

FOR IRAQ



THE UNITED NATIONS IN IRAQ IN 2019

UNAMI Public Information Office

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الأمم المتحدة – العراق
United Nations Iraq

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Secretary-General

The United Nations is here to help Iraqis seize the opportunity to build a brighter future



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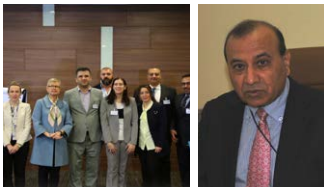
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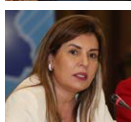
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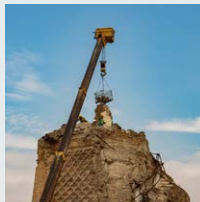
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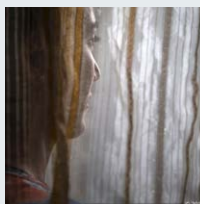
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**SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR IRAQ
Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert**



Just over one year ago, I arrived in Baghdad to take the helm of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

What a year it has been. Our engagement reached all facets of Iraqi society, from government officials to religious leaders, from minority groups to Iraq's youth, from political parties to community leaders.

We all agree that Iraq has immense potential. But perseverance, hard work and political compromise will prove essential to make the most of this potential. We must also recognize that decades of trouble continue to impact the present.

In my February 2019 briefing to the Security Council, I stated that it is high time to turn away from factional politics and to focus on addressing the immediate needs of the Iraqi citizens. I emphasized that further delays would threaten the stability of the country. The protests that started early October 2019 are a case in point.

The people of Iraq bear the brunt of any political stalemate. They pay the price as their needs and demands for better services go unaddressed, as too little progress is

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The United Nations is here to help Iraqis seize the opportunity to build a brighter future for all the boys and girls, all the women and men who call this wonderful country home

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achieved on reconstruction, economic and social development, employment, justice reform and the fight against corruption. Iraqis ought to be able to rely on strong democratic governance and viable state institutions. They know this, and their calls are loud and clear.

Undoubtedly, a young, diverse democracy struggling with a heavy legacy from the past and vast current challenges, would be very complicated for any government to manage. Iraq's daunting challenges did not arise overnight, nor are they solely the product of Iraqi actions. As such, they will not be resolved in an instant.

Iraq's to-do list is a long one. The road to lasting peace, stability and shared prosperity is not a short, straight line. But the journey is worth it.

Pragmatism, determination and compromise will be key in facing the challenges ahead, as will political accountability, a shared pride in Iraq's rich history and shared hopes for its future.

Taking to the streets in the largest mass protest movement in Iraq's recent memory, the young women and men of Iraq demonstrated that they care deeply about the future of their country, a future they are keen to shape directly. This future belongs to them and will prove them right.

As we welcome 2020, we recognize that any crisis contains within it the seeds of opportunity, the promise of change. The United Nations is here to help Iraqis seize this opportunity, to build a brighter future for all the boys and girls, all the women and men who call this wonderful country home.



The United Nations in Iraq

Fast Facts about the United Nations in Iraq



What is UNAMI's mandate?

The Security Council resolution 2470 (2019), adopted on 21 May 2019, reaffirms the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq, and emphasizes the importance of the stability and security of Iraq for the people of Iraq, the region, and the international community, particularly in light of Iraq's victory over the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh), and supports Iraq in addressing the challenges it faces as it continues its post-conflict stabilization efforts and increasingly turns to the task of recovery, reconstruction and reconciliation, including the requirement to meet the needs of all Iraqis, including women, youth, children, displaced persons, and persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities.

UNAMI's mandate includes 1) advising, supporting and assisting the Government and people of Iraq in advancing inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation; developing elections and referenda processes; advancing constitutional provisions and reforms; facilitating regional dialogue; conducting a census; 2) promoting, supporting and facilitating, in coordination with the Government of Iraq, humanitarian assistance, the implementation of the International Compact, improvement of basic service delivery, economic reform and sustainable development; and 3) promoting the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform in order to strengthen the rule of law in Iraq.

Mandate implementation

UNAMI is fully engaged with the Government, and in close partnership with Iraq's political leadership is providing advice, assistance and support on a range of issues such as, among others, institution-building, legislative reform including in the security sector.

UNAMI is also working in close coordination with Iraqi institutions, including media, civil society and academia, in promoting the values of national reconciliation, tolerance and co-existence as part of a process to build an enabling environment for reconciliation. It focuses on ensuring national ownership and buy-in from components of Iraqi society, including at the political, community, and regional levels.

Since its inception in 2003, UNAMI has played a crucial role in providing support to the drafting of Iraq's 2005 Constitution and assisting in ten elections. UNAMI's electoral assistance to Iraqi institutions is in a fully integrated manner with other electoral projects implemented through UNDP, UNOPS and IOM. Support includes capacity-building of and advisory to the Independent High Electoral Commission on operations, information technology and new voting technologies, election logistics, procedures and training, strategic communications and legal drafting/electoral complaints. UNAMI's Electoral Assistance also provides legislative support to various expert technical committees in the Council of Representatives.

UNAMI undertakes a range of activities aimed at promoting respect for and protection of human rights in Iraq. These include monitoring and reporting, advocacy, advice and assistance to the authorities on implementation of Iraq's human rights obligations, and capacity building of the Government and civil society on human rights issues. Activities are aimed at enhancing respect for the human rights of Iraq's people and their full and equal participation in economic, social, cultural and political life, ending violations and ensuring accountability for perpetrators of human rights violations, providing redress for the victims and empowering Iraqis to claim and maintain respect for and protection of their human rights.

As per its mandate on neighbourhood relations UNAMI is continuously engaged in advancing Iraq-Kuwait cooperation and also supports both sides in the search of missing persons and on the delicate issue of missing Kuwaiti property.

How does the UN implement its projects in Iraq?

UNAMI works with government, development and humanitarian partners, UN Agencies and civil society to facilitate and support humanitarian, recovery and critical assistance for the execution of the mission's development strategy, planning and coordination. UNAMI facilitates UN system efforts to foster coherence and continuity between humanitarian action, peace and the transition to sustainable development.

Through an extensive field network, UNAMI facilitates multi-stakeholder partnerships and forums supporting UN system efforts mandated during the post-ISIL transition including return of displaced populations, stabilization of newly liberated areas, gender equality, social cohesion and inclusion, structural reforms and community reconciliation.

Where does the UN work in Iraq?

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the UN Country Team (UNCT) work in all the 18 governorates of Iraq and operate at the community, governorate, regional and national levels. National and international staff are deployed throughout the country and work in partnership with their local, provincial, regional and national counterparts.

Which UN organizations work in Iraq?

The UN Country Team has 23 members, including 15 resident and 3 non-resident agencies: FAO, ILO, IFAD, OCHA, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNCTAD, UN WOMEN, UNDP, ESCWA, UNESCO, UNEP, UNHCR, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO, UNFPA, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO, UNMAS and IOM. (UN-ESCWA, UNEP and UNCTAD are the non-resident agencies.) In addition, the UNCT includes the World Bank Group.

The United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) was established pursuant to the United Nations Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), with the mandate to support domestic Iraqi efforts to hold Da'esh/ISIL accountable for their crimes committed in Iraq through collecting, preserving and storing of evidentiary material for crimes that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

In its third report, UNITAD informed the Security Council that a year after its deployment it has become fully operational with its core staffing, facilities and evidence-collection practices are now in place in Iraq, while initial documentary, digital, testimonial and forensic material are being collected in line with the highest possible standards.

What is the difference between UNAMI and the other UN entities operating in Iraq?

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) is a political mission established in 2003 at the request of

the Government of Iraq, by UN Security Council Resolution 1500. In 2007, its role was greatly expanded by Resolution 1770.

The presence of the UN organizations in Iraq is established on the basis of bilateral agreements with the Government of Iraq.

How long has the UN been present in Iraq and why?

Iraq is a founding member of the United Nations. A number of UN organizations have been operating in Iraq since 1955. Others established their offices in the early 1990s and again after 2003. The UN continues to be present in Iraq to respond to the needs of the Iraqi people and support their efforts to achieve a peaceful and prosperous future.

Does the UN have any alignment with particular groups or factions?

The UN is an impartial organization working in Iraq at the request of, and in partnership with, the Government of Iraq. The UN does not favour any political, sectarian or ethnic groups or factions. It upholds the highest standards in fostering equal opportunity among all Iraqi people, respect for human rights and enhanced empowerment to achieve a successful, dignified and sustainable future for the people of Iraq.

How is UNAMI managed?

UNAMI is headed by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, who is supported by two deputies, one who oversees political and electoral affairs, and one who oversees UN humanitarian and development efforts and performs the functions of Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq. The Mission is administered by the UN's Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and supported by the Department of Operational Support.

Through its resolution 2470 (2019), adopted on 21 May 2019, the Security Council extended the mandate of UNAMI until 31 May 2020.

UNAMI has an authorized strength of 852 personnel (331 international, 521 national).

The Mission's budget for 2019: USD 105.7 million.

Interview with

Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance

MS. ALICE WALPOLE

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One of my key messages to Iraq's young people has been to urge them to participate in Iraq's elections, both as voters and future candidates, so that their voices may be heard, and their choices registered

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We should be proud that UNAMI is a UN mission with a female leadership. It sends an important message on the UN's commitment to building gender parity across its workforce

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What were you most proud of in 2019? Is there any specific thing that stands out that you've done or contributed?

I am proud of UNAMI's work in engaging with young people across the country throughout the year. Iraq's youth are, of course, key to the future of their country, and for many of them 2019 has been a year of political and social awakening. I have chaired workshops in governorates across Iraq for young community activists at which I was deeply impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment with which they tackled the political, social, environmental and economic issues in their communities - and by their lively interaction with politicians and local officials.

Iraq is a country with an exceptionally young population, with almost [70%] of its inhabitants under [25] years of age. Tapping into the potential of Iraq's huge youth population in order to bring about meaningful change is an important focus for UNAMI. Iraq's youth have shown themselves to be dynamic, inventive, socially engaged and courageous in striving for a better future. These young men and women have formed the bulk of those Iraqis participating in the large-scale public demonstrations in Baghdad and many other parts of the country since October 2019. It is a tragedy that so many of the victims of the excessive use of force and other human rights violations that have accompanied the demonstrations have been very young.



UNAMI has been in touch throughout the tumultuous last months of 2019 with young demonstrators, and I was personally deeply touched by their resilience and the strength of their desire for change.

One of my key messages to Iraq's young people has been to urge them to participate in Iraq's elections, both as voters and future candidates, so that their voices may be heard, and their choices registered. I know they are disillusioned with the existing political leadership, but I hope that recent electoral legislation will help bring fresh, accessible, accountable politicians into Parliament. I remain uncomfortably conscious of the low voter turnout that characterised the 2018 elections: Iraq's political representatives and leaders must gain young people's trust so that youth engages confidently in future with the political selection process.

On numerous occasions in 2019 you said that women should be adequately represented at all levels of decision-making in Iraq. What do you think about the current position of women in Iraq?

The lack of representation of women in Iraqi public life remains an issue of great concern to me. The participation of women in decision-making bodies, including government, is deplorably limited. No country can afford to ignore the skills, expertise and experience of half of its population in this way. UNAMI has consistently advocated for Iraq's many qualified women to be given meaningful access to political and governmental decision-making processes and positions. I myself have spoken publicly many times on the need for Iraq to do more to ensure that talented women gain access to leadership positions, whether in parliament,

local government, the judiciary, the civil service, diplomacy, academia, business or civil society. Iraq, which has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as other international frameworks for women's advancement, must now translate these commitments into action.

The large-scale public protests which started in October 2019 have witnessed the extensive involvement and participation of women, determinedly pushing for far-reaching reforms to deal with a legacy of unresolved political, social and economic problems and injustices. This movement is creating a window of opportunity to enable the appointment of women in reformed governmental structures. It is disheartening that this unique chance to build diversity into Iraq's leadership has not yet been recognised.



I continue to be impressed by the innovative, dynamic roles played by Iraqi women activists, including those who are members of UNAMI's Women Advisory Group. During 2019, this Group has shown itself to be a valuable resource in providing UNAMI's leadership and others with their high-quality analysis and advice on many issues, including electoral reform, domestic violence and the ongoing constitutional review - at a time when the inclusion of female experts in government-appointed committees on legislative and constitutional reform has been disappointingly low.

In 2019 you were deeply involved in promoting gender parity within UNAMI ranks. What is UNAMI doing to attract more women?

We should be proud that UNAMI is a UN mission with a female leadership. It sends an important message on the UN's commitment to building gender parity across its workforce, particularly in a country where women face such obstacles in gaining access to leadership positions.

Within UNAMI, although some progress has been made in recruiting more female staff, much more remains to be done, both in the areas of recruitment and career development, to retain and attract qualified female staff, both international and national. Currently the mission's female staff component is 21%, which is well below the average across UN field missions - but a slight improvement on previous years' figures.

Part of UNAMI's mandate is protection of minorities and promotion of inter-faith dialogue. How were you involved in this area in 2019?

UNAMI continues to undertake a range of activities to promote and protect the rights of minorities. For example, throughout 2019, we engaged with the Yazidi community to address the ongoing problems they face, including obstacles to their safe and sustainable return to their homes and the continued impunity for horrific violations under international law against many Yazidi families.

As part of my ongoing interactions with Members of the Council of Representatives who come from minority groups and communities, I regularly meet with Christian, Shabak and Yazidi politicians. We also continue to reach out to religious leaders: during 2019 I met, for example, the Bishops of Mosul and Basra, both of whom play an active role in local reconciliation and social awareness initiatives

and foster inter-faith dialogue. In addition, in my engagement with tribal leaders from, for example, Basra and Anbar, I have emphasized UN support for their efforts in finding solutions to social and political divisions at community level, in particular those resulting from the recent political instability.

Part of the UNAMI mandate (under Security Council resolution 2107/2013) concerns the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-party persons and property. What is the situation now in this area?

I am pleased to say that 2019 was an exceptionally productive year for developments on this important file. For the first time in 15 years, the remains of what we believe to be Kuwaiti missing persons were discovered in Iraq. In March 2019, a joint team of the Iraqi Ministry of Defence and the Kuwaiti Committee on Missing Persons and Prisoners of War exhumed two burial sites in Muthanna governorate. After preliminary analysis in Baghdad, these remains were handed over to Kuwait in August 2019, and we hope that ongoing forensic analysis will conclusively establish their identity. UNAMI provided assistance to this process, including by making our plane available in June to facilitate the visit of a team of Kuwaiti officials to the Medical Legal Institute in Baghdad and to transfer selected bone samples to Kuwait. I am encouraged by the constructive cooperation between the Iraqi and Kuwaiti authorities, and also very grateful for the continuing invaluable leadership of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Tripartite Commission on the missing Kuwaiti persons.

I should add that Kuwait, during its [May] 2019 Presidency of the UN Security Council, drafted and tabled the Security Council's first ever resolution on persons missing in armed conflict. Resolution 2474 (2019), as I underlined when speaking on the occasion of the International Day of the Disappeared in August 2019, is an important tool in addressing the rights of families of the disappeared to be informed on the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones. The issue of disappeared and missing persons resonates deeply in Iraq, where hundreds of thousands of persons across all communities have gone missing during decades of armed conflict.

As regards missing Kuwaiti property, 2019 saw substantive advances. In late August, and again in late October, Iraq returned two large consignments of

books belonging to the Kuwaiti Central Library and the Kuwait University. In total, some 240,000 books were handed over. While delighted at these developments, UNAMI will continue to advocate for the return of missing property still outstanding, such as the missing Kuwaiti National Archives.

What are the UNAMI political component's priorities for 2020? How do you see it achieved? Do you predict a rough road ahead?

It is clear that Iraq right now is facing exceptionally complicated political challenges. The coming weeks and months will be vital in establishing some sorely needed stability and leadership for the country. Among the most pressing issues is the selection and appointment of a new Prime Minister, who must be acceptable not just to the large political blocs but also to the demonstrators, whose brave, sustained efforts have launched this much-needed political and social change. UNAMI will seek to support the new Prime Minister and government in delivering on the complex political and legislative agenda ahead.

An area of focus for me will be electoral reform. I am proud of the work done by UNAMI's electoral team in advising and advocating on the new electoral law and the law on the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC). We will be working very hard to provide IHEC with assistance on the preparations for free and fair future elections, as part of the solution to the political divisions in the country, and to guarantee a more accountable and more accessible political leadership. The perceived integrity of the electoral process is important both at the national level and at governorate level, especially in the disputed territories. The legacy of unaccountable leadership, entrenched corruption, lack of public services, the marginalisation and exclusion of women from decision-making processes - all these are issues that can only be addressed through a genuine representative parliament and provincial councils.

All these priorities will require UNAMI's political and electoral teams and human rights advocates, working in Baghdad and field offices across Iraq, to continue juggling many tasks and responsibilities. I remain proud and impressed by their achievements in very difficult circumstances in 2019; I have no doubt that they will step up to meet the challenges of 2020.

Interview with

Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator

MS. MARTA RUEDAS



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There is also an infrastructure development component, which the stabilization programme helps to support and continued to deliver in 2019

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How do you see your role as the DSRSG/RC/HC overseeing the UN's humanitarian and development efforts in Iraq?

2019 was the first year that the United Nations Country Team in Iraq worked under the new development system reform mechanism. So, indeed, we have been evolving a little bit. It means that the coordination mechanism changing a bit and certainly the instruments are changing. So, we have spent some effort this year to develop the new cooperation framework under which the development system will operate.

We have come up with an initial draft

but keeping in mind how the situation in Iraq is developing, we will probably postpone the start of the implementation because of many uncertainties in the political sphere.

At least we have worked jointly as the development system to come together with an agreed set of outcomes and outputs that can be measured in terms of the development results. And that's a good step forward.

In which priority areas were most of 2019's humanitarian and development projects implemented?

For the Humanitarian program it not very different from previous years, in

the sense that there is still some work in support of camp-based populations. And there are still quite a few camp-based populations. But we have started to evolve into finding durable solutions, which means trying to transition people out of camp situations into other solutions.

Let me explain a little bit. At the peak of the ISIL crisis, we had six million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). In the two and a half years since, more than 4 million have returned home.

Those who returned had a reasonably easy solution to their return— they had existing houses, maybe they needed to refurbish them, but in general their



reinsertion into their communities of origin was reasonably possible.

The remaining IDP populations need a different kind of approach, more active support to return to some semblance of normalcy. For these populations, we need to develop a structured support program towards durable solutions. Over the course of last year, we worked a lot on finding alternatives for these displaced. And, of course there are the regular humanitarian programmes of support like cash, health, education, housing, and support for natural disaster preparations such as floods and earthquakes. All of this falls under our humanitarian mandate.

Durable solutions form a package of support that requires both humanitarian and development assistance. In these cases, a good deal of emphasis is placed on building social cohesion in a community. This includes employment, engagement with the community, and so on.

There is also an infrastructure development component, which the stabilization programme helps to support and continued to deliver in 2019. Also, on the development side, we have worked to strengthen institutional elements, like the Ministries of Education and Health. We also work on legal support and advisory services, to help

the Government in developing more robust Rule of Law systems.

I must mention another strong component being developed is in agricultural development and natural resources management. Although we are still active in liberated areas, much more is happening in southern Iraq, such as Basra.

In 2019 we have witnessed an ongoing humanitarian crisis, especially with the latest developments in Syria and influx of Syrian refugees in Iraq. What has UN done to help these people in need?

In the KRI Syrians remain in camps in and around Dohuk. The new influx of refugees has been modest, approx.

20,000. With the existing population around 250,000, it was not too difficult to absorb the new 20,000, especially since Kurdish authorities were well prepared to receive the new influx. As most of the Syrian refugees crossing the border were Kurdish, it was also easier to absorb them into existing populations, and people were allowed to leave the camp if they had a means of support outside the camp.

Despite difficulties the UN family continued with deliveries of aid to those affected in the newly liberated areas. Are you satisfied with what has been achieved so far?

We can always do more. However, I am satisfied that we were able to do

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The remaining IDP populations need a different kind of approach, more active support to return to some semblance of normalcy. For these populations, we need to develop a structured support program towards durable solutions.

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what we had set out to do. Of course, there are still difficulties with integrating ISIL-affiliated families, but we are working on that caseload and making some progress.

We have reached the targets that we set for ourselves, so in that sense I'm satisfied.

UNDP and other UN agencies, funds and programmes are heavily involved in the reconstruction efforts of the newly liberated areas. Can you tell us more on that?

That's much slower, I would say. Of course, the stabilization component is reasonably fast, but that is just infrastructure, which is technically simpler. I say 'just', but we still need a lot of infrastructure support. Much of the longer-term work, like employment, development of health systems, housing systems, education systems, reconciliation work, Rule of Law, requires work that is longer term and requires institutions that have solid backing. I think that it is still a pending agenda.

In 2019 UN launched appeals for funds to assist people in Iraq. How would you evaluate donors' response?

There's an annual appeal. The Humanitarian Response Plan is launched in December of the year previously, with the Global Humanitarian Overview. In fact, we launched the 2020 appeal in December. UNHCR has their RRRP, which is launched separately.

In my capacity of Humanitarian Coordinator, I monitor the HRP and UNHCR monitors the RRRP. For the HRP we have received a very high response rate from donors. I think that we

should feel very satisfied. The donors are confident in our presentation of the analytical basis for what we are requesting. And it would seem they also feel confident in our capacity to deliver and to report on that delivery. It depends on how you count the financing, but we have reached 90 percent of the funding that we had asked for. And that is a global high.

2019 was a rich yet challenging year for Iraq and for the UN family in the country. What were you most proud of in 2019?

I think advancing on a durable solutions agenda and progressing on returning and reintegrating ISIL-affiliated families are key. These two things are of course linked. It's a difficult agenda on both issues, but we are making progress on both. Fundamentally, that's the key issue, if we want to try to pull out something from the whole humanitarian and development agenda.

What were the major obstacles you faced in 2019 and how did you overcome them?

