech:

“Your Excellency, President of the Republic, Barham Salih,
Your Excellency, Prime Minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi,
Your Excellency, Speaker of the Parliament, Muhammad al-Halbusi,
Your Excellency, President of the SJC, Fayeq Zaidan,
Your Eminence, Sayyid Ammar al-Hakim,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Excellencies, Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps,
Distinguished Civil Society Representatives, Tribal and Religious leaders,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted and honored to attend this significant event, on behalf of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, to mark the “14th Islamic Conference to Address Violence Against Women and Girls”. Please allow me to firstly commend the efforts of the al-Hakim Foundation, under the sponsorship and leadership of His Eminence Sayyad Ammar al-Hakim, for convening this annual event and to reaffirm our shared position on the eradication of all forms of violence and discrimination against women.

This year’s theme: ‘Educating Her is the Renaissance of the Nation’ reminds us of the importance of ensuring girls and women access to education – both

formal and informal – and how that leads to the transformation and progress of communities and the nation.

We welcome the new Iraq National Education Strategy (INES 2022-2031), developed with support of UNESCO and UNICEF. It is a strong framework for national commitments for education and training over the next 10 years. Within this framework, we encourage strengthening support programmes for older girls and young women who have not completed their basic education so that they return and achieve their formal education and training.

Last June, the Government of Iraq jointly with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) convened the first national conference to address early marriage bringing together civil society, tribal and religious leaders, and the international community. Similar initiatives need to be encouraged as one way of ensuring

women and girls’ access to education and the opportunities that this may engender for the future.

Distinguished Guests,

The theme of this conference today also demands that we examine the role that women play in politics, in the economy, in addressing the impacts of climate change and participation in every sector of society. As we all know, Iraq is in the middle of a political crisis. Efforts should be encouraged to bring women to the table in current and subsequent national dialogue sessions and to participate in finding solutions to address the current political impasse. Iraqi women will not fully play a positive role unless they are given a seat at the table and elected to decision-making roles in politics and governance.

Distinguished Guests,

Constructive and inclusive dialogue is the only means to find solutions to any political crisis and to implement much needed reforms in the interests of the country and its people. This includes accelerating adoption of laws that would protect women and other persons at risk, notably the Anti-Domestic Violence Bill which is still pending.

Finally, I would like to assure you that UNAMI and the whole UN family stand ready to support the Iraqi government, state institutions and the people of Iraq in addressing the current political crisis, implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and supporting the country towards a path of peace and prosperity.

Thank you.”



courtesy of the Media Office of the Hikma National Movement

Towards improving social cohesion in Baaj and Shariaa



Baghdad, 28 August 2022 - Social divisions, such as those that can emerge in displacement-affected populations, have a negative impact on social cohesion and community health. To promote community engagement in dialogues around the relationship between health and social cohesion,

IOM Iraq organized a series of workshops with youth in the areas of Baaj (Ninewa Governorate) and Shariaa (Dohuk Governorate). Four highly interactive workshops took place during August; two were attended by 30 young women and tackled topics including access to health services,

young women's health and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). The two other workshops were attended by 30 young men and focused on managing emotions, healthy masculinity and prevention of GBV.

Not only did these sessions offer an opportunity for youth to discuss these topics that are seldom tackled in their communities, they also provided platforms for dialogue and interaction between youth from different socioeconomic backgrounds, further contributing towards improving social cohesion in Baaj and Shariaa.

With support from IOM Iraq's health team, the workshops were delivered by local civil society organizations (CSOs), whose staff members were first engaged through a Training of Trainers. The CSOs expressed hopes to lead similar workshops in the future. These workshops were made possible with support from the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Japanese Ambassador to Iraq visited UNFPA projects in Diwaniya Governorate

Diwaniya, 28 August 2022 – Japanese Ambassador to Iraq, SUZUKI Kotaro, visited today Diwaniyah Governorate with Dr. Rita Columbia, Representative of UNFPA in Iraq.

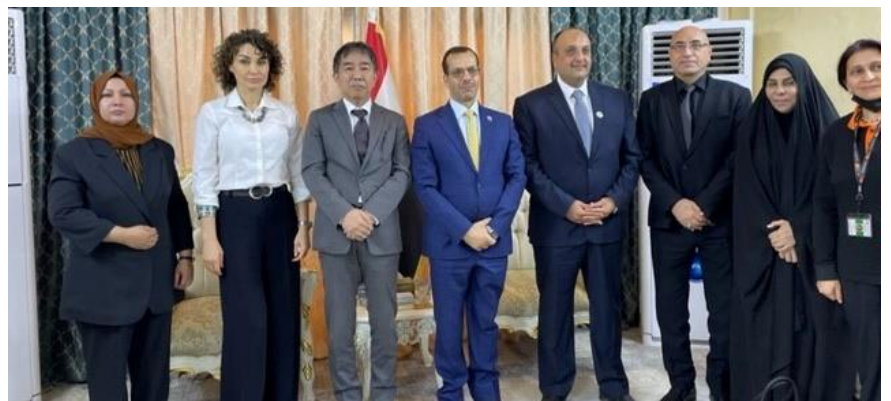
In Diwaniyah, Ambassador SUZUKI observed UNFPA's activities of "Integrated life-saving, Sexual, Reproductive Health and Youth services for returnees, IDPs and host communities (particularly women and girls) in Diwaniyah Governorate", funded by Japan. He also interacted with local project partners and beneficiaries.

During his visit, Ambassador SUZUKI had a meeting with Mr. Zuhair Ali Al Shallan, Governor of Diwaniyah Governorate, and exchanged views together with Dr. Rita Columbia, on the economic and social situation in Diwaniyah. Ambassador SUZUKI also introduced the projects funded by Japan in this governorate.

Diwaniyah Governorate is a unique governorate, which has strength of trade and agriculture, for its geographical advantages.

Ambassador SUZUKI commended UNFPA and Diwaniyah people concerned for their tremendous efforts for the young generation, who are the future of Diwaniyah. He also expressed

his hope, saying that Diwaniyah has potential for further industrial development, including agriculture. The healthy growth of children and adolescent, who could lead the development, is a treasure of Diwaniyah, and that maternal and child health care is indispensable for this purpose.



“A Guide to Effective Report Writing” workshop held in Erbil

Erbil, 4 September 2022 - Accepting Others Organization (AOO) strengthened the capacities of 25 participants working at national women's rights NGOs on report writing and various writing techniques through a workshop conducted in Erbil entitled “A Guide to Effective Report Writing”. The event was conducted

in partnership with UN Women and funded by the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund.



Creative thinking helps young girls to accelerate their development, become proactive and improve their communication skills

Basra, 7 September 2022 - Huda is a facilitator at the Zahraa Youth Centre for Women. She organizes regular sessions on creative thinking for young girls, because she thinks it helps them to accelerate their development, become proactive and improve their communication skills.

15 girls participated in the creative

thinking session last week, where they learned how to think outside the box and find creative solutions facing adolescent girls in Basra.

Thanks to UNFPA and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), young girls have a chance to improve their life skills at the Zahraa Youth Centre.



UNESCO holds a workshop for female journalists on advocacy skills

Baghdad, 7 September 2022 - A workshop on building advocacy skills for female journalists was given by the UNESCO Iraq office for a group of Iraqi female journalists and civil activists from various NGOs. In light of the rising tide of online attacks on Iraqi female journalists and the high-risk rates made worse by the unsteady political situation, this activity takes place within the framework of the MDP Iraq, Multi-International Donors Programme, where the Communications Information Sector of UNESCO Iraq works to improve the level of advocacy among journalistic groups, including females.

UNESCO works with international donors to enhance the working conditions for journalists in Iraq, it also wants to educate journalists, particularly female journalists, about effective advocacy strategies that alter society by addressing the dangers and difficulties they face.

Iraqi female journalists need to know how to handle threats, whether they arise online or offline, according to journalist Raja Hamid. For more than 20 years, silence has characterized the situation for female journalists. She continues, "Thank goodness, UNESCO's efforts improved the situation and placed us on the correct route to confront these threats and problems through group action and

advocacy campaigns.

The recent judicial precedents are the most significant risk that journalist Nour Al-Qaisi identified that needs to be addressed by international organizations. These legal precedents have largely dealt with the information on social media networks, and there is a lot of false and misleading information online that affects female journalists and may be used by the nation's security forces, endangering their safety.

Maha Ali, a participant in the session and one of the College of Media's most recent graduates, said: "I had no idea that female journalists in Iraq faced

such a variety of threats. I am now able to comprehend the realities of the working environment for journalists as a result of this session, and I will stress to all of my graduates' colleagues the significance of supporting advocacy campaigns to defend women journalists.

Through MDP, UNESCO aims to give female journalists and activists courses and trainings that will improve their awareness of dangers and how to manage them. Additionally, it seeks to persuade political leaders to improve the standing of female journalists in Iraqi public policies, laws, and legislation.



UNFPA and the Folke Bernadotte Academy signed a MoU to continue supporting the Youth, Peace, Security Iraqi Coalition to effectively implement the UNSCR 2250

Baghdad, 11 September 2022 - UNFPA and the Folke Bernadotte Academy signed a Memorandum of Understanding to continue supporting the Youth, Peace, Security Iraqi Coalition to effectively implement the UNSCR 2250 - a resolution recognizing the importance of engaging young women and men in shaping and

sustaining peace.

The areas of cooperation ensures capacity-building for the members of the coalition, supporting youth-led initiatives and engaging young people in future projects and activities across the Iraq.



Engaging couples, shifting gender norms



Ramadi, 14 September 2022 - "We love each other. Most importantly, we respect each other and want to see each other grow and flourish. It's important to share respect, equality and power in a relationship," says Firas and Rawya. According to the newlywed couple from Ramadi, this is the key to a healthy, happy and most importantly, safe marriage.

Firas and Rawya got married two years ago. As soon as they first met, they felt a deep connection which blossomed into a strong friendship and, over time, developed into a trusting and healthy relationship. "It was only logical that we get married as there was no doubt that we were a good fit for each other. Most importantly, we also wanted the same things and had similar approaches to life," Firas says. "However, not all relationships are healthy and safe. Many people face different forms of emotional and physical violence in relationships and keep silent about it. It is especially worse when women are unaware of their rights," adds Rawya.

UNDP works closely with couples like Firas and Rawya to reduce intimate partner violence and improve the well-being of survivors. This includes seventeen sessions for couples over three months, covering issues from

creating safe spaces for open communication to addressing triggers of gender-based violence.

The project also includes a component for training community leaders on reducing gender-based violence to shift mindsets between couples and at the community level. Since 2021, 44 couples and 61 community leaders have been trained in Anbar and Diyala. Another ten couples from Diyala will receive this training by the end of this year.

"We learnt about creating safe spaces and listening to each other. We spent time talking about how to bring up children in a safe household. This is the only way we will be able to end the cycles of violence women and girls have faced over generations. After this training, we will ensure that we spread these messages to our friends, family and community," Rawya says.

Firas and Rawya welcome this initiative and are confident that such training sessions will help reduce violence in families.

On speaking to Muhanned and Aya, a young couple from Ramadi who also underwent the training with Firas and Rawya. "This training helped us understand how important it is to share all responsibilities at home. And most importantly, to find safe and

healthy ways to communicate our issues," says the couple.

The curriculum for the training included a range of interactive and informal sessions, including take-home exercises designed to change mindsets and reduce intimate partner violence. It focused on addressing power imbalances, recognizing change as a process, understanding triggers of gender-based violence and building ways to manage triggers.

Lalith al-Khateeb, the main trainer for the sessions, is convinced that creating awareness is one of the most efficient solutions. "We conducted most of the sessions with the couples together. This forced the couples to have open and frank conversations with each other. The content of the training evolves progressively, from recognizing stages of change to taking concrete steps to make those behavioural changes," he says.

With adequate care and attention, such trainings can be implemented safely and effectively, even in contexts like Iraq, where violence is tolerated and common. As Lalith says, "I noticed that the women who attended training spoke with confidence and felt safe. It is important to handle this training with care, sensitivity and understanding of societal conditioning in Iraq."

About: The project is being implemented through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization with support from Canada and Denmark. The couples were selected from a livelihoods skilling project they had participated in through the Facility.

The curriculum is a part of 'Indashyikirwa', a programme led by UNDP globally that aims to reduce intimate partner violence and shift related attitudes, behaviours and social norms. It was initially implemented in Rwanda by CARE Rwanda, Rwanda Women's Network and Rwanda Men's Resource Center. UNDP Iraq adapted this model for returnees affected by the ISIL conflict.

UNFPA offers comprehensive gender-based violence services at a one-stop assistance center in Mosul

Baghdad, 15 September 2022 - The threat of violence and unavailability of quality medical consultation were never easy on women and girls in Mosul.

With funding from KOICA, UNFPA offers comprehensive gender-based violence services along with medical assistance and Family Planning services at a one-stop assistance centre in Mosul. The centre allows survivors of gender-based violence to access holistic care and legal assistance.



Around 250 women and girls attended different IOM supported vocational training activities

Kirkuk, 22 September 2022 - Internally displaced persons and other vulnerable populations across Iraq need continued access to mental health and psychosocial support services.

In Kirkuk Governorate, IOM Iraq's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) team has been supporting displaced families in Al-Jamia neighborhood through conducting different life skills, with vocational trainings, MHPSS awareness sessions, case management services, recreational activities, literacy courses and caregiver sessions.

The activities were designed following community consultations that targeted seven to 50-year-olds. Around 250 women and girls attended different vocational training activities such as sewing, toy making, home and accessories making. These activities were integrated with MHPSS and life skills awareness raising activities.

One of the participants in sewing

activity said, "IOM-MHPSS center felt like home. Coming here made us feel refreshed, gave us positivity, and increased our self-esteem."

Another participant in the toy making activity noted, "I never thought that one day I would enjoy making toys with my mom. This activity helped bridge the gap between me and my mom and was an amazing opportunity for me to meet girls at my age."

These activities took place over three

months; at the end, the participants decided to organize an art and crafts festival in coordination with the Youth and Sport Center in Kirkuk. Local officials, other community members, and the participants' friends and relatives attended the festival and were amazed by the positive changes the participants have made.

These activities were conducted with support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.



UN Women in Iraq conducted a training course for the shelter managers

Erbil, 22 September 2022 - In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, UN Women in Iraq conducted a training course for the shelter managers from Erbil, Duhok, Garman, and Suleimaniyah. Training topics focused on GBV case management, and how to manage GBV case who suffer from mental and psychological symptoms. As well as discussing the challenges that faces the shelter managers and how to overcome these challenges

Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Ms. Zakia Said Salih . in her opening speech, highlighted the need to support shelters in KRI and provide protection services to women who are subjected to violence. Women in shelters are in need



of psychological and legal support services as well as empower economically through providing vocational training courses, said Ms. Salih.

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

The course focused on ways to prevent and respond to gender-based violence successfully completed

Baghdad, 26 September 2022 - UNDP have successfully completed the training of 20 representatives from the Department of Labor and Social Affairs in Anbar, Diyala and Salah al Din. The course focused on ways to prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

The representative will now train their colleagues within the department. This was implemented through the Funding Facility for Stabilization thanks to support from German Embassy Baghdad.



Strengthening the capacities on leadership, negotiation skills, peacebuilding, peace processes and social reintegration

Baghdad/Tikrit/Kirkuk, 29 September 2022 - Zahrat Al Iraq Organization (ZIHR) strengthened the capacities of 25 participants representing ZIHR and other national women's rights NGOs on leadership, negotiation skills, peacebuilding, peace processes and social reintegration in Tikrit.

Information Centre for Research and Development (ICRD) strengthened the capacities of 49 participants representing the Women Empowerment Departments and women teams from Baghdad, SalahAlDin and ThiQar on women's role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution through three workshops conducted in the three governorates.

Civil Development Organization (CDO) strengthened the capacities of 20



participants working at 10 national women's rights NGOs on UNSCR 1325, Iraq NAP, women's rights, democracy, social cohesion and decision making through a three-days' workshop conducted in Kirkuk Entitled "Women

Participation from Conflict Zones in Decision-Making Processes".

The workshops were conducted in partnership with UN Women and funded through the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund.

Women supporting women: sewing in Abu Ghraib

Baghdad, 4 October 2022 - Cycles of war and internal conflict in Iraq have led to massive material and human loss, leaving behind many women to reckon with economic crisis without their primary breadwinners.

As they have done throughout history, Iraqi women have answered the call with strength and tenacity.

"We were displaced from Abu Ghraib district by the sectarian conflict [in 2006] and went to Al-Bayaa area in Baghdad. We returned after the conflict ended in 2010," said Huda, 25. The severe wave of sectarian violence that swept Iraq beginning in 2006 led to the displacement of some 1.6 million families.

"My husband died of illness," she continued, "and the responsibility to support [my children] became very big." Huda has loved sewing and clothing design since she was 12 years old. As she improved her skills over the years, sewing became her source of livelihood. Since her displacement, Huda has worked as a seamstress in both Baghdad city centre and at home in Abu Ghraib district.

"The sewing machine that I use is old – from 2005. I am still working on it and have been thinking of buying one, but I don't have the financial means," Huda explained. "The price of the machine starts at \$250 [and goes up] to \$450. This is too expensive."

After her return to Abu Ghraib, Huda participated in a cash-for-work sewing activity supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to supplement her income. The activity



brought on 20 women from the area to produce uniform vests for local schoolgirls, and took place over 40 days in the Shams Al-Hayat Sewing Workshop.

The Shams Al-Hayat Sewing Workshop is run by Dr. Hayat Ibrahim, a psychology professor at the University of Baghdad who established the workshop towards the beginning of the sectarian conflict in order to support widows and vulnerable women in her community.

"I turned to humanitarian work in order to economically support women so that they can strengthen themselves such that their dignity is not [negatively] affected, as we live in a patriarchal society, and it is difficult for women to work, especially in Abu Ghraib," said Dr. Ibrahim. "We worked on opportunities [for women] to build and help themselves."

When it first opened, the workshop had only ten sewing machines, but today

that number has expanded to 24, and Dr. Ibrahim aims to grow it further, accommodating as many women as possible and supporting them to financially support themselves.

"The benefit from this workshop was financial and psychological. I learnt many things. The more a person grows, the more she needs to learn. She needs to develop herself," said Huda, who took the role of a trainer during the activity. "I loved the young women's new ideas and opinions. It was like exchanging experiences. I transferred my experience to them and showed them how to work on the machine and design. I gained some new designs from them, too. The workshop was very interesting, and we hope that such activities will be repeated."

Like Huda, 52-year-old Ekhlal also participated in the Shams Al-Hayat sewing activity as a trainer.

Displaced from her home in Anbar Governorate's Fallujah district in 2014

Women supporting women: sewing in Abu Ghraib *(continued)*

due to the presence of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) fighters, Ekhlhas remains in Abu Ghraib district with her husband and five children. They have no intention to return home.

“When we fled to Abu Ghraib, we had to rent a house and pay the rent [largely] through my work sewing clothes, since my husband cannot work because he suffers from chronic illnesses,” she said.

Ekhlhas loves sewing and designing clothes. With 20 years of experience under her belt, she runs her own sewing business out of her home using an old sewing machine she has had for ten years now.

“I need a new sewing machine – there are very modern machines [available these days] – but my financial condition does not allow me to buy one as my income barely covers our living expenses,” Ekhlhas explained.

“I know that it’s a tiring profession and requires high concentration, but the work is fun,” she said. For her, sewing is not just a hobby or a livelihood, it’s a

means of improving her mental and emotional well-being – through both the work itself and her exchanges with other participants at Shams Al-Hayat. “Psychologically speaking, [the activity] contributed a lot to catharsis.”

Ekhlhas added: “My relationship with my colleagues is good – we share our ideas, enjoy our work, spend a nice time together and gain new skills. New sewing techniques caught my attention, and we learned how to work as a team and increase high-quality production. This is a valuable opportunity to learn new things.”

Approximately 1,500 school uniforms were sewn during this activity. During September, these were distributed to six girls’ schools in Abu Ghraib’s Al-Shuhada area, for students who are orphans or whose families have little income.

Both Huda and Ekhlhas continue to work as tailors at Shams Al-Hayat and are saving up for new sewing machines. In the wake of the immense destruction left behind after the conclusion of the

ISIL conflict, several factors including the COVID-19 pandemic, volatile oil prices and a decrease in the value of the Iraqi dinar came together to produce a state of widespread economic decline in Iraq. Effects can be felt most acutely by vulnerable populations such as those impacted by protracted displacement. Women in particular face heightened barriers to economic participation and achieving financial self-sufficiency.

IOM Iraq supports efforts to increase women’s economic opportunities and participation, including through Cash-for-Work programmes, which quickly put much-needed cash in the pockets of those most in need, while also contributing to reconstruction and economic revitalization in communities still rebuilding after the ISIL conflict.

This cash-for-work activity was made possible by support from the Government of Germany, through KfW.

By Rafal Abdulateef, IOM Iraq

UNFPA celebrated the International Day of the Girl Child

Baghdad, 8 October 2022 - “Spring Girls” Book is a collection of adolescent girls’ stories expressing their hopes, fears, loves and losses as they navigate a challenging present and uncertain future with determination and grace.

On 8 October, UNFPA celebrated the International Day of the Girl Child and published the “Spring Girls” Book with the Department of Media and Information of Kurdistan Regional Government and Al-Mesalla Organisation and funding from Royal Norwegian Embassy in Amman and Sida - Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete.

The “Spring Girls” initiative aimed to raise awareness among adolescent girls on their rights and provide them with communication and writing skills.



Cash-for-work beneficiaries measure the impact of the project

Dohuk, 10 October 2022 - The Baghdad Association held a follow-up session for cash-for-work beneficiaries, which is considered the last stage the Women Peace and Security Project in partnership with the United Nations Women and with the support of the government of Finland, with the participation of 34 displaced women and girls from Kabarto 1-2 camps in Dohuk, after they worked for 55 days inside the camp activities (planting, painting, and cleaning).

The session aims to measure the impact on women and girls in economic terms, which is represented in gaining a job opportunity and experience in the profession in which they worked during the period of activity, as well as in terms of social aspects represented by changing the daily routine and gaining social relations with other beneficiaries, in addition to the psychosocial support that women received during the activity period by the project staff.



My name is Fatma



Mosul, 14 October 2022 - Fatma remembers the year she turned thirteen – she had just completed her fifth grade when her parents pressured her into an arranged marriage. She had never met him before. No one ever asked for her consent. She was robbed of her childhood and forced to drop out of school. "They didn't ask for my opinion. They were unfair to me."

Fatma, now 49, has four children, the youngest is seven, and the eldest is 26. Originally from east Mosul, she moved to west Mosul after marriage. She lived there for over twenty-eight years until she was displaced during the ISIL conflict.

In 2014, when ISIL took control of Mosul, Fatma and her family fled to Tel Kaif. They walked for over 85 km from Mosul. The idea was to drive to Erbil from there, but taxis were charging them around US\$70. Unable to afford it, they returned to Mosul. After which, they lived under ISIL's control for over three years.

However, in 2017, when the fight to retake the city from ISIL began, she lost her husband. "It was around midday, and we were having lunch in the front yard. During this, there were

airstrikes. ISIL members were stationed outside our home. None of us dared to ask them to move. Suddenly we didn't feel anything, and the house collapsed. My daughter and husband were buried under rubble." Her husband passed away within a few hours of the airstrike. While her three-year-old daughter survived. "I took my daughter to the hospital immediately. She was in a coma for over forty days." Fatma moved her family to Tel Kaif, distraught and devastated by the loss and trauma. Her husband, a daily wagger, was the sole breadwinner. During their marriage, she was not allowed to work. However, after his passing, she was forced to find ways to make ends meet. She leaned on family members, the local mosque, and aid organizations to support her. She also received food rations from the government. "It was a challenging period. We were living on one meal a day."

Fatma was tired of borrowing and depending on others to make ends meet. She decided to take matters into her own hands. She started to explore business ideas and ways to restart her life. This was when she came across a

business development and small-grant opportunity organized by UNDP and World Vision.

During this, Fatma learned how to manage finances, customers and vendors. This was the first time she had learned something new after dropping out of school. She was excited. Confident with her new skills, she used the small grant to open a provision store. She strategically rented a store close to a school and residential area, attracting many customers.

Having tasted independence and self-reliance, this is only the begging for Fatma. Today she joined a savings group. Every week, she saves around US\$14. She hopes to save enough to further expand her business. "With this store, my circumstances have changed. Before, I couldn't even buy fruit for my children. But now, it's different."

When Fatma first opened her store, she would get only twenty customers. Today, her business has expanded, and her loyal customer base has also grown. She receives over 50 to 60 customers every day. "The happiest moment of my life is now. I am living better than in the past. I am meeting my children's needs. It is most difficult when your children ask you for something, and you cannot do it for them."

Fatma feels proud of all that she achieved. As she best puts it, "I live with a strong will and with dignity."

About: The project is implemented by UNDP's Building Resilience through Employment Promotion project, in partnership with World Vision, with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), provided through KFW Development Bank.

“Media Advocate for Women’s Issues” workshop held in Erbil



Erbil, 01 October 2022 - Iraqi Women Journalists Forum (IWJF) built the capacities of 20 journalists from different media institutions in Baghdad and Al-Basrah and SalahAldin on training tools, efficient trainers characteristics, gender sensitivity throughout the training sessions, media campaigns, and advocacy skills through a workshop conducted in Erbil entitled “Media Advocate for Women’s Issues”. The workshop was conducted in partnership with UN Women and funded through the Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund.



UNDP Iraq is supporting Iraqi communities to contribute to the implementation of the second National Plan for UNSCR 1325 (2000)

Kirkuk, 4 October 2022 - This year is the 22nd anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325(2000) on Women, Peace and Security.

UNDP Iraq is supporting Iraqi communities to contribute to the implementation of the second national plan for Security Council Resolution 1325(2000) on Women, Peace and Security.

In partnership with the Iraqi Network for Resolution 1325 and the Sustainable Development Network (TAM), UNDP held two dialogue sessions in Diyala and Kirkuk, with the

participation of 62 representatives from community police, the National Human Rights Commission, local civil society organizations, as well as representatives of media institutions and youth groups, to consider the most effective ways to strengthen the role of women's groups in monitoring the implementation of the national plan in innovative and sustainable ways. The discussion focused on enhancing the national agenda for security and peace, and defining national priorities that take into account the needs of Iraqi women.



UNWomen commemorates the 22nd Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and launches the ministerial and localized sectoral plans for the Iraq National Action Plan (INAP) in partnership with the DWE



Baghdad, 30 October 2022 – The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (UNWomen) in Iraq celebrated the 22nd anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and launched the ministerial and localized sectoral plans in partnership with the Iraqi Department of Women Empowerment at the General Secretariat at the Council of Ministers. The event was initiated by opening remarks from Dr Yusra Mohsen, Director General of the Iraqi Women Empowerment Department, where she expressed her gratitude towards the long-standing partnership with UNWomen and the achievements that have been made with regard to INAP implementation and the development of the sectoral and localized plans. She also highlighted the importance of the NAP concerning supporting the

implementation of the Iraqi women strategy.

MP. Ebtisam Al-Hilali, Head of the Women committee in parliament, stressed the importance of advancing women's political participation and the WPS agenda in Iraq through the active and meaningful participation and involvement of women. She also added that there are more women members in the parliament and that the presence of women committee is essential and beneficial to ensure that women's and girls' rights are always maintained as the highest priority.

Dr Khanzad Ahmad, Secretary general of the High Council of Women and Development in Kurdistan, highlighted the tremendous work that has been done on the NAP in Kurdistan and added that civil society engagement and the involvement of all stakeholders and the international community is

crucial for the successful implementation of the NAP.

Dina Zorba, UNWomen Representative to Iraq and Yemen, highlighted that this success could not have been possible without the commitment, ongoing partnerships, and continuous and active engagement of all stakeholders in formulating the National Action Plan (NAP). She expressed gratitude towards the strong partnership with the DWE and the Swedish and Finland Government for their continuous support and trust in UNWomen. She added that we need to strengthen further our collaborations and join efforts to build on this success.

Mr. Matti Lassila, Ambassador to Finland, congratulated the government of Iraq and UNWomen for this achievement and highlighted that Finland has made UNSCR1325 its priority to promote inclusive and equal gender societies. He also elaborated more on the importance of sustainable economic growth and to ensure that women are involved in all developmental aspects.

Civil society representatives from around the country also participated in the event and highlighted their vital role in monitoring and implementing the National Action plan and their plans to further support the WPS agenda. Speakers included: Dr Nebras Al Mamory (Head of Iraqi Women Journalist Forum), Dr. Nada Al Jbouri (Head of Iraqi Women and Future), Wailet Georges (Head of Iraqi Minorities Council), Eman Abdulrahman (Head of Women Leadership Institute) and Mr. Haider Al Awadi (Member of the 135 Network).

On the anniversary of UN Security Council resolution 1325, UNAMI urges Iraqi women parliamentarians to unite to bolster their political influence

Baghdad, 31 October 2022 – Despite an unprecedented showing in the current parliament, for women to win the leverage they seek in Iraq’s male-dominated political system it is essential that they set aside partisan interests and unite in pursuit of better representation and stronger influence across the spectrum.

Today marks the 22nd anniversary of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), a landmark resolution which calls for women’s participation and representation in political processes and conflict resolution; protection of women and girls from gender-based violence; and strengthening women’s rights under national laws, among other key elements.

This anniversary comes at a critical time for the women of Iraq. A government was formed last week which includes three women among its

21 members. Iraqi women hold 96 seats in the Council of Representatives (CoR), close to an impressive one-third of the legislature and above the 25 percent bottom line quota.

The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, said that the increased representation of women, while very much welcome and encouraged, is not enough. Irrespective of their political affiliation, women parliamentarians need to unite on issues that matter most to women, and their representation in senior government positions, political parties and other positions of influence must be bolstered. Furthermore, the new Iraqi government can benefit from women’s strength in parliament to advance its programme of reform and development, and this in turn accords women further political leverage.

The SRSR urged parliamentarians –

women and men - to fully address women’s concerns and interests in future legislation to positively impact the lives of ordinary Iraqi women and girls. This should include the passing by the CoR of the Anti-Domestic Violence Bill which has been pending for a number of years.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert further stated: “We renew our commitment to advancing the tenets of Security Council resolution 1325, including by ensuring that the voices of Iraqi women are heard and by promoting the creation of an enabling environment for their full, equal and meaningful participation and representation in all areas of society. The new government can aid this progress by advancing the implementation of the second National Action Plan on 1325. Everyone will benefit from a stronger representation of women in society.”

International gender group met in Baghdad



Baghdad, 31 October 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary - General for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance, Mr. Claudio Cordone met today, on the 22nd Anniversary of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, with members of the international gender group during which they discussed ongoing and planned initiatives to advance implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. They discussed joint advocacy and engagement with the new government, parliamentarians and civil society actors on issues around addressing gender-based violence, promoting legislations to protect women’s rights and supporting leadership training programmes for women.

Human Right

Capacity building on human rights topics

Basra, 22 August 2022 - UNAMI Human Rights Office hosted a roundtable discussion today with participants from Basra, Muthanna, Dhi Qar, Maysan and from IHCHR. Participants discussed the OHCHR Regional Meeting in Doha on the International Decade for People of African Descent.





Nasiriyah, 22 August 2022 - The UNAMI Human Rights Office, in coordination with Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR) in Dhi Qar, held a roundtable discussion today in Nasiriyah with 15 police investigators on the findings and recommendations of its recent report, "Human Rights in the Administration of Justice in Iraq: legal conditions and procedural safeguards to prevent torture and ill-treatment." The Report is available at:
EN: <https://bit.ly/3QZqQ9f>
AR: <https://bit.ly/3Ahvt7Y>



Muthanna, 23 August 2022 - The UNAMI Human Rights Office, in coordination with the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights in Muthanna held a roundtable discussion in Samawa with 19 participants from civil activists, women's leaders, the Family Protection and Community Police units, journalists, Samawa Health Directorate, and the Women Empowerment unit of the office of the Governor, on prevention and accountability for killings of women in the southern governorates of Iraq. Participants exchanged ideas to strengthen accountability mechanisms for the prevention of violence against women and girls, including protecting their right to life, which is challenged by honor killings.



Muthanna, 23 August 2022 - The UNAMI Human Rights Office held a roundtable discussion in Muthanna with participants from the Iraqi Bar Association and the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR) in Samawa on accountability in cases of torture. Participants discussed how Iraq's human rights courts could be used to prevent torture and promote accountability. Participants exchanged their experiences in filing torture complaints before the public authorities and discussed the challenges they faced, outcomes, success stories and recommendations.



Baghdad, 31 August 2022 - Dr Hisham Al-Alawi, Head of Human Rights Directorate, Iraqi MOFA, met with Ms. Danielle Bell, Chief of Human Rights Office at UNAMI. They discussed upcoming reports on the status of Human Rights in Iraq and the Action Plan related to CAACs.



Baghdad, 8 September 2022 - Today, the Human Rights Office of UNAMI presented at a capacity building workshop for young human rights defenders organized by the Gulf Centre for Human Rights in Baghdad. Among other topics, participants discussed human rights protection mechanisms and the role of the United Nations as well as civil society in the promotion and protection of human rights in Iraq.



Baghdad, 8 September 2022 - UNAMI's Human Rights Office held an interactive workshop today in Baghdad with young Iraqi artists for a project organized by NGO Beit Tarkib, and supported by the Embassy of the Netherlands in Iraq. The artists are developing conceptual art on various human rights issues, using multiple mediums, to be displayed on Baghdad's Rasheed Street for International Human Rights Day in December.

UNAMI HRO had a roundtable discussion with the High Judicial Council and Iraqi Bar Association delivering on accountability for corruption and upholding fair trial rights lessons learned in Iraq's Judiciary

Baghdad, 10 September 2022 – UNAMI Human Rights Office had a roundtable discussion with the High Judicial Council and Iraqi Bar Association delivering on accountability for corruption and upholding fair trial rights lessons learned in Iraq's Judiciary.

Here is the text of the opening remarks by Ms. Danielle Bell, Chief, Human Rights Office, UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI):

“Esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Thank you for joining us in today's roundtable discussion to take stock of how corruption cases are addressed by the Iraqi justice system. This event forms part of an important collaboration between the High Judicial Council, UNDP, the EU and UNAMI and is aimed at strengthening the Iraqi justice sector's response to corruption.

Comparative experience shows that addressing corruption cases is challenging for any justice system. High level corruption cases stand out for their complexity, the need for achieving cooperation from different

institutions in collecting evidence, their linkages with power structures and the reluctance of witnesses to testify.

As UN partners in this project, we thank you for your trust in working with us on the important question of how Iraq can best address corruption.

We convene today in a closed-door dialogue and frank exchange of experience on challenges and opportunities in investigation, prosecution and adjudication of corruption cases. We host this dialogue at the beginning of our trial observation program for corruption cases, because we seek your guidance at the outset of this program on where you see strengths and weaknesses of the justice system in addressing corruption cases.

The HJC has endorsed our work to conduct trial observation and granted our team access to investigative and trial hearings. The empirical data we are collecting in the program allows us to analyze the process and develop recommendations to you as well to support initiatives of our international and UN partners.



We aim to discuss these findings and recommendations of our trial observation work with you regularly. To this end, we suggest that today's meeting is the first in a series of meetings to speak about the corruption response of the judiciary.

Secretary General António Guterres said: “Corruption threatens the well-being of our societies, the future of our children and the health of our planet. It must be fought by all, for all.” I thank you for standing up against corruption and hope we in the UN can effectively support you in this aim.”

Economic, social and cultural rights are fundamental building blocks for achieving sustainable development



Erbil, 25 September 2022 – Access to adequate food and water, housing, education, health, a decent job, and freedom to practice one's culture are basic human rights that are essential to sustainable development.

To empower relevant stakeholders to monitor legislative policies and budget

processes that can guarantee these rights, the UNAMI Human Rights Office (HRO) in Erbil conducted a one-day training on 20 September 2022 for 27 men and women comprising journalists and civil society organisations working on humanitarian, development, women,

and girls' rights issues.

