

For Iraq



THE UNITED NATIONS IN IRAQ IN 2015

الأمم المتحدة - العراق
United Nations Iraq



For Iraq

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Photo credits: UNAMI PIO, FAO, UNDP, WFP, UNEP, UNWomen, UN Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, UNFPA, WHO, IOM, UNESCO, ILO, UN Photo


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UNAMI

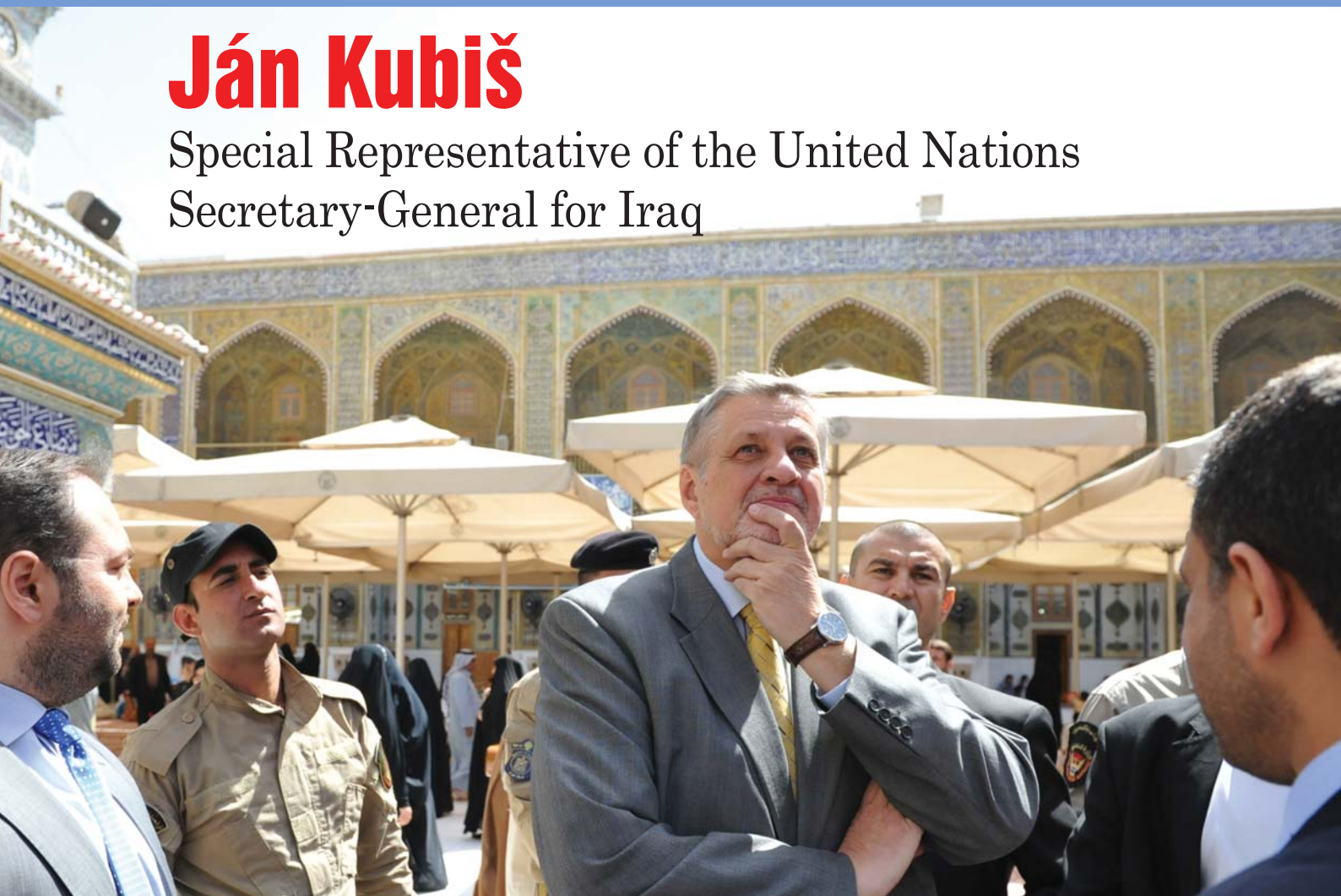
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Ján Kubiš

Special Representative of the United Nations
Secretary-General for Iraq



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The use of UNAMI good office mandate also enabled it to advocate for principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and other international instruments

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A major part of the activities of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq (SRSRG) in 2015 in Iraq was to use his good offices mandate to help bring views closer, and identify how the United Nations can best assist the Iraqi Government face daunting and persistent challenges, including terrorism and a dire humanitarian situation, compounded by senseless sectarian violence, institutional weaknesses and an ailing economy.

SRSRG Ján Kubiš was working closely with a range of stakeholders and interlocutors, not only on finding solutions, but also on implementation of visions to put Iraq back on the path of stability and peace.

Politically, the highest risk in Iraq remained the lack of an overall vision and a unified strategy for national reconciliation amongst Iraqis. In its role as a facilitator, SRSRG encouraged Iraqis to understand the impediments

to national reconciliation and subsequently find solutions and compromises to overcome these challenges. Some of identified challenges to national reconciliation include: Sunni fragmentation; sectarianism; intra-party rivalries; and the lack of a unified strategy for national reconciliation. Positive steps on the way forward, although still in the preliminary phase, have instilled us with hope. Iraq's three presidencies have taken steps to consolidate all visions into a cohesive strategy that would guide all activities; and the Sunni political leadership has embarked on a number of initiatives to unify its stance on national reconciliation and move beyond partisan disputes that have hindered efforts to advocate for and promote the rights of their constituencies.

SRSRG Kubiš was further working closely with all partners and stakeholders - at the national, local and community level - to encourage greater cooperation on the implementation



Security situation in Iraq

Security remains the preeminent concern in Iraq. Without security, everything else collapses. To put this in perspective, UNAMI documented 22,370 civilian casualties in 2015. That was 7,515 persons killed and 14,855 wounded. Given the rigorous approach that its Human Rights Office brings to its verification efforts, these numbers are an absolute minimum, and they do not account for the people who died from the secondary effects of violence after having fled their homes, such as exposure to the elements, lack of water, food, medicines and health care.



of confidence-building measures that would aid national reconciliation. UNAMI is already seeing greater cooperation between Iraq's political forces, evidenced by their commitment in the 2016 budget to finance the entities fighting ISIL and provide humanitarian assistance to Iraq's displaced population, rebuild communities damaged, or in some cases, completely destroyed, by terrorism and military operations.

The use of UNAMI good office mandate also enabled it to advocate for principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and other international instruments.

Year 2015 was regrettably marked by heightened regional tensions, which threatened to ignite sectarianism within Iraq. While these incidents possibly posed the greatest challenge of the SRSG's tenure so far, his engagement contributed to deescalating tensions, urging Iraq's political leadership to prevent and counter any actions that could exacerbate sectarian strife in the country and in the region. Indeed, the use of UNAMI good offices mandate was particularly effective in Iraq's diplomatic row with Turkey over the latter's military presence, which Baghdad deemed as a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The parties agreed to set aside factual matters in dispute and instead concentrate on reaching an amicable resolution. While challenges remain, as relations remain tense, there has been no escalation on either side, with both committed to constructive dialogue to reach an amicable resolution towards full normalization of their bilateral relations.

UNAMI support to inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation

As part of the implementation of its mandate, UNAMI has continued its efforts to promote inclusive national reconciliation among the leaders of all Iraqi components and political groups, civil society and local communities, and neighbouring countries in support and coordination with the Government of Iraq. SRSG Kubiš continued to engage in extensive outreach with a full range of political interlocutors, both inside and outside Iraq, to encourage their engagement in an inclusive reconciliation process that upholds respect for Iraq's unity, sovereignty and constitutional order to promote a genuine, inclusive Iraqi political system based on equal rights of all Iraqis to counter sectarianism and extremist ideology (ISIL's radical ideology). Similarly, SRSG Kubiš visited Iran, Jordan, Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates to bolster regional support for the Iraqi Government's reconciliation efforts.

Additionally, UNAMI undertook a number of activities during the year that have aimed at the creation of an enabling environment to build trust and restore dialogue amongst the different components and political entities through the provision of political and technical support. It provided technical expertise to assist in the enactment of the proposed National Guard law while, in September 2015, UNAMI, in collaboration with Prime Minister's Office, organized a conference for representatives of governorates, civil society, Parliament and the federal Government on the role of devolution in promoting national reconciliation.

In December 2015, UNAMI also conducted, in cooperation with the Council of Representatives' Reconciliation, Accountability and Justice Affairs Committee, a workshop to assist the Council of Representatives in reviewing the Justice and Accountability Law and Banning of Anti-Extremism/Ba'ath Party draft law by providing international comparative experience to enhance the operation of the broader transitional justice and national reconciliation agenda, of which this legislation is a key part, and which are included in the National Political Agreement of September 2014.

Furthermore, and in view of the crucial role of the media in promoting and consolidating values of reconciliation in society, UNAMI organized, in collaboration with the Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation of the Prime Minister's Office (IFCNR-PMO), a Conference on the role of public opinion makers in supporting political and community reconciliation, with the participation of more than one hundred prominent media, academic and civil society figures, which would help build a groundswell of support for the national reconciliation process.

In 2015, the Government of Iraq had made increasing progress in liberating areas that ISIL had occupied and UNAMI, in collaboration with United Nations Country Team (UNCT), supported the Government's efforts to undertake community reconciliation in recently-liberated area.



Protection of civilians

In 2015 the violence experienced by civilians in Iraq remained staggering. Civilians were killed and maimed in attacks at restaurants, cafes and markets, and in places of worship as they go about their daily lives. It is every day that Iraqis are bearing the brunt of this conflict, and among them are persons in situations of clear vulnerability, including children, persons with disabilities, members of minority groups and internally displaced persons.

ISIL continued to commit atrocities that included the gravest of violations, including acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. ISIL is slaughtering people it perceives as opposed to it or its ideology, and is systematically persecuting members of specific ethnic and religious communities. It has subjected women and girls to sexual violence, including sexual slavery, and has forcibly recruited boys into its ranks.

In 2015, UNAMI also received reports of unlawful killings and abductions and the destruction of civilian proper-

ty by members of Iraqi Security Forces and associated groups. Some of these incidents were reportedly reprisal attacks against persons perceived as supporting or being associated with ISIL.

UNAMI continues to push for the better protection of civilians and for perpetrators of violations and abuses to be held accountable. Its Human Rights Office dedicates enormous energy to investigating and verifying human rights violations and abuses and, through its documentation work, is cataloguing the scale and extent of the conflict's impact on the Iraqi people. It meets with victims and survivors, it travels to camps and villages to gather testimony, it works in close partnership with UN agencies to assist individuals and communities, and it conducts advocacy with the Government and other duty bearers to directly raise issues of concern and to remind them of their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law as well as the laws of Iraq.

UNAMI's weekly human rights reports keep the international community

constantly apprised, and inform the deliberations of bodies that include the Security Council and the Human Rights Council. Further, in 2015, UNAMI produced two public reports on the Protection of Civilians in the Armed Conflict in Iraq. The first covered December 2014-April 2015, the second – which will be released in 2016 – covers May through to the end of October 2015.

In addition to bearing witness to the conflict's impact on civilians, these reports present clear findings and recommendations to all parties to the conflict, to the international community and to the Government of Iraq on the practical steps that must be taken to better protect civilians. In short, all parties to the conflict must strictly comply with applicable international human rights law and humanitarian law. They must take all feasible precautions to protect civilians from the effects of hostilities. They must immediately cease all acts of violence and abuse committed against civilians. And they must provide safe passage to displaced civilians and provide safety guarantees to the humanitarian actors who are striving to sustain them. For its part, the Government of Iraq must also ensure that all of its associated armed forces in the fight against ISIL operate under its command and control and are accountable for their actions.

Persecution of minorities

In 2015 the situation of minorities in Iraq remained precarious. UNAMI have witnessed thousands migrating due to the security situation. It remains its priority to see minorities going back to their home areas following liberation. While protection of cultural heritage and diversity is connected to the protection of people's lives, communities that have fled their homes need to regain a sense of security as an essential element of basic human rights.

Additionally, there is a major need to address stabilization and social cohesion in Iraq. The United Nations has been monitoring and reporting on the situation of all Iraqi minority communities, the violations of their human rights to which they have been subjected in relation to the current conflict in Iraq and the effects of the violence, particularly those abuses and violations inflicted by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Through the monitoring and reporting work of UNAMI, there have been five public reports, along with a number of internal reports, to the Security Council and the Human Rights Council. This information has been vital for the United Nations and the international community to formulate and implement policies and programmes to respond to the ongoing crisis, particularly in relation to the care and protection of the victims.

The UN has consistently acknowledged that the human rights abuses committed by ISIL may constitute international crimes, including war crimes, against humanity and geno-



cide. However, the authority to acknowledge such violations in law rests with properly constituted courts and tribunals.

As part of UNAMI advocacy to improve the situation of minorities in Iraq, SRSK Kubiš attended a conference in Paris on 8 September on "Victims of ethnic and religious violence in the Middle East", co-chaired by French Foreign Minister Fabius and Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh. The conference was an important initiative in bringing together the different actors on issues confronting the ethnic and religious communities in the Middle East, notably Iraq and Syria. There was a sense of urgency among participants to develop a strategy to address the root causes of the conflict, as well as the protection of ethnic and religious communities. SRSK Kubiš chaired one of the sessions on "the political situation of Iraqi minorities". At the end, an Action Plan, which aims to serve as a roadmap, was adopted.

UNAMI has also facilitated a series of

interfaith dialogues as part of the Interfaith Harmony Week, in collaboration with religious groups and civil society, in which political and community leaders participated. These series of dialogues presented the opportunity for civil society and religious leaders to debate issues affecting society in a neutral forum. Community and religious leaders, and tribal sheikhs openly advocated for political participation, representation and equality of all citizens before the law. This development will facilitate public thinking on and long-term development of laws that will inform full religious freedom and freedom of speech, as well as anti-discrimination policies and eventually lead to a situation where full equality and protection of all citizens is promoted outside sectarian mindsets and frameworks. There is no doubt that these events are needed in Iraq. What still needs to be done, however, is for Iraqis themselves to work together in coming with realistic solutions to sectarian and religious violence.

The relationship between the Iraqi Central Government and Kurdistan Regional Government

In a nutshell, the state of current relations between Erbil and Baghdad can be described as one of pragmatic procrastination, not least due to the primacy of the fight against ISIL and the severe economic crisis both Erbil and Baghdad are facing. Obviously, UNAMI would have liked to see progress on core issues contained in its mandate, such as the drafting of revenue-sharing legislation as well as more regular exchanges and meetings between the KRG and the Central Government to solve outstanding issues, including the disputed internal boundaries. However, three points are of note that make 2015 a more pragmatic and in a way calmer year in Baghdad-Erbil relations than the tumultuous 2014. Firstly, the rhetoric has become less confrontational under the Abadi Government and both sides are talking to each other. Secondly, coordination between the Kurdish Peshmerga and Iraqi security forces has increased notably. Thirdly, and most importantly, the budget and revenue-sharing agreement struck in December 2014, despite ongoing hiccups in its implementation, has been included in the 2015 and 2016 budget laws, and therefore remains valid and accepted by both sides.

Violence against vulnerable groups

In May 2015, the Government of Iraq endorsed the Special Emergency Plan on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 to take into account the concerns of women and girls affected by the conflict with ISIL. Resolution 1325 is now viewed and used as a key instrument for advocacy to better address the dire needs of women and girls affected by the conflict, enhance protection and promote women's participation in security and political processes and mechanisms as well as urge more efforts to the women and girls currently under ISIL captivity.

UNAMI in 2015 continued to support the Government of Iraq and civil society in advancing women's rights. In August 2015, through the financial and technical support of UNAMI and UN Agencies, a two-day national conference was held in Erbil on 'Empowering Women to Address the Impact of Terrorism'. The Conference brought together government officials, civil society, IDPs, parliamentarians, women's rights activists, researchers, religious and community leaders, the international community and media representatives. The Conference was held in response to UN Security Council Resolution 2178 of September 2014 paragraph 16, which "encourages member states to engage relevant local communities and non-governmental actors in developing strategies to counter the violent extremist narrative that can incite terrorist acts, address the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, including by empowering youth, families, women, religious leaders, cultural and education leaders and all other concerned groups of civil society adopt tailored



approaches to countering recruitment to this kind of violent extremism and promoting social inclusion and cohesion."

The Conference also provided a forum to review and build on the recommendations of the Regional Conference on 'Women's Resistance to Extremism and Terrorism and their Struggle for Rights, Peace and Security', held on 10-11 May 2015 in Erbil. A number of recommendations identified in the conference which the UN family is supporting the Gol and civil society to implement include: addressing the impact of violent extremism and terrorism on Iraqi women and girls, particularly those from minorities' communities; empowering women to counter radicalization and combat terrorism; participation of women in social cohesion and reconciliation; creating opportunities to enhance women's representation and participation in power and decision-making; the role of the media and the internet in countering extremism; effective partnering in implementing frameworks on women, peace and security and ; the role of women in building peace.

UNAMI'S KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015

UNAMI is especially proud of the way it responded to the numerous political challenges and crises during 2015 such as political rivalries that impeded implementation of the National Political Agreement and reform agenda, intra-community violence and sectarian-based attacks in liberated areas. In response, UNAMI rallied international support for the strengthening of security cooperation against ISIL amongst national actors, and between the Iraqi Government and its regional and international partners; and the facilitation of dialogue amongst Iraq's political actors and communities.

While the political challenges have been immense, UNAMI nonetheless focused its stakeholders and partners on consolidation and implementation of their blueprints for national and community reconciliation; facilitated discussions amongst influential and prominent Iraqis on the means for them to use the power of their voice and lead by example in denouncing

sectarian rhetoric to counter violent extremism and promoting the principles of tolerance and peaceful co-existence.