Who said that we overcame them? Major obstacles? I said that we made some progress on ISIL affiliated families, and that's true, but there is a huge resistance to resolve that caseload. Of course, we understand where the resistance is coming from. It's a historical issue. But unless that is resolved, we are not going to be able to have a normal society and a solid basis for the future.

I think what is good is that, individually, in various different governorates, we've been able to advance the agenda in a number of areas. And with the

Ministry of Interior we have been able to work on getting documentation issued to a lot of people that were lacking that fundamental citizenship right.

That's one area where we had challenges, but we are working to resolve them.

I think one challenge that has come up at the end of the year so I don't know how it will be resolved is the issues of access.

We have seen a rise in access denial or blockage, when we were not able to reach some of the communities that require assistance because of the problem of issuance of the access clearance or with the checkpoints that do not recognize the validity of these access clearances in various different cases.

What will be UNAMI priorities in the humanitarian and development area for 2020 and what might be the biggest challenges?

The major priority will still be to advance the twin issues of durable solutions and of the ISIL-affiliated families. So, we will be working strongly to get that resolved.

What might be some of the major challenges? Again, access is the fundamental issue that we still must overcome.

And we will have to see how the situation evolves in Iraq to understand whether there will be additional needs that we haven't foreseen that will need to be addressed. Or whether we will have to postpone some of the programs that we had planned. Currently we have a situation of considerable uncertainty.



Office of Political Affairs

Interview with

Director of the UNAMI Office of Political Affairs

MR. MANOJ MATHEW

UNAMI advises and supports the Government and people of Iraq on advancing inclusive political dialogue, and stability at a national and community-level



Is it possible to sum-up 2019 from your office's point of view?

2019 was a tumultuous year for Iraqi politics as the country experienced the largest wave of demonstrations in its recent history and the resignation of the Prime Minister. These events have all contributed to political uncertainty, and increased demands on the UNAMI Office of Political Affairs (OPA), as it continued to work towards carrying out its mandate. During 2019, political stability, community-level relations and Baghdad / Erbil relations were all elements of this mandate which saw important developments during the year.

How does the Office of Political Affairs attempt to support political stability?

UNAMI advises and supports the Government and people of Iraq on advancing inclusive political dialogue, and stability at a national and community-level. In 2019, OPA supported SRSR Hennis-Plasschaert's good offices in facilitating dialogue among political leaders to mitigate conflict and strengthen social cohesion. OPA continued to engage with political actors from the national, executive level to the local level, placing an emphasis on the needs of women, youth, and persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities.

How did the demonstrations in Iraq affect your office?

Of course because of their impact on the country and the political grievances being expressed, the demonstrations have been a focus of the office's work in terms of understanding the underlying causes, observing events and supporting political dialogue. As demonstrations grew, the UN played an important mediation and interface role between demonstrators, the government, and political factions. OPA has directly supported this process, maintaining contacts at all levels and facilitating meetings to allow a wide range of parties to voice their views and gain an understanding of the other parties.

You mentioned work at the community level, how has your office contributed to this?

An important, practical contribution to improving relations at the community-level, has been the youth workshops that OPA convened across the country throughout 2019, in consultation with the Government and with support from local-partners. These aimed to support the younger generation of Iraqis through capacity-building in peace-building, conflict resolution and community peace. They gave participants an opportunity to exchange views on the challenges they face, discuss solutions, and provided a direct interface with government officials including governors and members of parliament.



What form did these workshops take?

The workshops were held at the governorate level and lasted three days. Over the first two days, a diverse group of young people participated in sessions to discuss youth participation in building social peace and stability, as well as strategies for dealing with conflict in the governorate. On the third and final day, local politicians joined a dialogue with youth on challenges facing the governorate, establishing communication channels between youth and decision-makers; increasing the latter's awareness of youth needs and priorities.

During 2019, the workshops brought together approximately 400 participants, including 162 young women. So far, workshops have been held in 14 governorates. Four were postponed but will be held during 2020. The series of workshops will then conclude with a national youth meeting, to which the three Presidencies and leaders of political blocs will be invited.

Have you seen progress on Baghdad-Erbil relations?

Good relations between the two parties are important for the stability of Iraq as a whole. UNAMI is mandated to support attempts by the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Re-

gional Government to resolve their outstanding issues through dialogue. In 2019, the mission facilitated and reported on growing engagement between the two governments. A marked rapprochement between Baghdad and Erbil led to the announcement of a preliminary agreement on oil and revenue sharing in November 2019. It is hoped that the execution of this agreement will mark a new era of greater trust and collaboration from 2020 onwards.

How do you see 2020?

2020 will be a challenging year for Iraq – a new government must be formed, there are legitimate political grievances to be addressed and there is the possibility of elections. These issues will all involve active support from UNAMI, flowing from the Mission's mandate. OPA will support the mission leadership in engagement with Iraqi political leaders to address outstanding issues such as constitutional reforms, Baghdad-Erbil relations, disputed territories, enactment of legislation and democratic representation. OPA will work to ensure that through out this, all community representatives, including demonstrators, women and youth leaders, minorities and religious leaders gain a space for a meaningful role in the decision-making processes that will shape their, and Iraq's future.



Electoral Assistance Office

“All modern democracies hold elections, but not all elections are democratic”

Interview with

Principal Electoral Adviser and Head of Integrated Electoral Assistance Team

DR. AAMIR A. ARAIN



What were OEA greatest achievements in 2019?

2019 was a challenging year due to the increasing unpredictability of the political environment, as well as the successes obtained in providing technical electoral assistance to the Government of Iraq and its Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC).

Throughout 2019 the Office of Electoral Assistance (OEA) remained actively engaged with IHEC in supporting the preparations for the Governorate Council Elections (GCE), which were scheduled to take place 1st April 2020 and were later cancelled.

UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance

provided technical assistance to the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq (IHEC) in the development of its four-year strategic plan (2019-2022). An essential part of the strategic planning process was the development and facilitation of a five-day workshop. Subsequently, a clear framework for strategic planning was established and approved by the Strategic Planning Committee and the IHEC Board of Commissioner (BoC).

In 2019 the OEA team further intensified its interactions with the IHEC BoC and Legal Committee to review a series of regulations for elections and to revise the several draft documents of the Legal Electoral Framework. Further, the team

also engaged with the Council of Representatives Legal Committee to discuss and provide advice during the reviewing of the Electoral Legal Framework. OEA submitted various recommendations to the proposals of the GCE Law, as well as to the Presidential Electoral Reform Committee and to the Council of Minister's draft proposals of CoR Law and IHEC Law, highlighting topics that should be addressed by the Committee, identifying and recommending the most suitable options in the context of the Iraqi environment.

OEA also reviewed other proposed provisions for amending the electoral law, including clarification on the distribution of the seats and re-enforcement of requirements for women's representation, and submitted its comments based on comparative experiences and best practices in other countries.

Voter registration is one of the most critical aspects of an electoral process. The quality of the voter's list impacts the outcome of an election and determines its credibility. For an election to be fair, a voter list must encompass all communities and segments of society without any discrimination.

In that regard, the UNAMI's Office of Electoral Assistance provided the Kurdistan Region Independent High Electoral Commission (KIHEC) technical assistance to conduct a three-day workshop on voter registration. The workshop aimed at enlightening the participants about different aspects of voter registration, based on the established principles. The training was crucial to enable the KIHEC to take a decision about voter registration and voter list update.

OEA has been continuously providing technical assistance to the Kurdistan Region Independent High Electoral Commission (KIHEC) regarding the adoption of good electoral practices aiming at improving the capacity of the electoral body in different technical areas. In this context, in early April 2019, KIHEC requested from UNAMI OEA to provide technical assistance in identifying/developing training materials, and also to deliver a series of election training programs, of which "Fundamentals of Training" (FOT) was one of them. The OEA office answered the request by assigning an advisor to deliver four 4-day sessions on the "Fundamentals of training," for total of 54 participants. The main purpose

of the workshop was to examine the theory and practice of training and to identify the strengths and challenges of each facilitator.

The OEA Information Technology (IT) Advisor conducted a quick assessment of the IT capacity in the KIHEC, and a three-day intensive training workshop was developed and delivered on "Fundamentals of Data management and Visualization" for a total of 15 staff members.

OEA, jointly with the UNAMI Gender Unit, conducted a workshop on gender-responsive electoral processes and helped to establish gender focal points in the electoral field offices. Topics covered were international and national frameworks promoting women's political participation, the electoral cycle, and gender mainstreaming in electoral processes.

Gender focal points were identified whose overall role is to promote awareness on gender-responsive electoral processes within IHEC and KIHEC offices at governorates level and through engaging with external partners such as NGOs in creating awareness.

What were the challenges in 2019?

One of the greatest learning experiences to date working on elections in Iraq, is that it has taught us to remain ever vigilant and ready for a surprise. This is true given the constant fluidity of the discussions regarding the elections schedule and of proposals for amending the election law. Often, what presents as a political agreement will shortly after being canceled or morph into something else. This is true, for example, when the 1st April 2020 was announced as the agreed date to hold the Governorate Council Elections and soon after to be postponed with no explanation with no new election date mentioned. This uncertainty affects electoral preparation and in planning the allocation of staffing and resources.

Iraq itself is continuing to be a challenging terrain for electoral operations as the security situation remained to be volatile.

The audit of IHEC IT systems was another challenge worth being highlighted this year. A prolonged and ongoing struggle to identify credible companies to audit the IHEC Result Management Systems (RMS) started from the moment when the Board of IHEC introduced the imple-

mentation of the electronic voting machines last year. Responding to IHEC's request, UNAMI submitted a letter listing four additional companies, two of which were considered unsuitable, and the other two were being probed by Iraqi Intelligence. IHEC, up to this date, has failed to sign any contract with an audit company.

Although the KIHEC was very grateful for the assistance provided by the OEA, a continues requests for further support were send to UNAMI senior leadership. Due to a lack of permanent presence of international OEA staff at the Erbil office, it was, at times very difficult to arrange and provide constant electoral technical support to this institution.

How do you see IHEC in the next few years?

IHEC should concentrate further efforts to improve the general public's perception of it as an independent institution, capable of conducting electoral activities transparently and in full accountability to its public, away from any form of political pressure and interference.

Success in that field will likely depend on future institutional reforms, such as the IHEC Board of Commissioners selection process, where increased transparency will go a long way into dissipating any doubt of back-channel influence and political backing in the Board.

The most important element in every election is getting voters to the polls. Democracies perform better when more people vote. Educating voters remain one of the tasks of IHEC, the perception that one vote will not make any difference should be addressed, methods on improving the voter turnout should be put in place and strategies for effective messages must be developed by IHEC.

Gender and minority representation among members of the Board of Commissioners, Director Generals, section heads and IHEC staff should also figure on the short and long-term goals of the institution, until an adequate number of women and minority representation is obtained.

Finally, preparing the institution to mature into a self-sustaining body, having the fundamental capacity to build and retain qualified staff, to establish and update legal frameworks, and as stated previously, to win the confidence of the public, will pave the way for an exit to the present UN Office of Electoral Assistance.



Human Rights Office

Q&A with

Chief Human Rights Officer

MS. DANIELLE BELL

What was your assessment of the human rights situation in Iraq during 2019?

The year was marked with a steady improvement of the security situation that led to some positive effects in the promotion and protection of human rights, most importantly to considerable fewer civilian casualties as compared to previous years. Notwithstanding this positive development, serious human rights concerns remain in the administration of justice, the respect for human rights during demonstrations, access to education and the protection of the rights of Iraq's diverse ethnicities and religious groups amongst others.

In 2019, the UNAMI Human Rights Office (UNAMI HRO) strengthened

existing and established new partnerships with the Government of Iraq in support of its efforts to protect and promote human rights for all Iraqis. This is essential for preserving social diversity and cohesion, effectively building resilience against violent extremism which is essential for Iraq's long-term stability. Findings are regularly shared with the relevant authorities, presenting tailored recommendations to address the human rights situation.

What are some of the improvements that you observed in 2019?

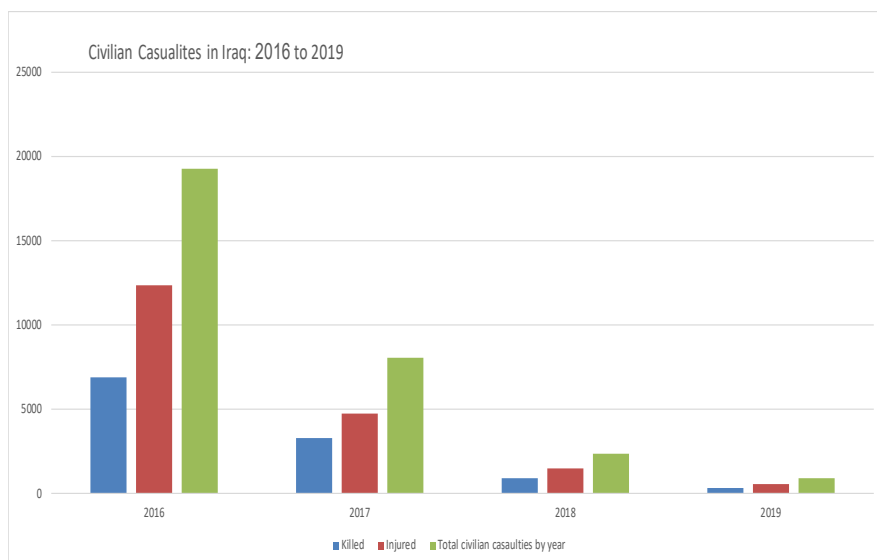
In terms of the protection of civilians, Iraqi communities suffered far fewer civilian casualties.

Overall 2019 was marked by a dramatic reduction of conflict related harm, with 907 recorded civilian casualties (includ-

ing 104 children), the lowest level since UNAMI HRO started its recording in 2008. In comparison UNAMI HRO recorded 2,396 civilian casualties in 2018, and 8,079 in 2017 confirming the sharp downward trend since the territorial defeat of ISIL in December 2017. The peak was 2014, during the ISIL conflict with 35,408 recorded civilian casualties.

What happened during Iraq's Universal Periodic Review in front of the Human Rights Council in 2019?

On 14 November 2019, the Government of Iraq participated successfully in its third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) by the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The Minister of Justice lead a delegation that presented a detailed account on the implementation of recommendations from the previous two reviews, including



on women's rights, administration of justice, minority rights, post-conflict survivors and education. 110 member states representatives took the floor in the ensuing debate which is a testimony to the interest of the international community in the situation of human rights in Iraq.

What did you do to strengthen the contribution of NGOs and civil society organizations to treaty body mechanisms and their contribution to the UPR?

Throughout 2019, UNAMI HRO organized 13 capacity building sessions with at least 230 men and women participants, representing civil society organizations, networks and human rights defenders in Baghdad, Basra, Erbil, Kirkuk, Mosul, Najaf, Ninewa and Sulaymaniya governorates. These capacity building sessions encouraged an exchange of ideas and identified opportunities amongst participants to contribute to shadow reporting to treaty body mechanisms and the UPR process so that the voice and concerns of civil society actors are heard.

What was done with respect to the protection of human rights during demonstration?

UNAMI HRO monitors actively the ongoing demonstrations, conducting over 500 interviews with victims, witnesses, families and government authorities during the last quarter of 2019. The protection of demonstrators taking part in predominantly peaceful demonstrations remains a serious concern by the end of the year. The most flagrant human rights violations documented during demonstrations include the killing of 362 protesters (17 children) and injury of 2,286

others by security forces and groups referred to as 'militia'. In addition, UNAMI HRO has documented cases of torture, inhumane or degrading treatment, abductions, arbitrary arrests and detentions. UNAMI HRO has issued three public reports voicing these concerns and calling for accountability to hold perpetrators responsible, stressing the need for urgent revision of existing directives on the use of lethal and non-lethal force and the protection of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

How does the UNAMI HRO support the Government's effort in the promotion and protection of human rights in the administration of justice, including after ending territorial control of Da'esh / ISIL?

In 2019, UNAMI HRO closely collaborated with the High Judicial Council and the Ministry of Justice on the administration of justice, implementing a trial monitoring and a detention visit program. Findings give rise to serious concerns of the protection and respect of human rights in the administration of justice and the lack of basic fair trial standards for persons accused of ISIL affiliation and the protection of their rights during terrorism trials.

Between 1 January and 31 October 2019, UNAMI HRO observed 793 court hearings, including investigative hearings, with a focus on terrorism-related cases throughout the country. In January 2020, UNAMI HRO jointly with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a report with its

Overall 2019 was marked by a dramatic reduction of conflict related harm, with 907 recorded civilian casualties (including 104 children), the lowest level since UNAMI HRO started its recording in 2008

findings: Human Rights in the Administration of Justice in Iraq: Trials under the anti-terrorism laws and implications for justice, accountability and social cohesion in the aftermath of ISIL. The report concludes that basic fair trial standards have not been respected and violations identified concern the equality before courts and fair hearings, with an ineffective defence and limited possibility to challenge evidence. This is compounded by an overreliance on confessions and the inadequate follow up on frequent allegations of torture and ill-treatment, aggravating the disadvantages faced and fair trial concerns of defendants. Recommendations recall that a strong, transparent and fair justice system is a key element of a democratic state that generates trust in its institutions, in turn strengthening social cohesion and resilience against violent extremism.

In addition, UNAMI HRO established a systematic detention monitoring programme. From July to December 2019, UNAMI HRO visited 49 places of detention across Iraq. The program aims to support the Government of Iraq's efforts to strengthen the protection of rights for persons in detention, identifying avenues to effectively prevent torture and ill-treatment. Similarly, UNAMI HRO supported the Government of Iraq on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2427 (21 June 2019), the first ever resolution on persons reported missing during armed conflict.

Support was also provided to the Government of Iraq's efforts on protection of persons from and follow up on cases

of enforced disappearances. In this regard, UNAMI HRO submitted comments on the draft bill on the protection of persons from enforced disappearances, tabled at the Council of Representatives on 29 June 2019.

UNAMI also provides support to the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh / ISIL as mandated by Security Council Resolution 2470 (2019).

What was done in 2019 to address sexual and gender-based violence?

Throughout 2019, the promotion and protection of women and girl's rights in Iraq remains a concern, with some progress noted but some long pending legislative processes continue to be stalled. In addition, UNAMI HRO continues to document gender related killings (also known as honor killings).

The proposal of the Yazidi Survivor Law was a welcomed advancement in the protection of Yazidi women survivors by UNAMI. The draft law was submitted to the Council of Representatives by the Iraqi Presidency on 7 April 2019 and is pending to be tabled. It is a clear indication that the Government of Iraq stands by the Yazidi community, in particular women survivors, to seek accountability for atrocities committed against them. Amongst other things, the draft bill creates an urgently needed forum to discuss children born of sexual violence and their protection in Iraqi law. UNAMI HRO will continue to support UN partners and advocate in the process to also include other survivor communities, including men and boys and broaden the definition of sexual violence to include forced marriage and sexual slavery.

Similarly, UNAMI welcomed the edict by the Head of the Yazidi Supreme Spiritual Council, on 24 April 2019, confirming that survivors of ISIL related crimes will be welcomed back to the community. However, UNAMI HRO continues to advocate on the protection of children born of sexual violence to Yazidi women, as these children remain ostracized by the communities of their mothers. This specific situation of concern calls for tailored and practical solutions to allow mothers to return to their communities with their children.

With respect to the promotion and protection of women's rights UNAMI HRO



engaged in the advocacy on the draft Anti-Domestic Violence Bill which has passed the last stage of review and awaits submission to the Council of Representatives (COR). UNAMI HRO provided technical assistance to the Government of Iraq to integrate international human principles and standards in the draft bill. For example, on 19 and 20 September, UNAMI HRO and the OHCHR Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa, with support from other UN partners, facilitated a technical workshop, in Beirut, Lebanon, with members of the State Council, that created a space for critical discussions and finding solutions for provisions needed to ensure the protection of survivors and those at risk of domestic violence. In addition, UNAMI HRO supported consultations and advocacy among civil society and women organizations, government and relevant UN partners.

In 2019, UNAMI HRO continued to monitor gender related killings (also known as honor killings) and documented 28 cases of women killed, including in Baghdad, Kurdistan and other governorates across Iraq. It remains a prevalent concern piercing through Iraqis different social structures and a testimony that more efforts and a stronger commitment is needed to ensure the protection of women and girls from such heinous crimes. In this regard UNAMI HRO will continue to advocate to repeal Art 130, 131, 128 and 409 of the Penal Code mitigating the sentence for murder when committed in the name of honour.

What is being done to promote and protect the right to education for all?

UNAMI HRO implemented a new program examining the access to education in post-conflict communities in Iraq. A first report in a series examines the right to education in Iraq: The legacy of ISIL territorial control on access to education. In 2019, UNAMI HRO conducted 237 interviews and group consultations with children, youth, parents and teachers, including in internal displacement camps, from areas formerly controlled by Da'esh / ISIL. Findings identified two main challenges specific to these communities, firstly the absence of appropriate avenues back into education that addresses the knowledge gap created by years of missed education. Secondly the limited access to civil documentation that enable school enrolment.

In 2020, UNAMI human will continue to advocate on the access to education for all Iraqi children and is planning to organise round table discussions with the concerned federal, local authorities and civil society actors to identify specific and practical solutions. A second report will follow focusing on access to education by girls and young women.

How does UNAMI address the rights of members of Iraq's diverse ethnicities and religious groups?

Embracing Iraq's diverse ethnicities and religious groups is crucial for its long-term stability. UNAMI HRO has worked throughout 2019, in various ways to create space for dialogue between federal,



local authorities, community members and civil society, so that concerns are heard, and solutions found.

In January 2019, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination issued its recommendations to the Government of Iraq on the promotion and protection of human rights of minorities. In support of the Government's efforts to implement these recommendation, UNAMI HRO organised 12 round table discussions bringing together Government officials, the Independent High Commissioner for Human Rights and non-governmental organisations, including representatives of minority communities from various locations. As a result, two minority working groups were established creating a space amongst government authorities and affected communities to find solutions for existing challenges. In addition, a government directive was issued in March 2019, to issue unified identity documents to members of the Roma community in Iraq, ensuring equal access to education, health and other basic services.

