



United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
(UNAMI)
Office of Electoral Assistance (OEA)

SUPPORT TO WOMEN FOR 2021 COR ELECTIONS BY UN AND OTHER PARTNERS





United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and United Nations (UN) agencies provided substantial support for empowerment of women in elections on many levels, as candidates, voters, electoral administrators, and representative of civil society organizations (CSO), through collaboration and technical assistance to Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) and different women specialized supportive bodies on level of the Council of Ministers (CoM) Secretariat, Ministries and CSOs. UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance (OEA) provided much needed coordination umbrella, information flow and encouragement to UN and Iraqi entities to work together for a common cause. The UN Electoral support manifests a “One UN” integrated approach.

The support was in the following areas as mentioned in the Secretary General’s (SG) Report on Women and Peace and Security about support of UNAMI for protection of women candidates.

“In Iraq, ahead of the 2021 elections, the United Nations supported the development of a new electoral code of conduct that addressed defamation and gender-based violence targeting women candidates and supported efforts to counter gender-based violence and hate speech during the election campaign. This included establishing hotlines, assigning a dedicated judge to address incident reports, criminalizing cyberattacks, and providing protection for women candidates”

Excerpts from UN Secretary General’s report on Iraq

1. Approach:

In Iraq, ahead of the 2021 elections, the UN extended multi dimensioned support to women manifested either through direct intervention with IHEC as an electoral management body, or through joint and collaborative interventions with other bodies such as legislative, judiciary and executive in pursuit of improving women representation and empowerment as candidates and engagement as voters and poll workers. Efforts were channeled to improve IHEC gender mainstreaming in its outreach efforts and its regulations and procedures towards implementation of electoral law. A lot of these efforts utilized IHEC memos of understanding with the executive institutions to benefit from resources and forums for trainings, technical expertise and services and forums.



1. Women voters queuing to vote on E-day



Others were focused on gender quota related legislative reforms and interpretations. Emphasis, furthermore, focused on political parties through sponsoring the Electoral Code of Conduct (ECC) signing ceremony. Focus was also made on individual women candidates' capacity building that was inclusive this time of promoting their technical and IT skills during the campaign period and maintaining their social media accounts privacy and security, on the one hand, and documenting and addressing GBV measures through judiciary means, on the other hand.

2. Collaboration, advise and technical assistances:

In order to carry out its commitments to these values and the mandate on women's rights including political participation the following initiatives and activities with outputs, were undertaken with different stakeholders.

3. UNAMI Support to IHEC:

Technical assistance was led by OEA different teams to support IHEC in several major areas as follow:

Legal

- ❑ Technical assistance was provided by OEA which contributed towards IHEC's adoption of the Procedure Seat Allocation with interpretation of the women quota in accordance with the international standards and best practices. In this regard, implementation of the women quota in line with the international standards and best practices, 95 women won seat (28.8 of the total seats) in the Parliament. The number of seats won by female candidates represents an important progress towards enhancing political participation of women.
- ❑ To ensure gender quota is understood in accordance with the international standards and best practices OEA prepared Fact Sheet on Gender Quota and shared with public via its website and social media platforms.



2. UNAMI OEA and Gender team meeting with IHEC officials



3. Workshop for women conducted with the support of UNAMI OEA



❑ Advisory on Seat Allocation / Women Quota:

Technical assistance was provided by OEA including an advisory on seat allocation/women quota to ensure that gender quota is applied in line with international standards and best practices. This effort contributed towards IHEC's adoption of the Procedure Seat Allocation with interpretation of the women quota in accordance with the international standards and best practices. In this regard, implementation of the women quota in line with the international standards and best practices, 95 women won seat (28.8 of the total seats) in the Parliament. The number of seats won by female candidates represents an important progress towards enhancing political participation of women. The Constitution and Election Law ensures the minimum quota of 83 women seats in the Council of Representatives, it also allows for more women to be allocated seats, if they are elected. Despite the fact that nothing in the electoral legislation can be construed as a limitation to allocate to women more than one seat in each constituency, there was a tendency to interpret the women quota as a ceiling. Thus, as to ensure women quota is not a ceiling, OEA provided technical assistance including an advisory based on the national electoral legislation, international standards and best practices and participation of IHEC Legal Committee meetings during preparation of Regulation on Seat Allocation. Impact of these efforts resulted in women crossing the 83 seats to 95 seats for the first time.

❑ Fact Sheet on Gender Quota:

To ensure gender quota is understood in accordance with the international standards and best practices OEA prepared Fact Sheet on Gender Quota and shared with public via its website and social media platforms.