UNAMI stepped-up its engagement with civil society and women's groups to promote and strengthen a grassroots approach on national reconciliation.

UNAMI also advocated for the Council of Representatives to enact legislation that would protect pluralism and diversity in Iraq. This is essential at a time when Iraq's diverse communities have come under threat by ISIL.

UNAMI promoted effective governance through the values of openness, partnership, inclusiveness and broad consultations in decision-making. Since July, thousands of protestors have taken to the streets of Baghdad and other cities, notably in the south, complaining of widespread corruption, nepotism in Government appointments and a flawed sectarian quota system. They also demand better ser-



vices, sufficient electricity, water supplies, a clean environment, improved healthcare and jobs. UNAMI regularly met protest organisers and acted as a conduit between them and the Government regarding their demands, encouraging direct communication and openness on the part of the Government on reforms it was undertaking to address protestors' demands. UNAMI has also encouraged the Government to listen to protestors' demands, and adopt legislation to protect their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and protests.

The enhancement of accountability was another focus. In this regard, UNAMI encouraged openness and cooperation in Government decision-making, as well as implementation.

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UNAMI stepped-up its engagement with civil society and women's groups to promote and strengthen a grassroots approach on national reconciliation

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UNAMI's priorities for 2016

In 2016 UNAMI seeks to keep promoting dialogue amongst Iraqis to mitigate sectarian-driven violence and strengthen social peace. It aims to do this through regular engagement with political actors at the national/sub-national level; promotion of intra- and inter-component dialogue, including facilitating contact between political and other representatives inside and outside the political process on the basis of common principles, and outreach with regional actors for support to national reconciliation efforts in Iraq.

UNAMI will continue to support the Council of Representatives in the drafting and enactment of crucial legislation that will promote peaceful national coexistence and to advocate for the adoption and implementation of comprehensive laws on the protection of civil and minority rights, notably the law protecting diversity and legislation prohibiting hate speech that incite violence and prevent discrimination.

UNAMI will also take a proactive role to counter challenges that could potentially undermine the unity of Iraq in the post-ISIL era, such as territorial disputes, that could lead, if unchecked, to intra-communal conflicts and sectarian-based violence. In this context, UNAMI aims to play a proactive role in enabling Iraqi stakeholders create a roadmap towards implementation of Article 140 of the Constitution which provides a mechanism for a census and referendum to determine the disputed internal boundaries.

FAST FACTS

The United Nations in IRAQ



What is UNAMI's mandate?

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

Mandate implementation

Since its inception in 2003, UNAMI has played a crucial role in providing signifi-

cant support in the drafting of Iraq's 2005 Constitution, and assisting in nine elections. UNAMI had an instrumental role in the successful and peaceful conduct of Iraq Parliamentary elections, helping keep Iraq on-track towards democratic transition and consolidation. Its role was both a technical support role to the election bodies, as well as a political role in engaging legislative and political actors throughout the electoral processes.

UNAMI is fully engaged with the Government and in close partnership with Iraq's political leadership in providing advice, assistance and support on furthering national reconciliation, strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights through security sector and legislative reform, as well as institution-building, the implementation of which are essential to making progress on security and returning Iraq to a path of reconciliation and stability.

UNAMI partners with Iraqi institutions

in promoting the values of reconciliation, tolerance and co-existence as part of a process to build an enabling environment for reconciliation. It focuses on ensuring national ownership and buy-in from components of Iraqi society, including at the political, community, demographic and regional levels. In doing this, UNAMI adopts a multi-sectoral approach, encompassing the media, academic and cultural institutions.

After having successfully helped establish, trained and advised Iraq's first High Electoral Commission, the Mission has assisted the Government of Iraq in establishing an Independent High Commission for Human Rights to promote and protect the rights of all Iraq's people according to international standards.

UNAMI has played a continued support role to the constitutional review process and the implementation of constitutional provisions, as well as on the development of processes to resolve disputed internal

FAST FACTS

boundaries.

UNAMI is continuously engaged in advancing Iraq-Kuwait normalization, which resulted in a partial exit of Iraq from its obligations under Chapter VII of the Charter in June 2013, and helped complete the fieldwork of the Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Maintenance Project (IK-BMP), pursuant to Security Council resolution 833 (1993). UNAMI also supports both sides in the search of missing persons and on the delicate issue of missing Kuwaiti property.

UNAMI works with government partners and civil society to coordinate the humanitarian and development efforts of the UN organizations and to support the partnership and technical cooperation between the Government of Iraq and the UN entities operating in the country, while coordinating UN humanitarian efforts and the financial assistance of the donor community.

United Nations, through an extensive field network and in close coordination with authorities at the governorate and district levels, facilitates stabilization efforts, as the Government of Iraq moves to secure and stabilize newly liberated areas.

In a context of acute humanitarian crises, waves of displacement and widespread violence, UNAMI and the UNCT identify modalities for the delivery of humanitarian assistance that would mitigate the major constraint of limited access, and promote the safety of humanitarian staff and their beneficiaries.

How does the UN implement its projects in Iraq?

In 2010, the UN Country Team and the Government agreed on the first United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Iraq, covering the period from 2011 to 2014. Subsequently, in April 2014 the second UNDAF was signed that covers the period from 2015 to 2019. The Framework commits the United Nations to a programme of work in partner-

ship with the Government, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector and the international donor community.

The UNDAF focuses on two main priorities, which are in line with the National Development Plan and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): strengthening the ability of state institutions to effectively respond to the needs of Iraqis; and social inclusion and equity, especially for vulnerable groups including those displaced by conflict and natural disasters.

Where does the UN work in Iraq?

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

Which UN organizations work in Iraq?

The UN Country Team has 20 members, including 15 resident and 3 non-resident agencies: FAO, ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNCTAD, UN WOMEN, UNDP, ESCWA, UNESCO, UNEP, UNHCR, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO, UNFPA, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO and IOM. (UN-ESCWA, UNEP and UNCTAD are the non-resident agencies.) In addition, the UNCT includes the World Bank.

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

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) is a political mission, which was established in 2003 at the request of the Government of Iraq, by UN Security Council Resolution 1500. The Mission has been on the ground ever since, and its role was greatly expanded in 2007 with the passage of Resolution 1770.

The presence of the UN organizations in Iraq is established on the basis of bilateral

agreements with the Government of Iraq.

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

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

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

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

How is UNAMI managed?

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

Through its resolution 2233, adopted on 29 July 2015, the Security Council extended the mandate of UNAMI until 31 July 2016.

UNAMI has an authorized strength of 953 personnel (398 international, 555 national).

The Mission's budget for 2015: USD 143 million.

Interview with

GYORGY BUSZTIN

Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq



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The United Nations has been monitoring and reporting on the situation of all Iraqi minority communities, the violations of their human rights to which they have been subjected in relation to the current conflict in Iraq and the effects of the violence

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How do you see your role as Deputy SRSR for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance evolved through 2015?

My role has very much relied on the momentum of unity following the formation of a national unity Government in September 2014 and the National Political Agreement that crystalized its commitment to address the multitude of challenges facing Iraq, particularly daunting following the advent of ISIL. I used my Offices to strengthen partnership with the Government, civil society, and community and religious groups. Together with the Office of Political Affairs, we organized workshops to strengthen the capacity of parliamentarians to implement objectives and commitments stipulated in the National Political Agreement, including for a greater devolution of central powers; engagement in effective negotiation to adopt key legislation

that would aid national reconciliation; and promote activities and the drafting of legal frameworks to better protect the rights of minorities, prohibit hate speech, and counter violent extremism. We also worked in close partnership with the various Government bodies that have taken the lead on national reconciliation to promote better coordination and unify all initiatives into a single vision. It is important to note that we significantly broadened outreach beyond the Iraqi capital, Baghdad.

My role has been one of developing initiative as much as responding to political developments. As pro-Government forces continued to liberate territory from ISIL control, I have met with Government and civil society counterparts to urge for the advancement of community dialogue to promote the principles of peace, tolerance, inclusiveness and forgiveness. I have also

responded to developments during the second half of 2015, such as the popular protests during which the local population demanded that the Government pay greater attention to local governance issues, such as corruption, the need for the provision of better services and the creation of local jobs. As a Mission, we have stepped-up outreach, paying regular visits to the southern governorates, meeting representatives of local government authorities, civil society and protest organizers. This has enabled me to use Mission's Good Offices to communicate local issues to the central authorities.

What were you most proud of in 2015? What were, in your opinion, UNAMI's and your main achievements in the political field?

I am most proud of our efforts on the national reconciliation front. We have been as



engaged as ever with all segments of society, urging for unity and the strengthening of Iraqi national identity. Through our intensive engagement and use of good offices mandate, we have been able to focus our partners on better identifying the strategies that would aid national reconciliation and encouraged a convergence of views. Our emphasis on implementation of confidence-building measures remained strong. I am also proud of UNAMI's tireless work in raising awareness on ISIL's destruction of cultural heritage and the protection of minorities. Beyond that, I am proud that our idea of providing toys to IDP and refugee children has got traction thanks to the magnanimous grant of LEGO and our excellent cooperation with UNICEF. Being present at the ceremonial launch of the distribution was a moving personal experience.

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

In August, Prime Minister Abadi ordered the dissolution of the Ministry of Human Rights, as part of a wide-ranging reform

plan intended to strengthen democratic institutions and fight corruption. The Ministry has had the lead on the file on missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and headed the inter-ministerial committee on the same matter. The Government of Iraq has yet to announce a decision on which entity will take over the dossier. For now, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been playing a facilitation and coordination role in terms of political and diplomatic representation on the file.

We do commend the Government for introducing crucial reforms to enable it to respond effectively to the urgent needs of the Iraqi people. We have called on the Government to swiftly implement a decision on the new entity taking over the file and ensure that all information and technical expertise is passed on to the relevant counterparts to guarantee a smooth transition and continuation of work. We have encouraged the Government to introduce 2016 work plan, including field and excavation works, as well as allocate necessary financial resources to those endeavours, despite structural changes and its severe security and financial challenges.

Lack of tangible results in search of the missing Kuwaiti persons and property re-

mains quite concerning, particularly as some grieving families, twenty-five years on, have yet to learn the fate of their loved ones. Members of the Tripartite Mechanism, chaired by the ICRC, have been instrumental in keeping the file of missing persons in the spotlight and in bringing innovative ideas to the table to try to push the file forward. As observers within the mechanism since 2014, we are very supportive to the proposal adopted in October during the Tripartite Commission session in Geneva to commence an in-depth scientific review of all information and past efforts in order to focus and better direct search activities to locate and clarify cases of missing persons. We hope that this holistic approach will be able to transform past information into new realities and yield results.

It is important to note that the enhanced ties and cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait are at their strongest since 1990. The goodwill between the two states is demonstrated, in particular, by the agreement of the Government of Kuwait to an additional one-year deferral of the reparation payments by the Government of Iraq. However, it is necessary to underline that progress on the file of missing Kuwaiti persons and



property is central to the full normalization of relations between the two countries and will have far-reaching implications on other aspects of mutual interest. This is a very opportune moment for Iraq to undertake an enhanced course of action on this humanitarian issue.

Earlier this year you said that women should be adequately represented at all levels of decision making in Iraq? What do you think about the current position of women in Iraq?

The goal to increase women's representation and participation in all levels of decision-making is clearly articulated in Iraq's National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Furthermore, Iraq is signatory to various international instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that uphold women's rights include the right to equal representation and participation. While it is important to acknowledge that Iraqi

women have made remarkable efforts towards increasing their representation within elective posts as seen in the National Legislative Elections that took place in 2014 and other levels of decision-making, much remains to be done to ensure that women are adequately represented. There are obstacles linked to inadequate economic empowerment and negative socio-cultural attitudes towards women's leadership that still need to be removed to allow women to fully and equally participate in public life and key decision-making processes. Iraqi women need to think carefully about their own goals, strategies and tactics in male-dominated society; particularly in politics and work closely with male leadership and civil society networks that recognize and support women's full and equal representation in decision-making. In addition, real commitment and adequate resources are needed to translate the policy frameworks on women's advancement to real gains towards increasing women's representation

particularly within the political sphere.

Part of UNAMI's mandate is protection of minorities and promotion of interfaith dialogue. What are UNAMI's achievements in this area in 2015?

The situation of minorities remains precarious. We have witnessed thousands migrating due to the current security situation. It remains our priority to see minorities going back to their areas following liberation. While protection of cultural heritage and diversity is connected with the protection of people's lives, communities that have fled their homes need to regain a sense of security with regard to expressing their culture as an essential element of basic human rights. Additionally, there is a major need to address stabilization and social cohesion in Iraq. The United Nations has been monitoring and reporting on the situation of all Iraqi minority communities, the violations of their human rights to which they have been subjected in relation to the current conflict in Iraq and the effects of the

UNAMI

violence, particularly those abuses and violations inflicted by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

In marking Interfaith Harmony Week in 2015, UNAMI, in collaboration with the Iraqi Centre for Managing Diversity, Iraqi Interfaith Council, Iraqi Culture Day and Masarat Institute organized a series of events across Iraq. Activities included an interfaith conference organized by Ammar Al-Hakeem, Head of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, an interfaith service at Abdulkar Al-Geylani Mosque in Baghdad, interfaith dialogue at the Sabeen Mandaean Church, and interfaith service and dialogue in Erbil. Religious leaders from all faiths echoed the UN message for dialogue and peace in promoting national reconciliation. Participants also focused on fighting terrorism with a clear message of unity against ISIL, and their yearning for peace and stability in Iraq. Similarly, they used the dialogue as an opportunity to call for constitutional and legislative reforms.

During the Interfaith Harmony Week organized by UNAMI in collaboration with civil society groups and religious leaders from 2-7 February, political figures spoke in one voice stressing unity. Religious leaders and civil society groups broadly called for constitutional and legislative reforms, while appealing to the Government to ensure that discrimination, abuse and any other destructive attitudes against others based on differences of gender, religion, language, ethnicity, culture or other distinctions are done away with. A strong sense of national unity, reconciliation and the desire for peace emerged among various sectors of the Iraqi society. Inclusivity should be a hallmark of legal frameworks that foster citizen rights and equal participation in the Iraqi political and administrative system. While urging Iraqi leadership to deliver on national reconciliation, I also stressed that it is crucial that political progress and the process of inclusion proceed simultaneously.

While celebrating the interfaith harmony week, participants recognized the need to elaborate strategies to reform education curricula, and promote Iraqi identity and citizenship. Civil society representatives highlighted the importance of involving youths to expose them to ideas of tolerance and citizenship, while teaching the concepts in school. I am impressed by the Minister of Education, Mohammed Ibtihal's



commitment to introduce human rights education, religious tolerance and dialogue concepts in the school curriculum, as well as the follow-up conference on inter-religious dialogue the Ministry organized in March. The former Minister of Human Rights also undertook to collaborate with the Minister of Education on introducing human rights in the curriculum. This, in my view, is a significant development towards curriculum reform and recognition of the importance of preserving cultural diversity by inculcating tolerance, coexistence and respect of all Iraqi communities.

I attended the UN-organized brainstorming session held on 20-22 July, which discussed ways to strengthen the international community's efforts, with an emphasis on the role of the UN, to protect and promote pluralism and diversity in the wider Middle East. The session brought together a small group of distinguished "Middle Eastern personalities", with deep understanding of the region's multiple challenges. It was organized by the UN Department of Political Affairs, in collaboration with UNESCO and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France. Prior to the meeting, I consulted widely with the representatives of the ethnic and religious communities to better understand their concerns in order to present their demands at the brainstorming session. I ensured that the recommendations from all communities were presented at the forum.

What are the UNAMI political component's priorities for 2016?

National reconciliation is the bedrock for Iraq's stability and unity, and constitutes the key priority for UNAMI in 2016. To that effect, and as part of the implementation of its mandate, UNAMI will continue to promote dialogue between Iraq's components and political entities, both inside and outside the political process, on the basis of common principles to mitigate sectarian-driven violence, strengthen social peace and herald an inclusive Iraqi political system based on equal rights of all Iraqis that upholds respect for Iraq's unity, sovereignty and constitutional order. This also includes engaging UNAMI's network of regional actors in consultation and advocacy for regional support to national reconciliation efforts in Iraq.

Supporting community reconciliation is another area of focus in view of the recent successes in the liberation of ISIL-controlled areas to promote the values of reconciliation, tolerance and coexistence as part of a process that would engage civil society, religious and tribal leaders, youths and women to rebuild an enabling environment for national reconciliation.

UNAMI would continue its political and technical support to the Council of Representatives in the drafting and enactment of crucial legislation that will promote peaceful national coexistence. We believe the UN can make substantial contributions in the course of the year to several projects that impact on national reconciliation, a fundamental condition for bringing this country back from the brink.

Interview with

LISE GRANDE

Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative

As Humanitarian Coordinator, Ms. Grande collaborates with authorities, UN agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and affected communities. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs supports the HC's work

For Iraq: 2015 was a difficult year for Iraq; how would you summarize the humanitarian situation?

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq is one of the world's largest and most volatile. The combined impact of widespread insecurity and fiscal collapse has put millions of Iraqis at extreme risk. Nearly one-third of Iraq's population, ten million people, is in trouble. Three million Iraqis have fled their homes and three million more are living under ISIL control. Countless people have been brutalized. The situation of women and children, most particularly those who have been captured and enslaved, is heart-breaking. Some of the most horrific violence in the world is occurring in Iraq. In-

discriminate bombing, killing, abduction, rape, looting and expulsion are common in hard-hit areas.