Throughout 2019, UNAMI HRO conducted a country-wide advocacy campaign for the promotion of minority rights and the protection of religious minorities. A human right film festival toured through Iraq, screening a selection of 24 short human rights movies which competed in the 3x3 Film festival in Baghdad. It empowered Iraqi writers, film makers, directors and actors to showcase their talent by drawing attention to challenges faces by religious minorities and raising

awareness about human rights issues. Between March and August, UNAMI HRO organized 36 short film festival events in 17 out of the 19 governorates, which were attended by 4158 Iraqi men and women.

Towards the end of 2019, UNAMI HRO supported art projects, where human rights issues of concern to Iraqi people are portrayed on murals across seven governorates. Issues addressed included domestic violence, child marriage, discrimination and corruption. Murals were commissioned in Anbar, Najaf, Karbala, Mosul, Missan, Nassiriyah, Basra and Baghdad, with the aim to foster a discussion about human rights in the public space.

What are the UNAMI Human Rights Office priorities for 2020?

In 2020, UNAMI HRO will continue to support the Governments of Iraq's efforts to implements its national human rights strategy and identify new arising collaboration opportunities.

UNAMI HRO priorities in 2020 include:

- Strengthening the protection of human rights in the administration of justice, including on counter-terrorism related issues;
- Promotion and protection of freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly and widening of democratic and civic space;
- Supporting social diversity and cohesion, protection of the rights of members of ethnic and religious mi-

norities, through non-discrimination, including access to education and documenting accounts of local peace initiatives;

- Enhancing equality and strengthening the protection of women rights including elimination of discriminatory stereotypes and prejudice towards women and girls belonging to ethnic minority groups;
- Promotion of accountability for human rights violations of the past and present, including addressing cases of enforced disappearances;
- Early warning and protection of human rights in post-conflict Iraq;
- Combating impunity and strengthening support to survivors of conflict related sexual violence;
- Reinforcing the protection of children, in particular children affected by conflict or in detention.

In 2020, UNAMI HRO will also focus on the protection of marginalized and vulnerable communities, including internally displaced persons by documenting and presenting accounts of persons who have lived in areas formerly under control by ISIL. Other issues that UNAMI HRO will work on include, enforced disappearances, protection of journalists and media workers, cooperation with the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights, Kurdistan Region Independent Commission for Human Rights and human rights defenders and activists.



Introduction

The year 2019 correspond to the first year of the implementation of the United Nations Development System Reform for strengthening the capacity of the Resident Coordinator Offices, as a critical aspect of the Secretary-General's vision for an independent, empowered and impartial Resident Coordinator system.



What is the role of the Development Coordination Office (DCO) in supporting the implementation of UNAMI Mandate?

The Development Coordination Office is the technical and advisory support unit of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC) in fulfilling the UNAMI mandate of providing support to Iraq for its stabilization, reconstruction and development efforts. It is specifically mandated to lead the United Nations Country Team in setting strategy and in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development programmes, as outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and in the Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF).

How does DCO fulfil that role?

The Development Coordination Office fulfil that role through four main activities: (i) establishing and maintaining partnership with Iraq's Development actors; (ii) planning, reporting and advocacy for Iraq's development; (iii) supporting the UN country team in delivering as one and; (iv) monitoring and evaluating Iraq's development. DCO maintain relationships with all development actors (donors, private sector, civil society, government ministries) engaged in development work both at national and subnational (governorate and community) levels through different forums organized or attended (Development Partners Forum, Provincial Planning and Development Councils, SDG Sub-Committees established at Governorate levels, Area Development Coordination Team meetings at Governorate levels) and other working groups to inform and support development actors.

DCO's main Achievements in 2019

One of the most important achievements of the DCO in 2019, under the leadership of the DSRSG/RC/HC, is the formulation of the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework covering the period 2020-2024. The new Cooperation Framework is the UN development system's contribution to support the country's progress towards the SDGs in an integrated manner, with a commitment to leave no one behind, human rights and other international standards and obligations. It articulates the UN's collective response to help Iraq address its priorities and gaps in their pathways towards meeting the SDGs.

The second achievement is the technical support provided to the PMT and RRP Working Groups for the coordination of the implementation of the two-year Recovery and Resilience Programme (RRP 2018-19) that was launched by the Secretary-General at the Kuwait International Conference for Reconstruction of Iraq in February 2018. The RRP serves as a platform for the UN system and the international community in Iraq to provide targeted and coordinated support to high-priority communities at risk of facing violent extremism again and to support the delivery of basic services and expanding political and social participation across the nation. A One-UN Country Results Report has been completed to highlight the main achievements, gaps and lessons learned of the UN in Iraq.

The third achievement is the regular coordination and functioning of the Development Partners Forum (DPF) as an overall umbrella for aid coordination mechanisms that through the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Program (RRP) facilitate the delivery of basic social services. A Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Recovery and Development Program Fund was signed between the UN and the Ministry of Planning on 1st August 2019 in support of the implementation of the RRP and the future UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2020-2024.

DCO field offices in Governorates played also an important role in supporting the Government SDG Sub-committees by organizing 20 knowledge sharing sessions on the Sustainable Development Goals with Government counterparts, Civil Society, the private sector and other key stakeholders. They also supported the Governorates Planning and Development Councils.



DCO's priorities for 2020

The priorities of the Development Coordination Office in 2020 will focus on three areas: (i) Monitoring of the implementation of the new Cooperation Framework (CF) through Priority Working Groups or Joint Work-plans or UN Development System joint-programming and joint programs, (ii) Preparation of the SDG financing strategy, (iii) the completion of the communication strategy of the Cooperation Framework and (iv) Updating the UN Common Country Strategy (UN CCA).

In the monitoring of the new CF, DCO will work closely with the PWGs, as well as with existing UN thematic working groups and/or tasks forces, such as the M&E Working Group, the UN Communication Group and the Gender Working Group and will prepare periodic reports to be submitted to the UNSDCF Joint Steering Committee. Annual reviews of progress towards strategic priorities, outcomes and outputs, and assessment of significant changes in the country context inform agreement with the Government and relevant development partners on UN planned contributions. The UNSDCF Joint Steering Committee (JSC) is the key driver of accountability, partnership and national ownership. The UN System in Iraq, through DCO facilitation and coordination, will prepare and submit an annual report on progress in achieving outputs and outcomes through the One UN Country Results Report (using UNINFO platform) to the UN-Gol Joint Steering Committee (JSC) and will ensure that the report feed into the government thematic/sector reports and the Voluntary National Reviews at

the Higher-Level Political Forum.

The preparation of the SDG financing strategy is another important priority since the UN development system's financial contribution to national development is often relatively small, the UNDAF's traditional focus on channeling donor support to collective UN results has shifted to using the UN development system's convening power to support Governments in developing and implementing sustainable financing strategies. The Cooperation Framework hence expands from "funding" to financing. It is expected that these efforts will help align international assistance and mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals in development programming.

DCO, with the support of an external consultant, is also supporting the UN Communication Working Group in the formulation of the communication strategy for the new Cooperation Framework. The strategy will help the UN development system convey very simply and concretely what the UN development system is doing to help the country achieve the SDGs.

DCO is also planning to update periodically the UN CCA as stated in the new Cooperation Framework guidelines to take into consideration the evolving context and dynamic in the country and which will serve as a current analytical resource and to reduce the time required for formulating a new Cooperation Framework. The CCA shifted from a one-off event to a "real-time" core analytical function.



United Nations Investigative Team for the Promotion of Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL UNITAD

Over a year since its deployment in Iraq, UNITAD became fully operational, with over 130 staff members supporting its work, including investigators, legal officers, forensic specialists and witness protection officers. In parallel, key operating procedures, technological equipment and evidence management facilities have been established to facilitate the collection, storage and analysis of evidentiary material in line with international standards.

Harnessing the increased substantive capacity and drawing on extrabudgetary contributions provided by Member States, UNITAD has expanded its strategy to include additional priorities, ensuring that its focus and key objectives reflect the breadth of communities across Iraq that are affected by the crimes committed by ISIL in Iraq.

UNITAD prioritized targeted field-based activities in Sinjar, Mosul, Tikrit and other locations across Iraq, collecting key documentary, forensic and testimonial material capable of filling evidentiary gaps in support of domestic proceedings. Engagement with survivors and affected communities has remained central to these efforts, with the Team implementing advanced witness protection and support measures to ensure that even the most vulnerable members of Iraqi society are able to come forward with their accounts.

Cooperation with the Government of Iraq

UNITAD's support and cooperation with the Government of Iraq remains at the core of the Team's work in pursuit of ensuring justice for victims and accountability for those most responsible for ISIL crimes committed in Iraq. Capacity-building and technical support has been provided in such fields as the excavation of mass graves, DNA analysis and evidence and the digitization of legal documents. Cooperation with the Government of Iraq has also been central to the effective conduct of investigative activities, as the Team has been able to draw on a wide range of existing documentary and digital material held by Iraqi national authorities in pursuit of its investigative priorities.

Based on extensive cooperation between the Investigative Team and the Iraqi judiciary, direct support was provided to ongoing criminal proceedings in a third State concerning ISIL crimes committed in Iraq, including the provision of witness testimony directly from UNITAD's HQ in Baghdad. This significant step in the implementation of Security Council resolution 2379 (2017) represents a joint success of the Government of Iraq and UNITAD, drawing on the common will to deliver accountability in line with the mandate provided by the Council.

Mandate Renewal

At the request of the Government of Iraq, the Security Council (SC) unanimously voted to extend UNITAD's mandate for one year, as it continues its work to support domestic efforts to hold ISIL members accountable by collecting, preserving and storing evidence of the most serious crimes committed in Iraq in line with the highest possible standards. Through resolution 2490 (2019), the Council further reaffirmed its support for resolution 2379 (2017) which established the Team headed by Special Adviser Mr. Karim A. A. Khan QC. The Council reaffirmed in the resolution its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and unity of Iraq, welcomed the Government of Iraq's considerable efforts to defeat ISIL, and took note of the request for the renewal of UNITAD's mandate. The Council further noted that ISIL constitutes a global threat to international peace and security, condemned the crimes it committed. The SC reaffirmed the importance of holding those responsible accountable will further expose



these crimes as being used as a tactic of terrorism, recognizing that UNITAD's work could assist in efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism. Following the extension of its mandate,

the Investigative Team continued to prioritize the further strengthening of its partnership with the Government of Iraq and the international community in pursuit of accountability.





FAO in Iraq

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is committed to addressing the long-term needs of vulnerable Iraqi population affected by years of instability and unrest. In the face of the enormous challenges faced by Iraq, agriculture remains the backbone of rural livelihoods. Maintaining food production and rebuilding the agriculture sector are fundamental to prevent hunger and to provide a pathway towards resilience from humanitarian crises.

For these reasons, FAO is actively bridging humanitarian and development interventions. This includes the transition of agriculture, livelihoods and food production towards recovery for smallholder farmers through activities that feed into long-term rehabilitation.

FAO is assisting the Government of Iraq to address land degradation threats through supporting national level capacities to strategically assess land degradation threats and support the implementation of globally proven best sustainable land management practices

2019 in a Glance

Displacement in country and the waves of returns are fueling tension through competition for basic services and scarce natural resources – accelerated by environmental degradation, and climate change. FAO is providing returnees and their host families with opportunities to rebuild their lives and move from international aid to self-reliance bearing in mind that the majority of displaced had agriculture-based livelihoods before they fled their homes.

FAO is working with partners to build resilience in Iraq by rehabilitating irrigation systems and agricultural infrastructure in rural areas; strengthening agriculture related skills and knowledge of rural food producers through training and capacity building; investing in value chain development of selected agricultural commodi-

ties; and strengthening information and early warning systems. FAO is also saving livelihoods through the distribution of seeds, vegetable kits, greenhouses and gardening kits and supporting home-stead-based conservation and marketing in Anbar, Nineveh, Kirkuk and Salah AIDin. Given the increasing complexity in country, people without substantial or diversified resources, are likely to be hit the hardest. FAO has developed a strong expertise in the implementation of cash-based programs linked to livelihoods promotion and agricultural development. In 2019, FAO continued to develop and implement Cash for Work interventions in the context of support and protection of productive assets and livelihoods. In addition, FAO is also rehabilitating The Al-Jazeera irrigation Project in Nineveh that supplies 70,000 hectares of land with water for agriculture, domestic use and livestock watering.

Climate Change and Food Security

The Main drivers of poverty and food insecurity in Iraq are conflict and insecurity, rapid population growth and the effects of climate change including increasing water scarcity and accelerated desertification. The rising temperatures and the shortage of water is negatively impacting the agricultural production despite its significance to wide population sectors, due to years of conflict, mismanagement of water, infrastructure, production and desertification.

FAO is working to improve Irrigation Water Efficiency, On-Farm Water Management followed by on-farm climate-smart water harvesting, irrigation water supply, livestock watering systems, and technologies (e.g. water harvesting structures, irrigation equipment and CFW interventions). FAO is also providing farmers with solar-powered pumps for ground and surface water irrigation and livestock watering systems in order to demonstrate the benefits of improved efficiency and quality of water that such equipment can provide.

More specifically, FAO is assisting the Government of Iraq to address land degradation threats through supporting national level capacities to strategically assess land degradation threats and support the implementation of globally proven best sustainable land management practices.

Early Warning - Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

FAO is committed to support the strengthening and use of early warning and preparedness related to agriculture, food security and nutrition in Iraq by conducting a series of training and capacity building sessions that enable national entities to analyze their preparedness capacity to respond to potential crises. In addition, FAO and the Government of Iraq are developing a strong technical partnership to enhance country level response. Identifying, monitoring and prioritizing disaster risks affecting agriculture, food security and nutrition and food safety is paramount to ensure sound threat-specific emergency preparedness and inform long-term resilience strategies and programming.

Building on long-established technical relationships at country level, FAO conducted consultative workshop on common and comprehensive analysis of the food control system in Iraq. The workshop provided better understanding of Codex principles and guidelines for an effective national food control system, it also paved the way for a draft outline strategic development agenda and priority needs for development of the food control system in Iraq. Furthermore, capacity building training sessions were conducted to Government staff on plant quarantine to protect the plant germplasm of Iraq from the direct and indirect effects of introduced pests and diseases that might enter through various channels and bordering areas.

In an effort to support rural farming communities to protect their health, their livelihoods, and maintain food security and nutrition while protecting

animals and reducing the risk of diseases spilling over into humans and stop pandemic threats at source, FAO is working to strengthen animal health capacities. In response to emerging cases of The Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) disease, that causes haemorrhagic fever and a high fatality rate to animals, FAO conducted consultative workshops. FAO is currently developing an Arabic Early Warning System for Animal Diseases, which will help provide accurate information on all types of animal diseases in Iraq and cooperation with the public and private sectors. This system will also collect data from animal health control workers using Mobile phones, which will significantly strengthen decision-making to support the mechanism of reducing the spread of diseases.

Red Palm Weevil (RPW), as one of the most destructive pest of palms, has been causing widespread damage to several palm species in Iraq. FAO has been building the capacity of institutions, and farmers to improve early detection, diagnosis, surveillance, quarantine and management measures. In addition, FAO has conducted several awareness raising campaigns regarding the risk of the pest to ensure stakeholders' active involvement in the promotion of preventive measures as information and knowledge sharing established and maintained. These initiatives has helped to successfully contain the spread of RPW, saving more than 100,000 hectares of date palm trees and protecting the income and livelihoods of more than 10 million farming families in Iraq. Despite this success, FAO cautions that vigilance is required due to risk of future RPW invasions from neighbouring countries.





Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme

Supporting improved access to basic services in more than 20 communities across Iraq and the KR-I, the Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP) targeted areas hosting a high number of refugees and IDPs experiencing protracted displacement. 57 infrastructure projects were constructed or rehabilitated including roads (25), sewerage (6), water

(5), electricity (5), schools (12), a community hall in Diyala, Air Testing Station in Dohuk and two housing projects – or 1,023 homes; and benefiting more than 1 million people.

1,342 cash-for-work opportunities (73 women) were created in the KR-I, including 54 refugees and 515 IDPs, ensuring access to immediate income opportunities. 1,202 individuals (446 women) also benefitted from asset recovery support and 1,312 people (557 women) participated in skills training to support access to sustainable livelihood opportunities; including business development training and vocational training.

Bolstering UNDP's resilience building efforts in Iraq, on-going social cohesion activities witnessed the first pilot Diploma for Peace and Conflict Studies launched at Mosul, Bagdad and Anbar Universities, engaging 43 students. At the community level, 287 religious leaders received training on promoting dialogues and peaceful co-existence, whilst 125 youth (51 women) were trained to monitor triggers of conflict.





Funding Facility for Stabilization

At the request of the Government of Iraq, UNDP established the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) in June 2015 to facilitate the return of displaced Iraqis, lay the groundwork for reconstruction and recovery, and safeguard against the resurgence of violence and extremism.

FFS operates in areas liberated from ISIL. As of December 2019, the FFS stabilization portfolio contained more than 3,55 projects – over 2,200 projects have been completed in the 31 liberated towns and districts where UNDP has been mandated to work in the areas of Anbar, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Diyala and Kirkuk, and more than 1,200 projects currently underway or in planning stages.

Approximately \$1.2 billion has been mobilized from 28 donors, including the Government of Iraq. To date, more than 8 million Iraqis have benefitted from FFS. Other highlights include:

- 555,000 people have better access to education
- 1.7 million people have improved healthcare access
- 3.3 million people have better water supply
- 1 million people have increased access to electricity
- 104 completed sewerage projects are benefitting 1.8 million people
- More than 40,000 people have been provided with immediate livelihood opportunities through cash for work and cash grants
- 171,000 people have improved housing
- 4.1 million women beneficiaries

UNDP Security Sector Reform

Rule of Law Programme:

Overall programme of work stems from the assumption that security is a pre-condition for Iraq's long-term stability and sustainable development (SDG Goal 16). It aims to promote and support both government and non-governmental stakeholders for a more balanced and complementary approach to security and justice sector transformation in post-ISIL Iraq with emphasis on improving local security and justice provision. Furthermore, the engagement also invests in civil society to play an active role in security and justice sector governance at local level by providing a supporting environment to engage with policy makers.



Key highlights during the reporting period:

Security and Justice Sector Reform:

- Gol Security Sector Reform Programme (SSRP) implementation mechanisms consisting of '8 systems' are operational including coordination, technical support and, alignment sought from other international partners active in this sphere (National Security Architecture; National Security Legislation; Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement - with specific focus on improving local policing and criminal investigations; Democratic and Institutional Oversight; Intelligence Community; Defence and Internal Security; Critical Infrastructure Protection; and, Boarder Strategy)
- On-going technical advice and assistance to Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) in the implementation of Gol SSRP within it's identified '8 system' priorities and coordination of International Partner (IP) technical advice and assistance:
- 'Women's Involvement in the Security Sector ' was incorporated as a 'cross-cutting theme.
- Under 'Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement' system of which UNDP is the lead international partner coordinator - the implementation of the Local Police Service Road Map was initiated in coordination with the Police Affairs Agency and the corresponding unified Standard Operating Procedures for Criminal Investigations was adopted as an internal Ministry of Interior regulation to be implemented in synchronicity with the former. (Both policy documents were elaborated and adopted by the government with advice and assistance from UNDP).
- In parallel and in pursuant to these efforts a total of 141 mid - ranking local police officers were trained in police management and a total of 37 local police trainers and criminal investigation specialists were up-skilled in advanced ToT courses on Improving Effectiveness of Local Policing (IELP) and Criminal Investigations with a specific focus in liberated areas.
- Supported 09 CSOs to implement 12 quick impact projects to advance public - local police collaborations in Ninewa, Anbar, Sala- al-Din, Baghdad, Karbala and Basra. Activities included a outreach of 1699 community members, police and local authorities.
- Community Security Integration Pilot is also being implemented in Qurna/ Basra to help reintegration of 100 former fighters that would allow them a pathway to socio-economic advancement and, also initiate one community development initiative. Overall aim of this engagement is to promote security-development nexus approach.



Improving access to justice for Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) survivors:

- Conducted one TOT and 30 cascade trainings to 330 Directorate of Combating Violence Against Women (DCVAW) personnel on GBV awareness raising campaigning.
- Supported DCVAW to design and conduct a campaign on SGBV prevention to IDPs and host communities in KR-I to a total outreach of 1,001 women and men.
- Delivered 4 trainings on SGBV survivor protection and case investigations to 271 DCVAW personnel and also supported 6 DCVAW family reconciliation managers to undertake a study visit on domestic violence resolution to Egypt.



Supporting Recovery and Stability in Iraq through Local Development

The EU-funded programme Supporting Recovery and Stability in Iraq through Local Development is helping to strengthen the efficiency of Iraq's institutions and renew the social contract between citizens and the state. Launched in 2019 in partnership with UN-Habitat, the programme is implementing priority projects identified in consultation with the local authorities in nine governorates: Anbar, Basra, Duhok, Erbil, Missan, Ninewah, Salah al-Din, Sulaimaniyah, and Thi Qar. Support is focused on the decentralization of powers from central to local authorities, including through the development of institutional capacities, the optimization of revenue generation systems, peer-to-peer partnerships with EU local authorities, and the empowerment of civil society to advocate for local development causes.

Underway are local projects on urban recovery, environmental conservation, eco-sustainable tourism, renewable energy, with job creation at the core and a focus on youth and women. UN-Habitat has initiated rehabilitation projects of damaged housing, basic infrastructure, public open spaces and education or health facilities in the residential areas of West Mosul, Heet, and Yathrib. UNDP has engaged dozens of youth from the southern governorates in addressing local development challenges through the Basra Innovation Olympics and the Beautiful Basra Design competition, incorporating some of their proposals into the design of a green public space in Basra. Further, over 35 youth are being trained on broadcast and photo journalism to become community reporters.

Headway

Launched in February 2019, Headway programme is working to empower Syrian refugees, local host communities and internally displaced people (IDPs) in areas affected by the crisis through involving them in practical solutions to rebuild their lives. The programme is funded by the EU Trust Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, MADAD, and implemented in partnership with UN-Habitat.