Annette Lyth, UNAMI's Senior Women's Protection Adviser in Erbil, said that the objective of the training was to empower participants with the right tools for monitoring laws enacted to ensure citizens access their economic, social, and cultural rights.

“You need the required knowledge and skills for monitoring the fundamentals of economic, social and cultural rights as well as identifying its violations. This training will also provide you with the right tools to hold meaningful engagement with the government and other actors that support and enhance protection of these rights that advance the sustainable development goals, ensuring that we leave no one behind.”

Tarah Saadaldin, a Monitoring and Evaluation officer at the Emma Organisation for Human Development, works on monitoring sexual and reproductive health rights for females within youth groups in schools. “There is a lack of transparency of information for these rights, and we would like to

Economic, social and cultural rights are fundamental building blocks for achieving sustainable development *(continued)*

use the tools we acquired today to provide that accessibility to information for vulnerable populations”, Ms. Saadaldin said in an interview at the end of the training.

To achieve these rights, civil society organisations and the media will need to foster an effective and functioning alliance to network and collaborate on monitoring the rights of citizens.

Surkew Mohammed, Editor-in-Chief of Peregraf News Website, an independent online news outlet,

appreciates the importance of partnerships in monitoring and identifying human rights violations. He said that his institution has mounted a lawsuit against the three presidencies (KR President, KR Prime Minister and KR Speaker of the Parliament) demanding access to information regarding the fiscal budget. Mr. Mohammed shared his experience with the other participants on how to advocate for the right to obtain information.

He said, “Today’s workshop was crucial to build sustainable partnerships between the civil society organisations and the media so that we can work together to have better awareness on how to engage with the authorities to enhance transparency, respect for human rights, and the rule of law.”

Written by Celia E.B.T. Dadson.
Interviews translated by Rashwan Salih (UNAMI PIO)

UNAMI HRO delivered a training to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior in Basra on the due process rights of defendants under Iraqi and international law



Basra, 26 September 2022 - UNAMI’s Human Rights Office delivered a

training today to the Iraqi Ministry of Interior in Basra on the due process

rights of defendants under Iraqi and international law. Eighteen Ministry of Interior senior officers attended the training, which focused on the Iraqi and international human rights law framework protecting the right to legal counsel, the right to remain silent and the right to prepare an adequate defense. The training also covered the legal framework governing legitimate arrests, the prohibition of torture and the right of detainees to be brought before an investigative judge within 24 hours from their arrest. UNAMI Human Rights Officers discussed the Iraqi Criminal Procedure Code, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, the Convention against Torture and the International Convention for Protection from Enforced Disappearance. The training also touched on strengthening the administration of justice by combating corruption.

UNAMI HRO discussed accountability for gender related killings

Duhok, 28 September 2022 - UNAMI Human Rights Office held a consultative workshop in Duhok, Kurdistan Region, to discuss accountability for gender related killings. Participants from NGOs, women’s organizations and civil society 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.



Taking stock of progress in the implementation of the Regional Plan of Human Rights in Kurdistan Region one year after its launch



Erbil, 6 October 2022 - The Office of the Coordinator of International Advocacy (OCIA) in the Kurdistan Region held a one-day conference in Erbil to take stock of the progress in the implementing the Regional Plan of Human Rights one year after its approval by the Presidency of the KRG Council of Ministers and to identify the additional steps required to address persistent challenges in the coming months and years. In his opening address, the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region, Mr. Masrour Barzani, stressed the importance of “working with international partners to ensure that Kurdistan Region is fully

committed to international standards of human rights, including freedom of the press.”

Mr. Christian Ritscher, Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD, underlined the importance of the Regional Action plan for UNITAD’s work, in particular relating to administration of justice matters and procedural safeguards.

In opening remarks on behalf of the UN Iraq SRSG, Chief of UNAMI’s Human Rights Office Ms. Danielle Bell commended the efforts of the Kurdistan Regional Government in recognizing the importance of human rights and freedoms and the role they play in peace and development. In the past

year, collective efforts have focused upon addressing issues related to freedom of expression, promoting human rights in the administration of justice, accountability and ending violence against women.

She added that “One year into the implementation of the Action Plan, I reiterate the unwavering support of UNAMI’s Human Rights Office towards its continued implementation. We encourage all relevant stakeholders to join efforts, to identify areas of shared interest, and to collectively support the Action Plan’s implementation in a coordinated manner.”

Also addressing the conference, the Head of the Iraq Office of UNODC, Mr. Ali Elbereir, underlined UNODC’s support to the implementation of the Action Plan, while highlighting that “improving policing and investigations is key to reaching SDG Goal 16 and to ensure that we leave no one behind by ensuring access to justice and protection of human rights for all.”

The conference also was attended by a Representative of the Iraqi Prime Minister, KRG’s Deputy Prime Minister, ministers, regional and federal government officials, the Head of the Judicial Council, diplomats, UN officials, and a number of NGO directors.

IOM, MOLSA sign Cooperation Agreement to support implementation of Yezidi Survivors Law

Baghdad, 10 October 2022 — Today, the General Directorate for Survivors Affairs under the Iraqi Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) signed a Cooperation Agreement with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), aimed at supporting the implementation of the landmark Yezidi Survivors Law (YSL), adopted in 2021.

The YSL established a framework for providing financial support and other forms of redress to survivors of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant’s (ISIL) atrocities against Iraq’s Yezidi, Shabak, Christian and Turkmen communities. Though progress has been made on this front by the Government of Iraq, Iraqi civil society and international organizations, survivors continue to live in immense need.

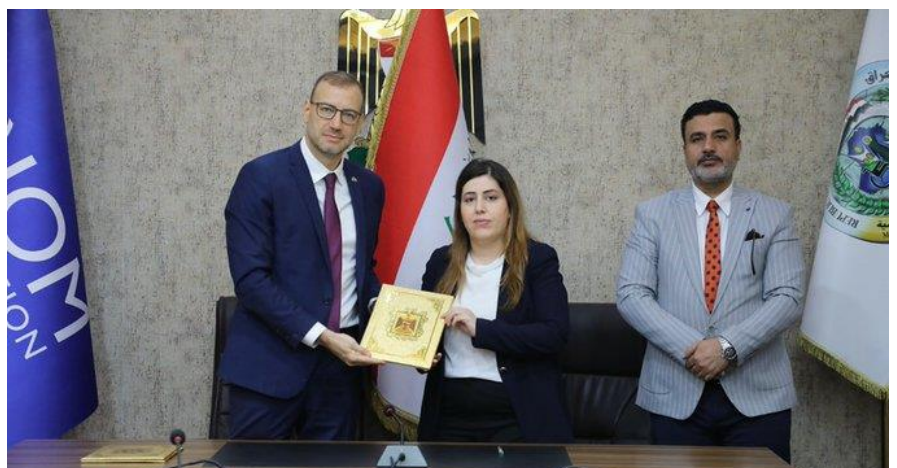
The Directorate is mandated with implementing the YSL through the provision of individual reparations and the coordination of other transitional

justice measures to address the legacy of ISIL’s genocide and crimes against humanity.

Under this Agreement, IOM Iraq will support the implementation of activities to strengthen the Directorate’s capacity to fulfill its mandate, including through capacity building, technical guidance, material

assistance and outreach among survivors, affected communities and the general public. Signatories also commit to exchanging expertise and best practices in the field of reparations and transitional justice.

The signing of this Agreement is in line with an already-established close partnership between the Directorate



IOM, MOLSA sign Cooperation Agreement to support implementation of Yezidi Survivors Law *(continued)*

and IOM Iraq in the preparation of the application process for reparations under the YSL.

“IOM Iraq remains committed to working with MOLSA and the Directorate to support a trauma-informed, survivor-centred process that helps reparations reach survivors in a timely and efficient fashion,” said Mr. Giorgi Gigauri, Chief of Mission for IOM in Iraq. “Many survivors remain in protracted displacement, and those who have returned home are not significantly better off. By building

capacity at the national and local levels, we can together contribute to durable solutions for these displacement-affected survivors.”

Director General Sarab Alias Barakat said: “Today, we – the General Directorate for Survivors’ Affairs of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs – are happy to cooperate with IOM Iraq. Since the YSL was enacted, IOM has supported the Directorate by providing technical expertise, training and material and logistical support. If had it not been for IOM’s support, the

Directorate would not have reached this progress in the implementation of the YSL. We look forward to further cooperation in the future.”

Survivors can apply to receive benefits under the YSL by submitting an application directly through the Directorate’s online portal, or by scheduling an in-person meeting at the Directorate’s main office in Mosul or any of its branch office locations and submitting an application during the meeting.

Creative tools for human rights advocacy: Peace narratives through digital storytelling and filmmaking

Erbil, 14 October 2022 - From 10 – 15 October, as part of the Peace Narratives Project’s implementation, the Human Rights Office of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) launched the first of five participatory workshops aimed at training youth activists to engage creatively within the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in Iraq and promote human rights through cartoons, digital storytelling, and short films.

Through the “Peace Narratives Project”, UNAMI and OHCHR previously commissioned a report and mapping that highlighted the role of Iraqi youth as catalysts for positive change in building sustainable peace. The project presented examples of youth-led human rights initiatives from different communities across the country and illustrated the essential role played by Iraqi youth in promoting social cohesion and protecting the human rights of religious minorities. By documenting narratives of youth-led volunteer projects which cut across community boundaries, the project sought to encourage increased youth representation and participation in the promotion of peace and security as envisaged by Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.

In continuance of this successful project, UNAMI/OHCHR will convene five training workshops with youth across Iraq to explore creative tools for human rights advocacy, such as ‘Cartoons’, ‘Digital Story Telling’ and ‘Participatory Film Making’. Using creative media encourages participants to tell their own stories to a national audience, allowing their testimonies to



be integrated in investigation processes and their voices to be heard by policy makers.

UNAMI believes that human rights defenders, activists and organisations will achieve greater impact if they can go beyond telling stories of others and empower people to share their own experiences. With the accessibility and vitality of social media, human rights activists from diverse backgrounds can self-advocate, sharing their own engaging stories, reach out to the wider community and start important conversations on minority rights. In this way, narratives can be more authentically communicated.

The trainings focus on how to tell a powerful story that can trigger empathy, urgency, and inspire tangible change, based on the conviction that art can transform underlying social norms. The workshops will empower participants to design and develop their own advocacy strategies and public campaigns, with a particular focus on storytelling for human rights through a variety of mediums and methodologies.

The first workshop held in Erbil this week worked with participants to produce short digital films that can be used in advocacy to promote and protect the rights of religious minorities, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.

The immediate outputs of the training include:

- Youth trained in new creative ways to share their human rights work. Focused primarily on Cartoons, Digital Storytelling and 2-minute Short Films.

- Youth empowered to reach wider audiences and advocate for change.

- Training resources on creative media advocacy that can be shared on the Peace Narrative website

- New advocacy resources that can be shared nationally on the project website

- Networks of youth activists for the protection of human rights of religious minorities developed and strengthened.

By UNAMI Human Rights Office.

At the request of activists a training on digital security was organized in Basra

Basra, 22 October 2022 - The UNAMI Human Rights Office partnered with INSM Network to provide practical training to a group of 31 human rights defenders, activists, journalists, bloggers, and lawyers on how to maneuver safely through cyberspace. The training focused on improving digital security and increasing knowledge and awareness of digital rights in Iraq, as part of the UN's Cybersecurity Awareness Month. Participants were introduced to practical tools to strengthen the safety of their digital environment, including

communication, data storage, as well as protection from hacking, among other topics. UNAMI Human Rights Office Team provided a session on how to recognize and counter hate speech online, in order to promote spaces where diversity is promoted and respected.

This event was delivered at the request of activists for training on digital security. It is part of a larger digital human rights education and advocacy project; further such workshops will be held in other governorates of Iraq in the upcoming months.



Living with Disabilities

UNFPA conducts regular capacity-building and recreational activities to empower young people to lead their lives and be active citizens

Baghdad, 13 September 2022 - Full inclusion of young persons with disability means equal access to improved sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) and gender-based violence (GBV) services, civic engagement, and life-skills education.

In Al-Hadbaa Youth Centre, UNFPA with support from Finland conducts regular capacity-building and recreational activities to empower young people to lead their lives and be active citizens.



IOM continues support to deaf people in Iraq

Baghdad, 23 September 2022 - Deaf people in Iraq are made to feel marginalized due to the countless communication barriers they experience every day. On the International Day of Sign Languages, IOM Iraq joins the deaf community to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and other sign language users.

With generous support from the Government of Australia, IOM Iraq continues to strengthen its approach to disability inclusion. The new report 'Deaf People in Iraq, A Cultural-Linguistic Minority: Their Rights and Vision for Inclusion' aims to shine a light on their challenges and successes. It is available at:

<https://iraq.iom.int/resources/deaf-people-iraq-cultural-linguistic-minority-group-their-rights-and-vision-future>



UNESCO Iraq and the High Judiciary Council discuss the cooperation framework on the safety of journalists and freedom of expression

Baghdad, 1 September 2022 - UNESCO Iraq Communication and Information Officer, Dhea Subhee, discussed with Judge Faiq Zeidan, the President of the High Judiciary Council, the cooperation framework on the safety of journalists and freedom of expression, within the "Breaking Silence" project funded by the



UNESCO Iraq hosts Supreme Judicial Council to update journalists safety indicators and end impunity

Baghdad, 15 September 2022 - UNESCO Iraq Office and the High Judiciary Council of Iraq participated in the Arab region consultation on the 10th Anniversary of the UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

In a special session on the safety of journalists, the Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council, Judge Hatim Jabbar, presented a detailed presentation on the procedures of the judiciary in the context of the work of the National Committee for the Protection of Journalists developed by UNESCO Iraq in 2016.

In this regional conference of Arab States and North Africa - Iraq presented its model of safety and anti-impunity among four countries that presented their models to ensure the safety of journalists and put an end to impunity and highlighted the protection and safety aspects of journalists from Government authorities, reviewed law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. Journalists and human rights activists from Iraq have contributed to display a variety of risks and difficulties they face, which may not be covered in the action plan adopted by the United Nations ten years ago.

Crimes Against Journalists Unit, Digital Reporting Platform for Journalists, Hotlines for Protection of Journalists, Supreme Court decision to mandate 22 judges in appeals courts to look into cases and prevent the arrest of journalists for reasons related to broadcast wages or licensing Working for media institutions were some of the most prominent achievements mentioned by the Iraqi

judiciary representative Shakra. UNESCO also plays its role in supporting these achievements through the Iraqi National Mechanism for Journalists' Safety, established by the UNESCO Office in Iraq in 2018.

The Iraqi judiciary is taking part for the first time in the update of "safety indicators and evasion indicators for crimes committed against journalists", the conference comes after the regional consultations held in mid-May this year in Rabat sponsored by UNESCO and attended by a representative from Judiciary of Iraq.

The Media and Communications Authority, the Ministry of the Interior and the Iraqi Journalists' Union are among the governmental institutions that participated in the discussions and contributed to presenting their insights to update global indicators of journalists' safety and combating impunity.

This activity comes in the context of a

number of UNESCO projects, such as the Breaking the Silence Barrier project funded by the Dutch Embassy in Iraq, and the MDP multi-donor program to support free expression and journalists' safety.



UNESCO appreciates the Iraqi judiciary's prompt action to support freedom of the press and freedom of expression

Baghdad, 6 October 2022 - The High Judiciary Council of Iraq responds to UNESCO's plea concerning a ruling made by a governorate's administrative

authority that prevented journalists from working without a permit. The HJC addressed the relevant authority and instructed them not to obstruct

journalists. UNESCO appreciates the Iraqi judiciary's prompt action to support freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

UNITAD on Twitter

Baghdad, 21 August 2022 - On the International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to Victims of Terrorism, UNITAD salutes the bravery of all victims and survivors who remain resolute in their plight for justice and accountability. UNITAD continues to place victim and survivor communities at the heart of its investigations, in order to promote accountability globally and seek justice for all those who suffered #ISIL international crimes in Iraq.

Baghdad, 22 August 2022 - This year's International Day Commemorating Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief, we salute the dedication and perseverance of the many victims and survivors of ISIL's international crimes against all Iraqi communities.

UNITAD is dedicated to work with all communities affected by ISIL international crimes. The Team encourages these communities' efforts to seek justice and see accountability taking shape globally for the atrocities that befell them at the hands of ISIL perpetrators.

Baghdad, 30 August 2022 - UNITAD followed with concern the escalation in Baghdad and other governorates and the loss of Iraqi lives. We reiterate calls for de-escalation and restraint to spare further bloodshed. Inclusive dialogue is the only way to protect Iraq, its people and institutions and the state of law.

UNITAD discusses 20 important files with the Iraqi News Agency



By Harith Al-Abadi, INA

Baghdad, 2 September 2022 (INA) - The Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crime Committed by Da'esh (UNITAD), elaborated its mission and tasks in Iraq, while revealing the most prominent results achieved regarding a group of files, including mass graves, the Tikrit Air Academy massacre (Speicher crime), genocide against the Yazidis and other crimes committed by the terrorist gangs against civilians in Iraq.

UNITAD Special Adviser Christian Ritscher said in an interview with the Iraqi News Agency (INA), that "Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Da'esh Crimes has been mandated by the United Nations Security Council to promote accountability for international crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq.

Since 2018, UNITAD's headquarter was created in Baghdad, followed by the setup of two additional offices located in Dohuk and Erbil. Since the start of its mission, UNITAD has adopted different lines of investigations to collect, preserve and store evidence of acts committed by ISIL

that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed in Iraq.

So far, the Team has achieved landmark progress in four investigative priorities:

1. Crimes committed against the Yazidi community in Sinjar beginning in August 2014;
2. The mass killing of unarmed cadets of the Tikrit Air Academy in June 2014;
3. Crimes committed by ISIL/Da'esh in and around the Badush prison near Mosul in June 2014;
4. Crimes related to the facilitation of ISIL financing; known as Al- Rawi network.

More investigations are going on. UNITAD continues to investigate into those complex international crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq, including acts perpetrated against all affected communities in Iraq; the Christians, Kakai, Shabak, Shia Turkmen and Sunni communities. In this, UNITAD works in close cooperation with Iraqi authorities, in particular the judiciary, as well as several local and international organizations.

The last UNITAD report to the Security Council dated May 2022, gives a thorough

description of the latest results achieved and the way forward.

Evidence investigation

On the process of collecting evidence, UNITAD Special Adviser Christian Ritscher said: UNITAD collects a variety of evidence through different channels and ensures that it is all properly processed, stored and preserved. My investigators regularly interview witnesses, analyse documents and evaluate the electronic devices left behind by Da'esh perpetrators. The testimonial, documentary and digital evidence is gathered thanks to the excellent cooperation between UNITAD and the Iraqi authorities, as well as the collaboration developed with a range of actors, including the affected communities, the civil society, local and international organizations as well as cooperation with many 3rd states. All these actors know how important it is for the Iraqi society to properly investigate these heinous crimes. This collection of evidence helps rebuild the full picture of ISIL crimes in Iraq, in an undeniable way. What we aim to do is make sure that this evidence is collected and preserved according to international standards, and is admissible in relevant courts. The aim of this entire process is to pursue accountability for ISIL international crimes through evidence-based trails that rise to international standards.

Challenges facing UNITAD

Regarding the main challenges facing UNITAD in its day-to-day operations, the team advisor noted that "UNITAD's mission is complex by nature. Also, we cannot underestimate that ISIL operatives still pose a threat, especially in areas of mass grave excavations. But we adopt very diligent security measures to mitigate risks. This happens through

UNITAD discusses 20 important files with the INA *(continued)*

continuous cooperation and coordination with Iraqi authorities, which supports UNITAD's field operations.

Digitization of paper evidence project

UNITAD Special Adviser also mentioned "Another challenge is posed by the great number of scattered and paper-based evidence that is left by ISIL in the areas which it controlled as well as the complexity of crime scenes and mass graves. To counter these challenges, UNITAD works closely, as I already mentioned, with the Iraqi authorities, mainly the Iraqi judiciary, in collecting and documenting evidence, as well as digitizing paper-based evidence. The digitization project is one of UNITAD's pillar solutions to collect and preserve evidence according to the highest international standards. Digitization also means that this evidence is searchable, which also facilitates the work of Iraqi investigative judges.

Additionally, UNITAD has pioneered in harnessing advanced technology in investigations. This approach has proved particularly impactful during the height of the COVID19 pandemic which placed restrictions on the Team's work in the field. In partnership with key private sector actors, UNITAD has successfully adapted and developed new technologies in dealing with huge volumes of complex and challenging data. The Team published earlier last year a manual titled "Harnessing Technology in International Criminal Investigations" which can be found on UNITAD website. This publication presents lessons learned that may serve as a resource for domestic and international entities alike.

Mass graves investigation strategy

Regarding the excavations of the sites of mass graves in Sinjar, he stressed that "UNITAD's mass graves investigations work is underpinned by its mass graves investigations strategy, endorsed by the Government of Iraq. The strategy supports the joint planning and delivery on mass graves investigations to ensure that the forensic work of search; location; excavation; analysis of human remains and evidence; DNA sample collection from relatives; registration of missing ISIL victims; as well as the DNA identification and return of human remains to the next of kin; are all coordinated, conducted in accordance with international standards, and support UNITAD's impartial independent investigations. This is done hand in hand with the concerned Iraqi authorities, in particular the Mass Graves' Directorate (MGD) and the Medico-Legal Directorate (MLD).

The excavation of mass grave sites in Sinjar are a part of this investigations strategy. The mass graves in Kojo, Sinjar were amongst the first to be opened and excavated in relation to ISIL crimes against the Yazidis.

The File of crimes committed against the Yazidis

On the file of crimes committed against the Yazidis, UNITAD Special Adviser clarified "In partnership with the MGD, the MLD and other relevant local authorities, 32 locations north and south of Sinjar mountain, e.g. Kojo, Hardan, Solagh, Qeni, Sinjar town... have been fully excavated and human remains and evidence recovered from these crime scenes. The investigation of the human remains and evidence recovered is ongoing in some instances; however, these crimes are alleged to relate to the killing of members of the Yazidi community by ISIL in 2014".

He also affirmed that multiple data collection campaigns have been held in and around Sinjar, and in Internally Displaced Person camps in the Kurdistan Regional Government areas, to enable Yazidi survivors and families of missing persons to come forward to register their missing person(s) and provide DNA reference samples to identify the victims' remains. The campaigns are led by the Iraqi national authorities (MGD and MLD), the collection of this data is a critical to the investigation to link missing persons and circumstances of disappearance to witness testimony, and to enable the identification process, confirming that "So far, UNITAD has supported the return of identified remains of 145 Yazidi victims from Sinjar, for dignified burial."

It is worth noting that the process of mass graves' excavations and identification of victims' remains is complex and lengthy. But we must continue working. UNITAD is currently working to support an AM data collection campaign to target Yazidi families living in Germany. This campaign will be the first of its kind, and will help more identifications of Yazidi victims for dignified burial.

The magnitude of ISIL crimes in Iraq is huge. And as I mentioned, the process of mass graves' excavations is complex and lengthy. Additional known execution and mass grave sites relating to ISIL crimes against different communities in Iraq are pending forensic excavation, with sites safeguarded until such time as the excavations can be scheduled in line with a joint strategy endorsed by the Government of Iraq.

The file of Yazidi women survivors of ISIL crimes

Regarding the file of Yazidi women who survived the crimes of ISIS terrorist gangs, he said: I am very happy to point to the fact that Iraq has taken an important step on the path of supporting survivors with the adoption of the Female Yazidi survivors' law. This law extends not only to Yazidi female survivors, but to survivors from other communities that suffered ISIL crimes in Iraq including the

Shabak, Kaka'i, Turkmen communities.

The law is an important recognition of the nature and magnitude of ISIL crimes, and aims in essence to support the needs of the survivors.

As UNITAD had stated before upon the adoption of this law that we consider it a cornerstone in acknowledging the impact of ISIL crimes against the Yazidi as well as other Iraqi communities.

The type of compensation for women survivors of sexual violence? Whether Yazidis or other minorities?

UNITAD Special Adviser said: As indicated previously, the international community is committed to seeking justice for the survivors and victims of ISIL through the continuous unanimous support to UNITAD. When ISIL perpetrators are tried for the international crimes they committed, including genocide, survivors will have their day in court.

The international community, through member states, is supporting UNITAD's efforts to build the capacities of the Iraqi authorities in investigations, identification of remains, as well as their support to victims and survivors. There is dedicated funding to UNITAD, as we are sure to other organizations in Iraq, with the aim of improving the psychosocial wellbeing of survivors through building the capacities of the national specialists who serve them.

The international community's support to victims' right to justice manifests also through the trials that can take place in several countries, like the ones in Germany and Sweden. These trials support victim and survivors' rights and participation in the accountability process.

The fate of Yazidis who are missing and the hundreds of thousands in IDP camps

Regarding the fate of 2800 Yazidis who are missing and the hundreds of thousands in IDP camps, UNITAD Special Adviser affirmed that UNITAD is aware that the fate of the Yazidis still missing, their relatives and the members of the community living in IDP camps is very precarious. I have recently visited an IDPs camp close to Duhok, and met with some of the Yazidi families whose plight continues and whose future remains uncertain.

But, as I mentioned, this aspect falls outside of the scope of UNITAD's mandate. The Team is dedicated to conduct criminal investigations into the international crimes committed by ISIL against the Yazidi community in Iraq, and has prioritized the investigations of the murder of the Yazidi men, the abduction of Yazidi women and girls to subject them to sexual slavery and young boys to train them to fight. The Team hopes that through its investigations and engagement, justice and accountability for the crimes committed against the Yazidi

UNITAD discusses 20 important files with the INA *(continued)*

community can be promoted and achieved, which hopefully will put them one step closer to the path of healing.

We do hope that the fate of those missing will be revealed sooner rather than later.

He also stressed that UNITAD investigates ISIL crimes against all Iraqi communities and victims including the Yazidi, Sunni, Shia, Christians, Kaka'i, Turkman. This, however, deals only with those affected by ISIL crimes.

Mass graves investigations related to Da'esh atrocities have been conducted at sites other than those in Sinjar.

Extensive mass graves investigations work has been conducted in relation to ISIL killings of Badoush prison inmates, a predominantly Shia group of victims, the complexity and vastness of the sites, with multiple execution and body disposal locations over a large area, meant the forensic work was carried out over several phases of field work with the MGD and the MLD. In addition, multiple data collection campaigns across several provinces have been conducted to reach out to the relatives of the victims and collect DNA samples for identification.

An excavation, and data collection campaign related to ISIL's targeted killing of Sunnis in Anbar has been conducted in partnership with the Government of Iraq authorities. UNITAD and its work with the national authorities is underpinned by the principal of accountability, with no hierarchy of victim or ethnic group. A recent data collection campaign has been held in Tal Afar, led by the MLD, reaching out to other minorities, Turkmen, Kakai and Shabak, in preparation for the excavation of mass graves where we believe these victims have been buried.

The crime of mass killings that ISIL committed against Tikrit Air Academy personnel

UNITAD Special Adviser Christian Ritscher emphasized that "Excavations were carried out at different locations in the Presidential Palaces by the Iraqi authorities between 2015 and 2017, before UNITAD's deployment. Some of the findings have been included and analyzed as part of UNITAD's investigation into acts perpetrated against the military cadets and personnel from Tikrit Air Academy in June 2014. Key testimonial, digital and forensic evidence allowed the Team to conclude in May 2021, that these acts amount to war crimes of murder, torture, cruel treatment, and outrages upon personal dignity. Crucial digital evidence includes two videos produced and released by ISIL, both containing scenes of criminal acts perpetrated by ISIL at the Presidential Palaces grounds or related to such events. Forensic analysis of the first video carried out by UNITAD has established that parts of the

video appear to reliably show scenes of the massacre at the Presidential Palaces grounds in Tikrit. The evidence also shows that ISIL carried out its crimes against the cadets and military personnel from the Tikrit Air Academy, who were predominantly Shia Muslims, based upon discrimination against this religious group.

In that regard, UNITAD found that, in addition to the findings of war crimes, the publication of one of the ISIL propaganda video may amount to direct and public incitement to commit genocide against Shia Muslims. The video – its audio and visual messages – is a crime in and of itself, including its production and public dissemination and contains direct appeals to kill Shia Muslims. The video was publicized and made available via mass communication means, fulfilling the legally necessary public element of this crime. It was released on ISIL's closed network on Telegram and then uploaded to YouTube. ISIL's media operatives and pro-ISIL supporters circulated links to the video on Facebook and Twitter. And, finally, to magnify its potential reach, ISIL translated the - initially published in Arabic video - into English and some other languages. This video proves the full dimension of the massacre against the cadets of the Tikrit Air Academy.

These preliminary findings and legal characterizations are based on the evidence collected so far. UNITAD continues to investigate this massacre in the context of the crimes committed in Tikrit and al-Alam as well as all crimes committed against the Shia community in Iraq and to update its findings accordingly.

The file of the international crimes

UNITAD Special Adviser Christian Ritscher said: This is a very important question. There is no statute of limitations for international crimes, which applies to those international crimes committed by ISIL members; war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

This means that prosecution and trials can take place as long as even one perpetrator remains alive. We have seen this in other parts of the world where international crimes were committed, and perpetrators were held accountable even after tens of years have passed.

What we want to see is for Iraq to prosecute ISIL perpetrators for international crimes, which of course requires adopting the appropriate legal framework to deal with ISIL crimes as international crimes in Iraq. So far, this is lacking in the domestic Iraqi law. Nevertheless, to promote accountability according to the mandate of the UN Security Council means to preserve and store the evidence properly in order to be

able to hold perpetrators responsible as long as they are alive.

The team's work in Iraq

Ritscher elaborated: The mandate of UNITAD is limited to crimes committed by ISIL/Da'esh members in Iraq. The excavation of mass graves takes place in Iraq only. UNITAD cooperates with a large number of States where ISIL/Da'esh members are being investigated and prosecuted for alleged crimes committed in Iraq.

The role of the Iraqi government in assisting the investigative team

Regarding the role the Iraqi government in assisting the investigative team, UNITAD Special Adviser Christian Ritscher said: UNITAD was established at the request of the Government of Iraq to the United Nation's Security Council. With a mandate to support the Iraqi government and the people of Iraq in the pursuit of accountability and justice for ISIL crimes, the Team works closely with the Government of Iraq and its various institutions to fulfill its mandate.

The Government of Iraq and Iraqi authorities including those of the Kurdistan Regional Government, have played a key role in supporting UNITAD in implementing its mandate to hold ISIL members accountable for their international crimes. I can say, it is a very fruitful cooperation.

UNITAD support for the Iraqi judiciary

UNITAD Special Adviser affirmed during the interview that "UNITAD holds regular meetings with the Chief Justice and Head of the Supreme Judicial Council, underlying the close cooperation with the Iraqi judiciary. Meetings also include those with the competent investigative judges, in particular those in Baghdad and in Nineveh.

I already mentioned the EU Digitization Program, a broadly conceived program including a massive transfer of knowledge to our counterparts at the Iraqi judiciary. Through this program UNITAD engages with Iraqi national authorities and judiciary in evidence digitization, in which UNITAD deploys mobile teams of archivists and information management specialists to assist in the physical archiving and digitization of evidence.

"Moreover, the Team works closely with the Iraqi judiciary in building the capacities of Iraqi judges in terms of international law. The Team had organized an in-depth training course on International Humanitarian Law and International Criminal Law to build the capacities of 28 members of the Iraqi judiciary, including women members of the judiciary. The course was conducted in Arabic, and constituted an important milestone in enabling Iraqi Judges to

UNITAD discusses 20 important files with the INA *(continued)*

build cases on ISIL international crimes, thus ensuring that members of ISIL/Da'esh are held accountable for those crimes.”

“UNITAD provides also Iraqi judges with technical support in developing case files of international crimes committed by ISIL/Da'esh in Iraq, with the aim of holding ISIL/Da'esh perpetrators accountable for committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and, in some cases, genocide.”

“Through this work, the Team seeks to significantly enhance the ability of national authorities to draw on existing evidentiary bases and strengthen their capacity to build cases in line with international standards. This also enhances the ability of Iraq to engage with UNITAD in the implementation of its mandate.”

Partnership and daily cooperation between UNITAD and Iraqi authorities

UNITAD Special Adviser emphasized that “Since I assumed my responsibilities last year, I made it a priority to hold regular meetings with senior officials from the Government of Iraq, including the Office of the Prime Minister, the Presidency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Coordination Committee, and the National Security Advisory, to strengthen our partnership with Iraq.

This has enhanced our partnership, and the common understanding of UNITAD’s mission. The support that the Government of Iraq provides is key to the Team’s progress towards delivering on the collective objective of holding ISIL members accountable through international-standard trials reflecting the scale and nature of the crimes committed by ISIL against the people of Iraq. To this end, UNITAD:

- Supports the work of national authorities in excavations of the mass graves of ISIL victims;
- Assists in the recovery and documentation of digital evidence of ISIL crimes retained by the relevant Iraqi authorities;
- Supports building the Iraqi Judiciary’s capacity in areas related to International Criminal Law and International Humanitarian Law.
- Provides Iraqi judges with technical support in developing case files of international crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq, with the aim of holding ISIL preparators accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.
- Stands ready to extend technical support to Iraqi Parliamentarians in their endeavors to domesticate international criminal law, to deal with ISIL crimes as international crimes.

He also affirmed that “UNITAD on its part has been eager to hear from the wider NGO community in Iraq on their experiences and their views on areas

pertaining to the work of the Team. To this end, the UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum was launched in December 2020, with the aim of serving as a platform that brings together all relevant international and Iraqi NGOs for regular collaboration, exchange of ideas and best practices, as well as exploring areas for enhancing cooperation.

The observations and recommendations of the thematic and plenary roundtables, which constitute the two types of events held by the Forum, are disseminated to all relevant units within the Investigative Team. UNITAD also seeks to incorporate the outcome of those meetings in my biannual report to the UN Security Council.

Additionally, there is a lot of work that is done at the operational level through cooperation between relevant NGOs and different investigative and thematic units of UNITAD. For example, several representatives and I myself joint the recent ceremonies in Iraq and abroad on occasion of the 8th anniversary of the attack on the Yazidi population and paid tribute to the great efforts of the Yazidi civil society to heal after the genocide committed by Da’esh perpetrators.”

Supporting the efforts of the Iraqi authorities specialized in investigations UNITAD Special Adviser pointed out that “On the path of implementing its mandate, UNITAD continuously supports Iraqi authorities in investigations. An example is our support to the mass grave investigations in which it focuses on building capacity and providing resources and technologies that support the forensic work of the national authorities.”

“UNITAD has been holding technical trainings for national experts and has been providing equipment necessary for excavation and identification operations. An example is that most recently, UNITAD presented the Iraqi Medical Legal Directorate (MLD) with qualitytype GmbH’s Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) including a DNA matching module MatchMaker. The LIMS, is intended to support MLD team in its efforts to establish robust scientific identifications of the remains of victims recovered from ISIL mass graves across Iraq.”

“Additionally, there is an ongoing UNITAD project working with the MLD’s DNA laboratory, to strengthen its laboratory and to accelerate the DNA identification process.”

“Working across all the components that comprise mass grave investigations, in partnership with the Government of Iraq is at the heart of UNITAD’s work on this portfolio. Therefore, the Team’s experts provide hands-on, on-site support to Iraqi specialists from the Mass Graves Directorate (MGD) in the excavation and collection of forensic evidence from mass graves of ISIL victims,”

“Additional areas of support extend to the judiciary as detailed in previous questions, and other relevant branches of the Iraqi government.

The strong collaboration and cooperation between the relevant national authorities and UNITAD is anchored in our joint commitment to achieve justice for the victims, survivors and their families and to assist the national authorities in their efforts to hold those most responsible accountable for their crimes.”

The perpetrators of crimes against Iraqis?