Families throughout Iraq are struggling to find work, housing, decent health care and safe drinking water and two million children are out-of-school. One of the most alarming developments of the past year is the sharp increase in poverty among families hosting displaced persons, particularly in Kurdistan where one million Iraqis have found safety. The cholera outbreak in August 2015 confirmed what many fear—that Iraq's public and social infrastructure is overwhelmed, and in many communities is breaking down. Depending on the Mosul and Anbar military campaigns, as many as



12 million to 13 million Iraqis may be in need by the end of 2016, dependent on help from the Government, religious foundations or humanitarian organizations.

At least 2.4 million people are food insecure, forced to rely on severe and often irreversible coping strategies. Among displaced people in camps, 20 per cent are known to have already sold their household assets and 30 per cent to have exhausted their savings. In locations with large concentrations of displaced people, demand for health services has increased by as much as 50 per cent; in Baghdad, 84 per cent of displaced people are unable to access health facilities.

Conditions are highly variable in newly retaken towns; in many, if not the majority of these towns, it will take months to create conditions that allow for safe, voluntary and dignified return. To date, over 650,000 people have returned to their homes. They face enormous difficulties. Very often, their homes have been damaged. Schools, clinics, police stations, roads and bridges are destroyed, broken or booby trapped. Law and order is not always fully established and in many places, there are few public services.

What has the UN team in Iraq done to help those people in need?

A national effort, involving the Government, civil society and countless communities, has been mounted to address the crisis. The Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government have provided aid, coordinated assistance and have helped to secure the safety of populations who need help. The people of Iraq have welcomed displaced persons into their homes and communities and local groups and religious organizations have worked tirelessly to provide shelter, care and support.

In 2015, the Humanitarian Country Team supported the national effort, preparing one of the most highly prioritized appeals launched in the region. Partners, supported generously by donors, have worked-around-the-



clock to reach people under siege, help newly displaced families seek safety, provide life-saving support to families at extreme risk, and deliver assistance to returnees in areas retaken from ISIL.

The UN and its 180 humanitarian partners reached more than two million Iraqis every month with assistance. Food security partners provided help to an average of 1.5 million people each month and education agencies reached half a million children. A quarter of a million Syrian refugees and hundreds of thousands of displaced Iraqis families received shelter support. Health partners were able to reach 1.8 million people in 2015 and vaccinate 5.5 million children against polio.

Mobilizing resources for the humanitarian operation remained difficult. Although the 2015 Iraq appeal received, at 74 per cent, the highest percentage funding of any appeal in the world, the 26 per cent shortfall meant that hundreds of thousands of people did not receive the assistance they required, and deserved.

The lack of humanitarian funding has been deeply frustrating, particularly because the strategic importance of the Iraqi humanitarian operation cannot be underestimated. Iraq is at the centre of the world's anti-terrorist ef-

forts and the European refugee crisis, and straddles the sectarian fault line running through the Middle East. Humanitarian assistance cannot resolve these problems, nor the conflict inside Iraq, but it is essential for helping to ensure that civilians are protected and receive the life-saving assistance they are entitled to under international humanitarian law.

All partners are worried about 2016 because all indicators point to a worsening situation. Humanitarian partners know that their contributions in 2016 will have a disproportionate impact on the future of the country. Partners have again prepared an honest, highly prioritized appeal. Humanitarian agencies are not asking for inflated funding in the hope of receiving a portion. Needs have been assessed and the costs of meeting these at international assistance standards calculated at USD 4.5 billion.

Recognizing the enormous security, access, capacity and funding constraints they are facing, partners are requesting USD 861 million in the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan to help ensure that the most vulnerable people receive the assistance they need. Protection remains at the centre of the humanitarian operation. The amount

being requested is not commensurate with the overall humanitarian needs in Iraq, leaving an ethical gap between the international standards and the packages partners plan to deliver. The appeal does, however, accurately reflect the absolute minimum required to help Iraqis survive the crisis.

Beyond the humanitarian response, how else is the UN responding to the situation in Iraq?

One of the UN's flagship programmes is UNDP's Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization (FFIS) which was established in June 2015 at the request of the Government. The aim of FFIS is to help government authorities in newly liberated areas quickly repair key public infrastructure, jump-start the local economy, generate income for local households, and promote community reconciliation. FFIS is currently working in newly liberated areas in Anbar, Salah al-Din, Ninewah and Diyala Governorates. In total, FFIS has been authorized to work in seventeen areas. Most recently, the Facility has started work in Ramadi, where widespread destruction and contamination by booby-traps have slowed stabilization efforts.

FFIS is overseen by a Steering Committee chaired by the Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister's Office. The Steering Committee selects the areas from within the four conflict-affected provinces (Anbar, Diyala, Ninewah and Salah al Din) where FFIS engages. Provincial Control Cells, chaired by the Provincial Governor, choose the specific projects. FFIS teams implement high impact projects designed to accelerate normalization and returns and to bring maximum visibility to the Government. Using special authority granted to it by UNDP headquarters, FFIS is able to have contractors working on the ground within two weeks of the Steering Committee's endorsement. As soon as FFIS projects are completed, reconstruction and resilience programmes are expected to start.

FFIS was ground-tested beginning in July in Tikrit. Within three-four months

major progress had been made with more than 95 percent of all families returning to their homes. As a result of FFIS projects, the availability and quality of the city's water supply was above pre-conflict levels; 100 percent of electricity demand was met; tens of thousands of people benefitted from refurbished health facilities; the Qadisiya police station was rehabilitated; and four schools were repaired. One hundred businesses including bakeries, grocers and repair stores received cash grants and were able to start trading and hundreds of youth were employed on work brigades cleaning neighborhoods and rehabilitating ten major public buildings including Tikrit University where more than 20,000 students are now registered.

FFIS has also been engaged in Al Dour where more than 75 percent of all families have returned are benefitting from the renovation of two primary healthcare clinics, two schools, and the main water station. Hundreds of people have been employed to collect rubble and paint public buildings. In Mkeishifa, 100 percent of families have returned and are benefitting from the renovation of four schools, the water station, and the primary healthcare center. Hundreds of people have been employed to collect rubble and paint public buildings. In Rabia, more than 80 percent of families are home and benefitting from improved electricity and the rehabilitation of the Al Jazeera agricultural scheme. Hundreds of people are being employed to clean the city and paint public buildings.

Development efforts have been facing some restraints, including financial limitations. To what extent was the UN able to overcome those and achieve tangible results?

Although agencies are primarily focused on humanitarian action and stabilization, development and reform work is continuing. Ten agencies have continued to implement 13 projects aimed at improving the delivery of public good as part of the Kurdistan



2020 Trust Fund, which is co-managed and capitalized by the Kurdistan Regional Government. Eight UN agencies have continued to support a path-breaking Public Sector Modernization Programme aimed at modernizing and decentralizing key socio-economic sectors including health, education, rule of law, administration, and economic diversification. UNDP is pioneering a Basra Compact designed to help the Basra Governorate take full control over the administrative functions that have been newly derogated to provinces by the federal government.

UN agencies are also involved in countless areas of reform. Either together or as lead agencies, members of the UNCT are helping to rebuild agricultural systems, restructure the country's public distribution system, support security sector reform and community reconciliation, reform the social protection floor that helps millions of Iraqi families, restructure health management systems, introduce building codes, modernize public administration, protect cultural artifacts, promote quality education, support the refugees from Syria who have sought safety in the country and clear complex Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) from conflict

UNAMI

areas so that people can return to their homes.

What role can partners and donors play to address the humanitarian crisis?

The Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government have played central roles in addressing the crisis, but will have few resources in 2016. The Government's social protection floor, although under severe strain, has been crucial for supporting displaced

families, many of whom receive cash grants, food parcels through the Public Distribution System, health care, education, and shelter.

Persistently low oil prices, however, are crippling both governments. Public revenues have decreased sharply, investment projects have been cancelled, operational costs are being reduced across all ministries in both the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and payrolls have been delayed for months. Hun-

dreds of thousands of workers are without jobs, including in the construction sector, a major source of employment in the Kurdistan region. Widespread agricultural shortages are likely, with large parts of Iraq's cereal production belt remaining under ISIL control.

Donors have been generous with their support, yet much more funding is urgently needed to help the people of Iraq. We hope that in 2016, this support and solidarity is provided by the international community.



Interview with

MARWAN ALI

Director of the Office of Political Affairs

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We will continue to reach out to civil society organizations, knowing that they rely on our support as much as we rely on theirs

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What were the biggest achievements of OPA in 2015?

This year has witnessed tremendous changes in the political environment in Iraq, with both attempts to undermine the country's unity on the one hand and strong calls for national coexistence on the other.

In this context, the Office of Political Affairs has supported the Iraqi Government's national reconciliation agenda. To support the Iraqi Government's efforts to tackle the root causes of violence in the country, the Office of Political Affairs partnered with a broad range of interlocutors to identify confidence-building measures, as well as promote activities that would aid national reconciliation, including legislative reform and dialogue on the principles of tolerance, pluralism and co-existence.

The Office of Political Affairs, in collaboration with the Dutch and German Governments, commenced implementation of a project to support national co-existence through the adoption of legislation. The project successfully conducted advocacy, outreach and engagement with the Council of Representatives and political blocs to promote legislation addressing critical issues in Iraq, including decentralisation, and the expansion and protection of civil and minority rights, as well as strengthening local engagement in the provision and management of security. This project has contributed to reinforcing our relationship with the parliamentary institutions and strengthening cooperation with the political blocs.

In the context of this project, the Office of Political Affairs



and the Prime Minister's Office jointly organised a seminar in Baghdad on "Devolution as part of national reconciliation" in September, attended by more than 120 Government officials and civil society leaders, to discuss how devolution of powers could support national reconciliation in Iraq, as well as perspectives and approaches to federalism. Recommendations from the seminar will help guide ongoing efforts to promote national reconciliation in Iraq.

The Office of Political Affairs also partnered with Iraqi institutions in promoting the values of reconciliation, tolerance and co-existence as part of a process to build an enabling environment for reconciliation. We focused on ensuring national ownership and buy-in from components of Iraqi society, including at the political, community, demographic and regional levels. In doing this, we adopted a multi-sectoral approach, encompassing the media, academic and cultural institutions.

UNAMI, in collaboration with the Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation in the Office of the Prime Minister, organized in September a Conference on the role of public opinion-makers in supporting political and community reconciliation. More than one hundred prominent media, academic and civil society figures participated. The conference confirmed the crucial role of the media in creating an enabling environment to promote and consolidate values of national unity and reconciliation in society, and highlighted the means through which opinion-makers can positively contribute to the advancement of national and societal reconciliation.

Finally, building on the lessons learned from the operations in Tikrit, we undertook a mission to Diyala jointly with the Office of the Prime Minister's Implementation and Follow-Up Commission on National Reconciliation. There, we met local authorities, as well as community leaders and returnees, and these discussions helped us identify confidence-building measures to facilitate and guide community reconciliation efforts in the future.

We also worked closely with religious clerics to help promote the Government and international campaign to counter radical

ideologies. To mark the International Day of Tolerance on 19 November, we organized jointly with UNESCO conferences in Baghdad and Erbil to mark focusing on the protection of diversity and prevention of incitement. The conferences brought together distinguished Iraqi personalities, religious leaders and faith-based organizations, Members of Parliament, representatives of the Prime Minister and President, intellectuals, youths, civil society organisations, women and human rights activists, political leaders, academics, and representatives of ethnic and religious minority communities. Participants discussed the role of interreligious dialogue in a democratic society, and ways to prevent incitement of violence and radicalization, as well as to promote diversity and pluralism in Iraq through dialogue.

UNAMI works in partnership with the Iraqi government and civil society organizations. From a political perspective, how has this collaboration progressed over the past year?

The Office of Political Affairs continued to be actively engaged with civil society on matters pertaining to UNAMI's mandate, such as national reconciliation, strengthening of Iraqi institutions and local advocacy with communities to promote co-existence. Over the course of the year civil society organizations have participated in a wide range of activities that the section has undertaken. For example, NGOs and community leaders were crucial partners in the series of roundtables that we organized in Basra and Karbala as part of the interfaith dialogue in January 2015. In February 2015, we celebrated the Interfaith Harmony week in Baghdad and Erbil, with religious leaders and representatives of minorities coming together to echo our message for dialogue and peace in promoting national reconciliation and fighting ISIL. In doing so, religious leaders and civil society groups broadly called for constitutional and legislative reforms, while calling upon the Government to ensure that discrimination and abuse based on differences of gender, religion, language, ethnicity, culture or other distinctions are prevented by all means. A strong sense of national unity, reconciliation and the desire to work for peace emerged from these events.

Civil society organizations remain our main link with local communities to better understand their needs, and to advocate for a culture of peace and tolerance. They carry our voice and our call for national reconciliation to all corners of Iraq. We constantly liaise with academics, students, minority representatives, NGOs, youth and women activists to discuss the causes of social division, as well as measures to unite Iraqis. The outcome of these discussions feed into our work plan and activities, including advocacy with Iraqi officials. This December we launched a series of consultations with civil society organizations aimed at identifying their needs to implement activities for national reconciliation and areas in which joint efforts with the UN in Iraq could bear fruits. We started with Baghdad but are planning for similar consultations in the Provinces.

The last quarter of 2015 was also marked by demonstrations supporting reforms in Baghdad and the Southern provinces. These illustrated the power of civil society in shaping the political agenda. During the course of these protests, the Office of Political Affairs met activists and protest leaders to gain a better understanding of their demands, but also to advise and assist them in formulating the messages that would unite Iraqis around their cause. We feel that civil society in Iraq is more engaged than ever in political issues of concern and it can do even more if empowered. In this regard, the UN family has an important role to play in ensuring that civil society organizations are equipped with the right tools to participate actively and as a positive force in advancing inclusive political dialogue, national reconciliation and community coexistence. This year has seen progress in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism but more support is still needed at the grassroots level to ensure that unity in the fight against terrorism translates into unity between Iraq's various components. Many challenges from the past remain, while new ones have surfaced. We will continue to reach out to civil society organizations, knowing that they rely on our support as much as we rely on theirs. Only combined efforts could meet the demands and expectations of Iraqi people.

Interview with

AAMIR ARAIN

Principal Electoral Advisor, Head of Integrated Electoral Assistance Team

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Throughout 2015, IEAT remained fully engaged with the IHEC in supporting preparations for potential electoral events

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What has been the greatest achievement of the Integrated Electoral Assistance Team in 2015?

With the timely holding of Iraqi elections over the two preceding years, including the Council of Representatives elections in 2014 and the Governorate Council elections in 2013, the Integrated Electoral Assistance Team focused in 2015 on taking stock of what has been achieved so far in providing technical electoral assistance to the Government of Iraq and the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) and on what would be the programmatic and strategic needs for the coming years. To do this, an electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) was deployed in March 2015 by the Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs who is also the UN system-wide Focal Point for Electoral Assistance. The NAM team, following their meetings with national and international interlocutors in Baghdad and Erbil, including with the IHEC, senior government officials, political blocs, civil society and media representatives, noted a strong desire for continued United Nations support, both at the technical and political level, to elections in Iraq. In its report, the NAM recommended continuing UN support to IHEC at least until 2018 on strategic elections management and in certain targeted areas of technical assistance. It also recommended support to the Council of Representatives to strengthen parliamentary oversight to elections, in reviewing the electoral laws and in organizing the process for selecting the next set of IHEC Commissioners. The NAM also pointed out options for possible support to the newly-created Kurdistan Independent

High Electoral Commission (K-IHEC).

How was your cooperation with the Iraqi counterparts?

In 2015, the Integrated Electoral Assistance Team further intensified its interactions with the joint Council of Ministers and Council of Representatives committees that were set up to review the electoral legal framework. IEAT presented various formulas for electoral seat allocation in proportional representation systems, including the advantages and disadvantages of such, in order to guide the committee in identifying and recommending the seat allocation method deemed most applicable to the Iraqi milieu. IEAT also reviewed other proposed provisions for amending the electoral law, including clarification and re-enforcement of provisions for women's representation and submitted its comments based on comparative experiences and best practices in other countries.

IEAT followed up on the progress of discussions between the IHEC and the K-IHEC. The head of IEAT attended several high level meetings of IHEC and K-IHEC Commissioners in Erbil and in Baghdad, leading to the signing of a joint memorandum of cooperation between the two electoral bodies. Both the Council of Representatives and the Kurdistan Regional Parliament will have to formally endorse the memorandum before it can be implemented.

Throughout 2015, IEAT remained fully engaged with the IHEC in supporting preparations for potential electoral events. These included preparations for governorate council elections due in 2017 and the yet unscheduled district and sub-district elections.



Similarly, IHEC completed the signature verification process and prepared the operational timeline and budget for Basra's regional referendum request, but funding was not made available to proceed to the next steps. IHEC gave priority to continuing the biometric voter registration process and expanding its coverage to include security forces registration and planning for the registration of millions of internally displaced by recent conflicts.

What was the greatest challenge for your team?

In 2015, there were significant cuts to international electoral assistance capacities with the expiration of the UNDP/UNOPS-implemented institutional development project in February 2015 and the draw-down of the USAID electoral assistance project for IHEC that was implemented by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). As such, UNAMI remains the only UN entity with the capacity to respond to requests. However, maintaining staffing capacity in Baghdad at current levels proved difficult in 2015, due to security and logistical reasons. IHEC was vocal in requesting UNAMI mission leadership to help ensure that international advisers are able to maintain their presence in Baghdad to support the IHEC.

Work-wise with IHEC, it remains challenging to deal with an IHEC wherein political bloc interests remain quite strong from top to bottom. How to nurture and sustain independence, neutrality and professionalism in the institution over the long run, remains a strategic goal that UN electoral assistance seeks to help address.

What is on the electoral agenda?