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Fact sheet



<https://www.iraq.un.org>

Elections for Iraq's Council of Representatives

FACT SHEET # 6 Women's Quota

What is the legal framework for women's participation in Iraq's elections?
 Women's political participation in Iraqi elections and gender equality are promoted through both international commitments and domestic legal provisions. As a State party to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Iraq is obliged to ensure participation in public life without discrimination based on gender. Furthermore, Iraq has committed to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5 on "gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls," which aims to "ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life."

The Constitution of Iraq prohibits discrimination based on gender equality and guarantees the right of women to participate in public affairs and to enjoy political rights, including the right to vote, elect and run for office. Also, the Constitution sets a minimum quota for women in Iraq's Council of Representatives (CoR).

What is a women's quota?
 It is an allocation for women of a certain number or percentage of seats of a body such as a parliament, committee or government.

Why is a women's quota needed?
 The participation of women in government or parliaments at the policy level continues to be low in general, and there is an urgent need to achieve a balance between women and men holding publicly elected positions. The women's quota is a temporary special measure mandated by CEDAW with the aim to accelerate de facto equality and progress towards ultimate equality of gender representation.

What is the women's quota for the CoR elections?

Prepared by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). More information: unami-electoral@un.org 1

4. Copy of Factsheet. Full text available at - <https://bit.ly/3RQY0ZI>



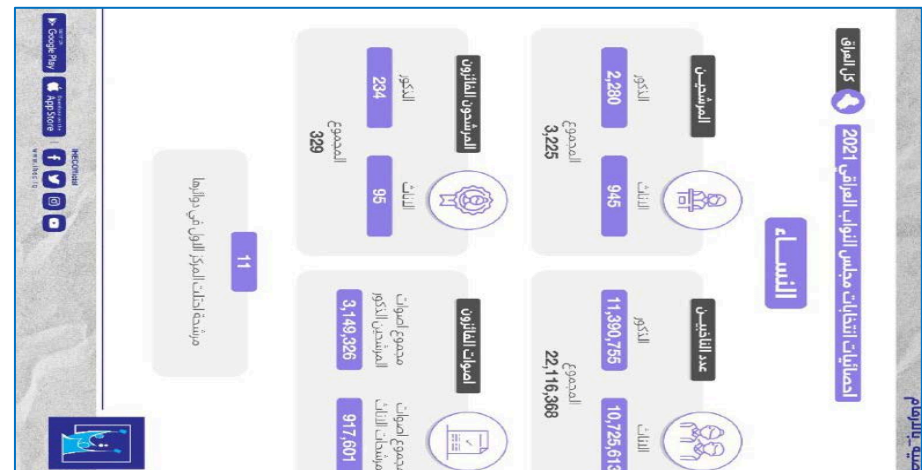
Communications and coordination support



5. Workshop for women conducted with the support of UNAMI OEA

Collaboration with Civil Society: UNAMI OEA, through UNDP managed Low Value Grants for CSOs voter/education & awareness activities within its "Support to Iraq's Electoral Process" Project. The program supported implementation of a total of 47 projects carried out by 31 CSOs country wide from June 23, 2021 – October 9, 2021. Out of the 47 projects, 22 projects targeted women voters. COSs managed to engage and reach out to large numbers of women voters through in-person activities (57.2%). Such positive outcome was achieved because of i) dedicated proposals targeting women only; ii) extensive networking at the local level with religious/tribal leaders, authorities and other grassroots organizations to promote women participation; iii) devoted sessions for local leaders on women's participation to public life and elections; iv) in more traditional and rural contexts, CSOs in some cases rearranged their plans and replaced gender-mixed sessions with dedicated activities for women-only; v) In other cases, male family members were allowed to attend in-person activities so to increase women participation and community acceptance.

- ❑ UNAMI OEA advised the IHEC public outreach department on communication and outreach plan and strategy in absence of sufficient allocated funds and to utilize memos of understanding with the different government offices to promote the communication activities. Support and advise was extended to IHEC to use the ministries, Iraqi Media Network and other independent commissions, CSOs and international sides in implementing the outreach campaign. Following part further details the individual collaboration by IHEC with these stakeholders that was supported by OEA and other UNAMI and UN agencies.
- ❑ OEA supported IHEC in developing the visual products for various target groups including women. The products were widely shared on IHEC's digital and social media platforms. Additionally, OEA coordinated with a British media company in Iraq to produce a video on women's political participation.
- ❑ OEA advised IHEC on the necessity to be inclusive of different groups through providing sign language translation. OEA contracted a sign language translator for people with disabilities. The video products including those targeted for women were added with sign language translations.



