

UNAMI Herald

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September—October 2019



UNAMI urges Iraqi authorities to prevent violence, enable peaceful demonstrations in future



Baghdad, 22 October 2019 – A special report, prepared by the Human Rights Office of UNAMI, outlines key human rights concerns regarding the demonstrations that occurred in Iraq from 1 to 9 October 2019. UNAMI’s interim findings indicate that serious human rights violations and abuses have been committed during the recent protests. The report contains a set of recommendations and urges Iraqi authorities to take concrete steps to ensure accountability, to prevent human rights violations and to enable peaceful demonstrations in the future.

The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, said: “Iraq has come a long way, it is

essential not to further undermine its many achievements. A climate of intimidation and fear is unworthy of Iraq’s potential as an open and democratic society. The UNAMI report highlights shortcomings and measures to prevent them in the future.”

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert took note of today’s release of the Investigative Committee’s report: “This is an important step towards accountability, and I urge that further steps be taken to prosecute and punish those responsible. This is of great importance as investigations, delivering accountability for perpetrators and redress for victims, also serve as critical tools of prevention and protection.”

UNAMI’s preliminary findings in-

clude credible reports of violations of the right to life, including deliberate killings of unarmed protesters and the excessive use of force by units deployed to manage the demonstrations. The report also highlights concerns regarding the widespread use of repressive measures to limit publicly available information on the demonstrations as well as allegations of arbitrary arrests, threats and harassment. It furthermore calls on all demonstrators to exercise their right to assembly in peaceful and non-violent ways, in keeping with the law.

“The loss of life, serious injuries and harm resulting from the violence during the demonstrations was both tragic and preventable,” said Chief of UNAMI Human Rights Office, Danielle Bell. “Concrete steps to enable peaceful assemblies and protect those participating should be a priority.”

Full report in English is available at http://www.uniraq.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&task=download&id=3478_d12a58b6fdf006e42f911576f52d4c49&lang=en



HUMAN RIGHTS
SPECIAL REPORT

Demonstrations in Iraq

1-9 October 2019

Baghdad, Iraq



In this edition ...

“Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshops held in Ninawa and Duhok

Mosul/Duhok, 03 September 2019 - Under the theme “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability”, two workshops were organised concurrently in Ninawa and Duhok Governorates 29-31 August 2019. The workshops brought to nine the number of such events taking place across Iraq throughout 2019 organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister’s Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association...

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Security Council unanimously extends mandate of UNITAD

Baghdad, 20 September 2019 – The Security Council remains united and resolute in its support of the work carried out by the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh/ISIL (UNITAD), as members today unanimously voted to extend its mandate for another year, until 21 September 2020.

At the request of the Government of Iraq, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da’esh/ISIL ...

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UNAMI welcomes Iraqi repatriation of Kuwaiti property

Baghdad, 29 August 2019 - The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq warmly welcomed the return by the Government of Iraq today of a large consignment of Kuwaiti property, removed from Kuwait during the conflict of 1990-91. The repatriation of the property marks another important step towards the full normalisation of relations between the two countries.

In a ceremony at the Diplomatic Institute in Kuwait City, a total of 42,000 books and materials belonging to the Kuwaiti Central Library and Kuwait University were handed back to the Kuwaiti Government... *More on page 17*

UNESCO supports the Minister of Interior of Iraq in providing protection for media institutions in Iraq

Baghdad, 6 October 2019 - Following the attack on several media outlets in Baghdad on Saturday 5 October 2019, the UNESCO Office for Iraq was invited by the country’s Minister of Interior, H.E. Yassin al-Yasiri, to attend a special meeting with Iraqi media managers and the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate.

During the meeting, the Minister provided information on the dynamics of the attacks on media newsrooms and on other attacks against journalists and media professionals covering the recent demonstrations... *More on page 27*

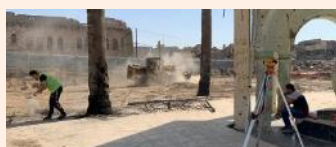
Iraq reconfirms commitment to achieve SDG 5 and the empowerment of women

Baghdad, 16 September 2019 – Under the patronage of His Excellency the Prime Minister Mr. Adel Abdul Mahdi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in Cooperation with The Ministry of Planning (MoP), hosted a conference on Iraqi Women’s Vision on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. The conference aimed to shape the vision of Iraqi women on the SDGs and 2030 Agenda and discuss their role and current issues... *More on page 20.*



UNESCO begins onsite works in the Al Nouri Mosque complex

Mosul, 13 October 2019 - UNESCO begins onsite works in the Al Nouri Mosque complex, including clearing the rubble and UXOs, stabilization of the Al-Hadba Minaret and Mosque and construction of a warehouse. The Governor of Nineveh, Mansour Al-Mareed, announced the commencement of the reconstruction of Al-Nouri Mosque in the old city of Mosul, under the supervision of UNESCO and Nineveh Governate. *More on page 68*



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

UN expresses concern after violent protests in Iraq, urges calm and restraint

Baghdad, 2 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, expresses grave concern over the violence that accompanied some of the demonstrations in Baghdad and other gover-

norates. She calls for calm and deeply regrets the casualties among both the protesters and security forces.

The Special Representative reaffirms the right to protest: "Every individual has the right to speak freely, in keeping with the law." Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert

urges the authorities to exercise restraint in their handling of the protests to ensure the safety of peaceful protesters while upholding law and order and protecting the people, public and private property.

UN Special Representative meets protesters, calls for calm and stresses the importance of a direct dialogue

Baghdad, 2 October 2019 - In line with UNAMI's mandate to advise and support, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with a number of protesters in Baghdad tonight. The Special Representative reiterated her call for calm and emphasized the importance of a direct dialogue between the people on the streets and Iraq's leadership. The protesters are demanding economic

reforms, jobs, reliable public services, accountability, prudent and impartial governance, and an end to corruption. "These are legitimate and longstanding demands. A direct dialogue, to discuss ways forward and to bring about immediate and tangible results, is of great importance."

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert urged the authorities to exercise maximum restraint in the handling of the protests and to give peaceful protesters space to freely

speak their minds, in keeping with the law. "The ability to preserve the right to protest is a sign of political and democratic maturity. Moreover, the use of force only fuels the anger, de-escalation is urgently needed" she said, warning against the infiltration of these demonstrations by parties with political and/or other agendas undermining the main cause of the protesters.

UN Special Representative welcomes PM Abdul-Mahdi's address: Dialogue must pave the way to understanding, reconciliation and progress

Baghdad, 4 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, welcomed last night's address of Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi emphasizing the need for unity, dialogue and action.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert: "Iraqis have overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges in the past. Their resolve and spirit of unity triumphed in the fight against Da'esh, a brutal enemy that threatened the country's very existence. If Iraqis are to rebuild a prosperous, inclusive and resilient country - a nation whose sovereignty is strong enough to resist entities that actively seek to hinder, delay or undermine Iraq's stability - this same unity must continue to prevail. There is an opportunity to move forward. The interests of

the country must be prioritised above all else. Its people and its forces must join hands to defend hard-won victories. Dialogue must pave the way to understanding, reconciliation and progress."

"The longstanding demands are legitimate, and immediate, tangible results are of great importance to revive public trust. At the same time, one cannot expect quick fixes or miracles in dealing with the legacy of the past and the many challenges of the present. Moreover, a government cannot go it alone: it is a joint responsibility. Iraq's daunting challenges did not arise overnight, nor are they solely the product of Iraqi actions. The harsh reality is that it takes time to deliver. Iraqis must press ahead, in unity, and with an engaged United Nations at their side."



The Secretary-General is closely following developments in Iraq

New York, 04 October 2019 - "The Secretary-General is closely following developments in Iraq. He calls for dialogue between the Government and the demonstrators as an immediate step

towards de-escalation and reiterates that freedom of expression and peaceful assembly are fundamental rights that must be respected. The Secretary-General is deeply saddened by the loss

of life during the recent protests and appeals to all actors to exercise utmost restraint and refrain from violence," Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General.



Deeply saddened by the senseless loss of life. Five days of reported deaths and injuries: this must stop. I call on all parties to pause and reflect. Those responsible for violence should be held to account. Let the spirit of unity prevail across #Iraq

7:39 PM · Oct 5, 2019 ·

91 Retweets 220 Likes

Baghdad, 5 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, tweeted: Deeply saddened by the senseless loss of life. Five days of reported deaths and injuries: this must stop. I call on all parties to pause and reflect. Those responsible for violence should be held to account. Let the spirit of unity prevail across #Iraq



Condemn ongoing violence, as the number of dead and injured continues to rise. Shocked at vandalism/intimidation by masked gunmen of some TV studios. Entirely unacceptable. Government efforts required to protect journalists. Free media is the best safeguard of a strong democracy.

10:12 PM · Oct 6, 2019 ·

Baghdad, 6 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, tweeted: Condemn ongoing violence, as the number of dead and injured continues to rise. Shocked at vandalism/intimidation by masked gunmen of some TV studios. Entirely unacceptable. Government efforts required to protect journalists. Free media is the best safeguard of a strong democracy.

UN Iraq Special Representative: “Armed entities threatening Iraq’s stability cannot be tolerated, dialogue in the interest of all”

Baghdad, 26 October 2019 – Responding to the latest wave of protests, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, deeply regrets and condemns the further loss of life and injuries, and strongly denounces the destruction of public and private property. She also expresses grave concerns about armed entities seeking to hinder Iraq’s stability and unity, undermining the people’s right to peaceful assembly and their legitimate demands. “The protection of human life always comes first. Armed entities sabotaging the peaceful demonstrations, eroding the Government’s credibility and ability to act, cannot be tolerated. Iraq has come a long way and cannot afford to slide back into a new cycle of

violence.” It is tragic and unsettling to witness the return of violence, deaths and injuries. Social media restrictions remained in place, while internet access was intermittent. Yet we also recognize and welcome that, unlike in early October, security forces have assisted injured demonstrators and ensured the free movement of medical units. “All parties need to redouble their efforts on the ground to not only prevent provocations and unnecessary confrontations, but also to collectively stand against armed spoilers. Additionally, while the report of the Investigation Committee is a welcome step in the right direction, the people’s continued calls for accountability should be addressed at the right level - without delay.”

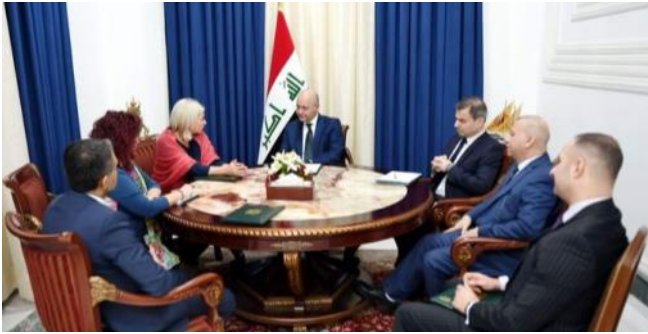
The Special Representative reiterates that implementing the many measures, announced by the Government in recent weeks, will take time. A constructive dialogue on the way forward is in the interest of all. The United Nations stand ready to assist, including by supporting the Iraqi authorities in their efforts to address legitimate demands for change: accountability and transparency, an end to corruption, improved public services, strengthened governance, and an environment that is conducive to growth and employment. “I also call upon all (political) leaders to set an example through action. Calls for an end to corruption, for instance, should be accompanied by the closure of the so-called economic committees of their parties or movements.”



Baghdad, 26 October 2019 – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met in Baghdad today with parliament Speaker, Mr. Mohammed Al-Halbousi. They discussed the latest security developments in light of the ongoing demonstrations in Iraq. They stressed the need to address the legitimate demands of the protesters. Photo courtesy of CoR.



Baghdad, 27 October 2019 – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today by the Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Adel Abdel-Mahdi. They discussed the ongoing protests, stressing the need to protect the peaceful nature of the demonstrations; efforts to implement government’s reform package and how the UN can support in this regard. Photo courtesy of the Prime Minister’s Office.



Baghdad, 27 October 2019 – The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today by the President of the Republic of Iraq, Mr. Barham Salih. Discussions centered on the ongoing protests, the electoral processes and a national dialogue for political reforms.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the President of the Republic.



Baghdad, 27 October 2019 . The head of the Supreme Judicial Council, Judge Fa'iq al-Zaydan, received today UN SRSG for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert. They discussed the latest developments of the ongoing demonstrations as well as the Government's and the Judiciary's efforts to combat corruption.

Photo courtesy of the SJC.

UN Iraq Representative condemns continued violence, stresses national dialogue to end 'vicious cycle'

Baghdad, 29 October 2019 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, condemns in the strongest terms the rising number of deaths and injuries during the demonstrations engulfing many parts of Iraq.

The recent developments across many parts of Iraq, in particular in Karbala last night, are most alarming. Witness reports indicate that live fire was used against demonstrators, causing high numbers of casualties.

"Violence is never the answer, the protection of life is the overriding impera-

tive," the Special Representative said. "A national dialogue is urgently needed to find prompt, meaningful responses. This vicious cycle of violence must end." The UN stands with the Iraqi people and is ready to assist in this dialogue, Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert said.

UN Iraq Special Representative visits Tahrir Square, meets with demonstrators

Baghdad, 30 October 2019 - In our continuous efforts to promote dialogue between protesters and the government, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Tahrir Square to engage with the people out there.

While exchanging views and discussing possible ways to address the legitimate demands of peaceful demonstrators, SRSG Hennis-Plasschaert reiterated that no government could comprehensively tackle the legacy of the past and the present challenges in just one year in office.

SRSG Hennis-Plasschaert called for a national dialogue to identify prompt, meaningful responses, to break the vicious cycle of violence, and to unite against the perils of division and inaction. Standing together, Iraqis can find the common ground needed to shape a better future for all.



DSRSG Walpole meets with MPs who are staging a sit-in in the Council of Representatives

Baghdad, 30 October 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Alice Walpole, met today with the First Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Mr. Hassan Al-Kaabi, and members of the Sai'roun bloc and other MPs who are staging a sit-in in the Council.

They exchanged views on parliament's role in resolving the current political crisis. DSRSG Walpole stressed the right to peaceful demonstrations and the urgent need to address the demands of the demonstrators. She reiterated the United Nations' call for national dialogue.



Iraq at a crossroads: UN urges national dialogue

Baghdad, 31 October 2019 - Since demonstrations swept across many parts of Iraq in early October, the United Nations has engaged with a wide range of Iraqis in the search for solutions. From day one, we have consistently called for the protection of peaceful protestors and the need to address their legitimate demands. We continue to condemn in the strongest terms the loss of life, the many injuries and the destruction of property. We are stressing the urgency of the situation at every turn.

After visiting the demonstrators, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, observed: "On the streets I witnessed women, men, the young and the elderly, united under the Iraqi flag in their love for their country. Democracy has given Iraqis the right to have their voices heard and to hold their leaders to account. Today Iraq stands at a crossroads. Progress through dialogue, or divisive inaction. Violence only breeds more violence. A public national dialogue can bring Iraqis together to draw a roadmap towards a more inclusive, stable and prosperous Iraq. Full access to all information, facts and figures will prove key. Window dressing will only feed anger and resentment".

Recalling the recent anniversary of the United Nations, the Special Representative noted "74 years ago, Iraq, alongside 50 other countries, founded the United Nations. Its fundamental principles are more important than ever: 'to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights' and 'to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom'. Iraq is in the United

Nations, and the United Nations is in Iraq. Today we stand by your side and are ready, if called upon, to bring to-

gether all parties and move forward on a roadmap that meets the legitimate demands of the Iraqi people".



“Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshops held in Ninawa and Duhok

Mosul/Duhok, 03 September 2019 - Under the theme “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability”, two workshops were organised concurrently in Ninawa and Duhok Governorates 29-31 August 2019. The workshops brought to nine the number of such events taking place across Iraq throughout 2019 organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister’s Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association.

At the Ninawa workshop, a group of 15 young men and 13 young women from various components in the governorate discussed a number of issues that they identified as important to the youth in the context of their Governorate. This included youth unemployment, land disputes, problems affecting the health sector, and missing persons. In addition, they also discussed youth participation in decision making and the possibility of establishing a youth advisory

council in the Governorate. The meeting was joined on the last day by the Deputy Governor of Ninawa, Mr. Hassan al-Lihaibi, and a number of Members of the Council of Representatives and of the Ninawa Provincial Council, who engaged in a frank dialogue with the participants on the raised issues.

Addressing the meeting, Director of UNAMI’s Office of Political Affairs (OPA) Manoj Mathew said: “Inclusive and frank discussions must take place between communities to address past legacies and to build a stable future for Iraq. This cannot be done without the political, social and economic participation of young people - and their involvement in reconciliation efforts to bridge differences and address grievances”.

At the Duhok workshop, a group of 14 young men and 13 young women from various components in the governorate discussed peaceful coexistence amongst the Iraqi components as well as combating hate speech among tribes and religious groups in the Governorate. To

this end, they proposed the establishment of a coexistence committee in Duhok Governorate. They also discussed youth participation in the government, the problem of unemployment and addressing the loopholes in the labour law as well as encouraging investment and small projects. On the last day of the workshop on 31 August, local officials, including members of the Council of Representatives, Kurdistan Regional Parliament and Provincial Council members joined the discussions.

Addressing the Duhok workshop on its last day, Mr. Mathew noted: “As witnessed elsewhere in the world, the catalytic energy that young people can bring to resolve political or social deadlock should not be underestimated”.

The activities are in line with UNAMI’s mandate to support youth and their valuable contributions to Iraqi public life. Similar workshops were recently organised in Anbar, Babil, Basra, Karbala, Wasit, Najaf and Sulaymaniyah.



Peace through the eyes of Anbar’s youth

Baghdad, 4 September 2019 - “We choose peace because we want to connect people...but we also need to understand how people of different religions, cultures and experiences interpret peace.”

“I’ve tried to gather all of Iraq in one statue,” says 24-year-old Anbar University student Sruor.

At 24m3, the structure is a striking. Four black and white cubes stacked asymmetrically, sitting in central Ramadi. “The first cube bares the names of each Iraqi governorate in kufi script,” she adds. “The second, the names of the old civilizations and the third, the symbols of Iraq’s diverse religious groups. The last cube is printed with letters in cuneiform script, along-

side the iconic image of the dove of peace”. “People see the statue, but they are also invited to interpret its meaning. What does it represent?” Sruor is joined with her friend and fellow student, 28-year-old Tasneem.

Both young women call Anbar home. But what more do they have in common? A commitment to build peace in their community. “We choose peace because we want to connect people...but we also need to understand how people of different religions, cultures and experiences interpret peace.”

Between 2017-2019, UNDP’s Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme and local NGO, Iraqi al-Amal Association, provided training to 289 young people (including 122 young

women) from across Iraq – just like Sruor and Tasneem. Trained in the active promotion of a culture of peace in their communities, students were invited to design activities that would invite the participation of community members from various backgrounds, to engage and exchange ideas. 114 projects were selected to receive small cash grants and supported throughout the planning, promotion and implementation of their initiatives.

Giving women a voice

A passionate photographer, Tasneem chose to host a photo exhibition in early 2018. “I wanted to connect two things – photography, a powerful medium for storytelling, and women, very few of which are photographers in Iraq,” she

Peace through the eyes of Anbar's youth (continued)

says, camera in hand as she points it away to find focus. "I saw a gap in my community - women were interested in photography, but they lacked skills and didn't know how to take the first step." With Tasneem's efforts, eight women participated in the exhibition, "Peace Gallery" and many are still shooting today. "I wanted to challenge the gender stereotypes in my community and create a space for women to safely express their ideas. When we started encouraging people to use their talent to spread personal messages of peace, the community paid attention – all of a sudden, we were asking them to reflect on what their picture of peace would look like!" exclaims Tasneem.

Painting for peace

Leaving the city centre, we meet another young woman on the grounds of the University of Anbar. 24-year-old Noor, an aspiring artist, was also a grant recipient for her community initiative, "Anbar Women's Touch". "My painting exhibition invited 17 young women living in Anbar to paint their peace," she says. "The youngest exhibitor was 7 years old."

Noor has displayed one of the paintings for us on the lawn of the University, flanked by newly renovated offices and classrooms. "I chose to host my exhibition inside the College of Pharmacy. It's led by a woman and I wanted to give women a voice – but it also needed to be in a safe space," explains Tasneem, as she relays Noor's story.

Despite its current appearance, 70% of the University's main campus was destroyed or damaged during ISIL's occupation of Ramadi, hindering the return of students, and forcing study to continue amongst the rubble.

With the support of UNDP Iraq's Funding Facility for Stabilization in partnership with the Government of Iraq, the University of Anbar campuses have been brought back to life. Eighteen buildings have been rehabilitated across the University, including the female dormitories, the University's main library, several engineering laboratories and five women's colleges. The rehabilitation work encouraged students to return to university after Ramadi's liberation from ISIL by providing safe, comfortable learning environment, equipped with the necessary facilities. Today, the University bustles with more than 23,000 students across its campuses.

From this space, youth like Noor, are being empowered to use their skills to help shape the process of recovery amongst the people of Anbar – starting with their ideas of peace.

"Noor connected women interested to paint with experienced faculty members from the art college, helping them to get the support they needed to transform their ideas with paint."

The power of books

Next, we meet Hassan, standing by a tall glass cabinet in the courtyard of the Faculty of Political Science & Law. He's a new graduate and the youngest peace advocate we meet. "I decided to install a miniature peace library on campus. I filled the cabinet with books to help people learn about the idea of peace and it's many interpretations."

"I saw a need – people want to know what causes conflict, and why we need peacebuilding," he adds. "This is a way for people to discover peace in private. You can take a book and read in the garden or at home alone," he continues. "Over time, people have become more active in discussing ideas of peace and questioning what is going on in our community. Young people are starting to change the way they talk about conflict and what we need to do as a community to achieve peace."

UNDP Iraq and Iraqi al Amal Association bring youth together from across the country to train face-to-face – mixing young women and men and people of mixed ethnic and religious backgrounds – to promote understanding based on shared experience and on shared hope. In these safe spaces, young people can develop a new understanding of those who are different to themselves. "We want to connect all men and women and give them balanced opportunities to access materials on peace and to create their own meanings and representations. We believe people should have a chance to be who they want to be, and to do what they love – that's peace," explains Tasneem, Srour, Noor and Hassan.

For this group of youth, the support and training they received is continuing to encourage new thinking. "Young people are interested in reflecting. Now

we've seen the power of inviting people to create their own meaning – through art and discussion," adds Tasneem.

About the Peace Education Project Activities under the Peace Education Project were made possible with the generous funding of the Government of Japan and the Government of Germany. Implemented by UNDP Iraq and Iraqi al Amal Association, the Project trains both youth and academics across all governorates of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, on topics of peace and conflict studies. In 2019, the project launched the first national Diploma for Peace and Conflict Studies – designed in collaboration with the Iraqi Universities Consortium for Peace Studies and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The first group of students will participate in a piloting of the Diploma in late 2019.

Since 2017, Iraqi al Amal Association has successfully trained 289 youth (124 women) on topics of peacebuilding and conflict, with training graduates designing and implementing 122 community engagement initiatives; building stronger social ties in communities previously effected by conflict and crisis.

About UNDP's rehabilitation work in Ramadi

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 after the ISIL conflict, lay the groundwork for reconstruction and recovery, and safeguard against the resurgence of violence and extremism. Since the liberation of Ramadi in December 2015, FFS has completed more than 265 stabilization projects in the city. FFS helps local authorities quickly rehabilitate essential infrastructure and services such as water and electricity networks, healthcare facilities, school and homes.



Art for Peace' project encourages creative approaches to build peace, reduce discrimination and combat negative stereotypes among students and teachers

Baghdad, 12 September 2019 - 'Art for Peace' is a project run by IOM Iraq, in primary and secondary schools in Hamdaniyah, Ninewa Governorate. It encourages creative approaches to build peace, reduce discrimination and combat negative stereotypes among students and teachers of different religions and ethnicities.

As part of this initiative, IOM Iraq trained 30 teachers, education counselors, and representatives of the Hamdaniyah Directorate of Education on the principles of peace education and facilitation skills.

"I use painting and sculpture as a tool to enable the students at the Mary Secondary School for girls to express themselves and their feelings after returning to Bakhdida (Qaraqosh) in freedom and safety," said Mahera, a teacher, during the event.

"Dialogue and art are effective tools in finding common interests and concerns among students, we seek to reject extremism that has exhausted our generation as we do not want future generations to suffer the same," added Nassar, another teacher from Hamdaniyah.



Women and youth activists share best practices in influencing peace processes and implementing peace agreements

Baghdad, 18 September 2019 – Supported by the UN Women Regional office, women and youth activists from Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen recently met in Beirut, Lebanon, to share best practices and lessons learned in influencing peace processes and implementing peace agreements in their respective countries. Participants at the

"Women & Young People in Peace" workshop held in Beirut concluded that youth and women peacebuilders should work together; security and protection for youth and women peacebuilders is essential; young women need specific support to access leadership positions.



"Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability" workshops held in Erbil

Erbil, 19 September 2019 - Under the theme "Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability", the tenth in a series of workshops was organised in Erbil Governorate in the Kurdistan Region from 12 – 14 September 2019. The workshop was organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace in the Prime Minister's Office

and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association. Twenty-six youth, including eleven young women, from various parts of the Governorate attended the workshop and discussed a number of issues that they identified as important to the youth in the context of their Governorate. The main themes discussed included how youth can actively participate in decision-making; empowerment of women within the Governorate;

youth unemployment and ways of increasing job opportunities in the public and private sectors.

The meeting was joined on the last day by the Deputy Governor of Erbil, Mr. Tahir Abdullah, the Chairman of the Provincial Council, Mr. Ali Rasheed, the Director-General of the Youth Department, Mr. Jamal Hussain and a number of members from the Kurdistan Regional Parliament, who engaged in a frank dialogue with the participants on the raised issues.

Addressing the meeting, the Head of UNAMI's Erbil Regional Office, Mr. Ricardo Rodriguez, said: "Reconciliation and national unity are going to feature prominently in any sustainable peaceful future. Inclusive and frank discussions must take place between communities, to address past legacies and to build a stable future for Iraq".