A job creation grant scheme was launched and 10 information sessions organized in the governorates of Erbil, Duhok and Sulaimaniyah to encourage local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to submit job-generating project proposals targeting over 400 vulnerable youth. Implementation is due to commence in early 2020. This was informed by a labor market survey covering 50 SMEs and 8 non-governmental organizations that identified the needs of potential employers, sectors and willingness to hire target community members. Additionally, Headway is training nearly 45 youth of the same groups from the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and Ninewah on broadcast and photo journalism to become community reporters. Headway further trained six female refugees and opened a beauty salon for them at Qushtapa camp near Erbil, co-funded by the Kurdish signer and owner of Luvion Salon, Helly Luv.

UN-Habitat's key activities are the rehabilitation/upgrading of damaged housing units; addressing housing, land and property rights; rehabilitation of small-scale water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure; and capacity building for municipal technical staff on the maintenance of WASH projects.



UNEP's major projects in Iraq in 2019

Using Microbes to Clean up Iraq Conflict's Pollution Legacy

A bioremediation initiative seeking to enhance nature's own ability to clean up oil spills in Iraq's conflict-affected areas is underway in Kirkuk by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with the state-owned North Oil Company and the Ministry of Health and Environment, and facilitation support from the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq. The technique seeks to harness naturally-occurring soil bacteria as a powerful natural ally to decontaminate poisoned land.

Progress in cleaning up the pools of heavy oil that remain on the doorsteps of people's homes in places like Qayyarah, which bore the brunt of so-called Islamic State's scorched earth tactics against oil facilities is slow.

In a bid to kick-start remedial action, UNEP is helping build the capacity of staff from the ministries of oil and environment in cleaning-up oil spills through training and supporting the design and implementation of practical demonstration trials.

Bioremediation is the process by which microbes naturally break down petroleum. Combining nutrients from manure, bulking agents such as wood chips, and water with oil-contaminated soil creates the ideal conditions for bacteria to thrive, speeding up the natural process which breaks down the oil.

While bioremediation is not a be-all end-all solution, it offers a promising and affordable solution to Iraq's oil pollution predicament and constitutes a core

part of the solution toolbox for clearing many, if not most oil spills in Iraq. Nonetheless, the clean-up approach needs to be tailored to the specific conditions of each oil spill, considering factors ranging from the type of soil to the chemical characteristics of the crude oil itself.

The bioremediation trial is currently being carried out in North Oil Company's headquarters in the historic Baba Gurgur oil field, where oil was first discovered in Iraq in 1927. The effort is part of UNEP's capacity-building assistance for improving environmental management of the oil and gas sector in Iraq, which is prioritizing assessment and clean-up of conflict related pollution. It is being carried out with support from the Government of Norway's Oil for Development programme.

Promoting Debris Management and Recycling in Kirkuk

The ISIL conflict heavily damaged Kirkuk Governorate and generated a very large amount of debris. Debris recovery is a pressing challenge that hinders the population's return to rehabilitate and reconstruct their homes. The recovery of the conflict-affected areas of Kirkuk Governorate therefore depends on the successful removal of debris.

To sustainably manage and recycle the debris created by the ISIL conflict, UNEP and IOM operationalized a pilot debris project in western Mosul in 2018 and developed environmental guidelines for debris recycling centres in Iraq.

Although the debris challenge in Kirkuk Governorate is different from Mosul's urban context as it is spread out across a rural landscape, the west Mosul model is nevertheless serving as a useful model.

Following a Debris Management Workshop hosted at University of Kirkuk in March 2019, and organized by UNEP and UNAMI in collaboration with Kirkuk governorate, a Debris Working Group focusing on conflict-affected areas was established.

There are opportunities that can be gained from robust and proper debris planning, such as employment generation, cost reduction in subsequent reconstruction works, more efficient resource use and better environmental management. Consequently, it is critical that those responsible for debris planning are aware of these opportunities.

In this regard, UNEP is providing technical advisory support to Kirkuk's Debris Working Group in conducting a debris assessment in ten villages which were heavily damaged during the conflict. The assessment is meant to inform the preparation of cost-benefit modelling scenarios to determine effective debris recycling options.

Positive progress has also been made in mobilizing both national resources and international assistance in addressing the debris challenge in Kirkuk, which should enable for practical action to be taken for the first time on the ground.



Protected Areas Network Project

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Environment, UNEP has embarked on a project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to support initial steps for the establishment of an effective and sustainable Protected Areas Network through profiling, listing and categorization of potential protected areas important for conservation and sustainable use of critical biodiversity assets in Iraq. Iraq's biodiversity has faced many challenges and threats. Milestones for biodiversity conservation are protected areas and a well-structured and managed network of protected areas that can be the key for preserving species and habitats and maintain their viability. Such a structured and managed network is presently missing in Iraq. The areas of Dalmaj Lake and marshes and Teeb oasis and wetlands were selected as priority sites for the implementation of the network of Protected Areas of Iraq.

The project addresses barriers and constraints to effective implementation of a national network of protected areas focusing on the design, planning and establishment of a national system of protected areas as well as strengthening the institutional and legislative framework for Protected Areas through stakeholder consultations, capacity building, among other key activities. The success and lessons learned through this project will allow for the scaling up and replication of the approach for the declaration of other Protected Areas in the country.

The Project will assist Iraq to meet its obligations under the Convention on

Biological Diversity (CBD) and under the Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA). Creating a national network of protected areas will allow Iraq to be aligned with the regional and international dimensions concerning protected areas in a short and medium-term horizon, with reference to Aichi Target 11 of the CBD and in particular to the "creation of new protected areas" and "creation of connectivity corridors", and to other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to which Iraq is signatory. Strengths of the Project include: the establishment of the Pilot sites that will be a tangible example to test the effectiveness of the project components; institutional strengthening and awareness raising that will provide long-term benefits to the overall goal of biodiversity conservation. The successful stories realized with the pilot sites have the potential to be replicated to other Protected Areas of the network.

Field surveys were carried out during the first year of the project including a socio-economic assessment. Key biological and cultural areas were identified and will be used in the formulation of a Protected Areas Network Design.

Both pilot sites have been approved by the National Committee of Protected Areas and while Dalmaj has been approved by the Environmental Protection Council, Teeb is still in process. The key objective of the project is to have both areas submitted to the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers for final approval and declared as protected areas.



Message from the Head of Iraq Programme

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. UN-Habitat has been active in Iraq since 1996 under the Oil for Food Programme. After 2003, UN-Habitat was largely engaged in recovery and reconstruction efforts, particularly supporting internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees through the provision of shelter and reconstruction planning solutions.

UN-Habitat follows a multi-dimensional and coherent approach in tackling diverse urban issues, and contributing to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Iraq. These range from emergency response such as providing safe and adequate shelter for IDPs and returnees, to projects that aim to build and develop the capacities of local and national governments in plan-

ning and managing urbanization, to more theoretical endeavours including research and analysis on the dynamics of urbanization and the impacts of the armed conflict.

As Iraq makes transition from an emergency response phase to reconstruction, UN-Habitat facilitates urban recovery in Iraq through rehabilitation of damaged houses, construction of low-cost houses to accommodate returnees who lost their homes are amongst the most vulnerable families, reconstruction planning of conflict-affected cities, and addressing housing, land and property rights of the displaced persons and returnees. UN-Habitat also works closely with the national and local government of Iraq to upgrade informal settlements and promote good governance and decentralization.

Wael Al-Ashhab

Head of Iraq Programme, UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat's Activities

Promoting urban recovery and resilience in newly liberated Areas in Iraq

To support recovery and stabilization of areas liberated from ISIL, UN-Habitat has established a new community-based housing self-rehabilitation approach. Under this approach, UN-Habitat ensures that community members are capacitated and employed to undertake the rehabilitation of war-damaged houses, thereby creating job opportunities and supporting their livelihoods, as well as encouraging them to engage in the rebuilding of their community. The houses to be rehabilitated are selected based on the combination of two main criteria: (a) the degree of physical damage, identified through field assessment conducted by UN-Habitat's engineers, based on the categorization endorsed by the Shelter Cluster in Iraq; and (b) the vulnerability of the beneficiaries, identified through community consultation meetings and vulnerability assessment criteria endorsed by the Protection Cluster and the local authorities.

UN-Habitat engineers are engaged on site throughout the project, conducting the field assessments, supervising the rehabilitation activities and running the final inspection before the hand-over of the rehabilitated houses. Their constant field presence ensures the high quality of the work conducted. Throughout the process, the community members were provided by necessary construction and rehabilitation skills through tailored capacity building sessions. This approach will thereby empower the community members both socially and economically, increase community ownership, and encourage targeted communities to solve their problems independently, which is the key to peaceful recovery and resilience. In 2019, UN-Habitat rehabilitated more than 400 heavily damaged houses in West Mosul.

Construction of low-cost core housing units to accommodate those who lost houses during the conflict

During the conflict with ISIL, more than 29,000 houses were completely destroyed. Most of the owners of these destroyed houses were left without meaningful support to address their lack of housing, making it difficult to return. In 2019, UN-Habitat constructed 289 units of durable core houses in Ramadi, Fallujah and Garma in Anbar Governorate to accommodate approximately 2,800 vulnerable returnees whose houses had been completely destroyed. Three urban sites were planned, designed and developed through close community engagement and provided with basic services and infrastructure including roads, electricity, water and sewage networks. These core houses are designed and constructed in such a way that returnees can expand the living space either horizontally or vertically if and when they wish to do so.

The project represents significant contribution to integrate urban planning and physical interventions for post-conflict recovery and resilience as the development of the core houses to accommodate vulnerable displaced people who lost their homes is one of the key pillars of the “Housing Reconstruction Strategy”, which has been developed by the Government of Iraq and UN-Habitat to provide guidance for housing reconstruction and development in conflict-affected areas.

Addressing housing, land and property rights of vulnerable returnees

Iraq has experienced several waves of mass displacement over the last forty years that have caused an intricate land and property situation. Land and property challenges are made all the more complex by the multiple causes of property loss, including expropriation by the Ba’ath regime, sectarian violence, economic hardship, and conflict with ISIL. Many families lost their homes because of acts of persecution and destruction by ISIL, and during the military operations to liberate the occupied areas. A significant number of IDPs and returnees have reported that their official property records were lost, dispersed, or destroyed as a deliberate act of various armed groups, predominantly ISIL. Some ethnic/religious minorities, such as Yazidis, face serious challenges as they were never allowed to register their housing and land rights officially,

due to discriminatory policies dating back to the 1970s. Furthermore, many returnees do not have knowledge about the procedures to submit request for compensation to the Government of Iraq.

UN-Habitat, as a leading agency on housing, land and property rights, addresses these challenges through a combination of activities, including provision of legal support to the returnees to prepare and submit their compensation request, awareness-raising and information dissemination on housing, land and property rights with special consideration to women, peaceful resolution of land and property disputes through local mediation initiative, and issuance of Occupancy Certificates to Yazidis in Sinjar, who never owned official housing and land documents. As of end of 2019, more than 3,100 Occupancy Certificates were issued and distributed after endorsement by local authorities and community representatives.

Working with the local authorities to support recovery and stability

UN-Habitat works closely with local authorities in conflict-affected areas, including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq that accommodates more than 700,000 IDPs, to strengthen their resilience and develop their capacity to lead reconstruction planning. Under these initiatives, UN-Habitat together with the local authorities rehabilitate not only war-damaged houses and infrastructure, but also public open spaces, education and health facilities to ‘build back better’ damaged cities. This approach embraces the adoption of greener technologies, the use of materials sourced and produced in Iraq, and focuses on job creation and skills enhancement, particularly for women and youth.

In 2019 UN-Habitat launched upgrading of Al-Yarmouk Park in West Mosul. Upgrading of Al Yarmouk Park, with its unique size and current dilapidated conditions, is expected to bring positive impacts on economy, environment, safety, health, and community cohesion in Mosul. The upgrading activities were planned through close consultations with local authorities and community members, and implemented by local volunteers, including youth. By involving youth in its redesign as a multi-functional space, Al Yarmouk Park has a strong potential to enhance civic identity, social interaction and cultural expression.

Upgrading informal settlements

In 2016, a survey conducted by the Ministry of Planning in Iraq indicated that there are more than 3.3 million people living in informal settlements in central and southern Iraq. UN-Habitat, together with the Government of Iraq, are working to develop durable solutions to address challenges faced by the local authorities as well as people living in informal settlements – including deteriorated living conditions, lack of basic services and livelihoods, and lack of their tenure security.

In parallel with the development of the new Law on Informal Settlements, pilot upgrading of informal settlements in Mosul, Ramadi and Basra were implemented in 2019. These pilot projects adopted a participatory community planning approach to identify, prioritize and deliver activities to improve living conditions and contribute to the long-term socioeconomic development of the targeted informal settlements. Through activities such as installation of a new water drainage system and potable water network, garbage cleaning, road paving and construction of a new public space, these pilot projects also contributed to create approximately 1,000 man/days of work for residents of these informal settlements, including youth.



UNHCR in Iraq

UNHCR supports the Government of Iraq to respond to the protection and assistance for IDPs and refugees in Iraq and to identify comprehensive solutions to help them rebuild their lives. UNHCR leads the Protection, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), and Shelter and Non-Food-Items Clusters in support of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees and collaborates with the Government to coordinate the Syrian refugee response through the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP).



Facts and Figures

Population:

1.44 million IDPs | 4.46 million returnees | 286,949 refugees | as of the end of December 2019

Of the 286,949 refugees registered in Iraq, 254,810 are of Syrian nationality, including 18,991 new arrivals from north east Syria.

Camps:

There are ten refugee camps across KR-I hosting 41 per cent of the Syrian refugee population (over 99,000 individuals), including Bardarash and Gawilan, which host new arrivals from north east Syria. The remaining 59 per cent (around 146,000 individuals) of Syrian refugees live in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

UNHCR also manages 40 IDP camps across Iraq that host over 277,000 IDPs.



Key areas of intervention:

Protection interventions and advocacy

In line with its core mandate, UNHCR carries out a wide range of protection interventions and conducts substantial advocacy efforts to guarantee the access of vulnerable displaced individuals to humanitarian assistance and to the full exercise of their fundamental rights. This includes the provision of legal assistance and representation; addressing restrictions on freedom of movement; improving access to civil documentation, safety and basic services; psycho-social counselling; identifying and referring vulnerable persons to specialized services; support for survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV); and preserving family unity. For refugees, particular emphasis is placed on admission and access to safety, registration and documentation of asylum-seekers, and increased resettlement and other solutions as part of global responsibility-sharing arrangements. For internally displaced persons, UNHCR works with the Government to identify durable solutions, including voluntary, safe, dignified and non-discriminatory returns. Particular focus is also placed in strengthening access to civil status documentation through the provision of legal

assistance and support to the Ministry of Interior's Civil Affairs Directorates in order to enable IDPs to access public services, move safely through checkpoints, return to their homes, and secure employment. UNHCR protection monitoring and the 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview reveal that a significant number of IDPs and returnees still lack some form of individual documentation, such as the Public Distribution System (PDS) card, Civil Status IDs, Iraqi Nationality Certificates (INCs), passport, birth certificate, and others. In 2019, UNHCR collaborated with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of the Government of Iraq to implement mobile missions where government officials were deployed to issue civil documentation to IDPs living in camps. The primary focus of the mobile missions is to issue three of the most critical documents for IDPs - Civil Status ID, Iraqi Nationality Certificate, and, wherever available, the Unified National ID Card. As of the end of November 2019, the MoI had issued a total of 7,123 CSIDs and 11,226 INCs to IDPs. In 2020, UNHCR will continue supporting mobile missions conducted by the MoI

UNHCR presence in Iraq

UNHCR operates out of six offices countrywide, including the Baghdad Country Office, Erbil Sub Office, Duhok Sub Office, Mosul Sub Office, Sulaymaniyah Field Office, and Kirkuk Field Office.

In addition to the above offices, UNHCR and its partners maintain presence countrywide in Basra, Hilla (Babylon), Ba'quba (Diyala), Kerbala (Kerbala), Najaf (Najaf), Samarra (Salah al-Din), Kut (Wassit), and Khanaqin (Diyala).

for civil registration and documentation. UNHCR also provides support to the Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoMD) to establish a database of IDPs and returnees. This database could provide an excellent platform for the distribution of the 1.5 million IQD return grant that the GoI has committed to transfer to returnee households.

UNHCR builds the capacity of NGO partners and government officials on SGBV prevention and response and the protection of children, including best interests procedures for children at risk.



Supporting families address their most basic needs

UNHCR assists vulnerable displaced and refugee families to cover their most basic needs through the distribution of cash assistance. In areas where markets are functioning and accessible to beneficiaries, unconditional cash provides an efficient way to meet the needs of those affected by displacement, allowing families to prioritize their own needs while upholding their dignity and making them less likely to resort to harmful coping strategies.



Relieving vulnerable displaced populations from harsh winter conditions

In some mountainous areas of Iraq, especially in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) where 99 per cent of Syrian refugees reside, temperatures can drop to below freezing during winter months. Winterization assistance helps IDPs and refugees to cope with severe winter conditions. Throughout the winter of 2019 and 2020, UNHCR plans to reach 666,000 IDPs, 157,000 Syrian refugees, and 16,800 refugees of other nationalities with winter assistance in the form of cash. This assistance remains vital to ensure that vulnerable displaced families are well equipped with the necessary resources to survive winter's harsh conditions.

Safe spaces for displaced populations

UNHCR provides a range of services to refugees, IDPs, returnees and stateless persons in Community Support Centres (CSC) across the country. CSCs are safe and public spaces where women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds can meet for social events and share ideas and opinions with each other and with UNHCR and its partners. CSCs are safe spaces where everyone is welcome to meet specialized protection staff and receive counselling, services and assistance. CSCs provide recreational activities such as sports and games for children, adolescents and youth. Key information on different topics, such as child protection, SGBV, education, health and legal services, is also available. Vocational trainings are also provided to empower vulnerable displaced individuals and enhance their skills.

Provision of shelter support and camp coordination

Through its shelter interventions, UNHCR ensures that refugees, IDPs, and returnees in Iraq have access to adequate shelter and Core Relief Items (CRIs). Shelter assistance by UNHCR includes provision of adequate shelter in IDP and refugee camps as well as the installation of transitional shelter units (Refugee Housing Units) and rehabilitation of damaged houses in selected return areas to facilitate re-integration of IDPs.

As the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster and Sector lead, UNHCR works with local authorities and humanitarian actors to improve the living conditions of IDPs and refugees living in camps through the provision of coordinated services. UNHCR supports the management of 40 IDP camps and 10 refugee camps across Iraq.

Strengthening social cohesion while supporting the country in its reconstruction efforts

UNHCR assists returnee communities with community-focused Quick Impact Projects to foster peaceful co-existence and social cohesion and facilitate the re-integration of displaced persons. UNHCR's strategy aims to foster an enabling environment for IDP returnees to attain self-reliance and strengthen resilience. Projects include the repair of key infrastructure such as civil affairs directorates, schools or health clinics, agricultural facilities (water pumps, greenhouses), and the restoration of services such as garbage collection.

Promoting durable solutions and self-reliance

UNHCR seeks to reduce dependency and promote self-sufficiency among the refugee population in Iraq, regardless of their chosen durable solution. UNHCR's strategy focuses on ensuring that people of concern are included into existing legal and social systems and works across four thematic areas covering legal, economic, civil, and socio-cultural dimensions. The strategy envisages support to local communities and governments to integrate refugee camps into the host community environment with the vision of camps ultimately becoming built-up settlements that will turn into neighbourhoods of nearby towns, with refugees enjoying equal access alongside the local population to strengthened basic services and access to the job market and education.

UNHCR works with key government line ministries, UN agencies, development actors, and the private sector to ensure the systematic inclusion of persons of concern into national development plans and long-term development programmes through strategic advocacy, coordination, and evidence-based joint programmes and/or programming. Key partnership areas include protection; social protection, documentation and legal assistance; and (re)integration including access to basic and social services and self-reliance.



North east Syria Emergency

Eight years after the start of the conflict in Syria, Syrian refugees in Iraq continue to face many challenges and new arrivals continue to be registered on a regular basis. Following the escalation of fighting in north east Syria (NES) in mid-October 2019, Iraq received an influx of Syrian refugees (18,991 by the end of December 2019). The number of new arrivals is expected to continue over the next six months at a slow but steady pace. While 8,134 new arrivals have joined their family members in urban and rural communities in KR-I, the majority of new arrivals are hosted in two camps, Baradrash and Gawilan camps in Duhok Governorate. Continued efforts are required by all humanitarian actors, including local authorities, UN agencies and NGOs, to ensure all new arrivals have access to adequate protection and basic services.



Q&A with

UNICEF Iraq Representative

MS. HAMIDA LASSEKO



What are the priorities in Iraq for 2020?

Our priority is to continue championing the rights of children in Iraq and ensuring their right to quality education, health care, clean water and protection from violence are fulfilled. We will continue to work with the government and lobby for child friendly policies that improve the lives of children in this country while continuing to support the needs of children displaced by conflict.

2020 is the start of a new decade with new opportunities, but it is also a reminder

that the clock is ticking. The Iraqi government and international partners have only ten years left to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Now more than ever, we need to act and ensure no child is left behind.

What would you say are the most pressing issues for children and young people in Iraq?

Iraqi children have borne the brunt of the violence that was swept across much of the country over the years. Sadly, they have found no refuge from violence even when they are at home—80% of



children reported experiencing violent discipline in their home and in school. Children should be protected from all forms of violence.

Access to quality education is another area of deep concern for UNICEF. Over three million school-aged children don't have regular access to education. They are at risk of violence, exploitation and early marriage. There is also a shortage of teachers in parts of the country affected by conflict and half of all public schools in the country require rehabilitation.

Education is a pathway to personal and national development. The government of Iraq needs to invest more impactfully in quality education and improve access to learning and vocational training to reduce the youth unemployment rate. I am happy to say that in 2019, we have (highlight one of our accomplishments here?)