6. Infographic on women and elections produced with the support of OEA



- ❑ **Meeting with CMC to further collaboration with other relevant stakeholders:** UNAMI OEA, during July 2021, suggested IHEC to communicate and coordinate directly with CMC for cooperation and to facilitate the broadcast the IHEC messages, inclusive of women targeted messages, through SMS, and other channels.
- ❑ **Sending SMS messages to raise awareness on the importance of women participation in election:** UNAMI OEA PO team drafted six messages to be sent as a bulk SMS. The text messages were shared with IHEC Public Outreach Department (POD). Three bulk SMS were sent through two different national telecommunication companies.
- ❑ **Launching hashtags to support women participation:** OEA supported IHEC in launching several social media campaigns. #I_Vote and #Ivoted were one of those campaigns where IHEC posted motivational slogans and quotes for women participation.



7. IHEC #I_vote social media campaign



8. Public awareness activities conducted with the support of UNAMI OEA



9. IHEC social media content targeting women and people with disabilities

- ❑ **Sending messages and notifications through social media platforms to encourage electoral participation and support for women:** IHEC with the support of CMC and UNAMI OEA PO developed the direct communications channels with Facebook regional office. Several meetings were held between the IHEC digital media team and the head of government and policy for the Facebook MENA region. OEA PO facilitated one of those meetings. The established relationship helped IHEC in taking down some of the profiles and posts using inflammatory words, spreading the fake news, incite violence, and use hate speech against IHEC leadership.
- ❑ **Use of other social media platforms to promote women electoral participation:** IHEC used messaging apps like Viber and Telegram, both platforms were verified in September 2021. OEA did support IHEC in developing cross promotional messages and designs, which helped in organic growth of these groups.

- ❑ **Eliminating and blocking social media sites that violate women rights and abuse women in senior positions and electoral candidates:** UNAMI OEA actively assisted IHEC in Developing social media guidelines during the election period. As highlighted on the guidelines, IHEC introduced a “words filtering system” on IHEC social media, especially on Facebook preventing people from posting words related to hate speech, vulgar comments and promoting violence. The comments on IHEC social media platforms especially Facebook with the elements of hate speech, inflammatory and inappropriate words were auto deleted to keep IHEC social media posts clean. Thousands of inappropriate and vulgar comments against candidates (including women candidates and leaders) were auto deleted. The comments on IHEC social media pages with such words were automatically hidden. On average 20-30% of comments that used “such words” were filtered and hidden by the IHEC social media pages.
- ❑ **Campaign against misinformation, dis-information, and mal-information:** IHEC launched a proactive campaign on social media against the spread of misinformation, dis-information, and mal-information. With the support of UNAMI OEA, IHEC developed Factcheck posts and content, which was shared through IHEC official social media platforms. About 50 contents were developed and shared on IHEC social media pages. All the designs were gender sensitive considering the women audiences.