UNITAD Special Adviser said, “UNITAD has been working on putting together information and analysis in order to work towards building case files about the crimes committed against the Yazidis, Tikrit Air Academy personnel, victims of the mass executions at Badush prison, and other ISIL crimes in Iraq. We aim to look into the structure of ISIL as an organization, and identify those who are most responsible for the heinous international crimes that were committed in Iraq.”

The asylum applications of the women fleeing from Iraq to foreign countries

UNITAD Special Adviser affirmed that, “This file falls outside the mandate of UNITAD. We may work with refugees and asylum seekers as witnesses. Other UN entities may support them in seeking refuge in other countries.”

“One of the areas of support that UNITAD’s provides to the victims and survivors of ISIL is in the form of adopting a victim-centred approach to investigation where the protection and psychosocial well-being of victims and witnesses is at the core of the Team’s investigations,”

“The Team also continues to engage in dialogue with a number of relevant Iraqi authorities with a view to further strengthening their capacity to provide comprehensive protection and support to witnesses, thereby also enhancing modalities of cooperation with UNITAD in this area. Specific elements that are being addressed include the implementation of existing domestic legislation with respect to witness protection, the development of a national witness protection structure, including a witness protection focal point network, and the establishment of a 24/7 witness hotline and response mechanism.”

The arrest of Taha al-J

UNITAD Special Adviser affirmed that “Taha al-J was tried in Germany, after he was extradited from Greece, and then convicted and sentenced for life for committing genocide against the Yazidis, in relation to the death of Yazidi girl, age 5, bought as a slave. This was a landmark conviction and the first finding before a court of law that the actions by ISIL/Da’esh against the Yazidis amounted

UNITAD discusses 20 important files with the INA *(continued)*

to genocide.”

“In the case in Germany, the defense argued that the Yazidi girl was still alive and had not died. UNITAD was able to help the German prosecutors by confirming with witnesses and the hospital that documents presented by the defense to this end were false documents..”

“The 19 months’ trial was under German jurisdiction, as Germany adopts the legal principle of “universal jurisdiction”, which makes German courts competent to

prosecute anyone for international crimes, regardless of where they were committed. This is a principle applied by several countries, not only Germany, which means that ISIL perpetrators can be prosecuted before national courts in a number of countries for the international crimes they committed.”

Iraq reconstruction operation

UNITAD Special Adviser stressed that “Pertaining to UNITAD mandate, the international community has set

tremendous resources for the Team’s investigations and in support of the path towards justice and accountability for all those impacted by ISIL atrocities in Iraq. The support of the member states in particular, has been invaluable to the progress of investigations.”

He also added that, “Reconstruction is not part of UNITAD’s mandate. But I can say that the work we do is key to ensuring viable reconciliation. Accountability is key to the healing of communities.”

UNITAD: The wellbeing of victims and survivors comes first

Baghdad, 11 September 2022 - The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Daesh/ISIL (UNITAD) has been committed to implementing a trauma-informed approach and to promoting the wellbeing of psychosocial specialists as the frontliners of working with victims and survivors of ISIL crimes.

Throughout August 2022, UNITAD’s psychologists have been working on multiple fronts to ensure this trauma-informed and victim-centered approaches are widely channeled through working with Iraqi counterparts. The Team provided a training for the Iraqi Mass Graves Directorate (MGD) staff in Baghdad on implementing a trauma-informed approach. The purpose of the training was to enhance key skills and knowledge to provide humane, supportive and practical assistance for vulnerable individuals, in line with international best practices. The same training is planned for the Medical-

Legal Directorate (MLD) staff in Baghdad, and a range of Non-Governmental Organizations that operate in different parts of Iraq and have expressed interest in enhancing their approach to working with survivors of ISIL crimes.

This training brings the partnership between UNITAD and the local authorities like MGD and MLD to an advanced arena as it builds on the technical support that the Team has been providing in mass graves excavations, as well as identification of human remains; all of which have been steady since the beginning of the Team’s investigations back in 2019. It also builds on previous trainings that UNITAD had provided to psychosocial specialists and staff from the MGD and MLD in 2021.

UNITAD psychologists’ trainings extended this August also to Iraqi NGOs whose psychosocial experts provide support to victims and survivor communities on a daily basis. In this context, UNITAD Witness Protection

and Support Unit conducted a training on “Stockholm Syndrome” to staff of the Commission for Investigation and Gathering Evidence (CIGE) in Dohuk, who work with the Commission’s victims’ unit. The training aimed to build the capacities of staff members engaged in gathering evidence and testimonies from witnesses and survivors with basic understanding of Stockholm Syndrome, its psychological implications and possible impact on the testimonies of witnesses.

Additionally, a training was conducted with Yazda Organization in Duhok, addressing the topic of Vicarious Trauma and Self Care. The training was designed to develop participants’ knowledge and understanding of professional hazards and the importance of implementing safeguarding strategies. It explored the signs and symptoms of vicarious trauma and the impact they can have on practitioners as individuals, as well as their work and workplace.



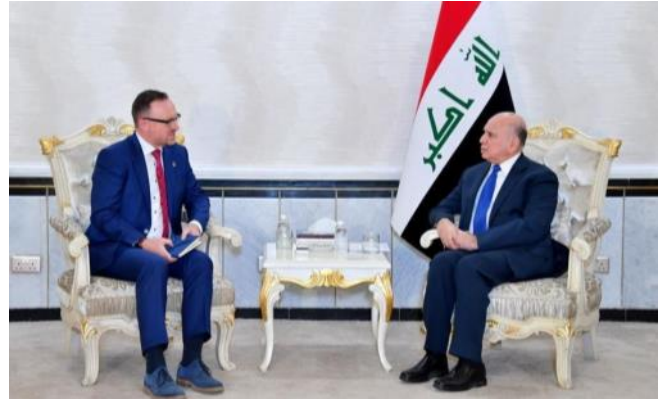
Baghdad, 11 September 2022 - In their meeting in Baghdad today, Special Adviser Christian Ritscher and MOFA Undersecretary for Multilateral and Legal Affairs, Chairman of the National Coordinating Committee, H.E. Qahtan Al Janabi, discussed ongoing cooperation between UNITAD and Iraq. Special Adviser Ritscher stressed the important role that Iraqi authorities play in supporting the Team’s mandate and UNITAD’s dedication to work hand in hand with Iraqi authorities towards achieving the common goals of promoting accountability and the pursuit of justice for ISIL international crimes.



Baghdad, 12 September 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met with the President of the Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council, Judge Faiq Zidan, today in Baghdad. They discussed several activities within the excellent partnership between UNITAD and the Iraqi judiciary, which is a key pillar in the Team’s operations. Their discussions included areas of capacity building of Iraqi judiciary and the ongoing digitization of evidence, all aiming to support the common objective of holding ISIL members accountable for international crimes.



Baghdad, 14 September 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was delighted to receive Mr. Haider Elias, President of Yazda Organization, at UNITAD's offices in Baghdad. They discussed mutual cooperation in seeking justice for ISIL international crimes against the Yazidi community in Iraq. Special Adviser Ritscher highly appreciated the support of Yazda and the NGO community to the work of UNITAD, serving the common goal of promoting accountability through a victim-centered approach.



Baghdad, 14 September 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met with Iraqi Foreign Minister, H.E. Fuad Hussein, in Baghdad today. They discussed ongoing partnership with Iraq and the increased cooperation over the past year in various areas of work.

He commended in particular the work done with Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including to showcase the cooperation between UNITAD and the Iraqi Judiciary in seeking accountability for ISIL international crimes.

Special Adviser Ritscher reiterated that he counts on the support of Iraq to the Team's work, which serves the common goal to achieve justice for all victims and survivors of such heinous crimes, most of whom are Iraqis.

Security Council unanimously renews UNITAD's mandate

New York, 15 September 2022 - The United Nations Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) through resolution 2651.

Resolution 2651 renewed UNITAD's mandate until 17 September 2023, first established by resolution 2379 (2017) upon the request of the Government of Iraq.

Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD Christian Ritscher welcomed the renewal of the Team's mandate as testament to the international community's commitment to the mission of UNITAD, adding that "the Team will continue its

work, in cooperation with the Government of Iraq and Member States, to serve our common goal of advancing justice for victims and survivors of ISIL's international crimes." He reiterated that: "Iraq as well as all members of the Security Council showed again their unwavering support to UNITAD and its investigations, as a leading entity in the quest for accountability for ISIL heinous acts, which may amount for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide."

Special Adviser Ritscher will continue to report the developments and progress of the Team's investigations to the Security Council every 180 days. In the 8th report (June 2022), the Special Adviser highlighted the progress made in multiple

investigations and the strong partnership between the Team and the Government of Iraq. Outlining future priority areas for the work of the Team, the Special Adviser explained that UNITAD is expanding its investigations into a number of key areas, including investigations of crimes committed in Mosul as the capital of the so-called "caliphate" in Iraq, as well as ISIL's destruction of cultural heritage and its use of chemical weapons.

UNITAD remains resolute in building partnerships with Iraqi authorities and victim communities, as well as concerned third states, while ensuring that the information and evidence it collects and preserves, in line with international standards, is admissible in court.

The European Union renews its support to UNITAD's digitization of evidence of ISIL crimes in Iraq

Baghdad, 21 September 2022 - The European Union (EU) extended its long-term commitment to justice and accountability with renewed support to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD). With this extension, the EU committed an additional €3.8 million to the digitization and archiving of evidentiary materials of ISIL crimes held by Iraqi authorities. The EU's contribution to this project represents the largest extrabudgetary contribution received by UNITAD to date.

UNITAD's partnership with the EU, which began in 2020, has already yielded notable achievements. A previous EU commitment of €3.5 million enabled provision of technical assistance to Iraq's national authorities and Kurdistan Regional Government Authorities, and the identification and digitization of over 5 million paper

documents, in addition to battlefield evidence, and electronically stored information.

Building on this renewed EU support, UNITAD will continue providing technical assistance and will expand its efforts to identify, preserve, and make use of evidence of ISIL crimes.

Mr. Ville Varjola, Ambassador of the European Union to Iraq said: "The EU is proud to support UNITAD activities in Iraq and reinforce its partnership with the United Nations. The preservation and organization of evidentiary material in relation to ISIS crimes will serve to deepen the evidential foundations for prosecutions. The victims, survivors, and indeed humanity, deserve no less."

Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD Christian Ritscher indicated that: "This funding is testament to the long-term partnership between UNITAD and the EU,

through which the Team has been able to provide tremendous support to Iraqi authorities, as well as advance its investigations. Such support showcases great commitment by member states to the Team's investigative efforts, and to the pursuit of justice and accountability for ISIL atrocious crimes." He added: "We look forward to further cooperation with the EU and member states in critical areas of support to the Team's investigations."

UNITAD is committed to support domestic efforts to hold ISIL members accountable by collecting, preserving, and storing documentary evidence of the international crimes which they committed in Iraq, to ensure the broadest possible use of such evidence before national courts, in line with international standards and in a way that serves victims' rights and participation in the accountability processes.

Germany supports UNITAD with additional €1,700,000 for investigating ISIL financial structure and economic crimes

Baghdad, 22 September 2022 – Germany has once more renewed its generous support and contributions to the work of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), with a new funding cycle of €1,700,000.

Through this support, UNITAD will be empowered to continue its investigations into the financial mechanisms of ISIL and uncover additional evidence about perpetrators who profited from their involvement in the war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by ISIL members in Iraq.

“Tracing the financial mechanisms of ISIL means tracing the organization... and thus puts us on the path of identifying those most responsible for those international crimes.” said Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD Christian Ritscher, adding: “UNITAD is able to deliver on such investigations with strong fortitude through this crucial support from Germany.”

UNITAD has completed its initial lines

of inquiry into ISIL’s different revenue streams, money service businesses’ material support to the group, and continues its structural investigation on ISIL’s central treasury (Bayt Al Mal). Additional investigations and lines of inquiries stemming from this renewed commitment by Germany are expected to shed light on the role of ISIL’s oil trade, its pillage, and the role this trade played in underwriting the crimes committed especially those committed against targeted minority groups.

H.E. Martin Jäger, German Ambassador to Iraq, emphasized the importance of UNITAD’s work: “By helping to deliver justice for the people of Iraq, UNITAD is an important actor not only in criminal justice but also in the stabilization of Iraq. We remain committed to supporting its important mandate both politically and financially”.

Special Adviser Ritscher explained that: “UNITAD’s partnership with Germany will persist to further its mandate through this support to the

investigations, as well as through Germany’s commitment to holding ISIL perpetrators accountable for international crimes, on which UNITAD stands strongly to partner.”

This renewed contribution will better enable UNITAD to support domestic authorities in their legal proceedings aiming to hold ISIL members accountable for the international crimes they committed in Iraq. Cooperation with Iraqi and international partners, including law enforcement and prosecutorial entities, remains instrumental to accountability efforts and to the pursuit of justice for the victims and survivors of those crimes.



UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum holds its fourth biannual plenary roundtable, convening in person for the first time

Baghdad, 6 October 2022 – The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) held on Wednesday its Fourth Biannual Plenary Roundtable meeting of the UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum, which was the first convening of the Forum as an in-person meeting.

The biannual roundtable meeting, which has been holding its meetings virtually since December 2020, brought together 50 participants this time, from both Iraqi and international NGOs together with UNITAD team members, to share insights and engage in a lively discussion on issues pertaining to the work of UNITAD and the cooperation with the NGO community.

“I firmly believe that the UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum is an important arm of collaboration and cooperation between UNITAD and the NGO

community; and the Forum goes hand in hand with the excellent cooperation at the operational level that is happening daily between various units of UNITAD and many NGO partners” said Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD Christian Ritscher in his opening remarks.

Participating NGO representatives gave an overview about their work, with many giving examples about the existing cooperation with UNITAD or offering suggestions on potential future cooperation. They also were introduced to several UNITAD investigators and heads of units who are working with their respective communities; affected by ISIL crimes. Additionally, many speakers introduced some of the major concerns of survivor and victim communities. The Team and the NGOs’ representatives also discussed UNITAD’s investigative priorities and how NGOs can contribute with a significant role in the investigations and outreach to victims and survivors. Additionally, a speaker from the Shabak community gave remarks as part of the Forum’s commitment to dedicate a space for different voices of affected communities.

Special Adviser Ritscher also noted how

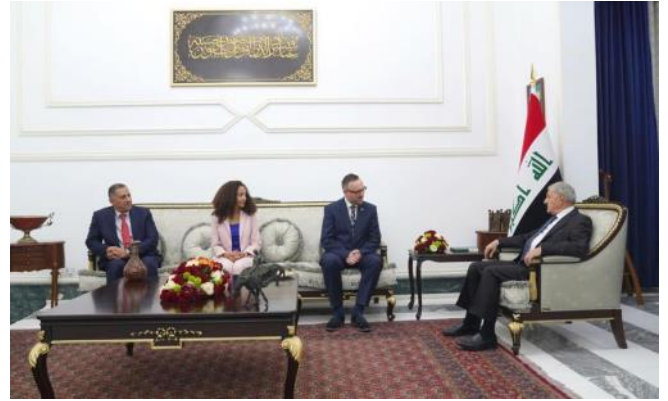
engaging and constructive the events of the UNITAD-NGO Dialogue Forum have been, expressing his confidence that this engagement will only increase as the Forum moves to in person interactions, “which makes this platform even more engaging and conducive for deeper communication, collaboration and opening the doors for new cooperation,” as he expressed.

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





Baghdad, 11 October 2022 – The Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was delighted to receive H.E. Ms. Jessica Svärdröm, Ambassador of Sweden to Iraq, today at UNITAD headquarters in Baghdad for the first time. They discussed ongoing cooperation and potential new projects. Special Adviser Ritscher is grateful for Sweden's commitment to support UNITAD's work and to promote accountability for ISIL atrocious crimes in Iraq.



Baghdad, 19 October 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met today in Baghdad with H.E. President of Iraq Dr. Abdul Latif Rashid to congratulate him as he assumes office, and to brief him on the work of UNITAD. President Rashid expressed his support to the important work of the Team, reaffirming Iraq's willingness to strengthen cooperation with the Team in multiple areas towards the common goal of delivering accountability and justice.



Baghdad, 20 October 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met today in Baghdad with H.E. Qassim Al Araji, National Security Adviser and Dr. Issam Al Saadi, Deputy National Security Adviser of Iraq. They discussed multiple areas of cooperation between UNITAD and the National Security Advisory.

Special Adviser Ritscher reiterated that engagement with all Iraqi counterparts is important, expressing his confidence in successful partnership with Iraq towards the common goal of delivering justice, which contributes to viable reconciliation in communities affected by ISIL's international crimes.



Baghdad, 21 October 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was delighted to receive H.E. Mark Bryson-Richardson, British Ambassador to Iraq at UNITAD headquarters in Baghdad for the first time. They discussed UNITAD's work and mutual cooperation, while Special Adviser Ritscher thanked the UK for its continued support to the Team's mandate and investigations.



Baghdad, 21 October 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met with H.E. Dr. Monstaser Al-Zou'bi, Jordanian Ambassador to Iraq at the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad. They discussed the work of UNITAD and potential cooperation. Special Adviser Ritscher reiterated his willingness to explore further cooperation with Jordan and other countries of the Arab region in promoting accountability for #ISIL international crimes in Iraq.



Baghdad, 25 October 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher met today with Prime Minister-designate Mohamed Shia Al Sudani in Baghdad, to brief him on the work of UNITAD investigating ISIL international crimes in Iraq. On his part, Mr. Al Sudani expressed his support to UNITAD's work and partnership with national authorities for the common goal of seeking justice and accountability for all victims of ISIL atrocities committed in Iraq.

UNITAD trained therapists on child development and disorders and trauma focused cognitive behaviour therapy

Dohuk, 27 September 2022 - United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) Witness Protection and Support Unit's psychologists conducted a 3-Day training for trainee therapists at the Institute of Psychotherapy and Psychotraumatology (IPP)-University of Duhok, on Child Development and Disorders and Trauma Focused Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. The training aimed at enhancing foundational knowledge of specialist treatment for traumatized children and adolescents.



Workshop organized for Kurdistan Region judges on case development for the prosecution of ISIL international crimes

Erbil, 23 October 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher took part in the opening segment of an exercise organized for a number of Kurdistan Regional Government judges on case development for the prosecution of ISIL international crimes; focusing on ISIL perpetrators who are abroad.

He was delighted to join Honorable Judge Abdul-Jabar Aziz Hassan, President of the Judicial Council of KRG, Honorable Judge Suham Abdulqadir Nabi, the Deputy Head of Public Prosecution in KRG, & Dr. Dindar Zebari, Head of the Office of International Advocacy in inaugurating this training.

In his opening remarks, Special



Adviser Ritscher indicated that this work is an important milestone in the pursuit of justice for victims of ISIL and the collective effort to hold

perpetrators accountable for their international crimes, thanking KRG for its continued support to the work of UNITAD.

A group of Iraqi judges will take part in an advanced training at the International Nuremberg Principles Academy in Germany

Baghdad, 26 October 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher was pleased to attend a reception at the German Embassy Baghdad welcoming a group of Iraqi judges who will take part in an advanced training at the International Nuremberg Principles Academy in Germany.

Special Adviser Ritscher thanked H.E. German Ambassador Martin Jaeger for extending support to facilitate arrangements for this training, which will take place in Germany this upcoming November.

Special Adviser Ritscher, further, highlighted that the training, taking place at one of the most renowned institutes in International Criminal Law and International Humanitarian

Law, provides judges with expanded and in-depth knowledge, which is

crucial to pursue accountability for ISIL international crimes.



After years of crisis, high numbers of Iraqis abroad are returning safely home

Erbil, 25 August 2022 - After years of crisis, high numbers of Iraqis abroad are returning safely home. To facilitate their sustainable reintegration, the Government of Iraq is implementing a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) to connect returnees to needed protection and reintegration services offered by government and local-level providers, civil society organizations, NGOs, international NGOs and UN agencies.

In coordination with the Technical Working Group (TWG) on migration, Erbil Governorate was selected as a location to operate the NRM due to the high number of returnees hosted there, including many who have recently come back from the EU and Belarus.

Between 20 and 23 August, IOM Iraq held a specialized training for staff from the Erbil Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC) and Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) on the operation of the NRM. Topics included:

- The migration management cycle
 - Objectives and principles of return
 - Readmission and reintegration
 - Standard operating procedure (SOP) for JCC referrals for reintegration assistance
- Case management and counselling
Specific attention was given to the

particular needs of returnees who have experienced human trafficking.

The training supports Erbil JCC officials to act effectively as dedicated reintegration officers and case managers in order to address returnee needs, and was made possible by support from the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).



Long-term stability in Iraq requires increased government capacity in migration management

Baghdad, 7 September 2022 - To further address gaps in the legislative framework for migrants, IOM Iraq conducted a series of training of trainers (TOT) sessions for Iraqi officials. The officials that participated in the TOT delivered legislation-oriented trainings to their counterparts in various ministries.

Recently, IOM held a specialized training for Iraqi officials on legal concepts and legislative techniques related to international migration law. This was part of a cascading training series presented by members of the inter-ministerial Technical Working Group on migration. Throughout the training sessions, presenters included

the Deputy Director General of the Parliamentary Development Institute of the Iraqi Parliament, a representative from the Ufuq Organization for Human Development and several other members of government ministries, including from the Kurdistan Regional Government. Participants engaged in in-depth discussions about the legislative process in Iraq, the incorporation of human rights standards in policymaking and the inclusion of affected communities in migration policy development.

This training was made possible with support from the European Union as part of the AWDA AMINA project.



IOM Iraq held a specialized consultation session to define recommendations that will strengthen policies and practices concerning return, readmission and reintegration

Baghdad, 20 September 2022 - After years of crisis, high numbers of Iraqis abroad are returning safely home. To facilitate their sustainable reintegration, some may need access to protection and reintegration services offered by government and local-level providers, civil society organizations, NGOs, international NGOs and UN

agencies.

IOM Iraq recently held a specialized consultation session with the Government's Inter-ministerial Technical Working Group (TWG) on Migration, to define recommendations that will strengthen policies and practices concerning return, readmission and reintegration. It

focused on topics such as the Government's integrated approach to return, readmission and reintegration; international cooperation; legal frameworks; human rights at the centre of return migration management; areas and modalities of readmission cooperation; the Readmission Case Management

IOM Iraq held a specialized consultation session to define recommendations... (continued)

System (RCMS); legal identity and national security aspects of return and readmission; and sustainable reintegration.

The TWG engaged in discussions about good practices, challenges and opportunities regarding return, readmission and reintegration policies and practices. Incorporation of human rights standards in policymaking and

the inclusion of affected communities in policy development were also covered during the workshop.

The session was organized in collaboration with IOM Headquarters and the Regional Office for the EEA, the European Union and NATO; it was made possible with support from the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



Humanitarian

IOM has been supporting IDPs in informal sites to access lifesaving assistance



Baghdad, 12 September 2022 - 62-year-old Hassan from Fallujah used to live in Amriyat Al Fallujah (AAF) IDP camp. When the camp was closed, Hassan and his family were unable to return to their area of origin. They stayed behind and now live under critical conditions in the AAF informal site.

“We have been living in Amriyat Al Fallujah since 2016. There are people who have applied for voluntary return, while others choose to stay because they can’t return for various reasons, including security or damaged homes in their areas of origin. Our situation used to be good when there were organizations supporting IDPs here,” he says. The little assistance available now is insufficient to meet the needs of informal site residents.

“First, the tents are very old – some are several years old and are falling apart from exposure to sunlight and rain. Rain is a blessing, and yet with the slightest amount of rainfall worries us because our tents leak and we must stand in different corners of it to avoid the leaks. And then we have a water issue. The tap water is salty. I challenge anyone to be able to drink a

glass of the tap water. It is like you have gotten a glass of fresh water and dissolved a spoon of salt in it, that’s how our water tastes. We use the tap water only for washing. When we wash our laundry, for example, you can see white marks on the clothes when they dry up, due to the amount of salt in the water. Its salinity erodes water tanks, taps and pipes.

And feral dogs are everywhere. That coupled with lack of lighting at night, especially near the latrines – which are also in bad shape – poses a major threat, especially to children. Each latrine is used by 3 to 4 families. One time, my wife went to the latrines at night, and suddenly, I heard her scream and run back – a dog was chasing her. I had to go and escort her to the latrines and back. We need a solution for this.

Previously there were organizations supporting the camp residents, especially the youth, with cash-for-work activities like cleaning campaigns in the camp. This had a twofold effect: cleanliness in the camp, on one hand, and daily work opportunities for people on the other. Now this is gone. The camp is dirty, and people have no daily

work opportunities. Many people can’t go out of the site, not even beyond the checkpoint. Even if they can, they must pay 10,000 Iraqi dinars for the transportation to be able to get to Fallujah where there aren’t many opportunities – they spend 10,000 dinars just to get there, and they may only get 10,000 dinars of income per day.

All kinds of support stopped completely. The needs are huge, and we can’t do anything about it. This feeling is suffocating.”

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“There is a lot of scrap metal here at Amriyat Al Fallujah from the remnants of the closed camp. People bring me metal and ask me to make useful items for them. A few days ago, someone brought me a damaged water tank; after cleaning and cutting it, I will use the plate to make a closet so they can keep their documents safe from mice and rats. I can make beds, couches, chairs, and if someone has enough metal, I can make them swinging chairs. This has become my only source of income. I make about 7,000 Iraqi dinars per day [about USD 5]. In this area where no one has any jobs and there is no support from organizations, it can barely cover tomatoes, potatoes and eggs to feed my family. I prefer to stay here because I am from a village in Ana, west Anbar. My house is destroyed and there are absolutely no livelihood opportunities there. I have five children who go to school here. If I move back, I interrupt their education; in my village there is no school, and I don’t have money to afford transportation for them to go to a school outside the village,” says Ismael, a 52-year-old father of 7 who learned blacksmithing in 2020 through IOM’s Blacksmithing Workshop in Amriyat Al

IOM has been supporting IDPs in informal sites to access lifesaving assistance *(continued)*

Fallujah camp.

“This place has become a dumping yard,” says Rahma, a widowed IDP from Jerf Al-Sakher, Babil Governorate. Rahma has been living in the Abu Ghreib informal site in Baghdad since 2014 with her now-teenage son and widowed daughter, who also has four children.

“No one takes care of it and there are no municipal services to clean it. There is a swamp on one side, a sewage trench on the other, and garbage everywhere. We live in the middle of it. The animals die in the swamp, and we get the smell. When we turn on the air cooler, the stench fills the house. You want to have lunch, but you can't due to the smell. People helped us put together this structure to live in, but it is in ruins. The windows do not have glass, and it has only the front door. When it rains, it leaks everywhere, and when there is a sandstorm, inside the house gets dark, and we can't see anything because it gets filled with thick dust. The tap water smells bad because the pipes run through the swamp and across the sewage trench. We only use it for washing. For drinking, we have to buy water. And we don't have any source of income. My son gets a one-day opportunity every ten days to work as a daily worker. He gets 15,000 Iraqi dinars [about USD 10]. I don't know what to spend it on. It doesn't cover the smallest fraction of our expenses. We need food and water. We need medical care; I am diabetic. We have daily expenses. What can you possibly do with 15,000 dinars? If neighbors do not support us, we can't even get a kilo of tomatoes. There are no organizations here to support us either. And we have no home appliances – no washer, no refrigerator, no stove, and no oven – and no carpet. On top of everything, rats are all over the house. They get into our flour and rice. We are suffering from rats, dogs and snakes here. Our situation is really critical.”

IOM has been supporting IDPs in



informal sites to access lifesaving assistance through integrated camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), shelter and non-food item programmes. With the overall goal of realizing dignified living conditions and mitigating physical risks, these programmes include electricity upgrades, sewage station rehabilitations and other site risk reduction work; advocacy; capacity building in, coordination of and referrals for service provision; essential shelter upgrades; provision of non-food items and multi-purpose cash assistance. Still, needs in informal sites are simply too great. Until they can return safely and voluntarily to their areas of origin, displaced Iraqis in informal sites remain in need of urgent humanitarian assistance.

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A young woman from Hawija: “We were displaced from Hawija in 2014 to Debaga camp, Erbil Governorate. After a while, we moved to Daquq, Kirkuk Governorate. After three years in displacement, we returned to Hawija once it was retaken and the situation was stable enough, but life was very depressing here. There was a lot of destruction and not much going on in the city. And I was stuck at home because I couldn't go to school due to my disability and our financial situation. I used to go to school, and I used to walk on my own, but one time during a flooding incident while we were displaced in Daquq, I fell and got hurt badly. Ever since, I have not been able to walk. When I saw other girls go to school, it frustrated me a lot and affected my mental health negatively. I was feeling down and suffocating being at home all the time.

One day, my brother heard from a friend about IOM and their activities in Hawija. I was delighted to learn they had drawing activities [that included psychosocial elements]. I immediately joined. Coming to this centre has changed my life. It is an opportunity to get out of the house and alleviate my frustration and stress a bit. The staff are very good, and people have a very positive impression of the centre and its services. I get to meet people in the centre and make friends with other girls and enjoy drawing together. I keep drawing all the time, even when I go back home. It helps me cope with my situation and stress.”

IOM Iraq's community-based mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programming, which includes



arts-based psychosocial activities like drawing courses, is designed to support community members in addressing daily stressors and becoming more resilient to psychosocial challenges. Through group sessions, participants develop stress management skills and the ability to identify and apply effective coping mechanisms.

She continues: “While in the centre participating in [MHPSS] activities, I also learned that IOM had a legal team who helped people with renewing or getting new civil documentation. All of our IDs were old and needed to be changed to the new unified National Iraqi ID card, but due to our financial situation, we could not afford transportation to Kirkuk to do the applications for the IDs and pay the processing fees. We went to the IOM Legal team here, and they took care of everything. Their lawyer did the applications for us, completed the paperwork and went to Kirkuk to submit the applications and get new IDs for us. In two or three weeks they will bring back the new IDs for us. This is truly wonderful! I hope this continues because there are so many people who can't even afford transportation to Kirkuk, and they are in dire need of renewing their civil documentation.”

Civil documentation helps to enable access to public services, shelter support and more.

IOM Iraq provides MHPSS and legal assistance through integrated, community-based approaches in Hawija; Coordination between the two programmes helps to provide more holistic support for people in Hawija in need of multidimensional assistance. Indeed, in the context of displacement, needs are rarely singular and often compounding. Meeting MHPSS and legal needs in tandem is key to facilitating the voluntary and sustainable return of individuals to their areas of origin and achieving durable solutions to displacement.

IOM Iraq's MHPSS and legal support in Hawija is made possible by the Swiss Development & Cooperation.

UNICEF and German diplomats visit IDPs camp

Sulaymaniyah, 17 September 2022 - UNICEF, German Embassy in Iraq Chargé d'Affaires, Philip Holzapfel, and Acting Consul General in Erbil, Sven Mossler recently visited Ashti IDP camp in Sulaymaniyah to see the positive impact on children and caregivers of the programs supported by the KfW Development Bank.



IOM Iraq conducted a training on the management of emergency situations

Baghdad, 19 September 2022 - In the current Iraqi context, healthcare staff need to be prepared to deal with both natural and human-made emergencies. Towards building the capacity of the healthcare workers in IDP camps, IOM Iraq conducted a training on the management of emergency situations, security and safety for medical staff from Jeddah 5 camp clinic in Ninewa Governorate. The training covered information on fire safety, the management of natural hazards and disasters, working in hostile environment, driver management and hostage incident management. It also covered the security context in Iraq and provided general information and suggestions for dealing



with checkpoints, mines, improvised explosive devices and unexploded ordnances. A total of 14 medical staff from the Jeddah 5 camp health facility

attended.

This training was made possible with the support of the USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.

Iraqi doctor provides care and comfort to Yazidi survivors



Dr. Nagham Hasan, regional winner for the Middle East and North Africa of the 2022 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Awards, has spent years providing medical and emotional care to former ISIS captives, and pledges to continue "for the long haul" despite often harrowing work.

By Cathy Otten, UNHCR Iraq

Duhok, 4 October 2022 - Four women sit huddled together around gynaecologist Nagham Hasan in a one-room cabin in the Rwanga camp for displaced people in the Kurdistan

Region of Iraq. Dr. Nagham, wearing a white coat, reassures each patient separately. She leans in closer, holding Leila's hand, and then turns slightly to check another woman's pulse. Her brow is furrowed with concentration yet her touch is assured.

It is September, eight years after these women were forced into slavery by ISIS militants. Outside, the heat of summer is intense. When the generator shuts off, the only sound is that of the women's hushed voices. They speak quickly and urgently, with a rare sense of hope afforded by the doctor's visit.

Four years since they escaped captivity, life remains precarious.

"Thank you, doctor, for what you have done for us. You were the first one who came to comfort us, counsel us and lead us. Without you, we wouldn't be ourselves," says Nergiz, 42, who was taken captive in 2014. Like all survivors in this story, due to stigma and risks of reprisals including from her own community, she has chosen to use a pseudonym.

"We were all captives. Each one of us spent more than four years in the hands of ISIS," says Nergiz, pointing to the group of women around her. The Yazidi religious minority were singled out and subjected to a devastating, genocidal campaign in 2014 because of their religious beliefs.

In August 2014, ISIS fighters captured Sinjar in north-western Iraq, executing thousands of Yazidi men, women and children, while abducting more than 6,000 Yazidis and subjecting women and girls to the most horrific of atrocities, in particular sexual violence and enslavement. Sinjar was liberated a year later, but some 3,000 Yazidis are

Iraqi doctor provides care and comfort to Yazidi survivors *(continued)*

still missing, and over 200,000 remain displaced.

Dr. Nagham, 45, turns to Nergiz and addresses her softly: “I am always here to support you. If I can’t support you it’s because it is not in my power. My aim is to take you through the trauma you experienced.” She wraps a blood pressure monitor around Nergiz’s upper arm, tightens it and waits.

As a child in the town of Bashiqa, northern Iraq, Dr. Nagham, who is also Yazidi, noticed the injustice and abuse women faced in the wider society and decided she wanted to help. She trained as a doctor in Mosul and began her medical profession with a dream to treat women who were unable to conceive. But after 2014, her career took a different path.

“I saw the catastrophe that happened to the Yazidi women – the way they were subjected to verbal abuse and rape,” says Dr. Nagham. When everyone else was fleeing, she chose to act and headed toward the camps to treat the survivors. The former captives needed treatment for infections and injuries caused by torture and widespread sexual violence as well as their poor living conditions.

Soon after, she established an NGO, called Hope Makers, to treat survivors while working as the director of Sheikhan General Hospital. As well as lending her medical expertise, she provides comfort to survivors with personal support.

Sometimes, however, Dr. Nagham is at a loss for words when trying to comfort her patients, especially when treating

girls as young as eight: “This really affected me, and shocked my humanity because how do you comfort a child who is so young and was raped by a 60-year-old man several times?”

When grief and worry overcome her, Dr. Nagham goes to her mother, Suham, for guidance. She tells her that she must keep going; that the survivors need her. Her daughter has always been like this, says Suham, smiling; as a child, Dr. Nagham acted like a mother to her younger siblings.

“I am here for the long haul.”

Despite having the opportunity to leave Iraq, Dr. Nagham decided “categorically” to stay: “I am here for the long haul,” she says. “I have a message; I have a cause. I think [the survivors] still need help so I don’t want to give up on them. Being a Yazidi woman and having the same faith as the survivors really helped me when talking to them and understanding their needs.”

For her outstanding service and commitment to her community and displaced people in Iraq, Dr. Nagham has been chosen as the regional winner for the Middle East and North Africa of the 2022 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award, a prestigious annual prize that honours those who have gone to extraordinary lengths to help forcibly displaced or stateless people.

Displaced Yazidis still live in extreme poverty in camps, informal displacement sites or urban areas, while other families are still searching for missing loved ones. Many Yazidis still cannot return home to Sinjar

because of the lack of public services such as health and education, the destruction of their homes, continued security challenges and a lack of access to justice. And some Yazidi women, those raising children born during their ordeals, face complications reintegrating into their communities.