The year 2016 is expected to be a busy year in terms of electoral preparations on many fields. While the next election for governorate councils is due only in 2017, most preparatory activities need to be undertaken within 2016. IHEC's operational timetable calls for a voter registration update to be done this year, covering both regular voters, special voting by security forces and also the increasingly more challenging registration of IDPs. The legal and regulatory framework for such elections also has to be finalized and put in place within the year. Many other preparations, including logistics, procurement, polling center plan-

ning, improvement in the results management system, staff recruitment and public outreach activities need to commence latest by the second half of 2016.

At the same time, the five-year term of the current Board of Commissioners expires in 2017. Like in previous occasions, UNAMI engagement is already requested by the Council of Representatives. In this, UNAMI will remain at the forefront in urging the Council of Representatives to set up the selection committee early, so they can proceed to plan and implement a professional, transparent and credible process for selecting the new Board.

On another level, parliamentary elections are due in Kurdistan in 2017 as the current parliament elected in 2013 has a four-year term. Whether for this or other electoral events that may be called in Kurdistan, the Kurdistan-IHEC is requesting technical assistance from the international community. In line with the NAM, UNAMI may decide on providing support depending on the finalization of the joint memorandum of understanding between IHEC and K-IHEC.

What about the UN's role in this process?

The United Nations provided electoral assistance to the Commission through its integrated electoral assistance team throughout the process. Under the overall leadership of UNAMI, the team provided technical and policy advice to the Commission through an integrated effort by UN entities in the areas of procurement, complex operational and logistical planning and implementation, electoral systems and legal reforms, and results management.

The Head of IEAT who is also the UNAMI Principal Electoral Adviser continues to provide strategic advice on election management and policy to the Board of Commissioners and senior IHEC officials. He participated in Board of Commissioners meetings and conducts regular discussions with senior IHEC officials regarding policy and management issues affecting IHEC and its electoral preparations.

UNAMI, UN Women and possibly UNDP are also engaged with the IHEC Gender Team with the aim of supporting the adoption by IHEC of its own gender strategic policies and in launching activities that will further

promote women's participation as election staff, voters, and candidates.

Why are elections so important for Iraq?

Election remains a vital part of the continuing Iraqi constitutional and democratic processes. Strong and credible governance institutions take root from the mandate they receive from the people through periodic and genuine elections. Elections confer legitimacy to vital Iraqi institutions.

The stabilization efforts in newly recovered areas following the recent conflicts will also necessitate that the governance and service delivery institutions receive fresh electoral mandate to ensure that they represent the wishes and interests of the population they govern.

Lastly, how would you like to see the IHEC develop in the next few years?

The international community, which stood firmly in its support to Iraq/IHEC and the United Nations which provided vital electoral technical assistance to IHEC and support to Iraq through delicate and challenging transitional period before and after the elections would like to see IHEC continuing to manage professionally the electoral affairs of this country. It is therefore important to ensure that IHEC be perceived as credible institution, and conduct its affairs free of political pressures in accountable and transparent manner. UN has played a vital role in the past but now it's time for IHEC and other Iraqi institutions to assume greater roles and conduct elections which will further respect for fundamental human rights and democracy in Iraq.

The selection process for the next set of IHEC Commissioners will again be critical, in terms of defining how the IHEC will be managed over the next five years. UNAMI will seek to engage the CoR to ensure that proper criteria for selection are adopted, including greater women's participation, and that the processes are implemented in a transparent and professional manner, according to best practices for selecting electoral management bodies.

Likewise, UNAMI will also seek to strategically engage the IHEC in order to address recurrent issues pertaining to the voter registry and the incessant quest to adopt appropriate election technologies that are sustainable and suitable for Iraq.

Interview with

FRANCESCO MOTTA

Director of the UNAMI Human Rights Office and Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Iraq

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Journalists and other media professionals continue to face threats, intimidation and harassment in carrying out their work – and many of them been murdered by ISIL for continuing to publish information on the situation in areas under ISIL control

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The Human Rights Office plays a key role in promoting equality and in protecting the most vulnerable in Iraq. How was the year 2015 in Iraq in terms of human rights?

While there had been some progress in the respect and protection of human rights throughout Iraq in recent years, the human rights environment significantly deteriorated during 2013-2014, primarily due to armed conflict, terrorism, and violence, which continues to inflict untold suffering on Iraqi civilians through deaths, injuries, ethnic cleansing, abductions, physical and sexual assault, destruction and damage to livelihoods and property, destruction

of sites of religious and cultural significance, and other systematic and widespread human rights violations perpetrated, in particular, by the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) and associated armed groups. Particularly affected by this violence are members of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities, women, children, people with disabilities and aged persons. Other areas of Iraq not directly affected by the armed violence, continue to suffer from the activities of armed groups that perpetrate targeted killings and kidnappings, and commit other acts of violence and intimidation often aimed at civilians, including members of diverse ethnic and



religious groups, women, and individuals based on perception of their sexual or gender orientation.

Armed conflict, terrorism and violence have had a corrosive effect on a range of other human rights in Iraq, including respect for the rights and protections of women, the protection children, the rights of people with disabilities, the rights of minority ethnic and religious communities, and freedom of expression and assembly, etc.

Respect for due process and fair trial standards and the administration of justice in Iraq, continue to be problematic, particularly in relation to respect of due process and fair trial standards.

Respect for women's rights and their opportunities to fully and equally participate in the economic, social, political and cultural life of Iraq has deteriorated in some ways in recent years. Women continue to suffer from lack of political representation and unequal or substandard access to education, health-care, other basic services, and economic opportunity.

Children continue to suffer from violence and armed conflict – and in some instances they have been recruited or used to commit or perpetrate acts of violence. UNAMI HRO has received numerous reports alleging that ISIL and some associated armed groups are actively recruiting children as young as 13 as fighters. UNAMI HRO has received a number of reports (some verified) that children have been used as fighters, as suicide bombers and to carry out atrocity acts including executions. ISIL also continues to use children for propaganda; with pictures of children wearing ISIL uniform and parading alongside adults being frequently posted on social media.

Despite the construction of schools in some areas by the Government of Iraq, access to education remains uneven throughout the country – the children of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returning refugees remain particularly effected.

Protection of children in conflict with the law continues to be a challenge – there is a lack of specific institutions for the care of such children, and there are few alternatives to imprisonment for children subject to the criminal justice system. Those children's detention facilities that do exist remain below acceptable international stan-



dards and there are few alternatives to the incarceration of children.

People with disabilities remain marginalised and have significant challenges accessing basic services, along with other forms of societal discrimination which hampers their full and equal participation in the political, economic and social life of Iraq.

Journalists and other media professionals continue to face threats, intimidation and harassment in carrying out their work – and many of them been murdered by ISIL for continuing to publish information on the situation in areas under ISIL control.

How does the Human Rights Office manage to achieve this delicate yet crucial mission? How is the Human Rights Office addressing these problems?

In response to the current crisis and its effects, UNAMI HRO has dedicated considerable efforts to promoting the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform in order to strengthen the rule of law in Iraq, through a range of activities. UNAMI HRO conducts a range of activities, often in partnership with members of the UNCT/Iraqi civil society, and government, including:

- a. monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation throughout Iraq (including the effects of armed conflict, terrorism and violence on civilians; monitoring of prisons and judicial sector; etc.);

- b. consultation with Iraqi stakeholders to identify gaps in the respect and protection of human rights and to identify solutions to those issues;
- c. advocacy on human rights issues and their solutions (Government);
- d. provision of technical assistance on ways to address gaps or implement solutions (Government/civil society/international);
- e. training and capacity building on human rights (Government/civil society);
- f. public outreach, awareness raising and empowerment actions. A particular focus is to ensure the empowerment and inclusion of "at risk" or marginalized groups (women, children, people with disabilities, members of ethnic, religious or sexual minorities) by undertaking activities to ensure their protection and aimed at ensuring their full and equal participation in the political, economic, and social life of Iraq.

Despite the difficult security situation, UNAMI HRO continues to conduct its activities in all governorates of Iraq that are not affected by armed conflict – particularly capacity building and awareness raising activities with CSOs and local government. In areas of the country affected by armed conflict and violence, UNAMI HRO has established networks through which it continues to monitor the human rights situation (including the impact of terrorism and



armed conflict on civilians) in those areas of the country.

What were the Human Rights Office's main achievements in 2015?

Given the deterioration in the human rights environment in Iraq during 2014, UNAMI HRO consolidated much of its activities on the protection of civilians. In this respect a major achievement for 2015 was the issuance of two public reports on the effects of armed conflict and violence on civilians in Iraq, one covering the period from 11 December 2014 to 30 April 2015 and the second from 1 May to 31 October 2015. UNAMI HRO also submitted a report to the United Nations Human Rights Council in compliance with resolution 28/30 on technical assistance provided to assist in the promotion and protection of human rights in Iraq. Despite serious challenges, UNAMI HRO was able to maintain information networks throughout Iraq, to ensure that it could continue to gather information on human rights violations no matter where, when or by whom they were committed. As part of the Protection Cluster, UNAMI HRO was also able to refer countless survivors of human rights violations committed in the context of the current armed conflict, particularly perpetrated by the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, to humanitarian service providers and other forms of assistance.

Promotion and protection of the rights of Iraq's diverse ethnic, religious and linguistic communities is one of the key tasks in the UNAMI mandate. How are the things developing in this area?

Minorities and other ethnic and religious communities suffer from various attacks, violence, threats, harassment, and other forms of discrimination. ISIL in particular has targeted members of diverse ethnic and religious communities for murder, threats and intimidation, rape, sexual slavery, destruction of property, expulsion and ethnic cleansing, destruction of places of cultural and religious significance, and other international crimes.

The draft Law on the Protection of Religious and Ethnic Minority Group Rights remains stalled before the Committee for Minority Rights in the Council of Representatives and UNAMI HRO is concerned that the current draft law does not meet relevant international standards. Ensuring that they can return to their places of origin, voluntarily and in safety and dignity and full respect for their lives, as well as rebuilding trust between communities will be major challenges if Iraq is to overcome the effects of the cycles of violence that have, and currently, beset it.

To assist diverse ethnic and religious communities address the challenges they face,

UNAMI HRO has re-activated the Oversight Committee appointed by the plenipotentiary representatives at a UNAMI/OHCHR sponsored Conference on the enhancing the protection and rights of diverse ethnic and religious communities in Iraq, held in Baghdad in March 2014. This oversight committee is engaged in devising a package of concrete recommendations (i.e., National Action Plan on the Rights of Diverse Ethnic and Religious Communities) on key legislative, institutional and policy reforms aimed at ensuring the protection diverse ethnic and religious communities and enhancing the respect for their rights, based on the Declaration of Principles and the Road Map endorsed by stakeholders at the March 2014 Conference).

UNAMI HRO is also conducting seminars, workshops and other awareness raising activities with members of ethnic and religious communities, in partnership with civil society organisations, on the rights of minorities to promote the respect and protection of the rights of minorities throughout Iraq.

Domestic and gender based violence is a very important issue. How is Iraq coping with it?

Large numbers of women have been subjected to conflict related sexual violence – particularly women from Iraq's diverse

ethnic and religious minority communities. Many of these women are unable to access basic care and support services. The Family Protection Units of the Iraqi Police, aimed at providing protection to women who are the victims of domestic/gender-based violence, are poorly resourced and staffed, and remain inaccessible to most women and children who are victims of domestic/gender-based violence. The draft Family Protection Law, the text of which substantively fails to meet Iraq's obligations under international law, remains stalled before the Council of Representatives. Owing to the failure to pass the Family Protection Law, the draft Shelter policy for the regulation, management and resourcing of shelters for the victims of domestic violence also remains pending under review by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA). As such, women who are the victims of domestic and other forms of gender based violence, still have nowhere to seek sanctuary, obtain access to psycho-medical and other forms of support, or claim their legal rights. Owing to the lack of shelters and other facilities for the care and protection of such women, many women who have sought protection are often housed in women's prisons and detention centres. The Iraqi Criminal Code no. 111 of 1969 continues to permit "honour" in mitigation of charges involving the murder of family members. Police rarely investigate such cases and alleged perpetrators are rarely held accountable. In the northern areas of Iraq, female genital mutilation (FGM) remains prevalent particularly in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

There continue to be reports of women and girls being trafficked within Iraq and internationally and forced into prostitution, and despite the Iraqi Trafficking Law no. 29 of 2012, women victims of trafficking and forced prostitution are often prosecuted for a range of 'crimes' and can face lengthy prison sentences.

Respect for women's rights and their opportunities to fully and equally participate in the economic, social, political and cultural life of Iraq has deteriorated in the recent years. Women continue to suffer from lack of political representation and unequal or substandard access to education, health-care, other basic services, and economic opportunity. The situation is particularly acute for women headed households.

To assist women in Iraq address the challenges they face, UNAMI HRO undertakes a range of activities. With CSOs and other UN partners, UNAMI HRO monitors the impact of violence (SGBV and CRSV) on women and other vulnerable groups and undertakes advocacy with Government of Iraq, police and judicial officials to ensure that the perpetrators of SGBV and CRSV are prosecuted

UNAMI HRO also conducts training of security force personal on issues related to gender and in the respect and protection of women and their rights, and the protection of women from GBV and CRSV. UNAMI HRO also conducts awareness raising campaigns with a range of partners to empower women to take action to claim their rights. UNAMI HRO is also engaged in conducting a review of laws and policies on the prevention SGBV and CRSV and the care and pro-

tection of women and children who are the victims of SGBV/CRSV and will make recommendations to the Government of Iraq on legal, policy and institutional reforms that ensure the protection and care of women and children who are the victims of SGBV/CRSV according to international standards – particularly UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820.

What are the Human Rights Office's priorities in 2016?

While the human rights challenges facing Iraq are considerable, UNAMI has concentrated its focus on six main policy areas:

- I. Protection of civilians and the rule of law: i.e., protection of civilians in armed conflict/terrorism, combatting terrorism and armed conflict while respecting and protection human rights;
- II. Rule of law: UNAMI HRO/OHCHR are engaged in developing a comprehensive package of legislative, policy and institutional reforms to ensure that the criminal justice system respects international and constitutional standards on due process and fair trial, and is accessible to all sectors of Iraqi society.
- III. Community reconciliation and transitional justice: grass roots community reconciliation processes aimed at addressing decades of human rights violations suffered by all communities/sectors of Iraqi society, with the aim of supporting national reconciliation processes.
- IV. Promoting civil and political rights and protection of women – particularly women and children who are the victims of SGBV and Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)
- V. Promoting civil and political rights and protection of ethnic religious and sexual minorities – particularly a comprehensive package of legislative, policy and institutional reforms aimed at ensuring the protection of minorities and their full and equal participation in the political, economic, and social life of Iraq.
- VI. State institution building: building the capacity of, and providing technical assistance to, the Iraqi High Commission for Human Rights; the Human Rights and other Committees of the Council of Representatives; Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, etc.



Interview with

FRANCIS PETER-BATTAL

Chief of Integrated Coordination Office for Development and Humanitarian Affairs



ICHODA plays a key role in promoting Humanitarian and Development Affairs in Iraq. How does the ICHODA manage to achieve this delicate yet crucial mission? How is the ICHODA addressing these problems?

In resolution 2233 (2015), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) until 31 July 2016, in order to promote, support and facilitate, in coordination with the Government of Iraq, humanitarian assistance, essential services and reconstruction, socioeconomic reform, and contributions of agencies, funds and programmes.

ICODHA's support to national reconciliation entails creating conditions and gaining support for commencing a genuine political process of national reconciliation, through community reconciliation, in addition to high-level political engagement both in country and regionally.

What were the ICHODA's main achievements in 2015?

Throughout 2015 ICHODA continued to promote humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as contingency planning in light of ongoing liberation operations that trigger additional massive waves of displacement.

ICODHA's extensive field network facilitated stabilization efforts during the course of 2015, as the Government of Iraq moved to secure and stabilize newly liberated areas. Particular emphasis is drawn to coor-

dination with authorities at the governorate and district levels through ICHODA's network of national officers.

How was the year 2015 in Iraq in terms of Humanitarian and Development Affairs?

The continued deterioration of the humanitarian situation set the scene for 2015 in Iraq, with an additional 1 million IDPs throughout the year, for a total of some 3.2 Million IDPs since January 2014 and nearly 250,000 Syrian refugees.

The Government of Iraq, alongside the Humanitarian Community, continued to deploy much needed humanitarian assistance to the affected population; however shortfalls and gaps continue to persist, and with worsening security conditions, coping mechanisms are severely limited.

Approximately 2 million individuals are entering their second year of displacement. One of the most dramatic changes is the deterioration of living conditions of host the communities: families who have generously opened their homes and shared resources with relatives and neighbours are rapidly plunging into poverty. Compounding the dire situation are the 40% drop on oil revenues and the still on-going conflict within the country.

Regrettably, children continued to pay a heavy price in 2015, as they are recruited to participate in combat operations in areas under ISIS control, with risks of being killed or wounded. Confirmation of numbers

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Development programs in Iraq have been ongoing but constrained owing to the unstable security situation and focus on the humanitarian response

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of those affected continue to be unknown due to scarcity of data.

In September 2015 Iraq declared a cholera outbreak, with 2,870 confirmed cases nationwide. By beginning of 2016 there was a decreasing trend in new cases attributed to containment measures, efficient case management and declining temperatures. Cholera is becoming endemic in Iraq, mainly due to weak water and sanitation infrastructure that needs to be rehabilitated, particularly in rural areas. Regrettably, a cholera resurgence is anticipated when temperatures start to warm up and rainfall commences during the spring season.

Limited returns to areas retaken from ISIS are on-going, with a total estimate of 470,000 individuals. Conditions in many areas, such as Sinjar and Ninewa, remain inadequate for large-scale returns: widespread destruction of homes, public buildings, and pervasive contamination by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and explosive remnants of war, coupled with the continued heavy militarization of the area and fragile security conditions.

What are United Nations doing in assisting the process of stabilization in Iraq?