Recent events in the country show that young people are passionate about

making their voices heard and are keen to participate in shaping the future of country and they should be able to do so without fear of violence.

At the global stage, UNICEF is very vocal about the climate crisis and the impact on children. Is that something you are looking at in Iraq given the climate-related emergency in Basra not too long ago?

In recent years, chronic drought has resulted in severe water shortages in communities along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Effects have been most noticeable in southern Iraq. Recent data shows only 10.7 per cent and 27.2 per cent of people in Basrah governorate have access to water and sanitation services that meet World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF safely managed standards.

UNICEF is working with the federal government, local governorates and other stakeholders to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and

capacity needed to respond to a future water crisis; we want to prevent children and their families from becoming climate migrants by working to bring sustainable solutions to communities. The alternative could be very disruptive for Iraq and its children.

“

Our priority is to continue championing the rights of children in Iraq and ensuring their right to quality education, health care, clean water and protection from violence are fulfilled



Revive the Spirit of Mosul

UNESCO in Action

Stabilizing the remaining structures

A crane is presently towering over the Al-Hadba minaret facilitating access to the remaining base of the monument, its cleaning and the stabilization of the historic minaret, built more than 840 years ago. A first set of stabilization brackets have been installed around the Al Nouri Mosque as well as Stripes around the pillars of the Mosque's dome have been placed to stabilize the pillars, while the building of wooden pillars is taking place to serve as propping system. The Al-Hadba Minaret surroundings have been completely cleared, making it possible to walk around the remaining base, in addition to gaining access to the uncovered external staircase to the top of minaret. The

clearing goes hand in hand with the recovery of possible historical fragments under the supervision of MoC.

Among the experts working with UNESCO there are structural engineers specialized in stabilization, consolidation and monitoring of historical and archaeological heritage who have been involved in a number of significant consolidation interventions on important monuments including the Tower of Pisa (Italia), the Temple of Jupiter in Baalbek (Lebanon), and the Temple of Qasr al Bint in Petra (Jordan).

In October, the Governor of Nineveh, Mansour Al-Mareed, announced the formal commencement of the rehabilitation works of the Al-Nouri Mosque in the old city of Mosul, under the supervision of UNESCO and Nineveh Gover-

norate. The restoration of the Al Nouri Mosque and its fabled Minaret is made possible thanks to the support of the United Arab Emirates, a key partner of UNESCO's initiative to "revive the spirit of Mosul".

UNESCO has undertaken the selection of valuable building fragments which are separated from the rubble for use during reconstruction

Demining and Salvaging

Demining operation are still ongoing. The area was extensively damaged due to booby-traps, hazardous materials and unexploded ordinance. In parallel to the stabilization works, UNESCO has undertaken the selection of valuable building fragments which are separated from the rubble for use during reconstruction, under the guidance of international experts and archeology students from the University of Mosul. These structural elements stored in a safe warehouse. The training of students of the departments of archaeology, architecture and engineering of the University of Mosul will be enriched by their participation in the restoration.

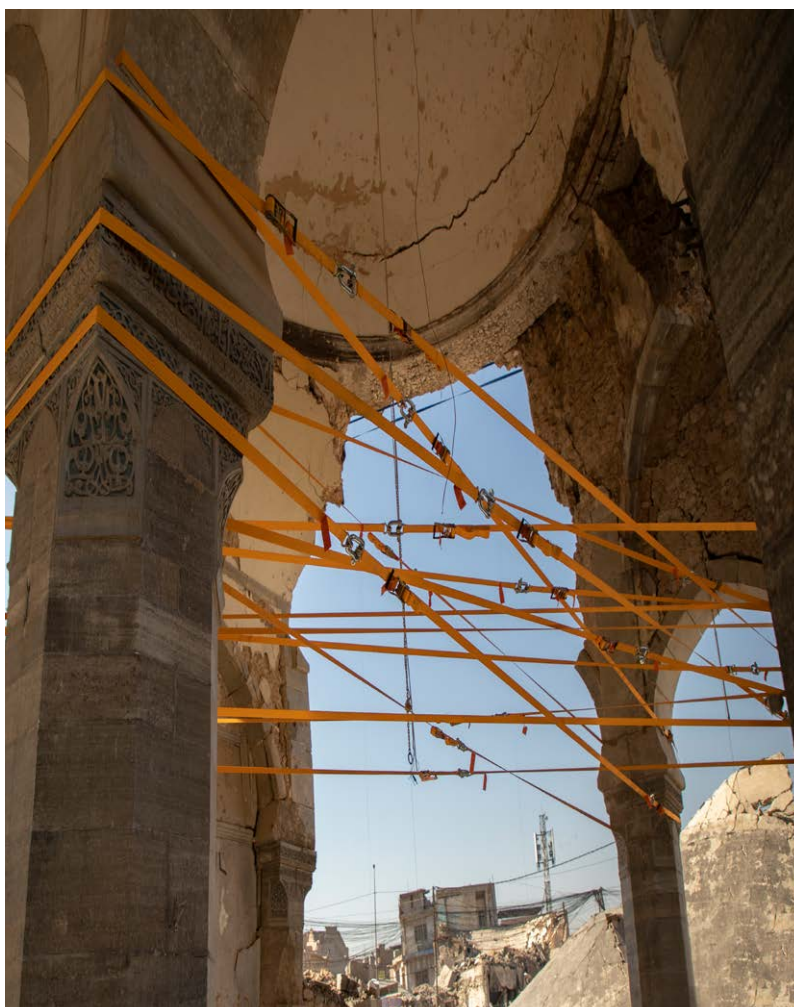
The monument will be completely restored in full respect of the site's historic integrity. Beyond the rehabilitation of architectural landmarks, the initiative includes on-the-job training for young professionals, employment of craftspeople (masons, carpenters, stone carvers, metalsmiths, etc.) and paid apprenticeships.

On 10 October, UNESCO Director-General, Audrey Azoulay, and the Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development of the United Arab Emirates, Noura bint Mohammed Al Kaabi, also agreed to undertake the rehabilitation of the Syriac Catholic Al-Tahera Church and the Latin Al-Saa'a Church in Mosul.

Reviving the Book festival

On 5 October, Mosul hosted its first book festival, with the support of UNESCO and the Book Forum, the NGO Guilde du Raid and other partners. The Ministry of Culture provided more than 4,000 books in various fields, with a significant discount. In coordination with the Mashki publishing house fifteen writers from inside and outside Mosul were invited for a book-signing session on the day of the event. The Festival also included a painting and photography exhibition, a film projection, and a concert. More than 700 of people attended the Festival, most of them families from the Old City of Mosul. "I am so happy," said one of the attendees "This is the first time our children attend an outdoor movie screening or a music show since the end of the war." Another explained, "we are very thankful, this event gives us the hope and power to rebuild our book shops again".

All of the above is just the beginning of huge project, but such results strengthen our commitment to #Revive the spirit of Mosul.



For more information on UNESCO's project, follow us on:

<https://en.unesco.org/fieldoffice/baghdad/revivemosul>

<https://en.unesco.org/fieldoffice/baghdad>

[#ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul](#)



UNMAS in Iraq

Foreword by

UNMAS Iraq Senior Programme Manager

MR. PEHR LODHAMMAR



1.4 million Iraqi children, women and men are still waiting to return home. This is our biggest motivation. We keep them in mind in every effort we make, whether in mobilizing resources, providing training to the Government of Iraq, issuing contracts and grants, providing risk education in IDP camps or finding and removing explosive hazards. The explosive hazard management activities have enabled other humanitarian actors and the Government of Iraq to start the reconstruction of key infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, bridges and public parks. Making the environment safe is a critical step before any rehabilitation works can take place and is crucial to facilitate the safe, dignified and voluntary return of displaced communities.



Extensive conflict in Iraq to retake cities from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or Da'esh displaced more than 5.8 million people between 2014 and 2017 and resulted in significant explosive hazard contamination following associated military campaigns, in addition to improvised explosive devices (IEDs) deliberately left behind by ISIL. 4.4 million people have since

returned home and the Government of Iraq, supported by the UN, is working to facilitate the safe, orderly and dignified return of the remaining 1.4 million people.

The explosive hazard problem is complex, extensive, and exceeds the capacity of the existing resources to address it. The Government of Iraq (GoI), the UN, and other national and international



stakeholders have prioritized the clearance of explosive hazards as the essential 'first step' before any rehabilitation or reconstruction work can be carried out on key infrastructure or residential buildings. Rehabilitation and reconstruction activities are critical to re-establish basic services and get people home safely to affected areas.

Active in Iraq since 2015, UNMAS supports the GoI and UN stabilization efforts, as well as humanitarian activities enabling the safe, orderly and dignified return of displaced people to areas previously occupied by ISIL.

Explosive hazard management:

HUMANITARIAN, STABILIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES ARE ENABLED

A blended approach, combining national and international commercial companies and NGOs, enables survey and clearance response in areas liberated from ISIL in direct support of the GoI and UN humanitarian and stabilization plans. When requested through the UN system, UNMAS deploys assessment teams, followed by specialized teams including: survey, high-risk search, battle area clearance, mechanical assets, and/or debris management.

Capacity enhancement:

GOVERNMENT HAS THE CAPACITY TO MANAGE, REGULATE AND COORDINATE AN EXPLOSIVE HAZARD MANAGEMENT RESPONSE IN LIBERATED AREAS

UNMAS supports a nationally led and implemented response. Building on existing capacities, UNMAS focus is to provide training and technical advice to the GoI across various entities: mine action authorities including the Directorate of Mine Action under the Ministry of Health and Environment, Ministry of Interior (police and civil defence), and government operations coordination centres to support the management, regulation and coordination of response to explosive hazards. The "National Strategy and Executive Plan for Mine Action 2017-2021" was launched in December 2017 with support from UNMAS.

Risk education:

IDPS CONFIDENTLY RETURN HOME

Coordinated with the UN Protection Cluster and the national authorities, risk education is provided to affected populations and humanitarian workers. Efforts are specifically targeting communities living in, or returning to, liberated areas known or suspected to be contaminated with IEDs and explosive hazards. UNMAS has provided national authorities with management training to improve coordination and management of risk education in Iraq.



UNMAS Achievements in 2019

UNMAS in Iraq conducted 1,353 surveys of explosive hazards in Al-Anbar, Salah al-Din and Ninewa Governorates in support of high priority stabilization and humanitarian interventions.

- Removed 862 explosive hazards, including 423 IEDs, 135 IED main charges and 40 suicide belts in liberated areas.
- Conducted 136 clearance tasks enabling UNDP and the GoI to move forward with the rehabilitation of critical infrastructures such as hospitals, schools, bridges etc. and humanitarian actors to move forward with urgent life-saving interventions.
- Coordinated and completed 5 joint assessment missions enabling the UN and humanitarian partners to deliver humanitarian aid as soon as liberated areas became accessible.
- 426 police officers, including 85 women police officers, trained in First Response to identify, mark and report explosive hazards, 456 UN security personnel, including 154 women trained in Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE) and 551 students including 178 women trained in IED awareness.
- 6,833 UNDP cash-for-work employees, 1,214 Governmental personnel and 701 NGO personnel/humanitarians trained to recognize and behave safely in the presence of explosive hazards while working in high-risk environments such as Mosul.
- 446,247 people received risk education and risk awareness training in schools, IDP camps, and other high priority areas.



UNFPA in Iraq

A commitment to women and girls across Iraq

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. Our mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) established its programme for Iraq in 2008 and opened its first office in the country in 2011.

Ever since, UNFPA has been working across the country to contribute to improving sexual and reproductive health services, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, enhancing youth-related programmes and availing population data for development.

In close coordination with the Government of Iraq, the Government of the Kurdistan Region, and the civil society, and in collaboration with other UN agencies, UNFPA pursues the country's development priorities and strategies.

When the crisis began in 2014, the Fund launched its emergency humanitarian interventions to respond to urgent reproductive health and gender-based violence

needs of women and girls affected by the conflict.

In 2020, UNFPA launched its third country programme (2020-2024) around UNFPA's three transformative results: end preventable maternal deaths, end unmet need for family planning, and end gender-based violence and harmful practices:

1. Sexual and reproductive health: Every woman, adolescent and youth everywhere, especially those furthest behind, has utilized integrated sexual and reproductive health services and exercised reproductive rights, free of coercion, discrimination and violence
2. Adolescents and youth: Every adolescent and youth, in particular adolescent girls, is empowered to have access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, in all contexts
3. Gender equality and women's empowerment: Gender equality, empowerment of all women and girls and reproductive rights are advanced in development and humanitarian settings
4. Population dynamics: Everyone, everywhere, is counted, and accounted for, in the pursuit of sustainable development



Prioritising reproductive health for families

In the last few years, UNFPA and the Ministry of Health have developed a protocol for the Clinic Management of Rape (CMR). After a lengthy advocacy process, the Government of Iraq endorsed the protocol which will ensure guidelines for the clinical management of rape are put in place. The service is to be piloted in two UNFPA-supported health facilities in Baghdad and Kirkuk and will later expanded to ten more governorates.

Furthermore, in Iraq, according to government reports, every year over 1 million children are born. With the Ministry of Health, UNFPA developed the National Family Planning Strategy. Previously, family planning was integrated in the National Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health Strategy. This new strategy will activate family planning services in public and private hospitals across the country and build the capacity of service providers. The Family Planning Strategy is expected to be endorsed by the Minister of Health in the second quarter of 2020.



Supporting young people

In 2019, UNFPA, in partnership with UNICEF, provided technical support to the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) and the Kurdistan Regional Statistics Office (KRSO) to conduct the National Adolescent and Youth Survey. This survey will enable both governments to put in place a robust policy framework and evidence-based programming and make informed decisions on youth-related matters. The results of the survey are expected to be published in the first quarter of 2020.

Moreover, this year, activities focused on young people and peacebuilding.

UNFPA in collaboration with its technical partner Folk Bernadotte Academy (FBA) organized a national stakeholder consultation on Youth, Peace and Security Resolution 2250. The discussions resulted in the formulation of a coalition of youth and civil society organizations to draw concrete steps for the implementation of the Resolution 2250 in Iraq. In addition, UNFPA, FBA and the Swedish embassy organized a five-day training for 25 young men and women on inclusive dialogue processes in peacebuilding. The sessions focused on enhancing the knowledge and practical ability of young people in the areas of peacebuilding, mindful communication, gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding, conflict analysis; inclusive dialogue, as well as the design and facilitation of dialogue sessions within their communities.

Ending GBV and harmful practices

In 2019, UNFPA with the Kurdistan Regional Government launched the Communication for behavioural impact (COMBI) to end Female Genital Mutilation. In the Kurdistan Region alone, close to 15,000 girls were circumcised in the last year. Through the COMBI plan, UNFPA and teams from the Ministries of Religious Affairs, Interior (GDCVAW), Justice, Health, Education and Labour and Social Affairs will approach an initial 7,500 mothers in the next 12 months with awareness-raising campaigns in order to save young girls from this harmful practice in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq where FGM rate are high.

As the lead agencies on gender-based violence prevention and response, UNFPA, through technical and expert support to the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, conducted and published a comprehensive assessment of the needs of gender-based violence survivors. The aim of the assessment was to identify the gap in service provision and support the coordinated multi-sectoral response.

The survey's results show that more than 30 per cent of displaced persons require health and psychosocial support services. Consequently, UNFPA conducted a series of training sessions as part of ten-week programme to enhance the capacity of 200 specialised and non-specialised mental health and psychosocial support service providers from across Iraq. The



training combined theory with practice and group activities to ensure service providers assist survivors in strengthening positive coping mechanisms as well as reduce risk of self-harm or suicide.

Furthermore, discussions with the government showed that armed and uniformed actions have had little training on gender issues in their formal training courses. Hence, UNFPA cooperated with the Ministry of Interior at Central Level and the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs in the Kurdistan Region in order to build the capacity of police officers and MOI staff working with survivors of gender-based violence to provide sensitisation of uniformed professionals such as Peshmerga; as well as to ensure survivor-centred response and services to GBV survivors seeking support from the Family Protection Unit.

UNFPA has been working across the country to contribute to improving sexual and reproductive health services, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, enhancing youth-related programmes and availing population data for development

Responding to emergencies

The military operations in North-East Syria which began on 9 October led to the influx of more than 35,211 Syrian refugees to Duhok Governorate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, as of 26 December. The refugees were relocated to Bardarash and Gawilan camps in Duhok.

Up until 29 December, UNFPA teams provided 3,367 women and girls with dignity kits, 986 others with psychosocial support and 1,983 with psychological first aid.

In addition, UNFPA deployed an RH mobile team and two ambulances for referrals at the Sehela border crossing. One RH clinic and one Women Centre have been opened in Bardarash camp. The existing UNFPA-facilities in Gawilan camp have been further expanded. Furthermore, more than 100 women received neonatal care at the UNFPA-supported reproductive health facilities.

UNFPA-supported mobile teams also conducted outreach visits to refugees in the camps to disseminate information on GBV and inform families about the GBV and RH-related services.

Paving the way for people-centred policies

In December 2018, with the support of UNFPA, the Government of Iraq elaborated the full Census Project document: the document provides the framework upon which the entire Census of Iraq is based. In 2019, the Prime Minister, HE Adil Abdel Mahdi, as the Chair of the Higher Population Council approved the 2020 Population and Housing Census for Iraq. Since then, the preparations for the Census began, including regular meetings of the Cen-



sus Supreme Commission headed by the Minister of Planning, Dr Nouri Al-Sabah al-Dulaimi.

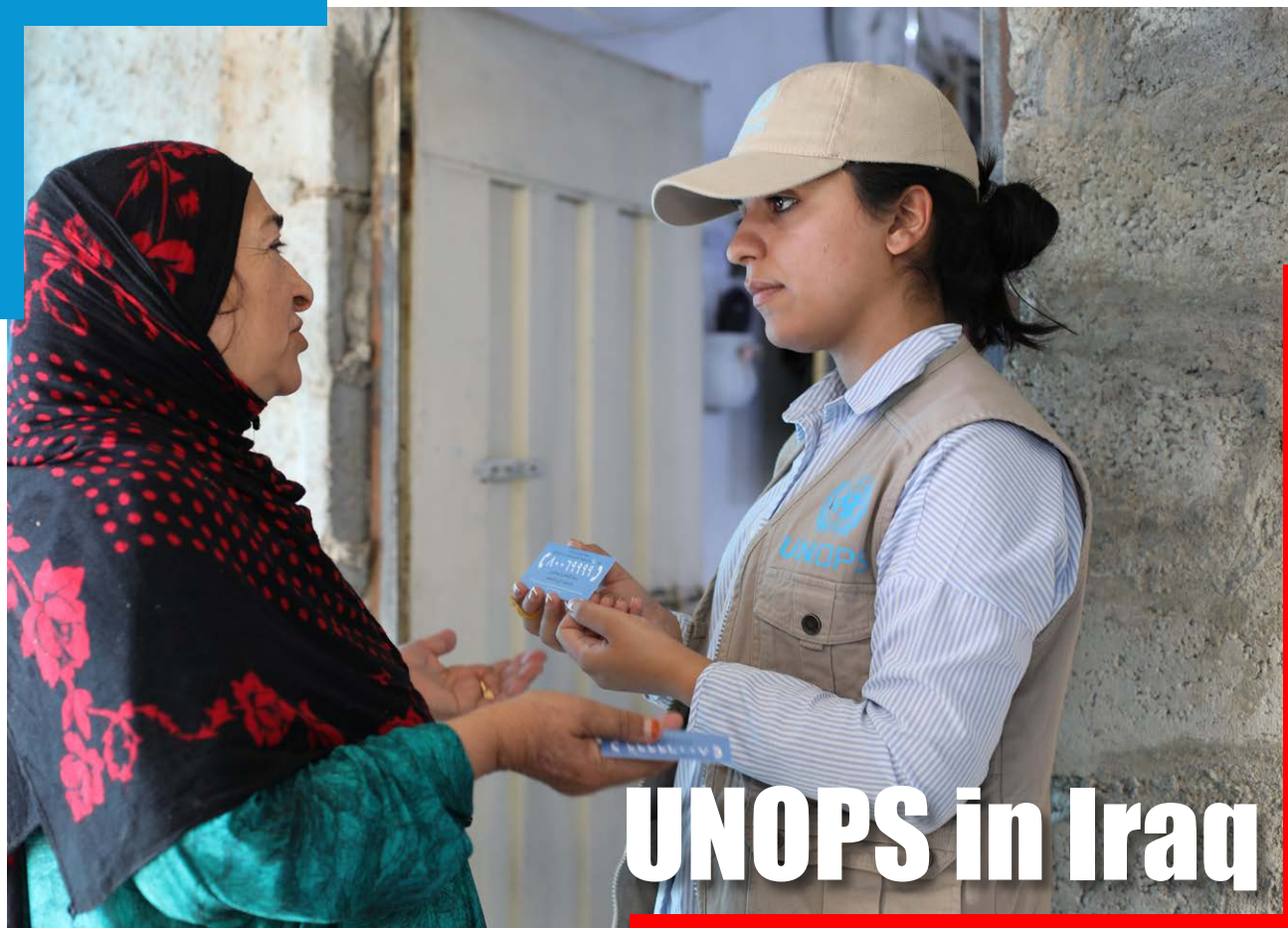
In July 2019, Mr Abdel Mahdi announced 2020 Census. For this reason, the Council of Ministers approved US\$ 37 million (44.5 billion Iraqi Dinars) for 2019 and US\$ 59.4 million (114 billion Iraqi Dinars) for 2020. In addition, after several study tours and exchange of expertise with Jordan and Egypt statistical offices and based on the lessons learnt, the Higher Population Council approved the adoption of the E-Census for the 2020 Census, instead of the paper-based count.

With the support of UNFPA, a national roadmap was drafted and adopted as a roadmap for the implementation of the Census with the work on-going on the draft questionnaire, the population enumeration and the National Document for Census Support and Advocacy. The detailed action plan of the census stages was finalised and the number of individuals needed to support the process has been identified. The Information and Communications Technology team formulated a detailed programme that ensure Iraq relies on its national capacities for the implementation of the e-enumeration.