Dr. Nagham has so far treated 1,200 survivors. Her NGO, Hope Makers, now has 50 staff members, and two clinics in Sinjar offering counselling, psychiatry and community outreach for survivors returning home. Some of her former patients have even gone on to become advocates for peace and human rights in their own right, which she says is a source of great pride and happiness.

Back in Rwanga camp, Leila, 42, sits to Dr. Nagham’s left. She was forced into slavery for four years and was tortured repeatedly. ISIS executed her husband and three older sons, she says. “I have lost so much – so many people ... I do not have the courage to speak of the atrocities I witnessed.”

Dr. Nagham begins to cry. Leila says that her experience in captivity has taken its toll on her body and mind, and that survivors like her feel that the world has forgotten their plight and moved on. That is why the continued care and attention offered by Dr. Nagham means so much.

“From the minute we arrived home we benefited from the doctor’s support, and she is still helping us,” says Leila. “She is always there for us.”

IOM Iraq provides ICRS and cash-for-work support to Iraqis in need

Kirkuk, 14 October 2022 - Muhammed lived in Kirkuk Governorate’s Hawija district under ISIL rule. During that time, he developed thalassemia – a blood disorder that can cause fatigue, weakness and, in severe cases, heart problems and bone deformities – made worse by the prolonged and profound fear and anxiety he experienced due to the ISIL conflict.

“Everything was scary, and neither medicine nor food remained in Hawija,” Muhammad recalls. “My family and I were forced to leave Hawija because I needed medicine and follow ups with a doctor. We decided to flee to Al-Alam district in Salah Al-Din Governorate in 2016.” He was just 17 at the time.

Muhammed and his family lived in a

camp in Al-Alam district for more than a year before moving again, this time to Kirkuk Governorate, where they had relatives and hopes for more job opportunities. The difficulties Muhammed faced in Al-Alam trying to meet his family’s basic needs, coupled with the sustained psychological distress he was going through, didn’t bode well for his health. This made the move to Kirkuk more urgent, as the governorate’s doctors could monitor his condition more closely.

Two years after Hawija district was reclaimed from ISIL, Muhammed and his family returned.

“Everything felt different and strange, I felt sad and isolated myself,” Muhammed tells us. “I wasn’t able to get in touch with my old friends, I was



a moody person who would get agitated by anything and everything – basically, life was totally black to me.”

He continues: “At the time, I looked for a job in order to reduce some expenses for my family, but everyone refused to hire me, and it continued this way for

IOM Iraq provides ICRS and cash-for-work support to Iraqis in need *(continued)*

several years.”

Then, two and a half months ago, Muhammad was registered with IOM Iraq's 'Information, Counseling and Referral System' programme, dedicated to supporting young people by providing information and referrals for mental health care, protection and legal support needs; capacity development trainings; and livelihood assistance.

“At the beginning of the ICRS programme, I faced difficulty and embarrassment expressing what was inside me,” says Muhammed. “The organization's programme enabled me to gradually overcome my fears and deal positively with my stress – to [work on] self-care, integrate with my peers and make friends with most of the participants. We received about 16 training sessions in various fields of

social cohesion: peace-building, legal rights, psychological support, anger and stress management, positive thinking, media literacy and other courses that have improved my disposition and made me a positive person who knows that life isn't black anymore.”

He adds, “ICRS was a turning point that proved to everyone and myself that I am talented and able to benefit my community by creating positive changes.”

After completing the ICRS trainings, Muhammed was referred to participate in an IOM Iraq cash-for-work activity. Cash-for-work programming offers displaced persons a source of income while working on projects that directly benefit their community. This can also positively impact morale for those struggling to find work.

“I am happy that I got the job and am now able to support my family and myself,” he says. “I am keen on improving myself and being an active member in my community. Starting with my relatives and friends at work or in the area, I have begun encouraging everyone to live in peace and security, to build and restore relations between the people of the area and the community as a whole – because if Hawija is stable, there will be openness and development in services, construction and public utilities. These will all have a positive impact on the lives of people in Hawija.”

IOM Iraq is able to provide ICRS and cash-for-work support thanks to the Swiss Development & Cooperation and New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Stabilization and Development

UN-Habitat celebrated the completion and handover of the second tourist facility in the Mesopotamian Marshes

Maysan, 22 August 2022 - In the presence of H.E. Maysan Governor Ali Dawai, a range of government officials, activists and the media, UN-Habitat celebrated the completion and handover of the second tourist facility funded by the UNDAF Iraq Trust Fund in the Mesopotamian Marshes. The first was built at the edge of the village of Al Shafi, to serve the Eastern Hammar Marshes located in the governorate of Basra, while the second was built on the road to the Hawizeh Marshes in the governorate of Maysan. The tourist facilities offer a large traditional mudhif and a shaded area built in reed, a pier for accessing the boats, a row of shops for the sale of local products and toilets. The overall objective of the project is to enhance the resilience and livelihoods of marshes' communities through the realization of



a contextually appropriate and light-footed tourist facilities designed to improve the accessibility to the marshes. Between the two sites, the project has created jobs for 290 unskilled laborers and 34 skilled and specialized workmen from these areas. The facilities' handover to the local authorities comes at a very critical time for the population living in the marshes

because of the on-going drought and fall in water levels which is causing a dramatic loss of vegetation, fish, and buffalos upon which their livelihoods depend. Protracted lack of public investments and the scarcity of water are threatening one of the region's most important ecosystems, triggering socio-economic hardship and steep rise in displacement cases.

UNDP rehabilitated the R1 River Regulator that helps irrigate farmlands across Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 28 August 2022 - Through the Funding Facility for Stabilization, UNDP rehabilitated the R1 River Regulator that helps irrigate farmlands across Kirkuk. Recently, there was an oil spill in the river, and the river regulator came into effect to prevent further contamination. The regulator closed all its gates and helped clean up the river. This prevented

pollution of the water that feeds over 116,700 hectares of land. Kirkuk's civil defense teams then cleared the oil and irrigation has resumed.

The rehabilitation was possible thanks to support from Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ), through KfW Development Bank.



ILO organized an inclusive roundtable discussion that focus on social protection in Iraq



Karbala, 24 August 2022 - The ILO, together with the Nabaa Center for Culture and Media in Iraq organized an inclusive roundtable discussion as part of a series of workshops, which focus on social protection in Federal Iraq.

The one-day event, which took place in Karbala on Wednesday (24th of August) was attended by Member of Parliament Dr. Riyadh AL- Musawi, the deputy governor of Karbala Mr Jasim AL-Fatlawi, the dean of Karbala

faculty of law, Dr. Riyadh Abdulla and a number of community leaders, trade union representatives, researchers, and practitioners from various fields. With a generous funding from the European Union, ILO presented the latest UN position paper titled “Building Iraq’s Social Protection Floor: Framework and Recommendations.” In addition, Dr Alaa Alhussieny from Karbalaa University reviewed the current laws that provide social protection for Iraqis in need. A rich and fruitful discussion followed the presentations on the many issues facing the implementation of the safety net in Iraq, most notably the errors in targeting, but also assessing the reform options available to build a coherent, effective, and impactful social assistance system that contributes to a vision of an economically productive and socially inclusive Iraq.

UN Habitat continues to improve the quality of life for Iraqi citizens

Baiji, 30 August 2022 - As part of its effort to improve the quality of life for Iraqi citizens, UN Habitat’s local development team celebrated last week the completed rehabilitation of Al Asri Park in the city of Baiji by its implementing partners Janat al Frdows and SSORD. The park and its adjacent football pitch measure approx. 10,000 sqm and serve a residential neighborhood that has suffered the brunt of the conflict with ISIL. The inaugural event was attended by Ms. Bushra Al-Qaisi , Parliament member from Baiji District, Mr. Mohammed Mahmood Al-Jbori Baiji Mayor, Eng Jum’aa Darob Head of Municipality, local officials and community representatives. Speeches were followed by a formal

ribbon-cutting and a site visit to the two new sports courts, open air gym, the large semi-circular fountain, picnic area, and the different amenities for adults and children. Ms Bushra Al-Qaisi publicly emphasized the critical role of the community in taking care of the park. The project, funded by the European Union, was handed over to Baiji Municipality who will also receive gardening equipment critical for the maintenance of the park. The inauguration of Al Asri Park concludes also a range of complementary activities led by Janat al Frdows and SSORD in Al Asri area. These have included a much-needed street-by-street garbage cleaning campaign that engaged 20 unemployed youth, the distribution of 230 large

domestic plastic garbage bins to households, and a WASH awareness-campaign that involved 390 children in a series of lively drawing sessions facilitated by UN-Habitat’s team supported by a health expert.



The World Food Programme (WFP) supports more than 80,000 people with climate adaptation initiatives

Baghdad, 5 September 2022 - Did you know that Iraq is the 5th country in the world most affected by climate change? The 2020/2021 rainfall season was among the worst in 40 years. The declining rainfall is expected to prolong drought periods, with severe impacts on food and water security. In some areas, farmers are achieving only about 50% of expected yields. The World Food Programme (WFP) supports more than

80,000 people with climate adaptation initiatives such as rehabilitating

irrigation canals and installing solar-powered water pumps.



UN Habitat continues to rehabilitate houses in Sinjar

Sinjar, 1 September 2022 - “My parents cried when we came back where our house used to be and saw nothing but ruins” said nine-years old Brihat, the youngest member of his family. “Without UN-Habitat – his father continued – we would have never dreamt of living in our home again”. Brihat and his parents were among the 32 families from Sinjar who received their new house keys, in the presence of the community leaders.

Many internally displaced persons continue to struggle with the harsh reality of returning to their areas of origin because of the destruction of housing, loss of livelihoods, and the lack of vital services. Lack of safe, dignified housing also poses challenges in terms of protection and causes additional hardship for households including women, people with disabilities and elderly relatives.



With the generous funding from the Government of Japan, UN-Habitat Iraq will reconstruct and rehabilitate a total

of 260 houses in Sinjar to strengthen access to housing and support the rights of the families.

German delegation visited the Mosul University's soil and concrete laboratory, science college and theatre hall

Mosul, 6 September 2022 - The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq hosted a delegation from the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of the Federal Republic of Germany, at the University of Mosul. They visited the University's soil and concrete laboratory, science college and theatre hall. These facilities have been rehabilitated by the Funding Facility for Stabilization.



Birth registration digitalization project launched in Iraq

Baghdad, 07 September 2022 - UNICEF, in coordination with the Ministry of Health, and financed by the Government of Germany and USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, recently launched in Iraq the birth registration digitalization project. The project will train staff from Health Directorates to collect accurate, real-time information on births from maternity units and birth registration offices, and provide related IT infrastructure and capacity.

The digitalization of birth registration in Iraq will help in the planning of services, and to identify children missing services such as essential vaccines and screening of well-being and development. It will also enable health facilities to monitor all children's health status, and to follow up those at risk.



Republic of Korea provides US\$1 million to WFP's resilience-building efforts in Iraq



Baghdad, 12 September 2022 -- The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) welcomed a contribution of US\$1 million from the Government of the Republic of Korea, which will support the implementation of resilience-building activities aiming at improving sustainable agricultural production in areas affected by salinity in southern Iraq.

This grant will support in restoring the agricultural-based livelihoods of nearly 4,000 smallholder farmers and their families through measures that help communities adapt to water and soil salinity in addition to focusing on climate-smart agricultural practices such as solar-powered water pumps and hydroponics, to withstand the

adverse effects of climate change and build their food security.

"The government of the Republic of Korea has been committed to supporting Iraq and its people over the past decades," said Mr. Sung-soo Choi, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Iraq. "It is my great pleasure to partner with WFP, which has the expertise to provide well-targeted assistance to the southern parts of Iraq, where our companies are also contributing to the community by building key infrastructures."

Iraq is the world's fifth most affected country by climate change. Water availability has plummeted due to the worst rainfall season in over 40 years and increasing water evaporation has

led to the degradation of large swathes of fertile lands in the southern governorates of the country due to salinity.

A decrease in water flow, particularly in the southern governorates where the rural population depends on agriculture to make a living, means the agricultural sector is unable to guarantee sufficient and sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural areas.

In addition, Iraq is currently a net importer of food and has been heavily impacted by the current crisis in Ukraine. "We need to take action now and introduce innovative solutions to the old agricultural practices that are just not sustainable in today's climate," said WFP Iraq representative Ally Raza Qureshi. "WFP is grateful for the Republic of Korea's support to help us tackle these serious issues and promote improved agriculture and food security in the land of two rivers."

With the support of partners such as the Republic of Korea, WFP can expand its resilience-building and livelihood interventions which have currently benefitted up to 51,000 food insecure smallholder farmers, returnees, and vulnerable communities across Iraq in 2022.

Skilling for the future

How Ramadi's Vocational Training Centre is producing Iraq's future entrepreneurs.

Ramadi, 12 September 2022 - Zaman Awad Farhan, now 30, returned to Ramadi in 2017 after liberation from ISIL. However, when she returned with her husband and three children, she was met with heartbreaking devastation. "Our house was left damaged by a mortar attack. I used to run a provision store and lost everything. Having used up all my

financial savings to take care of my family during the conflict, I could not reopen the store. It forced me to look for odd jobs to make ends meet."

Looking for a stable source of income, Zaman came across a one and a half month vocational training opportunity for hairdressers at the Vocational Training Centre in Ramadi. "I saw the call for applicants on social media and immediately applied." Now, she is pursuing her dream of opening her salon.

The Center was reopened in December

2019 after it was left damaged in the ISIL conflict. Its main building and 14 workshops were rehabilitated and equipped through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization, led by the Governorate of Anbar and local municipality in Ramadi. Since its reopening, more than 2,000 Iraqis like Zaman have been trained through the Center, with the number increasing each year.

Given the availability of funds for courses for, over 130,000 employment seekers registered with the Directorate of Labor and Social Affairs in Anbar can access the Center to gain skills in repairing household appliances, hairdressing, plumbing, sewing, carpentry, electrical works and car mechanics.

Ahmed Mohammed Zaki, 44, manages the Center. He ensures it is well-equipped, maintained and efficiently managed. "We have come a long way since liberation. I am thrilled to see the people of Ramadi benefit from the various trainings conducted here. This Center has become a hub for not just trainings and workshops, but also



Skilling for the future *(continued)*

meetings and discussions for social cohesion activities."

"Vocational skills are traditionally looked down upon in Iraq. We need to shift people's mindsets and make them see this as an opportunity to set up their own business." Ahmed plays a crucial role in spreading awareness about the various courses available across hard-to-reach communities in Anbar, providing the most vulnerable with opportunities to access long-term, stable employment.

"The rehabilitation of the Center has played a huge role in creating economic and job opportunities for people returning to Ramadi and finding ways to rebuild their life. We have maintained the facility and ensured courses run regularly," says Dr. Ibrahim Khalil Awsaj, the Mayor of Ramadi. The local municipality is key in ensuring information about the courses and opportunities the Center offers reaches communities across Ramadi.

At 27, Faten Adnan Adel managed to convince her family that she could earn an income and help run the household. "It was not easy to convince my family. Also, if I was going to work and start a business. I wanted to push myself and pick up a non-traditional skill."

At the Vocational Training Center in Ramadi, she found the opportunity to

get the skills she needed to become an electrician. "Initially, the other male participants were slightly hesitant to engage with me. Eventually, they came around and took me seriously. I stayed focused on learning and sharpening my skills. I learnt to install, repair, wire and maintain electrical systems."

The experience has not just provided Faten with new skills but also boosted her self-esteem. She was paid a daily stipend of US\$ 15. "I saved up most of my stipend to purchase a tool kit and start my business." Faten will soon become a breadwinner for her family while breaking barriers in a field traditionally dominated by men.

For Iyad Nafeh Hussein, 37, the course in welding has helped kick start his business. "The skills I learnt will stay with me all my life. Most importantly, the workshop is well equipped and maintained. I was able to gain practical and hands-on experience." Displaced during the conflict, he returned to Ramadi in 2018 and struggled to make ends meet. "I have hope now. I want to start spreading the word that I am available and ready to work."

More than five years since liberation from ISIL, Iraq faces new sources of instability due to lack of livelihood opportunities and economic turmoil. Training Centers like this are instrumental in providing technical

skills to people who are either unemployed, looking to set up businesses or are unable to access higher education.

"I have big dreams for the people of Ramadi. I hope that we can continue to serve the people and ensure we have a stable economic, social, and security situation. Ensuring smooth functioning of facilities like the vocational training Center will contribute to Ramadi's stability and economic growth. I hope that we keep engaging young people in productive and economic activities, so they can move away from extremism and contribute to the future of Iraq," adds Dr. Ibrahim, the Mayor of Ramadi.

Today, with over fourteen courses being conducted three days a week, the Ramadi Vocational Training Center is bustling with energy and promise.

About: The rehabilitation and equipping of the Vocational Training Center in Ramadi were implemented by UNDP Iraq's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS). The rehabilitation was funded by USAID, while the supply of IT equipment and furniture was supported by the Federal Republic of Germany, provided through KfW Development Bank. Supply of specific workshop equipment was supported by Finland, Norway, Italy, Denmark, Sweden and the European Union.

UNDP, USAID and KRG support digitization of the Public Pension Management Information System in Kurdistan

Erbil, 12 September 2022 – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) of Iraq, with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) today launch a new Public Pension Management Information System (PPMIS) in Kurdistan. The system will help to digitize and simplify business processes, reduce processing time for retirement applications, and prepare reports for decision makers.

UNDP has worked closely with the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MoF) and the Ministry of Planning (MoP) of the KRG to implement the PPMIS, a customized web-based application that connects twelve pension directorates with the General Directorate of Pension, and replaces a manual paperwork process, meaning easier and more seamless coordination and access to information. UNDP has conducted five training sessions, training a total of 62 pension



departmental staff, and has supported the General Directorate of Pension with the establishment of an administrative unit to implement and manage the system. This new system, which officially became active on 01 August 2022, has seen close to 600 new retirement applications submitted already.

According to Dr. Dara Rashid Mahmud, Minister of Planning, Kurdistan Regional Government, "The Public

Pension Management system is one of the Kurdistan Regional Government's accomplishments, and it is implemented in all governorates across Kurdistan."

"The new Public Pension Management Information System will support the digitization of pensioners affairs, link all pension directorates in the Kurdistan Region together, and speed up the processing time for pension applications in the future. Also,

UNDP, USAID and KRG support digitization of the Public Pension Management Information System in Kurdistan *(continued)*

pensioners can follow the progress of their applications online,” states Mr. Hazen Ismail Ramazan, Director General of Pension, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Kurdistan Regional Government.

"Ensuring timely and seamless access to pension information is a positive development that promotes the use of

transparent and sustainable digital technology in Iraq. The U.S. Mission in Iraq is proud of its contribution to bolster the pension management system in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq," says U.S. Consul General Irvin Hicks, Jr.

UNDP Iraq Resident Representative, Zena Ali-Ahmad, states, "UNDP is

grateful for the generous support from USAID alongside integral efforts from the Kurdistan Regional Government for their dedication toward upgrading the pension management information system in Kurdistan, ensuring residents are able to better access public services as they exit the workforce."

Strategic partnerships will bring everyone on board to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030



Erbil, 13 September 2022 – Some 20 technical staff of the Kurdistan Region's Ministry of Planning (MoP-KR) honed their skills in a training on how to build strategic partnerships for collaboration to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone in the Kurdistan Region.

The Development Support Office (DSO) in the UNAMI Erbil Regional Office, in partnership with the MoP-KR, conducted the one-day training with the objective of empowering the participants to build and foster

collaborative relationships with different relevant stakeholders with whom they can collaborate and monitor the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"This training is relevant to increasing our knowledge in understanding the SDGs as well as building strategic partnerships because we are critical in the implementation of government policies and development plans," explained Dr. Kanar Hidayat, the Director General of Development Coordination and Cooperation at the Kurdistan Ministry of Planning (MoP).

She added that the knowledge gained by the participants will be transferred to other colleagues at the director-general offices in the government ministries of the Kurdistan Region.

In his remarks, Kiezit Patrick of UNAMI DSO Erbil Regional Office explained to the participants that MoP Iraq sees vision 2030 as the framework for its development progress and a road map which all ministries and local governments should adhere to for the realization of the implementation of the global agenda 2030. "It is therefore important for us to equip you with the tools and the knowledge you need to do this work," he said.

Gohdar Mohammad Ali, head of Population and Labour Force Statistics, one of the participants, spoke about his take-away from the training. "What was important for me is to know who our partners can be and what resources they bring to the table. With this knowledge, I now have a better idea of developing indicators that are relevant to the implementation of the SDGs."

Text and photos by Celia E.B.T. Dadson, Public Information Office, UNAMI Erbil Regional Office

IOM Iraq engaged community members in Zab sub-district to expand two local primary schools

Baghdad, 13 September 2022 - As the number of displaced families returning home to Hawija district increases, schools struggle to meet the educational needs of the district's growing number of children. Some children are opting out entirely.

In response to community-raised concerns over overcrowding in schools and insufficient access to education, IOM Iraq engaged community members in Zab sub-district to expand two local primary schools: Al-Khawa boys' school and Al-Dahya girl's school. Together, they built four classrooms in Al-Khawa school and three in Al-Aldahya school.

IOM Iraq also supported the schools with materials and equipment for a healthy educational environment that encourages children and families to engage in school events and build stronger community relationships.

During the schools' reopening ceremony, one returnee mother said, "I am glad to see these improvements in the schools, now my child can sit with other children, learn and plan his future here."

This project was supported by the Government of New Zealand and the Government of Switzerland's Agency for Development and Cooperation.



UN-Habitat's Housing Land and Property Rights (HLP) programme organized the first awareness session on HLP and issued and

Sinjar, 14 September 2022 - In coordination with local authorities and community leaders, UN-Habitat's Housing Land and Property Rights (HLP) programme organized the first awareness session on HLP and issued and distributed the first 90 land occupancy certificates to the Yazidi minority living in Gir Zarak village in Sinjar district, under the project "Promoting peace and stability in Iraq by facilitating sustainable returns", funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

The project aims to provide support for the sustainable returns of vulnerable displaced population to Sinjar by facilitating and supporting their HLP rights and improvement of living

conditions.

Due to a legacy of discrimination, the Yazidi minority were not allowed until now to register their land rights in Iraq. Through UN-Habitat's HLP

programme, Yazidi's HLP claims, and rights are registered, mapped and homeowners receive their land occupancy documentation for the first time.



The Ministry of Youth and Sports and the ILO partner to advance financial education among youth in Iraq



Baghdad, 19 September 2022 - The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) in Iraq have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen their cooperation in advancing financial education among youth in Iraq.

The new partnership focuses on training a pool of national trainers from the Ministry in various governorates on ILO's Global Financial Education Programme, designed to teach financial knowledge and management skills to vulnerable groups, particularly young women and men.

The trainers will in return train around 1,000 young women and men on the tool, with a focus on those who are looking to start or improve their businesses in various sectors. The selected youth will include forcibly displaced persons, returnees and host community members, with a focus on Ninewa.

The initiative is being carried out by the ILO under the PROSPECTS partnership which is supported by the Government of the Netherlands.

"The Ministry has undertaken an important approach related to raising financial awareness and education, which emphasises the need for young people wishing to engage in the labour market to become well-informed of the main principles governing financial management through planning for personal budgets or business budgets and ways to deal with their finances...The most recent of which is the agreement with the International Labour Organization to set up a financial education programme in which a group of youth from ten governorates are trained with the aim that they launch their own training initiatives targeting around one thousand young people," said Minister of Youth and Sports of Iraq, H.E. Adnan Dirjal.

The ILO Global Programme on Financial Education is a comprehensive programme that addresses limited levels of financial literacy around the world, through national policy dialogue and capacity building at all levels and has been implemented for more than ten years in multiple countries.

The ILO has adapted the programme to address the needs of the Iraqi context and has begun to roll out the programme at the national level.

"The Labour Force Survey of Iraq shows that more than one-third of the youth population in Iraq was not in education, nor in employment or training. In addition, the youth unemployment rate was more than three times that of the adult unemployment rate. These figures highlight the urgent need to attract more youth towards the private sector and entrepreneurship," said Maha Kattaa, ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq. "Our collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports is a step in the right direction as it will enhance the capacities of young people in managing their finances, while supporting them to build sound relationships with financial institutions, which will help their businesses to grow."

PROSPECTS is a strategic four-year global partnership, that supports host communities and displaced populations in eight countries across East and North Africa and the Arab States and which also includes UNICEF, UNHCR, IFC, and the World Bank.

UNDP has supplied the Anbar Governorate with 18 cargo trucks

Anbar, 14 September 2022 - UNDP has supplied the Anbar Governorate with 18 cargo trucks. They will be used to maintain and ensure the smooth operation of municipality-provided services such as roadwork, sewerage repairs, water and electricity. The

trucks were distributed to al-Qaim, Al-Karābilah, Romana, Rawa and Falluja. This was implemented by the Funding Facility for Stabilization thanks to generous funding provided by USAID Iraq.



FAO Iraq rehabilitated the infrastructure and operational capacity of the North Al-Jazeera irrigation project



Baghdad, 19 September 2022 - More than 90% of the residents of Rabia rely on the North Al-Jazeera irrigation project as their main source of income.

Without this project, which is being rehabilitated by FAO, people will not be able to survive and will be forced to migrate to other areas.

Thanks to support from the European Union in Iraq, through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syria Crisis, 'Madad Fund', FAO Iraq rehabilitated the infrastructure and operational capacity of the irrigation project, enabling farmers to restore their livelihoods and agricultural assets which they lost during ISIL occupation. More than 200,000 people gained access to irrigated lands, enabling them to improve their food security. Mohamed is one those farmers. He was able to rent land where he planted potatoes and plans to plant wheat in the coming season. He is also employing 150 workers in his field supporting them with a sustainable source of income.

Technical workshop on the validation and ratification of KRI Vision 2030 held in Erbil

Erbil, 20 September 2022 - From 18-20 September, UNDP Iraq and the KRG Ministry of Planning held a technical workshop for around 200 senior officials from ministries in the KRI on the validation and ratification of KRI Vision 2030.

Work on KRI Vision 2030 started in collaboration with UNDP in early 2021 as a long-term development plan for the future of the region and encompasses a robust set of strategic initiatives. KRI Vision 2030 aims to facilitate public-

private sector involvement by encouraging and reporting on national growth and development strategies.

Mr. Zakros Fatah, Deputy Minister of Planning in the KRI emphasized the importance of adopting KRI Vision 2030 as a development plan that helps raise the level of services and the standard of living for all citizens.

Next up, KRI Vision 2030 will be submitted to the KRG Council of Ministers for adoption before the end of 2022.



UNDP has completed the rehabilitation of municipality shops in Ba'aj, Ninewa!

Ba'aj, 21 September 2022 - UNDP has completed the rehabilitation of municipality shops in Ba'aj, Ninewa!

Based in the city center, the complex has the capacity to hold nine shops. The local municipality will conduct a public auction calling for business owners to rent the facility at government-subsidized rates. This will help revive the local economy after being severely impacted by the ISIL conflict.

The shops were rehabilitated by the Funding Facility for Stabilization thanks to Canada in Iraq's generous support!



9,500 people in Sinjar now have access to clean water thanks to USAID and UNDP partnership

Sinjar, 20 September 2022 – The newly built Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment System in al-Qayrawan, Sinjar, has officially been opened with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ninewa Governorate.

The newly built water treatment system will provide uninterrupted access to clean drinking water to over 9,500 people living in central al-Qayrawan, Sinjar. The purpose-built facility can treat over 100 litres of water per person daily.

Before this, people living in al-Qayrawan did not have regular access to clean water. They would purchase water in tankers from private companies. The expense and uncertainty of transporting water by road resulted in increased prices and a lack of quality control. In addition, during the ISIL conflict, water supply from the tankers was regularly interrupted, leaving people without clean drinking water.

The Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment system is self-sustainable and built to purify and desalinate groundwater. The project included building three water treatment stations strategically distributed across central al-Qayrawan to reach all households. Each station has a well, reverse osmosis plant, dispensing tanks and spigots to



produce over 20,000 litres of water every hour.

The project was implemented through USAID and UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization programme. Since 2015, USAID has contributed over US \$400 million to the Facility, including over \$10 million in Sinjar, making it the Facility's leading partner. To date, USAID has supported around 900 rehabilitation projects through the Facility, including ensuring services such as water, education, electricity and health are restored.

"The reopening of this water treatment system is an important milestone in the journey to rebuild Sinjar and recover from years of instability. Finding local and sustainable solutions such as this system is key to creating a safe and dignified environment for families choosing to return to Sinjar," says

UNDP Resident Representative in Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"We would not be here today without the support of one of our founding partners, USAID. Together with USAID, we have made tremendous contributions to stabilization in Iraq. I would also like to recognize the strong partnership UNDP has with the federal government and local authorities, which enables us to implement such projects and ensure their sustainability," she adds.

UNDP is the leading implementer of stabilization activities in Iraq. To date, UNDP has completed over 3,300 stabilization projects across the liberated areas of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din. The programme has assisted 4.95 million internally displaced people to return home.

Three roundtable meetings of 'Social Policy and Economic Perspective in Iraq' were conducted

Erbil, 21 September 2022 - Three out of five roundtable meetings for the 'Social Policy and Economic Perspective in Iraq' were conducted by Rwanga Foundation in partnership with ILO (International Labor Organization).

Three roundtable meetings were conducted so far in Duhok, Halabja, and Sulaimani governorates, different stakeholders, governmental entities, and decision makers were brought together to discuss two topics:

- Implementation of retirement and social security law, its inclusion, and increasing inclusion area.

- Performing the rules of retirement and social security law and their influence to promote inclusion through social protection.

The designated participants have discussed and made suggestions and recommendations to achieve the

deliverable goal. During the roundtable meetings, topics were discussed about various sectors and informal workers who are not registered in the social security system yet. Challenges and best ways to be encountered were focused on.

After each roundtable meeting, a report was by a consultant prepared in each governorate as an outcome of the meeting with solutions to achieve a specific goal. However, two more meetings under two other different topics will be conducted in the upcoming months in (Erbil and Kirkuk) governorates.

The project is implemented by Rwanga Foundation in partnership with ILO (International Labor Organization), to bring together different stakeholders, entities, and decision-makers to discuss "Implementation of retirement and

social security law, its inclusion and increasing inclusion area" which is mainly to include all different sectors and informal workers in the social security system. During the roundtable meetings, Challenges and best ways to be encountered will be focused on. Meanwhile, ILO will share and discuss the proposed recommendations and suggestions with certain governmental authorities.



ILO to boost support for young entrepreneurs

Baghdad, 22 September 2022 - An MOU was signed between the Chamber of Industry in Ninewa and ILO PROSPECTS to boost support for young entrepreneurs in starting and expanding their businesses and provide young people with work-based learning and job placement.

The collaboration also focuses on training trainers from the Chamber on ILO's Start and Improve Your Business programme and enhancing outreach to

small business owners to start or improve their enterprises through training, capacity building and access to finance.

This falls within the framework of ILO's work under PROSPECTS in Ninewa to enhance engagement, employment and entrepreneurship of young people and foster their contribution to socio-economic development.



The Judicial Complex in Telkaif is now open

Telkaif, 22 September 2022 - The Judicial Complex in Telkaif is now open!

It was left damaged during the ISIL conflict. Managed by the Ministry of Justice, the complex will provide notary, judicial and land registration services. This will serve over 300,000 people living in and around the facility. It was rehabilitated through the UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization thanks to generous support from the Netherlands.



UNDP and ILO in Iraq to create decent short-term job opportunities for communities affected by the ISIL conflict

Baghdad, 22 September 2022 - UNDP have collaborated with International Labor Organization in Iraq to create decent short-term job opportunities for communities affected by the ISIL conflict. Focused on rehabilitating damaged infrastructure in al-Hamdaniya district in Ninewa, the joint project integrates ILO's signature Employment Intensive Investment Programme into UNDP cash-for-work activities.

To date, 183 people have been employed

through this partnership. This means they have not just gotten job opportunities that have helped boost their household income, but UNDP have also ensured they work in safe and dignified conditions.

This approach links rebuilding infrastructure lost during the ISIL conflict with creating jobs. It ensures that Iraqis can access more sustainable job opportunities while building back their lives.



The IOM and UNODC upgrade infrastructure and modernize the Trebil border crossing point

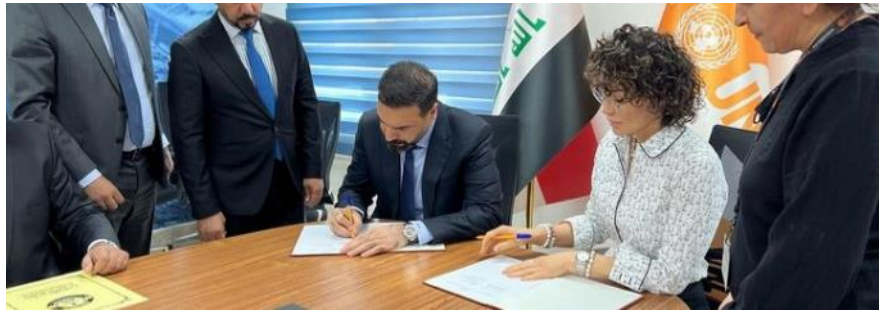
Baghdad, 22 September 2022 - Trebil is the only official land border crossing point between Iraq and Jordan. It sustained heavy damage during the conflict with ISIL and was closed for some time during the crisis, then re-opened in 2017. Since 2020, IOM and UNODC have been supporting the Iraqi Government by upgrading infrastructure and modernizing the Trebil border crossing point to improve security and facilitate legitimate and orderly flow of goods and people between the two countries.

The rehabilitation and upgrading of the Trebil Border Crossing Point was made possible with support from the European Union.



Strengthening and building capacity of Iraqi human resources for a more sustainable development Iraq

Baghdad, 27 September 2022 - UNFPA signed a memorandum of understanding with Al-Turath University to engage academia in development and humanitarian programmes on women health and youth empowerment. Through the partnership, training will be held to strengthen and build capacity of Iraqi human resources for a more Sustainable Development Iraq.



50 individuals took part in a recent Cash for Work (CfW) activity to clean school water tanks ahead of the new school year



Sulaymaniyah, 27 September 2022 - "We have been living in Sulaymaniyah since 2014 and life has been difficult for us. We are refugees; we live in rented homes, we have expenses, our kids go to school. Therefore we are very grateful for work opportunities such as this Cash for Work activity where we clean water tanks in Sulaymaniyah schools ahead of the school year. The

work is not too hard, and it is nice that there is an organization that supports us in this way. What we get from this work helps us greatly, because there aren't many opportunities for us, I hope these activities can continue. There are things I always wanted, but could not afford, for example a washing machine. This opportunity came at the right moment. Now I can save money from

this activity and buy one," said Dilivan, a mother of three from Afrin, Syria.

Dilivan is a refugee from Syria, currently living in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq with her family. She is one of 50 individuals in Sulaymaniyah (20 women, 30 men) who took part in a recent Cash for Work (CfW) activity to clean school water tanks in the city ahead of the new school year. The goals of IOM Iraq's CfW programming are two-fold: to support participants in earning daily wages, while also supporting the local government and communities at large through campaigns that improve shared spaces for all.

Since 21 July 2022, the group has cleaned water tanks in 132 schools.

IOM Iraq's CfW activities in Sulaymaniyah are made possible with the support of the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Over 980 people, like Mona, Faisal and Arjan from Tooz, have received business development and grant support



Tooz, 26 September 2022 - Looking to repair your mobile phone in Tooz? Look no further, as Mona Majeed's mobile repair store is now open for business. The 19-year-old is the first woman to have opened a mobile repair and accessories store in Tooz, Salah al-Din.

However, it has been an uphill climb for

Mona to get here. Originally from the outskirts of Tooz, Mona was forced to flee with her family during the ISIL conflict. "We lost all our money during the conflict as we had to flee and leave our belongings behind. We had to start from scratch. It was with my husband's help I was able to open the store. He had to work as a daily wagger to save open for the store," she says.

Although both Iraqi men and women own phones, the repair market is predominately dominated by men. Mona received a lot of backlash and resistance from her community when she decided to open the store. "I was able to overcome these difficulties." She believes that starting the store not just confronts gender norms but also inspires other women in her community.