The activity is in line with UNAMI's mandate to support youth and their valuable contributions to Iraqi public life. Similar workshops were recently organised in Anbar, Babil, Basra, Karbala, Wasit, Najaf, Sulaymaniyah, Duhok and Ninawa.



Youth of Iraq & peacebuilding: catalysts for change

Baghdad, 23 September 2019 – Investing in young people can help put countries on a path to accelerated economic growth and equitable development. To that end, the Swedish government and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA), in collaboration with UNFPA, have launched an initiative to train exceptional young men and women of Iraq on the principles of inclusive dialogue in peacebuilding.

On 22 September, the Embassy of Sweden, FBA, UNFPA, Iraqi Center for Negotiation skills and Conflict Management (IQCM) and Peace and Freedom Organisation (PFO) launched a five-day training for 25 young men and women on inclusive dialogue processes in peacebuilding. The interactive sessions will focus on collaboration and dialogue in sustaining peace.

Participants were selected during a previous collaboration between UNFPA and FBA in April 2019 where a consultative meeting took place to assess the needs of young people through discussions on the challenges and visions they have for the future through peacebuilding engagements.

Ambassador of Sweden to Iraq, H.E. Mr. Lars Ronnas, said: “The Inclusive Dialogue in Peacebuilding Programme provides a platform for young Iraqi peace builders to share experiences, strengthen their capacities and discuss challenges and visions for their future. The program mirrors the diverse Iraqi

society as participants are invited from all over the country. I am very pleased that the Embassy of Sweden in collaboration with Folke Bernadotte Academy, UNFPA, IQCM and PFO this week will be hosting in Baghdad the first in a series of courses aimed at inclusive peacebuilding in which I firmly believe that young Iraqis will play a key and constructive role.”

UNFPA Deputy Representative in Iraq, Mr Himyar Abdulmoghni, commented on the importance of the training saying: “Empowering youth and strengthening their role in peacebuilding is one of the four pillars of UNFPA’s country programme. To ensure sustainable peace in Iraq, we need to redirect the efforts of youth towards the implemen-

tation of peace projects and engage youth more in peacebuilding processes: The inclusion and participation of youth in peacebuilding processes pave the way for youth to become the agents of peace in their societies.”

The Inclusive Dialogue Processes in Peacebuilding training is a part of a three week-programme laid out over seven months (September 2019-March 2020). The sessions will enhance 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.



“Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshops held in Diyala

Baqouba, 23 September 2019 - Under the theme “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability”, the 11th in a series of workshops to gauge the views and concerns of youth across the country took place in Diyala Governorate on 20-22 September 2019. The workshop was organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Coexistence and Societal Peace under the Prime Minister’s Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association.

Fourteen young men and 12 young women from various parts of the Governorate attended the workshop. They discussed a number of issues that they identified as important to the youth in the context of their Governorate. In attendance for part of the discussions were also local officials who included the Second Deputy Governor, Mohammad Qutiba al-Bayati, along with five Provincial Council members.



The main themes presented and discussed included the youth’s political and administrative representation; how to address tribal conflicts and regional influences; restricting control over weapons exclusively to the State; how

to handle the return of family members affiliated with ISIL; preventing the spread of drugs among youth as well as ensuring the freedom of expression and other basic freedoms.

Addressing the closing session, Director

“Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshops held in Diyala *(continued)*

of UNAMI Office of Political Affairs Manoj Mathew commended the partici-

pants and local officials on their vibrant discussions. He highlighted the

importance of the input from the youth and urged the local authorities to listen to their views and concerns.

“Over the weekend, the world witnessed the power of youth across the globe, calling for all to take action against climate change; followed by a historic Youth Climate Summit on 21 September and the UN Secretary-General’s Climate Action Summit to take place on 23 September. Clearly, we must acknowledge the power of youth, and I encourage the Second Deputy Governor and local officials of Diyala to work closely with the youth in overcoming the challenges facing the governorate.”



“Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability” workshops held in Diwaniya

Diwaniya, 29 September 2019 – Youth in Diwaniya Governorate had the opportunity to voice their hopes and concerns regarding their community and country at a 26-28 September workshop under the theme “Iraqi Youth: Pioneers for Dialogue and Stability”. The 12th in a series of workshops across the country was organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), in cooperation with the Committee for Co-existence and Societal Peace under the Prime Minister’s Office and the Iraqi Al-Amal Association.

Seventeen young men and six young women from various parts of the Governorate attended the workshop. They discussed a number of issues that they identified as important to the youth in the context of their Governorate. These included: the importance of strengthening the political participation of youth; ways to increase job opportunities and counter unemployment; challenges faced by volunteer groups and civil society organization; concerns about the quality of health care services within the gover-



norate and the lack of medical supplies; and the spread of drugs among youth.

At the closing session on 28 September, the participants were joined by local officials who included the Second Deputy Governor, Malik Kadhim Al-Husseini, and two Provincial Council members, Ayad Tleya’a al-Myali, the head of Coordination and NGOs Committee, and Duha Al-Husseini, from the Education

Committee.

Addressing the session, Director of UNAMI Office of Political Affairs Manoj Mathew welcomed the vibrant discussions between the youth and the local officials. He pointed to the sixteen-year-old Swedish climate and environmental activist, Greta Thunberg, as a great example of one individual who managed to spark an entire global climate movement. He urged the youth to trust in their capacity to bring change, while encouraging them to work with the local government to collectively resolve the challenges facing the Governorate. He also encouraged them to express their desire for change by participating in the upcoming Provincial Council elections.

Similar youth workshops were recently organised in Anbar, Babil, Basra, Karbala, Wasit, Najaf, Sulaymaniyah, Duhok, Ninawa, Erbil and Diyala. The activity is in line with UNAMI’s mandate to support youth and their valuable contributions to Iraqi public life.



DSRSG Walpole discusses preparations for upcoming Governorate Councils elections with IHEC commissioners

Baghdad, 24 September 2019 – United Nations Deputy Special Representative for Iraq (DSRSG) Alice Walpole, accompanied by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) Principal Electoral Adviser, was received by the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) Board of Commissioners on 24 September 2019 to discuss the progress of preparations for the upcoming Provincial Council elections.

DSRSG Walpole highlighted the importance of implementing robust and timely measures to enhance the credibility of the electoral processes and to encourage increased voter participation. She was briefed by IHEC on preparations for an audit of the information technology systems for the elections.

Discussion also included an update on the biometric voter registration process and the distribution of voter cards, and consideration of the measures to be put

in place to enable voting by those displaced from their areas of origin, as stipulated in the amended electoral law.



Political Affairs

SRSG Hennis-Plasschaert visit to Kirkuk



Kirkuk, 30 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Kirkuk Governorate today to meet with

Acting Governor Rakan al-Jubouri and discuss the human rights situation and reconstruction needs of the province. Afterwards, she witnessed destroyed buildings in Multaqa village and visited

the Kakai community in Topzawa and Ali Saraj villages to assess what would be needed to allow people to return.





Baghdad, 1 September 2019 - H.E. President Barham Salih hosted the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert today at the presidential palace in Baghdad. In addition to discussing the general situation in the country, the Special Representative briefed the President on the UN Security Council's session of 28 August, during which she delivered a statement to the world body. Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert reaffirmed the UN's support to Iraq in numerous critical areas. President Salih noted the need for international support to bolster Iraq's role in reducing regional tensions and consolidating international peace and security. The President emphasized that all Iraqis look forward to a new era where security, stability and prosperity prevail. Photo courtesy of the Media Office of the Iraqi Presidency.



Baghdad, 29 August 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Alice Walpole, received Dr. Salim Al-Jubouri and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, they discussed the issue of missing persons and enforced disappearances. Photo courtesy of the Media Office of Dr. Al-Jubouri.



Baghdad, 2 September 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (DSRSG) and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met with Dr. Yassen Al-Mamouri, President of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) at the IRCS office in Baghdad. Discussions during the meeting focused on the humanitarian situation and activities in the country, with an emphasis on strengthening cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the IRCS in joint humanitarian activities and programmes in Iraq. Photo courtesy of IRCS.



Baghdad, 4 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met Dr. Hemin Hawrami, Deputy Speaker, Kurdistan Region Parliament, at the UNAMI HQ in Baghdad. They discussed the general situation in the country and in the Kurdistan Region. Photo courtesy of the media office Kurdistan Region Parliament.



United Nations, New York, 4 September 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Alice Walpole, was received by Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi, Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations. During the meeting, they discussed recent developments in Kuwaiti-Iraqi relations, the latest political developments in Iraq, as well as recent activities of UNAMI and the United Nations in Iraq. Photo courtesy of the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations.



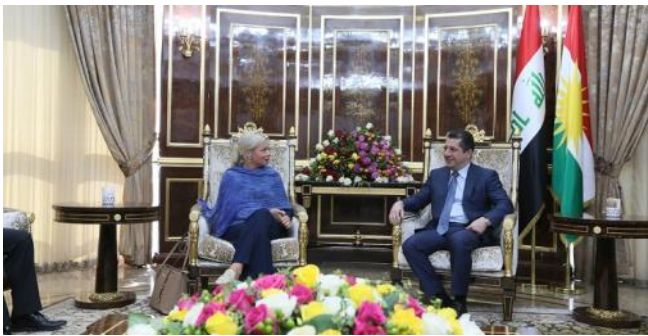
Baghdad, 4 September 2019 - Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, Representative to Iraq of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, and FAO team met in Baghdad with Her Excellency Dr. Sarbagh Salih, First Lady of the Republic of Iraq. Discussions focused on the FAO activities and programmes implemented in Iraq, as well as the environmental concerns and bio-diversity, plus innovative agricultural initiatives. The First Lady expressed great interest in the agriculture sector in Iraq. She emphasized the importance of the Palm tree in Iraq. At the end of the meeting, Dr. Al Hajj Hassan thanked the First Lady and expressed FAO readiness to coordinate fully with the Iraqi counterparts, in particular, the ministries of agriculture, water resources and environment for the development of the agricultural, water resources and environmental sectors.



Baghdad, 5 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with Mr. Jamal Al Dhari, head of the Iraqi National Project. They discussed the general political situation in the country as well as the forthcoming Provincial Elections and the issue of the disappeared or missing persons. Photo courtesy of INP.



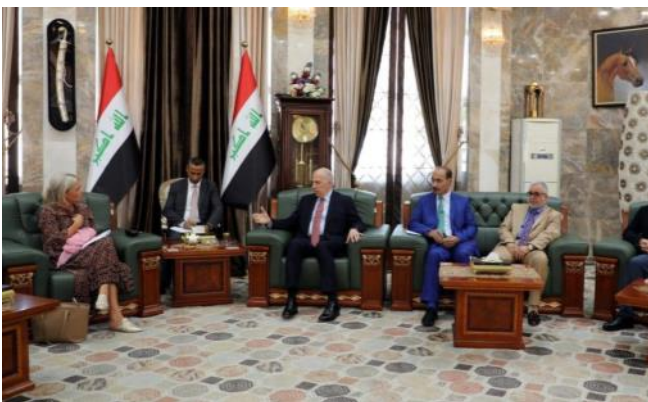
Erbil, 9 September 2019 - The President of the Kurdistan Region, Mr. Nechirvan Barzani, received today the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert. In addition to discussing the general situation in the Kurdistan Region and in Iraq, they discussed outstanding issues between Erbil-Baghdad.



Erbil, 9 September 2019 - The Prime Minister of Kurdistan Region, Mr. Masrour Barzani, received today the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert. In addition to discussing the general situation in the Kurdistan Region and in Iraq, they discussed outstanding issues between Erbil-Baghdad. Photo courtesy of KRG.



Baghdad, 11 September 2019 - The Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Adel Abdul Mahdi, received today the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert. During the meeting, the Special Representative extended her condolences on the tragic death of worshippers during the religious ceremony in Karbala on 10 September 2019 and also discussed the general situation in the country. Photo courtesy of the Prime Minister's office.



Baghdad, 12 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert met today with the head of the Al-Qarar Aliraqi Coalition, Mr. Osama al-Nujaifi. They discussed the latest developments in Iraq as well as the issue of missing persons and enforced disappearances. Photo courtesy of the media office of Mr. Al-Nujaifi



Baghdad, 12 September 2019 - Population challenges, status of women, violence against women, population growth, family planning, and the Nairobi Summit for Population & Development (ICPD25) were at the heart of the discussions between UNFPA Representative to Iraq, Dr Oluremi Sogunro and the First Lady of Iraq, Ms. Sarbagh Salih. Ms. Salih expressed her interest in attending the Nairobi Summit along the President to present Iraq's priorities and commitment towards improving the livelihoods of citizens across the country. Dr Sogunro emphasized the importance of the 2020 Population and Housing Census to enable the government to draft policies that will improve the services and strengthen the development process.



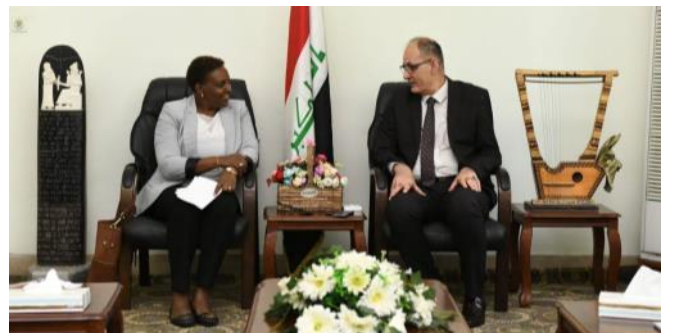
Baghdad, 16 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert met with Foreign Minister, Mr. Mohamad A. Alhakim. During the meeting they discussed the latest developments in Iraq and the Iraqi participation in the forthcoming United Nations General Assembly session at UN Headquarters in New York.
Photos courtesy of the Iraq Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Erbil, 16 September 2019 – The Deputy Prime Minister of Kurdistan Region, Mr. Qubad Talabani, received the Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq's (UNAMI) Regional Office in Erbil, Mr. Ricardo Rodriguez. During the meeting, the two officials discussed the latest developments in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region, including Erbil-Baghdad relationship.
Photo courtesy of KRG.



Baghdad, 18 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with the Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Dr. Bashir al-Haddad. During the meeting they discussed the latest developments in Iraq, as well as the participation of internally displaced persons in the upcoming provincial council elections.
Photo courtesy of CoR.



Baghdad, 18 September 2019 - UNICEF Representative in Iraq, Ms. Hamida Lasseko, met with the Minister of Culture, Dr. Abdulameer M. Al-Dafar Al-Hamdani. During the meeting, they discussed plans to partner for this year's 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and continuing initiatives to ensure the rights of children in Iraq.
Photos courtesy of the Ministry of Culture.



United Nations, New York, 24 September 2019 - On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with H.E. Dr. Anwar Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, United Arab Emirates. They discussed the regional situation and Iraq.

Photo: Courtesy of the Permanent Mission of the UAE to the UN



United Nations, New York, 24 September 2019 - On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with H.E. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They discussed the regional situation and Iraq.

Photo: Courtesy of IRNA



Baghdad, 26 September 2019 - UN Women Representative in Iraq, Ms. Dina Zorba, met today with the Iraqi Minister of Justice, Mr. Farouq Shawani. They discussed the ongoing preparations for the debate on the Iraq CEDAW report (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women).



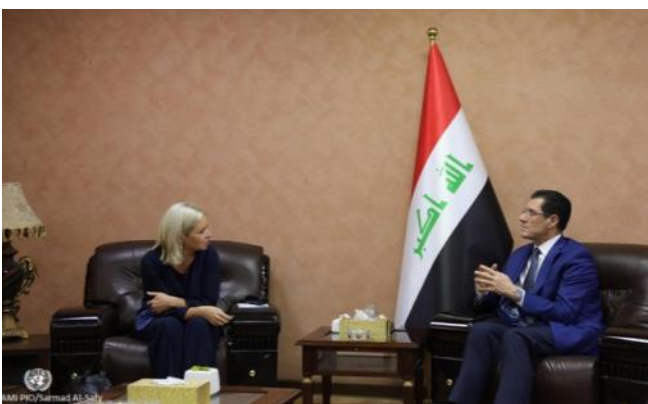
Baghdad, 01 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, was received today by Ayatollah Hussein Sadr. They discussed the political and humanitarian situation in the country.



Baghdad, 02 October 2019 – The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with Mr. Nawfal Baha Mousa, Minister of Migration and Displacement of Iraq. They discussed preconditions for the voluntary and dignified return of internally displaced persons to their places of origin.



Baghdad, 21 October 2019 – The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, met today with the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, Ms. Erna Solberg, who is on an official visit to the Republic of Iraq. Their conversation focused on the political situation in Iraq as well as the impact of regional security developments.



Baghdad, 22 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert met today with Dr. Nouri Sabah Al-Dulaimi, Minister of Planning of Iraq. They discussed the political situation in Iraq, including the recent demonstrations.



Baghdad, 22 October 2019 - The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met with Dr. Nouri Sabah Al-Dulaimi, Minister of Planning of Iraq. They discussed the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Iraq and involvement of development partners to leverage support for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda.

Photo courtesy of Iraq Ministry of Planning.

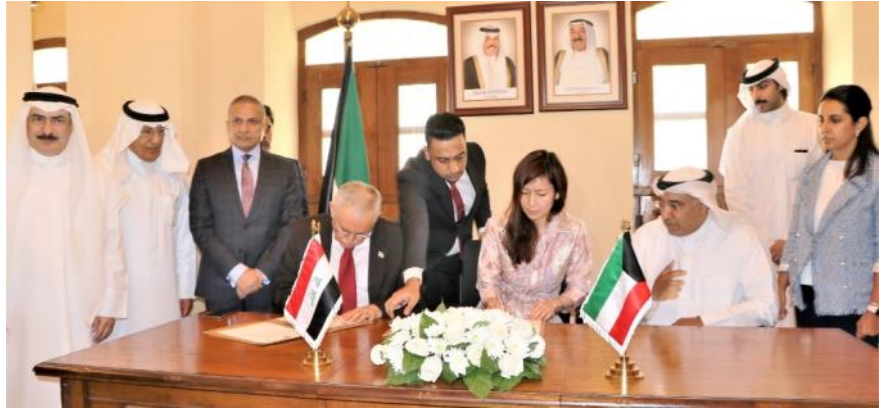
UNAMI welcomes Iraqi repatriation of Kuwaiti property

Baghdad, 29 August 2019 - The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq warmly welcomed the return by the Government of Iraq today of a large consignment of Kuwaiti property, removed from Kuwait during the conflict of 1990-91. The repatriation of the property marks another important step towards the full normalisation of relations between the two countries.

In a ceremony at the Diplomatic Institute in Kuwait City, a total of 42,000 books and materials belonging to the Kuwaiti Central Library and Kuwait University were handed back to the Kuwaiti Government. The handover was attended on behalf of the United Nations by Ms Hideko Hadzialic, United Nations Resident Coordinator a.i. in Kuwait.

UN Deputy Special Representative for Iraq Alice Walpole applauded the efforts of the governments of Iraq and Kuwait to resolve outstanding bilateral issues and called for continued con-

structive engagement to enable closure of the file on missing Kuwaiti property, including the National Archives, in line with United Nations Security Council resolution 2107 (2013).



Gender

A job placement activity organized with the support of UN Women and the European Trust Fund “Madad” in Domiz 1 camp

Duhok, 21 August 2019 – Baghdad Women Association’s Listening and Consulting Center in Seiji, Duhok, organized a job placement activity as part of the project “Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women, Girls and Host Communities in Iraq” with the support of UN Women and the European Trust Fund “Madad” in Domiz 1 camp.

The activity started with a three-day training in which 27 girls and women took part. The participants in the activity will be helped in getting jobs in the private sector in sewing, hairdressing, laboratories and other fields of work

and in accordance with their capabilities.

The training topics dealt with ways to

search for jobs, creating a resume, preparation for a job interview as well as types of interviews.



UN Inter-Agency Gender Task Force meeting held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 21 August 2019 - UN Women held today the regular UN Inter-Agency Gender Task Force meeting in Baghdad and Erbil in collaboration with UNAMI and UNDP. The agenda

of the meeting focused on a presentation on “Iraqi women rights between the law and reality” and a review and endorsement of the Gender Task Force Work Plan 2019-2020. The meeting also

included a brief update by participating UN agencies on gender equality and women’s empowerment programming in Iraq.



Meeting with government officials focuses on gender-responsive budgets

Baghdad, 29 August 2019 - The Baghdad Women Association has convened follow-up meetings with officials from the Ministries of Migration, Labor and Social Affairs and Health on gender-responsive plans and budgets in the period 27-29 August 2019.

The meetings, held as part of the project “Strengthening the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Iraq” with the support of the UN Women and the European Trust Fund “Madad”, focused on the issue of gender mainstreaming in the plans and budgets of these ministries to develop gender-responsive budgets.



A focus group discuss “National standards for gender perspective mainstreaming in policies”

Baghdad, 29 August 2019 - With support by UN Women and Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, Um Al Yateem Development Foundation organized in Baghdad a focus group meeting for gender experts to discuss “National standards for gender perspective mainstreaming in policies”.



A plan to strengthen the technical and institutional capacities of local partners working on gender and gender-based violence issues discussed at a workshop in Erbil

Erbil, 04 September 2019 - UNFPA and UN women workshop on putting together a plan to strengthen the technical and institutional capacities of local partners, including Government and civil society organizations working on gender and gender-based violence

(GBV) issues in the Kurdistan Region, Iraq was held in Erbil. The workshop was facilitated with the funding from European Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) Middle East.



High-level meeting to exchange experiences on implementation and funding of the National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325 held in Amman

Amman, Jordan, 04 September 2019 - The UN Women Iraq and UN Women Jordan country offices organized on 3-4 September 2019 in Amman a meeting to exchange experiences on implementation and funding of the National Action Plan for UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in the presence of high-level officials from both sides.



UNAMI supports IHEC to promote gender-responsive electoral processes

Baghdad, 05 September 2019 – A three-day workshop concluded in Baghdad today which considered ways how to ensure the meaningful engagement of Iraqi women in elections.

The workshop on gender-responsive electoral processes, jointly organized by the Independent High Elections Commissions (IHEC) and UNAMI in collaboration with UNDP, was held within the context of UNAMI's mandate to assist and advise IHEC on preparations for the 2020 local elections in Iraq. The workshop looked at the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on promoting women's full and active participation in political and electoral pro-

cesses.

UNAMI Director of Electoral Assistance and Principal Electoral Advisor, Aamir Arain, urged the IHEC to strengthen the capacity of its gender team and formulate a gender policy.

"Promoting an enabling environment that allows women to fully and actively participate in electoral processes is an important step towards ensuring women exercise their right to vote and contributes to stability and democracy," Mr. Arain said.

The discussions highlighted challenges facing female candidates, including sexual harassment, poor media coverage, insufficient campaign funds, limited support from political parties, and social discrimination due to negative patriarchal attitudes. It underlined the

importance of the quota system to guarantee women's representation, and the need for specific security measures and awareness to enable women to vote safely and freely, and a code of conduct to promote integrity in the overall electoral process.

Two former MPs who are members of the Women Advisory Group (WAG) shared their experiences as candidates in previous national legislative elections. Another WAG member described her previous work as a national elections observer. The group was launched early 2019 to advocate for better representation of women in reconciliation and political processes amongst other concerns.



Young influencers discuss means to spread culture of equality

Mosul, 8 September 2019 - Tajdid Iraq organization continues to organize awareness and education programmes at its Women's Services Center in Nineveh Governorate as part of the activities of the project "Strengthening the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Iraq", implemented with the support of UN Women and the European "Madad" Trust Fund. These programmes aim to spread a culture of gender equality and focus on means to reduce disparities between men and women.

As part of these programmes, Tajdid hosted a workshop on 8 September 2019 for a group of young influencers who have an impact on the local community. The participants discussed means to spread the culture of equality and work to reduce violence against women.



“Iraqi Women Empowerment Strategy: Towards gender equality and equal opportunities.”

Baghdad, 12 September 2019 - The Higher Committee for the Advancement of Iraqi Women held a meeting under the chairmanship of Baghdad Mayor Dr. Thikra Alwash, to discuss the drafting of the second national strategy for the advancement of Iraqi women. The meeting, organized with the technical and financial support of UN Women, was attended by members of the drafting Committee. The members presented the evaluation of the previous (2014-2018) Strategy in order to conduct a comprehensive evaluation along with proposals for the upcoming (2019-2023) Strategy. Participants in the meeting agreed on the title of the strategy: “Iraqi Women Empowerment Strategy: Towards gender equality and equal opportunities.”



Iraq reconfirms commitment to achieve SDG 5 and the empowerment of women



Baghdad, 16 September 2019 – Under the patronage of His Excellency the Prime Minister Mr. Adel Abdul Mahdi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in Cooperation with The Ministry of Planning (MoP), hosted a conference on Iraqi Women’s Vision on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. The conference aimed to shape the vision of Iraqi women on the SDGs and 2030 Agenda and discuss their role and current issues. Attendees discussed the possible entry points to strengthen women empowerment, and highlighted the need to address gender equality, and place women issues as a top priority in the development process. “Women’s Empowerment and gender equality claimed a prominent place in the Iraqi Vision 2030. Therefore, we affirm the need of building effective

administrative institutions to ensure women’s inclusiveness in the political, social and economic fields to enhance their developmental participation in the society,” said the Minister of Planning, H.E Mr. Nuri Sabah al-Dulaimi, in his opening remarks.

Representing HE the Prime Minister, The Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers, H.E Mr. Hameed al-Ghazi, highlighted the important role of women in society saying: “We believe that women are the core of the society and it is essential to develop a mechanism towards strengthening women empowerment in Iraq”.

UNDP Resident Representative, Ms. Zena Ali Ahmad, also stated that, “The 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved without realizing gender equality. Acting on SDG 5 alone is not enough. We must integrate the goals within our planning

systems in order to achieve all dimensions of development; politically, socially, economically, and environmentally. Given the inter-linkages and interdependence of the SDGs, any attempt to achieve one goal or to address a problem must be done closely through these dimensions combined all together”.

During the conference, different aspects of the experience of Iraqi women was analyzed from various points of view, including and not limited to education, political participation, health, social protection, decision-making, sectoral strategies, the national 2030 vision on SDGs, and the National Development Plan (NDP) for the period 2018-2022.