On 30 July, donors committed with UNDP to establish the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization (FFIS) in Iraq. Currently, the FFIS is supported by 14 international donors and is working closely with the GoI to stabilize newly liberated areas by restoring delivery of basic services, jumpstarting the local economy and promoting community reconciliation.

Several projects in Tikrit district have been completed, directly benefitting 65,000 people with potable water from three rehabilitated pumping stations and treatment plants; 30,000 people accessing ambulance services and rebuilt primary health care centres; 20,000 people receiving electricity from new mobile grids; thousands of children attending rehabilitated schools; thousands benefitting from the rehabilitation of the main police station; and hundreds of young people paid to remove rubble and waste, upgrade public facilities, paint public buildings and walls, and clean Tikrit University.

UNDP has expanded its support to other

districts of Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Diyala and Sinjar, and in Anbar is supporting the Government to prepare for the liberation of Ramadi through the preparation of a comprehensive stabilization strategy.

Further supporting the stabilization efforts, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provided wheat seeds and fertilizers to 10,000 of the most vulnerable people in the newly liberated areas to enable farmers to plant and access harvest and post-harvesting activities. IOM in turn provided also community assistance projects and livelihood assistance to returnees, displaced and vulnerable host communities.

What can you say about Development and Reconstruction Programmes?

Development programs in Iraq have been ongoing but constrained owing to the unstable security situation and focus on the humanitarian response. All UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes have maintained a minimum level of development and reconstruction programmes.

UNDP and the authorities of Basra signed the Basra Compact, aimed at strengthening participatory and accountable governance and reviving economic activity within the province. UNEP launched (1) a national programme to combat sand and dust storms to reduce the recurrence of sand and dust storms in Iraq, (2) a National Action Programme (NAP) to combat desertification, and (3) the first national communication report on climate change. Moreover, UNEP and UNESCO continued to assist the Iraqi Government on developing a Management Plan integrating the cultural and natural components of the Iraqi Marshlands for their nomination as World Heritage Site. UNESCO provided technical and managerial capacities in integrated groundwater resources management to safeguard life-line access to potable water.

WFP continued to support the Public Distribution System (PDS) reform and School Feeding Programmes; UNICEF supported the Ministries of Education, and Water and Sanitation; and WHO supported the Ministry of Health to strengthen the Health System nationwide. There was also further support to Government of Iraq through the Iraq Public Sector Modernization Joint

Programme, which groups 8 UN Agencies working in various sectors under the coordination of the Prime Minister Office.

What are the ICODHA's priorities in 2016?

In 2016 ICODHA will continue to work closely with both the Office of Political Affairs and Human Rights to support community reconciliation at the grass root levels through:

- Contingency Planning by assisting the local authorities with table-top exercises to increase awareness and capacity for post-conflict planning in liberated areas.
- Coordination Support to GoI through the embedded staff in the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center (JCMC) in Baghdad, the Joint Crisis Center (JCC) in Erbil and the Ministry Emergency Cells, to strengthen coordination between the UN and the Government of Iraq.
- Coordination Support to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), to benefit from their network at the community level, to prevent overlaps and maximize resources.
- Community Outreach by identifying actors at community level to ensure the community needs are identified and prioritized.
- Provide support to ensure that local level public works, livelihood and community reconciliation programmes are directly linked to the UNDAF to promote national reconciliation.
- Assist in stabilization efforts by identifying, through scoping missions jointly with the GoI, key priorities following the liberation of an occupied area.
- ICODHA will also continue to assist the DSRSG/RC/HC with resource mobilization efforts, regionally and internationally, and supporting funding mechanisms to deliver a rapid and flexible response.
- Lastly, ICODHA will document Lessons Learned to ensure experiences at the grass root levels are documented/reflected, and in turn reach central, regional, and national levels.

Iraq at a glance



Successive wars, civil unrest, years of conflict and humanitarian crisis have stifled the economy of Iraq. With the current escalation of the large-scale armed conflict, there are an estimated 3.2 Million internally displaced people (IDPs) within Iraq. The influx of refugees from neighboring countries and war torn areas exert more pressure on overall economy of the country. Likewise, high food prices and shrinking jobs/employment markets have prevented many poorer Iraqis including IPDs from meeting their basic requirements and it is estimated that there

are 2.4 million food insecure people in Iraq. Of this population, 1.5 million people are the most vulnerable, often forced to rely on severe and often irreversible coping strategies, and are in need of urgent assistance.

FAO as the lead agency of the food security and agriculture sector, is working in Iraq to provide information analysis on food security and nutrition, policy advices and supporting resilience building to countries, communities and farmers affected by the crisis.



During 2015, FAO has assisted Iraq with development of long term agricultural strategies and policies, and with projects such as improving livestock productivity including developing livestock programme and veterinary services, improving fish farms, women empowerment, cottage industry, including and rehabilitation of water pumping stations etc.

FAO's emergency assistance focuses on providing time-critical livelihood support to families affected by the on-going conflict with a primary focus on (i) winter cereal crop production; (ii) backyard poultry production; (iii) vegetable production; (iv) micro-gardening; (v) job creation and income generation; (vi) support to small-scale livestock herders; (vii) co-ordination of the Food and Agriculture Sector.

Impact on Food, Agriculture and Livelihoods

Large parts of the wheat production belt lie directly under the control of ISIL and affiliated armed groups. Annual wheat production in Ninewa was approximately 655,000 tons for last year [FAO]. So far this year only about 179,000 tons has been sold, leaving many farmers with a wheat surplus in their fields and a severe income dip. The wheat-planting window for the affected governorates is from mid-October to late November depending on the agro-ecological zones.

In addition, agriculture-based livelihoods face severe constraints across the value chain – from production to marketing. Major constraints include: restricted access to land due to on-going crisis, reduced availability and increased cost of farming inputs (e.g. equipment, seeds, fertilizers, animal feed and vet services and labour), physical damage to land, poor access to water for irrigation, lack of farming equipment and infrastructure including storage facilities, disruption of markets and increased cost of and reduced access to animal feed sources; and decline or absent of veterinary supplies and services.

The livestock sector has been also affected. Insecurity caused difficulties for herders in feeding their animals and in some cases forced them to abandon or sell livestock. Additionally, there is an increased risk for outbreaks of livestock diseases as vaccination and veterinary services have been disrupted.

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FAO-IRAQ ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015

1. Finalization of the Plan of Action, PoA: The Plan of Action (PoA) is the latest step in a series of joint assessments and plans between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) over the past five years reflecting the partnership between the two organizations in support of the economic growth of the country's agriculture sector.

2. Governorates Initiative: FAO has taken a strong initiative in setting up Unilateral Trust Funds with many of the governorates in Iraq and began the first UTF project implementation in 2014 with the Nineveh Governorate on Small Ruminants. This is a 2 year project worth close to 3.5 million USD due to ISIS attacks on Nineveh governorate the project is temporary stopped. This project has led to awareness with other governorates such as Karbala, Erbil and Salah Al Din.

3. Currently, FAO is implementing the following projects:

- Distribution of wheat seeds and Fertilizers to vulnerable rural families in the newly liberated areas of Nineveh. The overall objective of the project is to improve food and nutrition security, livelihoods and nutrition conditions of vulnerable households living in Nineveh's most affected areas and increase on-farm incomes generated by vulnerable rural households (including smallholder and marginal farmers, agricultural wage earners and Iraqi IDPs) through the provision of agricultural inputs.

- Providing Food Security Assistance to the recently displaced in Anbar, Kirkuk, Diyala and Sulaymaniah areas. The project aims to save lives and assist communities to minimize negative coping mechanisms by addressing the urgent food and nutrition needs of vulnerable women, men, girls and boys recently displaced in Anbar, Kirkuk and Sulaymaniah area of operation, including Khanaqin,

and by safeguarding the nutritional status of the most vulnerable groups, through the provision of accountable, rapid and responsive assistance.

- Emergency supplementary feeding of productive animals to ensure their survival through providing Syrian refugees with life sustaining food production (milk, dairy products and meat).

- Improve food security and livelihoods through emergency support to vegetable growing farmers in conflict-affected governorates of Anbar and Salah Al Din. The project aim is to protect livelihoods and assist the most vulnerable people by addressing the urgent food and nutrition needs of returnees in Anbar and Salah Al Din.

- Socio-economic empowerment of rural women in Kurdistan Region. Building on existing programmes to help KRI women and girls become trainers, agricultural extension workers and ensure girls access to agricultural vocational schools. This program is a continuation of existing FAO programmes, including setting up cottage industries in different rural areas in Erbil, Sulaymaniah and Duhok governorates, as well as the formation of new associations in the project was expedited as sufficient knowledge and experience had been gained for project field staff to be in a better position to plan proactively in responding.

- Development of Rural Women in Iraq in coordination with the State Ministry of Women's affairs in Iraq, a cost sharing project between the United Nations and Iraqi Government under UNDAF Trust Fund, aiming to enhance the capacity, understanding and ability of women to reduce their vulnerabilities through supporting national policies and programs that enable them to be active participants in the development process, build resilience, provide economic and livelihood opportunities and enable inclusion in decision-making processes.

Overview of 2015

Present in Iraq since 1976, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is committed to supporting the Government and people of Iraq during their transition towards reconciliation, reform and stability.

UNDP's support ranges from promoting emergency livelihoods and community dialogue in districts impacted by the crisis, to prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) amongst Syrian refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs), to helping stabilize newly liberated areas. Further support includes the areas of inclusive area-based planning, governance reforms, decentralization, rule of law, and environment and climate change.

Highlights and Results



MATTERS OF FACT

- 13 countries have pledged support for UNDP's stabilization efforts
- 65,000 people are receiving safe drinking water from three rehabilitated water pumping stations and treatment plants in Tikrit
- 19,600 Syrian refugees, IDPs, and host communities have benefited from livelihood opportunities in KR-I
- 11,500 households have benefited from constructing key infrastructures in camps and host communities in KR-I
- 3000 SGBV survivors amongst refugee and IDP populations have benefited from legal aid services
- 5000 individuals benefitted from public outreach activities on legal empowerment
- 12 governorates are receiving support to improve sector-wide planning and coordination with the central level

Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization (FFIS)

Established in June 2015, UNDP's FFIS has been helping to restart basic services, reboot local economies, restore civic pride and promote community reconciliation in newly liberated areas from ISIL.

Ground-breaking stabilization work has already been done in Tikrit, where more than 155,000 people have returned to their homes and are now rebuilding their lives. FFIS has provided grants to small businesses, opened neighbourhoods for returning families and rebuilt civil and public assets. FFIS is starting to work in liberated areas in Diyala and Salah al-Din Governorates and is procuring and pre-positioning equipment in anticipation of Ramadi's liberation.

All FFIS projects are based on priorities identified by local authorities and on partnership principles including human rights, protection, gender and inclusion. Every effort is made to ensure that the prioritization and sequencing of activities is done in accordance with the United Nation's Guiding Principles on Displacement and Return.

Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP)

UNDP has been contributing to resilience building through its Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP), which helps local communities cope with the protracted crisis and recover from it where possible, and fosters social cohesion.

Through ICRRP, 11,500 households have benefited from constructing key infrastructure in camps and host communities; 19,600 vulnerable Syrian refugees, IDPs, and host communities have benefited from livelihood opportunities; 3,500 people have been engaged in participatory dialogue processes in host communities with Syrian refugees and IDPs; and over 5,000 female Syrian refugees and IDPs, including victims of SGBV, have received legal support through 7 legal service centres and mobile legal services.

ICRRP has further supported and guided the establishment of two Government coordination centres: The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center (JCMC) in Baghdad and the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC) in Erbil.

UNDP is scaling-up current interventions to enhance resilience of the crisis affected populations, focusing on:

- Operationalization of the crisis response coordination mechanisms at the Central, Regional and Governorate level;
- Improvement of basic service delivery and institutional responsiveness for longer-term/sustainable solutions;
- Expansion of livelihood support for local economic recovery;
- Strengthening of protection mechanisms for vulnerable communities, specifically for women and youth;
- Enhancement of participatory processes of community-based platforms in high social tension areas; and
- Development of a Resilience Index in Iraq.



Local Area Development Programme (LADP)

UNDP's flagship LADP is one of the country's few programmes providing direct support to 12 Governorates to improve sector-wide planning and implementation capacity, strengthen budget execution and service delivery, improve coordination between central and governorate levels and increase participation of communities in local development. LADP teams have helped authorities and stakeholders prepare Provincial Development Plans for Erbil,

Dohuk and Sulaimaniyah Governorates in the Kurdistan Regional Government. The Provincial Plans are already making a difference. In Sulaimaniyah, local communities planted 50,000 trees to mark the launch of the Plan that addresses the devastating impact of deforestation on the province.

During 2016, LADP will provide support to help elaborate Provincial Development Plans for nine Governorates, many of which are struggling to cope with and

recover from the current crisis. Working collaboratively with UNHABITAT, LADP is already helping Governorates to improve urban planning. In Basra, the two agencies are helping authorities to elaborate a conservation and heritage development plan, whereas their support in Tikrit targets the city's early recovery plan. They have also been providing support to prepare an infrastructure plan in Qadisiya, and an urban expansion plan in Maysan.





Energy, Environment and Climate Change Programme (EECC)

With UNDP's support, Iraq achieved considerable progress in 2015 in the areas of environment and climate change. The Ministry of Health and Environment has been technically supported to coordinate and determine Iraq's contributions to the Global Climate Agreement through effective participation in COP21 in Paris. Considering heightened security risks in water infrastructure in Iraq, policy guidance notes have been developed for the national authorities to promote peace and security in water sector.

Rule of Law Programme

The Rule of Law Programme aims at improving equitable access to justice and security, focusing on both normative and transformative aspects. Contributing to Security Sector Reform is another objective, with a view to promote accountable and responsive security sector governance and civilian oversight.

Amongst key achievements in 2015 are:

- Support to 10 Legal Aid Centers to address justice needs of IDP and refugee populations by providing legal, psychosocial and investigative services including case referrals;
- Establishment of strategic partnerships with the Judiciary, Courts, Bar Associations, Union of Jurists and others, such as the Family protection Units (FPU) and Directorates of Combating Violence against Women (DCVAW).
- Strategic guidance and technical expertise to conduct an Independent Board of Human Rights (IBHR) Law review in-line with International Human Rights principles and norms as well as to draft the Protection from Domestic Violence Law;
- Support to the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) in the development of the GoI National Security Strategy (NSS). The strategy central-

izes the concept of human security and promotes inclusivity and equality, and its development has revealed the immediate and fundamental need for the Government to focus its efforts on developing a Security Sector Reform (SSR) plan.

- Support the ONSA to initiate a process to develop the GoI SSR plan.

In 2016, UNDP Rule of Law Programme will focus on:

- Justice: Support to enhance the independence of the judiciary; promote a

context specific understanding of transitional justice and social reconciliation process through collaborative action at national and local levels; and promote legal aid servicers as an effective tool to enhance equitable access to justice that can be replicated at scale and applied in diverse contexts.

- Security: Support SSR based on human security principles and equality; contribute to people-centered civilian policing, and increase community security at the local level.





Other results include:

- Finalizing the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for 2015, which aims to build national capacity and addresses the risks and vulnerabilities of the disaster and climate vulnerable population in Iraq;
- Technical assistance has been rendered to the National Climate Change Committee in the analysis and determination of Iraqi Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) to the climate summit, COP21 in Paris. The INDC report will play a key role in shaping Iraq's policies and plans for mitigation and adaptation actions during the period of 2016-2025;
- Ministries of Electricity, Industry, Science and Technology, and Environment have united to set up a grid connected rooftop solar PV plant at Bytti Real Estate in Najaf, in order to encourage integration of clean and affordable solar energy in the fast growing real estate sector; and
- Capacity of the Ministry of Science and Technology has been enhanced, through training and hardware support, to undertake advance research and to find locally adapted and durable solution for sustaining Solar PV under excessive heat, and sand dust storm.
- UNDP has contributed to building national capacity through the training of: 45 officials on transboundary water negotiation and regional water cooperation; 23 officials on best practice solutions for transboundary water management, as part of south-south cooperation; and 70 officials on areas of disaster response and recovery, early warning, and risk assessment.

UNDP is committed to Iraq's Future

UNDP is a major partner contributing to democratic processes and good governance in Iraq. Its support to the Government, at both Federal and Regional levels, has been instrumental in prioritizing the Millennium Development Goals and safe-guarding development gains achieved. UNDP is further committed to help the country to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. Well positioned with a track record in different areas, UNDP stands ready to move towards a cutting-edge resilience agenda with a gender-dimension and a specific focus on economy, social cohesion and national reconciliation, in order to help the people Iraq recover and build a brighter future.

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UNEP

United Nations Environment Programme

The United Nations Environment Programme is the UN designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. UNEP coordinates the development of environmental policy by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and policy makers. UNEP is a regionally-based agency and Iraq is covered by UNEP's Regional Office

for West Asia.

UNEP focuses its work in seven thematic sub-programmes, addressing climate change, disasters and conflicts, ecosystem management, environmental governance, harmful substances and hazardous wastes, resource efficiency, and environment under review.

In Iraq, UNEP works closely with the Government of Iraq providing technical and





policy guidance and capacity building support in environment-related issues.

In 2015 UNEP has had a flagship programme in Iraq: "The Ahwar of Southern Iraq and Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities"

The marshlands of Mesopotamia (al-ahwar), located around the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in southern Iraq in Southern Iraq, were once home to several hundred thousand inhabitants, the Ma'dan, a people whose unique way of life had been preserved for over 5,000 years. With a steady water flow, limited interference from human activities, dam construction, pollution and oil industry in addition to a robust management plan, these natural wetlands may continue to provide a sustainable urban environment to its inhabitants, supplying them with enough food, water, fiber and health materials for generations to come.