Mona received business development

training and a start-up grant from UNDP. She received a five-day long business training course, followed by a grant of US\$ 1,000.

"I was able to open this store thanks to the business development training and start-up grant I received. This helped me purchase the repair tools I needed to start the store. While the training helped me understand how to run a business and track income, expenses and profits. I also learnt to balance profits and investing in my shop's growth."

A natural self-starter, Mona learnt to repair different mobile phones through online tutorials and videos. "I would watch videos online to find solutions to repair different models of phones. I used the profits to stock up on mobile phone accessories. This has helped boost my business."

Over 980 people, like Mona, Faisal, Shukria and Arjan from Tooz, have received business development and grant support *(continued)*

Today, Mona earns a profit of nearly IQD 500,000 (approximately US\$ 400). "My husband requires eye surgery. I hope to be able to save enough for the surgery and also expand the store and its services."

In a short period, Mona has been able to build a loyal customer base and increase her household income. "I have at least six to eight customers every day. With my earnings, I can cover all expenses for the house, including the rent." She also earns enough to be able to hire someone to help her manage the store.

Creating grant opportunities helps women like Mona realize their full potential. "I want to encourage more women to start such businesses, even if it is small. I want Iraqi women to defy the idea that only men can work."

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Meet 46-year-old Faisal from Tooz, Salah al-Din. He runs a mushroom greenhouse. With a loyal customer base and consistent harvest, his business is booming. He is married with five children.

This was not always the case for Faisal. He is originally a farmer from Abo Hassan, a village 14 km from Tooz. However, during the ISIL conflict, he was forced to flee to Tooz with his family. Overnight, his family was forced to abandon their home and farmland.

Faisal did not give up. To make ends meet, he worked as a daily wagger. Faisal kept his family's spirits high and hoped to save enough money to restart his farm. "One day, you will thank yourself for never giving up," he says. He dreamed of starting a mushroom greenhouse.

Faisal received business development training and a start-up grant from UNDP. He received a five-day long business training course, followed by a grant of US\$ 1,000. The project was implemented by World Vision in Iraq.

The Mayor of Tooz had called upon families like Faisal's who were displaced by the ISIL conflict to register and identify their required support. Grabbing this opportunity, Faisal applied for a start-up grant or business development support. Afterwards, World Vision and UNDP shortlisted Faisal based on a pre-determined vulnerability criterion that considered his socio-economic situation and family's capacity to recover from

conflict.

On speaking to Malik from the project implementation team at World Vision Iraq, he says, "Faisal's enthusiasm for his business was evident. He always showed me videos about mushroom greenhouses. He studied every detail about mushroom harvesting."

When Faisal received the grant, he immediately started working toward establishing the mushroom greenhouse. After Faisal built the greenhouse, he produced his first batch of mushrooms.

Faisal's business is booming. He has established a reliable supply chain for the mushrooms he harvests. He has also been able to build a loyal customer base.

However, this is only the beginning for Faisal. He dreams bigger. He now plans to upgrade his greenhouse, increase production and diversify the types of mushrooms produced.

Today, Faisal has a stable income and can provide his family with an improved quality of life. Most importantly, he has inspired all those around him. Faisal's 12-year-old son Ahmed* says, "I want to study agriculture and help my father grow his business and company."

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Meet Arjan Saadon Shawkat, 31, a father of three who lives in Tooz, Salah al-Din. His fondest memories growing up were spending time with his father on their farm in Yangija, a village five kilometres from Tooz. A wheelchair user from birth, he remembers spending long hours after school feeding the livestock on the farm. He always dreamt about taking over the dairy farm from his parents one day.

Life took an unfortunate turn for Arjan and his family during the liberation from ISIL. They had to flee, leaving their home and farm behind. "I still remember how we were worried for our safety. And how I was more worried about our cattle," he recalls.

Arjan and his family fled overnight. "One night, we decided to leave the house and take the cattle along with us. My brother, Yunus, carried me on his back. We fled towards the city centre, five kilometres from our home. When we arrived the next morning, we received the news that ISIL burned down our house." He remembers

how heartbroken and devastated his family felt on hearing the news.

Arjan's family was forced to use their savings to rent a place in Tooz. Unfortunately, they did not have enough funds to feed or provide medical attention for the cattle. Over time, they started to lose their cattle.

Arjan's health deteriorated during this period, and he had to undergo life-saving spinal surgery. The surgery was costly, forcing his family to sell the remaining cattle and borrow money. "I felt like I was the main reason for losing our only source of livelihood and for selling the cattle that was with us throughout our lives." This feeling forced Arjan to focus on his health and work towards building back what they lost.

Five years after liberation, Arjan's family returned to their village. He was more determined than ever to reestablish their dairy farm. Along with his brother, wife and parents, Arjan cleared the rubble and started to restore the house and farm slowly. "I cleaned and rebuilt the cattle barn by myself. I strongly believed that I would find an opportunity to buy cattle one day."

This was when Arjan heard about a start-up grant and business development training organized by UNDP. He grabbed onto the opportunity and immediately applied for it. He was then shortlisted based on a pre-determined criterion considering his socio-economic situation. During the training, Arjan was always the first to turn up and one of the most engaged. He was determined to use this opportunity to rebuild the dairy farm. On receiving the grant, Arjan purchased a couple of cows

Today, Arjan is the primary caretaker and manager of the farm. He ensures the quality of milk products while also managing the sales and supply chain. He recently rented out additional farmland to cultivate wheat. He plans to use his profits from the wheat farm to expand his dairy business. He now dreams of building a dairy farm larger than he had before the conflict.

About

The project is implemented by UNDP's Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme, in partnership with World Vision, with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), provided through KFW Development Bank. Over 980 people, like Mona, Faisal, Shukria and Arjan from Tooz, have received business development and grant support.

*Names have been changed to protect identity.

Return to campus: Shirqat College of Engineering reopens its doors

Baghdad, 5 October 2022 - The ISIL conflict displaced millions of Iraqis and destroyed homes, schools, offices, water systems, electricity networks and hospitals. Among the destruction were universities and colleges. During the occupation, they became hotbeds of repression. As the conflict deepened, academic freedom was left threatened or curtailed. Teachers, researchers, and students were forced to flee, and classes were abruptly stalled. Sometimes entire campuses were left devastated. Unfortunately, the Shirqat College of Engineering in Salah al-Din was among the many severely impacted institutions. Established in 2013, it was a relatively new institution before occupation. Equipped with a world-class curriculum and faculty, it aimed to become the engineering hub for Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din. The college focused on providing students with the required tools, resources and knowledge to develop solutions in mechanical and electrical engineering. However, it suffered extensive damages under ISIL and subsequently closed. "After liberation, the college was only a name on paper. The building was destroyed," says Professor Ali Mustafa, Dean, Shirqat College of Engineering. To support Iraqis restore important higher education centers, the college was equipped and rehabilitated through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization. "Today, the college has

opened its door to students. We have started to welcome students back on campus," says Professor Ali. After the conflict, only thirty students enrolled for classes. But today, over 300 students have enrolled. "The increase in enrollment has been possible because of the upgrading and equipping of the college and its laboratories. Initially, the college limited its admissions to the residents of Shirqat. Now, we welcome students from Iraq, such as Basra, Erbil, and Mosul. It is important to ensure diversity, inclusion, and cultural exchange between young Iraqis," he adds. Rebuilding institutions like the Shirqat Engineering College is crucial for post-conflict recovery, peacebuilding and economic development. For 22-year-old Ahmed Hammadi, a second-year mechanical engineering student, returning to campus has restored his sense of hope. "When we returned home, Shirqat was under rubble. But life is different now. I can see a lot of changes since liberation. Today, the college is closer to my home, and I can easily travel to the campus." During the conflict, Ahmed and his family fled to Kirkuk city. Two years after liberation, they returned to Shirqat as essential services like water, electricity and health care were restored. Looking ahead, he hopes to graduate and contribute to developing his hometown. Ahmed is not alone. 19-year-old Faten

Aziz, a first-year mechanical engineering student, also feels the same sense of renewed hope. "When we returned with my family from Erbil, it hurt me to see the pictures of the martyrs, destroyed buildings and abandoned homes. It was a bad period. Today, I see hope and have new aspirations. I hope to graduate and contribute to rebuilding my country." About: The Shirqat College of Engineering was rehabilitated through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization with generous funding provided by Canada. The Facility focuses on rehabilitating public infrastructure and providing essential services to communities living in areas affected by the conflict. It includes rehabilitating schools and hospitals, water systems and electricity networks, providing short-term employment through public works schemes and rehabilitating damaged houses.



IOM Iraq established an electrical network for IDPs in the Hay Al-Askari informal site

Baghdad, 06 October 2022 - Because informal sites are not connected to public electricity networks, those living there are forced to either go without or else find their own ways of accessing electricity. As a result, informal site residents are more vulnerable to dangers from issues such as unsafe wiring. IOM Iraq donated the materials for and established an electrical network for IDPs in the Hay Al-Askari informal site in order to improve safe access to

electricity and reduce dangers posed by improvised electrical wiring. IOM Iraq employed community members through cash-for-work activities to rewire electricity connections and install new wiring where needed for 150 houses belonging to both IDP and host community members. This activity was supported by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).



SDGs week celebrated in Iraq

Baghdad, 12 October 2022 - In celebration of SDGs week, UNDP held the Iraqi Youth Voice in SDGs initiative in cooperation with Iraqi universities in Basra, Karbala, and Anbar!

The initiative aimed at finding

solutions within SDGs 5,13,16 allowing the participation of 367 young men and women. Winners' selection included 18 candidates from the participating governorates to present their initiatives. The winning initiatives included

volunteering work aimed at raising awareness by addressing climate change, launching awareness campaigns, and holding art exhibitions concerned with gender equality, justice, and peace.

Encouraging national dialogue toward the decentralization of decision-making in Iraq



Baghdad, 8 October 2022 - The decentralization of power from central to local authorities promotes participation from community members in more areas, leading to a more inclusive governance process. UNDP, supported by the European Union (EU), has organized a preparatory workshop for the purpose of re-launching national dialogue on the decentralization process in Iraq, in partnership with the High Commission for the Coordination between Provinces (HCCP) and Iraqi Ministry of Planning (MOP).

The workshop took place in Baghdad and was attended by more than 109 participants including governors, deputy ministers, various senior government officials, and representatives of international organizations with a view to adopting a new approach towards re-engineering the decentralization process and

launching a new roadmap toward decentralization.

During the workshop, participants discussed and analyzed topics and obstacles related to the administrative, institutional, legal, and governmental aspects of decentralization. A new national approach was discussed, including key inputs into the national dialogue process, with a focus on avoiding political bias with respect to the effective implementation of decentralization.

Barbara Egger, Head of Cooperation for Iraq, Delegation of the European Union to Iraq, said during the event that, "The EU, MOP, HCCP and UNDP have a common goal, in that we want Iraqis and Iraqi youth to be educated, to be provided with health services, and other services they need for their wellbeing. Decentralization is certainly a long road, but it is a long road that is

worth the effort."

Dr. Aqil Khazali, Head of HCCP, expressed that, "Today's meeting does not express luxury, but rather a national necessity, given that decentralization is not only a politically and administratively binding constitutional principle in Iraq, but it also ensures the latest administrative systems are put in place, consistent with modern strategic management."

The Deputy Minister of Planning for Technical Affairs, Dr. Maher Juhan, indicated that, "The best thing we can do at this stage is not to stop, but to deeply reviewing what we have achieved, including the challenges and gains, and the future steps that we must take together toward decentralization in Iraq."

The preparatory workshop on decentralization was complemented by the implementation of a two-day training session targeting eighteen legal experts from Basra, Missan, Thi Qar, Salah Al-Din, Ninawa and Anbar governorates with the objective of analyzing the legislative framework for decentralization in Iraq in order to identify gaps and discrepancies, allowing for renewed commitment toward renewing the decentralization process in Iraq.

This series of workshops is implemented under the Supporting Recovery and Stability in Iraq through Local Development Programme, with support from the EU.

Senior officials participated in a workshop dedicated to discussion and expertise exchange on disaster risk reduction



Basra, 13 October 2022 - In recent years, Iraq has been affected by multiple natural and man-made hazards, like droughts, sandstorms, heatwaves, floods, and desertification. Conflict-affected communities,

including displaced populations, are increasingly vulnerable to these disasters.

This week, senior officials representing the Government of Iraq and Basra Governorate participated in two-day

workshop dedicated to discussion and expertise exchange on disaster risk reduction, including response coordination, procedures, stakeholders and the implementation of a unified community rapid assessment to report disasters.

This workshop builds upon the outcomes of another workshop organized in Kirkuk just one week before – part of a series of related workshops organized by IOM across a number of Iraqi governorates. In light of positive results, IOM Iraq is continuing to support coordination between disaster preparedness and response agencies on the national and governorate levels.

This workshop was made possible with support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.

Returning home, rebuilding lives, restoring hope



Mosul, 13 October 2022 - The battle to liberate Iraq from ISIL forced over 6 million people to flee, leaving their homes and lives behind. Many suffered widespread destruction and displacement due to years of instability. Since liberation, Iraq has been steadily progressing towards recovery. UNDP works closely with the Government of Iraq and the international community to reconstruct roads, reopen markets, restart water and electricity, and rebuild housing, health centres and schools. With over 4.9 million Iraqis having returned home safely and with dignity, there is hope for the future.

For instance, 44-year-old Walid Yaqoub Abbas from al-Muqdadiya in Diyala lives with his wife and two children. "For years, my family and I suffered a lot. We ran for our lives to protect ourselves from ISIL." They fled for safety to the Kolajo sub-district in Diyala. "After liberation, we returned home to absolute destruction. ISIL turned our ancestral home into rubble. I was heartbroken," he recalls. At this point, Waleed moved his family to a rental home until he found a way to rehabilitate his house. "The war forced us to use our savings. To top it off, I have not been able to find a job since I returned." He is a graduate of Mosul University. Unable to find work, he was forced to rely on extended family and loans to make ends meet.

Waleed is happy today. UNDP restored his home, allowing his family to return home safely. "Coming home makes a huge difference to my family and me. I hope to get a job, clear my debts, and return to life as we knew it."

Just down the street from Waleed, 45-year-old Amer Shoker Hamodi lives with his elder brother's family. They have faced their share of difficulties. "All the people who left their houses

behind lost their entire lives overnight. We left without having anything," he says. They stayed put during the liberation until the shelling reached a point where they feared being attacked. "One night, we decided to leave everything behind and move to the central Qara-tabā district in Diyala."

Having escaped safely, Amer returned home two years ago to destruction. "My friends, family, and everyone I had ever met had lost a family member, their livelihoods, or their homes. The destruction pushed the development in our region behind by years. We did not have access to clean water, electricity, and health care services. To top it, ISIL burnt our farms and killed our livestock, which affected our main source of livelihood," he says.

Enter Amer's house today, and it is a different story. You will be welcomed by a lush green garden and a newly rehabilitated home. "Now, I am saving up money to replace all the furniture. If I were to do this at my own expense, I would not have been able to restore it for years as I do not have any more savings." He is channelling all his finances towards bringing back his once booming farmland. "I am hopeful that we can overcome these years of trauma and loss," he says while looking out into his garden.

In the neighbouring street, 50-year-old Salima Awad Zabala returned after liberation, despite her house's damage. She lives with her sister, who also lost her husband during the war. The single mother of one son and two daughters is the primary breadwinner for the family. "It was during displacement that I started to work as a seamstress. I wanted to return home and start a tailoring business. I knew this was the only way to recover the losses and save enough funds to rehabilitate our

house."

Salima began making repairs to her house while also running her tailoring unit. "I am proud to see how far we have come. My daughters are learning to stand on their own two feet by seeing me work hard."

Meanwhile, in the historic city of Mosul, UNDP has completed the rehabilitation of over 12,000 houses. This includes 55-year-old Samia Ibrahim Aswad's home in the Old City. Unfortunately, she lost her husband during the conflict. "As we were fleeing Mosul by foot, my husband was hit by the impact of an airstrike. After a few days of fighting for his life, he passed away," she says.

They fled their home in the Old City as soon as the fight to liberate Mosul began and spent over one year moving between rental homes. "Our house is almost 100 years old and has been passed down four generations. When we returned to the destruction, it felt like I had not just lost my husband but also a huge part of our family history," says Samia. She lives in a busy household with her eight daughters, three sons, and their spouses and children. Her two-storey house with seven rooms was rebuilt, allowing them to return to the al-Ahmadya neighbourhood of the Old City.

While their stories indicate that stability has been steadily returning, needs remain. With 1.1 million people still displaced, many villages are yet to see those displaced return. Those who have returned face challenges due to limited livelihood opportunities and high social, political and security tensions.

Supporting the people of Iraq to build forward better, UNDP continues to have its boots on the ground and deliver. Around 35,200 houses have been rehabilitated to date, impacting millions of lives.

As Samia says, "Iraqis are resilient people. We have been able to return home and rebuild our lives. And you can see it around you. Life has begun to return. Seeing my grandchildren running around the house gives me hope that the future is bright."

About: The projects are implemented by UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization and Building Resilience through Employment Promotion. Samia, Salima, Amer and Walid's house were rehabilitated thanks to funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), provided through KfW Development Bank.

UNDP have completed the rehabilitation of Tikrit's Water Treatment Plant in Salah al-Din

Tikrit, 16 October 2022 - As Iraqis say, water is life!

UNDP have completed the rehabilitation of Tikrit's Water Treatment Plant in Salah al-Din. It was left damaged during ISIL. It was rehabilitated through the Funding Facility for Stabilization with Belgium and UK's support.

Today, it serves over 40,000 people with clean water.

UNDP also have completed the rehabilitation of al-Yaqtha Secondary

School for Girls and Rawa Industrial School in Anbar!

Both schools, which are based on the same campus, were left damaged during the ISIL conflict. Reopening the two schools will now allow 700 children to return to the classroom.

This was implemented through UNDP Iraq's Funding Facility for Stabilization in partnership with the Government of Iraq. To date, UNDP have rehabilitated and equipped over 870 schools in Iraq.



Joint statement by FAO and WFP in Iraq on World Food Day

Baghdad, 17 October 2022 - The world is at risk of yet another year of record hunger as the global food crisis continues to drive yet more people into worsening levels of acute food insecurity, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) warn. On World Food Day (16 October), the two agencies call for urgent action to address the root causes of today's crisis as the world continues to face challenges without borders, including Iraq.

Iraq, known commonly as the "Land of Two Rivers" has been experiencing increased drought for the past two years, brought about by the rising temperatures, reduced rainfall which is the lowest in 40 years in addition to reduced water flows in Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. This led to degradation of arable land, increased water, and soil salinity, which all contribute to serious loss of livelihoods and an increased pressure on the state national budget, which imports cereals to ensure enough food, is available to the population.

"Iraq remains one of the most affected countries globally by the adverse effects of climate change. Unless mitigation and adaptation are implemented, the future may not be promising for the small holder farmers and vulnerable groups in Iraq," said WFP Iraq Representative, Mr. Ally Raza Qureshi. "We at WFP believe that food is the path towards peace and as such, serious action must be taken immediately by the Government of Iraq and the International community to adopt climate smart food systems and long-term resilience building in order to ensure that Iraq and its people are able to navigate these testing times."

"This year slogan for the World Food

Day Leave no one behind. Better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, underlines the need for concerted action to ensure that everyone has access to adequate, healthy, and affordable food while maximizing environmental sustainability in particular in Iraq where climate change is disproportionately affecting the rural poor, their agricultural yields and productivity" said FAO Representative in Iraq, Dr Salah ElHajjHassan. "Each of us has a role to play in transforming food systems for the benefit of people and the planet; FAO is committed to empower the most vulnerable in Iraq, including women and youth, through the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient agrifood systems. We need to act in global solidarity to ensure that no one is left behind and become climate advocates by wasting less, eating nutritious food, in particular seasonal and locally produced foods and caring for natural resources like soil and water".

In 2021, Iraq developed a plan to increase the efficiency, inclusiveness, resilience, and inclusivity of its agrifood systems as part of the Food Systems Summit. This was done to ensure that everyone everywhere has access to enough affordable, safe, and

nutritious food to lead active and healthy lives.

Twenty percent of the Iraq's workforce are engaged in the agricultural sector, which is the second largest contributor to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) after the oil sector, accounting for 5 percent of the total GDP. Thus, agriculture development is critical to allow Iraq to achieve their vision of a more diversified economy, in addition to generating employment and boosting private sector engagement. In this regard, urgent work must be undertaken on the levels of investing in research and development in an effort to make farming more technologically advanced and capable of handling adverse climate conditions and financially viable in the country, in addition to Agri-business and value chain development to increase profit margins and encourage farmers not to abandon their lands, which is not merely a detriment to their incomes, but also drives up local food costs and shortages, affecting entire communities. It is also paramount to discuss the issue of food waste, which decreases the availability of food intended for human consumption. This has consequences for the environment, natural resources, and the overall economy.

FAO and WFP together with the Government, private sector, academia, civil society will continue working together to prioritize food security, to increase local food production and to strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable households. Immediate joint action is key to ensuring sustainable food and nutrition security while leaving no one behind.

Dr. Salah ElHajjHassan, FAO Representative, Iraq
Ally Raza Qureshi, WFP Representative, Iraq



ILO and the Erbil Polytechnic University partner to develop local skills in employment intensive methods



Erbil, 24 October 2022 - Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq - October 24, 2022 - The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Erbil Polytechnic University (EPU) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop the skills of technicians and workers in cultural heritage development

The collaboration is part of the on-going project "Support to livelihoods through cultural heritage development" being implemented by ILO and UNESCO, to create decent job opportunities for internally displaced persons, Syrian refugees and host community members. The work focuses on applying Employment Intensive methods to restore and safeguard cultural heritage, with the support of the European Union.

Employment Intensive methods link infrastructure development with employment creation, poverty reduction and local economic and social development. They promote local resource-based approaches, that optimise the use of local resources such as labour, materials, tools and

equipment. In addition, these approaches aim to upgrade available skills to improve the employability of workers in cultural heritage to implement conservation activities.

"Developing the skills and capacities of individuals employed in the local construction industry is an important and integrated element in ensuring the sustainability and impact of employment intensive approaches" said Maha Kattaa ILO Country Coordinator in Iraq. "We are pleased to partner with the Erbil Polytechnic University in this important initiative to ensure that more women and men acquire market relevant skills that have the potential to provide long-term and decent employment."

The new partnership will include the development of technical manuals and guidelines to implement a certification programme that supports the recognition of acquired skills for future assignments in the cultural heritage sector. The ILO will build the capacities of trainers from EPU to implement the skills training programmes, and monitor their training activities.

The trainers will go on to implement the training programme with skilled workers and technicians working in historical site conservations in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The trained labourers and skilled technicians will constitute a new and unique resource which could be utilized by governmental offices in charge of cultural heritage to rehabilitate the multitude of sites currently registered in the targeted locations.

"There are many construction projects in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and these construction projects will be risen and increased dramatically in the future. Thus, the Kurdistan market needs employees with skills in the field of urban development and construction," said Dr. Edrees Muhammad Harki, President of EPU.

The training will focus on stone paving, clay bricks building, as well as skills related to tour guides. It will be implemented in coordination with UNESCO, the General Board of Tourism and the General Directorate of Antiquities in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

The ILO-UNESCO collaboration integrates employment-intensive approaches into the Conservation of Cultural Heritage Programme in Iraq, implemented by UNESCO under the "Support to Livelihoods Through Cultural Heritage Development" project, which is supported by the European Union (EU) Regional Trust Funding response to the Syria crisis.

For more information, see Creating decent job opportunities through applying Employment Intensive Approaches at Cultural Heritage Conservation activities.

Agriculture

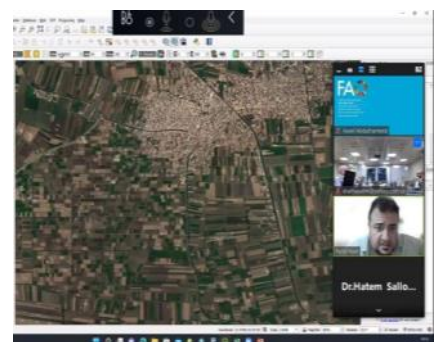
FAO completed a training for GIS experts on the use of FAO's WaPOR's field data collection

Baghdad, 22 August 2022 - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq completed recently a three-days training for GIS experts from Baghdad, Missan and Thi-Qar working in the Ministry of Water Resources on the use of FAO's WaPOR's field data collection.

The training introduced ODK collect application replacing paper forms used in survey-based data gathering. This tool will provide information on crop

status and growth development as well as identify the damage/stress signs for water accounting and productivity assessment using remote sensing.

Following the WaPOR project's launch early this month, this training starts the activities in Iraq and sets the qualification needed to start field data collection and crop mapping at West Al-Gharraf irrigation project scheme in Wasit and Thi-Qar Governorates.



H.E Minister of Agriculture together with high-level officials from Department of Women Empowerment and Ministry of Planning praise and appreciate strategic interventions of FAO-EU funded project in Ninawa

Ninawa, 26 August 2022 - Over three days, officials from Department of Rural Women Empowerment (Ministry of Agriculture), General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and Ministry of Planning visited interventions with women partners of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) through the project: "support to agricultural livelihoods of rural and peri-urban returnees and communities in Nineveh Governorate", funded by the European Union and implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture.

These visits concluded with ceremony organized by FAO on Thursday, August 25- 2022 in Bashiqa in the presence of His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture, Eng. Muhammad Karim Al-Khafaji, FAO Representative in Iraq, Dr Salah El-hajj Hassan attended by the Director of Nineveh Agriculture, directors of all agricultural departments in Nineveh, local officials, and the head of the farmers Union h, as well as 300 farmers including 200 women from Ninawa project sites.

The Minister of Agriculture, Eng. Muhammad Karim Al-Khafaji, during his speech, praised the efforts of FAO through its project to support the livelihoods of returnees, especially with regard to women's groups where impacts are visible. As FAO is taking care of small dairy producers and provided them with equipment for the collection and processing of milk, as well as promoting of green fodder cultivation. Moreover, the FAO organization emphasized on introduction of modern technologies for farmers. H. E. the Minister added that the Ministry of Agriculture is strongly supporting this initiative to encourage increasing local production.

The Minister concluded that all these interventions and outputs introduced by FAO came to enhance the work of rural women by improving their work and increasing their income and stability in their areas after a long-suffering that exhausted them because of the terrorists.

FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan highlighted, "Thanks to the EU's financial support and the real commitment and support from the H.E. Minister of Agriculture Mr. Muhammad Karim Al- Khafaji, we were able to implement this important project by scaling up the skills and



capacities of women and advancing the agriculture sector, both its animal and plant components." While reflecting the practical implementation in achieving t better: production, nutrition, environment and life.

"This project is an example of sustaining introduced expertise through the true partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture where practices were also shared with other extension staff from the Ministry in southern Governorates. The goal now is to redo this successful experience elsewhere to support the local farmers and rural women," Dr. El-Hajj Hassan added.

Dr. Intithar Fahd from the Department of Women Empowerment in the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers pointed out during her speech that our attendance today is in line with implementation of the outcomes of the meeting of the Higher Committee for the Empowerment of Rural Women, which was formed under the Diwani Order (93) for the year 2021, and directives His Excellency Prime Minister to visit the successful implemented activities in Nineveh FAO-EU Project, and the possibility of transferring the experience to the rest of the Governorates. She added during the past two days, we had a field tour to follow up on the success stories of the project, and we found that it went beyond the issue of livelihoods and went with other outputs, larger spaces, and aspirations beyond achieving some indicators of the sustainable development goals.

The Senior FAO Livestock Expert, Dr. Chedly Kayouli said that the project has given absolute priority to support women's groups due to their contribution to the development of their livelihoods, he added that to date, over 10,000 women were trained on advanced livestock feeding techniques,

milk production and marketing aimed at empowering rural women where 4,000 rural women have now better livelihood through enhanced skills in dairy products and technical expertise in feed production, milk collection. Likewise, these women were supported with hygienic stainless steel and food grade equipment including rehabilitation of village dairy centers for milk testing, processing and marketing to support their local businesses.

Finally, Minister of Agriculture and Officials valued and praised the interventions of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), especially after listening to the impressive success stories of rural women in Nineveh. The delegation emphasized that the results of inputs and outputs of the project would be submitted to the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers to adopt the transfer of this successful experience to other Governorates with support of FAO technical experiences.



The Minister of Agriculture and FAO Iraq Representative meet with Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda

Erbil, 28 August 2022 - His Excellency the Minister of Agriculture, Engineer Muhammad Karim Al-Khafaji, and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Representative in Iraq, Dr. Salah El-hajj Hassan, the Director of Ninawa Agriculture, Dr. Rabie Youssef and the Senior FAO Livestock Expert, Dr. Chedly Kayouli visited his Eminence Bashar Matti Warda the Archbishop of Chaldean Catholic Church in Erbil as a follow-up to the field visit made to the partners under the EU-funded project: "support to agricultural livelihoods of rural and peri-urban returnees and communities in Nineveh Governorate", and implemented by FAO in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture.

The discussion focused on the activities of FAO in Ninawa and ways to help the returnees who were supported by the project to improve the marketing of their dairy products and possibilities to facilitate the transportation of their improved processed dairy products to Erbil with distribution to hotels and restaurants in Ankawa taken the high demand for such local traditional and special quality products.

H.E. the Minister stressed the importance and success of the project's interventions, which helped the displaced families that were affected by

ISIL conflict to return home, and praised the expertise and support provided by the project team, which contributed to increasing the efficiency and quality of local products, which became world-class standards highlighting the importance of helping families to sell their products in Erbil. The Minister added that he strongly supports agricultural interventions in these liberated areas to support rural women.

His Eminence Bashar Matti Warda praised the efforts of His Excellency the Minister and the Ministry of Agriculture, and the outstanding achievements that resulted from the interventions of the project. He stressed that what FAO has achieved in these liberated areas in creating job opportunities and increasing income helped the displaced and returnee families to settle in their home areas.

The Archbishop indicated his entire support to these women groups to access new markets in Erbil or even for export abroad where there are a high number of Iraqi immigrants.

Finally, FAO Representative in Iraq, Dr. Salah El-hajj Hassan thanked and appreciated the Archbishop's efforts in supporting the families involved in the project and indicated that these results would not have been possible without the support of His Excellency the Minister, the ministry's work team, and the European Union funding. He stressed that FAO Iraq efforts will continue to support farmers and women groups. He added that there are other interventions with regard to crop component especially the cultivation, harvesting and processing of olives. He concluded with FAO commitment to make all possible efforts to support Iraqi farmers.



Through EU-funded project in the south, FAO Iraq is reviving the date palm value chain development

Baghdad, 8 September 2022 -The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq held a follow-up technical meeting at the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) on the development of the date palm value chain in Iraq in Basrah, Missan and Thi-Qar governorates. The discussions are part of activities of a European Union funded project "Restoration and

Strengthening the Resilience of Agricultural systems in Southern Iraq."

The meeting was chaired by MoA deputy minister for technical affairs, Dr. Mithaq AlKhafaji and attended by FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah al-Hajj Hassan, MoA's advisor, Dr. Mahdi Al-Qaisi, and a large number of experts including FAO date palm expert, Dr. Abdul Basit Ibrahim. The discussion

focused on the current and future challenges facing this important agricultural and economic sector and project activities in supporting date palm farmers, MoA and private sector. This meeting is within a series of upcoming activities in which the partnership between FAO Iraq and MoA under EU funded project will expand within the project work plan, where its outlines were clarified.

FAO Iraq Representative, Dr. Salah al-Hajj Hassan confirmed FAO Iraq's commitment to support the date palm sector in Iraq by introducing modern technologies adopted globally to cope with the challenges of water scarcity and climate change. The introduction of climate smart agricultural practices successful modern practices, to develop value chain for dates, as well as developing a long-term strategic plan that modernizes the sector, introduces sustainable and innovative practices and techniques.



FAO Iraq completed a 3-day training of the Farmer Field Schools facilitators in Erbil

Erbil, 19 September 2022– The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq concluded recently a three-day training of facilitators for the Farmers Field Schools (FFS), and continues the training programme for extension staff from the Ministry of Agriculture in Nineveh. 26 participants including 8 women – completed the course successfully.

This training is within the activities of the “Support to agricultural livelihoods of rural and peri-urban returnees and communities in Nineveh Governorate” project funded by the European Union and implemented by FAO in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture in Iraq. The FFS approach is a methodology to work closely with farmers to jointly analyze their production systems, identify problems, test solutions, and adopt practices that are most appropriate for their farming systems in the field.

FAO Iraq Representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan said, “The FFSs is an



innovative process to develop the agricultural practices of farmers and improve their income. FAO Iraq is working to strengthen the agricultural sector in Iraq and to create job opportunities for the rural families thanks to the European Union’s financial support.”

The extension staff practiced their skills as group facilitator data collection in the field, preparation of crop calendars, agro-ecosystems analysis, disease triangle and

preparation of a curriculum design. The training included also the application of good agricultural practices.

The participants visited a farm in Qushtapa district to apply agricultural-environmental analysis in the field. This training will enable the extension officers to establish and facilitate FFSs with a selected group of farmers throughout the agricultural calendar for selected crops. The trained facilitators are expected in turn to support about 375 farmers in Nineveh.

ILO introduces learning tool to strengthen cooperatives in Iraq’s agricultural sector

Basra, 28 September 2022 - (ILO News) Twenty-eight experts from across different fields have been trained as trainers on ILO’s Think.Coop and Start.Coop global learning tools, designed to promote cooperative development in various sectors.

In Iraq, the tools have been adapted to the country’s context and focus on the agricultural sector, which provides a critical source of employment and income, including for women who account for 20 per cent of the sector’s workforce.

The five-day training was the first of its kind to take place in Iraq. It was conducted in Basra, where the ILO, with the support of the European Union, is implementing a series of activities that seek to improve working conditions in the agricultural sector. This includes strengthening the role of cooperatives in promoting decent work and improving their organisational capacity to enhance productivity on farms.

“In Iraq, cooperatives have the potential to play a greater role in the changing world of work,” said Racha El Assy, ILO, Chief Technical Advisor. “At the ILO and through the support of the EU, we are developing a compliance

model for the agriculture sector to improve the living and working conditions of the sector’s workers. Part of these efforts focus on how cooperatives can potentially be leveraged to assist in advancing rights at work, improve quality of jobs, and foster local economic development.”

The tools were developed as low-cost, easy-to-use training tools for people involved in setting up, launching, or joining a cooperative. Think.Coop helps participants understand the cooperative model, its specific benefits and challenges, and make informed decisions about the suitability of the cooperative model. Start.COOP guides participants through the various steps of planning and setting up a cooperative.

“Cooperatives are important in improving the living and working conditions of women and men globally. Conducting this Training of Trainers in Basra will enable the participants to further train or co-train farmers who are members of cooperatives or are interested in forming or joining cooperatives and assist them in building a solid understanding of cooperatives. Additionally, the training promotes awareness of the cooperatives’ importance in

communities and encourages farmers to establish or join them,” said Shawkat Sarsour, ILO Cooperatives Master trainer.

Trainees included agricultural practitioners, union members, academics, cooperative members. The training focused on concepts related to cooperatives in the field of agriculture, food industry, and agricultural products; cooperative principles; elements of financing through contributions and the distribution of shares and revenues, in accordance with the mechanisms used in global experiences, in particular those related to the principles supported and adopted by the ILO.

“I specialise in the field of agriculture, so this training was useful as it outlined key concepts related to cooperatives, in terms of how to establish a cooperative and its objectives, among other issues,” said Zainab Fathel Al-Tamimi, a university professor and head of “Al Hayat” Organization for Development, which specialises in agricultural and environmental issues.

Ahmad Monther Shaker, a consultant in the agricultural engineers’ syndicate in Basra, also took part in the training of trainers. “The implementation of this

ILO introduces learning tool to strengthen cooperatives in Iraq's agricultural sector *(continued)*



training will help improve the current environment and reality of the agricultural sector. We will transfer this knowledge to members of society because it will help address some of the challenges in the sector.”