UNDP presented findings of an analysis, completed in 2019, through which the NDP 2018-2022 and Iraq 2030 vision were compared with the targets of SDG 5 to identify gaps. This is a first step toward assessing Iraq’s readiness to achieve the SDG gender targets, especially where the country still falls short on issues of discrimination and violence against women and girls, unpaid care-work and domestic violence that require immediate action.

Participants concluded that there is a need to develop a road map to activate women’s role as an early warning mechanism to combat extremist violence and corruption.



Engaging men, boys in awareness programmes on issues of equality and gender-based violence

Duhok, 12 September 2019 – Baghdad Women Association Listening and Consulting Center in Seiji, Duhok, conducted the fourth event in the activity of engaging men in community outreach programmes, conducted as part of the project “Strengthening the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Iraq” with the support of UN Women and the European Trust Fund Madad.

The activity included holding a meeting on 9 July 2019 to discuss violence against women and gender equality in the presence of 31 men and boys at the Youth Center in Duhok. The meeting was followed on September 12 by holding a football match between a number of girls and boys. The activity aimed to advocate for gender equality and reject the traditional view of society on the role of women, in addition to spread

awareness of women’s and girls’ ability to exercise various roles and activities, like men and boys.

The activity, which was conducted as part of the project “Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Iraq”, carried out with the support of UN Women and the European Trust Fund (MADAD) on 15 September 2019, was attended by 31 participants, the statement said.

Within the framework of the same activity, a play was staged tackling the issue of gender equality and the reduction of gender-based violence on 23 September 2019 in the presence of 70 audience members, the statement added.

According to BWA, the play attracted the attention of the audience as it raised the topic in a recreational way, catering for the need of refugees in the

audience for entertainment as well as awareness of the importance of gender equality.

On 25 September 2019 The Baghdad Women Association’s Listening and Consulting Center in Duhok carried out its fifth activity engaging men and boys in awareness programmes on gender equality and gender-based violence, according to a BWA statement.



UN action against sexual violence in conflict

Baghdad, 17 September 2019 – Today IOM - UN Migration held a roundtable discussion on the proposed draft law on support to Yazidi survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in Iraq.

IOM’s expert on transitional justice and reparations provided comments on the draft law, including interpretation and recommendations for enhancing the law. Guest speakers included Dr. Ibtisam Aziz, Director General of the Women’s Empowerment Directorate at the General Secretariat of the Iraqi Council of Ministers. Representatives from United Nations agencies, civil society,

including the nongovernmental organization Yazda, and the Australian, Brit-

ish and US embassies participated in the roundtable.



UN Women convenes a meeting on UNSCR1325 National Action Plan

Baghdad, 23 September 2019 - UN Women Iraq, in cooperation with the Council of Ministers’ National Secretar-

iat team and the Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA), convened a meeting in Baghdad on 22

and 23 September 2019 to discuss progress of work on the second National Action Plan for the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Federal Government, the Kurdistan Region Government and civil society organisations. UN Women Iraq representative Ms. Dina Zorba highlighted the significance of the action plan, emphasising the importance of creating a financing mechanism that establishes a joint fund. Ms. Zorba also underlined the importance of CSOs in carrying out the plan. During the meeting, participants discussed the draft administrative framework and regulating the financial evaluation process by preparing a general financial framework for the activities of the national action plan.



UNAMI welcomes the Government of Iraq's efforts to combat gender-based violence

Baghdad, 29 September 2019 - On the occasion of the Islamic Day for Opposing Violence against Women, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) welcomed the efforts of the Iraqi government to combat gender-based violence, including domestic violence, and reaffirmed continued UN support towards achieving this.

At an event in Baghdad under the auspices of His Eminence Ammar Al-Hakim, Deputy Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General Alice Walpole noted Iraq's ongoing constructive engagement with the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which includes a review of Iraq's commitments to combatting discrimination in the form of violence.

She particularly welcomed the current efforts of both the Office of the President of the Republic of Iraq and the Prime Minister to support the development of an Anti-Domestic Violence Law that, in line with the Iraqi Constitution, would protect the rights of survivors, as well as those at risk, of domestic violence; would provide them with effective legal remedies; and would contribute towards ending impunity for those who carry out such abuse.

The United Nations in Iraq will continue to support the government in its efforts to protect and promote the rights of women to be free of violence in

all its forms, and to create the conditions in which women and girls are

fully empowered to enjoy their rights and freedoms, Ms. Walpole underlined.



As part of the “Women’s Leadership, Empowerment, Access & Protection (LEAP) project” in Iraq the Women Leadership Institute’s Kirkuk Safe Space organized a focus group discussion with 16 women

Kirkuk, 3 October 2019 - As part of the “Women’s Leadership, Empowerment, Access & Protection (LEAP) project” in Iraq, supported by UN Women and the Government of Japan, the Women Leadership Institute’s Kirkuk Safe Space carried out today a focus group discussion with 16 women.

The session tackled “Shouldering responsibility” and means to teaching individuals, including children, how to shoulder responsibility.

On 1 October 2019 a focus group discussion with seven women was organized on the topic of domestic violence. The discussion tackled causes of domestic violence, its consequences and possible means to prevent it.

LEAP project aims to strengthen the resilience of refugees and host commu-



nities by providing immediate and essential services to women affected by conflict, including access to economic

opportunities and effective multi-sectoral services, protection mechanisms and empowerment support.

Short film festivals on minorities and human rights in Iraq

Baghdad, 27 August 2019 - As part of its work on enhancing equality and countering discrimination, in particular in relation to ethnic and religious minorities, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) through its Human Rights Office in United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) held a national short film competition and festival on Minorities and Human Rights in Iraq, and from March to August 2019 held 36 short film festival events.

With support from the Norwegian Government and the Iraqi film industry, short-listed films were screened by Iraqi implementing partner Art City Film and TV Production during the 3By3 Film Festival in Baghdad from 3-5 March 2019. This was the beginning of a nation-wide campaign where the Iraq Human Rights Office promoted the rights of minorities and human rights through film. Over 4158 Iraqis watched the leading short films in 17 out of the 19 governorates of Iraq. Social media and television coverage reached thousands more.

The short films sparked discussion on human rights concerns that need to be addressed including enforced disappearances, protection of minorities and discrimination. In addition to screenings in the Governorates of Iraq, leading short films were shown by OHCHR at events in New York, events in Baghdad, including a gathering of 350 youth hosted by the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights, to raise awareness about human rights concerns of minorities and wider human rights issues in Iraq.

The 24 films on Minorities and Human Rights were reviewed by a panel of three independent and impartial international judges. The judges awarded first place to an animation film "My Music" that celebrates the resilience of the artistic community during war by



telling the story of a pianist. In second place was "Black Lens", a powerful film on freedom of expression and the corrosive effect of corruption on the exercise of human rights. "Give Me My Chance", a film about the ingenuity of a poor child who sneaks into a school to participate in a mathematics class too third place. The directors of all three films secured film grants to assist with the costs of production of their next film projects. These and other costs associated with the Minorities and Human Rights section of 2019 3By3 Film Festival were funded by the Norwegian Government.

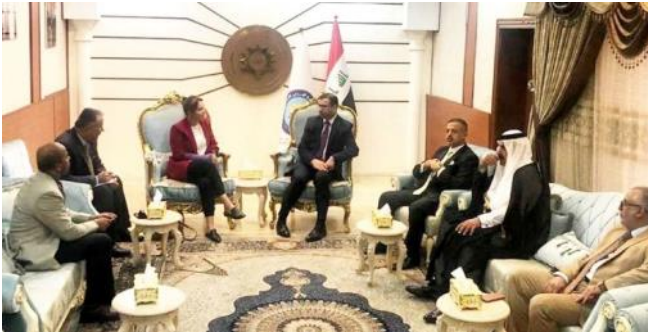
The films sparked vibrant discussion among diverse Iraqi audiences including representatives of Iraqi minorities, religious and tribal leaders, women who head their households, film makers, human rights defenders, academics, local mayors, police, university students, and disability advocates. A wide range of responses to the films were provided during panel discussions and from audience members during question and answer sessions. Participants also emphasized that discussions following the screening of the films enabled a forum for open discussion about human rights issues and concerns in Iraq, including the rights of minorities,

gender-based violence, accountability for conflict atrocities, discrimination and accountability.

Many participants praised the use of short films as an effective vehicle for raising awareness about important human rights issues in Iraq. For example, some called for a greater focus by film makers on solutions to human rights problems in Iraq, including the right to fair and public trials, the prohibitions against slavery, servitude, torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (including coercive interrogation), human rights violations committed online, climate change and its impact on enjoyment of human rights, the right to peaceful assembly, child labour, the right to health, the impact of pollution on enjoyment of human rights, discrimination against women in recruitment and the workplace, restrictions of freedom of movement imposed on many women and girls, denial of human rights through lack of basic services, the needs of the disabled, and weak government institutions which leave human rights including due process unprotected in some areas, allowing militias and tribes to fill the void.

Audiences across Iraq were also given the opportunity to vote for their favourite short film. In contrast to the verdict of the judges at the 3By3 Film Festival, "Cinderella" received the most votes at 32 out of 36 film screening events. This Iraqi retelling of the classic children's story highlights the plight of a girl who is orphaned by war and raised by her grandmother. The young actor who played Cinderella addressed the Najaf Film Festival in April. Her powerful performance was recognized by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq in Baghdad, during a ceremony in March where the directors of the top three films, as selected by the judges, received their film grants.





Baghdad, 3 September 2019 - The head of the UNAMI Human Rights Office and Representative of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Danielle Bell, met today with Dr. Salim Al-Jubouri, head of the Committee of the Disappeared and Missing, and other members of the committee. They discussed the issue of missing persons and enforced disappearances.

Photo courtesy of the Committee's Media Office.



Baghdad, 4 September 2019 - The head of the UNAMI Human Rights Office and Representative of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Iraq, Ms. Danielle Bell, met today with His Excellency Farouq Amin al-Shwani, Minister of Justice. Ms. Bell expressed thanks to the Minister for the Ministry's ongoing collaboration and support for the UNAMI Human Rights Office, and welcomed the continued engagement, particularly in the areas of reporting, detention and related issues concerning human rights.

Recommendations on Iraq's Human Rights situation as Civil Society, UN Member States consult ahead of Universal Periodic Review

Baghdad, 11 September 2019 – Iraqi civil society organisations had the opportunity to engage directly with UN Member States in Iraq at an interactive dialogue in Baghdad today in preparation for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Iraq's human rights situation later this year.

Twenty-six Iraqi civil society representatives covering all governorates of Iraq delivered briefings and participated in a Question and Answer session on the country's human rights performance with representatives from 12 UN Member States, and participants from the European Union, NATO and a number of international organisations. The civil society organisations made recommendations for the greater protection of rights of minorities, women and detainees, a moratorium on the death penalty, amendment of Article 41 of the Iraqi Penal Code in line with relevant human rights standards, and the need for shelters in all governorates for persons at risk.

Co-hosted by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Foundation and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) at UNAMI Headquarters in Baghdad, the dialogue aimed to assist UN Member States to formulate specific and well-targeted recommendations ahead of the 34th Universal Periodic Review Working Group Session in November.

Mr. Tim Petschulat, of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation, emphasized the "essential role" that Iraqi civil society and Member States will play at the UPR. The moderator of the event, Dr.



Herta Daeubler-Gmelin, a professor of International Law and former Minister of Justice in Germany, commended civil society and states for their "strong and necessary engagement in the process which can only strengthen" the UPR process.

Haider Al-Awadi, of the Insan Coalition for Human Rights, an Iraqi civil society organisation, stated that "today's event built our trust and confidence in the UPR process. Civil society organisations engaged in a concrete initiative with the international community. We hope that it leads to our important recommendations being raised by States in Geneva in November."

Danielle Bell, Chief Human Rights Officer at UNAMI, stressed the importance of the pre-UPR session dia-

logue. "Today's dialogue demonstrates a shared commitment to address what Iraqi civil society have identified as most critical, in particular rights of minorities, women and children, and human rights and the administration of justice," said Ms. Bell.



UN Human Rights training for Kurdistan Parliament committees' members

Erbil, 23 September 2019 - UN Human Rights engaged in a dialogue with 17 members of the Kurdistan Regional Parliament legal, cultural and human rights committees, advisers and parliamentary researchers on UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures including Universal Periodic Review.

UN Principles on Parliament and Human Rights, which emphasize the importance of civil society engagement with parliament on human rights issues, were also discussed. Iraq's human rights performance will be reviewed on 11 November, by the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review Working Group.

Two complementary law reform proposals were also discussed, including a Human Rights Act listing all of the

rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and requiring law makers to draft laws in accordance with those rights and to publicly certify that draft laws comply with those rights. The law would also require all public officials to act in accordance with human rights when performing their duties. The judiciary would have authority to refer laws that do not

comply with human rights for review by the legislature.

Establishment of an Anti-Discrimination Commission with authority to investigation and issue binding rulings on discrimination complaints was also discussed. Examples from other jurisdictions were highlighted.



UN Human Rights training for Civil Society and youth in Kurdistan Region

Erbil, 24 September 2019 - UN Human Rights conducted a workshop with 19 members of civil society and youth on how civil society can engage with UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures, including Universal Periodic Review.

UN Principles on Parliament and Human Rights, which emphasize the importance of civil society engagement with parliament on human rights issues, were also discussed. Iraq's human rights performance will be reviewed on 11 November, by the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review Working Group.

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UN Human Rights and Al-Manahil NGO conducted human rights training for 25 young women in Basra



Basra, 24 September 2019 - UN Human Rights and Al-Manahil NGO, conducted human rights training for 25 young women to enhance the capacities and skills of Iraqi women to become visible and effective in political and civic leadership positions.

The training included UNAMI Human Rights Office's mandate, the international human rights system, national and international human rights mechanisms, the principles of equality and non-discrimination, freedom of expression and opinion, the rights of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities, and monitoring, documenting and reporting human rights violations and abuses.

A two-day workshop with the Iraqi State Council (Shura Council) for final revision and finalization of the Anti-Domestic Violence Bill held in Baghdad

Baghdad, 24 September 2019 - UNFPA Iraq, UNAMI Human Rights Office and the Regional Office of UN Human Rights for the Middle East and North Africa, recently facilitated a two-day workshop with the Iraqi State Council (Shura Council) for final revision and finalisation of the Anti-Domestic Violence Bill. If enacted, the Law will protect all members of the family, not only women.



Where we belong

Baghdad, 30 September 2019 - “Where We Belong” is a short documentary that follows the story of two Iraqis – Abbas, an Iraqi Shabak radio host, and Alyaa, a Turkmen lawyer and human rights advocate – as they help ISIL-affected families affected to access justice and compensation. The film offers a rare glimpse of everyday life after ISIL in rural Iraq.

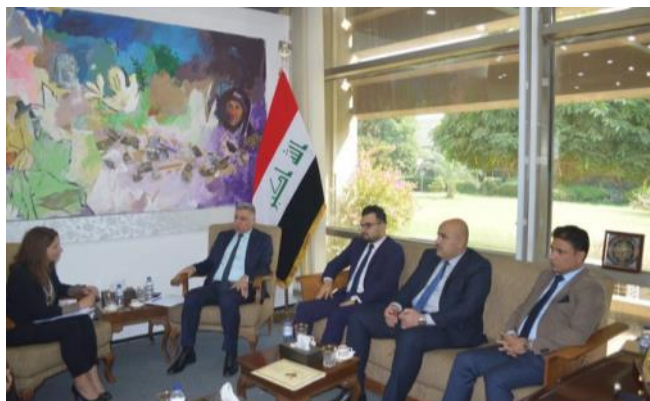
IOM and Minority Rights Group International are now working together to screen “Where We Belong” in different communities in Iraq. On 26 September, the film had its premiere in Iraq, in the diverse city of Kirkuk.

“The Nineveh Plain is like a miniature Iraq, where all ethnicities –Kurdish, Arab, Turkmen, Shabak, and Christian communities – live like siblings. But the actions of ISIL deeply affected minorities in the Nineveh Plain. Through this film, I wanted to show the injustice

we have suffered at the hands of ISIL and draw people’s attention, in the country and abroad, to ISIL’s brutality. I also want to contribute to rebuilding our city so that life can go back to what it was before ISIL,” said Abbas, one of the film’s two leading charac-

ters.

The film was produced by Minority Rights Group International, in cooperation with DARST & Manifest Media, with support from the European Union and The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Baghdad, 10 October 2019 – The head of the UNAMI Human Rights Office and the representative of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Danielle Bell, visited today the Human Rights Committee of the Council of Representatives, where she met with the Chair of the Committee, MP Arshad Salhi and members of the Committee.



Baghdad, 13 October 2019 – The Head of the UNAMI Human Rights Office, Ms. Danielle Bell, visited today The High Commission for Human Rights of Iraq where she met with Mr. Ali Abdel Karim Al-Jarba, Mr. Amer Boulos Zia and Zidan Khalaf Al-Atwani, members of the Board of Commissioners.

Photo courtesy of IHCHR.

UNESCO supports the Minister of Interior of Iraq in providing protection for media institutions in Iraq

Baghdad, 6 October 2019 - Following the attack on several media outlets in Baghdad on Saturday 5 October 2019, the UNESCO Office for Iraq was invited by the country's Minister of Interior, H.E. Yassin al-Yasiri, to attend a special meeting with Iraqi media managers and the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate. During the meeting, the Minister provided information on the dynamics of the attacks on media newsrooms and on other attacks against journalists and media professionals covering the recent demonstrations.

UNESCO expressed its deep concern for these attacks on Iraqi journalists and media. The UNESCO-supported national monitoring mechanism of attacks against journalists confirmed 26 attacks on journalists and 14 cases of media workers being impeded from covering protests in Baghdad and provinces around the country. Furthermore, three satellite channels have been closed by the Iraq National Communication and Media Commission (CMC), and the offices of four TV stations have been raided by unidentified armed groups, causing serious damages.

During the meeting, media representatives called the Ministry of Interior to assure protection for local and international media institutions in Iraq. Mr. Al-Yasiri, expressed his ministry's readiness to provide such special protection by dispatching security forces to any media that is threatened or at risk. He also invited all media to communicate with the Iraqi National Committee for the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, which was formed at the order of the Prime Minister in 2016. Mr. Al-Yasiri also advised that he had directed the Special Investigative Unit for the Protection of Journalists to communicate with journalists and media



workers who are attacked or in need of protection. He stressed that this unit is already conducting investigations into the attacks that have affected media over the past days. The Special Investigative Unit is part of the Ministry of the Interior and was formed with the support of UNESCO through a project funded by the Dutch government.

The UNESCO Office for Iraq in Baghdad has been spearheading the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, in close cooperation with the Iraqi authorities, media representatives, as well as national and interna-

tional specialized NGOs. Under the project "Breaking the Silence: Enhancing Public Accountability on Freedom of Expression and the Safety of Journalists in Iraq," UNESCO has also supported radio programmes focusing on the safety of journalists (e.g. "Media and Security"), and established the "5555" hotline, dedicated to the protection of journalists, in cooperation with CMC and the Ministry of Interior.

According to UNESCO's Observatory of Killed Journalists, Iraq has been one of the most dangerous countries for media professionals, with at least 193 journalists killed since 1993.



UNAMI Human Rights Head visited High Judicial Council

Baghdad, 16 October 2019 - The head of the High Judicial Council, Judge Faik Zidan, received today Ms. Danielle Bell, Director of the UNAMI Human Rights Office.



Head of UNITAD met with President of the Supreme Judicial Council

Baghdad, 18 September 2019 – The United Nations Special Adviser and Head of UNITAD, Mr. Karim Asad Ahmad Khan QC, met with President of the Supreme Judicial Council, Judge Faiq Zidan, to discuss UNITAD ongoing investigative efforts to provide support for the collection of evidence relating to crimes committed by Daesh/ISIL in Iraq.



Special Adviser leads UNITAD visit to Salahuddin

Baghdad, 19 September 2019 - Special Adviser and Head of United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for the Crimes Committed by Da'esh/Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (UNITAD), Mr. Karim A. A. Khan QC conducted a visit to Salahuddin Governorate on 16 September 2019. He was accompanied by Dr. Sallama Al-Khafaji, Chief of National Engagement and Support Unit, as well as UNITAD lawyers and investigators.

In the governorate's capital of Tikrit, Mr. Khan had several meetings with high level officials, including the Deputy-Governor Mr. Ammar Hikmat Abd el-Hassan, and the President of the Court of Investigation H.E. Hon. Fadel Akbar Toufic Al-Bayati. The Special Adviser recalled the various aspects of UNITAD's mandate and stressed the importance of cooperation with local authorities to bring about justice to the victims for the crimes committed by Da'esh, specifically those committed during the Camp Speicher massacre. He also discussed the various avenues of cooperation with Iraqi judicial institutions, including practical steps in which the Camp Speicher investigations can be deepened with the assistance of UNITAD.



Mr. Khan voiced his sympathies for the victims and survivors and valued their continued search for justice. He emphasized in the press conference following his meeting with the Deputy-Governor that the justice UNITAD is helping bring about "is not one born from some notion of collective guilt", but one that holds individuals accountable for specific crimes they committed. He also expressed his appreciation for the Deputy-Governor's continued support of UNITAD as it goes about investigating the heinous crimes committed by Da'esh in accordance with the highest international standards.

The Special Adviser and his team also travelled to the town of Duloiya, where they met with several leaders from Al-Jabouri Tribe, hosted by Sheikh Thaker Al-Jabouri in the presence of Prince Zeid Taher Abed Rabboh Al-Jabouri. During the meeting, Mr. Khan recognized the fallen victims of Da'esh in Duloiya and also highlighted the courage of those who fought against the terrorist organization.

The team concluded their field visit to Salahuddin with a drive by of the cemetery where the victims and fallen fighters were buried together.



Head of UNITAD met with Swedish Ambassador to Iraq

Baghdad, 19 September 2019 - The Special Adviser of Investigative Team and Head of UNITAD, Mr. Karim Khan met with H.E. Lars Ronnås, Swedish Ambassador to Iraq. The Special Adviser recalled UNITAD's mandate, and both parties emphasized the importance of collecting, preserving and storing evidence of ISIS crimes to the highest possible standards.



Security Council unanimously extends mandate of UNITAD



Baghdad, 20 September 2019 – The Security Council remains united and resolute in its support of the work carried out by the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD), as members today unanimously voted to extend its mandate for another year, until 21 September 2020. At the request of the Government of Iraq, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed

by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) for one year, as it continues its work to support domestic efforts to hold Da'esh 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), adopted unanimously, the Council further reaffirmed its support for resolution 2379 (2017) which created the investigative team headed by Special Adviser Mr. Karim A. A. Khan QC, and re-

ferred to the terms of reference contained in document (S/2018/119).

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 Da'esh/ISIL, and took note of the request for the renewal of UNITAD's mandate.

The Council further noted that Da'esh/ISIL constitutes a global threat to international peace and security. It condemned the crimes the organisation committed, and recognised that holding those responsible accountable will further expose these crimes as being used as a tactic of terrorism, and recognised that UNITAD's work could assist in efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremism.

Upon adoption of the resolution, Special Adviser Khan underlined the commitment of the team to work in close cooperation with the Government of Iraq to deliver on the promise made to survivors through resolution 2379 (2017), and noted that the unanimous support of the international community remained vital in the successful delivery of UNITAD's mandate. "The delivery of meaningful accountability through the work of UNITAD will ultimately be the product of a partnership, between our team and the Government of Iraq, and with the engagement and support of all communities in Iraq. The unanimous backing of the Council today, at the request of the Government of Iraq, represents an important recognition of progress made to date, but we have much more to do". Mr. Khan added that UNITAD will redouble efforts to work in close cooperation with the Iraqi authorities so that the justice so long promised to those communities most impacted by ISIL crimes may be delivered.



Nadia Murad Basee and her lawyer Amal Clooney met with the Iraqi and Dutch Foreign Ministers

New York, 27 September 2019 - During the United Nations General Assembly, Nadia Murad Basee and her lawyer Amal Clooney met with the Iraqi and Dutch Foreign Ministers to discuss the importance of using evidence collected by UNITAD to fight against impunity and prosecute crimes against Yazidis and other minorities.



Special Adviser Khan met Lahur Talabany, Director of KRG's Zanyari and Parastin (Zanyari) Intelligence Agency and Counter-Terrorism Group (CTG)

Erbil, 5 October 2019 - The Special Adviser of Investigative Team and Head of UNITAD, Mr. Karim Khan, met today with Lahur Talabany, Director of KRG's Zanyari and Parastin (Zanyari) Intelligence Agency and Counter-Terrorism Group (CTG). They discussed UNITAD mandate to investigate ISIS crimes in Iraq and to ensure that the promise of accountability is realized for the victims in the pursuit of justice.



Statement by the United Nations Investigative Team to promote Accountability for crimes committed by Da'esh/ISIL (UNITAD) on the death of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

Baghdad, 27 October 2019 – Following the death of Da'esh leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, we are reminded of the scale and severity of the crimes committed by this terrorist organization, and the imperative of delivering justice for all victims and impacted communities.

All senior members of Da'esh, those who have led mass killings, organized enslavement of women and girls and played a central role in the promotion of their ideology, must be held accountable.

UNITAD continues its investigative work in Iraq so as to support national authorities in holding accountable those Da'esh members bearing the greatest responsibility for its crimes,

including regional or mid-level commanders.

Inn doing so, we seek to ensure our work is delivered in partnership with the people of Iraq, in common pursuit of accountability. All communities in Iraq have been impacted by the crimes of Da'esh and all have suffered as a result of the actions of Al-Baghdadi and other members of ISIL leadership. As we move forward in our work, we will continue to draw on this unity of purpose in ensuring justice is delivered in

fair and independent criminal proceedings conducted by domestic courts in Iraq and other States.

Through the prosecution of Da'esh members in a court of law, based on incontrovertible evidence, we can ensure that the process of accountability serves to undermine the corrupt and false ideology used to justify the atrocities they have committed, and responds to the legitimate demands of survivors for judicial recognition of the crimes committed against their communities.