Since 2014, UNEP has embarked on a project to support the Government of Iraq in its efforts to nominate the Iraqi Marshlands as a World Heritage Site. The inscription process which is based on the Outstanding Universal Values (OUV) of the Marshlands will be used

as a vehicle to enhance the natural and cultural resources and strengthen institutional and technical capacity of local communities to manage the ecosystem, conserve its biodiversity and protect its prehistoric relicts and monuments. A Management Plan integrating cultural and natural components of the World Heritage file was finalized in June 2015 in collaboration with IUCN-ROWA, Arab Regional Center for World heritage (AR-CWH), UNESCO, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

Iraq nominated "The Ahwar of Southern Iraq and Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities", a mixed serial property, for inscription on the World Heritage list in January 2014, and has finalized the consolidated and participatory Management Plan integrating cultural and natural components of the World Heritage file in June 2015. The Management Plan will be further translated and publicized nationally and locally in 2016 to achieve official endorsement by the Iraqi Government.

UNEP also undertakes a range of other activities with its partners in Iraq, including:-

- National and Regional Programme

to Combat Sand and Dust Storms and alignment of National Programme to Combat Desertification & Drought (NAP) (to be launched December 2015)

- Preparation of Iraq's Initial National Communication to UNFCCC (to be launched December 2015)
- Work on the National Environment Strategy and Action Plan through the Strategic Cooperation Agreement with UNEP
- State of Environment and Outlook Report
- National Capacity Self-Assessment for the Global Environment Management (NCSA)
- Establishing National Network of Protected Areas
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)

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UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women, among other issues, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; empowerment of women; and achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

UN Women, present in Iraq since 2008, was established by General Assembly resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, with a mandate to assist Member States and the United Nations system to progress more effectively and efficiently towards the goal of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women

Women's State of Affairs in Iraq: One step forward, two steps back



Already affected by years of economic sanctions and armed conflicts, Iraqis, particularly women and girls, now face additional staggering challenges related to the deterioration of the security situation. The ongoing conflict with armed groups including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has forced mass displacement of population with more than half of displaced population (51%) are female.

Iraqi women and girls have been subjected to gross human rights abuses including abductions, trafficking, torture, forced marriage, and other forms of Sexual and Gender Based Violence. As extremist groups have increased in influence, their territorial advance has been coupled with targeted, strategic attacks on women's rights and freedoms, including a pattern of sexual slavery, abduction and human trafficking, as documented by the Iraqi Fact Finding Mission in 2015. Iraqi women in ISIL-occupied territories also suffer from limited mobility and engagement in public life, and lack of or minimal access to education, employment and health services. Mass displacement, the breakdown of law and order and the disruption of existing com-

munity protection mechanisms coupled with the increasing insecurity intensify the risk of SGBV of vulnerable women, particularly displaced women, widows and female headed households. Furthermore, the reality facing Iraqi women today is compounded by entrenched structural discrimination that lies at the heart of gender inequality in the country. Years of protracted conflict continue to produce dramatic changes to family structure with over 1.6 million widows and even more female-headed households.

Iraq enjoys one of the highest levels of representation of women in the parliament, thanks to a quota introduced in the constitution of 2005. The Iraqi government also took a significant step forward adopting the National Action Plan for SCR 1325 on women's peace and security. Yet, women's leadership continue to represent an untapped resource for supporting reconciliation and countering radicalization and violent extremism. Capitalizing on women's unique positioning and influence within communities, and the legacy of a strong women's movement in the country despite decades of armed conflict, and discrimination is stepping stone for progress.

UN WOMEN

UN Women response: Addressing vulnerabilities, leveraging women's leadership and agency

UN Women's approach in Iraq is one that does not only deal with women as victims in need of protection and as passive recipient of humanitarian and development assistance, but complements protection with leveraging women's leadership as agents of change and transformative leaders at the community and national level. UN Women works very closely with Government and civil society partners towards a) greater accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities, through gender responsive planning, budgeting and legislation; b) responding to the urgent needs and heightened vulnerabilities within a humanitarian crisis context, UN Women supports women's resilience through livelihoods and economic empowerment; and c) leverage women's leadership, agency and voice in national reconciliation and countering radicalization and violent extremism.

In 2015 UN Women extended livelihoods and cash for work opportunities to 2500 women refugee and IDPs in the northern governorates through its "Women & Girls' Centers" which offer vocational and soft skills training, and cash for work opportunities.

In close collaboration with national and civil society partners, UN Women geared up its efforts to support coalition building of women leaders around a common vision and strategy for action and leadership role in national reconciliation, peacebuilding and countering violent extremism.



The Women's Movement's Initiative to Support Peace and Social Cohesion and Combat Terrorism was launched in Baghdad and Erbil bringing together 230 representatives of women's and civil society organizations, networks, parliamentarians and gender activists who worked intensely to develop a common platform of priorities for empowering women, tackling extremism and building social cohesion and accelerate progress and implementation of the National Action plan for SCR 1325.

UN Women continues to extend policy and technical assistance support to national partners at the federal and regional level in their efforts to close the gap between laws, national strategies and action plans and their implementation and deliver on normative commitment to advance gender equality and women empowerment. UN Women supports national capacities in Gender responsive planning and budgeting at the regional and sub regional level and works closely with the legislative bodies to enhance the capacities of women parliamentarian and the responsiveness of the legislative agenda.

In KRI UN Women works closely with national and civil society partners and especially the High Council of Women Affairs in the areas of women's peace and security, economic empowerment of rural women; awareness raising and supporting the responsiveness of government institutions. UN Women in partnership with the Ministry of Education, UNDP and UNESCO supported the establishment of a Gender Study Center in Soran University which will serve as a repository of knowledge on Gender Equality and Women's empowerment in the region.

Interview with

AXEL PLATHE

Director of UNESCO Office for Iraq and UNESCO Representative to Iraq



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UNESCO also worked with the concerned legislative, judicial, executive and regulatory bodies to launch an initiative that will better monitor and end crimes against journalists

”

“Building peace in the minds of men and women”. This is UNESCO’s constitutional mandate. But how do you implement this mandate in Iraq, where almost one thousand people are being killed every month, minorities are persecuted and heritage is destroyed, and where peace appears to be a distant dream?

I believe, it is precisely in situations like the one Iraq is sadly experiencing that we must demonstrate that the values of tolerance, cultural diversity and respect for human rights are stronger than these barbaric acts. We must offer a different discourse, an open message which calls for tolerance. We must learn the lessons of the past and remind people of the extremely dangerous consequences of the rejection of others. We must speak up and say that diversity is a reality, to which we must adapt our policies and acts.

This starts with education, the most effective means of preventing barbarism and intolerance. Education means countering influences that lead to fear and exclusion of the others. It means help young people to judge independently, thinking critically and reasoning ethically.

This is why one of the most important pillars of UNESCO’s action is education.

2015 witnessed a dramatically great number of attacks on Iraq’s cultural heritage, which has been termed as ‘cultural cleansing’. How has UNESCO reacted in this regard?

We are indeed gravely concerned by the intentional targeting and systematic destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq. In the beginning of 2015 we witnessed a series of deliberate attacks on cultural sites such as the World Heritage site of Hatra, on Nimrud and Khorsabad, not to forget the destruc-

tion and defacing of many statues and bas-reliefs at Mosul Museum. The systematic destruction of some of Iraq’s most iconic monuments testifies to an ideology of hatred and violence.

We have acted on various fronts. We have worked, and are working, with our counterparts in the government to assess the damages and to plan safeguarding activities. We have been particularly concerned by the increased risks of illicit trafficking of looted objects and are working within the framework of UN Security Council Resolution 2199 to prevent this. And we are alerting the international community on the destructions that we are sometimes helplessly witnessing. The #Unite4Heritage campaign which was launched by Director General, Irina Bokova at the University of Baghdad in March 2015 is part of our response to the destruction and pillage of cultural heritage

in conflict zones. The campaign has proved a success. People, specifically youth, have created a global movement to promote the protection and safeguarding of heritage under threat using the power of social networks.

What can UNESCO do to protect physically endangered sites?

We can't send armies to the sites to protect them., UNESCO has not the mandate to send armies. We can however work with our partners, particularly the government of Iraq, in order to see whether we can limit the damages and also prevent other aggressions against heritage sites. But at the present time it's almost impossible for us to intervene on the ground and this is a drama indeed

As of November 2015, there were approximately 250,000 Syrian refugees and over 3 million IDPs residing across Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. How has UNESCO intervened in providing educational opportunities to these vulnerable communities?

Hundreds of thousands of girls and boys and young adults among the more than three million internally displaced persons have no access to education. Thanks to donations from the Japanese Government and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we were able to implement projects that will benefit a total of 24,000 adolescents.

- Our efforts in this area is best reflected in the figures:
- 4,500 Syrian refugees will have access to secondary education.
- 14,500 girls from IDP communities will be provided catch up classes and quality secondary education.
- 16 schools across Dohuk have been renovated, enabling over 7000 secondary age students access to quality secondary education.
- 5 schools have been constructed across the Kurdistan Region, which will cater for over 1300 students.
- 180 teachers received training
- And 220 Syrian and IDP teachers will receive training

In your opinion, should UNESCO focus exclusively on education for IDPs and refugees?

At UNESCO, we are first and foremost alarmed by the impact of the crisis on the

future of the young generation whether in Iraq, Syria or elsewhere; that is why we consider providing quality education opportunities for IDPs and refugees of high importance.

However, with that being said we must also focus on the more development oriented aspect of UNESCO's work in education. In Iraq we work across the board focusing on four subsectors: secondary education, technical and vocational education, higher education and non-formal education.

The five year project titled 'Educate a Child in Iraq- Phase I' came to an end this year. We were able to enrol more students than initially planned into primary education, totaling 37,353 out of school children brought back into school, 45% of them being girls. 986 teachers were also trained as part of the project.

This year we launched an ambitious five year project to reform technical and vocational education in Iraq, which aims to enhance the role of TVET in Iraq's economic and social development, by providing students with high quality education and training up to international standards.

Our capacity building projects help modernize the education sector, in the areas of curriculum development and teacher training. Last year new mathematics and science curricula for grades 1, 2 and 3 which were developed by UNESCO were used in 9,500 schools across Iraq. This year, we continued to work on developing the mathematics and science curricula for grades 4,5 and 6. We started to focus more on humanities and have started to build capacities of Iraqi curriculum developers to prepare more inclusive humanities curricula.

In higher education, we continue to work with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to introduce higher education institutions to the best practices in quality management and quality assurance. To contribute to social cohesion in Iraq, a UNESCO Chair on "Development of Interreligious Dialogue Studies in the Islamic World" at Kufa University was established.

Iraq remains one of the most dangerous countries for journalists to work in, the current crisis has only emphasized this fact. What initiatives has UNESCO spearheaded to foster press freedom and the safety of journalists?

You are right, Iraq still is a very dangerous country for journalists to work in. This year we lost many great journalists and media workers, but this has only made us more determined to work harder to ensure their safety and to end impunity for crimes against journalists.

We are in the process of carrying out a comprehensive assessment of journalists safety in Iraq. The assessment aims at establishing an evidence-based baseline about the state of journalists' safety and the impunity of crimes against them.

UNESCO also worked with the concerned legislative, judicial, executive and regulatory bodies to launch an initiative that will better monitor and end crimes against journalists.


Not many people know that the "S" in UNESCO stands for Sciences. How can sciences provide solutions for Iraq's challenges?

An example of how UNESCO harnesses the sciences to provide solutions for Iraq's economic, social and environmental challenges is our engagement in the area of natural sciences, in our project "Advanced Survey of Hydrogeological Resources in Iraq". It is funded by the European Union and aims at improving national capacities in exploring and integrating management of groundwater resources. Data sets have been collected for identifying potential groundwater resources and hydrogeological modelling.

You have completed your two year term as the Director of the UNESCO Office or Iraq on 31 December 2015. What is your strongest impression from this assignment?

There have been so many strong impressions and it is difficult to select just one. But I would like to mention the beauty of Ur and of the Marshes. When I was there in November 2015, I better understood the importance of this region of the world as the cradle of humanity in all its fragility. And I would like to mention the bitter conditions of the people in the camps who are longing to go back to their homes. To be confronted with both the past cultural grandeur and present human suffering has greatly impressed me. They constitute the parameters, in which UNESCO works for Iraq.

Promoting socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities in Iraq



The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. UN-Habitat supports governments, local authorities and civil society in strengthening their capacity for managing and rehabilitating human settlements, basic service provision and critical infrastructure in post-crisis environment. In Iraq, UN-Habitat has been active since 1996 under the Oil for Food programme. After 2003, UN-Habitat has engaged in early recovery efforts through durable shelter solutions and reconstruction efforts, as well as in technical support to government counterparts to achieve sustainable urban development and adequate shelter for all.

UN-Habitat's activities

Crisis response and recovery

Support to IDPs in Iraq through Provision of Durable Shelter

While emergency camps and temporary housings meet the immediate needs of those fleeing the crisis, global trends show that with protracted displacement, informal sites tend to turn into urban slums. The durability of the prefabricated shelter units and the infrastructure that supports them provide environmentally sustainable and dignified solutions to protracted crisis in Iraq, preventing

emergence of urban slums. In 2015, UN-Habitat completed four durable shelter sites in Erbil, Dohuk, Suleimaniyah and Basra by leading selection, preparation and planning of the shelter sites based on key principles of urban planning. These shelter sites were equipped with prefabricated shelter units that can accommodate total 1,350 IDP families to provide them with dignified lives in the midst of protracted crisis, accompanied with key facilities such as basic infrastructure, health clinics and schools. Construction

of five additional durable IDP shelter sites in Baghdad, Dohuk, Kerbala and Missan are ongoing to accommodate additional approximately 1,700 vulnerable IDP families.

IDP Returns and Housing, Land and Property Issues

Forced displacement almost inevitably means the loss of housing, land and property, and disputes regarding housing, land and property ownership and use can be an additional cause of tension in already unstable communities affected by crisis. When displaced individuals eventually consider return, whether and how they will be able to reclaim their

housing, land and property and thus rebuild their livelihoods will often be one of the most crucial concerns. To the larger community and the nation as a whole, reconciliation and the sustainability of the emerging peace in a post-conflict period can depend on how well these issues are addressed. In 2015, UN-Habitat had undertaken a rapid survey on housing, land and property issues among IDPs, finalized the first analytical report on housing, land and property issues of Yazidis titled "Emerging Land Tenure Issues among Displaced Yazidis from Sinjar, Iraq," and designed a programme to address these issues among returnees in Iraq.

Rehabilitation of Basic Infrastructure for Refugees and Displaced Persons

Based on house-to-house surveys and discussions with Syrian refugees and host communities, UN-Habitat identified real priorities of those who are affected by the crisis, and designed and implemented interventions to meet these priorities – upgrading shelter and water, sanitation and health infrastructure in vulnerable neighborhoods, and supporting their housing, land and property rights for better living conditions. Additionally, in collaboration with UNFPA, UN-Habitat constructed and rehabilitated total 61 hospitals, clinics and women's centers across the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, to provide reproductive health services, emergency obstetric care, and psychological support to displaced women and girls affected by gender-based violence as well as members of host communities.

Damage Assessments and Prioritization Exercise

In newly liberated areas such as Tikrit, Zumar and Amerli, UN-Habitat was involved with UNDP in the assessment of damages focusing on Housing and Urban Infrastructure in collaboration with other United Nations agencies. For Tikrit, prioritization exercise was conducted to identify and classify needs for early recovery and stabilization based on urban recovery methodology, engaging local authorities and civil society.

UN-Habitat's activities promoting sustainable urban development

Rehabilitation and Regularization of Informal Settlements and Internally Displaced Persons Areas in Iraq

UN-Habitat has been providing capacity development support to Ministries of Planning, Construction and Housing, Migration and Displacement, Municipalities and Public Works, Finance, and Municipality of Baghdad to address solutions for informal areas. A National Programme was launched including Legal, Institutional, Technical and Financial Pillars. The road map of the national programme was endorsed by the Council of Ministers last July. The agency is implementing a comprehensive model of informal settlement upgrading in Kurani Ainkawa neighbourhood in Erbil.

Land Reform

UN-Habitat embarked joint cooperation initiatives and project with a view to the reform of land management systems in the country. Under this framework, the government with support from UN-Habitat adopted in 2015 its Land Reform Strategy to address Land Property rights and disputes, property taxes, allocation of state lands and access to land.

Iraqi Public Sector Modernization

As part of a joint United Nations initiative to facilitate modernization of public sector in Iraq, UN-Habitat has been providing technical support to the Government of Iraq and local authorities focusing on the following three areas: administrative decentralization and devolution; citizen engagement and institutionalization of public participation in governance at the community level; and establishment of new basic service delivery

model in partnership with private sector. In 2015, UN-Habitat supported the Najaf Water Directorate through detailed studies and capacity development activities to improve water supply system in Najaf Province, located approximately 160km south of Baghdad. With the Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities and Public Works a new Municipal Land Management System was introduced and implemented.

Strengthening Urban and Regional Planning in the Kurdistan Regional Government

Aiming to build and strengthen technical capacity of staff of the Kurdistan Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism and the Directorate of Urban Planning of Governorates in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, UN-Habitat conducted a series of training sessions and capacity development activities. In 2015, more than 300 staff members were trained for 725 hours on issues relevant to urban planning and development, varying from construction of resilient infrastructure to geographic information system.

Establishing Building Control Regime for Kurdistan Region of Iraq

UN-Habitat developed tailor-made building codes for the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to promote technically sound planning and ensure safe standards for rapidly growing urban development in the region. Based on assessment of the existing codes and procedures, new application form for building permit was established to simplify and streamline application procedures, and key building codes such as on fire safety, energy efficiency, structural integrity, electrical safety and accessibility for disabled persons were updated.

UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



MORE DIFFICULT TIMES AHEAD

The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, co-ordinates and leads the refugee response in Iraq. There are more than 244,000 Syrian refugees in Iraq; as well as another 32,977 refugees from other countries.

UNHCR also plays a key role in the response to Iraq's displacement crisis, with more 3.2 million Iraqis forced to flee their homes due to conflict and violence. UNHCR leads the Protection, Camp Coordination/Camp Management (CCCM) and Shelter/NFI clusters throughout Iraq.

The agency has six offices in Iraq, with field units in all governorates.

UNHCR's representative, Bruno Geddo, took up his post in Baghdad in June 2014. He reflects on UNHCR's work and the challenges ahead.





There was no let-up in the conflict in Iraq last year, which has resulted in massive displacement. Do you foresee this issue being the major challenge facing Iraq in the coming year?

Unfortunately, the displacement situation is going to get worse before it gets better. Although parts of Ramadi are now under government control, ISIL still controls large areas of the country and could try to take other locations to compensate for their loss. In addition, the government has stated its determination to re-take control of Falluja and Mosul. When this happens, large-scale civilian population movements can be expected.

UNHCR and other UN agencies and partners have developed contingency plans and an emergency response mechanism. UNHCR has stockpiles of 20,000 tents and other core relief items to respond in the event of new mass displacements.

What are the main difficulties UNHCR has faced in providing assistance to those in need?

The volatile security environment is the biggest problem. It causes problems of access, often making it very difficult for displaced families to receive assistance in a safe location. It also hampers humanitarian access for our staff, making it harder to reach people in need. One example is the case of Al Obaidi camp, in Al-Qaim, Anbar province, where UN agencies have been unable to access the site since June 2014. Even so, we have managed to provide some basic services to refugees through a local partner.

What are the organisation's main priorities in the coming year?

We are committed to using cash assistance as a modality for helping displaced families, particularly those living outside of camps who are finding it difficult to make ends meet. Cash assistance gives families more freedom and dignity, and the ability to prioritise their own needs. It also assists in supporting the local economy.

The second priority is to help families to return home in cases where conditions are conducive for them to go back and rebuild their lives. The return of displaced Iraqis in safety and dignity is a key part of the national reconciliation process.

Areas of the country that have come back under government control need to be made safe; services need to be restored and public buildings rehabilitated. Unexploded ordinance is still a big issue.

The UN and the international community need to ensure that the returns process is carefully planned; that returns take place on a voluntary basis and that minimal conditions are in place to ensure that returns are safe and sustainable.

In addition to its role assisting displaced Iraqi families, much of UNHCR's work focuses on the Syrian refugee crisis, now in its fifth year. How do you think this can be resolved and a durable solution found for refugees living in Iraq?

The international community has done a remarkable job in keeping the issue of Syrian refugees – a very protracted crisis – on the global agenda and, because of that, levels of funding have been fairly consistent. As a result, UNHCR has been able to provide reasonable levels of assistance. However, life in a refugee camp, if prolonged, engenders the dependency

syndrome.

The longer the war in Syria continues, the higher the risk that refugees will increasingly be less able to provide for their families. Pending a political solution to the Syrian conflict, which may still take some time, UNHCR strongly supports efforts that encourage refugees to pursue self-reliance, especially through cash assistance, which allows refugees to prioritise their own needs.

Globally, UNHCR is campaigning to end statelessness – individuals who are not regarded a national by any State under their laws. How does that affect the organisation's work in Iraq?

UNHCR launched a global campaign, IBelong, seeking to eradicate statelessness by 2024. It is thought there are around 10 million stateless people in 64 countries. In Iraq, up to 50,000 people may be considered stateless under applicable criteria.

People who are stateless are denied a legal identity right from birth; they lack access to basic things we take for granted – health care, education, job opportunities, even an official burial or death certificate when they die. Most people are stateless due to no fault of their own. But in most cases, their condition could be resolved through minor changes to existing laws. We are determined to work with our partners and governments to make that happen.

We've held workshops and meetings on this issue with the relevant Iraqi authorities and civil society organisations to underline the importance of finding proper solutions to statelessness. Steps are underway to revise the nationality law, which is vital to tackling the issue.



Overview

Guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Iraq ratified in 1994, UNICEF works to protect the rights of all children, particularly the most vulnerable. UNICEF has worked in Iraq since 1952 and has had a permanent presence since 1984. In response to protected humanitarian emergencies, the UNICEF role has shifted over the years to address longer term development needs and, as necessary, to provide immediate emergency relief.

Iraq Summary

The acute humanitarian crisis that started in 2014 in Iraq comes on the tail of decades of conflict and crisis. Since 2014, Iraq has been host to one of the largest number of refugee and internally displaced persons in the world. As of the end of 2015, more than 3.2 million people were displaced across more than 2,000 locations and this number is expected to rise in the coming year.

UNICEF works in all 58 official IDP camps open across 15 of Iraq's 18 governorates, however in December 2015, IDPs living in camps represented only 10 percent of the total IDP population. Additionally, an estimated 4.6 million people are living in areas controlled by armed opposition groups of which 2.3 million are children, highly at risk and in need of urgent assistance. The Kurdistan region also hosts some 249,000 Syrian refugees. Through camp based programmes, community outreach and through partners, including government and civic society, UNICEF promotes policies and programmes to reach the most disadvantaged children with emergency humanitarian relief, education, protection, health and other services so they can enjoy their full spectrum of rights.

Funding

Last year saw a steep reduction in humanitarian funding for Iraq; while the funding requirement per the humanitarian appeal was US \$160 million, only US\$99.7 million was received, compared to US \$146 million in 2014.

Programme response



Child protection

Children continue to bear the brunt of the violent conflict in Iraq. Since the situation deteriorated in 2014, more and more children have been killed and maimed, abducted, exposed to sexual violence, as well as recruited and used for different purposes by armed forces and groups. The UN believes 1.9 million children are in areas under control by armed groups where they cannot be easily reached. In 2015 the UN verified 253 grave violations affecting 598 children, but these figures likely under-represent the full tally.

Due to insecurity, grave child rights violations remain significantly under-reported, particularly recruitment and use of children by armed forces and group, and sexual violence. Millions of Iraqi children remain exposed to risks of death or injury, abduction, forced recruitment into armed groups, sexual and physical violence, child labour, separation from caregivers, and the

death of family members.

UNICEF financed a Worst Forms of Child Labor Assessment in central and south Iraq in 2015. This assessment showed that children, especially the displaced, work under very difficult conditions, have insufficient food and water, face physical, verbal and sexual violence and other hazards.

The child protection sub-cluster led by UNICEF and Save the Children, expanded work to increase protection for children in host communities. UNICEF assisted in drawing up Iraq's Child Rights-Based National Child Protection Policy that addresses gaps in existing legislation and service delivery. UNICEF provides psycho social services and family tracing and reunification services for unaccompanied children, and works to ensure policies and services are in place to address needs of children exposed to these situation, as well as children in conflict with the law.



Education

Education needs remained high, with schools frequently operating double shifts to accommodate increased demand. UNICEF supported increased access to temporary learning spaces for more than 317,000 displaced children and provided learning materials and teacher training, including 2,000 teachers trained to provide psycho social support in the classroom.

In collaboration with the government of Iraq, UNICEF constructed 40 schools for some 36,000 children. Thirty seven pre-fab containers were provided for overcrowded schools in the central zone. In Dahuk, 38 prefab classrooms were added to existing schools, replacing tented classrooms that had suffered excessive wear or damage. Learning materials reached more than 346,000 children across the country.

Many families needed support for hidden costs of schooling, including transportation and learning materials. UNICEF will be working with partners to promote an integrated approach in support of children, connecting Cash Transfers, Education and Child Protection programming to ensure children have the opportunity to get a full and high quality education.



WASH

Armed conflict continues to cause destruction of water infrastructure and prolonged displacement increases demand for existing services. Since the beginning of 2014 UNICEF has supported provision of safe water to more than 2.3 million displaced people. In 2015 UNICEF responded to the winter needs of children with temporary WASH facilities and clothing and blankets to more than 600,000 children.

More than 178,000 IDPs have improved access to sanitation in camp locations across Iraq, and over 1.1 million people have received hygiene kits or other hygiene supplies.

Cholera struck in September 2015, with an outbreak declared by the Government of Iraq on 15 September. There were over 2,800 confirmed cases but only two deaths reported. UNICEF provided emergency medical, WASH and communication support to the cholera outbreak, and help establish outbreak response procedures for the next time cholera strikes.

Cash Assistance

More than 23,000 vulnerable displaced families have received direct cash transfers that have helped them to meet their basic needs with dignity.

In December 2015, UNICEF spent more than US \$400,000 to give 1,338 displaced families in Dohuk and Erbil living in host communities funds they could use to meet their unique needs. All recipients were registered using Last Mile Mobile Solutions (LMMS), an innovative technology that supports quick, accurate registration and helps avoid duplicated registration.



Rapid Emergency Response

In 2015 UNICEF delivered time sensitive assistance to more than four million people on the move through its Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM).

The RRM consortium, led by UNICEF and WFP, reached 4.8 million vulnerable people, including those in hard to reach areas, with basic survival items such as water, food and sanitation materials.

Health

Health services suffered mid year due to funding shortages, however despite restrictions UNICEF services continued for the youngest and more vulnerable without prolonged disruption.

UNICEF launched mobile healthcare services to provide immunization, growth monitoring, ante- and postnatal care and health promotion to displaced families. Special attention was given to northern areas of Iraq, which host both Syrian refugee and displaced Iraqi populations. Eighty-six mobile health teams, including 232 medical and paramedical staff were trained and equipped to bring crucial services to people hard-to-reach areas. UNICEF has supported measles and polio vaccination and Vitamin A supplementation.

Winterization

The “Warm for Winter” project was launched in October 2015 to ensure the most vulnerable children and mothers could survive the freezing winter months. More than 91,000 displaced girls, boys, and pregnant women received warm winter clothing and shoes and 76,699 blankets have been distributed to displaced families with priority being given to those in high altitudes and hard to reach areas. Before the end of the 2015/2016 winter, UNICEF plans to distribute an additional 650,000 sets of winter clothes to children, and blankets to 170,000 people.

Review of Agency Activities

UNIDO continued to support Iraq in 2015 through the ongoing Investment Promotion for Iraq (IPI) and Strengthening the National Quality Infrastructure to Facilitate Trade and Enhance Consumer Protection projects.

Iraqi private sector, particularly the SMEs, were supported within the framework of IPI through the Enterprise Development Centers (EDCs) jointly established and hosted by the Ministry of Industry and Minerals in Baghdad, KRG Ministry of Trade and Industry in Erbil, Nassiriyah Chamber of Commerce in Thiqr, and Basra Chamber of Industry on the one hand, and through capacity development support to Iraq's largest industrial CSO, the Iraqi Federation of Industries (IFI), on the other. The EDC Network mobilized Iraqi business delegations for participation to 12 fairs abroad, provided training to more than 261 entrepreneurs on various subjects, and organized and facilitated 283 B2B matchmaking meetings between Iraqi and foreign companies through out the year. UNIDO also ensured representation of the Iraqi private sector at high profile events such as Hannover Messe, world's largest industrial fair, where a section within the UNIDO booth was allocated for the Republic of Iraq.

The capacity development support to IFI comprised of strengthening the governance, equipping IFI with a modern web-based database, training the staff, and expanding the service provision for its members according to the international best-practices. UNIDO aims to enhance the advocacy role of IFI vis-a-vis the government and at international platforms. UNIDO intervention serves as a catalyst for amendment of several laws and by-laws governing the structure and operational modalities of IFI which are beneficial for and in the interest of the Iraqi private sector at large.

Strengthening the National Quality Infrastructure to Facilitate Trade and Enhance Consumer Protection project, whose main project counterparts are the Central Organization for Standardization and Quality Control (COSQC) and the Iraqi Ministry of Planning (MoP), supported Iraq with policy framework development, accreditation and conformity assessment, standardization, metrology, trade framework/WTO accession, and food safety with the overall goal of strengthening the national quality infrastructure to facilitate trade and enhance consumer protection. More specifically, the Project objective is to upgrade the national quality infrastructure (Standards, Testing, Metrology and Conformity Assessment) following international best practices for creating the enabling environment needed for a better trade performance and consumer protection.





During the year 2015, the project continued to provide technical assistance and capacity building to the Iraqi partners and institutions including quality policy reforms, trainings, study tours, rehabilitation and upgrading of laboratories, building internal quality systems, producing implementation manuals and internal procedures. Furthermore, the project assisted COSQC and the relevant counterparts to participate in regional international events fostering the integration of Iraq into the global and regional quality infrastructure networks, ultimately aiming at required international and regional recognition of its national quality system and related institutions. Hence, the Iraqi Accreditation System (IQAS) accomplished substantial achievements by being accepted as a full member of Arab Accreditation (ARAC), and an associate member of International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC). The capacities of Iraqi negotiators and trade officials were strengthened for WTO accession negotiations and for relevant service provision aspects. Moreover, to ensure food safety, the inspection system at two selected border crossing

points, five selected food testing laboratories, and thirteen shortlisted food processing enterprises in different areas of Iraq were assessed for further support. Through out 2015, 30 expert missions were conducted with a total of 227 expert mission days, 1021 people were trained through 53 train-

ings/workshops, and 328 policies/manuals/procedures were drafted.

In 2016, UNIDO will keep providing support to Iraq within the context of both projects which are envisaged to continue throughout the year.



The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is an operational arm of the United Nations, supporting the successful implementation of its partners' peacebuilding, humanitarian, and development projects around the world. UNOPS provides project management, procurement, and infrastructure services to governments, donors, and UN organizations. UNOPS projects in Iraq during 2015 included providing solar energy for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and paramedic ambulances to first responders, operationalization and management of an inter-agency IDP call center, support to capacity development of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights and the Council of Representatives Human Rights Committee, and supporting the strengthening of civil society.

Increasing Access to Electricity for IDPs and Host Communities in Iraq



Lack of access to electricity and light seriously impacts the health and safety of IDPs, especially women, children, and other vulnerable groups.

Through the "Increasing Access to Electricity for IDPs and Host Communities in Iraq" project, UNOPS has been able to address these needs through sustainable and innovative solutions with funding from the Saudi Humanitarian Fund for Iraq. More than 125,000 solar lamp and mobile phone charging kits benefiting at

least 680,000 individuals were distributed in five governorates, including difficult to access locations in Nineveh and Kirkuk. In addition, 280 solar streetlights were installed in nineteen IDP camps in three governorates. Finally, UNOPS installed major solar electrical systems at two women's clinics, two secondary schools, five primary schools, two health centers, and a registration center for IDPs in six IDP camps and two non-camp locations.

These major infrastructure installations provide free clean energy to benefit IDPs and host communities and ensure that these critical locations can operate without increasing the burden on the local electrical grid (and even in case of power outages). The systems are rated to last for decades with regular maintenance. With the use of solar energy, the project contributed to the protection, health and safety of more than 680,000 individuals in more than 125,000 families by ensuring reliable access to electricity and lighting.



Increasing Access to Emergency Response Services for IDPs and Refugees in the Kurdistan Region



Twenty fully-equipped paramedic ambulances were provided as part of the project “Increasing Access to Emergency Response Services for IDPs and Refugees in the Kurdistan Region,” implemented by UNOPS on behalf of the Government of Japan and in partnership with the Kurdistan Regional Government’s Bureau of Migration and Displacement (BMD). The project supports the BMD in providing emergency medical services to IDPs and refugees residing in three Iraqi governorates – Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Kirkuk.

At the handover ceremony, the Japanese Ambassador to Iraq, Mr. Fumio Iwai, said, “I am confident that this project will ease the plight of internally displaced persons in the region who were forced to leave their homes by Daesh.” Receiving the ambulances on behalf of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Director General of the BMD, Mr. Shokr Yassen, stated, “We highly value this donation as it addresses the needs of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq for ambulances, which could save the lives of thousands of women, men and children in the IDP camps.”

Iraq IDP Information Centre

On behalf of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNOPS established the Iraq IDP Information Centre (Iraq IIC) in 2015. The Iraq IIC is a toll-free nationwide hotline, reachable by dialing 800 69 999, that IDPs and other affected persons can use to access information and lodge feedback about the humanitarian response in Iraq. The Iraq IIC successfully identified outbreaks of cholera and leishmania in an area previously unknown to the UN and its partners after receiving phone calls from a number of IDPs in the affected areas. It also regularly identifies vulnerable families in urgent need of assistance, and identifies humanitarian service gaps across multiple Iraqi governorates. Effective outreach campaigns have led to a steady month-by-month increase in the number of calls handled by the Iraq IIC. In partnership with local telecommunication companies, a text message publicity campaign began in December 2015 that is expected to further increase the call volume.

Supporting Participatory and Accountable Governance

UNOPS also continued to provide support to the development and strengthening of civil society in Iraq through the “Supporting Participatory and Accountable Governance” project led by the United Nations Development Programme and funded by the Swedish government. The project strengthened the internal

capacity of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, enhanced the capacity of Iraqi NGOs to productively engage in advocacy and lobbying, and built an effective partnership between Iraqi NGOs and members of parliament to allow Iraqi citizens and civil society organizations to contribute to the legislative process.

Capacity Building of the Human Rights related Committees in the Council of Representatives and the Independent High Commission for Human Rights in Iraq

On behalf of the European Union and with the technical support of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNOPS is supporting the capacity of the relevant committees for human rights in the Council of Representatives, as well as providing direct support to the Independent High Commission for Human Rights (IHCHR).

UNOPS conducted needs assessments for the Council of Representatives and the IHCHR that identified their overall strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Based on the assessment results, a series of trainings for the IHCHR secretariat staff were organized covering accounting, IT, public budgeting, general administration, general human rights, protection of sources, legislative drafting, inspection of detention places, and fact finding. Social media channels such as the IHCHR website, Facebook, and Twitter pages were created, and UNOPS kick started a series of awareness campaigns including dissemination of leaflets, radio broadcasts, newspaper articles, and billboards in eight governorates of Iraq to increase general public awareness of the IHCHR’s role in protecting human rights.