Following the completion of the training, seven trainers were selected to conduct their first training, which brought together 25 women and men farmers and farm workers, including

date, tomato and vegetable growers, beekeepers, and livestock breeders from Basra.

Under the monitoring and coaching of the ILO Cooperatives Master trainer, the seven trainers conducted a three-day training of beneficiaries and introduced participants to some practical steps for the establishment of agricultural cooperatives, key principles of cooperative work, its

foundations, and issues related to financing and revenues.

“This training introduced us to ways in which we can strengthen our work and address some of our challenges through the establishment of agricultural cooperatives. The concepts were new to me and I am excited to become involved in cooperative work,” said Nadia Ali Fatah, a date farmer from the Abu Al-Khaseeb District of Basra, who took part in the training.

“The training highlighted the importance of building cooperative relations that would address some of the economic challenges we face and guide agricultural activities that can contribute to sustainable development in our community,” said Ziad Saad Ismael, a beekeeper in Basra.

The trainings took 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. It was implemented together with the Peace and Freedom Organization (PFO).

Joint statement by FAO and WFP in Iraq on International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste

Baghdad, 29 September 2022 – On the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLOW), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) call for action to address food loss and adopt sustainable food waste management in Iraq.

IDAFLOW aims to raise awareness about food loss, waste issues and possible solutions, to promote global efforts and collective actions toward meeting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 12.3 that aims at halving per capita global food waste at retail and consumer levels and reducing food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses by 2030.

We call upon the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to establish develop national targets and strategies in line with SDG 12.3. We also call on the government to encouraging supply chain collaboration with the aim to reduce food waste during production, processing and storage stages as well as support innovative behavioral changes to shift and reduce consumer

food waste norms.

To reduce food waste in Iraq, efforts must be made to encourage improved behavioral practices among food providers and consumers, as well as increased investments in intra-regional trade and the modernization of food supply chains.

Globally, while more than 820 million people go to bed hungry each night, FAO estimates that one-third of global food production – estimated at 1.3 billion tons of food – is annually lost or wasted along the supply chain, amounting to a financial loss of about US\$ 1 trillion annually. The food produced but never eaten would be enough to feed two billion people. That's more than twice the number of people on the verge of famine across the globe.

Food production has environmental and monetary costs and has become increasingly difficult in the current climatic condition with an ever-increasing population is very difficult. Food waste and food loss drains valuable resources such as water, land, energy, labour and capital especially in the region; one of the world's most affected by water scarcity.

The impact of food waste on the environment is also massive; it is estimated that food loss contributes 6-8% of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, effectively helping accelerate climate change. Most of the discarded food ends up in landfills, and as it decomposes it produces methane, a greenhouse gas that has 80 times the warming power of carbon dioxide.

FAO and WFP renew their commitment to work with both governments to develop and implement “awareness campaigns” and “food banks” to mitigate food waste by collecting unserved food and channeling it to people who need it and complement Iraq's efforts to end poverty, reduce hunger and improve human health.



A panel focused on facilitating access to finance for women and men keen to start their own small businesses in the agriculture sector held in Basra



Basra, 13 October 2022 - A panel discussion was organized in Basra bringing together over 35 potential agricultural entrepreneurs with

agricultural and financial service providers.

The discussions, which included representatives from governmental and local agencies linked to the agricultural sector; the Basra Chamber of Commerce; the Basra Chamber of Industry; and international organizations, focused on facilitating access to finance and issues related to administrative, legal, and technical services for women and men keen to start their own small businesses in the agriculture sector.

The entrepreneurs have recently completed training with the ILO on its

Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training programme, designed to support young entrepreneurs to start or grow their businesses. They also participated in training sessions that helped build their technical and managerial capabilities in poultry farming and tomato production.

The event is part of efforts by the ILO to promote skills, entrepreneurship and decent employment in the field of agriculture, within the framework of the "Strengthening Labor governance and Inspection and working conditions in response to COVID-19" project, supported by European Union in Iraq.

FAO-Iraq completed a 5-Day training course for extension staff on the facilitation of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in Basra

Basra, 14 October 2022 - The Food and Agriculture Organization of The United Nations (FAO) in Iraq concluded a 5-day training for agriculture extension staff to facilitate the implementation of "Farmer Field Schools" in Basra, ThiQar and Missan Governorates. Twenty-five (25) trainees participated in this training, implemented within the framework of the project "Restoration and Strengthening the Resilience of Agri-Food Systems Project" in southern Iraq funded by the European Union.

The training approach improves the capacities of agricultural extension staff to facilitate Farmer Field Schools, providing a hands-on approach for learning from peers, focusing on

capacities to improve integrated crop management practices throughout the seasons. These should in turn improve incomes while mitigating harmful effects of agricultural activities on the environment and public health, and suggest a model for a productive and sustainable agricultural sector in Iraq.

In a final ceremony that was held on 14 October, Dr. Salah Elhadj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq, stressed the good working relationship between FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture and other partners in the sector, and the importance of further developing capacities of extension staff and farmers. Other presentations during this session included representatives from the participants, ThiQar's



Governor's Assistant, Directors of the Directorates of Agriculture in Basra, ThiQar, and Missan, as well as the Head of the Farmers' Associations in Basra.

At the end of the ceremony, senior officials handed out certificates to all the trainees.

FAO Iraq workshop on vegetable nursery and production of seedlings in Nineveh

Erbil, 18 October 2022 - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Iraq concluded recently a three-day workshop in cooperation with Iraq Horticulture Development Program "IHD" and ECO Consult funded by the Ministry of foreign affairs of Netherland, focusing on the nursery management for the production of vegetable seedlings to increase farmers' Skills and Knowledge development in vegetable seedlings production.

15 farmers and extension staff from Nineveh governorate joined. The training course covered vegetable nursery, nursery Location, seeds treatment, vegetable seedlings production techniques including seed

planting, irrigation, seedlings care, misting and hardening of seedlings, fertilization, prevention of fungal and insect infestation and pest control.

FAO Iraq is working to develop the vegetable production chain and introduce seedling production technology in Nineveh Governorate through groups of farmers through the project "support to agricultural livelihoods of rural and peri-urban returnees and communities in Nineveh Governorate, Iraq" funded by the European Union and in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, within which 10 greenhouses with accessories were constructed and installed in Zumar and Hamam Al-Alil districts. This technology is expected to improve



the production of vegetable crops in quantity and quality, and increase the returns of vegetable farmers, and thus improve farmers' income and improve the quality of local agricultural products.

Sustainable Agriculture forum held in Babylon to celebrate World Food Day



Babylon, 18 October 2022 - Under the patronage of the Ministry of Agriculture, the World Food Day was celebrated jointly with FAO Iraq at Al-Mustaqbal University College in Babel Governorate as part of the Future Forum for Sustainable Agriculture event with the slogan “Sustainable Rural Agricultural Development, the Way to Achieving Food and Eradicating Poverty” with the presence of the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Prof. Dr. Mahdi Sahar Al-Jubouri, the Dean of the Faculty of Al-Mustaqbal University, Dr. Hassan Shaker Magdy and FAO Iraq Representative, Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan.

A number of agricultural producing companies, farmers, the local community, representatives from academia and government attended the event and discussed the food security situation in Iraq and the world and visited the exhibition of locally

produced agricultural products in Iraq and within the University College.

Dr. Salah Elhaji Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq highlighted the importance of the World Food Day and the greatest challenges to overcome food insecurity for all. “From 2008 to 2018, globally, agriculture, including crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, absorbed 26% of the overall impact caused by medium-to-large scale disasters and Iraq is one of the country most affected. He added that “High salinity and drought are a serious threat to Iraq ecosystem in the south, especially the marshes. The ancient Mesopotamia, the cradle of human civilization where farmers depended for thousands of years on fishing and raising buffaloes in the fertile aquatic marshes, is under the threat of water scarcity and the deterioration of its quality; we need to act jointly to address these challenges.”

The Deputy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Mahdi Sahar Al-Jubouri indicated that there is a significant decline in the cultivated areas due to a shortage water revenue. Therefore, he stressed the continuation of work and negotiations to reach a joint agreement that guarantees equitable water releases for Iraq and adopt efficient agricultural strategies to ensure food security by supporting farmers.

The Dean, Prof. Dr. Hassan Shaker Magdy stressed the need to organize capacity building trainings to support the important academic role in developing the means of production and strengthening areas of collaboration with FAO. He also acknowledged FAO efforts in supporting country's agriculture sector, enhancing food security and improving rural livelihoods.

Dean of Al-Mustaqbal University College presented a Certificate of Appreciation to FAO Iraq to acknowledge its efforts on supporting country's agriculture sector, enhancing food security and improving rural livelihoods. Deputy Minister Dr Mehdi Eljubouri represented HE. Minister of Iraq Ministry of Agriculture and FAO Iraq Representative Dr Salah ElHajj Hassan attended the opening ceremony of the Forum side-event at the University College of the Future in Babylon.

Locally produced agricultural products in Iraq Babylon and within the University College of the Future were exhibited at the side-event of the Forum dedicated to World Food Day.

FAO is able to deliver its interventions thanks to the continuous commitment and support of its partners in Iraq.

FAO strengthens Iraq's animal disease surveillance and reporting system capacity through the Event Mobile Application (E MA-i)



Baghdad, 20 October 2022 - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in partnership with the Ministry of

Agriculture conducted a training workshop on the Event Mobile Application (EMA-i) in Baghdad from 17 to 19 October 2022.

Good quality disease information and reporting is needed in order to understand the disease situation, support decision-making, prevent potential disease incursion and respond quickly. Thus, it is crucial to apply a system at national level to enhance veterinary services' capacities in disease reporting from the field to decision-makers and information sharing among stakeholders. For this reason, FAO has developed EMA-i for data collection and to facilitate real-time disease reporting to support veterinary services' capacities in disease surveillance implemented in

FAO strengthens Iraq's animal disease surveillance and reporting system capacity... (continued)

the field.

Using smartphones, animal disease information is collected with the EMA-i application from the field. These data, which are geo-referenced, are entered into the app and safely stored in the FAO Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) Global Animal Disease Information System (EMPRES-i). Through the financial support of the United States Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), the training targeted 32 participants from the veterinary departments of six governorates; Al-Anbar, Al-Muthanna, Basrah, Dohuk, Ninewa and Wasit in addition to Baghdad and Erbil, and representatives from the Ministry of Health as part of the One Health approach. The training aimed to

improve animal disease data collection and real-time reporting of animal disease outbreaks from the field to the national level by using the EMA-i application.

Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq, underlined the importance of this joint collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (KRG) to improve animal health and strengthen health and livelihoods in the region. He added: "This training of trainers on the Event Mobile Application (EMA-i) aims at enhancing early warning systems and will ultimately contribute to the reduction of the food and health security threats posed by emerging, transboundary and endemic

pathogens."

Veronica Quattrola, FAO Deputy Representative in Iraq stated that: "The use of the EMA-i app in other countries has demonstrated major improvements in animal disease reporting and communication between districts and central level. This training on the use of EMA-i technology in Iraq is timely and will strengthen the overall capacity of the livestock and veterinary services in animal diseases, reporting, early warning and surveillance."

Using this technology will improve the quantity and quality of reports allowing for effective and immediate action during the occurrence of a disease outbreak – in terms of detection, reporting and response.

Second Training of Agriculture extension staff on the implementation of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in Basra

Basra, 25 October 2022 - The Food and Agriculture Organization of The United Nations (FAO) in Iraq launched a second training for agriculture extension staff for 5 days to facilitate the implementation of "Farmer Field Schools" (FFS) in Basra, Thi-Qar and Missan Governorates. A total of 25 people participated, including 6 women. The training is part of the "Restoration and Strengthening the Resilience of Agri-Food Systems Project in Southern Iraq" project, funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by FAO Iraq in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture. The FFS approach is the methodology to work closely with farmers to jointly analyze production system, identify problems, test solutions, and adopt practices that are most appropriate for their farming systems in the field.

FAO Iraq representative Dr. Salah El-Hajj Hassan stated that, "FAO Iraq is



working to strengthen the agricultural sector in Iraq and to create job opportunities to the rural families thanks to the EU's financial support." Mr. Imad Nahal, International expert in FFS explained that "the FFS training approach is a practical learning process to enhance the ability

of farmers that will in turn improve their income.

This project is part of a larger EU-funded "Agri-food Business Development Program that is implemented along other international partners and focuses on job creation in the agricultural sector.

Growing chickpeas in Al Qosh

Baghdad, 1 September 2022 – "Due to ISIL occupation, we stopped planting pulse crops. Thanks to FAO's support with high-quality seeds, I was able to cultivate my lands and provide the basic needs of my family," said Ziyad Abou, 42, a Yazidi farmer from Khurzan village in Al Qosh.

Once back home after liberation, Ziyad had to work in other lands to cover his family's needs due to his inability to cultivate his land. Thanks to FAO Iraq's support, Ziyad was able to

replant his land and reproduce chickpeas.

This EU funded project helped Ziyad and many other farmers to restore the cultivation of chickpea crop again in Al Qosh, which has been famous with for decades.

FAO in Iraq is working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture to revive the traditional cultivation of pulses crops in the Nineveh Plains as an important food crops to ensure food security and families' income in the area.



Kick for trade



Baghdad, 11 August 2020 – The Kick For Trade Life-Skills Curriculum is a fun and interactive curriculum that uses the power of football to support participants in developing key life-skills. With a focus on employability and entrepreneurship, the life-skills covered by this course are relevant to many areas of life, with the aim of helping participants to pursue healthy and successful lives.

The sessions are designed to be delivered by trained life-skills coaches with minimal equipment and resources needed, so that they can be implemented easily in different environments, and made as inclusive as possible.

The curriculum has two sections – Employability and Entrepreneurship - each with 11 sessions - the number of players in a football team. The Employability section is focused on 11 key life-skills that will help young people to develop attributes needed to gain and remain in employment. The Entrepreneurship section builds on this, and introduces participants to 11 life-skills needed for pursuing their own ventures, and for setting up their own businesses and income generating initiatives.

The curriculum has been developed through close collaboration between sfw and Kick4Life.

streetfootballworld is a global network of 135 organisations that use football as a tool for social change, collectively reaching over two million people in 90 countries every year. The purpose of the network is to identify, connect and empower community organisations that have demonstrated a sustainable social impact in their communities, enabling them to do more. For over 15 years streetfootballworld has been implementing social impact strategies in cooperation with network members and a wide range of partners, to maximise the power of football for good. This has included creating initiatives such as Common Goal, that can contribute to advancing and leveraging the field of football for good, making the sector sustainable and amplifying its global impact. For more information on streetfootballworld visit: www.streetfootballworld.org

Kick4Life is a network member of streetfootballworld, based in Lesotho in Southern Africa, where the organisation delivers a wide range of football-based health, education, gender and employability programmes. They have also pioneered in the field of sport and social enterprise, launching a restaurant and a hotel which generate income for the charity's programmes, as well as providing structured training and employment opportunities for young people. Through Kick4Life Assist, the organisation also delivers training and support to other sport for good projects, working with partners throughout the world. For more information on Kick4Life visit: www.kick4life.org

The course is designed to help young people develop critical skills that are relevant to all areas of life. There is particular emphasis on developing skills that are important in the workplace – for gaining and remaining in employment, and for laying the

foundations for young people to develop as entrepreneurs.

The Life-Skills Curriculum aims to develop the following skills identified by the World Health Organisation as core life-skills:

- Decision making and problem solving
- Creative thinking and critical thinking
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Self-awareness and empathy
- Assertiveness and composure
- Resilience and coping.

In developing these skills the curriculum aims to help participants develop holistically and healthily in relation to the following areas of personal development and improvement:

- Healthy mind: to help participants develop self-confidence and self-esteem, and to promote
- inclusion and key skills such as communication and working with others.
- Healthy body: to empower young people with knowledge about protecting and enhancing health and wellbeing.
- Positive attitudes and behaviours: to support participants in developing and implementing values such as inclusivity, indiscrimination, respect and gender equality.

The long-term aim is for participants to develop skills which they implement in their everyday lives, with the confidence to pursue and achieve their goals and potential in all walks of life, notably in relation to their future careers. As such the curriculum also aims to contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth.

Review of national policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks, and practice in Iraq

Baghdad, 26 August 2022 - A baseline study for Iraq that aims to provide an understanding of the current policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks and practice in Iraq in relation to the access of refugees and IDPs to the labour markets, employment, livelihood and training opportunities, including self-employment and business development, the rights at work, including social protection and freedom of association, has just been published.

The report reviewed national legislature, policy documents, datasets and grey

literature to establish the legal basis for refugees' and IDPs' access to work and their rights at work. Findings from the literature review were verified and triangulated with field work to establish how the laws are understood and implemented in practice. Field work lasted from November 2021 to March 2022 and included key informant interviews with stakeholders in government, private sector, humanitarian and UN agencies, semi-structured interviews with IDPs and refugees in Dohuk, Ninewa and Erbil, and focus group discussions with refugees and

IDPs in Ninewa and Dohuk.

The report will guide implementation of PROSPECTS Partnership activities and would feed into the design of integrated interventions that promote decent work for refugees, IDPs and host communities in Iraq. It would further inform the policy dialogue on the access of refugees to the labour markets and its recommendations.

It is undertaken in conjunction with similar baselines drawn up in Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Egypt, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia.

Child labor is common in Iraq's agricultural sector and remains a significant concern

Basra, 28 August 2022 - Child Labour is common in Iraq's agricultural sector and remains a significant concern, with many young children working on family farms to help their families make ends meet.

The ILO in collaboration with Al-Meameen Humanitarian Foundation and with the support of the European Union in Iraq has launched new activities on farms in Basra to support young children who live or work on farms.

These include holding awareness raising sessions on the dangers of working in agriculture, as well as the importance of education through various recreational activities. The sessions also target parents and

guardians, highlighting key aspects related to children's wellbeing, including their education.

These efforts are part of broader activities which seeks to address some of the decent work deficits of the agricultural sector, including some of the root causes of child labor.

Activities will include:

- Working with the appropriate services, to refer children working in agriculture to formal schooling;
- Supporting children who are 16 and over to access vocational skills opportunities to enhance their school-to-work transition;
- Working with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to establish an effective labour inspection system to



improve working conditions. This will also play a central role in addressing child labour.

Find out more about project "Enhancing Labour Governance, Inspection and Working Conditions in Response to COVID- 19 in Iraq" - <https://bit.ly/3TmvekR>

Members of Parliament, Government officials and ILO intensify efforts to strengthen social protection and labour rights in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Dohuk, 14 September 2022 - The ILO held a series of activities this week in Dohuk with senior Members of Parliament and government representatives as part of on-going efforts to strengthen social protection and labour rights for workers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

A two-day consultative workshop took place to discuss the draft Labour Law and Social Security Law of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and the importance of their enactment in promoting a decent work environment in the region.

The event was attended by senior representatives, including the Speaker of the Kurdistan Region Parliament Dr. Rewaz Faeq, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs Ms. Zakia Sayed Salih, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, and ILO Country Coordinator for Iraq, Dr. Maha Kattaa.

"The Labour Law is extremely significant as it covers a large segment of society, and regulates workers' rights and that of their employers," said Deputy Minister Ms. Salih. "The ILO is conducting this workshop between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Members of Parliament to discuss this law ahead of the first discussion in Parliament."

Ms. Vojáčková-Sollorano stressed the importance of endorsing the Labour



and Social Security Laws, saying "they are the backbone of the social structure that will help improve labour rights for more and better decent work."

With the support of the European Union, the ILO has been working with its tripartite constituents - government, employer, and worker representatives – as well as parliamentarians, to review the draft retirement and social security law, currently in parliament. Key improvements under the draft law include extending coverage to workers in the informal sector, self-employed, and business owners. It also introduces new benefits to all workers in the private sector, both formal and informal, such as those related to maternity and unemployment.

The Labour Law regulates the employment relationships, contracts, working conditions and entitlements of

workers in the private sector. The ILO is providing technical support in the review of the Labour Law to ensure the law meets international standards and best practices.

"Strengthening social protection and labour governance are key priorities of the Decent Work Country Programme which was signed by ILO and its constituents and which is the ILO's main vehicle in implementing its decent work agenda," said ILO Country Coordinator Dr. Kattaa. "This week's workshops have been paramount in moving forward with efforts to extend legal protection and guarantees for workers and to improve the business environment in KRI".

In parallel to legislative reform, the ILO is working with partners to build the capacities of relevant authorities in the implementation of these laws and

Members of Parliament, Government officials and ILO intensify efforts to strengthen social protection ... (continued)

allow for a more efficient delivery of employment-related services, namely those related to social security.

The two-day consultative workshop was followed by a technical training for KRI Members of Parliament and government representatives on social security governance.

“The sessions on social security governance are timely as they will help

us identify some of the administrative issues related to the implementation of the new Social Security Law,” said Mr. Bijar Khalid, the Legal Committee Chairman of the Kurdistan Regional Parliament. “We welcome this very timely initiative by the ILO during this important stage.”

Conducted in collaboration with ILO’s International Training Centre (ITC-

ILO), the two-day training covered a range of topics. These included concepts and principles related to social protection; financing of social protection; governance of social protection institutions; actuarial valuation; strategic planning, risk management and service standards; and technology and human capital.

ILO seeks to develop entrepreneurial skills from a gender perspective – supporting women of low income

Dohuk, 3 September 2022 - “We have learnt how to become business owners and how to set up a business and develop new ideas within our local communities,” said Solin Shawket from Dohuk who took part in ILO’s “Gender and Entrepreneurship Together - GET Ahead for Women in Enterprise” training.

The programme seeks to develop entrepreneurial skills from a gender perspective – supporting women of low income.

The training was conducted by SWEDO - The Swedish Development Aid Organization 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 in Iraq.

Through these trainings, the project builds the capacities of rural women in entrepreneurship and decent employment in the field of agriculture.



Equal pay for work of equal value

Baghdad, 18 September 2022 - Equal pay for work of equal value - Achieving equal pay for work of equal value is essential in ensuring gender equality in the world of work and beyond.

Iraq ratified the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) in 1963, and equal wages for equal work is enshrined in Article 45 of the Labour

Law of 2015. Yet pay inequality continues to persist as the recently published Labour Force Survey found that female hourly earnings are 18.4 percent lower than male hourly earnings “when differences in age and educational attainment are taken into account.”

The Report is available at

<https://bit.ly/3dnXW4u>

We must continue to advocate for gender equality and non-discrimination in compliance with the labor law, and promote women’s economic empowerment through decent employment creation, skills development, and entrepreneurship development.

Security Sector Reform

Enhancing the prisons staff skills on the Risks and Need Assessment Protocols and Sentence Planning to develop policies and protocols for the implementation and operationalization of these targeted RNA protocols in prison

Sulaymaniyah, 20 August 2022 - Within the framework of the Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighter Detention Program, (FTF), funded by the U.S. Government and under UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, UNODC-Iraq and Vienna-HQ, launched the two training workshops on the ‘Risks and Needs Assessment (RNA) Protocols in Prisons and the Related Sentence Planning’

and ‘Developing policies and protocols for the implementation and operation of a specified RNA for terrorist and FTF prisoners to mitigate the threats posed by terrorist and FTF prisoners within the broader prison context’ for the managers and staff of prisons and reform centres under the jurisdiction of the Iraq Federal Government.

Taking place from 14-20 August, through coordination with the Ministry

of Justice, the workshops enhanced the development of well selected, trained, motivated staff, and reiterated the importance of interventions for prisoners. They included 61 participants encompassing prison managers, social workers, and prison officers along with a participant from MoFA. The workshops were conducted by Mr. Joseph Jhugroo, Head of the FTF program in Iraq, together with

Enhancing the prisons staff skills on the Risks and Need Assessment Protocols and Sentence Planning... *(continued)*



support from Mr Shah Khan, Head of the UNODC FTF program in Tajikstan, and selected experts from Bulgaria, Germany, and Canada. The organisation was undertaken by Ms. Saja Abdulshahib, Project Assistant, UNODC.

The training achieved two major objectives; gaining in-depth knowledge and understanding of the challenges, needs and priorities of the penitentiary systems in Iraq, and supporting Prison administrations to increase their capacity to classify terrorist and FTF

prisoners effectively by applying individualized RNA and to follow-up on classification findings in terms of allocation, categorization and rehabilitation/disengagement programs.

The need for rehabilitation and reintegration of FTFs and Violent and Extremist Offenders (VEOs) to be understood as the responsibility of a diverse group of professions working in cooperation was highlighted, together with recognition of the important distinctions between male and female

FTFs and that the needs of women in detention should include consideration of their children.

A detailed examination took place of the links between the diagnosis required for structured sentence planning and the identification of individual risks and needs of a radicalized inmate.

The training concluded with several recommendations including the need for dynamic security training and the formation of a Task force of qualified representatives from relevant bodies to work on the development of policies and protocols for RNA in the prison system. Additionally, the participants highlighted the desire for an in-depth study of female FTFs in their facilities. Through continued partnerships with local authorities, the UNODC aims to strengthen Iraq's institutional capacity to develop and integrate the relevant RNA instruments into practice, enabling prison staff to perform their tasks in an effective, professional manner to manage and mitigate the threats posed by terrorists and FTF prisoners. International best practices will be examined and adapted to the local context.

UNODC seminar participants reflect on access to justice and reparations for victims of trafficking in the post-conflict period

Baghdad, 19 September 2022 – In 2018, the Parliament of Kurdistan approved a Trafficking in Persons (TIP) law, now in force in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The law facilitates victim participation in judicial proceedings and acknowledges the victim's human trafficking experience. From 13 to 15 June 2022, UNODC organized a seminar to ascertain to what extent national stakeholders find the existing legal framework relevant and explore how the framework can be factored into the post-Daesh criminal justice and reparations processes.

UNODC organized the "Access to justice and reparations for victims of trafficking in the post-conflict period seminar" in the framework of the EU-funded Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrant – Asia and the Middle East (GLO.ACT Asia and the Middle East). The event brought together participants from key agencies, including judges, police, state counsel, the Directorate for Yazidi survivors, civil society and United

Nations agencies, to discuss the intersections between human trafficking and conflict in greater detail. It also provided an opportunity to understand the current practice of ensuring access to justice and reparations to Daesh victims, anticipating the positioning of the TIP agenda in the post-Daesh criminal justice, civil and restorative justice processes.

Imad Al-Dulaimi, Deputy Minister for Police Affairs and Zakia Sayed Salih, Deputy Minister of Social Affairs, opened the seminar by recognizing the link between TIP and crimes committed during conflict situations. Throughout the seminar, participants acknowledged the overlaps between TIP and atrocity offences (genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity) and between TIP and terrorism



UNODC seminar participants reflect on access to justice and reparations for victims of trafficking ... (continued)

offences. An expert presentation delivered by the Commission for International Justice and Accountability (CIJA) highlighted how foreign courts charged Daesh with atrocities and TIP offences committed against the Yazidi people in Iraq. The event also provided judges from Iraq and the KRI to present complex court cases involving Daesh victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and forced conscription, who ended up being criminalized by the system. Representatives from Iraqi law enforcement then presented on recent TIP cases involving conflict while UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch and Justice Sections spoke about their work to assist children and victims of terrorism, interlinking with TIP. UNODC explained that under projects such as STRIVE Juvenile, the office supports partner countries such as Iraq to develop and implement comprehensive national responses to

prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism affecting children, in full respect of human rights, gender equality and international law. At the end of the seminar, participants expressed their interest in further exploring the topics discussed. They made several recommendations for improving current practices to address the links between human trafficking and conflict. The Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants – Asia and the Middle East (GLO.ACT-Asia and the Middle East) is a four-year joint initiative by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) being implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in up to five countries: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Afghanistan), Islamic Republic of Iran (I.R. of Iran), Republic of Iraq (Iraq), Islamic Republic of

Pakistan (Pakistan). GLO.ACT-Bangladesh is a parallel initiative also financed by the EU and implemented with IOM. The project builds on a global community of practice set in motion in GLO.ACT 2015-2019 and assists governmental authorities and civil society organizations in targeted, innovative, and demand-driven interventions: sustaining effective strategy and policy development, legislative review and harmonization, capability development, and regional and trans-regional cooperation. The project also provides direct assistance to victims of human trafficking and vulnerable migrants through the strengthening of identification, referral, and protection mechanisms. The project is fully committed to mainstreaming Human Rights and Gender Equality considerations across all of its activities.

Through Community Policing Forums, women are part of identifying issues in the community and finding solutions

Ninewa, 10 September 2022 - Women's participation is essential when developing and implementing initiatives to help address community safety and security concerns. Through Community Policing Forums, women are part of identifying issues in the community and finding solutions. In Al-Qairawan, Ninewa, women members of the Community Policing Forum helped reach other women with information about the Ministry of Education's recently launched programmes supporting dropouts to

return to school. IOM Iraq supports the development and implementation of a gender-sensitive approach as part of the

Community Engagement and Policing programme. This activity was supported by the Government of Canada.



Three police stations opened in Ninewa

Mosul, 19 September 2022 - Today, UNDP opened three police stations in Tal Afar Faris, Tal Awinat and al-Hadhyma in Ninewa! The police stations were left damaged during the ISIL conflict. This will allow 535 police officers to provide security and law and order services to around 135,000 Iraqis living in and around the police stations. The rehabilitation was implemented through the Funding Facility for Stabilization thanks to support from the Netherlands. This compliments our ongoing security sector reform initiatives, including training for police officers in basic leadership and criminal investigations.

Since 2018, around 1160 officers have been trained across fifteen

governorates, of which 112 are from Ninewa.



A picture is worth a thousand words

Baghdad, 25 September 2022 - A picture is worth a thousand words, and this is true when it comes to sharing the work being done through Community Engagement and Policing.

On 25 September, IOM Iraq held a photo exhibition in Baghdad showcasing Community Safety Initiatives implemented under the Community Policing and Engagement programme in Ninewa, Anbar and Diyala governorates.

Over 100 people took part, including the Canadian Deputy Ambassador, Mr. Colin Lake; Director of Community Policing, Brigadier General Ghalib Al-Attayah; and government, civil society, media, international organizations, law enforcement and community



representatives.

Prior to the exhibition, staff from the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Interior's Community Policing Department, along with Community Policing Forum members, received

equipment and training to document and amplify the work being done to enhance safety and security.

This exhibition was made possible with the support of the Government of Canada.

Task Force of Kurdistan Region of Iraq: A step to review and refine the current classification systems in KRG-I

Erbil, 21 October 2022 - The criminal justice system in Iraq including the Kurdistan region has been weakened through years of conflict and. Most recently, the rise and fall of ISIL has placed significant strain on already challenged reformatory and detention facilities. The UNODC mandate includes a Criminal Justice Reform strategy encompassing police reform, prosecution service, judiciary, access to legal defense and legal aid, restorative justice, prison reform and alternatives to imprisonment.

Within the framework of the Returning Foreign Terrorist Fighter Detention Program, (FTF), funded by the U.S. government and under UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, UNODC-Iraq with the collaboration of Directorate of Reformatory – Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) / Kurdistan Regional Government - Iraq (KRG-I) conducted the inaugural meeting of KRI Task Force to review the recommendations of the Assessment of reformatories and Children's Detention Facilities conducted in Kurdistan Region of Iraq in June 2020 and to agree on the required actions to respond to these recommendation. The Task Force meeting also focused on the need to review and reform the current classification system to which inmates are subjected, with due consideration given to relevant legislative provisions. The meeting was conducted on 20 October 2022 with 20 representatives from Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, MOLSA, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Human



Right Department.

During the meeting, the UNODC presented a series of recommendations from the aforementioned assessment. These recommendations seek to present core thematic areas of concern and provide guidance on how to address them.

In line with the recommendations, the UNODC discussed the classifications of inmates with members of the Task Force. The UNODC emphasized that a well-designed and managed classification process is the cornerstone of an effective reformatory system and fundamental to the protection of human rights. The UNODC explained that classification has a direct impact on the effectiveness of interventions aimed at deradicalizing inmates and their disengagement from violence; and well as assisting in general management, and the safety and security of inmates, reformatory staff and the general public; the humane custody of inmates; and the ability to individualize case and sentence planning in addition to increasing the cost-effectiveness of operating a reformatory system.

In this line, the General Director of the Reformatory Directorate, Mr. Ihasan Abdulrahman said "There are multiple challenges, and the Directorate of Reformatory is working hard to address them. Nevertheless, cooperation with other governmental authorities and the support of UNODC are vital keys to overcome these challenges and achieve future development in reformatory facilities. We will draw on the international expertise provided by UNODC to enhance the reformatory system in KRG-I and strengthen the capacity of the reformatory staff".

The meeting concluded with agreements on the next steps. Aligned with SDG 17 and through its continued partnerships with local authorities, the UNODC aims to strengthen Iraq's institutional capacity to develop and integrate the relevant classifications tools into practice, enabling reformatory staff to perform their tasks in an effective, professional manner to manage and mitigate the threats posed by terrorists and FTF inmates. International best practices will be examined and adapted to the local context.

UNMAS, Ministry of Defence and Director General of DMA discuss the implementation of Iraq's national and international commitments in mine action

Baghdad, 17 August 2022 - The Director-General of the Mine Action Directorate, Eng. Dhafir Mahmood Khallaf, discussed today, Wednesday, at the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence, with the Director-General of the Engineering Support Department, Lieutenant-General Hatem Jabr Khalaf, and the Director-General of the United Nations Mine Action Service, Mr. Pehr Lodhammer, the executive and procedural steps to speed up the implementation of Iraq's national and international commitments at the level of various activities of mine action. The Directorate for Mine Action, which

runs the work of the National Mine Action Program in Iraq, always follows up with its implementing partners the

stages of completion, implementation and measures to overcome all challenges and obstacles.



Baghdad, 14 September 2022 - UNMAS Director, Ms. Ilene Cohn, together with UNMAS in Iraq Chief of Mine Action Programme, Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, met with the Director General of the Iraqi Directorate for Mine Action (DMA), Mr. Dhafir Mahmood, in Baghdad. The meeting included a discussion on the continuous support from UNMAS Iraq to DMA as well as calling for the need for the Government of Iraq to allocate state budget funding for mine action response in Iraq. The meeting also covered the concern of the increase in child casualties from explosive ordnance and reviewed the explosive ordnance risk education plan to combat this issue in the short and the long term.



Mosul, 18 September 2022 - UNMAS Director Ms. Ilene Cohn visited UNMAS operations in Mosul as well as ongoing clearance of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) outside the city in Ninewa Governorate, in an area where Implementing Partners have cleared thousands of IEDs in support of safe and dignified returns. Ms. Cohn also visited Al Shifa hospital, which was cleared by UNMAS in support of stabilization. The Director was joined by UNMAS Chief Mine Action Programme in Iraq, Pehr Lodhammar, and officials from the Iraqi Directorate for Mine Action.



Mosul, 18 September 2022 - UNMAS Director Ms. Ilene Cohn visited Al Shifa hospital, Mosul, with UNMAS in Iraq Chief Mine Action Programme Mr. Pehr Lodhammar and UNMAS Iraq implementing partner, Global Clearance Solutions.



Erbil, 19 September 2022 - UNMAS Director, Ms. Ilene Cohn, met today with the Head of Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), Mr. Jabbar Mustafa. The meeting included a discussion regarding explosive ordnance (EO) contamination levels in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), the continuous support from UNMAS in Iraq to IKMAA to mitigate the threat from EO in the KRI, and the acceleration to the demining progress.



Baghdad, 19 September 2022 - Special Adviser Christian Ritscher welcomed Ms. Ilene Cohn, Director of UNMAS at UNITAD headquarters in Baghdad. They discussed potential cooperation in areas formerly controlled by ISIL in Iraq where UNMAS' work is crucial to the safety of UN staff and national counterparts, especially in the field of mass graves' excavation.