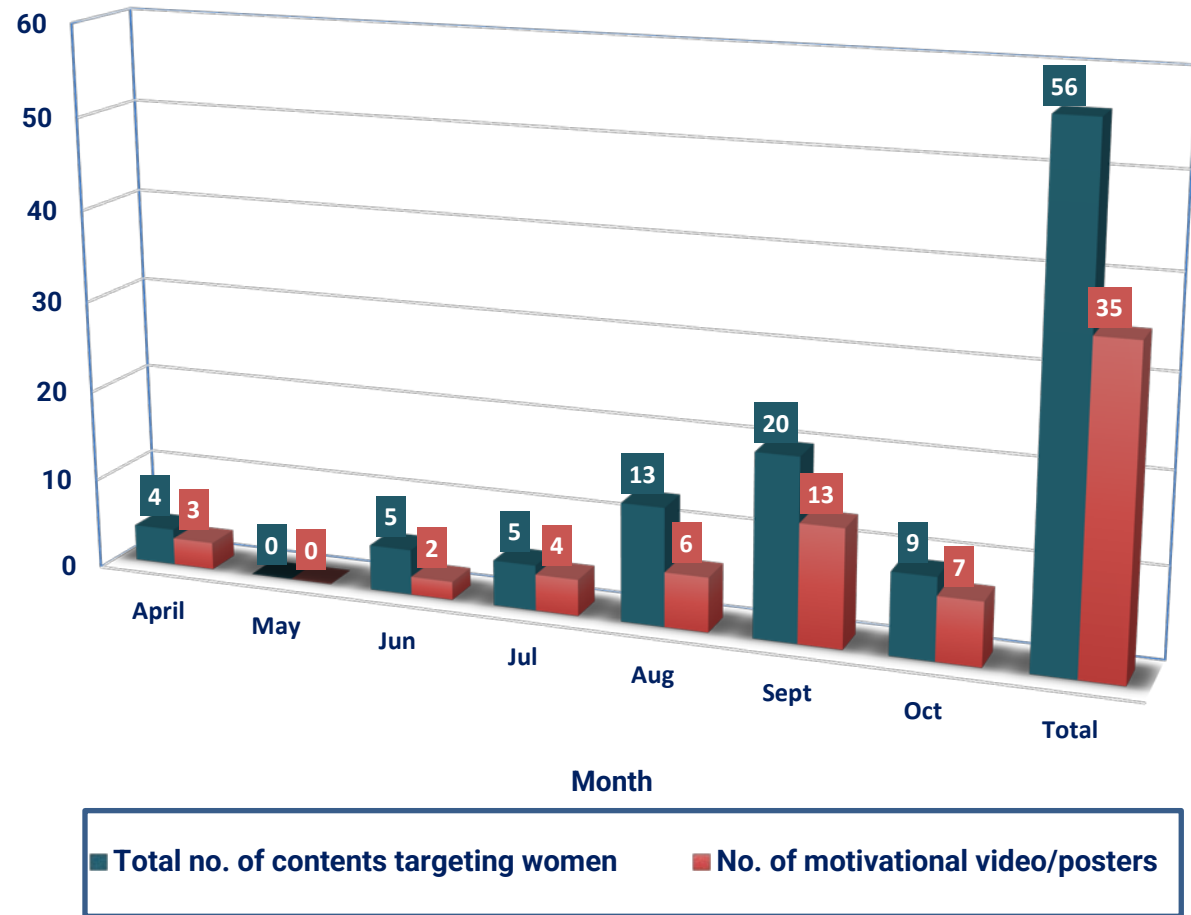


10. Sample of social media campaign posts



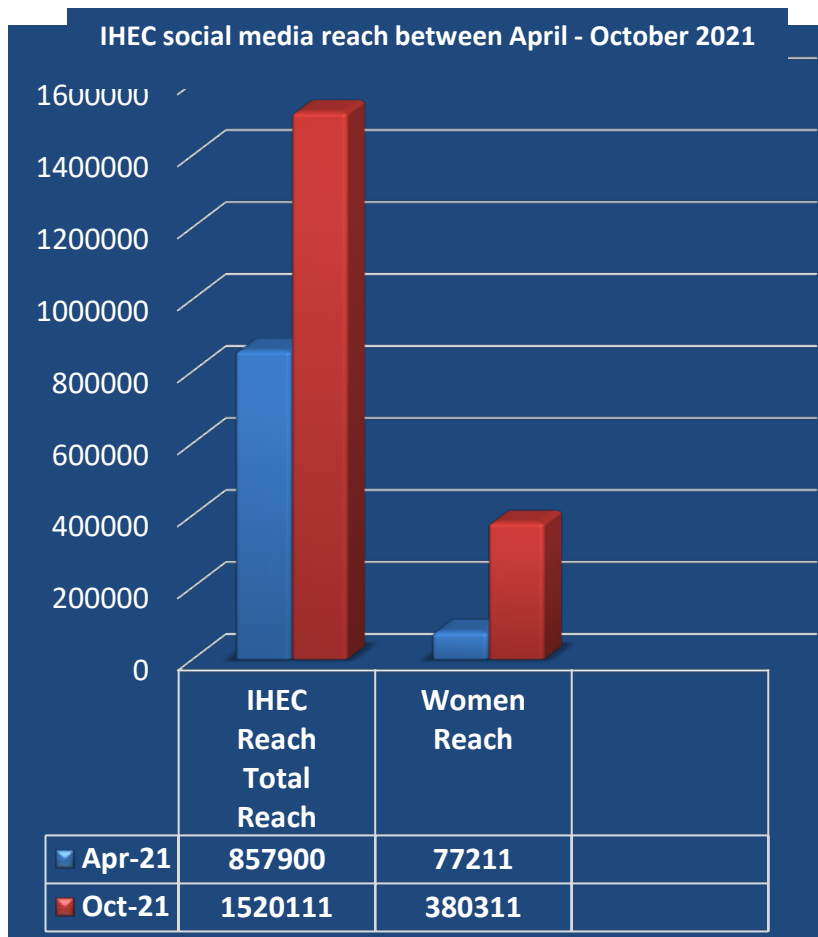
- Social media monitoring committee:** IHEC established a new committee to monitor the social media platforms to identify and understand the social media trends, the creators and amplifiers for misinformation and hate speech against IHEC and its leaderships. Weekly reports were developed and shared with senior management to tackle by appearing on media and reinforcing the messages through IHEC’s social media platforms. The committee identified several social media accounts and some partisan media channels responsible for spreading the lies, rumors, and fake news and in some cases conducting organized campaigns against IHEC as well as UNAMI leadership. Some social media pages were taken down. Similarly, IHEC assigned dedicated staff members to moderate the comments on IHEC social media platforms. UNAMI OEA PO provided orientation and practical guidance on moderating IHEC social media platforms and dealing with inappropriate comments. The monitoring committee also identified some trolling accounts and spammers attaching and defaming the women candidates, those accounts were reported.
- IHEC with the support of OEA developed and published 50 original contents (same contents were shared by IHEC on multiple media platforms and re-shared by GEOs on their respective Facebook pages) on social media directly targeting women between April – October 2021, out of which the number of motivational digital posters/videos were 35. See chart for the monthly breakdown.