Throughout the year, UNFPA exerted advocacy efforts at the highest level with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to ensure the creation and sustainability of an enabling political environment for the Census with discussions focusing on the non-politicisation of the Census and emphasising the developmental benefits to the population.

Some figures from 2019:

- Number of people reached with GBV awareness raising activities and interventions: 205666
- Number of women and girls subjected to violence that have accessed the essential services package: 267850
- Number of girls and women reached prevention and/or protection services and care related to child, early and forced marriage: 9626
- Number of girls and women reached with prevention and/or protection services and care related to female genital mutilation: 530
- Number of people received psychological support: 87672
- Number of women reached with RH advocacy and awareness raising interventions: 114334
- Number of people reached with RH services: 436459
- Number of gynaecological and family planning consultations: 326340
- Number of deliveries: 43823
- Number of people trained on RH-related topics: 10798
- Number of youth reached with awareness raising activities: 21636
- Number of girls with adolescent girls' toolkit: 19235
- Number of youth with peace building and PVE programmes: 8315
- Number of youth reached through Y-Peer activities: 5136



UNOPS in Iraq

“ From Baghdad and Erbil, our teams have been working hand-in-hand with the Government of Iraq, donors, and UN agencies to help bring better services to the people of Iraq. In 2020, UNOPS remains committed to support the efforts in Iraq to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and address some of its most pressing challenges ”

MR. USMAN AKRAM

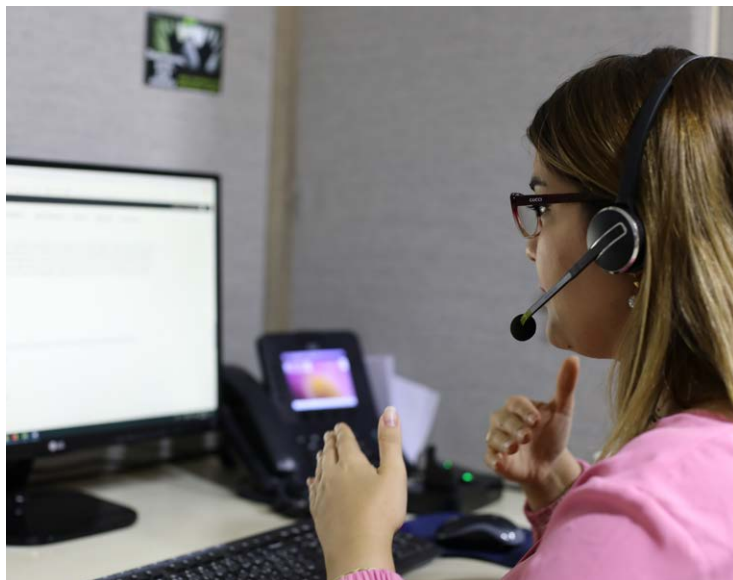
Director for UNOPS Operational Hub in Amman

During 2019, UNOPS implemented a number of projects to provide support to the Government of Iraq and other partners in the areas of humanitarian response, infrastructure, procurement and project management. UNOPS projects supported provision of assistance to the internal displaced persons, stabilization of liberated areas, and complemented capacity of its sister UN agencies in implementation of their initiatives.

Highlights in 2019

- Through the Iraq Information Centre (IIC), UNOPS connected over 93,000 internally displaced people, returnees, refugees and the host community members with critical information on accessing humanitarian assistance. In late July 2019, IIC hit a new record by handling 3,290 calls in just one week.
 - Through “Improving of Living Conditions in Liberated Areas through Renewable Energy and Emergency Waste Disposal” project, UNOPS provided renewable energy solutions to a number of hospitals and health clinics located in the newly liberated areas, especially in Anbar, Ninewa and Dyala governorates. In addition, UNOPS improved the capacity of the local authorities at the aforementioned gov-
- ernorates through provision of solid waste collection vehicles and collection bins, and provided a series of training sessions to local authorities on modern waste disposal systems.
- In March 2019, UNOPS completed the project “Improving the Operational Capacity of Demining Authorities in Iraq” to provide support to the Mine Action Agency. Through the project and in coordination with JICA and UNMAS, UNOPS enhanced the operational capacity of the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA), Ministry of Interior (Mol) and Iraq Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IK-MAA) by procuring specialized equipment for assessment, clearance and training mainly targeting Anbar, Salah Al-Din, Ninewa (Mosul), Erbil and Dyala.

Current Projects in Iraq



Iraq Information Centre (IIC)

The Iraq Information Center (IIC) was launched in 2015 following an inter-agency assessment into the information and communication needs of displaced populations in Iraq. IIC is managed by UNOPS on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). The IIC is a key facilitator of this information exchange, which allows first- and second-line programming to respond quickly to the critical needs of affected populations. The project's primary objective is to strengthen humanitarian response and accountability to affected populations in Iraq, and serves as a valuable initiative that has improved the quality of the humanitarian response in Iraq by facilitating the exchange of information between affected populations and humanitarian actors, collecting and circulating information about the urgent needs and priorities of affected populations, and closing the loop on complaints and feedback.

During 2019, IIC has received 96,089 calls of which 73% were from male callers and 27% were from women callers. In addition, 57% of these calls were received from IDPs, 37% from returnees, 3% from host communities, and 3% from refugees.

The project is currently being funded by the Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund, provided by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), World Food Programme (WFP), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The project previously received financial support from the European Union, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Office of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq.



Story From the Field

I wanted to register for an assistance but did not have enough information on how to do it. I called the IIC; and an operator answered my questions. She told me all I needed to know about the registration process, and I am thankful for her support." A returnee, calling from Tilkaif, Ninewa, July 2019.

FACTS ON UNOPS

UNOPS is mandated to expand implementation capacity across peace and security, humanitarian, and development efforts. Through its project services — including infrastructure, procurement, project management, human resources, and financial management services — UNOPS supports governments, the United Nations, and other partners in achieving Member States' Global Goals, and local objectives for people and countries.

As an operational arm of the United Nations, in Iraq, UNOPS provides support to the Government of Iraq, international partners, and United Nations agencies, to implement humanitarian and development interventions in the country.

UNOPS brings expertise to Iraq in sustainable project management, procurement and infrastructure.

Restoring Access to Critical Urban Services in Liberated Areas

With the support from the Government of Japan, throughout 2019, UNOPS supported restoration of critical urban services in the selected liberated areas in Anbar governorate. The restoration of urban services, including water and sanitation, transport, energy and solid waste management. The project supports Iraq in its efforts towards the realization of Agenda 2030 and more specifically contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and outcome: SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being; SDG #6 Clean Water and Sanitation; SDG #7 Affordable and clean energy; and SDG #9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure. The project is also in line with the "Revitalizing Communities" component of the UN's two-year Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme (RRP) developed to fast-track the social dimensions of reconstruction.

Emergency Social Stabilization and Resilience Project- Cash for work component

With support of the World Bank and in full coordination with the Iraqi Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), UNOPS, along with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is supporting targeted Cash for Work (CfW) opportunities in order to increase access to 51,350 short-term employment in areas affected by the crisis in Iraq, namely in the governorates of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Baghdad, and Babel. In addition to enhance economic activities and livelihood, and contribute to stabilization, recovery for communities, and rebuilding social cohesion in those targeted areas.



WFP in Iraq

During 2019 in Iraq, WFP continued to work to meet the needs of vulnerable people across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. WFP distributed food and cash assistance to displaced people and refugees in camps, helped people rebuild their lives through work and training opportunities, and provided healthy meals to children in schools. 2019 was the second and last year of WFP's Transitional Interim Country Strategic Plan, reaching 711,369 people.

The country remains challenging to work in. From August, camp consolidations, closures and relocations affected around 140,000 internally displaced people (IDPs). From October, violence in northeast Syria led to an influx of over 19,000 new refu-

gees. Civil unrest from Q4 caused delays in food and cash assistance. WFP remained agile and met the monthly food requirements of 457,180 IDPs in camps, plus ready-to-eat packages for newly or secondary displaced families. Over 17,000 newly arrived refugees also received assistance, among the 42,476 Syrian refugees reached in the Kurdistan Region (KR). To better meet people's needs, WFP worked to transition from food to cash-based transfers (CBT). Targeting exercises helped prioritise the most vulnerable for WFP support.

Opportunities to work when returning home from camps remain key. To help recovery and foster livelihoods, WFP scaled up its resilience programme, reaching 70,872 people. Such initiatives gave returnees the chance to earn a living after displacement, or the wider communities to restart agricultural livelihoods after continued barriers such as damaged irrigation systems or tools. Communities who had never worked together before, or held mutual mistrust, collaborated successfully. WFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with FAO to further coordinate on livelihoods





programming. Both continue leadership of the Food Security Cluster.

In the third year of the pioneering “EMPACT” programme, WFP reached 13,665 people through digital skills and English training. In June, the initiative was selected as an innovative solution to providing skills development and work opportunities at the No Lost Generation Summit in Amman, Jordan. Women are championed in all WFP’s activities, with nearly half all places on resilience and EMPACT projects dedicated for women.

After months of preparation, WFP recommenced its School Feeding programme in December, in partnership with the Ministry of Education - reaching 127,446 children in 6 governorates with nutritious meals. It is one example of how nutrition continues to be mainstreamed throughout WFP’s programmes. School Feeding had been on hold since mid-2018, pending the appointment of the Minister of Education. Feedback from parents, children and teachers indicated

how the healthy meals were helping children overcome short term hunger and focus in class.

Partnership is at the heart of WFP’s work. All year, WFP continued to coordinate with the government on social protection, taking the initiative to bring together the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), the national Public Distribution System (PDS) of food rations, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), to better complement each other’s resources and share distribution plans. This helped ensure value for money in the use of government and donor resources. Due to funding gaps in January, WFP was forced to reduce the frequency of monthly distributions to IDPs to every six weeks. Coordination efforts along with new donor support allowed WFP to move back to a four-week cycle from July. When MoMD distributed food to IDPs in camps, WFP “topped-up” the ration with food or cash assistance. By the end of 2019, this led to savings of USD 6.2 million in CBT, plus

1,900 metric tonnes (USD 1.2 million) of food, which ensured that support could continue to those most in need.

A cornerstone of WFP’s work in 2019 was the PDS partnership, which launched with the Ministry of Trade (MoT) in January. WFP provided technical expertise to commence digitalizing the Ministry’s management information system, to improve transparency and efficiency so that the right people receive food at the right time. The digital “ePDS” testing registered 68,000 people in 11 governorates, introduced iris scanning which proved popular, and is developing a “Tamwini” app for easy updates remotely, reducing long waiting times and multiple visits to PDS offices. At MoT’s request, the initiative is expanding countrywide in 2020. It is a key part of WFP’s new Country Strategic Plan (CSP), 2020-2024, which was approved in November and intends to support the government to better meet the needs of its citizens, alongside initiatives that lead to people’s self-sufficiency and lasting resilience.





The World Health Organization (WHO) and Health cluster partners in Iraq continued to support the government to respond to national man-made and natural disasters, and to implement developmental health programs. The health actors under the leadership of WHO in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH) are working to ensure that all Iraqis have access to the essential health care services as part of the country's mandate to achieving Universal Health Coverage. As such, the organization alongside other health partners is focusing on delivering both strategic development and emergency health programs in line with the needs of the population and government.

This report highlights WHO Iraq's achievements, and how it worked to support the Ministry of Health in its delivery of health services. In 2019, WHO continued to focus on technical support, capacity building of the Ministry of Health at all levels, and joint work with all health authorities and people of Iraq to reconstruct and rebuild health systems in areas previously affected by conflict. In other areas, WHO

is strengthening existing health systems through technical support to developmental programs covering major health system components, health protection and promotion activities, as well as prevention and control of major communicable and non-communicable diseases affecting the country.

Through WHO and UNICEF support, more than 2.6 million children (90% coverage) aged 09 -59 months in nine provinces of Iraq were reached with measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccines. The Immunization exercise was a continuum of the first batch conducted in 2018 that covered 10 Provinces. Also, more than 5.8 million children (95% coverage) aged 0-5 years were reached during the first round of Polio National Immunization Days covering all provinces of Iraq.

Restoration of damaged infrastructure in liberated areas was among the priority health activities in 2019. In Hawiija General Hospital in Kirkuk governorate, WHO supported the rehabilitation and inauguration of a 25-bed capacity pediatric and outpatient department. To ensure service provision at the opening of the facility,

the WHO delivered a wide range of medical technologies such as emergency room and operating theatre equipment and 30 tons of medicines for different treatments. Two hundred thousand people residing in the district, including displaced persons and returnees from other areas of Kirkuk, will benefit from this support. Also, WHO restored PHCs in the Telefar district serving both Zummar and Rabeea sub-districts, Sinoni, Ba'aj town, Shandokha village near Al Kasak junction and Al Wahda sector inside Talafar City. Now, these centers are offering emergency and maternity health services, laboratory, pharmacy, referral services, and health promotion activities. The agency further supported Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to open and equip a Neonatal/Pediatric Gastroenterology and Neonatal Semi-Intensive Critical Care units in Rapareen Hospital to accommodate the increase in demand for secondary health services by IDPs and refugees living in host communities. Thanks to these efforts, returnees are now able to access health services at any time during the day.

During this reporting period, WHO pro-

cured and distributed essential line medicines sufficient for a population of more than half a million, and emergency health kits enough for over 1 million populations for three months. These included NCD and trauma kits sufficient for 2800 surgical interventions. The procured medical products were distributed to eight Directorates of Health serving internally displaced persons, host communities, returnees, and refugees. WHO also continued to support health authorities to fill critical gaps in affected areas through the procurement of essential medicines and medical supplies. Thousands of pieces of equipment (lifesaving, diagnostic, laboratory), reusable devices, assistive products, and medical furniture were distributed to 20 health care facilities in Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Saladin and Sulaymaniyah Governorates. In response to the health needs of people affected by the flash floods in South Iraq (Basra, Wassit, Missan, and other surrounding villages), large quantities of life-saving medicines and medical kits (enough to treat more than 100,000 people for one month) were donated to affected areas.

In the northern parts of the country, WHO supported the medical waste management by collecting around 15 tons of medical waste from health facilities in Ninewah and Anbar governorates. Most wastes collected included plastic bags and safety boxes. To ensure that drinking water in Kirkuk, Sulaymaniyah, Ninewa, and Anbar meets the required standard; WHO supported quality monitoring of safe drinking water supplies, collecting and testing samples to ensure it meets the minimum standards.

Health services in PHCs (located in camps and host communities) were strengthened through conduction of quality of care and patient safety assessment studies, which resulted in the development of quality standards that can be adopted by MOHE to be applied all over the country, as well as enhancement of service delivery mechanisms in WHO-supported PHCs and mobile medical clinics (which recorded more than 4 million consultations since the beginning of the year in governorates hosting IDPs; including around 0.5 million children less than five years).

Further support to PHCs was achieved through the establishment of PHCs and the allocation of mobile clinics for thousands of returnees in areas of return (Zummar and Rabeaa sub-districts, Sino-ni, Ba'aj town, Shandokha village near Al

Kasak junction and Al Wahda sector inside Talafar City).

Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care (CEmOC) services in 7 different governorates; namely: Baghdad (especially Al-Karkh and Al-Rasafa districts), Babil, Erbil, Dohuk, Sulaymaniyah, Dyala and Basra were strengthened through training of over 200 healthcare providers on WHO orientation programs, quality provision of Essential New-born Care (ENC), quality antenatal and postnatal care, perinatal death surveillance, and illness integrated management techniques. Together with UNICEF and UNFPA, WHO supported the MOHE to conduct the Midterm Review of the National Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescents Health Strategy (2016-2020) and scale-up Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (PNDSR) in most governorates. These efforts can result in further improvement in services in the long-run. In addition, WHO continued to supply 10 Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (BEmONC) Centers with needed contraceptives.

Mental health services were strengthened in more than 60 family medicine centers and PHCs in 11 governorates. Finally, WHO supported the MOHE to assess PHC services in Iraq by measuring the quality of provided services against 125 different indicators related to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and SDG health-related targets. An Institutional Development Plan (IDP) was developed to close the service gaps and implementation will start in 2020.

Capacity building of PHC health workers in more than 800 PHCs on different health topics to strengthen their ability to deliver quality and effective essential health services. Over 2500 health workers and staff received training on Maternal and Child Health, Gender-Based Violence, Communicable diseases, International Health Regulations, Surveillance, Health Information Systems, Mental health and Substance Abuse, NCDs, Health Systems, Immunization, and Risk Communication. Currently, more than 115 health facilities in 11 governorates (Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Anbar, Baghdad, Salah Addin, Sulaymaniyah, Missan, Thi-Qar, Basra, and Ninawa) are providing integrated mental health and psychosocial support services. With the training provided to over 300 health professionals on Mental Health GAP (mh-GAP) intervention guide, WHO Problem Management Plus (PM+) manual, and

adequate management of GBV survivors, WHO was able to reach to more than 212,341 people with mental health conditions. Further support was provided through procurement and distribution psychotropic medicines (used for the treatment of mental disorders, reduce disability and prevent relapse), and the establishment of three new psychiatric units at DoHS' general hospitals in the most conflict-affected areas of Sinjar, Tal Affar and west Mosul.

Patient satisfaction with provided health services was measured using two different surveys conducted during the reporting period. First, a Quality-of-Care survey in IDP camps (conducted by Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) under WHO supervision) showed that 47% of patients are satisfied with the quality of the provided services in health facilities. In March 2019, the health cluster rolled out a second survey to assess if the cluster is efficient and effective in its role in meeting the needs of health partners and supporting the delivery of health services to affected people. The overall score was higher than 72%, indicating the performance status as "good".

Restoration of damaged infrastructure in liberated areas was among the priority health activities this year. In Hawijja General Hospital in Kirkuk governorate, WHO supported the rehabilitation and inauguration of a 25-bed capacity pediatric and outpatient department. To ensure service provision at the opening of the facility, WHO delivered a wide range of medical technologies such as emergency room and operating theatre equipment and 30 tons of medicines for different treatments. Two hundred thousand people residing in the district, including displaced persons and returnees from other areas of Kirkuk, will benefit from this support. Also, WHO restored PHCs in Telefar district serving both Zummar and Rabeaa sub-districts, Sino-ni, Ba'aj town, Shandokha village near Al Kasak junction and Al Wahda sector inside Talafar City. Now, these centres are offering emergency and maternity health services, laboratory, pharmacy, referral services, and health promotion activities. WHO also supported KRG to open and equip Neonatal/Pediatric Gastroenterology and Neonatal Semi-Intensive Critical Care units in Rapareen Hospital to accommodate for the increase in demand on secondary health services by IDPs and refugees living in host communities.



A lot of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) work in the past few years has focused on reinforcing Iraq's legal regime against terrorism. Considering the interest expressed by national partners to expand UNODC's work in Iraq, in 2018, UNODC ROMENA fielded two assessment missions during which priorities for UNODC's future partnership in Iraq were identified, including in the areas of drug control, countering organized crime and corruption, prison reform and health.

In early 2019, advancing the UNDS reform efforts, UNODC deployed a Senior Programme Coordinator to Iraq to enhance the operational capacity on the ground and build a long-term cooperation programme grounded in national priorities, focusing on the nexus between organized crime and terrorism.

Capacity to process terrorist cases

UNODC's cooperation programme delivered through the Global Programme on Terrorism Prevention aimed at reinforcing Iraq's legal regime against terrorism through legislative assistance, substantive training on international legal instruments and capacity-building in investigations and prosecutions of terrorism related cases.

Iraq was covered by the five-year Initiative on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Emerging Terrorist Threats, including Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) in Middle East and North Africa countries. In compliance with UNSCR 2178 (2014), the initiative aimed at strengthening national legal frameworks against FTFs; training criminal justice officials on specific legal aspects related to countering FTF at

the national and regional level; and enhancing international, regional and sub-regional cooperation. Partners include CTED and the Malta-based International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IJ).

Phase I (September 2014-October 2015, supported by the US and Japan) included two regional conferences covering Iraq (March and October 2015). Phase II (supported by the European Union and Canada) was launched in November 2015 and included sub-regional workshops and several national workshops, including for Iraq. As well as specialized training on the conversion of intelligence information into evidence.

Iraq is also one of three countries (together with Jordan and Lebanon) that have been trained in using special investigation techniques in terrorism-related cases with full respect of human rights and the rule of law. Specialized trainings for Iraqi

law enforcement, criminal justice officials and lawyers were held during 2017 along with their Lebanese and Jordanian counterparts on the use of SITs in investigating terrorist crimes and the admissibility of digital evidence before courts including the functioning of the chain of custody.

Anti-corruption

From 2011 until 2014, UNODC has worked with the Government to strengthen international cooperation, asset recovery, extradition and the initiation and management of litigation in foreign jurisdictions in partnership with the Commission of Integrity (CoI) and other law enforcement agencies. Capacity building training was delivered on financial investigation of corruption cases and international cooperation on asset recovery.

Addressing trafficking in cultural property

In 2016 and 2017, supported by the Government of Japan, UNODC partnered with the Government of Iraq on criminal justice responses to trafficking in cultural property on addressing the financing of terrorist groups through those activities, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2199, with the participation of representatives of INTERPOL and UNESCO.

Building on the success of the preceding areas of cooperation, a wide new number of subjects have been selected for future cooperation of which several are ongoing.

Anti-money laundering

As of 2019, UNODC partners with Iraq to implement an initiative, supported by Japan on disrupting terrorist and organized criminal operations, including the spreading of violent extremism in the Middle East and North Africa. With regard to anti money laundering activities, and in partnership with the Financial Intelligence Unit, UNODC plans to assess the challenges facing financial institutions (FIs) and money or value transfer services (MVTs) in detecting and reporting suspicious transactions and to deliver six training sessions to selected officials from FIs and MVTs on reporting suspicious transactions.

Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants

Iraq is one of the five focus countries of phase II of the EU supported Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT). The project has started implementation in April 2019 in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and continues to support governmental authorities and civil society organizations in developing and implementing more effective national and international responses to trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling (in the functional areas of strategy and policy development; legislative assistance; capacity building; regional and trans-regional cooperation; protection and assistance to victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants including children). An important partner of UNODC in Iraq in this regard is the National Anti-Trafficking in Persons High Committee, Chaired by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior. Its membership includes all line ministries at the level of Director General, in addition to a representative from the High Commission for Human Rights.