United Nations expresses concern over return of IDPs from Ninewa to Al-Anbar, Kirkuk and Salah al-Din governorates

Baghdad, 2 September 2019 - Humanitarian Coordinator of the United Nations in Iraq Marta Ruedas expressed her concerns regarding the means and methods of transfers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in camps in Ninewa Governorate over the past ten days. Since 23 August, Ninewa governorate authorities have begun repatriating IDPs who are not from Ninewa to their governorates of origin, often with little notice or apparent planning. The situation on the ground is fluid, and reported numbers fluctuate, but thus far, approximately 300 families (an estimated 1600 people) have been returned from Hamam Al Alil, As Salamiyah and Nimrud camps in Ninewa to locations in Al-Anbar, Kirkuk and Salah Al-Din governorates. "I am concerned about the lack of organization and advanced communication with affected communities and humanitarian partners," said Ms. Ruedas. "While acknowledging the Government of Iraq's expressed desire for IDPs to return home at the earliest opportunity, all such returns should take place within agreed-upon frameworks and with due consideration for humanitarian principles."

The first round of returns took place on 23 August from Hammam Al-Alil 1 and 2 camps to Al-Anbar governorate, and was characterized by lack of information-sharing and coordination between authorities in Ninewa and Anbar. Protection partners advocated on behalf of those IDP families who expressed fears regarding their personal safety if compelled to return to areas of origin, but such apprehensions were reportedly disregarded by Ninewa au-

thorities. Some families were subsequently denied security clearances by Anbar authorities to enter camps in the province and have since been secondarily displaced.

On 25-26 August, Ninewa authorities began the process of returning families from the Hamam Al-Alil camps back to Kirkuk governorate. Numerous IDP families, especially those from Hawiga, again expressed fears that they would be threatened upon their return and had reportedly received threatening phone calls from community members in their areas of origin warning against return. Despite such concerns, security actors confiscated the IDP's civil identification, informing the families that their documents would only be returned once they boarded the convoy. On 28 August, 116 families (651 people) were returned from Ninewa camps to Laylan 1 camp in Kirkuk governorate.

On 31-August, 135 families from the Hamam Al Alil camp and 15 families from As Salamiyah camp were transported from Ninewa to Basateen Al Sheuokh camp in Salah Al-Din governorate. The Iraqi Red Crescent Society confirmed that it was ready to support the new arrivals. In the early hours of 1-September, three hand grenades were thrown into Basateen camp from outside its perimeter. The grenades caused no damage, injuries or casualties, however, are a cause of great concern for the safety of the camp residents. In parallel, threatening messages are reportedly being shared on social media from community members who are opposed to the new arrivals.

The humanitarian community stands ready to cooperate with Iraqi authori-



ties to support orderly, voluntary and safe return of IDPs. At minimum, IDPs should receive reasonable notice of organized return movements to governorates of origin, adequate information about their relocation options, the ability to choose whether they will relocate to camps in their governorates of origin or to their areas of origin, departure letters before they leave camps to enable them to pass security clearances upon reaching their governorates, and access to return grants to assist their resettlement. Authorities must also ensure that host communities are adequately informed of the impending returns and do everything necessary to mitigate tensions between IDPs and community members. Information-sharing and coordination between authorities of different governorates, and between authorities and humanitarian actors.

Access to durable solutions among IDPs in Iraq: moving in displacement

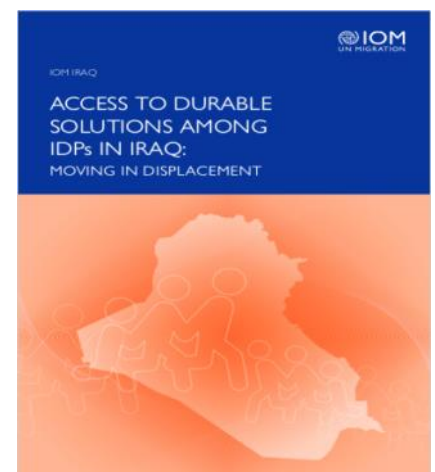
Baghdad, 9 September 2019 - IDPs who change location of displacement but do not return to their district of origin move to find jobs and secure livelihoods, supported by their family networks. They may visit their original homes, but the vast majority have not tried to live in them again. Some are "in process" returnees, meaning they have returned to areas very close to their original homes. They have also witnessed higher levels of damage to their housing, land and property than returnees; they may want to return home but cannot do so because their homes are too badly damaged.

The Access to Durable Solutions Among

IDPs in Iraq: Moving in Displacement report offers key insights into the particular challenges faced by IDP "movers".

IOM Iraq, in partnership with Georgetown University, has been implementing a Longitudinal Study on Durable Solutions for IDPs in Iraq since December 2015. The study has followed 4,000 displaced families living outside of camps who were displaced to Basra, Baghdad, Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk; this report is part of the study.

To download the Report please visit <https://iraq.iom.int/file/48941/download?token=cRET38gZ>



Returnees are residing in durable core-houses constructed by UN-Habitat

Baghdad, 7 September 2019 - Returnees are residing in durable core-houses constructed by UN-Habitat with generous funding from the Government of Japan. The Ramadi, Fallujah, and Karma sites were planned and constructed as cities extensions where vulnerable returnees can have access to basic services and livelihood opportunities.



IOM - UN Migration assisted with Non-Food Items (NFI) to returnee families in Anbar Governorate

Baghdad, 11 September 2019 - IOM - UN Migration assisted with Non-Food Items (NFI) to returnee families in Anbar Governorate. With funds from the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, 417 kits were distributed in Al Baghdadi sub-district and 366 kits in Heet district, including mattresses, gas cooker, plastic mat, kitchen set, rechargeable light, solar light, plastic sheet, hygiene kit and bed sheets. Alaa, who returned from Haditha to Al Baghdadi in 2017, said: "When I displaced to Haditha in 2014, I lost everything. We left everything behind. My car was stolen and my house was burned down. All these items will help me, my wife and my three children to get by."

On 15 September 2019, with funding from Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster

Assistance, IOM - UN Migration has distributed 381 Non-Food Item (NFI) kits to families returning to Rutba district. This assistance will significantly contribute to these families' wellbeing, as these returnees had lost

most of their properties and belongings during the conflict with ISIL. The non-food items include mattresses, gas cooker, plastic mat, kitchen set, rechargeable light, solar light, plastic sheet, hygiene kit and bed sheets.



SRSG Hennis-Plasschaert visited Ameriyat al-Fallujah IDP camp

Baghdad, 15 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Ameriyat al-Fallujah IDP camp

with Iraqi Parliament Speaker, Mr. Mohammed al-Halbousi, today to observe firsthand the obstacles to IDP returns to areas of origin. Safe, dignified, voluntary returns cannot be sus-



tained without cooperation on reconstruction, social cohesion and community engagement. The Special Representative also joined in a ceremony of the opening of the Bzaibiz bridge at the city of Fallujah.

More support is needed to ensure accessible quality health services for a quarter of a million Syrian refugees in Iraq

Baghdad, 22 September 2019 – The provision of health services for approximately 250 000 Syrian refugees in Iraq remains a major challenge for the local health authorities, the World Health Organization (WHO), and humanitarian responders in Iraq.

The shortage of resources, which resulted from the internal displacement crisis in 2014, coupled by conflict in many parts of the country, have burdened the already stretched health system and affected efforts to ensure availability of an accessible health package in 8 Syrian refugee camps and hosting communities in governorates of the northern Kurdistan Region of Iraq, mainly Erbil and Duhok.

In September 2018, WHO resumed a wide-scale health support programme covering health facilities in Syrian refugee camps in Iraq. The programme, which was funded by the US Department of States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, succeeded in achieving record-time gains.

Nine primary health care centres in refugee camps in Erbil and Duhok were furnished and equipped with various medical devices and laboratory equipment to strengthen essential health services at primary health care level.

Meanwhile, the 3 secondary and tertiary health care facilities of Reparin Paediatric Hospital in Erbil, Shiar Hospital in Sulaymaniyah, and Heevi Paediatric Teaching Hospital in Duhok were supported through the provision of furniture and various medical devices and life-saving equipment in service of the internally displaced population, Syrian refugees, and hosting community in governorates of the northern Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Darashakran refugee camp, about 50 kilometres to the north of Erbil, accommodates over 13 000 Syrian refugees, evacuated from different conflict areas in Syria.

“The clinic in Darashakran refugee camp resumed receiving between 150 to 160 patients a day, thanks to the significant supply of medicines and medical technologies provided by WHO,” said Ms Khunaw Sarok, Darashakran health clinic manager.

“Two years ago, we struggled with an acute shortage of medicine, medical supplies, and equipment. We gratefully acknowledge the support of WHO and US Department of States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration for enabling us to sufficiently respond to health needs in the camp again”.



Hiba Yousif, a 23 year-old Syrian refugee fled the Syrian unrest to Iraq in 2013. She is a mother of 5 children, three of whom were born in Darashakran camp; the last was only a few weeks old when we met with her at the camp clinic in June this year.

“The health services in the camp were poor and limited to the essentials in the past 2 years,” Hiba said. “ But we recently touched a significant improvement in the quality and quantity of health care delivery in the camp, including the referral services which saved me from a premature delivery less than a month ago.”

“Today, I brought my newborn baby (Yahya) to the paediatrician to check his eyes; they are irritated and tear a lot,” she explained.

Looking at her baby with a beautiful smile, Hiba expressed her thanks and appreciation to the health facility management and to WHO for providing a comprehensive package of health services and making emergency referrals possible.

At the waiting area, we also met with Nahid Hassan, a 35-year-old woman who came complaining of severe abdominal pain. She was recommended to have an ultrasound by the clinic doctor to identify the problem. “Fortunately, the centre has the device but is still waiting for a doctor to operate it,” she explained. “ Having a sonar in the private sector is too costly, so thanks to WHO, donors and the camp management for trying to make this service available to us for free.”

The support covered other areas like sexual-based violence, mental health, and psychosocial support services. As of July this year, WHO trained more than 250 health care providers from different governorates on managing cases of women subjected to intimate partner sexual violence in Syrian refugee camps and hosting community.

In addition, more than 50 health practi-

tioners were also trained on the use of Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) Intervention Guide to enhance and facilitate mental health service delivery in target governorates where displaced population and Syrian refugees are accommodated.

Furthermore, WHO covered all Syrian refugee camps by the Early Warning Alert Response Network (EWARN) and trained more than 128 staff in reporting sites in Erbil and Dahuk on the proper use of EWARN standardized reporting and disease definition.

“The demand is still immense and we have to address other health issues like the need for assistive technologies for those suffering physical disabilities. We do call upon local authorities, donors, and humanitarian partners to provide more support to minimize the health care cost for this vulnerable community,” the camp clinic manager concluded.

In 2018, WHO received a generous contribution of US\$ 2.5 million from the US Department of States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to increase the health security and resilience of Syrian refugees living in Iraq. The grant contributed to providing comprehensive primary health care, referral services, and rehabilitation care for the disabled and mentally ill patients in refugee camps and hosting communities in Erbil, Dahuk and Sulaymaniyah governorates.

The contribution also covered the procurement and distribution of essential medicines, and medical supplies and equipment to selected health facilities serving the refugees in target governorates.

WHO would like to express its gratitude to the US Department of States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration for their generous support which has enabled WHO and partners to resume quality health care delivery and ambulatory services to all Syrian refugees in Iraq.

Training on broadcast and photojournalism for refugees, IDPs and hosts held in Erbil

Erbil, 27 September 2019 - Nearly 45 Syrian refugees, internally displaced persons and members of host communities are now being trained on broadcast and photojournalism to become community reporters. They will be at the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr (UKH) in Erbil for two weeks and continue training remotely for months afterwards. The EU Regional Trust Fund MADAD is funding this project under UNDP's Headway programme to help creative youth enhance their skills and be better positioned in the job market.



UNHCR welcomes new funding from the European Union to assist vulnerable displaced Iraqis

Baghdad, 1 October 2019 - UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, welcomes a new donation of EUR 3 million from the EU to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Iraq. This funding will contribute to ensure the provision of legal assistance and civil documentation to over 30,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) across Iraq and to guarantee that camp management and camp coordination services (CCCM) are in place in all UNHCR-managed camps in Ninewa Governorate.

While Iraq recovers from conflict, the needs of its population diversify. Some 4.3 million people have returned to their homes and are restarting their lives, however the conditions for sustainable return are not yet met across all the country. Continued assistance for the 1.5 million individuals who remain displaced and the communities hosting them is essential to ensure a stable and peaceful recovery.

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, said "This new humanitarian assistance will be instrumental to help the most vulnerable populations in Iraq, especially the displaced. It is es-

sential for the stability of the country. The people of Europe stand in full solidarity with the people of Iraq in this critical phase."

Guaranteeing access to legal assistance and the obtention of civil documentation is a key aspect of recovery as it is a basic requirement for displaced persons to establish their legal identity, access public services, return to their homes, and exercise their basic rights. The generous donation from the EU will secure that IDPs have access to these fundamental services, ensuring that returns are conducted in a safe and sustainable manner. For those living in camps, support remains critical. In Ninewa Governorate alone, over 50,000 IDPs (8,300 families) are still living in UNHCR-managed camps. With the EU's aid, UNHCR will be able to ensure adequate services and key camp infrastructures are in place to support those living in them.

"While the situation in Iraq has notably improved during the past years and the country is steadily transitioning and advancing into a new post-conflict phase, we need to continue supporting its people in their recovery

and reconstruction efforts. Particularly the more than 1.5 million Iraqis still affected by displacement and wishing to rebuild their lives. This generous contribution by the EU enables us to be responsive and compassionate with those that continue relying heavily on humanitarian assistance. With ongoing support, we will stand with the people of Iraq until complete recovery is achieved" said Ayman Gharaibeh, UNHCR Representative in Iraq.



UNFPA partner in Duhok distributed dignity kits to 20 families who've arrived today to Domiz 1 coming from North Eastern Syria

Duhok, 14 October 2019 - UNFPA partner in Duhok distributed dignity kits to 20 families who've arrived today to Domiz 1 coming from North Eastern Syria.

UNFPA prepositioned dignity kits (women hygiene items) to respond to the urgent needs of women/ girls coming to the Kurdistan, Iraq looking for refuge.



IOM: First families cross into Iraq after crisis in North Eastern Syria

Duhok, 15 October 2019 - On Saturday night (12/10) almost 200 Syrian Kurds started crossing the border into Iraq's Kurdistan Region (KRI) to escape bombardments in North Eastern Syria. The families crossed unofficial entry points into KRI, through the villages of Masaka and Sahela.

A day after their entry into Iraq, 182 Syrians were brought by local security forces to a processing center near the Sahela border in Duhok, KRI's northernmost governorate.

IOM deployed Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RART) in Sahela, to receive the Syrian families and evaluate their fitness to travel further.

Three medical professionals, including one psychologist, were on-site to carry out emergency health assessments. Roughly 30 patients sat for consultations; children were mostly found to be suffering from upper respiratory tract infections, tonsillitis and the flu; while among adults some of the health issues examined by the doctors were post-surgery complications, hyperthyroidism, and asthma.

The medical team also assisted two pregnant women, who were found to be in stable condition.

All patients were examined and given the necessary treatment where available. For cases that could not be treated immediately, follow up care will be organized.

At the processing centre, IOM has also provided food and drinks for the fami-

lies. All individuals were then transferred by bus to Domiz 1 - a refugee camp in Duhok Governorate.

"IOM Iraq is gravely concerned by the emerging crisis in Northern Syria, that is putting thousands of already vulnerable individuals in harm's way," said IOM Iraq Chief of Mission Gerard Waite. "In collaboration with UN partners, IOM Iraq will support Syrians as they cross the border, and protect and assist those in need."

IOM Iraq will continue to monitor arrivals the border. A REMAP study, linked to the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) initiative, will be carried out to assess the numbers of Syrians crossing into Iraq through official border points.

IOM Iraq will support the UN response to these inflows by providing transpor-

tation that can take Syrian families from the reception facilities to the camps; Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) services; health assessments (including mental health and psychosocial consultations) especially at the border; by monitoring flows for the production of DTM reports; providing shelter kits and other non-food items as needed; and by communicating with communities to facilitate information sharing.

In a related activity, UNFPA partner in Duhok distributed dignity kits to 20 families who've arrived today to Domiz 1 coming from North Eastern Syria.

UNFPA prepositioned dignity kits (women hygiene items) to respond to the urgent needs of women/ girls coming to the Kurdistan, Iraq looking for refuge.



High level meeting held in Erbil about another possible refugee crisis caused by the new conflict in Syria

Erbil, 20 October 2019 – The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, attended today a high-level meeting of the UN Country Team (represented by UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, OCHA, WHO, and UNFPA) with the Kurdistan Regional Government Ministers of Interior, Education, Health, Planning, Department of Foreign Relations, and Governors of Dohuk, Suleimanyiah, and the Deputy Governor of Erbil. The ministers and governors expressed their concerns about another possible refugee crisis caused by the new conflict in Syria, and they described continuing difficulties with supporting more than a million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. The UN officials explained

their efforts to find durable solutions for IDPs and their readiness to respond

to a new crisis with the support of the international community.



Coordinated relief activities for refugees moving to Iraq as a result of the new conflict in Syria discussed in Erbil

Erbil, 20 October 2019 – The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Ms. Marta Ruedas, met with country directors and other representatives of non-governmental organizations to discuss coordinating relief activities for refugees moving to Iraq as a result of the new conflict in Syria. More than 4,000 new refugees have crossed into Iraq in the past week, joining over 250,000 others who have fled since the conflict in Syria began. The meeting was convened by the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI), a forum of over 180 organizations working to provide aid and support in Iraq for civilians affected by conflict.



Increasing numbers of Syrian refugees arrive to Iraq



Dohuk, 23 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Bardarash camp. The camp in Dohuk Governorate recently reopened to host incoming refugees from Syria.

Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert thanked the authorities for facilitating the movement of refugees into Bardarash camp and commended the work of the humanitarian response teams. “They have made a tremendous effort, working around the clock to help those in need.” She also expressed great concern: “The number of refugees is growing and the camp will soon reach its maximum capacity of 11,000. Further support from the international community is urgently needed.”

With new refugees arriving on a daily basis in increasingly high numbers, the camp’s population has more than dou-

bled in the last four days and now shelters approximately 10,000 people. UNHCR and partners are providing basic

services in Bardarash camp, including tents, food, and core relief items such as mattresses, blankets, and hygiene kits. Facilities are being expanded to give all newcomers access to sufficient water, showers and latrines. Healthcare and protection services are being provided, including the identification of unaccompanied or separated children and people with specific needs. Refugees with family members in the Kurdistan Region are allowed to join them in their towns and communities after registration.

“The Kurdistan Region authorities have been key in welcoming these refugees and addressing their immediate needs,” said Ayman Gharaibeh, UNHCR Representative in Iraq. “It has not been easy given the pace of arrivals, and we urgently need to identify and start preparing new camps to receive more people.”



With the support of UNHCR: Inauguration of the first National Identification Document Centre in Ninewa Governorate

Mosul, 31 October 2019 - The Directorate of Civil Affairs, Passports and Residency in Ninewa Governorate, with the support of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, inaugurated today 31 October 2019, the first national Identification Document centre in Ninewa Governorate, which will provide Iraqi citizens with a national ID card. This national card will replace two civil documents – civil ID status data and citizenship certificate.

The national card will help thousands of Iraqis who lost civil documentation during recent conflicts, allowing them to prove their identity, and to gain access to public services and government assistance programmes. It will also reduce identity fraud and administrative and legal problems that occur due to name similarities.

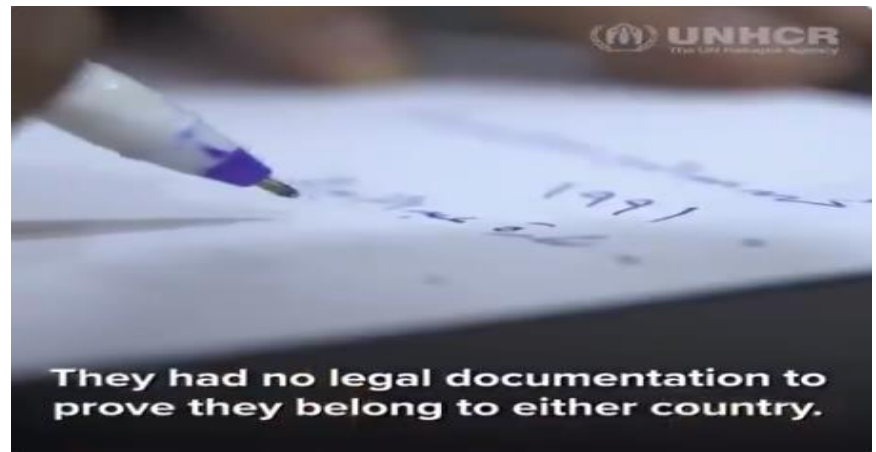
Many internally displaced persons have lost, damaged or not been able to obtain civil status documentation, including birth certificates, as a result of factors linked to their forced displacement. More than 600,000 people across Ninewa will benefit from this initiative by the end of 2020.

Across Iraq, 8 per cent of out-of-camp IDP households, 10 per cent of camp-based IDP households, 8 per cent of

returnee households and 6 per cent of households who remained in their homes reported missing documentation, without which they are unable to exercise basic civil rights.

“The lack of civil documentation among internally displaced persons is a major programmatic priority for UNHCR and other humanitarian protection actors in Iraq,” said Ayman Gharaibeh, UNHCR Representative in Iraq. “It has the potential to dramatically improve the lives of Ninewa’s citizens, as well as assist local authorities ensure the provision of public services.”

Since 2017, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has been working with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior to implement mobile documentation centres in Ninewa, Erbil, Duhok, Sulaymaniyah, and with legal aid partners to assist thousands of displaced families across Iraq to acquire essential legal documents that they need to prove their identity, as well as to access public services and assistance. In addition to this first centre in East Mosul, new centres will soon be opened in Bartella, Nimrud, Zummar, Rabia’a, Hammam Al Alil and Qayyarah sub-districts.



Stabilization and Development

Diyala streets: connecting people and boosting business



Diyala, 26 August 2019 - On the banks of the Diyala River, the provincial capital of Ba’aqubah swelters at a mid-summer high of 44 degrees Celsius. As the wind picks up over the warmer months, pedestrians battle the dust and dry heat; moving around the city can be tough.

In an area still recovering from significant destruction during ISIL occupa-

tion and liberation, UNDP Iraq is working to improve mobility for residents by helping to lessen the burden of moving around in this desert-like climate. The Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme has rehabilitated 29 roads across Diyala Governorate since 2017 – with 10 in the capital alone.

As we walk down Al-Hassan Road, a bustling street in central Ba’aqubah, it

becomes clear that the hot, black asphalt – rolled just two months prior, has increased more than just vehicle and foot traffic.

Boosting business

“The new street is clean and beautiful. Since the rehabilitation of the road, the prices of homes on this street have increased and the demand for buying and selling retail spaces and homes has risen; so more people enter my store.”

Havel, has owned his real estate agency for one year. Situated on a busy stretch of Al-Hassan Road, he estimates a 15% increase in foot traffic thanks to the new curbed roadside.

For Havel’s neighbor Mustapha, owner of a small mechanic workshop, business has also improved. “My shop is small, so I must do my repairs on the road,” he explains. Mustapha’s job is now much easier, and the repairs are completed faster, so he is able to welcome more customers in throughout the day.

Across town, we enter Gatoon Al-Razi neighbourhood on Door Al-Mandali

Diyala streets: connecting people and boosting business *(continued)*

road. With UNDP Iraq support, this street was leveled and compacted and it too is helping small business owners to boost their income. “The road has become much more accessible for vehicles and people”, explains 25-year-old, Saif. “Previously, community members tried to repair the road themselves, but were not successful.”

Since the road was leveled, Saif is able to keep a much cleaner and well-stocked shop, “Not as much dirt and mud is being walked in from the street, and my deliveries arrive right to the door – the truck wasn’t able to get this close before due to the rough road surface,” describes Saif.

Creating a space for community

For the 8,000 students of Ba-aqubah Technical Institute, the upgraded roadways were also a very welcome sight. Marwan, a member of the Institute’s Administrative staff, saw a noticeable reduction in absenteeism after the road works were completed, “Somewhere close to 1 in 5 students were skipping class – especially in winter and rain – due to the mud. Many have no choice but to travel on foot and would rather to stay home than arrive to class caked with mud or risk becoming sick,” de-

scribes Marwan. “And, if students did attend class on those wet days, they would walk all the mud indoors, so you can imagine how much happier the cleaners are now.”

“Thanks to the rehabilitation of Al-Hassan road, students are able to walk to class, rain, hail or shine,” says Marwan. “There are very few who don’t make it anymore.”

For 38-year-old Anram and his family, the issue of dirt and mud was also resolved when the street was rehabilitated. “My family has lived in this home since 1974, and my grandmother tells me that last time the road was renovated was in the 1980’s. Now, the time and effort required to clean our home is reduced. When we return from the street, we aren’t walking in mud and dirt, which is great for a home of 39 people...there is a lot of coming and going”

Keeping the city clean

As teams of street cleaners make their way through the district, residents are now noticing that they move faster on Al-Hassan Road. “Cleaning used to be more difficult. People would throw their rubbish out of cars or as they walk by. Now that Al-Hassan Road is a clean, paved street...they don’t throw it,” ex-

plains Mohammed and Ala, dressed in fluoro vests as they collect what trash has been left by the curb.

“The cost for cleaning on this street has reduced 50% since the rehabilitation has been completed,” adds, Head of cleaning services for Tahrer neighbourhood, Ahmed.

Together the roads rehabilitated in Diyala with UNDP Iraq’s support are enabling improved mobility for approximately 195,200 residents and their families in Ba’aqubah, and better business for roadside shop owners. Seeing paved roads has also given residents a renewed sense of pride in their city, resulting in less trash on the roadways. These projects were made possible with the generous funding of the Government of Germany in coordination with the Governorate office of Diyala.

The Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP) promotes the recovery and resilience of communities vulnerable to multi-dimensional shocks associated with large-scale returns and protracted displacement of Iraqis and Syrian refugees. This is achieved through a medium-term programming, integrating crisis management capacity building, rehabilitating basic service infrastructure, livelihood recovery and social cohesion.

A second chance for Amal and her family

Baghdad, 3 September 2019 - Amal Ahmad Mohammad lived a quiet life in the village of Hawija, in Kirkuk Governorate, 238 kilometres north of Baghdad. No more than five years ago, she and her husband were farmers.