Number of content produced targeting women



11. IHEC Motivational content for women produced with the support of the OEA

12. Chart number of content produced targeting women



13. IHEC social media reach

IHEC directly reached 857.9K people through social media in April 2021, out of which 9% (77.2K) were women. The direct reach crossed over 15.2 million in October, 25% (380.3K) were women. Additionally, IHEC with the technical support from OEA did promote the social media content targeting women and first-time women voters.



14. Mobile applications developed with the support of UN



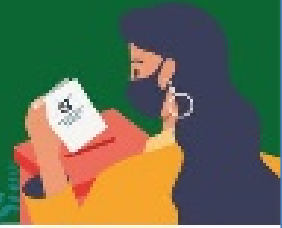
❑ **IHEC promotional material media coverage:** Because of very limited funding, a decision was taken not to make agreement with other Iraqi media channels, but to use the Iraqi Media Network and activate the signed memo of understanding in the production and broadcasting of IHEC motivational and educational material spots, as well as production of the elections related programs. This was one of the key channels of communication for IHEC outreach plan that was done in close daily coordination and advise from OEA supporting team. The materials produced were gender sensitive and that some were targeting women as voters and candidates to promote their political participation.



15. IHEC motivational post targeting women

16. Public outreach materials produced with the support of UN

إرشادات لحماية المرأة و ضمان مشاركتها يوم الانتخابات



- 1 ضمان سلامة موطعات مراكز الاقتراع والناخبات من خلال التأكد من أن الإجراءات الأمنية يتم تطبيقها بشكل فعال وسليم.
- 2 إعطاء الأولوية في طوابير الانتظار للنساء الحوامل والامهات.
- 3 تنظيم طوابير انتظار خاصة للنساء فقط في مراكز الاقتراع اذا اقتضت الحاجة.
- 4 تمكين الناخبات من الإبلاغ بأمان عن أي حوادث عنف لفظي أو تحرش جنسي أو جسدي إذا رغبن في ذلك.
- 5 إذا كان ذلك ممكناً جمع البيانات المصنفة حسب الجنس بعد الانتخابات وقد يشمل ذلك النسب بالإضافة إلى الناخبات التعرف على الثغرات ومعالجتها في إجراءات الانتخابات في المستقبل.
- 6 ضمان مشاركة النساء في عمليات العد والفرز وإعلان النتائج.

17. IHEC social media content on women and voting



Security

- ❑ UNAMI OEA was heavily involved with IHEC and the Supreme Elections Security Committee in putting plans and measures to secure elections and specifically generate protective measures to women candidates. Collaboration on this issue was also made with Judiciary and other security institutions.
- ❑ With the involvement of OEA a judiciary committee to receive complaints and violations against women candidates and hotlines dedicated to reporting GBV related cases was established. The outcome of these efforts led into having no major GBV reports as head of the Supreme Elections Security Committee, stated. This by itself marks a shift from the status of 2018 elections.



18. A young women posing after voting



19. IHEC female employees on E-day



4. Other UNAMI and UN offices and agencies extended support as follow:

- ❑ UNAMI Gender Unit (UGU) led monitoring and reporting on online hate speech and GBV against female candidates in the October 2021 elections. The findings were shared with IHEC and other political actors.
- ❑ Research on the needs and challenges of Iraqi women entering politics, with recommendations on how to address them (2020).
- ❑ A policy document on strengthening women's political participation.
- ❑ Training for women intending to enter politics.
- ❑ A specific language proposal, addressing concerns of female candidates in the ECC for political parties, taking part in the elections.
- ❑ Regular engagement with civil society and female candidates in the pre- and post-elections period.
- ❑ Comments to the draft workplan of the Women's Political Empowerment Committee. The Committee was formed according to Diwani order (32) of 2021, on 10/10/2021.
- ❑ UNAMI Gender Unit Contributed to UNAMI's Communication Strategy on the Elections with specific texts to promote women's participation as voters and candidates.