Supporting children recruited and exploited by terrorists and violent extremists

UNODC has developed guidance to Member States on how children involved with

terrorist and violent extremist groups should be treated by national authorities to ensure their treatment is in line with international norms and standards. In 2018 and 2019, funded by Japan, UNODC conducted related regional capacity-building activities that included Iraq. Specialized assistance will be provided to Iraq through a training planned for late 2019 on the rehabilitation and reintegration of children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups.

Addressing violence against women

In partnership with UNWOMEN and with support from Japan, UNODC will work to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement officers to provide professional, gender-sensitive responses to women victims of violence. Training is expected to take place during 2019 in Erbil with the participation of law enforcement officers from Baghdad. UNODC will develop a comprehensive programme to improve the criminal justice response to violence against women in Iraq.

Border control

UNODC is working with the Border Commission to set up a capacity to undertake risk profiling of containerized shipments at sea ports, dry ports and land border crossings under the Container Control programme. Iraqi officials participated in two regional workshops organized in the framework of UNODC's Airport Communications project in 2017 and 2018. In 2019, UNODC will initiate a project on border control funded by Japan. The goal of this initiative is to strengthen capacities of the law enforcement agencies to detect, intercept and investigate members of criminal and terrorist groups when trying to enter and operate in Iraq.

Countering narcotics

In 2019, UNODC initiated a project to support the Iraqi efforts in countering narcotics in Iraq. The overall objective of the project is to initiate a comprehensive capacity building approach for Iraqi law enforcement agencies and forensic entities to enable the country to counter the growing challenges posed by organized criminal groups, illicit trafficking and the links between organized crime and the financing of terrorism, with a focus on countering illicit drugs. This will support the Iraqi authorities to adopt a qualita-

tive enforcement approach focusing on dismantling criminal networks and thus go beyond the arrest of low-level criminal operatives.

Support to prison reform

In 2019, UNODC initiated an assessment of Prisons services in Iraq with the aim to support Iraq efforts towards the development of a National Action Plan for Prison reform in Iraq with a focus on Violent Extremist Prisoners and Children associated with violent extremist groups.

Strengthening long term cooperation in Iraq

Aiming to support Iraq's efforts to enhance the criminal justice system in wide array of thematic areas that UNODC is mandated to work on, particularly in the aftermath of the military defeat of ISIL, UNODC established a programme office in Iraq. A lot of UNODC's work in the past few years has focused on reinforcing Iraq's legal regime against terrorism. Considering the interest expressed by national partners to expand UNODC's work in Iraq, in 2018, UNODC fielded two assessment missions during which priorities for UNODC's future partnership in Iraq were identified, including in the areas of drug control, countering organized crime and corruption, prison reform and health. In early 2019, advancing the United Nations Development System (UNDS) reform efforts, UNODC deployed a Senior Programme Coordinator to Iraq to enhance the operational capacity on the ground and build a long-term cooperation programme grounded in national priorities, focusing on the rule of law and the justice system.

Safe Airports for Safer Citizens: UNODC AIRCOP supports Iraq in addressing terrorism and organized criminal networks at airports

Terrorist and organized criminal operations have globally grown in complexity. As the number of air passengers are expected to double in the coming 20 years, airports and the connectivity offered by airlines are prone to exploitation by terrorist entities and organized criminal groups for their transnational criminal activities.

To support Iraq in facing such challenges, the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP) implemented by UNODC in cooperation with Interpol and the World

Customs Organization delivered its first training in Baghdad on “Frontline identification and interdiction of suspicious passengers” from 8 to 12 September 2019. This activity is the first step of a series of activities, thereby connecting it to a network of 34 other countries (40 airports) participating in the programme.

Unity in Diversity: Iraqi Officials Study Visit to Mechelen (Belgium)

Diversity, inclusion, tolerance, and integration are core values of the UN system, yet it remains challenging to translate them into direct action within the context of addressing terrorism and violent extremism. A possible way to address such challenges is learning from previous successful experiences. From 18th to 20th March 2019, the UNODC MENA Regional Representative, Ms. Cristina Albertin and the UNODC Regional Advisor on Terrorism Prevention, Ali Younes, accompanied an Iraqi delegation to a study visit organised by the UNODC Terrorism Prevention Branch and the city hall of Mechelen, Belgium, to enhance their capacities to address crisis situations, counter terrorism, and to prevent violent extremism.

While Belgium had 565 Foreign Terrorist Fighters, Mechelen is one of the key communities and towns that did not have any of its citizens recruited. Such results are due to the initiative and efforts taken by the town’s population under the leadership of its current Mayor, Bart Somers, who received the World Mayor Prize by the City Mayors Foundation in 2016 for his efforts.

Visitors had the chance to meet the Mechelen Mayor Mr. Somers to debate on the Mechelen project “Police and Human Rights” for security cooperation. When speaking on the role of the police to promote security cooperation through integration and diversity, Mayor Somers added “The approach to fighting crime in Mechelen is seen primarily as a social policy, where the society must be engaged, and secondly, we never use our police to criminalise groups in society.” By the end of the visit, a set of recommendations was formulated to identify ways to replicate the Mechelen experience in selected municipalities in Iraq.

Border control operational efforts initiated in Iraq

As part of an integrated border man-

agement approach to support Member States’ efforts, UNODC has been invited by the Border Commission, together with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Interior and Customs, to meet in Baghdad on 18 February 2019. The meeting aimed to explore cooperation under UNODC’s Container Control Programme (CCP), attended by the International Organization for Migration, the European Union, Australia and the United States.

Following this meeting, several steps were taken by the Border Commission to formalize cooperation with UNODC including the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and the establishment of a steering committee. A first operational effort was the joint capacity building of Iraqi law enforcement officers at Treibil border crossing with Jordanian law enforcement officers at the Karamah border crossing (EU-funded projects and a first activity took place from 7-18 April 2019 in Amman, Jordan and will continue throughout 2019). UNODC is fundraising to expand cooperation to the Baghdad International Airport and Umm Qasr Seaport.

Empowering Women criminal justice officials in the national counter terrorism response

While undertaking efforts to deal with the aftermath of terrorist attacks, bringing perpetrators to justice, and providing support to victims and survivors, it has been widely acknowledged in Iraq that it is important to empower women in the ongoing peacebuilding process and the criminal justice response to terrorism offences.

On 7 March 2019, UNODC organized a large stakeholders’ meeting to launch a new programme on “Strengthening the Capacity of Women Professionals Working in the Counter-Terrorism Sector,” in Erbil. The meeting brought together around 40 representatives from Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Ministries of Health, Labor and Social Affairs, Interior, Justice, and Education, parliament, judiciary institutions, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), UN Women, civil society, non-governmental organizations, and the Women Empowerment Organization to gather the views of all sectors involved in the planned programme.

Throughout conducting a wide number of activities, UNODC data has shown that most of the delegations had been male, leading to the proposal of the programme. Therefore, efforts build upon past calls for further empowerment of women’s indispensable role in counter terrorism efforts.

The meeting’s attendees appreciated the proposals and initiatives put forward by UNODC and highlighted the past related efforts done towards women’s inclusion, such as the National Action Plan developed by Iraq on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325, on women, peace, and security. The meeting led to multiple rich discussions and encouraged stakeholders to identify some probable barriers to women accessing decision making posts and obtaining budgets for the women and peace agenda. Stakeholders further stressed to the necessity of including female perspectives and points of view while conducting studies on women.

Ceremony for the Completion of Five years of the Terrorism Prevention Branch Programme to Support Iraq’s Counter-Terrorism Efforts (2014 – 2019)

UNODC cooperates extensively with the Government in preventing and countering terrorism. Achievements include the new counter-terrorism draft law currently under review by Parliament, a countering violent extremism strategy, and the establishment of an Association of Victims of Terrorism. Such achievements were celebrated in the ceremony held in Baghdad at the Prime Ministers’ Guesthouse on Sunday the 14th of April 2019, with representatives from the UK, Denmark, and Japan.

UNODC announced the completion of five years of the Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) Programme to Support Iraq’s counter terrorism (CT) efforts regarding the Japanese and Danish supported programmes. The Global Project on Strengthening the Legal Regime against Terrorism for the years 2014 – 2015, 2015 – 2016, 2016 – 2017, 2017 – 2018 and finally after the liberation of Mosul 2018 – 2019; supported by the Government of Japan and the Strengthening criminal justice measures against terrorism and other orga-

nized crime programme in Iraq with both its phases (Phase I 2017 – 2018 and Phase II 2018 – 2019); aided by the Government of Denmark.

UNODC stands ready to continue partnerships with the Iraqi government on future cooperation in providing support in the implementation of the national strategy to combat violent extremism leading to terrorism. Such partnerships have already launched with the “Global Project to strengthen the legal regime against terrorism in Iraq after the liberation of Mosul (2018-2019)” project.

National workshop on the outcomes of the study on promoting the role of Iraqi women officials in counter-terrorism in Iraq

UNODC conducted the National workshop on the outcomes of the study on promoting the role of Iraqi women officials in counter-terrorism in Iraq from 25 – 26 November 2019 in Amman, Jordan. The two-day workshop has been conducted to present the prepared research study on gender disparity and women representation in counter-terrorism institutions; the leadership, decision-making roles and effectiveness of female professionals working in the CT field in Iraq, while analysing the status of current women capacities within a wide range of policy, law enforcement, investigation and judicial capacities related to the female cadre in Iraq and KRG. The workshop gathered representatives from the law enforcement and criminal justice sectors from the Iraqi Federal Government and the KRG to reflect upon the findings of the study and raise ways-forward for substantiating women empowerment in their respective fields. The workshop provided a platform to discuss and increase knowledge on various issues on women, peace, security and on CT related issues; enhance their technical capacities; and increase their skills on operational planning and strategizing.

This workshop:

- presented the outcomes of the factual assessment study based on visits to relevant CT departments in Baghdad and Erbil;
- formed sectorial groups and group discussions for discussing the outcomes of the study, proposals,

recommendations and gender-related policies, in light of the challenges presented by the study. Concrete recommendations per sectorial group were drafted and presented by the spokesperson of each group.

- drafted the final list of recommendations by the participants to be submitted to consultant. These recommendations included areas for capacity-building and technical support which UNODC shall consider in the implementation of the project's subsequent phase.
- The overall objective of the study is to research ways-forward for building the capacity and networking skills of female professionals working in the criminal justice field in Iraq Federal and KRG institutions to ensure that action in post-Daesh Iraq includes consistent, cross-sectoral, and targeted support to women.

Workshop on “The outcomes of the technical assistance handbook for relevant criminal justice officials on promoting effective use of alternatives to imprisonment in terrorism-related offences”

UNODC/TPB organized a three-day workshop for Iraq on “The outcomes of the technical assistance handbook for relevant criminal justice officials on promoting effective use of alternatives to imprisonment in terrorism-related offences”, in Amman, Jordan from 27-29 November 2019. The workshop was organized within the framework of UNODC's project on “Promoting effective use of alternatives to imprisonment,” funded by the U.S. Government.

FACT-CHECK UNODC IN IRAQ

LEGISLATION

- 4 specialized legislative workshops
- 1 law adopted: Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Law
- 1 law pending parliamentary approval: the new CT law
- 2 laws in process: the Digital Evidence Law and the Chemical Materials of Dual Use Law.



CAPACITY BUILDING

- 34 capacity building activities
- 660 officers trained
- 10 terrorism-related themes covered
- 198 experts shared expertise
- 21 recommendation documents produced



REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- 7 specialized meetings
- 56 officers trained
- 8 mechanisms facilitating cooperation incorporated into the legislations
- 2 regional networks
- 8 study visits to strengthen cooperation
- 2 Partnership-Building missions to Baghdad and Basra



The workshop is one of the two pilot trainings which are organized to discuss the use and implementation of alternatives to imprisonment and non-custodial measures in terrorism cases and explore existing legislative and institutional mechanisms for the adoption and implementation of such measures, in compliance with national legislation and policies. The three-day workshop aimed at raising awareness and enhancing the capacity of Iraqi officials regarding the use and application of alternatives to imprisonment in terrorism related offences and responding to the challenges the prison system in Iraq is facing in managing the high numbers of terrorist cases and detainees since the defeat of ISIL/Dae'sh.



UN OCHA in Iraq

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Iraq contributes to principled and effective humanitarian response through coordination, advocacy, policy, information management, and humanitarian financing tools and services.

Iraq is a country in transition. The formal conclusion of major military operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in late 2017 paved the way for millions of displaced Iraqis to return home. But returns have slowed since 2018 as the country grapples with post-conflict realities. Intercommunal and societal tensions persist on multiple fronts, political upheavals and natural disasters risk exacerbating existing humanitarian needs, and the spectre of armed conflict and renewed displacement lingers.

At the end of 2019, 4.1 million Iraqis are in need of humanitarian assistance, of whom 1.77 million are in acute need as a result of the crisis

Although the humanitarian context in Iraq has transitioned into a post-conflict phase, vulnerable people continue to face immense challenges. At the end of 2019, 4.1 million Iraqis are in need of humanitarian assistance, of whom 1.77 million are in acute need as a result of the crisis. Of the 6 million people displaced during the 2014–2017 conflict against ISIL, approximately 1.5 million people remain internally displaced, 70 per cent of whom have been displaced for more than three years, making the prospect of protracted displacement a reality. Reasons for remaining in displacement include community tensions in areas of origin, damaged or destroyed housing, concerns about explosive remnants of war, perceived insecurity, lack of services—notably health care and education—and lack of livelihood opportunities. Without communal reconciliation, large-scale reconstruction and widespread economic rejuvenation – all of which are outside the humanitarian sphere – these numbers are likely to persist in 2020.

Although Iraq is currently in a post-conflict phase, there are unpredictable dynamics throughout the country which impact humanitarian programming. Asymmetric attacks by armed groups continue to be carried out along with small scale military operations, resulting in new displacement and impacting the IDP return rate. In tandem, political demonstrations being carried out across the country since October 2019 have impacted humanitarian operations in multiple ways, including access, authorizations, banking systems and government engagement.

Protection remained the overarching humanitarian priority for 2019. Multiple pressing protection concerns remain, including retaliation against people with perceived affiliations to extremist groups; ethno-sectarian violence; forced, premature and obstructed returns; a lack of vital civil documentation; mental health and psychosocial support for IDPs and returnees who require specialized support; high ex-



plusive ordnance contamination of land (in-cluding private houses); and housing, land and property issues.

Humanitarian partners continue to experience access challenges, primarily at governorate- and local-level, where agreed authorization letters are rejected, aid supplies are diverted, staff is intimidated, and access to affected people denied. OCHA

has supported humanitarian partners to manage these constraints, but the repeated need to address such constrictions interferes with the vital life-saving work of UN agencies and NGO partners.

The 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan aims to safeguard the physical and mental well-being of conflict-affected people by providing services to meet basic needs,

as well as addressing critical problems related to living standards by expanding access to services. Noting the centrality of protection in Iraq, humanitarian partners in 2020 will respond to key protection needs of affected communities in support of the transition to durable solutions in accordance with applicable legal and policy frameworks.



The 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan aims to safeguard the physical and mental well-being of conflict-affected people by providing services to meet basic needs



Year in review 2019

In 2019, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iraq continued to address migration and mobility-related aspects in Iraq, responding to the humanitarian, recovery and development and policy-related challenges facing the country. The organization's work includes preparedness and response programming; supporting durable solutions through facilitating returns and sustainable reintegration of returning IDPs; promoting the stabilization and social cohesion of communities; and supporting integrated border management, migration governance, and community policing alongside the Government. Established in 2003, IOM's Iraq mission now counts more than 1,500 staff members, with main offices in Baghdad, Erbil, Basra and Mosul. In cooperation

with the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), the mission provides support to all 18 governorates.

IOM Iraq is the co-lead for the CCCM Cluster; the sub-national Central/South Shelter-NFI Cluster; and the Returns Working Group (RWG). In 2019 IOM Iraq was invited by government counterparts and partners to chair the 8th Committee for International Partners' Coordination Platform for Security Sector Reform, focused on International Border Management (IBM). IOM was also chair of the UNCT Programme Management team and co-lead of the "Economy for All" Working Group as part of the UN Development Strategic Co-operation Framework (UNDSCF) development and planning.

IOM in Iraq

2019 Achievements

Preparedness and Response

IOM Iraq contributed to addressing humanitarian needs and reducing vulnerability, in co-ordination with Government authorities and Cluster partners.

CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT (CCCM)

The Camp Management team provided support to government and NGO actors in camps and informal settlements, and capacity building assistance to local CCCM actors. The team operated in 40 camps and 62 informal sites in Anbar, Baghdad, Ninewa, and Salah Al-Din, reaching around 100,860 individuals with their services and using Mobile Response Teams (MRT) where relevant. IOM supported improved living conditions and protection of families in camps and informal sites through infrastructure upgrades and risk reduction activities, camp management support to local authorities and NGOs, and camp management capacity building.

SHELTER, NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI) AND MULTI-PURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE (MPCA)

In 2019, IOM carried out a remarkable number of shelter interventions to support safe and dignified

living conditions; reaching 3,733 families (22,149 individuals) through in kind or cash shelter interventions. IOM also completed the rehabilitation of Category 2 War Damaged Houses in the main governorates of return — Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah Al-Din — reaching 2,094 families (12,199 individuals) including 300 families (1,499 individuals) supported by the local NGO Kurdistan Human Rights Watch, which completed the intervention in Salah Al-Din with funding from IOM. Activities include rehabilitation of damaged houses, low-cost houses, critical shelter upgrades, rental subsidies and sealing-off kits, and tent replacement and repair activities.

IOM provided NFI assistance to the most vulnerable families that were displaced or had recently returned to their communities of origin, using both in kind and cash modalities — including MPCA — depending on need and market availability. The overall objective of this programming is to ensure that basic needs are met, and where possible contribute towards durable solutions to displacement. During 2019, IOM carried out NFI interventions in 10 governorates (Anbar, Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Erbil, Kirkuk, Misan, Ninawa, Salah Al-Din, Sulaymaniyah). This included supporting 12,395 families with basic kits, 2,000 of whom received cash for NFI via the e-voucher mechanism in Ninawa, Kirkuk and Salah Al-Din. 3,183 families received hygiene NFI kits; 11,411 families received winter seasonal kits and 242 families received replacement items such as blankets. 753 households received cash for NFI, and 1,003 households received MPCA support.

HEALTH

IOM supported access to primary and secondary health-care services, supporting the Ministry of Health by providing over 173,641 primary health care consultations through five static clinics, two primary health care mobile medical teams (MMT), seven Tuberculosis MMTs and one ophthalmological MMT. 6,431 individuals were referred to secondary or tertiary health facilities; 1,152 patients were supported through emergency transportation assistance by ambulance; and 5,279 non-emergency patients supported with non-emergency transportation assistance. For incoming Syrian refugees, IOM supported medical check-ups at the reception facility to ensure that families were fit to travel on to the designated refugee camps. Additionally, 67,491 individuals were reached with health aware-

ness activities in nine governorates: Ninewa, Erbil, Salah al-Din, Anbar, Diyala, Sulymaniyah, Duhok, Kirkuk and Baghdad. IOM Iraq assisted 7,883 individuals through screenings for visual acuity, primary treatment and vision correction (by providing eyeglasses). IOM implemented the Global Fund for Aids, TB and Malaria programming alongside the Gol. Two Department of Health hospitals were supported with medical equipment and running costs, and all 19 main National Tuberculosis Program centres were supported with TB medication, lab equipment and capacity building. IOM/MMTs performed TB screenings for 17,300 individuals in 9 governorates: Ninewa, Erbil, Salah al-Din, Anbar, Diyala, Sulymaniyah, Duhok, Kirkuk and Baghdad.

COMMUNICATING WITH COMMUNITIES (CWC)

Through CwC initiatives, IOM promotes two-way communication and disseminates information for crisis-affected populations. In 2019, 3,784 IDPs participated in awareness raising sessions on different topics including the dangers of smoking, hygiene, floods, anti-fraud, an IDP call centre, cash for NFI, and suicide prevention; 44,371 awareness raising materials distributed were distributed. IOM collaborated with the Ministry of Health to produce an awareness-raising video about depression to mark World Mental Health Day.

TRANSPORTATION

IOM provided transportation services to IDPs and Syrian refugees, including inter-camp transportation for 850 IDP individuals in Kirkuk and Salah Al-Din; some needed to move due to camp closure and consolidation processes, and others travelled for family reunification as requested by the Government or camp management actors. Transportation from border checkpoints in Ninewa to camps in Duhok was provided for 4,004 refugee families (18,954 individuals).

Community Stabilization

IOM's Community Stabilization Unit (CSU) follows an integrated approach to strengthen social cohesion between communities and enhance the resilience of people affected by conflict and displacement. IOM supported IDPs, returnees and host communities in regaining a sense of safety and human security, and increasing self-confidence and commu-

nity trust.

In 2019, interventions included specialized psychiatric and clinical psychological counselling; advocacy, coordination and awareness raising on mental health issues; structured community-based activities, capacity building on MHPSS and Social Cohesion for community focal points, government employees, NGO and civil society members; and community events and research. In 2019, IOM operated in 15 community centres and 18 venues (including youth and sport centres in IDP camps, informal settlements and urban settings) across eight governorates: Baghdad, Duhok, Diyala, Erbil, Karbala, Kirkuk, Najaf, and Ninewa. IOM provided 116,698 services to 15,955 new beneficiaries (72,534 beneficiaries in total) including non-competitive sports; basic emotional and psychosocial support and individual/group counselling; specialised MHPSS consultations and referrals to specialised MHPSS services; vocational training services and income generation services/livelihoods grants. Community members were reached with mediation and negotiation training, caregivers' courses, and leadership and personal development trainings.