“It was a simple and happy life,” said Amal, a 43-year-old mother of three children.

These good times for Amal and others in her village came to an end when the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) attacked her village.

Amal witnessed several killings by ISIL against her community members. She also witnessed people dying due to the lack of drinking water.

“Day after day, I was feeling more and more depressed. I was also noticing that my husband and my children were not smiling anymore. One day, I woke up and decided that we should get out of this nightmare.”

After convincing her husband to leave their village, Amal and her family ran away one night leaving behind all their possessions. Amal and her family kept going until they finally reached the Laylan camp in Kirkuk Governorate. At last they were safe, but that was not the end of their suffering.

“Life in the camp was hard because we did not have money. I had to send my kids to sell various types of things on the streets. I was worried about them. They often came back home crying because people were exploiting or mocking them.”

It was very hard for Amal to see the misery of her children, while she and her husband were unable to do much to help.

The staff of the Women Empowerment Organisation learned about Amal’s dire situation and spoke with her to see if they could offer a helping hand.

“At that moment my life started to change for the better,” she recalled.

Amal participated in a business skills development course and received a small grant for a business start-up provided by UN Women in partnership with the Women Empowerment Organization, under the “Women’s Leadership, Empowerment, Access & Protection in Crisis Response” (LEAP) project. Funded by the Government of Japan, the LEAP project aims to strengthen the resilience of refugees and host communities by providing immediate and essential services to women affected by conflict.



Amal was one of 80 women who qualified to receive such assistance from the LEAP project over the past year, receiving training opportunities on business skills and grants to their income-generating projects.

“I was so happy. I started my project by opening a small grocery shop,” Amal said, expressing confidence that she would overcome the challenges facing her, including some people’s views that women cannot work or own a business. “I continue to work hard even though people in the camp do not accept the idea that women can have their chances in life by working to earn money,” said Amal.

“This project saved my life and saved my children from bullies. I am now happier and more positive than ever.”

UNIDO: Rebuilding Bashiqá's Tahini Industry Post-ISIS

Bashiqá, 10 September 2019 - Bashiqá, a diverse sub-district located 12 kilometers northeast of Mosul is well known for the production of tahini, a thick paste made from roasted and ground sesame seeds.

Popular in the Middle East, tahini is a staple in most households, often used as a simple breakfast item alongside date syrup and eaten with bread, or as an ingredient in popular Mediterranean foods such as hummus.

Prior to the rise of ISIS in 2014 and the occupation of the sub-district in June of that year, 25 tahini factories operated in the area.

However, the takeover of Bashiqá by ISIS destroyed this booming industry and forced the community to seek shelter elsewhere, becoming Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) mostly in the Kurdistan Region of northern Iraq.

"Before 2014, we had very developed tahini factories," one factory owner, Sabah Jaboor explained. "When ISIS came, we lost everything."

Jaboor, a 67-year old retired school teacher first opened his factory during the first Gulf War in 1990.

After the sub-district was liberated in late 2016 and the security situation improved, IDPs began to return home.

"When we returned, we found that our factories had been looted, burned, partially damaged or completely destroyed," he added.

After returning, he found that half of his factory had been demolished in an airstrike, equipment and materials had been looted or destroyed, and he had also lost 350 olive trees and poultry.

Jaboor says that he once provided jobs to nearly 40 people. Since reopening his factory last year, he now only has the capacity to employ six to eight laborers. Another factory owner in Bashiqá, Sayd Haji, has been in the tahini production business since 1980, as his family has been working in the industry for generations.

"I lost \$800,000 because of ISIS," Haji explained, as walls in his factory were demolished and all equipment and raw materials were stolen.

Haji once employed nearly 45 people and produced over 10 tons of tahini per day. Now he's down to less than 20 employees and only producing four tons per day of tahini.

Today, only 17 factories have reopened, but the process has been difficult and production has decreased dramatically from what it once was.

"But we have will and vision. We were strong and were able to reopen our factories by working during displacement and saving money," Jaboor said.



"We need international support to rebuild," he explained. "It's urgent and migration has become a disease due to lack of job security."

This is how the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) became involved in assisting to reestablish the tahini industry in Bashiqá, Nineveh. Jovita Culaton Viray, Chief Technical Adviser said, "It is part of the process to help revive the local economy and generate employment in Bashiqá. The revitalization of the industries operational prior to the conflict and support of economic livelihood activities along a value chain can play a crucial role in this process".

By providing training in modern factory operation techniques as well as food safety and hygiene, factory owners will improve their business operations which will eventually allow for more employability opportunities within the community.

"We focused on tahini because Bashiqá is well known for its tahini production, especially with the local variety of sesame seeds that they use," explained UNIDO's National Coordinator Mahmood Khoshnaw.

He added that 16 tahini factory owners participated in the ten-day training that took place in Baradaresh beginning in mid-August.

"We focused on food safety, hygiene, factory layout and all of the technical parameters required of such food processing factories to operate in a safe environment and produce safe and hygienic food," Khoshnaw said.

The training also covered business and financial management as well as soft entrepreneurial skills.

UNIDO will allow time for the factory owners to implement what they have learned in the training and plan on a follow up assessment by late Septem-

ber.

Based on the assessment, Khoshnaw said that the project will give additional technical assistance including some equipment support to the beneficiaries of the training.

Participants in the program were happy with the training provided by UNIDO and are looking forward to implementing their newfound knowledge to improve their factories and help create jobs in the community.

"We received a lot of new information not only for tahini, but also for foods processing and safety and how to store foods to prevent bacteria and contamination," Haji said. "We also learned about factory layout and managing the factory."

Jaboor also commented on the results of the UNIDO training.

He explained that the layout and management of his factory was very "chaotic" before.

"It was as if we never had a factory before. The instructor is very knowledgeable and we are pleased with him," Jaboor said.

He added that everything in the training was beneficial. He highlighted some important points which hadn't been implemented before such as learning the organizational chart for employees, management of the factory layout, and the physical and mechanical process of how to properly clean the machines as well as food hygiene and safety standards.

"In this training program, we were exposed to a lot of new information," he said. "As a teacher, I can say that this is a very successful training program."

UNIDO is implementing the Tahini factory training with funding from the Japanese Government in order to help revive the local economy of Bashiqá, Nineveh, Iraq.

IOM organized cash-for-work 10-day clean-up campaign of Baiji district's main streets

Baiji, 8 September 2019 - The International Organization for Migration (IOM), in coordination with the Directorate of Civil Defense and the Municipality of Baiji, organized a large-scale cleaning campaign in Baiji district, Salah al-Din Governorate. Approximately 500 workers, men and women alike, participated in cleaning the district's main streets.

"I was born in Baiji and so were my children; our roots are here. Bringing Baiji back to life by cleaning it to make it look better will contribute to bringing back its pride," said Ihsan, one of the returnees to Baiji district.

With funding from the US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Ihsan and

500 others received cash for the 10-day cleanup campaign in Baiji.

"We hope that there will be other such

campaigns to encourage more people to participate in cleaning the city," concluded Ihsan.



New Head of ECHO in Iraq visits UNFPA Iraq Office in Baghdad

Baghdad, 11 September 2019 - UNFPA Representative Dr Oluremi Sognuro welcomed in his office in Baghdad today Mr. Christopher Reltien, the newly appointed Head of the EU Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) mission in Iraq.

The discussions focused on the bilateral efforts and the EU's support for the reproductive health and gender-based violence interventions led by UNFPA and how to better serve the women and girls across Iraq. The talks also tackled the funding challenges as the country transitions from the humanitarian context while the humanitarian needs remain significant.

Mr. Reltien highlighted the importance of protection, especially in the fields of reproductive health and gender-based violence prevention and mitigation. He also expressed the EU's interest in raising awareness on reproductive health education in the different governorates, beginning in Kerbala.

Dr Sognuro expressed his gratitude for the EU's long-standing trust in UNFPA in Iraq which translated into a contribution of EUR 23.5 million since 2015 in support of the Fund's humanitarian interventions. He also briefed the new ECHO representative in Iraq on the ECHO-funded projects, especially those in Mosul, and on the pro-

gress made in the Iraq 2020 Census's preparations.

They also emphasized the importance of family planning in the development and prosperity of Iraq, reiterating their commitment to work with the Government of Iraq to strengthen the reproductive health sector so that no women or girls are left behind.



IOM rehabilitated the water treatment plants in Taj Al-Salam

Baghdad, 12 September 2019 - Receding waters due to drought, and deteriorating conditions at the main water treatment plant in Taj Al-Salam community in Missan Governorate, have put over 6,000 people's health at risk.

IOM rehabilitated the plants with support from U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, improving water flow and quality and allowing the community to access potable water.



Safe airports for safer citizens: UNODC AIRCOP supports Iraq in addressing terrorism and organized criminal networks at airports

Baghdad, 12 September 2019 - 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 to spread their illicit and criminal activities transnationally.

The United Nations Security Council has adopted several Resolutions relevant for the fight against the travel of terrorists by air, including Resolution 2178 (2014) focused on stemming the flow of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) attempting to travel to conflict zones, Resolution 2396 (2017) focused on returning and relocating FTFs as well as 2482 (2019), which addresses the link between terrorism and organized crime and includes further strong emphasis on air passenger data.

To support Iraq in implementing these Resolutions, 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 inter-

diction 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.

The workshop, delivered by experts from the INTERCOPS programme of the Brazilian Federal Police experts, aimed at strengthening the skills of law enforcement officers at Iraqi international airports for the identification and interdiction of suspicious passengers. The Brazilian experts shared their knowledge and experience on the verification of travel/identity documents, use of evidence-based risk assessments, the collection and analysis of travel data to identify individuals posing a possible threat, as well as screening procedures respecting national and international legal frameworks in terms of human rights and non-discrimination.

The security architecture of Guarulhos International Airport, in Sao Paulo, Brazil was used as the basis for a case study, thereby allowing officials from various law enforcement agencies operating at the Iraqi international airports to learn about how a collaboration and partnership network was established

within and between Brazilian airports. Such inter-agency network, which is also one of the key pillars supported by AIRCOP at participating airports, enhances the ability and chances to detect and interdict suspicious passengers throughout the various points across the airport.

During the opening ceremony, Mr. Akiira Endo, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Japanese Embassy, assured the continuous support of his country to the people of Iraq, which was illustrated by assistance to several projects related to strengthening Iraqi legislation in countering terrorism in the past five years.

The event was marked by the wide presence of all relevant agencies, reflecting the commitment and willingness for collaboration with national institutions and with the international community. An on-site practical session at Baghdad international airport followed the classroom training, during which participants had the opportunity to reflect on their current practices and to discuss with experts the possible challenges and means of development; particularly in terms of passport control and luggage scanning.

Since the expansion of AIRCOP to the Middle East and North Africa in 2017, it has already delivered 30 national, regional and global activities to more than 500 operational frontline officers at international airports across the region. Such activities focused on strengthening frontline officers' capacity to perform advanced risk assessment of passengers traveling to and from their airports, on applying better profiling and investigative techniques, as well as facilitating operational information exchange and fostering cooperation between international airports of the region.



The Bzaibiz bridge at the city of Fallujah, Anbar opened

Fallujah, 15 September 2019 - The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine

Hennis-Plasschaert, joined today the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Mr. Mohammed Al-Halbousi, in a

ceremony of the opening of the Bzaibiz bridge at the city of Fallujah, Anbar.



WFP in Iraq is working with the Ministry of Education to resume “School Feeding Program” from next month

Baghdad, 16 September 2019 - The World Food Programme (WFP) in Iraq is working with the Ministry of Education to resume “School Feeding Program” from next month, reaching 300,000 children across 11 governorates. With the support and expertise from WFP over the coming academic year, School Feeding in Iraq is nutritious, ending short term hunger – and encourages girls to stay longer in secondary education, boosting learning outcomes. In local communities, WFP is also working to enhance women’s economic empowerment through providing employment opportunities in small businesses, suppliers and packaging centres.

Over the course of the year, WFP is

moving from direct implementation towards a government-owned school feeding programme. The Iraq Govern-

ment will take full ownership of the school feeding programme from the 2020/21 school year.



New agricultural training centre opens doors for Iraqi IDPs

Erbil, 17 September 2019 - An agricultural training centre, constructed to support internally displaced Iraqis, officially opened its doors at the Harsham Refugee Camp in Erbil, the largest city in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The facility is part of a United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) project in collaboration with the [applied] Foreign Affairs Lab - University of Applied Arts Vienna on Resilience-building through immediate livelihood and income generation for internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, and host communities in the Harsham camp. The project is funded by the Government of Austria, building upon the initiative for Integrated stabilization, economic recovery and reconstruction support for displaced persons returnees in Iraq funded by the Government of Japan.

The centre is an integrated training facility for agro-processing, which hosts five greenhouses, and is managed in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture – Research Centre in Erbil. The training programme there introduces families to greenhouse farming, as well as small-scale agro-processing, beekeeping and fruit-processing.

At the inauguration of the centre, Begard Talabani, 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 Re-



gion and the country as a whole.”

One graduate from the greenhouse farming course, 29-year-old Mansour Omer Khalat, explained, “During the training, I learned how to sow the seeds, how to transplant the seedlings into the greenhouse and other information about agriculture. I didn’t know anything about greenhouses before taking the training. It is a new technique for me. Before coming to the Harsham camp, my whole family has been working in agriculture for a long time, but I was in college. I was studying to become a teacher.”

The majority of the families that reside in the Harsham camp have been displaced from the Ninewa and other northern governorates of Iraq affected by the recent conflict. The training courses open new doors for them. The vegetables, planted during the greenhouse course, will partly provide for their own needs with the excess sold on the local market and in the Harsham camp, thus offering a steady source of

income. The beekeeping and the fruit-processing courses also create produce for the local market via the newly established Harsham Agricultural Association.

The Harsham Agricultural Association aims to provide a sustainable outlook beyond the project closure by giving opportunities to its members to pursue and diversify agricultural initiatives in the light of stabilization and a process of return for those communities affected by the conflict in the region.

For many years, UNIDO has been actively engaged in the northern governorates of Iraq in the promotion of social cohesion and acceleration of economic recovery. This newly inaugurated agricultural training centre provides an innovative and unique platform that can be further expanded as an agro-industrial training centre to support of rural communities in accessing mechanization and capacity-building in order to move up the agricultural value chain.

Enhancing capacities to prevent the trafficking of radiological and nuclear material in the Middle East

Baghdad, 17 September 2019 - On 16-17 September 2019, a UNICRI Team visited Baghdad to discuss and consult with the Iraqi authorities responsible for preventing the trafficking of radiological and nuclear (RN) material.

The visit was conducted within the framework of the project CONTACT – Enhancing capacities to prevent the trafficking of radiological and nuclear material in the Middle East.

The project, covering Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, is funded by ‘Global Affairs Canada’. The meetings with the different Iraqi authorities were coordinated and facilitated by the Iraq National Monitoring Authority (INMA).

Discussions focused on the development of a train-the-trainers’ programme on countering RN illicit trafficking for Iraqi national authorities, covering aspects such as profiling of potential traffickers, possible motivations driving traffickers, planning and conducting

intelligence/law enforcement operations to thwart attempts to traffic RN materials.

Within the framework of the project CONTACT, UNICRI is working with countries in the Middle East to share good practices and reinforce capabilities to effectively and carefully plan intelligence and law enforcement operations as well as to promote the exchange of information.

The CONTACT – Middle East project

complements the efforts of the Middle East countries and UNICRI by serving as an implementing partner of the European Union CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence initiative (EU CBRN CoE). Since its inception in 2010, the EU CBRN CoE has supported partner countries in establishing National CBRN Teams, in building capacities on CBRN safety and security and in developing National CBRN Action Plans.



IOM Iraq rehabilitated the electricity network in Filfeel village

Baghdad, 17 September 2019 - Filfeel village in Tel Kaif, Ninewa, was affected during the ISIL conflict and most of its residents had to flee. When they returned, they found an inoperable electricity network, which also caused water shortages.

IOM rehabilitated the network by supplying transformers, changing poles, replacing cables & adding new lines. This project allowed 375 families, mostly returnees, to have access to electricity, while also improving water supply. The project was supported by U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration.

“It was a privilege to fix the network here while also providing for myself,”

said Zamle, a local technician who worked on the rehabilitation project.



The UN Special Representative for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited a new distribution centre for national unified cards



Mosul, 19 September 2019 - The UN Special Representative for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited a new distribution centre for national unified cards, set to be opened by the Directorate of Civil Affairs, Passports and Residencies in the coming weeks. The project, supported by UNHCR, will serve over 800,000 residents of Mosul, including thousands whose civil documents were lost or destroyed during the recent conflict, helping ensure their future access to Government services.



After crisis, community resource centers foster reintegration and rehabilitation in Iraq

Jalawla, 20 September 2019 - During the ISIL crisis in Iraq, 3.5 million people were displaced from their homes. Since Iraq declared victory over ISIL in December 2017, nearly 1.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their locations of origin. But the most affected areas still suffer from the lack of services, decline in livelihood opportunities, and the destruction of public infrastructure.

To better address the return and reintegration needs of affected populations, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has established six Community Resource Centres (CRCs) in partnership with the Government of Iraq's Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) and humanitarian partners.

The sixth IOM-run CRC was inaugurated this Thursday (19/9) in Jalawla, Diyala Governorate – which has welcomed back over 220,000 returnees. Government officials, including the mayor of Jalawla, and representatives of partner local and international humanitarian organizations were in attendance.

“IOM is one of many partners working to carry out protection, health, livelihood and education programmes

through the CRC network,” added IOM Iraq Chief of Mission Gerard Waite. “In coordination with the government, it’s crucial that we continue supporting vulnerable communities with durable solutions, such as long-term reintegration strategies and provision of essential services.”

The Jalawla CRC launch follows the opening of another centre in Baiji, Salah-al-Din Governorate, in early September. The centres act as assistance and interaction hubs for all these communities and the public institutions that support them: the government, United Nations agencies, nongovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and other local actors.

The CRCs aim to increase opportunities for sustainable socio-economic reintegration by facilitating service delivery that will benefit returnees, those who remain in displacement and their host communities.

Core CRC activities include awareness raising and information dissemination; legal counselling and representation; informal education activities; Housing, Land and Property counselling; livelihood, capacity and skill-building opportunities, as well as making referrals to protection, mental health and psychoso-

cial support, and other services within the CRC coverage areas.

“The CRCs are an important part of our effort to engage with displaced individuals before and after they return, and to understand their needs so that we can provide an effective response, services and job opportunities,” said Naseer Abdel Sattar, Executive Director of the JCMC. “CRCs will help us put mechanisms in place to facilitate safe returns and the reintegration of mixed populations in affected communities.”

The Community Resource Centres in Baiji and Jalawla were established under the project SAFE RETURN – Reintegration and Recovery Assistance in Areas of Return in Iraq (AWDA AMINA), funded by the European Union. The project contributes to improving migration management in Iraq and aims to build the resilience of migrants, forcibly displaced persons and host communities.



Promoting formal employment in Arab states (Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq): transition from informal to formal economy

Turin, Italy, 20 September 2019 - The International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO) held a five-day training course aimed at examining strategies to improve formal employment during crisis settings.

The course focused on current socio-political situations in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq – countries which host large numbers of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, examining key challenges facing informal employment in those countries, and exploring policy frameworks, strategies, and measures that have been taken or can be taken to promote formalisation.

The training brought together government, employer, and worker representative, as well as social security representatives from Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. It allowed participants to exchange views and experiences on the roles different actors play in promoting formalisation.

“The objective of this course is to help participants identify the drivers for formalisation in their own country and design action plans to implement for-

malisation policies, measures in particular for migrant workers, refugees and IDPs,” said Coumba Diop, Senior programme officer at ITCILO.

The course examined country-specific contexts, as well as in international cases, shedding light on the ILO’s Response Plan to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Lebanon and Jordan, which supports efforts to increase economic opportunities and employment creation for both refugees and host communities – through promoting an employment-rich national response that integrates refugees into the formal labour market while also addressing the decent work needs of the local population.

The course was supported by Partnership for Improving Prospects for Forcibly Displaced Persons and Host Communities (PROSPECTS) - a strategic partnership between the Kingdom of the Netherlands, ILO, UNHCR, UNICEF, World Bank and IFC that supports refugees and host countries in the Horn of Africa and the Middle East.

“The ILO is implementing a number of initiatives in Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq in partnership with the Government of



the Netherlands, UNHCR, UNICEF, World Bank and IFC to support refugees and host communities, through the creation of jobs and livelihood opportunities,” said Maha Kattaa, ILO’s Regional Resilience and Crisis Response Specialist. “These efforts build on the ILO’s current programmes in Jordan and Lebanon where we have adopted a development-focused and employment-driven strategy to support host communities and refugees, through the promotion of formal employment, social dialogue, social protection and international labour standards.”

FAO organized multi-stakeholders' consultation workshop on sustainable land management for improved livelihoods in degraded areas of Iraq

Erbil, 18-20 September 2019 - The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in Iraq, in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Environment, Agriculture and Water Resources held a three-day consultation workshop on FAO GEF funded project for the sustainable land management for improved livelihoods in degraded areas of Iraq.

In his welcoming address, Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq, greeted all participants from Iraqi ministries. "The aim of this workshop is to look into and review the FAO- GEF funded project, which is designed to reverse land degradation processes, conserve and sustainably manage land and water resources in degraded areas in Southern Iraq for greater access to services from resilient ecosystems and improved livelihoods. FAO, along with local partners are currently working together to address the challenges of land degradation," Dr. EL Hajj Hassan said.

Dr. Jassim A. Al-Falahi, Technical Deputy of the Ministry of Environment, emphasized that the capacity building

and introduction of modern techniques; this project is establishing will serve as an important start to Iraq for the application of sustainable land management and combating desertification. He added that this project will assist Iraq in overcoming current environmental challenges, especially in terms of water scarcity, salination, and increase in temperature". Dr. Al-Falahi highlighted the role of national stakeholders by stating that "the Government of Iraq has full confidence in the local capacities of all relevant ministries and the experience of FAO in the country to provide all that is needed to successfully implement this project according to

the GEF requirements, which will represent an important message to international donors on Iraq's capabilities to execute strategically vital projects according to international standards".

The workshop was attended by 25 participants from all concerned Iraqi ministries. Stakeholders engaged in fruitful group discussions that resulted in key recommendations and prioritization of strategic needs to achieve sustainable land management for the improvement of livelihoods in degraded areas of Iraq. The endorsements and priorities set by the participants will, therefore, guide future improvement of the implementation process of the project activities.



ITU-UNESCO Digital Inclusion Week for Arab States

Cairo, Egypt, 22 September 2019 – Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) including heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease are collectively responsible for almost 70% of all deaths today.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are co-hosting the fourth ITU-UNESCO Regional Digital Inclusion Week for Arab States from 22 to 28 September.

Under the theme "Health, Education and Big Data for Enhancing Wellbeing", the week will explore the role that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are playing in combatting non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Activities are taking place in seven countries, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, State of Palestine, Sudan and Tunisia, with the support of 16 public and private sector partners from the region.

"Information and communication technologies present a huge opportunity to deliver health care services and information especially to people living in

rural and remote areas," says Ebrahim Al Haddad, Director of the ITU Regional Office for Arab States. "We are delighted to partner with UNESCO during this week, which will help to further strengthen ITU's existing work on non-communicable."

"The Digital Inclusion Week aims to highlight and raise awareness on mechanisms to support the social inclusion of marginalized sectors of Arab societies through the use of ICTs," says Ghaith Fariz, Director of UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States. "The week is also part of our efforts to highlight of the importance of information sharing ahead of the UNESCO's International

Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) which is celebrated on 28 September each year".

During the week, activities will highlight ongoing digital health initiatives in areas such as telemedicine and the use of ICTs to access health information on the management of non-communicable diseases especially in remote and underserved areas. By sharing case studies, experiences, identifying best practices and supporting public awareness, the week seeks to contribute to positive lifestyle changes and the development and adoption of effective policies that can contribute to a more inclusive society.



EU supports recovery of agricultural livelihoods in northern Iraq

Mosul, 22 September 2019 - Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan, Representative to Iraq of the Food and Agriculture (FAO) Organization of the United Nations accompanied by FAO team and MOA delegation, met with Mr. Mansour al-Mareed, Nineveh Governor, at his office.

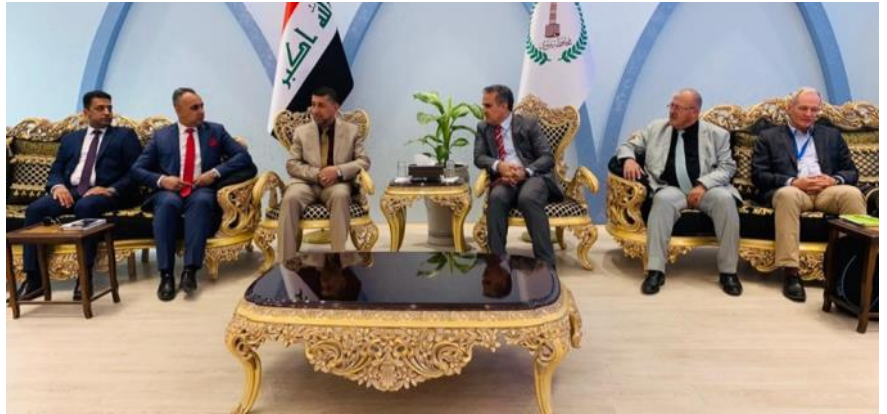
Discussions focused on FAO activities and programmes in Nineveh Province, as well as the challenges that the Nineveh Province faces in the field of agricultural and available water resources. Besides, Dr. Elhajj Hassan presented the EU-FAO project support for the recovery of agricultural livelihoods through the revitalization of food production, value chains, and income generation in Nineveh.

Farming families in northern Iraq's Nineveh Governorate will benefit from the EU contribution to FAO to recover agricultural livelihoods. The area,

which includes the city of Mosul, was known as the country's 'breadbasket' before conflict caused widespread damage and displacement.

Dr. El Hajj Hassan assured the Governor that FAO will provide the necessary support to improve the agriculture sector in Iraq. The Governor discussed

ways of enhancing and strengthening cooperation and coordination with the FAO and at the end of the meeting; he thanked the FAO delegation and expressed his office's readiness to cooperate fully with the organization for the development of the agricultural sector in Nineveh province.