- ❑ With the support of UN Women, Baghdad University/ women studies center and IHEC procedures unit at HQ and GEO level held workshops to prepare a manual for gender mainstreaming in the e-day procedures. The workshop also aimed to enable IHEC employees to train polling staff on gender mainstreaming in procedures and how to extend help for women, elderly and people with disabilities on e-day.
- ❑ **Report on the IHEC issued gender related instructions:** UN Women supported issuing a report on overlap points in regulations and instructions issued by IHEC in collaboration with CSOs. The report was discussed with IHEC legal committee and submitted to IHEC official channels.
- ❑ **Meeting with parliamentary legal and women, family and children committees:** IHEC held a meeting with relevant parliamentary committees with participation of UN Women and the women empowerment directorate in CoMSec to discuss instructions of seats distribution and mechanism of women quota.
- ❑ IHEC in cooperation with the UN Women held a workshop for political parties and CSOs attended by approximately 50 organizations and party agents, to enhance their knowledge and understanding on electoral law and polling day measures. The workshop urged CSOs to promote women participation on e-day.
- ❑ **Training female candidates on social media, public speaking, and media appearance:** UN Women provided logistic support to the Iraqi Media Network to provide a media and communication specialized training: “Media appearance and Conducting Successful Electoral Campaigns”. The training aimed at building their capacities regarding gender mainstreaming their messages to the public. This activity also addressed increasing women participation through successful campaigns and protecting them against media misrepresentation. Coordinating with IHEC (Department of Political Parties and Organizations) took place to select candidates who were trained in 4 groups.



20. IHEC employees on E-day



21. Gender mainstreaming workshop conducted with the support of UNAMI OEA



5. The President's Office, IHEC and Governorate Electoral Offices (GEOs)

- ❑ **Charter of Honour (Electoral Code of Conduct or ECC):** UNAMI OEA together with the Office of Political Affairs (OPA), facilitated a series of consultative meetings among political parties, alliances, independent candidates, and the Office of the President, for the preparation of the Charter of Honor (Electoral Code of Conduct). Further to this the UNAMI Gender Unit introduced the necessary revision of the language to advance women candidate's protection in the ECC.
- ❑ The Electoral Charter of Honor and Way Forward drafted on 19 April was submitted by IHEC for review to several stakeholders including UNAMI. OEA provided support in organizing a nationwide signing ceremony on the ECC for representatives of alliances, political parties, and individual candidates in all the governorates. On 15 September 2021, Iraqi political leaders signed ECC under the auspices of President Barham Salih. With the support of OEA, on 20 September political parties and independent candidates signed the ECC in all 19 IHEC GEOs. Good turnout of candidates and party representatives were recorded in all locations. The signings, which took place in the presence of officials from the IHEC, personnel from the UNAMI and other independent observers, were part of efforts by IHEC and the UN to minimize intolerance, violence, and hate speech, during both campaigning and voting periods. The goal was to maintain the legality, integrity and appropriate implementation of the process. The ECC is intended to, among other things, help increase confidence in the electoral process, prevent conflicts and enhance popular support for the Iraqi elections. Party signatories to the ECC were expected to respect the right and freedom of all other parties to campaign and spread their political ideologies and principles without intimidation or fear from any other party. The ECC also required all signatories to respect the freedom of journalists and the media and to support Iraqi women and minorities participating and standing as candidates in the elections. Signatory parties were expected to help create a safe electoral environment during the campaigning, polling, vote counting and post-election phases.



22. Electoral Code of Conduct signing ceremony



23. Women candidates campaigning during campaign period



6. Women Empowerment Department formed by Office of Prime Minister

- ❑ **Training workshops for IHEC staff on gender standards and goals during elections:** UN Women provided logistic support to the training 50 IHEC staff in relevant departments of Women Empowerment, Procedures & Training, Legal & Complaints Departments. Another workshop held was aiming at raising awareness and building the capacities of polling staff on the importance of gender mainstreaming in all stages of the electoral process, gender equality, etc.
- ❑ **A Coordination meeting to issue directives and instructions related to law enforcement and holding accountable those who committed crimes against women during the elections:** UN attended a coordination meeting with the Chief Justice in the presence of the National Security Advisory, Media and Communications Commission. As a result, Letter No. 811 on 9/9/2021 was issued by the Supreme Judicial Council, which included instructing investigation courts to take legal actions against anyone who violates the provisions of article 35 of Election Law No. 9 for 2020, stipulating the punishment of anyone who deliberately vandalizes candidates' posters or programs in their dedicated locations.