With the long-term goal of handing over services to local actors, IOM supported local Civil Society Organisation (CSOs) — 10 in Ninewa, seven in Duhok, and three in Najaf — with trainings, small grants, and on-site guidance and coaching. IOM also trained 45 CSOs on inclusion and access for persons with disabilities in humanitarian programming. In support of ongoing and future stabilization programming, IOM carried out five rapid conflict assessments and three research projects in coordination with four Iraqi Universities.

PROTECTION

IOM continued providing protection assistance to conflict-affected populations, vulnerable migrants and trafficking victims. This included supporting 15 vulnerable migrants and 100 trafficking victims, including voluntarily repatriating 63 trafficking victims to their country of origin; 294 beneficiaries with internal and external referrals to address protection concerns identified by emergency field staff; 1,337 beneficiaries with awareness sessions in Haj Ali and Hasan Sham camps (Ninewa) as well as Sharya Camp (Duhok); providing 103 beneficiaries (37 males, 66 females) with Emergency Cash Assistance, 650 female beneficiaries with dignity kits and 14,500 female beneficia-



ries with sanitary pads in Haj Ali camp. IOM also trained 674 staff members, contractors and implementing partners on PSEA, protection mainstreaming and GBV.

Migration Management

IOM's Migration Management Unit (MMU) supports the GoI and KRG in managing safe, orderly and regular migration through interventions related to community policing, Immigration and Border Management (IBM), Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR), and movement and resettlement.

COMMUNITY POLICING

IOM Iraq continued to scale up Community Policing in Iraq to contribute to peace and security. As part of the approach, in 2019 IOM has worked with communities and local police forces to establish 20 new Community Policing Forums (CPFs), bringing the total number of active CPFs established by IOM in Iraq to 94. CPFs are open and inclusive platforms where security issues affecting communities can be discussed. Problems are resolved by identifying the relevant entity to refer cases and issues, including law enforcement agents (police and judiciary), CSOs, governmental bodies or the communities. In 2019, IOM, in partnership with the Ministry of Interior, opened the Strategic Centre for Community Policing in Baghdad. IOM also trained 413 law enforcement actors, 157 community members, 14 members of CSO and 14 judiciary representatives on Community Policing and Counter-Trafficking. CSOs were involved in the operation of four Housing and Land Properties (HLP) assistance centres

in return areas. Furthermore, 7 CP Offices were built/rehabilitated and equipped in Baghdad, Duhok, Ninewa, Anbar, Diyala and Basra to make police stations more accessible and community friendly. Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) for CPFs, previously endorsed by the MOI, were revised and updated to reflect additional training modules and updates to CPF Terms of Reference.

MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

IOM is working with GoI ministries to develop a National Migration Strategy, using an evidence-based, whole-of-government-approach. In 2019, IOM supported the establishment of a government-led Technical Working Group. The TWG/IOM completed the first Migration Profile for Iraq and the Migration Governance Indicator assessment that measured national capacities across 90 indicators in six thematic areas, both of which establish an evidence base to support policy development. In 2020, IOM will support the TWG in drafting the national strategy based on these research outputs.

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER MANAGEMENT

IOM has a strong relationship with the MOI and Border Points Commission, to support capacity building of the State's migration and border management officers who facilitate movements at Iraq's borders. In 2019, IOM contributed to strengthening the border management capacities of the Ministry of Interior at the Syrian border between Rabia Border Point in Ninewa Governorate and Al Qa'em Border Point in Anbar Governorate. The refurbished Rabia Border Point

became fully operational, with personnel capable of conducting both routine border operations and crisis management. Trainings were conducted for 48 border officials and government ministry staff to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of border management processes. IOM is now providing mobile border management equipment and software (through the IOM MIDAS system) to effectively monitor cross-border movements, detect and intercept potential irregular movements and process individuals crossing the border. In 2020 IOM will build a border reception centre at Fao informal border crossing point and train border officials to support safe, orderly and dignified migration.

MOVEMENT AND ASSISTED MIGRATION

In coordination with the GoI and the KRG, IOM's AVRR programming assisted 1,232 people with their returns to Iraq through reception assistance; 1,453 returnees through cash assistance including cash upon arrival and reintegration cash grants; and 909 beneficiaries through provision of or referrals for vocational training, job placement, business start-up and expansion support, and/or housing support.

IOM provided movement assistance through resettlement services to 4,073 Iraqis (1,926 males, 2,147 females) and refugees (2,767 adults, 1,193 children, 113 infants), in collaboration with the governments in receiving countries, Iraqi authorities and UNHCR. The Family Assistance Project (FAP) supported 23,733 individuals (11,288 families) with family



reunification in Germany, in collaboration with the Iraqi and German Governments. 5,219 people completed applications at the FAP centre in Erbil which were submitted to the German consulate, with remote assistance provided to over 51,321 persons via phone calls and emails. This is in addition to the 125 temporary entry visas to KRI sponsored by FAP for Syrian applicants, and the 146 families who received assistance to send their family registration files to be legalized by the German Embassy in Beirut.

Returns and Recovery Programming

IOM's returns and recovery programming supports IDPs, returnees, and host communities using a holistic approach including rehabilitation or reconstruction of community infrastructure, economic recovery and livelihood assistance, and strengthening the capacity of civil society and Government authorities to effectively engage communities and stakeholders.

LIVELIHOOD AND JOB CREATION

With the aim of private sector revitalisation and long-term job creation, IOM supported 247 SMEs in 10 governorates by providing them with EDF (Enterprise Development Fund) grants to start or expand their businesses, thus creating 1,354 new jobs. In total, the 267 SMEs were supported with USD 4,346,887 USD. Medium and short-term employment was sup-

ported through individual livelihoods assistance to 7,999 beneficiaries (6,485 male and 1,514 female) to enhance employability and create jobs through micro-enterprises. Of those, 4,204 have received a business support package to start their own business, and 625 participated in vocational trainings. IOM also supported short-term employment by providing Cash for Work (CfW) to 3,170 beneficiaries.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

IOM rehabilitated damaged infrastructure instrumental to the provision of basic services or socioeconomic recovery. In 2019, IOM completed 93 infrastructure projects in 15 governorates such as water plants, schools, markets, hospitals, irrigation and agricultural infrastructure and electricity infrastructure.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES (CRCs)

As people return to their areas of origin, partners alongside the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre are providing information and resources to support sustainable solutions to displacement through CRCs that link humanitarian and recovery activities. IOM operated six CRCs in 2019 in Ninewa, Anbar, Salah Al-Din, and Diyala, serving 22,022 beneficiaries by providing 902 services to develop returnees' personal, professional, and psychological skills to ease their return and facilitate their integration. IOM also acted as co-lead of the CRC Steering Committee.

RETURNS WORKING GROUP

In 2019 IOM, in partnership with the Gol, initiated a strategy to facilitate safe, dignified and sustainable returns for IDPs in situations of protracted displacement, while supporting durable solutions. Eight help desks in Anbar and Ninewa governorates enabled 1,811 households to register and receive information on returns, plan visits to their areas of origin and receive services. These operational efforts are coupled with increased advocacy and research produced and disseminated by the research team to NGOs, UN Agencies, and governmental authorities.

DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)

The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) is IOM's information management system used to monitor population displacement during crises. The DTM collected and analysed key information on IDPs and returnees and disseminated information and research to facilitate understanding of the evolving needs. In 2019, DTM produced 6 DTM Master List reports and 12 associated datasets (concerning IDPs and returnees) across 18 governorates, 104 districts and 3,041 locations in Iraq. DTM launched an Emergency Tracking tool to monitor the population fleeing the conflict in Syria and crossing into Iraq from October to January 2019. As part of a regional DTM project, IOM also developed five flow monitoring points at Shalamjah in Basra; Fishkhabour and Ibrahim Al-Khalil in Dahuk; Bashmakh in Sulaymaniyah; Wassit Terminal in Wassit to capture migration movements across the region.



The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is the UN specialized agency with the mandate of promoting inclusive and sustainable industrial development. UNIDO and the Republic of Iraq signed a Basic Cooperation Agreement in 2017 in order to strengthen their existing cooperation. In 2019 UNIDO continued implementing its mandate in Iraq across the 3 dimensions of sustainable development: the social dimension (creating shared prosperity); the economic dimension (advancing economic competitiveness); and the environmental (safeguarding the environment). In this vein, UNIDO's activities in the country emphasized the Organization's commitment to the achievement of the 2030

More than 450 Young Iraqi's and Refugees, including 43% of women and an average age of 25 years old, benefited from training using modern and best-of-art technologies in various trades

Agenda and UN OCHA's Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq.

Within the social dimension, defined as creating shared prosperity, UNIDO implemented technical activities focused on enhancing youth employability, especially among refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities; supporting the establishment and expansion of SMEs; and creating income opportunities across all social groups. UNIDO particularly supported governmental institutions in providing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). In Kurdistan Region of Iraq, two projects, funded by the Government of Austria, were successfully completed by Nov 2019. Those projects significantly contributed to strengthen capacities of governmental institutions – Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) and Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) – in addressing Technical & Vocational Education and Training and Economic recovery for communities affected by the recent conflict in the region, which benefited to skills development across all social groups (Host Communities, Internally Displaced Persons, Refugees).

As such, during 2019, more than 450 Young Iraqi's and Refugees, including 43% of women and an average age of 25 years old, benefited from training using modern and best-of-art technologies in various

trades such as mechanics, truck maintenance, CCTV Installation, among others, in line with market demand of skilled workforce.

This project builds on the long partnership between UNIDO and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Kurdistan Region of Iraq, which started in 2011 with the establishment of the Swedish Academy for Training in Erbil. The Director General of MOLSA "Until now we have very successful story with UNIDO in developing the vocational education in Kurdistan and particularly in expanding of Swedish Academy for Training. Our doors remain always open to UNIDO for future partnerships as we believe that UNIDO have excellent experience, and a lot of experts that can helping us to develop more."

2019 has viewed the Inauguration of the Harsham Agricultural Training Center in Erbil, implemented by UNIDO in partnership with Ministry of Agriculture. Along the year 2019, this architectural innovative project, integrated within its environment, hosted several training sessions, in greenhouse farming, as well as small-scale agro-processing, beekeeping and fruit-processing. This initiative benefited to more than 120 IDP's living in the Harsham Camp, mainly rural communities from newly liberated governorates, by providing necessary skills and toolkits to impulse

their journey in diversifying farming activities and generate incomes along the agro-food value chain.

At the inauguration of the centre, Begard Talabani, Kurdistan of Iraq's Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, said, "UNIDO has been involved heavily in the assistance to IDPs. This is really great work. I hope that UNIDO and other UN agencies will continue to assist us to overcome this crisis and I would like to request UNIDO to further assist in the development of the agricultural sector in the region. This assistance will eventually result in a stronger infrastructure in the Kurdistan Region and the country as a whole."

A third UNIDO project completed in Iraq in 2019 was focused on enhancing youth employability among refugees, IDPs, and host communities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Along its life cycle, this project the project has provided soft and life skills training coupled with upgraded competency-based technical training – including agro-food processing activities – in selected industrial, trade and agricultural secondary schools, and arranged for apprenticeship and on-the-job training for employers. In addition, the project has promoted youth-led business start-ups and social enterprises by organizing business idea competitions in different thematic areas, including: information technology, waste management, agribusiness, creative industries, or renewable energy.

Another project implemented under the referred thematic priority in 2019 was the one focused on promoting social stabilization and accelerating economic recovery in Nineveh Governorate. This project addresses the need to revive the local economy and generate local employment opportunities for vulnerable people and communities. Thereby, enabling a sustainable resettlement of returnees, long-term economic development and political reconciliation. In parallel the project addressing the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus, one of the core priorities of the United Nations at system-wide level. With the support provided by the Government of Japan, UNIDO's intervention is actively supporting restoration of educational capacities by means of equipments and technology supply, capacity-building of National Staff of Ministry of Higher Education and Research, which leads to creating a didactic and learning environment that will benefit to generation of young Iraqi's student onward. This project, initiated during the year 2019 and to be continued in 2020, is oriented towards industrial

fields, in reviving hydraulic engineering and mechatronics Departments, playing a key role in educating and empowering young Iraqi's for professional career in industrial sectors and contribute to the acceleration of economic recovery and social stabilization in Iraq and the region. In 2019 this UNIDO project continued revitalizing micro- and small enterprises that were operational before the conflict, as well as assisting the establishment of new household income-generating activities for returnees.

At the institutional level, under this project funded by Government of Japan, UNIDO is providing restoration efforts to the University of Mosul, which has been tremendously affected by the presence of ISIL fighters during the recent conflict. Most of the facilities and assets have been looted or destroyed. UNIDO's intervention is actively supporting restoration of educational capacities by means of equipments and technology supply, capacity-building of National Staff of Ministry of Higher Education and Research, which leads to creating a didactic and learning environment that will benefit to generation of young Iraqi's student onward. This project, initiated during the year 2019 and to be continued in 2020, is oriented towards industrial fields, in reviving hydraulic engineering and mechatronics Departments, playing a key role in educating and empowering young Iraqi's for professional career in industrial sectors and contribute to the acceleration of economic recovery and social stabilization in Iraq and the region.

Within the thematic priority covering the economic dimension of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, advancing economic competitiveness, in 2019 UNIDO designed and approved the

"Investment Promotion for Iraq–Phase II". This project, whose implementation will start by the second quarter of 2020, is expected to enhance investments to Iraq during its reconstruction phase in order to expand the share of private sector contribution to the country's GDP, therefore creating employment opportunities for poverty alleviation and accelerating economic growth of Iraq.

UNIDO also contributes substantially and strategically at system-wide level through its participation and contribution to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Iraq. In 2019 UNIDO contributed particularly to the elaboration of the Common Country Analysis (CCA) which is paving the way to the subsequent United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) which, within the new development architecture designed through the UN reform led by the Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, and the general supervision of the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina Mohamed, replaces the previous UNDAF cycles. UNIDO provided substantial inputs particularly in those areas related to its mandate of promoting inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Additionally, and within the context of the activities undertaken by the UNCT in Iraq, in 2019 UNIDO actively participated in the Priority Working Groups (PWGs) established for UN agencies to implement the strategic and programmatic framework designed through the UNSDCF, formerly known as UNDAF. IN this vein UNIDO proactively contributed to PWG-2 (Growing the Economy for All), PWG-4 (Promoting Natural Resource and Disaster Risk Management, and Climate Change). IN years to come UNIDO will remain committed to support Iraq contribution in accordance to its mandate that no one is left behind development progress.





ILO Activities in Iraq in 2019

The Programme in Iraq will focus on three priorities: ensuring that private sector development supports the creation of new jobs, extending and strengthening social protection, and addressing child labour, and improving social dialogue in order to promote rights at work

Iraq has been a member of the ILO since 1932 and has ratified 68 ILO Conventions, including all eight fundamental Conventions.

Since 2004, the ILO and Iraq's government and workers' and employers' organizations have worked closely as part of the post-war reconstruction effort to bolster Decent Work and develop the labour market across different areas of the country.

Recent achievements include the adoption of a new Labour Law to improve Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; The ratification of ILO Convention 87 on the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise and ILO Convention 187 on the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health. A roadmap for public employment services in Iraqi Kurdistan has also been designed.

In 2019, the ILO consolidated their presence in Iraq by opening one country of-

ice in Baghdad and one project office in Erbil. These two offices will facilitate support to the government of Iraq and to workers' and employers' organizations, and coordinate collaboration with UN agencies and other development and humanitarian actors.

In December 2019, Iraq and the ILO signed the first Iraq Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP). The Programme, which runs from 2019 to 2023, supports national initiatives to promote decent work and strengthen Iraq's capacity to mainstream decent work in social and economic policies. It will be implemented through close partnerships between the ILO, the Government, and employers' and workers' representatives in the country.

The agreement was signed on 5 December by ILO Regional Director for Arab States Ruba Jaradat, Director General of Labour and Vocational Training Department of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Raed Bahedh, President of the

Iraqi Federation of Industries Ali Sabeeh al-Saadi, and President of the General Federation of Trade Unions in Iraq Satar Denbous on behalf of the Trade Union organizations.

Also in attendance at the ceremony in Baghdad were the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Bassem al-Rubaie, Minister of Planning Nouri al-Dulaimi, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mo-hamad Alhakim, as well as heads of government departments and agencies, employer representatives, trade unionists, ambassadors and representatives of UN agencies.

DWCPs are the ILO's main vehicle to promote decent work as a key component in national development strategies. Under the programme, the ILO will work with government, worker and employer organizations in Iraq to support national initiatives on employment promotion, rights at work, social dialogue and social protection.

Based on extensive consultations between the ILO and Iraqi constituents, the Programme in Iraq will focus on three priorities: ensuring that private sector development supports the creation of new jobs, extending and strengthening social protection, and addressing child labour, and improving social dialogue in order to promote rights at work.





UN WOMEN in Iraq



**Q&A with
Country Representative**

MS. DINA ZORBA

How do you see the situation of women in Iraq?

Iraq has crossed a long distance in the field of gender equality and women’s empowerment. We can take education, for example. There are encouraging figures on the number of girls going to primary school, which is almost equal to that of boys. For every 112 boys there are 107 girls going to school. Unfortunately, this percentage drops in later stages of education, with the percentage of girls joining intermediary education reaching 70 percent, compared to 97 percent for boys. At university level, the percentage drops drastically to 20.2 percent. We know that the government is working to reduce this gap and we hope that the im-

proving security situation will help boost these figures.

On the political level, we have a 25 percent quota of Parliament seats reserved to women under the 2005 Constitution which is currently undergoing a revision process. This quota enabled women to win 84 seats in the 329-strong Parliament in the 2018 legislative polls. But this percentage did not reflect on other political and public spheres, such as the government, as over the past several years there were no women appointed as ministers. In particular, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs was abolished since 2015, and ever since then there was an absence of a central authority, or a women’s machinery, to follow up on women’s affairs. As I

“ UN Women is collaborating with all concerned parties in gov’t, civil society to achieve common goals ”

said, there are positive elements that Iraq can build on, and there are shortcomings that need to be addressed to ensure that Iraqi women assume the status that they deserve in order to play a key role in serving their country. Iraqi women have great capabilities and potential that can be effectively utilised to push forward the development process and the economic recovery of the country.

This great potential is not being properly used as gender inequality continues to hold women back and deprive them of basic rights and opportunities. Gender inequality is hampering social progress. This is why women's and girls' empowerment is essential to expand economic growth and promote social development. People have to know the benefits of empowerment, not only for women and girls as well as their families, but for the society as a whole. The full participation of women in the labour force and other sectors plays a key role in boosting national growth rates. That is why we focus our work mainly on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

How does UN Women work to achieve its objectives in Iraq?

The change that we aspire to achieve requires the cooperation of all parties concerned. We are not working alone. We are working with our Iraqi partners in the government as well as in the civil society, and we are also joining hands with international community partners, including sister UN organizations, to help Iraq in various fields. We will continue to adopt joint collaborative actions and partnerships with stakeholders with the aim of achieving real results on the ground.

UN Women works in partnership with the three branches of power in the country – the executive, legislative and judiciary – and civil society groups at the national as well as at the local levels to effect real change. UN Women is doing so in partnership with the UN Country Team as well as international and multi- and bilaterals. UN Women also tries to leverage its mandate and role to engage the private sector through its work on women's economic empowerment.

To be able to achieve results, we have memoranda of understanding signed with key strategic actors that include the President's Office, the Prime Minister's Office and Parliament, and have partner-

ships established with key ministries that include the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Planning, Interior, Finance, and Education. UN Women aims to capitalise on these memos and partnerships to push forward the establishment of a high-profile, efficient women machinery agenda and to help modify all relevant legislation related to women.

How did UN Women respond to popular protests which started in Iraq in October 2019 and is there anything UN Women can do to help?

UN Women's efforts are mainly focused on advocating for the empowerment of women and gender equality, in addition to its role in responding, along with sister UN organisations, to the dire humanitarian situation in Iraq. We have been working with Iraqi partners on many projects and activities in these fields. After the start of the protests, we engaged with the demonstrators to be familiarised with their demands. UN Women also conducted a study on women's participation in the Iraqi protests to identify the motivation that prompted women and girls to actively take part in the protest movement.

We work in close cooperation and coordination with the Special Representative of the Secretary General and Head of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert and UN Deputy Special Representative/Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq Ms. Marta Ruedas who are also closely monitoring the situation.

The aim of these contacts and of our follow-up is to stand on the needs of the Iraqi people as a whole, and women and girls in particular.

In the same vein, we have been also involved in the constitutional revision process.

Throughout the constitution review process, UN women offered its advice on mainstreaming gender within the Constitution, to guarantee women's rights. UN Women's strategic support aims to ensure that the Constitution reform will be beneficial to women in a sustainable manner for many years to come. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which is a major reference point for our work, refers to constitutions as one important mechanism through which states can take action to guarantee equal

rights for women and specifies the need for governments to "provide constitutional guarantees and/or enact appropriate legislation to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex for all women and girls of all ages and assure women of all ages equal rights and their full enjoyment".

We hope that the new amended constitution would take these concerns into consideration to equally serve the all the Iraqi people regardless of their sex.

You focus a lot of your efforts on gender equality. Why is it so important in your and the UN system's work?

To start with, gender inequality is an injustice. We cannot accept injustices as they are and we have to address them, as individuals, societies, governments and as an international community. We also have to emphasize the advantages of gender equality and the empowerment of women which constitute Goal number 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, which is a group of goals that were set by the UN General Assembly in 2015 to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all of the world's countries, including Iraq, by the year 2030.

Advancing gender equality is critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting health, education, protection and the well-being of girls and boys. The Iraqi economy and the society as a whole stand to benefit from providing women and girls with equal access to education, healthcare, decent work and representation in political and economic decision-making processes. We keep in mind that empowering women requires tackling structural issues that include unfair social norms and attitudes as well as working to introduce progressive legal frameworks that promote equality between men and women.

Thus, we also focus our efforts on ending gender-based discrimination and violence. UN Women supports the enactment of new legislation aiming to eradicate harmful traditional practices and any efforts to end discrimination. This is being done in strong partnership with civil society organisations, including women's organisations, utilising our vast network of gender advocates who are strong believers in the importance of equality and empowerment.



الأمم المتحدة - العراق
United Nations Iraq