New WFP Representative in Iraq met with IDPs and refugees in the camps around the Kurdistan Region and Kirkuk, with partners, and with citizens in Anbar

Baghdad, 22 September 2019 - Over the first weeks in his new role as WFP Representative in Iraq, Abdurahman Meygag met with IDPs and refugees in the camps around the Kurdistan Region and Kirkuk, with partners, and with citizens in Anbar – where the new Minister of Trade launched iris scanning as part of the PDS social safety net digitalization.

Abdi's career with WFP in fact began in Iraq, where he was head of the offices in Mosul and Erbil from 1991 until 1996, when he was reassigned to Baghdad as head of the emergency operation. After seven years in Iraq, he moved to work in Sudan, Namibia, Liberia, Uganda and Kenya. Most recently, Abdi was WFP's Deputy Representa-

tive in Syria, providing leadership in implementing WFP operations there. He is delighted to return to Iraq after

many years and bring WFP into a new phase with the 2020-24 Country Strategic Plan which begins in January.



Under "Cash-for-work" project IOM hired 527 displaced people in Jeda camps to do maintenance work



Baghdad, 23 September 2019 - Electricity is necessary in camps for illuminating dark nights, and operating electrical devices such as fans, TVs and refrigerators. These workers, who were hired from the camp to maintain the electricity of the tents in Jeda camps as part of a cash for work project funded by EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid - ECHO.

IOM hired 527 displaced people in Jadaa camps to do maintenance work in Jeda camps including this electricity maintenance activity.

IOM - UN Migration rehabilitated 87 unfinished buildings in Najaf

Najaf, 24 September 2019 - IOM - UN Migration rehabilitated 87 unfinished buildings in Haidariya neighborhood, Najaf Governorate, where IDP families suffer from a lack of services. "Our family was divided into two. Some went to our relatives to spend the night because of lack of space. We would not sleep well, and on top of it we had no privacy, because doors and windows were in poor condition. Thanks to the rehabilitation works, we now have enough space, and new windows and doors," said Muslim Ahmed, who was displaced from Sinjar to Najaf in 2014. The IOM shelter team has been in-

stalling new ceilings, doors and windows; electricity networks; and sanitary facilities; in addition to casting the floor

and building new rooms; funded by Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.



Germany again a top supporter of WFP in Iraq

Baghdad, 24 September 2019 - The German Government has provided the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Iraq with €17.5 million to address the food needs of Syrian refugees and to support returnees and vulnerable communities. Germany is currently the top donor to WFP's programme in Iraq and has, for the past four years, consistently ranked among WFP Iraq's top two donors.

"Iraq is still dealing with building a state fit for the future so that more citizens can return in dignity," said Jochen Möller, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to Iraq. "That's why Germany continues to provide assistance to the most vulnerable, while supporting people's efforts to rebuild their livelihoods."

The contributions come from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO).

The GFFO share of €2.5 million will support 28,600 Syrian refugees. It builds on the €4.5 million received from GFFO in April in support of WFP's food assistance for internally displaced fam-

ilies in Iraq. The €15 million received from BMZ will help 52,200 returnees to earn and receive training when working on activities such as replanting harvestable trees and rebuilding canals. The returnees are people who were displaced by the conflict and who have been living in camps for displaced people in Iraq, some of them for many years.

"These German funds are helping WFP to smoothly transition its programmes from relief to development, for vulnerable families who need support," said WFP Representative in Iraq, Abdirahman Meygag. "With opportunities to earn and learn while rebuilding their lives, people will be able to move forward towards long-term self-sufficiency."

Indirectly, an additional 63,000 people

in vulnerable communities will benefit from restored water networks and rural agriculture production, and from greenhouses in urban areas. Across the country, BMZ funds will contribute to activities on adaptation to climate change.

Young people will also be able to get digital skills and English language training via WFP's EMPACT – "Empowerment in Action" project. EMPACT provides vocational training for Syrian refugees and vulnerable Iraqi youth. It partners with leading technology firms to provide software training and connect alumni with online work opportunities. EMPACT helps young people and their host communities to build sustainable livelihoods.



Bagera Farmers' Market launched

Duhok, 27 September 2019 - Under the auspices of the respected Mr. Farhad Atrushi, Governor of Dohuk and Mr. Paolo Fontani, Director of UNESCO in Iraq, the Bagera weekly Farmers' Market was launched on 27 Sept 2019 in Bagera, Dohuk Governorate.



UN-Habitat completed and handed over to the local authorities two pilot informal settlements upgrading projects in Mosul and Ramadi

Baghdad, 29 September 2019 -The upgrading works were conducted under the National Program for the Rehabilitation and Regularization of Informal Settlements/IDPs Areas, funded by the United States Department of State.

The collaboration between the United States' Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and UN-Habitat started in 2015 with the objective to support the Government of Iraq address the challenges related to the 1,1 million IDPs estimated at that time, many of whom were living in precarious conditions in the informal settlements rapidly sprawling throughout the country. Under the guidance of the Steering Committee led by the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, UN-Habitat developed jointly with the Poverty Reduction Executive Secretariat in MoP a National Strategy for Long-term Durable Solutions for IDPs and a Road Map for the enumeration, upgrading and regularization of informal settlements.

In 2016, MoP conducted a new national survey and recorded more than 3,3 million informal dwellers living within municipal boundaries. Faced with this unprecedented challenge, it is evident that the local authorities should strengthen their control over the usurpation of land earmarked for public services and agriculture, but they also need to develop durable solutions to address and effectively respond to the needs of low-income citizens, IDPs and returnees, for affordable housing and secure tenure in compliance with basic human rights.

Hence, in parallel to the on-going efforts to ensure the passing of the new Law on Informal Settlements drafted with the support of PRM, in late 2018 UN-Habitat initiated the piloting of upgrading projects in selected informal settlements in Mosul, Ramadi and Basra in consultation with the local authorities and the purposely setup Community Development Councils. The project adopted a participatory community planning approach to deliver development interventions that were specific to each context and that aimed to contribute the long-term socio-economic recovery of these areas.

In the informal settlement of Hay Tanak in west Mosul, the programme implemented a new storm water drainage system, connected 362 houses to a new potable water network, organised a two month Garbage Cleaning Campaign, levelled and improved the sub-



base of the streets and planted two rows of tall palms at the entrance of the settlement.

In the informal settlement of 7-Kilo in west Ramadi, the programme connected 432 houses to a new potable water network (including 178 houses in 5-Kilo), organised a two-month Garbage Cleaning Campaign and realised a new public Park by reclaiming a vacant and derelict area at the centre of this settlement in coordination with the municipality who has proceeded to incorporate the settlement in its planned urban extensions. This was made possible through a close coordination with the local authorities and target IDP and returnee communities.

Over the course of three months, the programme has provided nearly 1,000 man/days of work to unemployment men and Youth residing in the target areas, offering livelihood opportunities on a rotational basis though cash-for-work and short-term employment with the NGOs and contractors involved in the works. Overall, with this project, some 6,000 vulnerable people residing in informal settlements of Mosul, Ramadi and Basra have better access to basic services and a better security of tenure, in line with the National Informal Settlements Strategy.

During the handover event in Hay Tanak, Mosul, Sheikh Basheer Khuder, head of the Community Development Council, described the pitiful conditions in which the people of this area were living before – without potable water and inaccessible streets. He said that “for many years we felt forgotten, but now things have changed, and we finally feel human”.

Abdullah Mofak, resident of Hay Ta-

nak, described how in the past their neighbourhood was a dump yard “We couldn't go out of our homes because of the smell, the pipes were broken and leaking. We now have our own trash bins, the roads and neighbourhood are clean and the water network is fixed. Our children can now play outside. We truly don't know how to thank UN-Habitat for the changes they have made to our lives.”

The handover event held in 7-Kilo, Ramadi, was attended by H.E. Dr Ali Farhan, Governor of Anbar, who praised the works and urged the Iraqi government to find solutions for the informal settlements, stating that “the formalisation of the 7 Kilo area and the possibility for people to own their properties represents a huge step forward”. Mr. Ibraheem Al-Awsaj, Mayor of Ramadi, and Eng. Jasim Mohammed Alwan, Assistant Head of Ramadi Municipality, were equally supportive of UN-Habitat's efforts to address the issue and look forward to the scaling up of the programme. After the speeches, public officials cut the inaugural ribbon of the new park and conducted a ceremonial planting of a tree – symbolically contributing to the pledge of the Government and local authorities to a greener Iraq, in the week of the Climate Action Summit held this week in New York.



Cleaning campaign in Sinjar

Sinjar, 1 October 2019 - IOM Iraq's Community Stabilization Unit led today a cleaning campaign in Sinjar. Eighteen volunteers went around the main streets in Sinjar's market area to clear rubbish from the road and raise awareness of simple actions that everyone can take to care for the environment and the city.

During the activity, volunteers noted that cleaner public spaces can contribute to improving both mental and public health while improving the look and feel of cities.

This activity was funded by USAID - US Agency for International Development.



Public-private partnership provides vocational training for IDPs to support sustainable livelihoods

Erbil, 2 October 2019 - Toyota Iraq, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Human Relief Foundation (HRF) proudly inducted 16 new trainees at an opening ceremony hosted in the Toyota Iraq Training Center, Erbil. Since 2016, Toyota Iraq and UNDP have jointly contributed to the development of new skills for 53 young men and women in automotive mastery, customer service and skills and spare parts.

TOYOTA Iraq's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Shinsuke Fujimoto, said: "We aim to make as many Iraqi people experience happiness and enjoyment. This training program enables us to contribute to Erbil society and support IDPs living in protracted displacement, almost two years after Iraq's liberation from Da'esh. This is a part of Toyota Iraq's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities in collaboration with our development partners."

Starting this month, 16 new trainees will take part in training programmes, which will cover: the Toyota Principles, Toyota Production System, 5S and Safety and continuance improvements such as the "Kaizen" concept. Eight young men will undertake the Parts Storekeeper training programme, which covers receiving and dispatching of spare parts, inventory control; whilst eight young women will undertake the Customer Relationship Management training programme, focused on customer handling and "Omotenashi" a

Japanese word means hospitality with caring. This programme will run for 2-months including 1-month on-the-job training with TOYOTA Iraq Dealership partners, Cihan Motors and SAS Automotive Services. This enables trainees to gain valuable work experience.

Head of UNDP's Erbil Office, Ms. Isabela Uribe, commented, "The continuation of this programme demonstrates its success, and our continued commitment to increasing quality training opportunities for internally displaced men and women through our strategic partnership. We are setting an example of how partnerships with the private sector, even in an emergency or post-conflict context, can increase opportunities for livelihoods, and jobs. We highly appreciate the financial support received from the Government of Japan for the previous stage and

Government of Germany for the current training."

This project was funded through UNDP Iraq's Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme, with generous funding from the Government of Germany. ICRRP is a flagship programme, implementing short-term and medium-term projects to support vulnerable populations (IDPs, refugees and returnees) in host communities and newly liberated areas. Designed to complement life-saving and short-term stabilization efforts, as well as longer-term development programmes, ICRRP specifically aims to support families to withstand the multi-dimensional shocks associated with post-liberation and large-scale returns through integrated crisis management, access to basic services, improved livelihood opportunities and social cohesion.



Citizenship hopes become reality for Iraq's Bidoon minority

Basra, 10 October 2019 - Mohammad still remembers the day when, aged nine and having just started school near the southern Iraqi city of Basra, the deputy principal called him out of class. He was told that due to his lack of identity documents he would no longer be able to attend lessons.

"I went home and realized that I had to go and work to support my family. Only work, and nothing else," he says. "I

have never experienced being a student or had a childhood. There has been no comfort in my life since then."

Though he did not realize it back then, Mohammad is stateless. He is a second-generation member of Iraq's Bidoon community, which arrived in the country from Kuwait immediately after the 1991 Gulf War, most with no recognized nationality or official papers.

As a result, despite being born in Iraq,

Mohammad has spent his life living on the margins of society. He has no access to basic services including education and health care and is unable to vote, get married or even move around freely.

"I felt that I did not exist."

The lack of an official identity has left Mohammad with scars, both mental and physical. After he was hit by a car when he was 12 years old, his mother

Citizenship hopes become reality for Iraq's Bidoon minority (continued)

Salima took him to the local hospital with a badly broken nose and ruptured ankle ligaments. But when she was unable produce identity documents for her or her son, the doctors would only administer first aid before sending them home.

"I felt that I did not exist. When you don't have documents you are not counted," he explains.

There are tens of thousands of Bidoons currently living in Iraq. Short for bidoon jinsiya – meaning "without nationality" in Arabic – most, like Mohammad's mother Salima, can trace their heritage back to Iraq before their forebears settled in neighbouring Kuwait.

Now, thanks to a partnership between UNHCR – the UN Refugee Agency – and Iraqi NGO Mercy Hands, there is hope for Mohammad and others like him.

Since August 2017, lawyers from Mercy Hands backed by UNHCR funding have been working to help Bidoons and other stateless people acquire Iraqi nationality, assisting an average of 500 individuals per year.

Salima is one of those they have helped. Having found two living witnesses who could testify to her parents' Iraqi heritage, lawyer Laith Najar launched proceedings in the courts on Salima's behalf. After a six-month legal process, earlier this year she was granted Iraqi citizenship.

"This has given me hope."

"I am so happy, it has put my mind at ease," Salima says, the heavy lines around her eyes softening as she

smiles. "I have a real hope that my children will be able to get their documents soon."

Najar says the next step is to launch similar proceedings for Mohammad and his sister, based on their mother's newfound legal status. Iraq's nationality law was amended in 2006 to ensure that all children born inside the country can acquire nationality on an equal basis from their mother or father, unlike many other countries in the region where it is only through the father.

The challenge in Salima's case is that neither her marriage nor the birth of her children was ever registered, so these will have to be established through the courts before Mohammad's case can be resolved

Najar says the number of cases they can process each year is currently limited by the resources available, with only three full-time lawyers working in the field. But as the number of Bidoons and other stateless people who gain

citizenship increases in Iraq, through them it should be possible for others to prove their nationality more easily, he adds.

"One of the questions we ask is whether they have any relatives in Iraq, and that information allows us to widen the circle," he explains. "I feel very happy that these people can obtain their documents and prove their identity as Iraqis."

Mohammad says that gaining a nationality after all these years would ease his anxiety and allow him to start building the kind of life that has been denied to him for so long.

"This has given me hope that because my mum has documents, I will be able to get them too," he says. "Now I have hope that I will be able to get married, and live my life like any other person around me."

By Charlie Dunmore and Edith Champagne in Basra, Iraq



FAO inception workshop for a new EU-funded project to support the recovery of agricultural livelihoods in Nineveh

Mosul, 15 October 2019 - The FAO project on Supporting Recovery of Agricultural livelihoods by revitalization of food production, value chains and income generation in Nineveh Governorate, was launched in an inception workshop organized in partnership with the Nineveh governorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Iraqi Farmers' Union as well as other national stakeholders. The workshop agenda included presentations on the main components of this project and expected impact for the sustainability of food production and agricultural livelihoods of rural and peri-urban population in Nineveh Governorate. This event coincides with the occasion of the World Food Day commemorates and the 74th anniversary of



FAO establishment in 1945 where. FAO Iraq confirms its commitment to

achieve zero hunger and support healthy diets and sustainable liveli-

FAO inception workshop for a new EU-funded project ... (continued)

hoods.

This project is expected to support around 70 000 beneficiaries, as well as hundreds of government and non-governmental decision makers, service providers, facilitators/workers and unemployed labourers in the Governorate of Nineveh. It is in response to the large population movements, destruction of, and damage to water systems, irrigation facilities and other agricultural infrastructure, disruption of value chains and losses of personal assets, crop and livestock production and food supplies following the conflict with ISIL. The main interventions support vulnerable smallholder crop and livestock farmers with i) vegetable production and marketing systems; ii) small-scale agri-food processing, marketing and micro-enterprise systems; and iii) improved small-scale dairy processing and marketing systems; iv) efficient irrigation water use and management measures and technology; v) increased

availability of quality cereal and legume seeds; and vi) improved small-scale animal fodder production, conservation and marketing systems.

In his welcoming address, Dr. Salah ElHajj Hassan, FAO Representative in Iraq thanked the EU for the kind support and all the participants for their valuable time and contributions to the planning of this project. He also expressed FAO readiness to fully cooperate with the local government, Ministry of agriculture and farmers for the development of the sector in Nineveh governorate. He said "this project will support the recovery of agriculture livelihoods through the revitalization of food production, value chains and income generation in the governorate. Farming families in Nineveh will benefit from this EU contribution to FAO for the reintegration and support to returnees and rural livelihoods".

Dr. Zuhair AlAraji, Deputy Governor of Nineveh highlighted the importance of

such programs to the highly vulnerable farmers in rural areas of the governorate, he said "we thank the EU and FAO for this important and strategic project in Nineveh governorate post the conflict with ISIL, where the agriculture infrastructure has been destroyed and the farmers abandoned their land and livestock due to military operations and instability".

Dr. Hussein Ali Saud, Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture for Livestock activities said "FAO is a key partner to the Ministry of Agriculture, we appreciate the efforts made by the organization to accomplish and integrate food security and agriculture sustainability in Iraq in general and in Nineveh in particular".

The event was concluded with a discussion on the geographical scope of the project components and beneficiary selection criteria and contribution, roles and responsibilities of its partners and future work plan.

On World Food Day, FAO and WFP support healthy diets and sustainable livelihoods in Iraq

Baghdad, 16 October 2019 – Today on World Food Day, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) renewed their commitment to supporting the government of Iraq in ensuring that all Iraqis have food security by 2030, with a focus on nutritious food and sustainable livelihoods.

"World Food Day is when we confirm and work to achieve our commitment towards Zero Hunger. In Iraq, FAO will be further cooperating with WFP to provide capacity development and rural income generation programmes for farmers. FAO is supporting the rehabilitation of water infrastructure, value chains development, the fishery sector and introducing smart agriculture practices in response to country priorities and climate change impact," said FAO Representative in Iraq Dr. Salah El Hajj Hassan.

The 2019 Memorandum of Understanding between FAO and WFP fosters closer collaboration on longer-term initiatives. Activities will include restoring irrigation canals, instituting sustainable practices such as planting productive trees, and providing inputs such as seeds and tools. Through such programmes, vulnerable people will receive an income, can get back to work following displacement due to conflict,



and continue to farm and grow their own food.

As well as enhanced nutrition awareness for Iraqi citizens, in the coming year, climate change adaptation will be a priority so that communities are better able to recover from climate-related shocks. FAO and WFP are striving to build social cohesion through collective livelihoods rehabilitation. WFP recently reopened its office in Basra to help coordinate activities next year in the south, where vulnerability and poverty indicators are worst.

"In this rehabilitation phase, FAO and WFP are working on livelihoods projects to bring communities together,

and contribute to improving long-term self-sufficiency," said Abdirahman Meygag, WFP Iraq Representative. "We see our climate change adaptation activities as being crucial for food security and the country's recovery."

FAO and WFP will also share expertise on information management and assessments, for evidence-based programming that targets the most vulnerable. Programmes are designed together with the government, for and with communities. The two agencies will also coordinate with partners on livelihoods activities, to maximise income-generating opportunities for those in most need.

UN program gives confidence to women, refugees and IDPs in starting their own businesses

Baghdad, 20 October 2019 - As a beacon of light in the struggling economy in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and with the assistance from the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) the region is experiencing a spike in female and refugee entrepreneurs.

UNIDO's Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) with funding from the Government of Japan provided training to a total of 164 participants (103 in Erbil and 61 in Koya) earlier this year. 90 are from the host community, 25 are IDPs and 49 refugees. 78 of the total participants were female.

"This program is important because most of the participants are unemployed university graduates," said Seerwan Jameel, Senior Business Consultant for UNIDO.

Seerwan explained that due to the financial crisis, the Kurdistan Regional Government is no longer employing new university graduates.

"With support, the graduates can establish their own business and possibly provide more employment opportunities within their community," he said, adding "especially since all of the resources for success of the project are available locally."

Following the EDP training, participants then competed for an award of tools, equipment and materials needed to start their own businesses.

A total of 30 entrepreneurs in Erbil and 17 in Koya received support in order to turn their ideas into a profitable business.

Of the 17 beneficiaries chosen in Koya, over half of them were women.

Shawin Dlawar Sadraddin is one such woman.

With the support she received, Shawin was able to start her own business as a honey bee farmer, making her the first female in Koya to work in an industry dominated by men.

"This project is important because honey is healthy, especially natural and organic honey, which is difficult to find here in Kurdistan," she explained, adding that each bee hive can produce from 5-7 kilos of honey.

Shawin, an alumni of Koya University found it difficult to find employment after graduating last year.

She was happy to take part in the EDP program conducted in partnership with Koya University, which provided 120 hours of education over an eight-week period that including technical and soft skills training.



Since starting her business in June, Shawin said she has collected a total of 90 kilos of honey. Each kilo sells for \$60.

"I will continue to work in this field," Shawin, age 25, said. "I hope to open my own shop soon."

Another Koya University alumna, Dehat Abdul-Rahman Hama was also a chosen beneficiary for her business idea of starting up a fishery.

Since graduating in 2015, Dehat found it difficult to find employment but worked in ice cream and bread-making factories to earn money, hoping to own her own business one day.

Within two months of completing the EDP program and receiving assistance, Dehat is now the first woman in Koya running her own business as a fish farmer.

She now has over 4,000 fish in two suspended ponds on the outskirts of Koya.

Dehat said her brother supports and helps her run the fishery, and they have hired one employee to feed the fish daily.

"The fish I am raising here are given good food. Since we don't feed them any chemicals, they are organic and healthier," she added.

Dahat explained that it will take approximately 6-7 months for the fish to be ready to sell and she is looking forward to bringing in her first profit.

"The UNIDO training helped me both mentally and financially," Dehat explained. "Now that I know more about how to run my own business, if I have a new idea in the future, the information and training they gave me will still be beneficial."

Another new business owner is a Syri-

an refugee who took part in the EDP training provided in Erbil.

Abdulaziz Othman, age 32 from Hasakah, graduated university with a degree in Pharmacology and then moved to the Kurdistan Region seven-and-a-half years ago.

However, since he was 12-years-old and throughout university, Abdulaziz helped his father and older brother who worked in scaffolding and woodwork, which helped him develop skills for building homes.

Until June of this year, he worked for different companies and people building housing foundations.

"Before the training, it was very difficult working in this field and to make money," Abdulaziz explained. "I was very depressed. After the training I had confidence in myself to do anything I wanted."

With the idea of starting his own business in scaffolding, UNIDO provided him with support beams and wood which helped him kick start this business.

He also mentioned that before owning his own business, no one in his community knew who he was. Now that he has his business, people look up to him and he is happy to be able to provide employment for people who have been unable to find substantial work.

"The UNIDO training had much more benefits for me than just the physical support," Abdulaziz said.

The EDP program is part of UNIDO's project to "enhance youth employability among Syrian refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and host communities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq" with support from the Government of Japan.

Course concept on basic criminal investigations for Iraq, to improve local policing

Baghdad, 16 September 2019 - Close cooperation between UNDP Iraq, Danish Police and Iraqi Ministry of Interior has led to develop a course concept on basic criminal investigations for Iraq, to improve local policing and criminal investigations in the country.

During a seminar organized by Danish National Police and attended by a pool of 40 Danish international police trainers, who had shared their expertise to design and deliver courses in Improving the Effectiveness of Local Police (IELP) and Mid-Level Police Management to Iraqi police officers.

The Danish International Police Trainers will also assist in the delivery of the upcoming courses on criminal investigations and training of trainers' courses in Iraq.

UNDP is grateful to the Danish National Police for its generous support and

assistance and on-going collaboration with UNDP and MoI.



A Community Policing Forum (CPF) meeting held in Khanke

Duhok, 24 September 2019 - Clemens Hach, Head of the Stabilization Division at the German Federal Foreign Office, and Barbara Wolf, German Consul General in Erbil, attended a Community Policing Forum (CPF) meeting in Khanke, Duhok, to learn more about how these CPFs work to address safety and security issues in communities across Iraq. The CPF members and Community Police Officers discussed a wide range of issues their community faces and has solved, such as assistance for a sexually abused young girl.

The German Federal Foreign Office has

been supporting Community Policing in Iraq since 2016, allowing IOM to

expand the CP approach and refine its methodology.



IOM's Community Policing programme helps build more resilient and secure communities

Erbil, 26 September 2019 - At Rozhiyar Primary School in Erbil the Community Policing Department for

Erbil Governorate launched an awareness raising campaign for 600 primary schools and kindergartens in the city

and its surrounding districts.

Bolstered by the motto 'Towards a Peaceful Future and Away from Crime', the initiative aims to raise pupils' awareness about behaviour such as bullying, violence, and withdrawal from school; it also aims to bridge gaps between the police, teachers and the students' families. The initiative was launched by the Community Policing Department in Erbil Governorate, in partnership with the Smileland Company; it will begin officially on 1 October 2019.

IOM's Community Policing programme helps build more resilient and secure communities, notably through capacity building, mentorship and monitoring. This contributes to the management of safe, orderly and regular migration.



UNMAS meets Chinese Ambassador in Iraq to discuss UNMAS explosive hazard management activities in the country

Baghdad, 2 September 2019 - UNMAS Iraq Senior Programme Manager, Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, recently met with Mr. Zhang Tao, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Iraq, and Mr. Zhao BeiDou, Defense Attaché at the Chinese Embassy, in Baghdad to discuss UNMAS explosive hazard management activities in the country, and China's possible engagement through the provision of in-kind support staff.

In Iraq, the People's Republic of China has heavily invested in the country's economic and livelihood revival, sponsoring initiatives to build and rehabilitate schools and other public infrastructure with thousands more planned for the coming years.

However, the presence of explosive hazards continues to impede these humanitarian and stabilization efforts, preventing any prospective development until fully cleared and rendered

safe. UNMAS, along with other mine action organizations, is assisting the Government of Iraq to safely clear contaminated areas from explosive hazards.

UNMAS would like to thank the Government of the People's Republic of China for its contribution to Iraq's reconstruction efforts and for its interest in mine action.