24. Gender mainstreaming in election process workshop for IHEC GEO staff



25. Meetings on women's participation at IHEC



26. Meetings on women's participation at IHEC



27. Women candidates campaign materials



28. Infographic voting procedures

7. Ministry of Interior (Mol), National Security Advisory and Judiciary

- ❑ **Training women candidates on cyber security and social engineering:** UN Women supported the office of the National Security Advisory with technical assistance in training a total of 669 female candidates out of 980 candidates on cyber security and social engineering. The trainings were offered online and in-person to both politically affiliated candidates and independent candidates.
- ❑ **Educational campaigns and seminars to support IDPs and minorities' participation in the elections:** UN Women provided technical and logistic support to the educational campaigns and seminars. A questionnaire was conducted by experts from Tamayouz center and Baghdad psychological support center to identify the opinions of citizens regarding data updates, receiving voter cards, participation in the elections, and declaration of results. It was published on Facebook, Telegram and WhatsApp groups. The number of participants was 2224.

Hotline numbers: OEA coordinated with the Supreme Elections Security Committee for elections to follow up on reported incidents or intimidation against female candidates, a hotline was established at the request of the supreme security committee. The Ministry of Interior announced the establishment of two hotline telephone numbers to receive security-related complaints from female candidates during the campaign period. On 18 August 2021, IHEC announced that the Committee had established a hotline number to receive complaints on elections-related security incidents and violence.

- ❑ **Filing Women candidates complaints:** Based on the security line, the High Judicial Council (HJC) announced a hotline for GBV, instructions were given to the judiciary to establish an investigatory committee to investigate such allegations. On 1 August 2021, the HJC published a decree ordering those complaints from female candidates be filed with the judicial investigators' offices of the Investigative Courts. The decree was issued in response to a meeting to discuss electoral-related concerns among other issues between the HJC and women's rights activists held on 28 July.
- ❑ **Training support to Mol staff:** UN Women supported organizing training for ministry staff on addressing the complaints and provide assistance in line with the principles of confidentiality and Do No Harm.



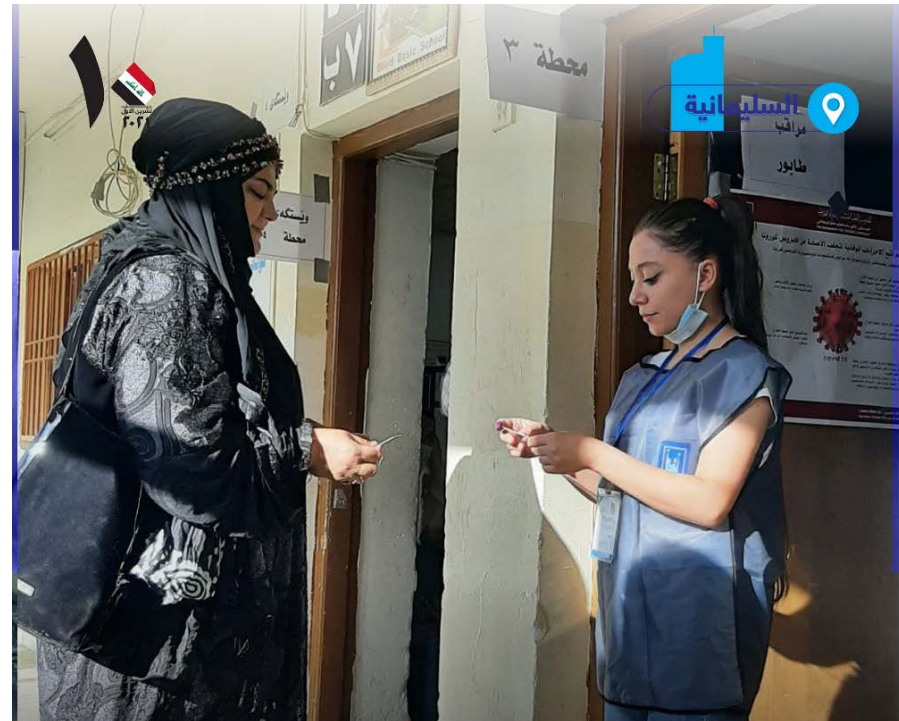
- ❑ **Coordination meeting was held with the Supreme Judicial Council, Ministry of Interior, National Security Advisory and Media and Communications Commission:** UNDP supported the meeting to address the routine and legal procedures against assailants on female candidates, as well as electoral regulations, instructions and mechanisms that could be implemented to protect female candidates from cyber extortion and offensive media content. The meeting resulted in agreeing on the preparation of a database of the complaints and expediting the implementation of judicial decisions to provide security for electoral campaigns for women as well as media coordination regarding fake news and highlighting them.