The EU spearheaded the UNMAS expansion of clearance beyond retaken areas

Baghdad, 20 September 2022 - Since 2016, the European Union has contributed over \$26 million to support UNMAS in Iraq activities, including support of survey, clearance, explosive ordnance risk education, and technical support. The most recent contribution from the EU enabled UNMAS Iraq to clear legacy landmines in southern Iraq.

The EU spearheaded the UNMAS expansion of clearance beyond retaken areas, which has created further donor interest, allowing UNMAS to extend clearance in Basra province for another year with funding from multiple donors. This will result in more cleared areas for much-needed residential and

agricultural land.

Thank you to the European Union for

their generous contribution to UNMAS in Iraq throughout the past six years.



Explosive ordnance incident at Shatt al-Arab near Basra kills 2, injures 1

Basra, 24 October 2022 – Two Iraqi members of a team working for a United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) implementing partner were killed and a third was injured in an incident at an explosive ordnance clearance site at Shatt al-Arab near Basra in southern Iraq today.

The incident occurred in the early morning at the site managed by Al Khebra Al Fania (AKAF), which is one of UNMAS Iraq's implementing

partners. The injured person was reported to be in stable condition in hospital.

UNMAS Iraq and the entire UN family in Iraq convey their deepest condolences to the families of the deceased and wish the injured person a speedy recovery.

UNMAS is working closely with the Iraqi Directorate for Mine Action to investigate and review the incident to understand if any conditions can be

addressed and precautions implemented to reduce the risk of such incidents in the future.

AKAF has been a partner of UNMAS for the last two years and cleared hundreds of items of explosive ordnance in the Shatt al-Arab area. The clearance operations are essential for the safety of impacted communities and safe access to land for agricultural activities and development.

UN on Twitter

New York, 27 October 2022 - Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations: "My sincere condolences to family & friends of the @UNMAS implementing partners killed & injured on Monday in an IED incident near Basra, Iraq. I commend the courage of all UNMAS staff & partners who put their lives at risk to save others. #NotATarget"

Everyone should have access to accurate information on health-related precautions

Baghdad, 19 August 2022 - Regardless of where they reside, everyone should have access to accurate information on health-related precautions. This is particularly important in areas where people live in sub-standard shelters. IOM Iraq's Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Mobile Response Team recently coordinated with the Al-Duloeyah Health Department in Salah al-Din Governorate to facilitate a day of health awareness sessions and medical check-ups for the area's displaced persons. Eighteen men from Al Ameen Village and the Albu Jewari informal site attended, receiving basic information about hepatitis and its treatment, the

prevention of Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever and the benefits of vaccination against COVID-19. Medical staff performed blood pressure checks

and provided advice on managing hypertension. This activity was supported by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.



IOM Iraq provided two automated hematology analyzers to primary health care centers in Ninewa Governorate

Ninewa, 25 August 2022 - As part of its ongoing durable solutions programming in Iraq, IOM is supporting the Ministry of Health to provide quality health care services in areas of return. IOM Iraq recently provided two automated hematology analyzers to the Baaj and Hatra primary health care centers in Ninewa Governorate and trained laboratory assistants in their operation. The devices will allow them to conduct blood analyses and provide essential diagnostic services. This means that people living in and around Baaj and Hatra districts will no longer need to travel hours to Mosul or other cities to access these services. Similarly, in July 2022, four other primary health care centers – located in Erbil, Baghdad and Dohuk Governorates



– received medical equipment, including ultrasound machines, defibrillators, digital weight scales and more, as well as training support for their use.

These activities were made possible with support from the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

Proper first aid training can not only save lives

Kirkuk, 29 August 2022 - Proper first aid training can not only save lives, it can also speed up recovery and determine whether a patient will experience a temporary or long-term handicap. Such training is especially

important for IDPs living in informal sites, where safety risks tend to be greater. IOM Iraq's Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) team coordinated with the Iraqi Red

Crescent Society to conduct 5 days of first aid training sessions in Kirkuk Governorate's Hay Al-Askary informal site, attended by 62 women and 37 men. First Aid Kits were distributed after the sessions.



Participants learned ways to respond and maintain composure in emergency situations, growing their confidence to take charge when necessary. Such trainings can help participants better understand themselves and how they and others react in different situations that require the administration of first aid. This activity was made possible by support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.

Capacity building of health educators on risk communication and community engagement

Baghdad, 04 September 2022 – Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO representative in Iraq, addressed dozens of Ministry of Health professionals during WHO Iraq workshop aimed to build the capacity of health educators on risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) in the context of outbreaks in Iraq.

He stressed the importance of effectively communicating about health risks and engaging with communities to prevent, control and confront the spread of diseases in Iraq.

COVID-19 pandemic taught us that RCCE is key for a successful response to outbreaks and epidemic-prone diseases.



Building the capacities of healthcare workers to manage drug supply, material stock and waste management

Baghdad, 7 September 2022 - An estimated 4.9 million IDPs have returned to their areas of origin since the ISIL crisis. As part of its work supporting durable solutions in locations witnessing high numbers of returns, IOM Iraq is training healthcare staff to improve healthcare management and service provision in areas of return.

In Baghdad Governorate, IOM health teams recently conducted the 'Enhancing Interdisciplinary Health Practices' (EIHP) training – a series of workshops focused on building the capacities of healthcare workers to manage drug supply, material stock and waste management – reaching 10 health care professionals from primary healthcare centres and staff from the Directorates of Health in Abu Ghraib and Al-Kharkh districts. Other EIHP workshops were also conducted in Ninewa



and Dohuk Governorates, reaching about 40 health care providers. These activities were made possible

through the support of the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

WHO attends Pharmacy Summit in Sulaymaniyah

Sulaymaniyah, 10 September 2022 - "The World Health Organization works with partners and the Member States to strengthen regulation, including post-marketing surveillance, and to eliminate substandard and falsified medicines," said Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO representative in Iraq, while addressing today's Pharmacy Summit Iraq/Kurdistan-2022 held in Sulaymaniyah.

In his speech he emphasized that Universal Health Coverage (UHC) would not be achieved without availing access to safe, effective and affordable medicines able to prevent, treat and lessen the impact of ailments and diseases.



WHO campaign to raise awareness of Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever

Baghdad, 12 September 2022 - The World Health Organization (WHO) and Iraq Red Crescent Society teams are on the ground to reach the most at-risk communities in 11 governorates to raise their awareness of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF). Safe livestock slaughtering practices by butchers will limit CCHF transmission during the Arbaeen visit.



WHO delivered 10 tons of essential medicines and medical supplies

Erbil, 13 September 2022 - The World Health Organization (WHO), with support from the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, completed this week the delivery of several shipments containing more than 10 tons of essential medicines and medical supplies to meet the health needs of tens of thousands of Syrian refugees in 9 refugee camps in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Duhok governorates.



New Pediatric Unit opens its door before newborns in Akre Pediatric and Maternity Hospital in Duhok Governorate

Duhok, 14 September 2022 -- The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the Directorate of Health in Duhok Governorate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, inaugurated today the new Pediatric Department in Akre Hospital.

With the opening of this department, the hospital became the only facility in the city to offer specialized services to children and newborns.

The new unit will provide the population of Akre with support to address the increasing needs for neonatal and pediatric health care services in Akre and surrounding

districts, including Bardarash, which is home to 3500 Syrian refugees.

"The establishment of this department will not only provide service to newborns and children among the population of Akre and refugees but will also provide a model for the transition from humanitarian response to the development through building resilience in the health system," said Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO Representative and Head of Mission in Iraq.

The new department comprises 28 beds equipped with emergency care supplies and medical equipment and supplies,

enabling the hospital to provide intensive care treatment to newborns and children. To further improve the quality of care in the department, advanced training sessions to enhance the technical capacity of the health workers assigned to the department in close collaboration between WHO, the Directorate of Health in Duhok, and AISPO.

The establishment of this department was made possible through a partnership with the State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and through technical collaboration with AISPO.



IOM Iraq has built an emergency room in Zummar sub-district

Mosul, 15 September 2022 - To support displaced families in rebuilding their lives and improving their access to basic services, IOM Iraq has built an emergency room in Zummar sub-district in Ninawa Governorate.

The project aims to provide medical support to the people of Zummar by establishing an emergency room for urgent cases instead of referring them to the city of Mosul for medical treatment.

Now, it is easier for Zummar's community to receive medical care. About 8,000 families will benefit from

this project.

The construction of the emergency room in Zummar was made possible

with the support of the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.



WHO and Iraqi Red Crescent Society concluded a large-scale awareness campaign

Baghdad, 23 September 2022 - WHO and Iraqi Red Crescent Society concluded a large-scale awareness campaign to reach communities, farmers, butchers and livestock traders with health messages before, during and after the Arbaeen Visit.

Over 128,000 people among high-risk groups were reached by 252 volunteers in 11 governorates.



IOM Iraq is supporting different pillars of the National Cholera Preparedness and Response Plan

Baghdad, 20 September 2022 - IOM Iraq is collaborating with the Directorates of Health in multiple governorates across the country, including Ninewa, Duhok, Erbil, and Anbar to support different pillars of the National Cholera Preparedness and Response Plan.

In Ninewa, IOM recently organized capacity building activities for 30 health staff at Jeddah 5 camp clinic to train them on outbreak containment, preparedness response and cholera case management; essential medical supplies were also delivered to the healthcare center. Awareness raising activities were conducted for 15 staff members of partner NGOs operating in the camp. The outreach campaigns and community cholera awareness/prevention sessions are conducted by IOM Iraq's community health promoters, who aim to improve knowledge of and access to health services among vulnerable, mobile populations.

These activities were made possible with support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.

In a related activity, IOM Iraq is implementing health promotion activities aiming at improving community health in areas of return, as part of efforts on durable solutions in locations witnessing high numbers of returnees,

IOM trained community health promoters have been conducting outreach activities doing door to door visits and group sessions with returnees and host community members about topics related to disease prevention through access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene.

One issue addressed by the community health promoters was the cholera outbreak witnessed in Iraq this summer.

The engaged the targeted communities in Ninewa, Duhok, Baghdad and Erbil in active discussions on prevention of cholera and diarrheal diseases.

In August, the community health promoters reached about 6000 persons and are continuing throughout September.

These activities were made possible through the support of U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.



Discussions to advance the digitalization of the health information system in Iraq

Baghdad, 25 September 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO representative in Iraq, met the Minister of Health, Dr Hani Al-Aqabi, along with data experts from WHO Iraq, WHOEMRO and UniOslo, and discussed to advance the digitalization of the health information system in Iraq.

The new system will provide real-time information to enable evidence-based decision-making.



IOM Iraq conducted a non-medical training of trainers on Person-Centered Care (PCC) for health care professionals in Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 26 September 2022 - Access to quality health services and dignified care is a right for all people, including those affected by displacement. Recently, IOM Iraq conducted a non-medical training of trainers on Person-Centred Care (PCC) for health care professionals in Kirkuk Governorate. The training reached 12 participants from Kirkuk’s Directorates of Health, who will be able to subsequently roll out PCC trainings for health care providers at primary health care centers in different areas of across the Governorate.

IOM’s PCC approach focuses on the needs and dignity of the patient, helping to reduce discrimination in health care settings and promoting effective patient-provider communication, shared decision making and trauma-informed care. Such capacity-building interventions not only improve the quality of health care but



also aid in building trust between communities and the health system. This activity is a part of IOM Iraq’s work on durable solutions in locations witnessing high influxes of returnees

following displacement, and part of efforts to improve care provision and patient-provider relationships in these areas. This training was supported by the Government of Germany.

WHO concluded training on the collection, transferring and diagnosis of samples related to outbreaks and epidemic-prone diseases

Basra, 27 September 2022 – WHO concluded today a three-day training workshop on the collection, transferring and diagnosis of samples related to outbreaks and epidemic-prone diseases, targeting 13 laboratory technicians and

specialists from Basra, Thi Qar, Missan, Muthanna and Dewaniyah governorates.



WHO representative in Iraq, attended the Patient Safety conference in Baghdad

Baghdad, 27 September 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO representative in Iraq, attended the Patient Safety conference in Baghdad, along with the Minister of Health, Dr Hani Al-Aqabi. The conference is focusing on reducing medication errors and harm.

Dr Zouiten commended the measures taken by the Ministry of Health to enhance medication safety based on the recommendations set by WHO.



Enhancing health care for IDPs in Iraq's informal sites



Baghdad, 28 September 2022 - As a result of years of conflict, Iraq's national health system suffers from constrained primary healthcare (PHC) services, a lack of sufficient trained health personnel, destroyed or inadequate healthcare infrastructure and shortages of medicines and medical supplies.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) often live in precarious conditions in camps and informal settlements. These communities face poor hygiene and sanitation conditions and insufficient access to health services — including maternal and child health care.

IDPs in Iraq, including those in protracted displacement, still need support with access to basic services, including health services.

In the Al-Mateen sector of the Amriyat Al Fallujah informal site, Anbar Governorate, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) supports a health clinic that receives many residents from the surrounding area in Anbar. Patients undergo examinations and receive medication as needed.

Marwa was displaced from Al-Qaim district to Amriyat Al Fallujah informal site in 2014 with her husband after a tiring journey until they reached what was then an IDP camp, before it was closed and reclassified in 2021. She had to sacrifice her wedding ring to get money for the journey, so that her family could reach safety.

"After the birth of my first child I couldn't get pregnant again and had frequent miscarriages, we don't know why," said Marwa, 34.

Marwa visited the IOM Iraq clinic, where there is a gynecologist, and after conducting tests, it was found that she suffered from chronic stress in pregnancy and a kidney condition, both of which were hindering her ability to conceive.

"My family was supportive of me. I

never despaired, as my husband encouraged me to see a doctor, take tests, follow up on medicines and treatments, and the doctor from the medical team intervened. I followed their instructions and advice until I reached a positive result," Marwa explained, who is now expecting her second baby.

Like Marwa, Sarah also experienced difficulties with pregnancies, while also seeking safety for her family during the crisis caused by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Sarah was displaced from Karma to Amriyat Al Fallujah in 2016, after her father was killed by ISIL; she decided to flee undercover with the help of friends.

"I got married in 2019 and for more than two years there was no pregnancy. I dreamed of becoming a mother, and this situation affected my psychological state greatly" explained Sarah, 29. "My financial situation was also not good enough to pay the medical examination fees and for the doctors' visits to find out [why I couldn't get pregnant]."

The combined costs of medical examinations and medication can be very expensive. It is difficult for displaced persons with no steady source of income to cover these costs,

especially because many lost everything they owned when they fled suddenly after ISIL entered their cities. "After a while, I learned [about the IOM clinic] and a female doctor who specializes in gynecological conditions. It is easy [and free] to access; I was encouraged and visited the doctor to conduct some tests," Sarah explained. "It was discovered that I suffer from some problems that [were preventing] pregnancy."

Sarah was prescribed a course of treatment; her case was monitored periodically, and then she became pregnant.

"I am happy and excited to see the baby, and the addition of a new family member. I'm getting great support from my husband and family as well as from the medical team" said Sarah, who is due to give birth soon, at time of writing.

The health clinic receives an average of 20-25 patients per day; the medical staff's duties include consultations for pregnant women; conducting ultrasounds; examining and treating gynecological disorders; and dispensing suitable medications for each patient. The gynecologist conducts consultations and treats patients two days per week. The health clinic also provides other healthcare services for residents of the informal site, including treatment and follow-up for patients with chronic diseases, and health promotion and awareness raising activities on communicable diseases, disease prevention and other health-seeking behaviour topics.

These services are made possible with support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and the Government of Germany.

By Rafal Abdulateef, IOM Iraq



Building health system resilience in Iraq: Investing in the management of pharmaceuticals and biomedical technologies

Erbil, 29 September 2022 – The World Health Organization (WHO) in Iraq, in partnership with the Ministry of Health in the Kurdistan region, opened new WHO warehouses located within the Kurdistan Ministry of Health storage area in the Erbil governorate.

The inauguration marks the initial phase of a major transition from direct service provision to building resilience in the health sector and strengthening health systems, including the investment in the management of pharmaceuticals and biomedical technologies. Similar action is scheduled for all governorates in an endeavor to strengthen the health system in Iraq and enhance national capacities in the areas of procurement, storage, dispatch and overall management of pharmaceuticals and medical technologies across the



country.

“I’m extremely pleased to oversee this significant shift in the area of medical technologies forecasting, procurement, storage and management. This represents a cornerstone in our drive toward health systems reform in Iraq,” said Dr Ahmed Zouiten WHO Representative in Iraq. “We are determined, alongside our counterparts in the Ministry of Health in the Kurdistan region and at federal levels to strengthen the medical technologies supply chain as an investment bringing us one step closer to achieving universal health coverage in Kurdistan and in all the governorates of Iraq,” Dr Zouiten added.

A warehouse area of 2000 sqm, enough to accommodate over 1000 pallets, was designated by the Ministry of Health in Kurdistan to WHO earlier this year. The new warehouses were renovated and furnished according to international standards with a

digitalized inventory system. A training and mentoring programme will be undertaken by a WHO technical team with the aim of standardizing and improving the pharmaceutical and medical technologies supply chain management across the country.

“Managing medicine and medical equipment is a pillar of the health system as without good medicine and medical equipment there would be no access to health and consequently no universal health coverage,” Dr Zouiten concluded.

This programme and all the achievements made so far would not have been possible without the effective partnerships with and support from our main donors, including the European Commission of Humanitarian Aid, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, the States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, State of Kuwait, and the Government of Germany.



Baghdad, 3 October 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO representative in Iraq, met Dr Eric Chevallier, Ambassador of France to Iraq. They discussed the findings of the Universal Health and Preparedness Review (UHDR) Pilot in Iraq and explored ways of enhancing the partnership and collaboration between Embassy of France in Baghdad and WHO Iraq to strengthen the health system and address the health security in Iraq.



Baghdad, 4 October 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO representative in Iraq, met the Ambassador of Kuwait to Iraq, Tariq Abdullah Al-Faraj. They discussed activities on consolidating the cooperation and partnership between WHO Iraq and Kuwait to strengthen and advance the health sector in Iraq. Kuwait has always been a key and strong partner to WHO in Iraq.



Baghdad, 6 October 2022 - Dr Ahmed Zouiten, WHO representative in Iraq met the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Administrative, Technical and Legal Affairs, Ambassador Omar Al-Barzanji. They discussed ways of enhancing collaboration between WHO Iraq and Iraqi MOFA, and investing in health diplomacy to achieve #HealthForAll.



Cairo, 10 October 2022 - Dr Ahmed ZOUITEN, WHO representative in Iraq, along with the Iraqi Minister of Health, Dr Hani Al-Aqabi was attending the 69th session of the WHOEMRO's Regional Committee meeting. They engaged in in-depth discussions that endorsed crucial regional policies, activities and plans.

UNDP completed the rehabilitation of the Artificial Limbs Center in Falluja, Anbar

Falluja, 6 October 2022 - UNDP completed the rehabilitation of the Artificial Limbs Center in Falluja, Anbar.

Damaged during the ISIL conflict, it was rehabilitated by UNDP Iraq's Funding Facility for Stabilization, with support from Belgium and Denmark.

The center will provide artificial limbs and rehabilitative care to people with disabilities.

To date, UNDP have completed over 165 health care projects in Anbar. This includes rehabilitating and equipping Falluja Teaching Hospital, Ramadi Maternity Hospital, and many health care centers across Anbar.



Workshop on the digital assessment of public health facilities held in Erbil

Erbil, 07 October 2022 – WHO Iraq in collaboration with the Ministry of Health at the Federal and Kurdistan levels, conducted in Erbil a training workshop on the digital assessment of public health facilities aimed at providing Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care (EmONC) in Kurdistan.

The workshop, which targeted 25 participants from maternal and pediatric hospitals in Erbil, Duhok & Sulaymaniyah, aimed to measure the health system's capacity in Iraq and the need to improve the quality and availability of health services delivered to mothers and newborns.



WHO acts to collect data and assess the epidemiological situation of cholera in Iraq

Baghdad, 13 October 2022 - In response to the cholera outbreak, the World Health Organization (WHO) Iraq

team visited the water quality laboratories and treatment plants of the Ministry of Construction, Housing

and Municipalities in Baghdad to collect data and assess the epidemiological situation of cholera in

Baharka Hospital officially opens in Erbil



Erbil, 24 October 2022 – The Baharka Hospital was inaugurated today by the Kurdistan Regional Government in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Federal Republic of Germany. It is a speciality hospital that is purpose-built to treat patients with airborne infections and respiratory illnesses.

The Kurdistan Regional Government's Department of Health constructed the main hospital building, while UNDP undertook the electrical and mechanical works. In addition, UNDP provided life-saving medical equipment required to establish isolation rooms, medical furniture, and ventilators. The electrical and mechanical works, and medical equipment were funded by the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Development Bank. While the Kurdistan Regional Government funded the civil works through various sources.

The hospital in Erbil has 38 beds and 30 isolation wards with the ability to provide specialised medical treatment and services to patients with respiratory illnesses. Currently, it is being operated and managed by Erbil's Department of Health. It will serve a

catchment population of over 1 million residents.

On the importance of the hospital, Director-General of Health Dr. Dlovan Fati says, "Baharka hospital will allow us to treat patients with airborne infections and respiratory illnesses. The opening of this hospital represents the passion, determination and hard work of the health department to improve access to health care services in Erbil. We thank UNDP and Germany for their generous support with making this a reality. We will continue to work hard and ensure high-quality health care services are provided."

"The new hospital is critical for Erbil to provide isolation facilities and speciality care for patients with airborne infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, chickenpox, and tuberculosis. This well-equipped facility will also help reduce the pressure on nearby health centres during an infectious outbreak, providing timely patient care and a purpose-built environment for healthcare workers," says UNDP Resident Representative for Iraq, Zena Ali Ahmad.

"This hospital would not have been established without the generous

support from one of our longest-standing partners, the Federal Republic of Germany. Together with Germany, we have made tremendous contributions towards reviving the health sector in Iraq after years of instability and conflict," she adds.

"Our support to the Baharka hospital and UNDP stands in line with the significant contributions of Germany to the Iraqi and Kurdish health sector with more than US\$410 million since 2014. Germany underlines its commitment to working jointly with our Iraqi and Kurdish partners in rebuilding the country. In the future, Iraqi and Kurdish ownership will be important at all levels in order to ensure the sustainability of our engagement," says Klaus Streicher, Consul General of Germany.

"We at KfW Development Bank are pleased and honoured to join in celebrating the inauguration of Baharka hospital which is indeed very special as it presents a direct cooperation and collaboration between the Kurdistan Regional Government and UNDP. We particularly look forward to seeing Baharka hospital utilized at the earliest, serving the public and assisting those in need of medical services," says Dr. Christine Heimburger, Director Department Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, KfW Development Bank.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, UNDP has supported the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government in strengthening its response to airborne infectious disease outbreaks. This facility is one of the nineteen speciality health centres established across the country by UNDP.

Mental Health

IOM supports displaced families with mental health and psychosocial support services

Kirkuk, 25 September 2022 - Internally displaced persons and other vulnerable populations across Iraq need continued access to mental health and psychosocial support services. In Kirkuk Governorate, IOM Iraq's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) team has been supporting displaced families in Al-Jamia neighborhood through conducting different life skills, with

vocational trainings, MHPSS awareness sessions, case management

services, recreational activities, literacy courses and caregiver sessions.



Jameela joined one of the community-based mental health and psychosocial support activities that integrates elements of simple vocational training

Hawija, 8 September 2022 - Jameela, 34, mother of 5: “Keeping your sanity when you are stuck at home most of the time with no source of income and nothing to do is very hard,” says Jameela, a 34-year-old mother of five. Jameela’s family was displaced from Hawija in 2014, returning home after three years in displacement. The town was in ruins and remnants of war were strewn everywhere.

“The situation was not good, and people were psychologically exhausted. Because my husband is blind and has stones in both kidneys, he can’t work. We have no one to work and support the family – other people support us. The other day, we had nothing to eat for dinner. That’s how bad our financial situation is.”

Jameela heard about services offered at IOM Iraq’s centre in Hawija. She decided to join one of the community-based mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) activities that integrates elements of simple vocational training.

“I took part in the salon activity. I learned how to cut and dye hair and how to do makeup. I feel good about this because it is useful and helps me to get out of the house and use my time for something beneficial. I made new friends with other women. It helps us change the mood a bit. I am very happy with this centre and its activities, I chat, laugh and joke with other women, and this helps us forget about our

psychological state a bit.”

Jameela and the other participants also received psychosocial support sessions on stress management and self-care. In addition to strengthening positive coping mechanisms, such community-based support serves as a gateway to address psychosocial challenges and identify individuals in need of more specialized MHPSS support in a non-stigmatizing way.

While at the centre, Jameela learned that IOM Iraq also provides legal support. Jameela’s family members all had old civil documentation that needed to be renewed, but because of their financial situation, they hadn’t been able to do so.

“Our IDs are very old, and eventually everyone needs to change to the new unified Iraqi ID currently in use, or you will face challenges with the old IDs. But for that, people must go to Kirkuk. Because of our situation, we couldn’t afford the transportation, let alone the renewal processing fees. I heard that IOM provided legal support, which sounded very good. We applied for the civil documents renewal, and their team did everything for us. We only had to come here to the centre and bring the old documents. They took care of everything else. And soon, we will get our new IDs.”

Civil documentation – a right in and of itself – is necessary for the exercise of other rights, including the rights to education, health, adequate housing,



freedom of movement and due legal process. Having the appropriate ID helps to enable access to public services, school enrollment, shelter support and much more.

IOM Iraq provides MHPSS and legal assistance through integrated, community-based approaches in Hawija; Coordination between the two programmes helps to provide more holistic support for people in Hawija in need of multidimensional assistance. Indeed, in the context of displacement, needs are rarely singular and often compounding. Meeting MHPSS and legal needs in tandem is key to facilitating the voluntary and sustainable return of individuals to their areas of origin and achieving durable solutions to displacement.

*names have been changed for privacy reasons.

IOM Iraq’s MHPSS and legal support in Hawija is made possible by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

IOM Iraq organized its third Suicide Prevention workshop

Baghdad, 14 September 2022 - The theme of this year’s World Suicide Prevention Day was “Creating Action Through Hope”. To mark the occasion IOM Iraq organized its third Suicide Prevention Workshop, hosted in collaboration with Koya University and in partnership with Azhee Foundation. Dozens of academics, researchers, government officers, mental/medical healthcare professionals, journalists, and staff members of civil society organizations actively participated in five discussion groups focused on: education & research; health; media; policy making; and civil society & gender.

The workshop was an opportunity for participants to learn about each other’s programs and interventions and see

what possibilities exist for further collaboration on suicide prevention efforts. The event also featured an art exhibition where work by the artist Naz Ali, as well as pieces created by

beneficiaries of IOM’s Mental Health and Psychosocial Support programmes, was displayed.

This activity was supported by the Government of Germany.



UNITAD on Twitter

Baghdad, 11 October 2022 - This World Mental Health Day 2022 we stand by victims and survivors enduring traumas and aftermath of ISIL atrocities, reiterating that accountability is an important step towards healing.

UNITAD continues to prioritize mental health of victims, survivors and national experts working with them.

World Mental health Day commemorated in Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 12 October 2022 - To mark the World Mental Health Day, IOM Iraq held an event in Kirkuk, in coordination with Directorate of Health (DoH), bringing together community members, mental health actors and others to discuss community mental health needs and services in Kirkuk. The event featured passionate speeches from the DoH and IOM highlighting the vital role of mental health in the wellbeing of individuals and families.

“Mental health for all. This is the slogan for this year’s World Mental Health Day. We are celebrating alongside 150 other countries. We want to say that mental health issues are common, as one in eight people in the Iraqi community suffer from mental health issues, and that this illness is equivalent to physical diseases and needs to be attended to minimize complications,” said Dr.Sabah Namiq, Director of the Kirkuk Public Health



Department. “Our department is active in providing mental health support in health centers, in the light of the goals drafted by the Ministry of Health and IOM.”

During the event, volunteers raised awareness through a short play on the impact of mental health on society, and a group of young children performed a local song with different mental health

positive messages. The event closed with a debate and open discussion on mental health needs in Kirkuk, and how to minimize stigma and fear around speaking up on mental health issues.

IOM provides community-based mental health services in Kirkuk with the generous support of USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance

Environment

Climate change and the Law: integrating the NDC in Iraqi legislations



Baghdad, 17 August 2022 - The impacts of climate change on Iraq are among the worst in the world. With the temperatures continuously soaring to 50 degrees Celsius in summer months, and the iconic Marshes in the south experiencing extreme drought, it is a critical time for the Iraqi government to steer the country in the right path of climate adaptation.

The Iraqi government has a clear vision to adapt to the effects climate change through the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)* which serve as the country’s guiding policy framework, developed with support from UNDP after Iraq joined the Paris Climate Accord in 2021.

To achieve the targets identified in the

NDC, it must be supported by national laws.

Recently, UNDP held a high-level discussion to facilitate the process of utilizing the environmental knowledge of national and international experts to modify existing legislations or draft new ones in order to mainstream and integrate the NDC in the Iraqi laws.

The Minister of Environment Dr. Jassim Abdulazeez Hamadi led the meeting, alongside advisors to The Council of State as well as technical experts and the legal department of the Ministry of Environment (MoEn). Technical experts presented an environmental framework along with the scientific evidence on the urgent need for climate action to the

Council of State through the Ministry of Environment’s legal department, showcasing the climate change work that has been done since 2009. Both MoEn and the Council of State will have more discussion in the near future to suggest new law/ make amendments, or draft new regulations to ease the implementation of the NDC.

This important step shows the Iraqi government’s commitment to combatting climate change and reemphasizes UNDP’s continuous support to Iraq in this area, particularly as COP27 in Egypt approaches, where Iraq is expected to present the environmental methodology it is currently following and benefit from the international expertise at the conference.

*The Nationally Determined Contribution is the plan to adapt to climate change and reduce emissions that gets submitted every 5 years to the United Nations Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat. All countries that join the Paris Agreement are required to communicate and maintain their climate actions and the contribution they intend to achieve regarding reduction of emissions of Green House Gases.

WFP Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa received by the President of Republic

Baghdad, 22 August 2022 - Ms. Corinne Fleischer, WFP Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, was received today by the President of Republic, Mr. Barham Salih. She said: "Amidst urgent priorities in Iraq, the 5th most affected country by the Climate Crisis, we agreed that climate is an emergency and without immediate action, it will continue to displace thousands of people, in search of better opportunities".



Summer course "Green Building and Sustainable Technologies" held in Mosul

Mosul, 5 September 2022 - The effects of urbanization and climate change are converging in dangerous ways. In the coming decades, millions of people in the Arab region are likely to be affected by droughts, flash floods, sandstorms, periods of extreme heat and a general decline of the environment. Climate change may also negatively impact infrastructure and worsen people's access to basic urban services, particularly the poorest. Yet, properly planned and managed, cities can be places of innovation and efficiency. The academia is well poised to provide the leadership that is needed to address what might be this century's greatest challenge – the preservation of a habitable planet.

Hence, UN-Habitat has partnered with the Mosul University to deliver a two-week Summer Course titled "Green Building and Sustainable Technologies",



funded by the European Union as part of its local development programme. The course, held by Dr Adel Al-Assaf, an expert in this field, is being attended by

30 freshly graduated engineers and students in their last year of university, as well as a dozen professors keen to integrate new notions in their curricula.

UN-Habitat has enrolled 10 youth from Telafar in a dedicated vocational training course on solar energy

Mosul, 18 September 2022 - Despite the benefits of renewable energy and Iraq's ideal climate conditions, most potential Iraqi consumers and decision-makers in the public sector lack the necessary knowledge on solar energy and confidence in its feasibility as an alternative power source. Significant strides have already been made in the past few years, but more needs to be done to ramp up the photovoltaic market in Iraq and reduce people's dependence on the national grid and non-renewable sources.

To support upskilling and employment prospects in this growing sector, UN-Habitat has enrolled 10 youth from Telafar in a dedicated vocational training course delivered by Aid Gate Organization (AGO), in partnership with Mosul's Vocational Training

Centre (VTC). Once their training was completed, they embarked on a week-long apprenticeship with the Dohuk-based Silevany Company during their

installation of a new photovoltaic system in Yarmouk Park, Mosul. This important initiative is funded by the European Union.



Solar energy used in Anbar

Heet, 25 September 2022 - The al-Bayader oasis in Heet, Anbar is now powered by solar energy!

The solar panels and system were installed by the UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization. Going forward, the water pumps at the oasis will be powered by solar energy, ensuring sustainability while also reducing costs.

This will benefit over 15,000 farmers living in and around the oasis. It has been possible thanks to Canada in Iraq's support.



Introducing solar energy in Mosul



Mosul, 16 October 2022 - Despite the benefits of renewable energy and Iraq's ideal climate conditions, most potential Iraqi consumers and decision-makers in the public sector lack the necessary knowledge on solar energy and confidence in its feasibility as an alternative power source. Significant strides have already been made in the past few years, but more needs to be done to ramp up the

photovoltaic market in Iraq and reduce people's dependence on the national grid and non-renewable sources.

To support upskilling and employment prospects in this growing sector, UN-Habitat has enrolled 10 youth from Telafar in a dedicated vocational training course delivered by Aid Gate Organization AGO, in partnership with Mosul's Vocational Training Centre (VTC). When

their training was completed, they embarked on a week-long apprenticeship with the Dohuk-based Silevany Company during their installation of a new photovoltaic system in Yarmouk Park, Mosul. A new solar system comprising of 88 solar panels will ensure that the community hall will be fully independent from the main city grid and emit no greenhouse gases. This initiative, funded by the European Union, falls in line with Iraq's effort to reduce its current dependence on fossil fuels.

"It's the first time I attend such a training and now I feel that I need to learn more and more" said Mr Mahmood Nizar Abd, electrical engineer of Mosul Municipality, who has just concluded a week-long training on the design, operation and maintenance of solar systems delivered by UN-Habitat in partnership with Silevany Co.

The tailored course included a variety of topics, from the basics of solar systems, photovoltaic (PV) modules, batteries, inverters, and principles of PV design, to system monitoring and troubleshooting.

UNICEF Report – By 2050, every child in Iraq will be exposed to high heatwave frequency

Baghdad, 26 October 2022 – 559 million children are currently exposed to high heatwave frequency* globally, according to new research from UNICEF. Further, 624 million children are exposed to one of three other high heat measures - high heatwave duration, high heatwave severity or extreme high temperatures, with Iraq being among the countries currently with the highest child exposure to extreme high temperatures and most concerning forecasts for 2050.

The report *The Coldest Year Of The Rest Of Their Lives: Protecting Children From The Escalating Impacts Of Heatwaves* highlights the already extensive impact of heatwaves on

children and reveals that, even at lower levels of global heating, in just three decades, more regular heatwaves are unavoidable for children everywhere.

The report estimates that by 2050, all of the world's 2.02 billion children are expected to be exposed to high heatwave frequency, regardless of whether the world achieves a 'low greenhouse gas emission scenario' with an estimated 1.7 degrees of warming in 2050 or a 'very high greenhouse gas emission scenario' with an estimated 2.4 degrees of warming in 2050.

Forecast for Iraq is especially worrisome. While in 2020, only 6% of Iraqi children are exposed to high heatwave frequency, both scenarios for

2050 project not only that every single girl and boy in Iraq will be exposed to high heatwave frequency by that year, but they will also be exposed to high heatwave duration and extreme high temperatures.

Millions more children will be exposed to high heatwave severity and extreme high temperatures depending on the degree of global heating reached. Currently 23 countries fall into the highest category for child exposure to extreme high temperatures. This will rise to 33 countries by 2050 under the low emissions scenario and 36 countries under the very high emissions scenario. Iraq is among the countries in the highest category in both scenarios.

UNICEF Report – By 2050, every child in Iraq will be exposed to high heatwave frequency *(continued)*

“As UNICEF Executive Director has stated, the mercury is rising and so are the impacts on children,” said Sheema SenGupta, UNICEF Representative in Iraq. “Already, 9 out of 10 children in Iraq are exposed to extreme high temperatures, and it is only going to get worse. More children and young people will be impacted in Iraq by longer, hotter and more frequent heatwaves over the next thirty years, threatening their health and wellbeing, and likely worsening mental health conditions and impacting most vulnerable children, especially girls.” And she finished, “The two scenarios from the report demonstrate the need to take measures now. How devastating these changes will be depends on the actions we take now. Quoting our Executive Director, this is the only way to save children’s lives and futures – and the future of the planet.”