UNMAS informs Spanish Ambassador in Iraq about the extent and nature of explosive hazard contamination in Iraq and UNMAS response to it

Baghdad, 5 September 2019 - UNMAS Senior Programme Manager, Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, recently met with the Spanish Ambassador, Mr. Juan José Escobar Stemmann, and Spanish Defense Attaché, Col. Juan Jose Vieira, to provide an overview of the extent and nature of explosive hazard contamination in Iraq, along with a brief synopsis on UNMAS response.



Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq expresses sorrow over death of deminer

Baghdad, 7 September 2019 - The Humanitarian Coordinator of the United Nations in Iraq, Marta Ruedas, expresses deep sorrow over the death of a deminer working for the Geneva-based Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) on 3 September 2019 while un-

dertaking humanitarian clearance operations in the area south of Mosul.

On behalf of the United Nations and the humanitarian community, Ms. Ruedas extends condolences to the family of the deceased, Brandon Pinson, of the United States of America, his col-

leagues and the broader humanitarian community. "Humanitarians have lost a brave colleague. He risked – and sadly sacrificed - his life in order to save lives. The clearance operations he was a part of are critical in making liberated areas safe for the return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to their homes",

A number of specialized organizations are conducting clearance operations in the areas of Iraq liberated from ISIL, in coordination with the Iraqi Directorate of Mine Action, and face daily threats from the widespread explosive hazard contamination left behind.



Demining activities at the Al-Nouri mosque site discussed

Mosul, 10 September 2019 - UNESCO team in Iraq met in Mosul with the Director, Northern Regional Center for Explosives, the Director of Mines and Explosives Section (Ministry of Defense), and with representatives from the Department of Antiquities (SBAH). The discussion focused on the demining activities at the Al-Nouri mosque site: the site has been partially cleared by the Iraqi authorities. A survey report will be finalized shortly by a specialized contractor for final clearance.

In agreement with the Iraqi authorities and under the supervision of the De-



partment of Antiquities, UNESCO will carry out the work of lifting, sorting

and documenting the remaining archaeological debris at the site.

UNMAS Iraq presents its work to senior German delegation in Baghdad



Baghdad, 12 September 2019 – At the invitation of the Government of Germany, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) presented its activities to a delegation comprising HE Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, Minister of Defence of the Federal Republic of Germany and Dr. Ole Diehl, German Ambassador to Iraq, in addition to senior officials representing multiple international organizations.

As the largest donor of UNMAS explosive hazard management (EHM) activities in Iraq, Germany has been a crucial enabler in the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their areas of origin.

“Too many IDPs are still not able to return to their homes because explosive hazards threaten their lives and prevent reconstruction in their communities. Germany proudly supports UNMAS explosive hazard clearance and risk education approach. Our support through the Foreign Office funding is an important component of our comprehensive approach in Iraq,” said Dr. Diehl.

Since October 2016, UNMAS Iraq has cleared more than 50,000 explosive hazards, of which 2,000 are improvised explosive devices, and delivered risk education and life-saving messages to nearly one million Iraqis. As a priority, UNMAS works in conjunction with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as the gateway to stabilization and reconstruction, as no development or rehabilitation activities can be completed so long as land remains uncleared from explosive hazards.

Speaking at the event, Ms. Clara Vaz, Senior Gender Advisor at UNMAS Iraq, said: “Consecutive conflicts in Iraq have created contamination conditions unlike anywhere else in the world. Lessons learned have also shown that mine action is an economic empowerment venture, and in a country with a noticeable dearth of employment, there is opportunity within this field.”

“This can, however, further compound existing inequalities if women are left out of mine action. It will fail to capture the experiences, voices and needs of

half the population. UNMAS Iraq actively promotes both gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment in these non-traditional fields of work: as fully capable and expert role models.”

Through its activities in Sinjar, UNMAS has taken a unique approach to clearance operations. The teams are mixed-gender, comprising more than 50 per cent women, with the majority of the Yazidi and Muslim searchers hailing from the region and its nearby surrounding areas. This allows a personal connection to many, and inspires significant passion for their work.

Ms. Hanan, one of the 21 women working in Sinjar, spoke on the particular meaning of clearance to her and her community: “I’m proud because we are saving lives by removing improvised explosive devices that had been used by ISIS during the war, and the most important thing about our job is that we are working so the people who are living and suffering in camps can return back to their homes.”

UNMAS would like to thank Germany for its generous invitation to present its work, and for its continuous support to UNMAS EHM activities in Iraq.



The Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) recently hosted a ceremony celebrating the launch of its new office in Mosul

Mosul, 12 September 2019 - In collaboration with UNMAS, the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) recently hosted a ceremony celebrating the launch of DMA's new office in Mosul. In attendance was the Deputy Minister of Health and Environment, Dr. Kamran Ali, in addition to senior officials representing the Government of Iraq and #UNMAS.

In its drive to facilitate explosive hazard management (EHM) activities in country, UNMAS, working together with DMA, has established a solid presence in contaminated areas in Iraq, particularly in areas retaken from Da'esh control. The establishment of the new DMA office will enhance liaison between UNMAS, DMA, and local authorities, thereby streamlining clearance efforts for a more coordinated response.



Commenting on the event, Dr. Kamran said: "The scale of explosive hazard contamination, including those of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and explosive remnants of war (ERWs), is particularly significant in the Ninewa

Governorate. The DMA, working together with international and national authorities, and under the guidance of the Prime Minister and Minister of Health and Environment, has opened this office in Mosul in order to perform our duties more rapidly and thus free Ninewa from explosive hazards as soon as possible."

UNMAS would like to thank the DMA, the Ministry of Health and Environment, in addition to key Iraqi government entities for their crucial role in facilitating EHM activities in country, with a particular thanks to the Federal Republic of Germany for its contribution to UNMAS activities in Iraq, and its support for the opening of this new office.



UNMAS Iraq Senior Programme Manager recently presented UNMAS activities in Iraq to senior Australian officials

Canberra, Australia, 12 September 2019 - UNMAS Iraq Senior Programme Manager, Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, recently presented UNMAS activities in Iraq to senior Australian officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra. The presentation provided a brief overview of UNMAS clearance efforts in Iraq, highlighting key initiatives sponsored by Australia, including gender mainstreaming in mine action activities.

The extensive contamination in areas retaken from Da'esh control continues to impede humanitarian and stabilization efforts in Iraq. Before any such efforts can be undertaken, the areas must first be cleared of explosive hazards.

Since UNMAS inception in Iraq, the Commonwealth of Australia has played a pivotal role in supporting UNMAS activities in country, paving the way for rehabilitation and reconstruction ef-



forts to continue in the liberated areas. Post-Da'esh, Australia has also been an essential contributor to initiatives facilitating the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of internally displaced persons to their homes.

UNMAS would like to thank the Government of Australia for its generous support to the mine action sector in Iraq, and for its leadership in gender mainstreaming and technical support efforts in country.

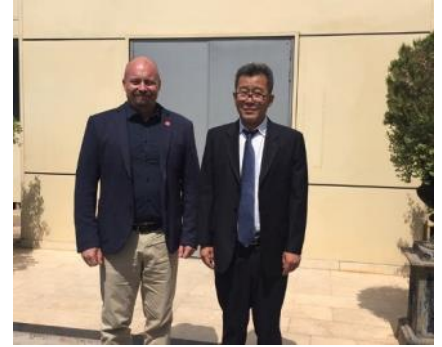
UNMAS met with Consul of the People's Republic of China to Iraq in Erbil to discuss UNMAS activities in the country

Erbil, 13 September 2019 - UNMAS Senior Programme Manager, Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, recently met with Mr. Ni Ruchi, Consul of the People's Republic of China to Iraq in Erbil to discuss UNMAS activities in the country and China's possible contribution through the Peace and Development Trust Fund. During the meeting, Mr. Ni Ruchi had the opportunity to try goggles used during explosive hazard awareness sessions and gloves distributed to cash-for-work employees. This helped him to better understand some of the risk education activities undertaken by UNMAS in areas previously controlled by Da'esh.

In Iraq, the People's Republic of China has heavily contributed to the country's economic and livelihood revival, supporting initiatives to build and rehabilitate schools and other public infrastructure with thousands more planned for the coming years.

The presence of explosive hazards, however, continues to impede these humanitarian and stabilization efforts, preventing any prospective development until fully cleared and rendered safe. UNMAS, along with other mine action organizations, is assisting the Government of Iraq to safely clear contaminated areas from explosive hazards. UNMAS would like to thank the Gov-

ernment of the People's Republic of China for its contribution to Iraq's reconstruction efforts and for its continued interest in mine action.



UNMAS held a training in Babel Governorate for the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center on Humanitarian Mine Action Basic Management

Baghdad, 27 September 2019 - UNMAS recently held a training in Babel Governorate for the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center (JCMC) on Humanitarian Mine Action Basic Management. A total of 31 students participated in the course, including 13 women. The participants were selected from 13 different departments from the Iraqi government.

Mrs. Saima Thamer, commented on the training: "The information on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) was very useful. It gives us the opportunity to share this knowledge with the Babel community."

"The training was very well organized with accurate information and well planned schedule. The instructors were excellent, especially in simplifying the information and leading the discussion" added Mr. Rasheed Shalan.

UNMAS would like to thank the Federal Republic of Germany for its con-

tribution to technical support initiatives in Iraq.



Japan continues its support to UNMAS activities in Iraq

Baghdad, 10 October 2019 - "When will the IDPs finally return home? That depends on the pace of clearance of explosive hazards, the critical first step

toward a safe home for all, which depends, in turn, upon the continued generosity of countries like Japan. Japan has contributed more than ¥432 mil-

lion (\$4 million), principally to risk education programs of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). Last year alone, Japan provided an overall total of ¥6.8 billion (\$63 million) for Iraq.

To protect these 'at risk' groups, UNMAS Risk Education programs, supported by Japan, have blanketed those living in neighborhoods who may still be exposed to explosive hazards and those in IDP camps. Creative approaches have introduced self-protective measures and behavior, reaching more than 500,000 girls and boys, men and women, young and old in 2018 alone."



UNMAS attended a ceremony celebrating the clearance of three villages in the Sinjar region by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)

Baghdad, 11 October 2019 - UNMAS, accompanied by Mr. Mikko Autti, Desk Officer at the Unit for Arms Control under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, recently attended a ceremony celebrating the clearance of three villages in the Sinjar region by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF).

As part of its directive to assist the Government of Iraq in explosive hazard management (EHM), and working in tandem with the ISF, UNMAS has contributed to the clearance of the three villages. In his speech to attendees comprising senior Iraqi government officials, Mr. Fran O'Grady, UNMAS Head of Projects, emphasized the pivot-

al role of clearance to Iraq's future recovery.

Following the event, UNMAS provided a brief to Mr. Mikko on its activities in Sinjar, along with a general outline of future projects planned to assist humanitarian and stabilization efforts. Mr. Mikko also spoke to the Yazidi searchers for their input on clearing villages they once inhabited.

The Government of Finland has contributed significantly to humanitarian and stabilization efforts in Iraq, and has been a key supporter of UN efforts to facilitate and catalyze the overall recovery of the country. UNMAS would like to thank the Republic of Finland



for its support to UNMAS EHM, risk education, and technical support activities in Iraq over the past three years.

UNMAS, in collaboration with the Kirkuk Police Academy, organized the first mixed-gender Emergency First Responder Training for female and male police officers in Iraq

Kirkuk, 12 October 2019 - UNMAS, in collaboration with the Kirkuk Police Academy, recently organized the first mixed-gender Emergency First Responder Training for female and male police officers in Iraq.

Approximately 22 participants representing ranks from Lieutenant to Captain attended the session. The course provided attendees with knowledge on Basic Life Support, conducting scene surveys, breathing assessments and treatment of chest injuries, in addition to other elementary first aid exercises. All participants passed the training, with the majority scoring 100%.

Ms. Yusra Jalil, a participant in the training, said: "The training was very useful as it provided us with basic life-saving skills that will enable us to potentially save lives of civilians and our

fellow colleagues. As police officers, our job often entails significant risk as well as contact with injuries, such that these mitigating skills will surely be needed in the future. I encourage all police officers who receive the oppor-

tunity to enroll in this course."

UNMAS Iraq would like to thank the Federal Republic of Germany for its contribution to technical support initiatives and the organization of this training.



UNMAS celebrated the graduation of 16 police officers from its Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training course

Baghdad, 13 October 2019 - In collaboration with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, and funded by the Federal Republic of Germany, UNMAS recently celebrated the graduation of 16 police officers from its Explosive Ordnance Dispos-



al (EOD) training course, of which 11 graduates have also successfully passed the Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) component.

The trainings were administered to cross-unit police officers representing the Anbar, Kirkuk, and Ninewa Governorates, providing EOD/IEDD training to novice-level police officers.

"This is the end of a 16-week course, 16 tough and demanding weeks, which you all have passed. Upon this day, you are the ones who will assure safety and security for your fellow countrymen. Your service is needed, and I am sure that sooner rather than later, you will

contribute to the development of safety in Iraq," said Mr. Mikael Engdahl, UNMAS Technical Support Team Lead.

Deputy Minister of Interior, Mr. Imad Mohammed Mehmood also commented on the training: "UNMAS is a very valuable partner of the Ministry of Interior and we are really grateful for its help. The donation from Germany is very important for Iraqi EOD/IEDD training, and we hope that Germany will continue to support Iraq in the future."

UNMAS in Iraq would like to thank the FR of Germany for its contribution to technical support initiatives and the organization of this training.

UNFPA Iraq continues the training of 200 specialized and non-specialized mental health and psychosocial support service providers

Baghdad, 01 September 2019 - With the support of UN Action and La Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID), UNFPA Iraq continues, for week 6, the training a total of 200 specialised and non-specialised mental health and psychosocial support service providers to enable them to offer proper and quality care to survivors of gender based violence (GBV), sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and trauma.



WHO in Iraq is participating in the Health Expo Iraq 2019

Baghdad, 2 September 2019 - The World Health Organization (WHO) in Iraq is participating in the Health Expo Iraq 2019 organised by the Ministry of Health. The event aims to raise public awareness of health issues, information, and services in the country. WHO staff will respond to health questions and health education messages on immunization, antimicrobial resistance, HIV/AIDS, environmental health, road traffic and injury and family planning to the public is being disseminated. The event will run for three days under the theme "Together for better health and environment".



International Day for Suicide Prevention (10 September) marked in Iraq

Baghdad, 11 September 2019 - According to the World Health Organization, almost one million people commit suicide every year. In Iraq, suicide is often considered taboo and survivors can be stigmatized. On International Day for Suicide Prevention (10 September) a local nongovernmental organization, Azhee, in partnership with IOM Iraq, hosted a conference for families and friends of suicide victims, academics, United Nations agencies, ministries and other relevant parties.

The conference provided a forum to discuss actions to combat the stigma surrounding suicide; improve support systems for families who have lost loved ones; promote openness about mental health care; and improve policy and advocacy. Participants represented 10 different Iraqi governorates and included people living in IDP camps as well as urban settings.

"My son Rehat, 18, was a great musician. He participated in festivals and competitions and won the best clarinet player award, he was even better than

of some of his teachers, but he was under a lot of peer pressure. His psychological state deteriorated so much that he committed suicide. I hope that such conferences and sessions will contribute to raising awareness among youth and family members so they choose dialogue and sharing their problems before surrendering and considering suicide," said Aziz Hama Karim, father of a suicide victim.

Azhee was founded in 2018 to coordinate national efforts to reduce the numbers of suicide casualties and tackle its impact on those who have a personal experience with suicide. IOM Iraq prioritizes mental health and psychosocial support through its social cohesion and community stabilization programming. "I came up with the idea of establishing this organization when I woke up one morning and found that my 16-year-old had taken his own life. We were in shock and we did not know why he did what he did. We wanted to know why, and we are still looking for an answer. There was no one to support us, so we



thought that what happened to us could happen to other young people and families. Since then, we have worked hard to establish a platform to raise people's awareness and support those most vulnerable, encouraging them to share their suffering and concerns. We hope that what happened with our son will not happen to others," said Pakhshan Kakawais, the founder of Azhee. This project is funded by Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.

Suicide prevention is a key component of IOM Iraq’s community stabilization portfolio

Erbil, 10 October 2019 – World Mental Health Day is recognized every year on 10 October, to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilize efforts in support of mental wellbeing. This year, the focus is on suicide prevention.

Suicide prevention is becoming an increasingly important component of IOM Iraq’s Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) programming. In recent years, increased reports of suicide cases in some IDP camps where IOM works; increased interest in the topic amongst governments entities; and official requests for support from the Iraqi Ministry of Health and Environment and local NGOs; have led to the development of a training module and material, standard operating procedures on suicide prevention and response, and other activities, as part of the organization’s community stabilization and social cohesion work.

IOM Iraq MHPSS staff have been holding trainings for service providers (MHPSS, Camp Coordination and Camp Management, Protection) in targeted camps, to introduce the topic of

suicide, explain the risk factors and help separate fact from myth. The trainings equip MHPSS professionals to focus on high-risk sociodemographic factors such as stigma, domestic violence, poverty, illiteracy and the marginalization of women.

An internal Standard Operating Procedure was developed to guide colleagues who work with vulnerable beneficiaries on the topic of suicide prevention and response; IOM also supports local organizations that organize social awareness activities and advocacy on behalf of those affected by suicide.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), nearly 800,000 people die by suicide every year; for each suicide there are more than 20 attempts. The impact of suicides and suicide attempts can affect families, friends and communities, yet in some societies the topic is taboo and subject to stigma. However, suicides can be prevented, through measured actions at the individuals, community and national levels. Goal 3 of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals is to “ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for

all at all ages”. It includes a target related to the reduction of “premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being”; suicide prevention is included in this target. IOM Iraq’s work to destigmatize suicide, and support those impacted by it, represents progress towards the achievement of Goal 3.

IOM Iraq’s MHPSS programme has been active since 2014. It currently operates in eight governorates: Baghdad, Kerbala, Duhok, Najaf, Erbil, Diyala, Kirkuk and Ninewa. Since January 2019, the programme has reached 14,850 beneficiaries with the provision 45,012 services. These MHPSS activities are made possible with support from the United Kingdom’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office; USAID; the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA); the Government of Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT); the European Union; and the Governments of Italy, Germany, Japan, Canada and The Netherlands.



World Patient Safety Day marked in Baghdad

Baghdad, 17 September 2019 - More than 100 people joined the World Health Organization (WHO) in Iraq and the Iraq Ministry of Health to light up the National Museum skies in Baghdad with orange lights and flew orange balloons to mark the launch of the very first-ever World Patient Safety Day 2019 (17 September).



Iraq celebrates first ever World Patient Safety Day

Baghdad, 22 September 2019 – Lina Suhail had just undergone her third caesarian section in Al-Karkh Hospital when WHO launched its first World Patient Safety Day. Unlike other patients, Suhail was happy with the services that she received from this hospital. “All staff have been very helpful in giving me and other patients all the medications and personal care which hastened the healing process. This is a rare occurrence in most health facilities here. I think this was the main reason the caesarian operation was successful,” said Lina Suhail.

“The biggest challenge that many patients face and that may not make them as lucky as I am, is the issue of poor hygiene and the inadequate supply of medical products - such as medicines and medical equipment - to treat and manage complicated or simple health conditions,” added Suhail.

According to Iman Kashmoula, the Patient Safety Unit Officer at Al-Karkh Baghdad Health Department, the patient safety programme has been implemented in 13 hospitals in Iraq since 2018, focusing mainly on preventing medical errors and adverse events that patients are exposed to.

“Not all hospitals in Iraq have been able to reach the patient safety standards. This is mainly due to lack of financial allocations, inadequate effective follow-up by specialists in the field of patient safety, and the huge numbers of patients compared to the medical staff available to deliver the services,” said Iman Kashmoula.

Dr Ahmed Abdel-Hassan, chairperson of the Patient Safety Committee at Al-Karkh Maternity Hospital shared what makes the hospital unique in terms of patient safety.

“At Al-Karkh Maternity Hospital, we follow all the 140 patient safety standards provided by the Ministry of Health, among them, identifying patients before any medical procedure is

done, marking high-risk medicines in distinctive colours, ensuring that patients forms are correctly filled by competent medical professionals and providing safe transfer of patients from the theatres to the admission rooms,” said Dr Ahmed Abdel-Hassan

“Patient safety aims to prevent and reduce risks, errors, and harm that occur to patients during the provision of health care. Unsafe care is likely one of the 10 leading causes of death and disability in the world. In Iraq, health professionals are working hard to prevent these events” as Ms Hudham Ismail Hammoud, the Head of Nurses in Al-Karkh Maternity Hospital, said. “Iraq, like many countries, is faced with many challenges that compromise the safety of patients. To minimize risks associated with patient safety, it is prudent that the government increases the number of health facilities to cope with the problem of overcrowding, creates awareness among patients and health workers on issues of patient safety and increases the number of nurses, doctors, and health service providers to cope with patient numbers. Others are the provision of all preventive supplies such as sterilization materials and patient identification bracelets,” said Ms Hudham Ismail Hammoud.

Although health care providers in Iraq are receiving tremendous support from the health authorities to reduce the burden of harm caused to patients as a result of medication errors, healthcare-associated infections, unsafe surgical care procedures, and unsafe injections

practices in health care settings, the disruption of the health system in country over the last few years has left it ill equipped. Other harm that is likely to affect patients includes diagnostic errors, unsafe transfusion practices, radiation errors, sepsis, and venous thromboembolism.

Regionally, evidence has shown that up to 18% of hospital admissions are associated with adverse events, 80% of which are preventable. Patients may be at risk of harm if the care they receive is not satisfactory, whether that is because it is delayed, inefficient, inequitable, of poor quality, not based on the latest evidence or represents a financial burden on the patient and their family. Globally, WHO is prioritizing patient safety as a global health priority and urging patients, health care workers, policy-makers and health care industry to “speak up for patient safety”. Key factors of patient safety strategies recommended by WHO are clear policies, leadership capacity, and data to drive safety improvements, skilled health care professionals and effective engagement of patients in their own care.

Today, WHO and the Ministry of Health of Iraq joined the global campaign to launch World Patient Safety Day under the theme, “Speak Up for Patient Safety.” Through this campaign, WHO and the Ministry mobilized patients, their families, health workers, policy-makers, academicians, researchers, professional networks and the healthcare industry to speak up. They did this by visiting and listening to the voices of patients in Al-Karkh Maternity Hospital and by conducting a patient safety symposium in the same hospital. In the afternoon, a press conference was held in the National Museum in Baghdad to raise public awareness of the importance of patient safety. In the afternoon, the city’s sky was lit in orange to commemorate the importance of the day.



UNFPA organized a workshop on the decision-making tools for family planning service providers

Baghdad, 21 September 2019 - Family Planning is a central strategy for bringing down high rates of maternal mortality and infant mortality. UNFPA recently organized, with the support of the Government of Canada, a workshop on the decision-making tools for family planning service providers. In this workshop, participants were briefed on the best ways to approach family planning and which method is most appropriate for each family.



Pediatric Intensive Care and Neonatal semi-intensive care units newly equipped to open doors for infants in Raparin Pediatric Hospital in Erbil

Erbil, 26 September 2019 - The World Health Organization (WHO) in partnership with the Ministry of Health in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) today celebrated the opening of the Pediatric intensive care and Neonatal Gastroenterology and the Semi-Intensive Care Unit in Raparin Pediatric Hospital in Erbil, KR-I.

The two pediatric intensive and semi-intensive care units were supported by WHO to provide specialized quality care services for the infants and in-need for medical treatment children from the Syrian Refugees, internally displaced population (IDPs), and hosting community.

The two units are well furnished with a set of advanced medical equipment like

Gastroscopy and Colonoscopy to manage between 20 to 30 cases of gastrointestinal disease per month.

“The rehabilitation and equipping of the two pediatric and infants intensive care units in Raparin Pediatric Hospital is only one result of the good collaboration and coordination between WHO and the Ministry of Health in Kurdistan Region of Iraq,” said Dr. Adham R Ismail Abdel Moniem, Acting WHO Representative in Iraq.

“We believe that such contribution will save infants’ lives and lift some of the pressure put on the pediatric health facilities serving the IDPs, refugees, and local community in KRG governorates,” Dr. Abdel Moneim added.

WHO intervention in the rehabilitation

and equipping of the facility included upgrading the bed capacity of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in the mentioned hospital with additional four beds, four ventilator, six monitoring devices, and a planned package of training courses to build the capacity of pediatric doctors in the area of neonatal intensive care services.

The Neonatal Semi- Intensive Care Unit, on the other hand, has a full daily bed capacity of 35 patients. The Unit is newly furnished with additional 10 medical monitoring devices, 10 infant incubators, six infant phototherapy, three Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) devices, and three spiral phototherapy machines.

WHO support also included equipping the hospital with other devices like ultrasonic nebulizers and syringe pump, among many other items.

The outpatient, emergency and surgical units in Raparin Pediatric Hospital receive a daily average of 1000 to 1500 children including 150 -170 admission per day. Approximately, 40 % of the hospital visitors are Syrian refugees and IDPs children.

WHO support to this pediatric health facility was made possible through the generous contribution from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (BPRM).



Polio National Immunization Days campaign launched in Iraq



Baghdad, 1 October 2019 – The Ministry of Health and Environment in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, kicked off the first round of the Iraq polio National Immunization Days campaign on Sunday.

Senior officials of the Ministry of Health and the heads of WHO and UNICEF, Dr Adham Abdel Moniem

and Ms. Hamida Lasseko officially launched the five-day campaign in the Governorate of Kerbala, southwest of Baghdad. It aims to vaccinate more than 2.6 million children under the age of 5 years in 10 governorates Iraq wide. “Keeping Iraq polio-free remains a major priority for WHO and its partners. We continue to do everything we can to maintain this great achievement; this

campaign is essential and critical to doing so, as well as to minimize the risk of any potential importation of poliovirus in the country,” said Dr Adham Ismail, the Acting WHO Representative Iraq.

Vaccines are the safest and most effective way to protect children against preventable killer diseases, and the campaign is a centerpiece of the Ministry of Health’s work to ensure that every Iraqi child is immunized and no child left behind.