29. IHEC female employee guiding voters on E-day

- ❑ **Workshops with political parties/entities representatives to encourage them on women's participation in leading and political positions:** UN Women supported a training workshop on 23 August 2021 for CSOs and political party agents to train them on advocating increased gender balance in decision making in political parties and include electoral policies and decisions on women's empowerment in elections.

- ❑ **Meetings with civil society organizations (CSOs) and community leaders to bolster women's electoral chances and encourage women electoral participation:** UN Women provided logistical support to holding a consultative meeting and workshop with (CSOs). During the workshop, an agreement was reached on the role of CSOs in the current phase, and the measures the organizations will adopt to encourage women to participate in the elections. As a result, the Women Empowerment Department developed a database for projects, programmes, workshops, and sessions to be implemented/held by CSOs. The Department followed up the implementation of activities and received progress reports.



30. IHEC female employee on E-day assisting voter on E-day



8. Ministry of Higher Education/Center for Women Studies

- ❑ **Survey to detect public assessment of the political participation of women** and measure voter trends, where voting for women is concerned. The methodology was prepared by the Center for Women Studies within the Ministry of Higher Education, implemented by Bayan Center (Funded by the UN Women).
- ❑ **Women Advisory Group:** UN Women provided technical and logistical support to the Center for Women Studies Advisory, in leading a workshop with experts in electoral affairs, a current candidate, former MP and women's rights activist. The discussion covered all aspects of gender mainstreaming in the legal environment and was summarized into a 38 pages report: "Legal Environment and its Impact on the Political Participation of Women in Iraq/A Report" .
- ❑ **Specialized meetings to review and amend regulations governing the electoral process to ensure that gender is taken into account:** UN Women supported meetings held in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research/Women Studies Center to prepare a draft handbook for gender inclusion in all IHEC's procedures during the elections. Twenty-two IHEC staffs were present in the meeting who discussed current procedures and challenges. Electoral regulations, procedures and instructions were endorsed.
- ❑ **Reviewing the regulations on standing-for-elections and seat allocation in the way that ensures bigger opportunities for women in the elections:** UN Women supported a meeting in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research/Women Studies Center to prepare a draft handbook for gender inclusion in all IHEC's procedures during the elections. Some of 22 IHEC staffs were present in the meeting who discussed current procedures and challenges. Electoral regulations, procedures and instructions were endorsed.



31. IHEC Commissioner meeting representative from people with disabilities community

- ❑ **Guide for polling staff:** UN Women provided technical and logistic support to the Center for Women Studies in preparing and drafting a guide for polling staff to integrate gender in electoral procedures on election day. The guide content was from the research on different gender and elections resources, outcomes of the advisory group workshop as well as IHEC polling procedures.
- ❑ **Guide for women candidates:** UN Women provided technical and logistic support to the Center for Women Studies in preparing and drafting a guide for women to explain the electoral system to help understand its nature and the opportunities it provides for female candidates: "Women's Political participation According to the Iraqi Parliament Election Law No. 9 for 2020, Guiding Principles for the Political Representation of Women". Information for the preparation of the guide was collected based on the outcomes of the advisory group workshop, in addition to interviews with electoral experts and reviewing documents and laws relevant to the electoral process. The guide was reviewed by IHEC.
- ❑ **Implementing workshops to develop the skills of female candidates:** UN Women advised the Center for Women Studies to conduct virtual workshops due to Covid restrictions and big number of targeted women candidates.



9. Conclusion and Recommendations

This overview shows that UN's support for women's participation in all elements of the electoral process has many facets and is part of a gender mainstreaming approach by UNAMI in Iraq through all of its cooperating partners.

The ongoing result of this approach is indicated by an increased participation of women voters in the latest elections and an increased number of women parliamentarians in the Iraqi CoR. 48% Of the voters were women. The percentage female parliamentarians increased from 25% to 29%. In actual numbers this is from 83 parliamentarians to 95 female parliamentarians.

UNAMI OEA will continue coordination with relevant UNAMI and UN Offices and Agencies to help IHEC promote gender mainstreaming within its structure and its programming towards the goal of promoting IHEC as a leading model in promoting gender. Furthermore, to enable it as an effective electoral management body in promoting women political engagement on the level of voters and candidates. This could be realized through working closely with its women empowerment team and GEO coordinators network and different actors.