Young people in Iraq are taking action to respond to the impact of heatwaves. Mujtaba Jafar Abdulazeez Alshawi is a 20-year-old climate change activist, quoted in the UNICEF global report, “I got involved in climate change advocacy because climate change has a huge impact on Iraq, especially in my city, Misan. During the summer months the temperatures can reach as high as 50°C. The air conditioning is not available in all public places or at stops on the road, making it challenging to move around and deal with the heat.” Mujtaba is clear about the way forward, “We need to take action now. We need to implement and take previous climate agreements more seriously, like the Paris Agreement, as well as move to sustainability and not rely on materials that increase pollution.”

Produced in collaboration with The Data Collaborative for Children and launched in partnership with UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Vanessa Nakate and Africa-based Rise Up Movement, these findings underscore the urgent need to adapt the services children rely on as unavoidable impacts of global heating unfold. It also makes a case for continued mitigation, to prevent the worst impacts of the other high heat measures, including longer and hotter heatwaves and higher extreme temperatures.

The report found high heatwave duration currently impacts 538 million, or 23 per cent of, children, including adolescents, globally. This will rise to 1.6 billion children in 2050 at 1.7 degrees warming, and 1.9 billion

children at 2.4 degrees warming, emphasising the importance of urgent and dramatic emissions mitigation and adaptation measures to contain global heating and protect lives.

Heatwaves are especially damaging to children, as they are less able to regulate their body temperature compared to adults. The more heatwaves children are exposed to, the greater the chance of health problems including chronic respiratory conditions, asthma, and cardiovascular diseases. Babies and young children are at the greatest risk of heat-related mortality. Heatwaves can also affect children’s environments, their safety, nutrition and access to water, and their education and future livelihood.

UNICEF is calling on governments globally to:

- **PROTECT** children and young people from climate devastation by adapting social services. Every country must adapt critical social services - water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), health, education, nutrition, social protection, and child protection – to protect children and young people. For example, food systems must be strengthened to withstand hazards and ensure continued access to healthy diets. Increased investments must be made in the early prevention, detection, and treatment of severe malnutrition in children, young people mothers and vulnerable populations. At COP27, children, young people and their rights must be prioritized in decisions on adaptation.

- **PREPARE** children and young

people to live in a climate-changed world. Every country must provide children and young people with climate change education, engagement and participation opportunities on climate action, disaster risk reduction education, green skills training and green jobs and opportunities to meaningfully participate and influence climate policy making. COP27 must see countries strengthen the focus on children’s climate education and empowerment in the ACE action plan, adopt it, and implement previous commitments to build young people’s capacity.

- **PRIORITIZE** children and young people in climate finance and resources. Developed countries must deliver on their COP26 agreement to double adaptation funding to \$40bn per year by 2025 at a minimum, as a step to delivering at least \$300bn per year for adaptation by 2030. Adaptation funding must make up half of all climate finance. COP27 must unlock progress on loss and damage, placing the resilience of children, young people, and their communities at the center of discussions on action and support.

- **PREVENT** a climate catastrophe by drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions and keep 1.5 degrees Celsius alive. Emissions are projected to rise by 14% this decade, putting us on a path to catastrophic global heating. All governments must revisit their national climate plans and policies to increase ambition and action. They must cut emissions by at least 45% by 2030 to keep heating to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius.



UNESCO is progressing with the rehabilitation of historic Shanasheel houses and Al-Ashar Canal

Basra, 11 September 2022 - Work is underway in Basra Old City. UNESCO is progressing with the rehabilitation of historic Shanasheel houses and Al-Ashar Canal, while creating local job opportunities. These projects are generously funded by the European Union.



UNESCO Representative to Iraq and Iraqi Minister of Culture visited the Governor of Babel

Babel, 13 September 2022 - UNESCO Representative to Iraq, Paolo Fontani, and Iraqi Minister of Culture, Hassan Nadhem, visited the Governor of Babel, Ali Waad Allawi, in the presence of Sheikh Adnan Al-Janabi, and Sheikh Raed Allawi, to discuss future projects in UNESCO's World Heritage Site, Babylon. Situated 85 km south of Baghdad, the property includes the ruins of the city which, between 626 and 539 BCE, was the capital of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Its remains, outer and inner-city walls, gates, palaces, and temples are a unique testimony to one of the most influential empires of the ancient world.



DSRSG/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq visited UNESCO worksites in Mosul

Mosul, 16 September 2022 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq/Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Irena Vojáčková-Sollorano, accompanied by UNESCO Representative to Iraq, Mr. Paolo Fontani, visited UNESCO worksites in Mosul and expressed huge enthusiasm with the achievements made so far.



A training course on the use of WebGIS successfully concluded

Mosul, 19 September 2022 - UNESCO, in partnership with its consultant RISVIEL of Italy, has successfully concluded a two weeklong training course for the technical staff of the agencies of the Nineveh Governorate on the use of WebGIS, as an effective data management and planning tool for the strategic urban development of central Mosul City. The training is part of UNESCO's Revive the Spirit of Mosul initiative, made possible with the generous financial support from the European Union.



UNDP rehabilitated the visitor's facilities at Khinnis Reliefs



Dohuk, 16 October 2022 - UNDP rehabilitated the visitor's facilities at Khinnis Reliefs, an Assyrian archaeological site built around 700 B.C. Khinnis Relief is an Assyrian archaeological site built around 700

B.C in Dohuk. The rock reliefs and tombs are considered the region's most delicate ancient rock carvings. However, years of conflict have negatively impacted tourism. To revive the local tourism, UNDP's Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience

Programme and ACTED, supported local communities rehabilitate the site's facilities. Through cash-for-work, 135 people were employed for 40 days to trim trees, clean waterways, fit solar-powered lights and install benches. UNESCO Representative to Iraq, Paolo Fontani, attended the opening of the first stage of the Faida Archeological Park organized by The Directorate of Antiquities and Heritage of Duhok & the University of Udine, in the presence of Ali Tatar, Duhok Governor, Sasan Awni, Minister of Municipalities and Tourism, Kurdistan Regional Government, Maurizio Greganti, Ambassador of Italy and Emilio Cabasino, head of AICS. Today, the site has become a symbol of hope and cooperation. This was possible thanks to support from the Federal Republic of Germany, provided through KfW Development Bank.



[#ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul Initiative continues](#)

Mosul, 3 October 2022 - UNESCO team, led by Head of Culture Programme, Mr. Junaid Sorosh-Wali, met with the Mayor of Mosul, Mr. Ameen Fanash, and the Deputy Governor of Nineveh, Mr. Hassan Al-Allaf to discuss the achievements, progress and future activities, within UNESCO's #ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul Initiative. The latter praised the successful achievements and the close cooperation between Iraqi government and UNESCO.



[Tigris Nights Film Festival held in Baghdad](#)

Baghdad, 10 October 2022 - Paolo Fontani, UNESCO Representative to Iraq, attended the "Tigris Nights Film Festival", held by the Goethe-Institut and the French Institute in Iraq, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture. Iraqi, German and French short films were screened.

Education

IOM conducted a training on debate, advocacy and peace building in Anbar's Ramadi district

Anbar, 18 August 2022 - With deep societal cleavages remaining after ISIL's official defeat, Iraqi youth need support to cultivate healthy dialogues on important issues in their communities. Between 7 and 14 August, IOM Iraq, in cooperation with the local government and in partnership with the University of Anbar, conducted a training on debate, advocacy and peace building in Anbar's Ramadi district. The training

targeted youth and social activists, as well as government employees from the offices of the Governor, Mayor and public services. 40 people attended, dividing into two teams – the prosecution and the defense – to debate problems in Iraq's education system and potential solutions. This training was made possible with support from the U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.



Employment intensive program to support creating decent job opportunities for Iraqis and Syrian refugees

Erbil, 23 August 2022 - The Salim Qaqa heritage house (B45/3) is considered as one of the most important heritage buildings at the historical Citadel of Erbil. It represents a rare example of an intact house with all its own original elements at place. The house is rich with original distinctive architectural elements that represent the authentic architecture of the Citadel, such as roofed tarma with alabaster arches, colored paintings on the walls, false decorated ceilings, iron handrails, colored tiles and patterned brick parapets.

The structure of the building is being restored by UNESCO and the High Commission of Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to adapt the Employment intensive program to

support creating decent job opportunities for Iraqis and Syrian refugees.

This activity is implemented under the project "Support to Livelihoods through Cultural Heritage Development" funded by the EU Regional trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis.

Erbil Citadel (UNESCO World Heritage Site) is a rare surviving example of a formerly fortified settlement which has grown up on the top of an imposing ovoid-shaped tell. The artificial topography of the archaeological mound conditioned the urban form of the settlement.



Trainings of Master Trainers on Education Management Information System (EMIS) continue

Baghdad, 31 August 2022 - UNESCO Iraq completed the fifth and sixth rounds of training of Master Trainers on Education Management Information System (EMIS) from the General Directorate of Education of Muthana and Missan governorates in Muthana Governorate and of Thiqr and Karkh 3. The trainings were delivered by expert trainers from the Ministry of Education's General Directorate of Educational Planning with technical backstopping from UNESCO. "Education Management Information System (EMIS) for Quality



Education" project is funded by the European Union and is being

implemented in partnership with UNICEF Iraq.

UNESCO met with the Technical Committee for the Application of the School Guide to discuss its implementation in the 250 schools

Baghdad, 4 September 2022 - Following the endorsement of the 'Guide for Safe and Supportive Learning Environments' by the Ministry of Education, UNESCO met with the Technical Committee for the Application of the School Guide to discuss its implementation in the 250 schools targeted by the GA-PVE-E project in Al Anbar and Ninewa governorates.

The meeting identified concrete steps and timeline for the application of the guide on the ground. It was also agreed to continuously monitor the implementation in 250 schools and meet again after the implementation to review and identify measures for the MoE to take to roll out the guide beyond the 250 schools.

The school guide has been co-developed with the Ministry of Education and is anchored on the Code of Conduct of the Ministry. It provides school staff with

the techniques to create safe and supportive learning environments that strengthen the defenses for peace among learners.



Improving access to quality and inclusive education

Baghdad, 4 September 2022 - Since 2019, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) is funding the UNESCO project “Improving Access to quality and Inclusive Education with Gender Equality for Out of School Children in Salah Al Din and Baghdad Governorates, in Iraq”. From 22 -23 August, AICS and UNESCO conducted a joint visit to the schools together with the Department of Education to witness the impact of the project interventions.



A commission to launch Internet services for 3000 schools within the educational information management project prepared by UNESCO



Commission's Executive Director, Muhammad al-Asadi, received the Head of the Education Sector and Assistant Director of the UNESCO Mission in Iraq, Santosh Katari, at the Commission's headquarters.

The meeting witnessed an agreement to increase the number of schools covered by the provision of Internet services within the comprehensive service project in the Commission, by an additional 1,500 schools, bringing the total to 3,000 schools for two years, and to activate it directly to implement the UNESCO EIMS project on transferring education in Iraq from paper-based to digital.

Baghdad, 7 September 2022 - The Media and Communications Commission has launched internet services for 3,000

schools under the educational information management project prepared by UNESCO. This was discussed when the

Programmes launched to support individuals who have dropped out to return to school

Ninewa, 8 September 2022 - In Al Qairawan, Ninewa, Community Police put up signs as part of the campaign to raise awareness about the Ministry of Education’s recently launched programmes supporting individuals who have dropped out to return to school.

This campaign was a Community Safety Initiative, planned and organized by the Community Policing Forum with the support of IOM Iraq. This activity was supported by the Government of Canada.



The Government of Iraq and WFP have been working together to ensure children most at risk of hunger remain in schools

Baghdad, 16 September 2022 - The Government of Iraq and WFP have been working together to ensure children most at risk of hunger remain in schools, which fed 450,000 children during the 2021-2022 academic year. School Feeding is essential to continued education and country growth.



Back to Learning Campaign is launched in the KRI to improve access to quality education for out-of-school children and welcome Syrian refugee children into the public school system



Erbil, 20 September 2022 - Marking the new academic year in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), the Ministry of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), jointly with UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Save the Children and the education partners launched the “Back to Learning Campaign” to further improve access for out-of-school Iraqi children and welcome refugee children to quality education in public schools. The campaign reaffirms the commitment of UN agencies and partners to support the implementation of the Refugee Education Integration Policy (REIP) that was adopted by the KRG in late 2021. Under the slogan: “Education for All For a Better Future!”, the launch event was held at Bahari nwe school in Erbil, where some Syrian refugee children are now enrolled.

“With the support of our partners, we are committed to reach out to the most vulnerable children and help them realize their dreams of a better future,” said H.E. Alan Hama Sa'eed Salih, Minister of Education of KRG, at the event, emphasizing the importance of all children having equal access to education.

Starting this academic year, all refugee children aged six to nine can register and study in any public school in KRI. The Ministry of Education of the KRI, in cooperation with the Directorates of Education, schools and education partners will ensure access to education for all children in a welcoming learning environment. Children will receive instruction in officially recognized curriculum languages (Sorani, Badini, Assyrian, Turkmen, English and Arabic) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

“Every child has the right to education,

formal, non-formal, on-line or in-person education, no matter what their background or situation is. UNICEF wants all children in schools and learning. This also applies to refugees and hence, the implementation of the Refugee Education Integration Policy will give a brighter future to the refugee children. UNICEF will continue to support the Ministry of Education of the KRI to implement this policy, committing to reach all children with quality education,” said Teija Vallandingham, Chief of Education of UNICEF in Iraq. “Inclusion of the refugee children in the education system is one step towards an inclusive society.”

“It is our collective responsibility to exert every effort to pave the way for a better future for displaced children. The Kurdistan Regional Government’s Ministry of Education shows great leadership by welcoming refugee children to enroll in public schools and qualified refugee teachers to participate in these education efforts. The KRI shows the region and beyond what it means to welcome refugees,” said Jean-Nicolas Beuze, UNHCR Representative in Iraq. “Many of the refugee students in KRI were born here after their parents fled their homes in North East Syria in particular ten years ago. Learning alongside their Iraqi Kurdish friends will give them further opportunities to create bonds that will keep communities together.”

“Children are the future of our country and this is our responsibility to ensure that ‘no children is left out from the right to have a potential and better future’ – which can be enabled through bringing them to the school and learning centre throughout this Back to Learning Campaign. As a leading child rights organization, Save the Children believes that education is a

fundamental right of children, regardless of their ethnic, religious, migratory, ability/disability status and gender and over the years, Save the Children has supported the right to education for thousands of children including refugees, host communities and Iraqi internally displaced persons by the Da’esh violence,” said Rizgar Al-Jaff, Acting Country Director, Save the Children Iraq. “Save the Children, along with all the education partners, UN agencies, national and international NGOs, must continue their efforts to ensure that all children, without discrimination, from all corners of Iraq, have access to quality education.”

In addition to the REIP, the Back to Learning Campaign aims to address the key factors that have resulted in children being out of school. The first goal is to ensure that Iraqi out-of-school children and adolescents are identified and have access to physical or virtual learning facilities/platforms under formal or non-formal education. The campaign then further addresses other social, cultural, economic, political, behavioral or personal issues that hinder their access to education. Authorities in the education sector will be notified about the new and emerging issues that have impacted children’s access to education and have left them out of schools. To keep track of these achievements, an online system will record necessary information about these children and adolescents, reasons for being out of school, and progresses made in supporting the children until enrollment in formal or non-formal education. Around 33,000 out-of-school Iraqi children and adolescents are targeted to be reached this year during the campaign.

To fill this learning gap, UN agencies and partners will continue supporting the Ministry of Education of the KRI to provide access to education to all children including the Syrian refugee children and adolescents.



WFP and UNICEF launched an initiative to help adolescent girls in Basra continue their education

Baghdad, 21 September 2022 - During 2020, many children, especially girls, were not able to connect to distance learning; compounding a grim reality among children already affected by poverty, disability, or social exclusion. WFP and UNICEF launched an initiative to help adolescent girls in Basra continue their education by connecting them to e-learning, opportunity, and choice. Over 2,500 girls from Basra were able to complete their primary education and pursue a better future, rather than being denied a basic human right.



Marking World Teachers' Day, 1,000 teachers finalize their training in Al-Qadisiyah on ICT-based distance learning (e-pedagogy)

Al-Qadisiyah, 6 October 2022 - Marking World Teachers' Day Celebration on 5 October, the Directorate of Education (DoE) in Al-Qadisiyah Governorate finalized the training of 1,000 teachers on the ICT-based distance learning (e-pedagogy), implemented by UNICEF and UNESCO thanks to European Union funding. These 1,000 teachers are part of the roll-out of the training for 4,000 teachers who are about to finalize their training on improved e-pedagogy in four Directorates of Education (Basra, Qadisiya, Thiqr and Rasafa 3). The program's main objective is, using interactive online teaching and learning methodologies, to enhance teachers' e-skills, enabling them to implement newly acquired knowledge to support children during crises. "This training, about to be finalized by 4,000 teachers, is a milestone in strengthening resilience of Iraq's education system, by providing digital tools to teachers to deliver quality and inclusive education, even at the time

when face-to-face learning might be challenged by natural or manmade hazards. Let World Teachers' Day serve to reaffirm UNICEF's commitment to support the Ministry of Education, jointly with UNESCO and funded by the European Union, in mainstreaming e-pedagogy as a strategic tool for every teacher in Iraq", said Sheema SenGupta, UNICEF Representative in Iraq. Recognizing the central role of Teachers in delivering quality teaching and learning, UNESCO declared 5th October as the World Teachers' Day in 1994. This year's theme is "Transformation of Education Begins with Teachers." "In Iraq, UNESCO is supporting the Ministry of Education to strengthen teachers' knowledge, skills and competencies in ICT based distance teaching and learning methodologies to ensure continuity of learning during any emergency such as COVID-19, which may disrupt access to face-to-face learning. UNESCO has mobilized the support of international partners, in particular the European Union to activate online



learning platforms, introduced the blended learning approaches and tools for teachers and is supporting delivery of training to 4000 teachers in partnership with UNICEF", said Paolo Fontani, Director and UNESCO Representative to Iraq. The e-pedagogy training, added to the Education Management Information Systems put in place, and the Governorate level Education Sector Plans, supported by UNESCO and UNICEF, are key parts of the joint work with the Ministry of Education, supported by the European Union to strengthen systems and build the capacity of the educational system in Iraq.

UNESCO is working with the MoE to update the school curricula

Baghdad, 6 October 2022 - UNESCO is implementing an ambitious project to reform Vocational Education in the Ministries of Education in Federal Iraq and Kurdistan. With the generous fund from the European Union, the professional training programme (TVET 2) project aims to increase the employability of graduates from the MoE's Vocational Schools. To achieve this UNESCO is working with the MoE to update the school curricula to ensure they are competence based, meet the needs of

the labour market and up to date technically and pedagogically. A meeting was held with the Director of Scientific Affairs in Baghdad, Mr. Issam Ali Al Jaff, to agree the plans for piloting the new curricula this academic year. The new curricula have been developed for Construction, Hospitality and Tourism, and Agriculture. Training will be given to the Teachers to support them implementing the new Curricula in the coming weeks. In addition, a Curriculum Working Group is being formed to develop a brand new

Curriculum for Information Technology over the coming months.



94 schools in Iraq were supported with school furniture and equipment

Baghdad, 6 October 2022 - Thanks to the contribution from Education Above All Foundation of Qatar and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation under a project to improve access to quality and inclusive education for out-of-school boys and girls in Iraq, 94 schools in Iraq were supported with school furniture and equipment. Eight schools in Ninewa and 11 schools in Baghdad received this week the final batch of school furniture and equipment.



Asiacell, Korek and Zain handed over 1500 internet devices to UNESCO to support the rollout of the Ministry of Education's digital Education Management Information System (EMIS)

Baghdad, 24 October 2022 - At a ceremony, attended by representatives from the Ministry of Education (MoE), Communications and Media Commission (CMC) and UNESCO Iraq Office, the Telecom Companies Asiacell, Korek and Zain handed over the second batch of 1500 internet devices to UNESCO to support the rollout of the Ministry of Education's digital Education Management Information System (EMIS) to 3,000 target schools in 9 Iraqi Governorates.

In partnership with the European Union, UNESCO has supported the MoE in the development of a tailored digital EMIS. This system is being rolled out in targeted 3000 schools in cooperation with UNICEF. To enable the EMIS, the CMC is providing each school with free internet connection for 2 years. UNESCO is

working on partnerships to expand the EMIS application across all other governorates in Iraq within the next 5 years.



Youth

A photography festival and photo exhibition organized in Hawija's Zab sub-district

Hawija, 12 September 2022 - Youth living in Iraq's Hawija district are working to overcome the area's dark history with creativity and resolve.

Last month, IOM Iraq organized a photography festival and photo exhibition in Hawija's Zab sub-district, featuring the work of fourteen community members who spent one month capturing photos to highlight the area's history and beauty.

The festival went on for four days and was dedicating to spotlighting Hawija's historical and archaeological sites, bolstering local tourism and celebrating Hawija's customs, traditions and life.

"I love my city, Hawija. I want to show

the world what Hawija looks like. We have a nice place here, we want people to see the beauty of Hawija," said one young woman whose photography was on display.

"I participate in this initiative for free," said one young man. "Unfortunately, most of the time Hawija is linked to conflict, to destroyed houses – we need to focus on the bright side, as well. Hawija is recovering, and there are lots of nice places."

These activities were made possible with support from the Government of Switzerland's Agency for Development and Cooperation.



The afterschool clubs support children to discover new passions and hobbies, nurture life skills

Baghdad, 14 September 2022 - Many children who have experienced conflict and displacement have been denied the universal right to a childhood – with fear and isolation occupying where safety and play ought to exist.

IOM Iraq engages local youth volunteers to run after school clubs and activities that provide children with the opportunity to build a rich life outside their homes; meet and learn from relatable positive role models; gain fresh perspectives and ideas; and build new friendships with other children.

“It’s too much fun!” said one child. “I have learned new things, and I can’t wait to share what I have learned with my siblings and friends.”

The afterschool clubs support children to discover new passions and hobbies, nurture life skills and more. Children who participate in structured after-school programmes see improved academic performance, increased confidence and self-respect and a stronger ability to engage in principled dialogue with others.

“Before this, I used to have to push my child to go to school. [Now,] he loves it and keeps telling us what he has learned during afterschool club,” one mother said.

Such activities also help to connect children, parents and teachers alike to IOM-offered services including protection, legal and mental health

support.

IOM Iraq’s ongoing afterschool programming in Hawija is supported by the Government of Switzerland’s Agency for Development and Cooperation.



International Youth Day celebrated in Mosul

Mosul, 23 August 2022 - Last week, the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports organized with UNICEF and partners the annual festival of the International Youth Day in Mosul, in the presence of the Minister of Youth and Sports, Mr. Adnan Darjal, and the UNICEF Deputy Representative in Iraq, Ms. Paula Balancea.

The event included the launch of the Learning Passport in Iraq, a UNICEF-supported digital platform that will contribute to increasing access to learning and skilling for young people in Iraq.

During the event, young people expressed their ideas, aspirations and needs, and how they should invest in every possible opportunity to fulfil their dreams.

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. For every child and young person, an opportunity!



International Youth Day commemorated in Kirkuk

Kirkuk, 21 September 2022 - During last month’s International Youth Day, a group of motivated youth from Kirkuk Governorate decided to celebrate the day with a focus on the planet. They called attention to the role of young people in protecting the environment, starting by clearing out the waste being dumped near the youth centre in Al-Jamia neighbourhood.

The event was organized by IOM Iraq in collaboration with the newly created Al-Jamia youth group in coordination with Kirkuk Municipality and the Department of Youth and Sport.

One participant said, “We cleaned [up] but in few weeks the waste will accumulate again, and we will again do another cleaning campaign and invite more youth from the community to join. We as the youth won’t give up on our

role in the community, and we are encouraging the community to do [the same].”

Another volunteer said, “I am glad that the cleaning campaign was an entry point for me and few of [my friends] to learn more about IOM’s [Mental Health and Psychosocial Support] services in Al-Jamia. I wasn’t aware of these

services until I participated in the cleaning campaign. I am really glad that I participated in IOM’s community initiative and I have had service orientation sessions. I will pass this information to wider community.”

These activities were conducted with support from USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.



Youth Advocates Mobilization Lab held in New York during the General Assembly

New York, 22 September 2022 - Mujtaba, from Iraq, was one of the UNICEF Youth Advocates from 23 countries that met UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell in New York at the Youth Advocates Mobilization Lab, during the UN General Assembly.

“It was great to hear from other youth about the issues their communities are facing and the solutions they are trying to find,” says Mujtaba, after they

discussed about climate change and children’s right to access quality education.

Voices of youth are heard! Together we will make a difference.

Mujtaba also participated in a meeting with Selwin Hart, Special Adviser to the Secretary General on Climate Action during the UN General Assembly, where he spoke about the current drought in the marshes, the high temperatures in the summer and

the desertification in Iraq.

“It was a great to know more about the role of the UN in protecting our environment and the planet for the next few years, because we should take action to fight climate change now,” says Mujtaba, UNICEF Youth Advocate from Iraq.

Mujtaba is an inspiration for the youth of Iraq.



Storytelling activities for a better future for children

Mosul, 25 September 2022 - Storytelling is one of the most important tools for improving children’s communication, expression and listening skills. Building healthy reading habits also helps children learn new vocabulary and expand their creativity. IOM Iraq worked with Youth Mobilisers in West Mosul to create a storytelling space inside a school in Al-Shifa neighbourhood. The mobilisers, who are motivated young people from the community, received training from Peace Cell Project on interactive storytelling skills; they will start hosting storytelling activities at this space, with hopes of contributing to a better future for children, as Mosul rebuilds following the end of the ISIL crisis.

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



Youth empowerment is a vital component in the process of creating more sustainable communities

Sinjar, 11 October 2022 - Hawas, 19, a young man from Sinjar, hopes for improved access to job opportunities and a better life, thanks to his engagement in productive vocational training and development initiatives. "My father worked in the military and

his salary was good enough for all the family’s needs. But after the ISIS invasion my father lost his job, and we became displaced and lived in a rental house in Khanki,” Hawas recalled. Hawas’s expectations for education and for brighter future, were abruptly put

on hold, but he never lost sight of his motivation to improve and keep learning. After completing high school studies, he went to pursue accounting, he is enrolled in the second year of institute now.

When it comes to rebuilding the

Youth empowerment is a vital component in the process of creating more sustainable communities *(continued)*



community, youth empowerment is a vital component in the process of creating more sustainable communities. Understanding this important aspect, UN-Habitat Iraq implemented vocational trainings as well as cash-for-activity related to construction and rehabilitation of houses for 200 returnees, including young unemployed women and men, generously funded by the Government of Japan.

"Through vocational training, I learned many skills and it provided me with new tools. Now I can even help my father with our unfinished house. A lot of my friends and some of my cousins, have taken this training and considered it to be an important learning experience. Many of them got jobs. It was an excellent opportunity for me to further gain more skills and competency," he stated.

UN-Habitat Iraq is implementing both hard components (establishing infrastructure) and soft activities (social initiatives and capacity development) as packaged activities.

"Young people in Sinjar require additional assistance for job

opportunities, since the situation hasn't yet recovered in the area," said Hawas.

"This training has helped so many people in my community to improve and acquire new skills. Many young people want to contribute to the rebuilding of our community," he added.

After completing their skills training, participants obtain certificates, and then work in one of the UN-Habitat supported projects, like cash for work. Later, they also continue working to help to rehabilitate houses in the area.

"I am very motivated to learn more, improve my skills, and further my education to be able to serve my community better," said Hawas of his bright dreams for the future.

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Nofa Issa Omar, 26, her husband, and daughter lived a peaceful life, like many families in Iraq before ISIS invasion. During the conflict, Nofa's husband was kidnapped, and she was trapped fending for herself with newborn child.

"When ISIS invaded Sinjar, we were forced to move to camps where we stayed for about two years. The living

situation was extremely difficult in the camp. To take care of my daughter, I went for any jobs available, be it harvesting cucumbers or potatoes all day long or farming in extremely hot weather. I was ready for everything because I knew I was all alone, and I had to raise my daughter," says Nofa.

After two years in the camp, Nofa decided to return to her hometown to provide a better life for her child. She was involved with vocational trainings as well as cash-for-activity implemented by UN-Habitat supported by the Government of Japan. This particular project allowed 200 returnees, including young unemployed women like Nofa as well as men, to be engaged in various activities including electric wiring and the whitewashing of walls in construction of houses. These activities supported young women and men to improve their livelihoods and



acquire skills to enhance their future employment opportunities.

"I am very grateful for UN-Habitat and to Government of Japan for this life changing opportunity and want to emphasise that we need more of skill-development initiatives in the area especially for women" says Nofa.

Upon completion of the training, Nofa gained appropriate skills to paint walls and other activities, fully engaging in construction works around the area. Nofa is planning to establish a small business with her female friends to provide the requisite services to help restore the destroyed houses for the people in the community.

"My message to all women would be to work and become independent financially, to take care of our children, to secure a better future for them."



UNDP’s Peace and Coexistence Short Film Festival held in Iraq

Baghdad, 25 September 2022 – Commemorating International Day of Peace, UNDP’s Peace and Coexistence Short Film Festival continued over three days, showcasing local talent and inspirational films.

Over 1,500 films were submitted! Three short films from across Iraq have received awards for best documentary, best animation, and best overall short film.

Winners included best animation film “Ball” produced by Auda Abdul Karim, the best documentary “She was not alone” produced by Hussein Al Saeed, and best overall short film “The wind

girl” produced by Dana Karim. The festival was held in partnership with Civil Development Organization

and supported by the Government of Germany, as part of UNDP Iraq’s Citizen Journalism Project.

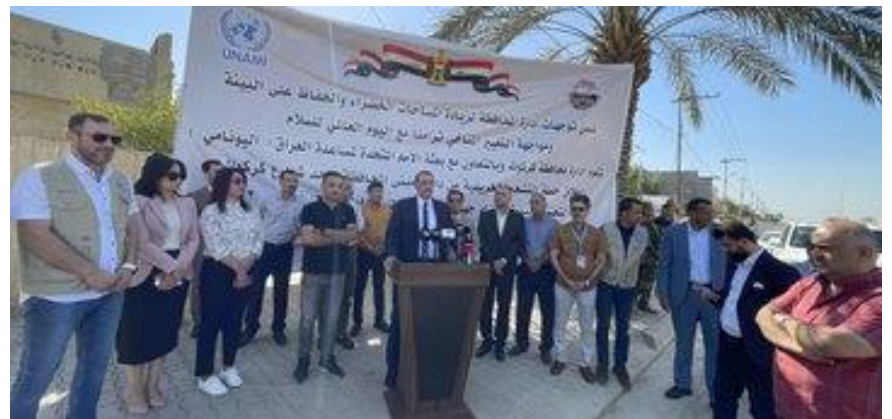


Kirkuk marks International Day of Peace

Kirkuk, 28 September 2022 - The UNAMI-Kirkuk Office marked International Day of Peace by kick-starting a tree-planting campaign to raise awareness about climate action and highlight little steps that can be taken to combat the adverse effects of climate change.

Present at the event, the acting Governor of Kirkuk, H.E. Rakan Al-Juboori, graciously planted the first tree sapling, with Governorate dignitaries, civil society representatives and United Nations staff following suit by planting an additional 150 tree seedlings. In his remarks, he said that “Kirkuk Governorate welcomed this inspiring initiative by UNAMI and was pleased to participate in taking concrete steps towards addressing the effects of climate change in the Governorate”.

Thanking Governor al-Juboori for this support, Martijn Dalhuijsen, UNAMI Coordination Officer for Kirkuk and Ninewa, noted that “the Governorate of Kirkuk has been actively engaged with establishing a “Culture for Peace”, and 2022 marks its 20th Anniversary of the



Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. It is thus fitting that this year’s theme for the International Day of Peace: “End Racism. Build Peace”, highlights how the Kirkuk Governorate is home to several multi-ethnic and multi-cultural groups with different religious backgrounds”.

The tree-planting activity in the Governorate, which was recently launched by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, further symbolises how

diverse communities unite to bury their differences and live together in peace and harmony”.

The day’s activities also consisted of showcasing vibrant T-wall artwork by local painter Fatima Fazel and her NYN group of street artists. Illustrating use of different mediums to spread messages of peace, the mural paintings were commissioned under the UNAMI Art-for-Peace Project. Ms. Fazel was excited about exhibiting her work and partnering with UNAMI in this creative project, and is determined to continue employing her skill and passion to raise awareness about the urgency of protecting our planet as well as conveying messages of peace and hope.

The day concluded with a “Sports for Peace” football match between teams of different ethnicities, united to achieve a common goal of acceptance, friendship and solidarity.

As mandated by UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/36/67 in 1981, the International Day of Peace provides an opportunity for all of humanity to commit to peace above all differences and contribute to a Culture of Peace.

Written by Martijn Dalhuijsen, DSO-UNAMI.



United Nations family in Iraq marks UN Day with a powerful digital display on one of Baghdad's tallest buildings



Baghdad, 25 October 2022 - Marking UN Day on 24 October this year in Iraq was none too common. It was unique. After an intense two weeks of internal discussions, planning and preparation, the magic began at 7:40 p.m. on a pleasant, cool evening. It's the winter season in Iraq where the sun sets silently beyond the horizon in the early evening, leaving us with shorter days and cooler nights, in stark contrast to the stifling heat for most of the year.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of Baghdad's rich culture and impenetrable evening traffic, the Public Information Office of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) projected a digital billboard showcasing the work of the United Nations in Iraq on one of the tallest buildings in the capital with three giant screens. The vibrant outdoor display covered the entire oval-shaped Baghdad Mall tower with a series of captivating images conveying one united message to the public that "on #UNDay, and every day, the United Nations renews its commitment to the people of Iraq to work together for a stable and prosperous future and to meet the targets of the #GlobalGoals and #LeaveNoOneBehind".

The making of this video was a challenge that we conquered with zest, determination, and a treasure chest full of patience! We had to ensure that the overall underlying message embodied the voice and opinions of colleagues in UNAMI PIO plus fellow communication

officers and focal points from the 25 other UN entities participating in the video – many of whom had suggestions to raise as the production got underway. Sometimes, comments were technical such as logos, font size and speed of display; at other times it was about the Arabic script, whereby a misplaced sign on a letter could become a noticeable embarrassment. This entailed repeated proofreading, while simultaneous reviewing, editing, adding and removing of text and photos, design elements and special effects as well as accommodating last-minute requests went on anxiously and cautiously until the early hours of the 24th of October, culminating in an

impressive manifestation of the 'One UN' joint effort. The updated, final cut was rushed to the operator only a few hours before broadcasting.

Falling on the eve of the Tishreen protests of 2019 anniversary and following a year of tumultuous political tension in the country that included bouts of violence, marking UN Day this year was a challenge that we accepted, encouraged by a recent political window of opportunity.

It was as well an opportunity to showcase what we - the UN in Iraq - set out to achieve: serving for peace to safeguard the future of Iraqi youth, fostering constructive dialogue and social cohesion while acknowledging the beauty and simplicity of strength in diversity, promoting human rights and freedom of expression, as well as providing life-saving assistance to those in need.

From looping images of children to the elderly, from techno-vocational trainings to innovative sustainable development projects, from empowering women to seeking justice for victims of war crimes, the bright rays of light from the rolling display were striking and captured the attention of the youth on foot, as well as people stuck behind the wheel in Baghdad's notorious bumper-to-bumper traffic. The roving exhibition remained visible until 8:45 p.m.

Amid today's global challenges, slivers of hope are just the touch we all need to look forward to. UN Day reminds us of this today, and every day.

Text and photos by UNAMI Public Information Office