WHO is supporting health authorities with micro-planning, execution, supervision, and monitoring the vaccination exercise among communities in rural, urban and hard to reach areas. Special focus will be placed on children who missed their vaccination in the past and are therefore lagging behind. WHO will also support with the post - evaluation once the campaign is done.

In addition, WHO is supporting more than 13,000 vaccinators and over 1,300 supervisors who are administering the

Polio National Immunization Days campaign launched in Iraq (continued)

vaccines door-to-door. WHO is also deploying 10 WHO Polio / Expanded Program on Immunization surge staff to the field to monitor the campaign's roll out.

UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Health to ensure that the vaccines are stored properly and in accordance with international standards. UNICEF provided high quality storage and a digital system that monitors the temperature of the vaccines twenty-four hours a day.

“Quality health care for every child, including immunization, is enshrined in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and we must ensure that every boy and girl is able to practice this right. The healthcare and nutrition that a child receives during his or her first five years is crucial to their lifelong development,” explained Ms Lasseko.

In the lead up to the campaign, UNICEF-supported field staff went home to home, tent to tent, to raise

awareness among parents and caretakers on the importance of vaccinating their children and the importance of vaccines in keeping the children healthy and lowering the chances of disease outbreaks.

This phase of the campaign covers eighty-one districts in the 10 governorates of Erbil, Suleimaniyah, Dohuk, Ninawa, Kirkuk, Salahiddin, Al-Anbar, Wassit, Kerbala and Najaf. The second round of the campaign will take place in November.

WHO intensifies its support to vulnerable communities in Ba’aj by strengthening the delivery of primary health care services



Baghdad, 21 October 2019 - The World Health Organization (WHO) has intensified its health support to vulnerable communities in areas of return in Ninewa governorate delivering more than 140,000 health interventions to people in and around Ba’aj town since January 2019. At Ba’aj primary health care center (PHCC) supported by WHO patients received consultations for all health conditions, vaccination, laboratory services, medicines, emergency health care and referrals for emergency cases

Together with the local health, authorities WHO established this health center to provide the much-needed health services for more than 22 000 returnees in Ba’aj and the surrounding villages who had no access to any form of medical assistance.

Nineteen-year-old Suood Sami just returned to his home in Ba’aj from Salamiya 2 IDP camp where all basic services were always available. He was overjoyed to learn that he could access similar health services in Ba’aj a place that was badly affected by the conflict and health infrastructure was all destroyed not more than 2 years back, thanks to WHO for restoring these services.

“I was skeptical about returning home unsure if I could find the critical basic services like health. However, once I

arrived, I was happy to find Ba’aj PHCC operational. It is the only health facility-serving people in Ba’aj and its surrounding villages. We are lucky to have access to health services and essential medicines especially at a time when my baby is unwell,” said Suood. Before the crisis, Ba’aj town had 1 functional hospital and 11 primary health care centers. WHO’s support has made it possible for people like Suood with resource constraints to accessing health services in hard to reach areas a step toward recovery and in support of the returnees resilience where everyone has access to healthcare no matter their financial status.

Suood is not alone; his 36-year-old neighbor Haytham Jadi Jaber had also brought his 10-year-old son, Mustafa to the health facility. Mustafa was suffering from acute sore throat and abdominal pain. “It has been 2 days since Mustafa started having a high fever, I was unable to rush him to the health facility because I was engaged elsewhere. By the time, I took him to the health facility he was at the verge of fainting. The story would have changed if there was no health facility for me to seek such emergency health support,” said Haytham Jadi Jaber.

Seated next to the doctor's room is 28-year-old Fatty Atteya a patient with chronic conditions. He requires continu-

ous medical support in the form of special medications. Like many men and women with chronic conditions in his community and lifelong illnesses, he is unemployed; this poses a challenge to his abilities to obtain basic needs like medicines and other basic needs..

“The long journey makes it difficult especially for patients with emergency needs, including women with pregnancy-related complications,” said Atteya. WHO’s intervention aims to support communities and individuals like Suood, Fatty, and Muhammad by ensuring that they have access to the health care that they most need. However, in some areas, such as Ba’aj, Thrai Alkrah, Abu Taqeya, health care is completely absent with people having to travel considerable distances to reach the nearest functioning health units or hospitals. In emergencies, WHO has deployed ambulances to transport patients from Ba’aj PHCC to specialized facilities.

WHO remains the only agency supporting primary health services in return areas of Ba’aj following the 2014 crisis that displaced thousands of people including more than 100,000 others from Ba’aj town.

As the summer ends and preparations for winter commence, certain diseases are more likely to occur, including acute respiratory tract infections. The environment is also likely to increase the risk of other water infections such as diarrhea. Despite the many challenges that patients and medical workers face, the health facility remains the best hope for many people with chronic and emergency conditions. Thanks to WHO’s, partner Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance/United States Agency for International Development (OFDA/USAID) for the financial support and WHO’s implementing partner DARY for delivery the health care.

SRSO Hennis-Plasschaert fulfills tree challenge

Erbil, 9 September 2019 – Today, the Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, planted a tree at a school in Erbil responding to a challenge from Kurdistan Region President, Nechirvan Barzani.

The Special Representative challenged President Barham Salih, Prime Minister Adil Abdul Mahdi, and Speaker Mohammed Al-Halbousi, to join her in adopting this initiative as a national challenge of planting trees throughout Iraq.

On the 21st of September 2019, the United Nations observes the International Day of Peace, under the theme "Climate Action for Peace".



UNHCR climate action continues in Erbil

Erbil, 25 September 2019 - UNHCR staff members, its partner Qandil staff and refugee and displaced volunteers planted trees in Mamzawa in Erbil. This comes as a step in beautifying the neighborhood and as another step in climate action for a better tomorrow and a better future.



Microbial hope for cleaning up Iraq conflict's oil pollution legacy

Kirkuk, 26 September 2019 - A biological remediation pilot project seeking to enhance nature's own ability to clear up oil spills in Iraq's conflict-affected areas is launched in Kirkuk by UN 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 (UNAMI). The initia-

tive seeks to harness naturally occurring soil bacteria as a powerful natural ally to decontaminate poisoned land. Over three years ago in summer 2016, the residents of Qayyarah - a small town of around twenty-five thousand people, some sixty kilometers south of Mosul - were caught in the line of fire as so-called Islamic State fighters torched nineteen nearby oil wells. So thick were the clouds of smoke, that

people could not distinguish day from night for weeks in what infamously came to be known as the 'Daesh winter'. Rivers of crude oil flowed through Qayyarah's streets and into seasonal wadis as tens of thousands of barrels of oil relentlessly spewed for months. The specter of an even worse environmental catastrophe was heightened as the simmering oil slick migrated to less than three kilometers from the mainstem of the Tigris River; Iraq's water lifeline.

Following an epic battle to control the oil fires that took nearly a year, the North Oil Company (NOC) which manages the oil fields of northern Iraq is currently collecting an estimated 20,000 tonnes of remaining oil waste in Qayyarah into around a dozen large pits. Progress, however, has been slow and pools of heavy viscous oil remain on the doorsteps of entire neighborhoods and households, who complain about the impacts of noxious fumes on their children's health.

'In some places, the layer of heavy oil is two to three meters thick, and long



Microbial hope for cleaning up Iraq conflict's oil pollution legacy (continued)

stretches of wadi channels are now effectively tarmac roads on which cars can be driven' observed Mr. Mohammed Dawood, head of Qayarah oil refinery's environmental unit. Furthermore, Environment Ministry officials expressed concern that exceptionally heavy rains and flash floods of the 2018/19 winter season washed out oil from the holding pits into the Tigris River.

While oil production restarted in Qayarah immediately after the conflict ended in June 2017, reaching currently an estimated 40,000 barrels per day, little has been done to clean-up the conflict's toxic aftermath. 'Oil companies need to give at least equal attention to protecting human health and the environment as they give to oil production and profits. This requires the Ministry of Oil to provide the necessary resources and enhance the environmental management capacity of NOC', remarked Mr. Waleed Hussein, who leads the Environment Ministry's oil pollution control team.

Microbes that naturally break down petroleum offer one promising and affordable solution to Iraq's oil pollution predicament. While the idea of using oil microbes devouring oil spills is not a new one in Iraq, its potential is barely recognized by national oil companies, much less applied.

In a bid to move from theory to practice, UNEP in collaboration with UNAMI delivered a four-day hands-on

training workshop on remediation of oil spills from 23 to 26 September 2019 that was hosted at NOC headquarters in the historic Baba Gurgur oil field where oil was first discovered in Iraq in 1927. Twenty-nine oil experts from the ministries of environment and oil, including national oil companies from across Iraq, participated in the training event which examined a broad spectrum of techniques to remediate oil pollution.

'They key point about bioremediation is that it's an affordable and relatively simple process, and so readily applicable in treating the many oil spills caused by the conflict as well as from Iraq's expanding oil industry' said Mike Cowing, the UNEP expert who designed the demonstration trial at NOC headquarters.

'By adding nutrients from manure, bulking agents like wood chips and water, we are simply creating the ideal conditions for bacteria to thrive and speeding up the natural process of breaking down the oil' underscored Dr. Ian Goodacre, director of the RSK Group branch office in Basra, an international company pioneering Iraq's first full-fledged bioremediation treatment sites in the Zubayr and Rumaila oil fields, and who is also advising the Kirkuk pilot.

At the same time, it's important to recognize that bioremediation is not a cure-all solution for all of Iraq's oil

spills. 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. Nevertheless, 'bioremediation constitutes a core part of the solution toolbox for clearing many, if not most oil spills in Iraq' affirmed Mr. Cowing.

At the workshop's conclusion, Dr. Jassim Humadi, Iraq's Deputy Environment Minister and Mr. Azad Jaleel, director of NOC's environment department, committed to working together in promoting the application and dissemination of bioremediation to help clean up oil spills as a matter of priority.

'We are keen to promote biological remediation as a cutting-edge and cost-effective tool not only to fight the huge oil pollution challenges created by the conflict, but also to clear up future oil spills the we know will continue to happen' said Dr. Jassim.

Note: Since mid-2017, UNEP is supporting the Government of Iraq to clean-up oil pollution and sustainably manage and recycle the huge volumes of debris created by the ISIL conflict. This training is part of a series of capacity building events that UNEP is carrying out in Iraq on assessing and remediating oil pollution and is supported by the Government of Norway Oil for Development (OfD) programme.

Culture

UNESCO Iraq is implementing the biggest portfolio in UNESCO

Baghdad, 10 September 2019 - With over USD 130 million of funding and an expanding portfolio that is expected to grow into the future, it is anticipated that procurement and contracting will be key in the delivery of our mandate to support the Government and the people of Iraq.

Therefore, the workshop on procurement and contracting that was delivered to UNESCO Iraq to help facilitate the procurement process in Iraq, review the possibilities of a fast-track procurement process, engage the staff about the particular procurement realities in the country, and gain a better understanding of the UN procurement landscape in order to propose a better UN collaboration.

The outcome of this training is expected to feed into a global UNESCO reflection about the way it currently does procurement. UNESCO Iraq could be a



harbinger for a fast track, risk-based procurement and contracting framework that will enable UNESCO, not only to improve procurement in other

field offices but to demonstrate how central services should make more efforts to learn more from field operations.

UNESCO and Iraq reaffirm their commitment to the reconstruction of Mosul

Paris, France, 11 September 2019 - UNESCO Director-General, Ms. Audrey Azoulay, held a working meeting at UNESCO Headquarters with the Minister of Culture of Iraq, Mr. Abdulameer Al-Dafar Hamdani, and the Governor of Nineveh Province, Mr. Mansour Al-Mareed, to review the progress of the project, "Revive the Spirit of Mosul".

This flagship initiative, launched by UNESCO in 2018, with the support of the Government of Iraq and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, focuses on the human dimension of the reconstruction of the city around three main points: the rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged or destroyed cultural heritage, the rehabilitation of the education system and the revitalization of cultural life.

"We are committed to working together. We agreed on a solid timetable and action plan," said the Director-General at the end of the meeting, referring specifically to the reconstruction project funded by the United Arab Emirates,

which includes the Al-Nuri Mosque and its minaret as well as two churches. She indicated that consolidation work on the remaining structures and demining of the mosque and minaret site is expected to be completed in the coming weeks, and reconstruction could begin in the first half of 2020. The latter had been severely damaged during Daesh's occupation of the city. "We are aware of the difficulties, but the people of Mosul deserve our efforts," said Ms. Azoulay, recalling, "Mosul was the symbol of diversity and tolerance before the conflict. The spirit of Mosul is an example and an objective for the rest of Iraq."

"The needs are considerable," said Minister of Culture Al-Hamdani, "but with the help of UNESCO and the international community, we can meet the challenge. We will work as a united team."

Nineveh Governor Al-Mareed thanked UNESCO for its efforts to revive Mosul's history and spirit and emphasized the need let people know about the

project. "The population must be informed that this is a concrete project," he said.

Ms. Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director General: "Fruitful meeting with the Minister of Culture of Iraq, and the governor of Nineveh. We discussed cooperation with the Government of Iraq to accelerate works on the ground, restore Al-Nouri Mosque, Mosul heritage and cultural life. We build peace where it starts. Let's #ReviveTheSpiritofMosul".



Baghdad, 15 September 2019 - The UNESCO team in Iraq met with the "Baghdad - City of Literature - Creative Cities Network" team in Baghdad. They discussed UNESCO Director-General and UAE Minister of Culture sign landmark agreement for Mosul's Christian Heritage and cultural diversity



Mosul, 19 September 2019 - The Special Representative for Iraq of the United Nations Secretary-General, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, toured the ruins of the landmark Al-Nouri Mosque in Mosul. ISIL blew up the structure and its iconic Al-Hadba leaning minaret before its military defeat in Mosul. UNESCO is leading a project to restore the historic mosque to its former glory.

UNESCO Director-General and UAE Minister of Culture sign landmark agreement for Mosul's Christian Heritage and cultural diversity

Paris, 10 October 2019 - UNESCO Director General, Audrey Azoulay, and Noura bint Mohammed Al Kaabi, the United Arab Emirate's Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development, today agreed to undertake the rehabilitation of the Syriac Catholic Al-Tahera Church and the Latin Al-Saa'a Church in the Iraqi city of Mosul. The agreement is an addition to UNESCO's Revive the Spirit of Mosul Initiative, marking a major advance for the restoration of cultural and religious diversity to the Iraqi city and an important step for the Christians of the East who are part of Mosul history and future. During their meeting at UNESCO Headquarters in the presence of the Ambassador of Iraq to France, Abdulrahman Hamid al-Husseini, the Minister and the Director-General signed an amendment to that effect, extending the scope of the agreement between the Organization and the United Arab Emirates that paved the way launch of UNESCO's flagship initiative.

The signatories qualified the amendment as "a major step for the recovery of the Old City of Mosul." They described the rehabilitation of the churches, damaged during the occupation by Daesh, as important not only because of their value as cultural heritage, but also as testimonies to the diversity that has been the historic hallmark of the city, a proud crossroads of cultures and a peaceful haven for different religious communities over the centuries.

Al Tahera Church, built from 1859 to 1862, sustained severe damage in recent years and a large part of its ar-

chitectural and outer walls were destroyed. The structure of the Al-Saa'a Church was damaged during the occupation of the city by Daesh and its convent was looted and ransacked. Completed in 1873, the church is often referred to as "Clock Church" due to the clock lodged in its tower, a gift from Empress Eugenie of France to the Dominican Fathers of Mosul. Once rehabilitated, its convent will serve both as place of worship and as a community centre for all of Mosul's residents.

Brother Nicolas Tixier and Brother Olivier Poquillon, who represented the Dominican order during today's meeting, thanked UNESCO in the name of the order and reiterated their attachment to Mossoul, where Dominicans have built bridges between all communities since the 18th Century.

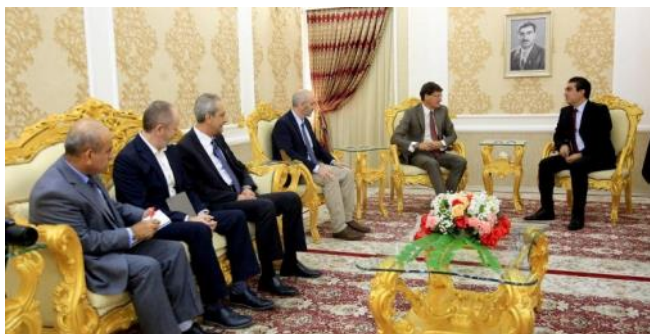
UNESCO is liaising closely with the Dominican Order and the Christian Waqf in the rehabilitation of the churches.

During their meeting Ms Azoulay and Ms Al Kaabi reviewed ongoing successful cooperation in restoring the Al-Nouri Mosque and its Al-Hadba minaret, due to begin in the coming days after a necessary period of stabilization. It is a major component of the Revive the Spirit of Mosul initiative, funded by the UAE.

Beyond the rehabilitation of architectural landmarks, the initiative includes:

- on the-job training for young professionals
- strengthening the capacities of craftspeople (masons, carpenters, stone carvers, metalsmiths, etc.)
- Job-creation opportunities
- technical and vocational education

Students in the departments of archaeology, architecture and engineering of the University of Mosul will benefit from taking part in the process of restoration of the landmark buildings.



Duhok, 27 September 2019 - Mr. Paolo Fontani, Director of UNESCO Iraq accompanied by the UNESCO team met with the Governor of Duhok Mr. Farhad Atrushi. The meeting focused on the restoration of the historic Amadiya city which is located in Duhok Governorate. The history of the city of Amadiya goes back as far as ancient Assyria. It's perched on a mesa or a plateau, formerly only accessible by a narrow stairway cut into the rock.



Abu Dhabi, UAE, 02 October 2019 - As part of "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" Initiative, Ms. Noura bint Mohammed Al Kaabi, the United Arab Emirate's Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development, received UNESCO representative in Iraq, Mr. Paolo Fontani, to discuss efforts to preserve the World Heritage and the UAE's ongoing efforts of reconstruction of Mosul's cultural heritage.

UNESCO begins onsite works in the Al Nouri Mosque complex

Mosul, 13 October 2019 - UNESCO begins onsite works in the Al Nouri Mosque complex, including clearing the rubble and UXOs, stabilization of the Al-Hadba Minaret and Mosque and construction of a warehouse. The Governor of Nineveh, Mansour Al-Mareed, announced the commencement of the reconstruction of Al-Nouri Mosque in the old city of Mosul, under the supervision of UNESCO and Nineveh Governate.



UNESCO supports the rehabilitation of 54 schools in Iraq

Baghdad, 12 October 2019 - With support from Educate A Child, UNESCO is working hand in hand with the Iraqi Government to rehabilitate 54 schools in Iraq, enabling students to have an adequate learning environment.



European Union supports UNESCO's work in Iraq

Erbil, 17 October 2019 - EU Ambassador to Iraq, H.E. Martin Huth, visited the Erbil citadel, a World Heritage property, accompanied by the high commission for the Erbil citadel revitalization and UNESCO Iraq. The EU is supporting a programme of cooperation with the authorities and UNESCO Iraq to continue the conservation and revitalization of the citadel. The programme involves the rehabilitation of historic buildings in and around the citadel, support for cultural activities and training on heritage management and tourism and hopes to generate employment opportunities for the local community and IDPs. The European Union is also contributing 20 million Euros through

UNESCO to the reconstruction of historic buildings in Mosul which includes

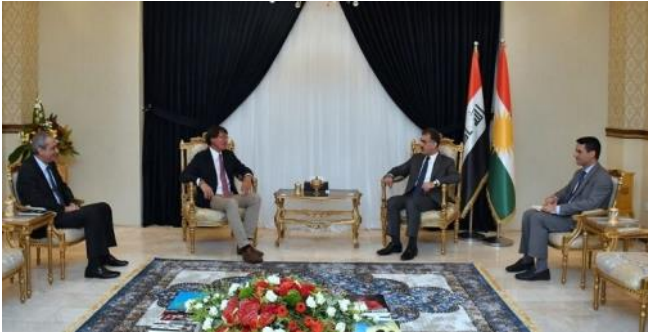
houses, schools and cultural infrastructure.



UNESCO Representative in Iraq meets Italian Ambassador

Baghdad, 18 October 2019 - H.E. the Ambassador of Italy to Iraq, Mr. Bruno Antonio Pasquino, met with Mr. Paolo Fontani, Director of UNESCO Iraq, at the UNESCO office in Baghdad to discuss future projects in the field of heritage and culture in Iraq.





Erbil, 27 August 2019 - Mr. Paolo Fontani, the Representative of UNESCO to Iraq, visited the Department of Foreign Relations KR-I where he met with H.E Safeen Dazyee. Mr. Paolo and Mr. Dazyee discussed the joint cooperation between UNESCO and the KR-I particularly on the education of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the successful rehabilitation of Erbil Citadel.



Erbil, 27 August 2019 – UNESCO Representative to Iraq, Mr. Paolo Fontani, met with the Minister of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Mr. Alan Hama Saeed Salih. They discussed mutual cooperation and partnership in the education sector.

National scientific conference entitled “Technical Education Reform in the Kurdistan Region - toward the Bologna process” held in the Kurdistan Region

Erbil, 6 September 2019 - Under the patronage of Kurdistan Regional Government Minister of Higher Education & Scientific Research Erbil, Suleimanya and Dohuk polytechnic universities held a national scientific conference entitled “Technical Education Reform in the Kurdistan Region - toward the Bologna process”.



UNESCO representative addressed the Iraq Energy Forum



Baghdad, 19 September 2019 - Rory Robertshaw, UNESCO Iraq, attended the Iraq Energy Forum where he gave a speech on the impact of new technologies on global employment and skills trends and the need for education providers and administrators to respond with innovative approaches to meet future skills needs.



Supporting the Government of Iraq to develop the Iraqi Education Strategy (2020-2030)

Baghdad, 19 September 2019 - UNESCO in coordination with IIEP (UNESCO), UNICEF and the World Bank is supporting the Government of Iraq to develop the Iraqi Education Strategy (2020-2030). The first technical workshop took place at the Al Rasheed hotel in Baghdad that set the course for future collaboration on the strategy.



Al-Sanober school in Wana refurbished with IOM support

Baghdad, 2 October 2019 - IOM Iraq has built six classrooms at Al-Sanober school in Wana, Ninewa with the funding from U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. The new facilities will increase the school's capacity to 1,000 students, improve the learning environment and give girls an opportunity to access education.

"Al-Sanober is the only school in the sub-district for girls and it was overcrowded. Thanks to this project, many more girls from the community will have access to education," said Tel-Kayf Mayor, Basim Ballo, during the opening ceremony.

Through this and other infrastructure, livelihood assistance and community engagement projects, IOM Iraq contributes to improving conditions for sustainable recovery in Iraq and supports durable solutions to displacement.



UNESCO is implementing a project to improve access to quality and inclusive education for out-of-school children in Iraq

Baghdad, 22 October 2019 - In partnership with Educate A Child, a global

programme of the Education Above All Foundation, UNESCO is implementing

a project to improve access to quality and inclusive education for out-of-school children in Iraq: through its implementing partner in Thi Qar, the Swedish Humanitarian Relief (SHR) Organization, has enrolled 1,466 (840 boys and 606 girls) Out-Of-School Children (OOSC) of 6-14 age in formal education, Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) or Youth Programme in coordination with Thi Qar Directorate of Education based through 21 October 2019. During this process, every child who is registered at the school has received a school kit to facilitate his/her learning.



School during rehabilitation

The Secretary-General learned with deep sorrow of the loss of life and injuries that occurred near the Imam Hussein shrine

New York, 11 September 2019 - The United Nations Secretary-General learned with deep sorrow of the loss of life and injuries that occurred near the Imam Hussein shrine in Karbala, Iraq.

A large number of worshippers were present on the site to commemorate Ashura, including nationals from Iraq and other countries. The Secretary-General expresses his

deepest sympathies to the families of the deceased and wishes a speedy recovery for the injured. The United Nations stands ready to support the Government in dealing with this tragedy.

UNAMI opens Mosul Office, pledges continued support for Ninewa communities in post-conflict recovery



Mosul, 19 September 2019 -The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) formally inaugurated its offices in Mosul at a ceremony attended by local government officials, senior UNAMI staff, UN Agencies and partners, establishing a continuing presence in the Ninewa Governorate and pledging to strengthen its support to the local communities and authorities in this period of post-conflict recovery. Cutting the ribbon and planting a tree as a symbol of peace, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, noted that the inauguration of the office marked a milestone, “a step that will deepen our collaboration, enhance our coordination and provide a constant interface with the UN for all

stakeholders.” “In the Arabic roots of the name ‘Mosul’ one can find the idea of a linking point, of a coming together. And indeed - we intend this office to be a meeting place for all those with a stake in the development and prosperity of Ninewa. A junction where visions become plans, and where plans come to life,” Ms. Hennis-Plasschaert said. Since the liberation of the city and the governorate from Dae’sh (ISIL), the UN family in Iraq has regularly deployed staff to the area, implementing programs in support of the dignified return of IDPs, preparing for provincial elections, promoting stabilization, social cohesion and human rights, removing explosive remnants of war, rehabilitating houses and reconstructing cultural

and religious sites. The Special Representative later toured the ruins of the landmark Al-Nouri Mosque, which ISIL destroyed before its retreat from Mosul. UNESCO is leading the restoration of the mosque and its iconic Al-Hadba leaning minaret. The Special Representative also visited a new distribution centre for national unified cards, set to be opened by the Directorate of Civil Affairs, Passports and Residencies in the coming weeks. The project, supported by UNHCR, will serve over 800,000 residents of Mosul, including thousands whose civil documents were lost or destroyed during the recent conflict, helping ensure their future access to Government services.



Greening Baghdad

Baghdad, 30 September 2019 - A gardening bazar was held recently at the UNAMI compound in Baghdad. The Bazar aimed to draw people into the practice of gardening in the hope of supporting the greening of the planet.



SRSR Hennis-Plasschaert visited Ayatollah Hussein al-Sadr's schools for deaf and blind children in Baghdad



Baghdad, 22 October 2019 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Ayatollah Hussein al-Sadr's schools for

deaf and blind children. The Special Representative interacted with the children and received a briefing on the schools' teaching methods by former Deputy Minister for Social Affairs, Dr.

Abdulghani al-Yozbeki. She also visited the adjacent orphanage and home for the elderly.