UNOPS also supported the renovation of the IHCHR main building to

create and equip a small training and documentation center, facilitated development of a database and document management system for the IHCHR, and provided training for IHCHR staff. Additionally, UNOPS supported the drafting of the Commission’s internal Rules of Procedure as well as the development of a Procedural Manual on Monitoring and Inspecting Detention Places and an Ethics and Professional Code of Conduct. A Non-Discrimination Policy and Transparency Policy were also developed.

UNOPS also provided technical support to the drafting of proposed amendments to the Law on the Establishment of the Iraq Human Rights Commission (Law 53 of the Year 2008), which is now pending adoption. Finally, a four-year Strategy on the Integration of Human Rights Concepts and Values in the Iraqi Educational System was drafted with the support of UNOPS and adopted by the IHCHR.





UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA expands the possibilities for women and young people to lead healthy and productive lives.

In Iraq, UNFPA works to increase access of women and girls to quality reproductive health services including maternal and new born health, family planning and adolescent health services and to support prevention and mitigation of gender-based violence including coordination and reporting. UNFPA is also supporting empowerment of young people with civic engagement and life skills, supporting government to generate and utilise disaggregated population data, and distribution of dignity kits to restore the dignity of women fleeing the fighting.

Major areas of UNFPA interventions

Achievements in 2015

In 2015, UNFPA partnered with a number of local women groups, national and international NGOs and governmental institutions to make significant contributions to the life of women and girls in Iraq. Some specific achievements highlighted below:

Reproductive Health

- 22 Reproductive Health clinics were established in camp settings to delivery life-saving reproductive health services including perinatal care, family planning and referral to comprehensive maternity services.
- Three delivery rooms were established and supported in Anbar which provided much needed RH services for IDPs and host communities including , a total of 11,735 gynaecological consultations, 4,770 antenatal care visits and 450 normal deliveries.
- 103 reproductive health public health facilities were supported with person-

- nel, equipment and supplies to deliver reproductive health services including services for women with complications (emergency obstetric care) and safe delivery services
- 395,000 women and girls accessed a wide range of reproductive health services in UNFPA supported health facilities.
- Skills of health workers were enhanced to provide emergency obstetric care services, family planning, clinical management of rape and adolescent reproductive health services.
- UNFPA supported formulation of manuals, tools and guidelines on reproductive health

Women's empowerment and Gender-based violence (GBV)

- 77 women centres and safe spaces were established and supported in camp and non-camp settings to deliver lifesaving GBV services including case management, psycho-social support, life skills, recreational activities and opportunities for economic empowerment.
- One comprehensive and specialized centre for provision of health services and psychosocial support to survivors of sexual violence was set up in partnership with the Department of Health in Dohuk.
- 15 social centres run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) and two social centres run by the Directorate for Combating Violence against Women were established in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.
- Over 23,000 Dignity Kits were distributed to newly displaced women and adolescent girls as part of the Rapid Response Mechanism aimed at restoring their dignity in the initial days of displacement
- Over 60,000 Dignity Kits were distributed to women, as an entry point for GBV interventions
- Community outreach, mobilization and awareness raising with information on available services and GBV risk mitigation initiatives were supported.
- Capacity building of national partners (government and national NGOs) for effective and coordinated GBV responses including training of 64 social workers on survivor centred approaches and GBV case management was enhanced across Iraq
- UNFPA led the GBV sub-cluster which coordinates all key partners involved in GBV prevention and mitigation.
- UNFPA anchored the roll-out of GBV Information Management System with nine participating data sharing organisations.

Young people

- UNFPA built skills of 78 social workers, vocational animators and teachers as trainers in life skills and civic engagement.
- UNFPA's support to youth centres and women spaces resulted in 2,720 young refugees, IDPs and host populations acquiring life skills through peer education.
- 60 juveniles from reformatories in Kurdistan Region acquired skills on peer education techniques and began imparting similar skills to their peer inmates.
- 12,200 young girls and boys in refugee, IDP and host communities were reached with messages on sexual and reproductive health as well as life skills.
- UNFPA's support also led to the revision of the national youth strategy, development of a volunteerism strategy, and establishment of two youth advisory boards.

Population and Development

- Capacity of the Central Statistics Organisation (CSO) and the Kurdistan Regional Statistics Offices (KRSO) were strengthened through hands-on training of 12 staff on computer networking, 19 staff on metadata framework, 4 staff on database management; 7 staff on data dissemination, and 4 staff on the Production Plan.
- 8 persons from CSO and line ministries were trained on conducting survey on diaspora populations .
- Advocacy for population issues was also enhanced through national major events including the International Youth Day and the World Population Day with the participation at the highest level of government.

Future Plans



UNFPA's Executive Board has approved a four-year Country Program (2016-2019) that will focus on reproductive health, adolescents and youth, gender and women's empowerment including GBV prevention and mitigation and population data production and management for planning and policy making.

In 2016, UNFPA will focus its attention to the enormous needs of refugees, IDPs and returnees especially in areas where facilities offering reproductive health services are either overwhelmed or partially or completely damaged. For these facilities, UNFPA will provide the necessary medical equipment and supplies, commodities and health personnel.

UNFPA will also endeavour to consolidate the existing GBV prevention and mitigation efforts while expanding similar services to areas with strong need. Central and southern Iraq and areas newly liberated from the armed groups will be given special focus.

Advocacy and capacity building initiatives will be enhanced to meet the social and health needs of adolescents and youth especially those affected by conflict. Child marriage as well as female genital mutilation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will be given special attention.

Capacity of government will also be enhanced to generate, analyse and utilise population data with special focus on refugees and IDPs. The generated data will be availed to humanitarian and development institutions for improved planning.

WFP in 2015

In 2015, World Food Programme (WFP) continued to carry out its operational priorities in Iraq assisting the most food-insecure Internally Displaced People (IDPs) living in central governorates affected by ongoing conflict, while targeting critical assistance to vulnerable families in all 18 governorates. Over the year and due to access and funding constraints, WFP has reached 1.5 million people on average per month through monthly food parcels, ready-to-eat rations and vouchers. WFP is also supporting the Government of Iraq with the regular resumption of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in order to harmonize assistance.

By early April, WFP along with two other sister UN agencies entered the besieged town of Al Baghdadi in Anbar, where the conflict had led to militants besieging the town for six months leaving thousands of residents with very limited access to food, clean water and medicine. Working with its cooperating partner ISHO, WFP distributed ready-to-eat rations, canned food for people on the move, to 21,000 people. Even before reaching Al Baghdadi was possible, WFP provided much-needed food assistance to 30,000 individuals who were airlifted by Iraqi forces from Al-Baghdadi and transported the Baghdad to reside with family and relatives.

Because of dwindling funds since April, WFP has had to halve the size of the family food parcels it provides to IDPs who live outside of camps and who may have access to job opportunities, except for IDPs within the high-priority governorate of Anbar who continue to receive full parcels. Family food parcels are sufficient for one month and consist of wheat flour, rice, pulses, vegetable oil, sugar, salt and bulger. The value of food vouchers for more than 400,000 people was also reduced to US\$10 per person per month. Vouchers are given to families with access to local markets and allow them to choose their own diet. They also support local Iraqi retail shops. In 2015, WFP food vouchers handed out to Iraqi IDPs have injected over US\$ 70 million into the Iraqi economy.

Providing urgent food assistance to vulnerable families in conflict is just one part of WFP's mandate. WFP in Iraq also works to treat and prevent malnutrition among school children by providing them with school meals that act as an incentive for families to send their children to school and keep them there. School meals help children to grow into healthy and educated adults. A successful school feeding pilot project in the



southern governorate of Thi Qar assisted 21,000 school children during 2014-2015 academic year. WFP is now in talks with the Ministries of Health and Education to implement a national school feeding programme, with plans to assist 120,000 school children with nutritious meals in 2016.

Along with serving displaced Iraqis, WFP also assists Syrian refugees who have sought shelter and safety in the northern region of Kurdistan. Syrian refugee families receive monthly vouchers worth US\$10 or US\$19, depending on their level of food insecurity. In 2015, WFP assisted nearly 105,000 Syrian refugees with family food parcels and vouchers that have injected over US\$ 14 million into Iraq's local economy. For 2016, WFP aims to assist 72,500 Syrian refugees

In June United Nation Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) was launched in Geneva to highlight the humanitarian crisis in Iraq and call on the international community to step up its support. The HRP was able to raise US\$ 14 million for WFP.

By November 25, after 15 months of occupation under ISIS, Iraqi forces were successfully able to liberate Sinjar City. WFP was the first humanitarian agency to send life-saving food assistance to 21,000 Yazidis and Kurds who have taken shelter on Mount Sinjar.

Following months of discussion and planning with the Government of Iraq's Ministry of Trade, WFP and its local partner ISHO distributed in December life-saving food assistance to nearly 70,000 people in the besieged cities of Haditha and Al Baghdadi in Anbar. The Iraqi Ministry of Trade provided 1,050 metric tons of wheat flour, rice, sugar and vegetable oil to help cover

the food needs of the affected families for one month. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) covered the cost of handling and transportation.

Ending the year on a positive note, WFP was the first humanitarian agency to provide food to families from Ramadi, following its liberation from ISIS in December, who were evacuated to Habaniya Tourist City. IDP families in the districts of Amiriya, Khalidiya and Al-Nukhaib also received ready-to-eat rations and family food parcels sufficient for nearly 40,000 individuals.

Striving to better serve vulnerable and conflict-affected families in Iraq, WFP has set up a call center with a hotline as part of its Communicating with Communities mandate, which allows IDPs to give WFP staff members' feedback on the food assistance we deliver. By facilitating and responding to IDPs' opinions, WFP is maintaining its accountability towards the people it serves, helping to fulfil their right to live with dignity.

In 2015 WFP's emergency food assistance in Iraq was supported by Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Iraq, Italy, Japan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund, the UK, the USA, and private sector donations. The Special Operation was funded by the USA, Kuwait, the UK, Canada, Sweden, Japan, and private donors. Out of WFP's total requirements for 2015, which were US\$ 323,226,011, WFP received US\$ 128,201,718.

What next

Going forward and based on assessments of what can be achieved, WFP aims to reach a maximum of 1.5 million of the most food-insecure Iraqi IDPs throughout the country with in-kind food, vouchers or cash transfers on a monthly basis. To do this efficiently, WFP is finalizing a targeting strategy that will enable it to identify and support the most food-insecure people based on a vulnerability criteria that includes female-headed households, the elderly, disabled persons and families with no adults of working age (i.e. between 18-60 years). Transferring the most vulnerable IDPs in urban and peri-urban areas in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Baghdad, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, Diyala, Najaf, Kerbala and Basrah from in-kind food assistance to cash transfers, will be a gradual and careful process that will mitigate risks of the misuse of cash.

WFP plans to implement the SCOPE system for the management, delivery and monitoring of assistance to all IDP beneficiaries throughout Iraq. WFP is establishing large database of beneficiaries using data from the MoT, PDS, MoDM, IOM, and UNHCR and cooperating partners (CPs). WFP will use the SCOPE database as a common platform enabling CPs and WFP to avoid duplications, identify gaps in assistance, and facilitate assessments and targeting processes. Having one common beneficiary database will ultimately make the humanitarian response in Iraq more cost efficient and responsive to the needs of affected population. The full implementation of the SCOPE database will enable WFP to maximize the complementarity between WFP assistance and PDS (where and when functioning, even if partially) and to adapt the most appropriate type of transfer for beneficiaries.

Furthermore, WFP has been conducting assessments in cooperation with the Government of Iraq and implementing partners to move towards complementary rations for households that receive food entitlements from the government's PDS, followed by a transition towards food assistance for only those households that are most vulnerable to food insecurity. Cooperation with the Ministry of Trade, the Kurdistan Regional Government - in particular the Governor of Duhok - and the availability of local wheat flour through the Public Distribution System enabled WFP to suspend wheat flour distributions in Duhok governorate since September. This needs-based targeting has allowed WFP to stretch its limited resources further to reach the most vulnerable displaced families. WFP will conduct a Comprehensive Food Security & Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) to better inform WFP strategic programming in 2017 and beyond.

Interview with

JANE PEARCE

Representative and Country Director of WFP in Iraq

What is the WFP's role in Iraq?

The United Nations World Food Programme has been working in Iraq since 1991 to combat hunger and prevent malnutrition. Assisting the Iraqi people and enabling them to live with dignity is our main goal. We provide immediate emergency food assistance during conflict such as distributing family food parcels, ready-to-eat rations or vouchers that allow the most food-insecure Internally Displaced People (IDPs) to buy food from the market place. But we also have non-emergency types of assistance such as school meals for school children which help fight malnutrition among young children. WFP works with the Government of Iraq to build capacity and support the Government's Public Distribution System.

What measures are in place to ensure that Iraq can react to humanitarian emergencies effectively and efficiently?

WFP liaises with the Government of Iraq to ensure safe and steady access to areas where humanitarian assistance is needed. We have a network of local and international partners who work on the ground to deliver much-needed food assistance to people who need it across Iraq's 18 governorates.

What were WFP's other achievements in 2015?

It has been a very successful year for WFP. We made breakthroughs in assisting food insecure people in some of the most unstable parts of Iraq, including Anbar, and Mount Sinjar during the winter snow and rain. We continued to make progress with the consolidation of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2016 and our programming for the New Year. After many months of hard work, WFP and its local partner were able to deliver food donated by the Government of Iraq to 70,000 people in the besieged towns of Haditha and Al Baghdadi in early December, which had not received humanitarian assistance since April 2015. I was thrilled with this widely acknowledged achievement, and WFP is hoping to continue this successful collaboration with the Government of Iraq in the New Year.

What are the WFP's priorities in 2016?

Going forward and based on assessments of what can be achieved, WFP aims to reach a maximum of 1.5 million of the most food-insecure Iraqi IDPs



throughout the country with in-kind food, vouchers or cash transfers on a monthly basis. To do this efficiently, WFP is finalizing a targeting strategy that will enable it to identify and support the most food-insecure people based on a vulnerability criteria that includes female-headed households, the elderly, disabled persons and families with no adults of working age (i.e. between 18-60 years). Transferring the most vulnerable IDPs in urban and peri-urban areas in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), Baghdad, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, Diyala, Najaf, Kerbala and Basrah from in-kind food assistance to cash transfers, will be a gradual and careful process that will mitigate risks of the misuse of cash. To implement the SCOPE system for the management, delivery and monitoring of assistance to all IDP beneficiaries throughout Iraq, WFP is establishing large database of the people it serves using data from the MoT, PDS, MoDM, IOM, and UNHCR and cooperating partners (CPs). WFP will use the SCOPE database as a common platform enabling CPs and WFP to avoid duplications, identify gaps in assistance, and facilitate assessments and targeting processes. Having one common beneficiary database will ultimately make the humanitarian response in Iraq more cost efficient and responsive to the needs of affected population. The full implementation of the SCOPE database will enable WFP to maximise the complementarity between WFP assistance and PDS (where and when functioning, even if partially) and to adapt the most appropriate type of transfer for beneficiaries.

WHO

| World Health Organization





Interview with

ALTAF MUSANI

Acting WHO Representative for Iraq

What is the WHO's role in shaping health policies and supporting the health reform process in Iraq?

WHO is the specialized public health organization mandated to provide the most reliable and evidence based technical assistance, strategic and operational guidance to countries worldwide. Exceptional attention and proportional support are particularly given to countries in crisis and transitional phases to help them appropriate shape the health policy directions that are guided by global health evidence and best practices.

WHO works very closely with the Iraqi Ministry of Health and related sectors on daily bases to identify priorities and guide the health sector on preparedness, effective and efficient response to health and health care requirements. Over the last two years (2014-15) WHO has been collaborating and advising the Ministry of Health on the need to assess the situation and revise Iraq's national health policy. In 2014 the first version was finalized and successfully cleared by all the administrative authorities including the Iraqi Parliament. Furthermore, a more robust update has been worked out with the technical leadership of WHO over a series of consultations that finally involved representatives from a wide range of stakeholders to refresh the policy and integrate the Government's health sector development plan that was successfully achieved mid-2015. The national health policy is founded on the principle that health is a multi-sectoral outcome and, as a result, all sectors and governmental and non-governmental agencies in society should be responsible for ensuring the availability of good health of the population.

What kind of support is WHO providing to address these challenges?

In 2015, WHO has mobilized financial and technical resources for a range of health

system development interventions in Iraq. A good compendium of workshops in leadership development, evidence based decision making, strategic planning for health sector development, health financing, transforming health information system, medical and health sciences education systems development, nursing and midwifery development, quality improvement in primary health care through accreditation, moving with confidence towards a decentralized health care system, and many other health systems corner stones in Iraq. In addition, WHO has mobilized many international experts to work hand in hand with the Iraqi Ministry of Health to address many burning sector priorities. Four international experts were mobilized to assess and formulate a development plan for two centers of excellence in nursing education, training and service delivery. The health facility accreditation system was also addressed through a specialized and highly regarded consulting institution which also trained 12 Iraqi surveyors for implementing a national accreditation system in the country.

Moreover, a number of international experts were contacted and lined up to deliver technical assistance interventions to health issues in Iraq; these interventions include (a) assessing human resource organizational structures, policies and development needs towards the production of Iraq human resources strategy; (b) assessing the health financial management towards greater efficiency and transparent allocation and management of resources; (c) assessing the burden of diseases in Iraq and strengthening preventive health care services and health promotion through a strategic plan of action; (d) assessing the state of mental health in Iraq and prospects for strengthening and sustaining services according to the regional and global stan-

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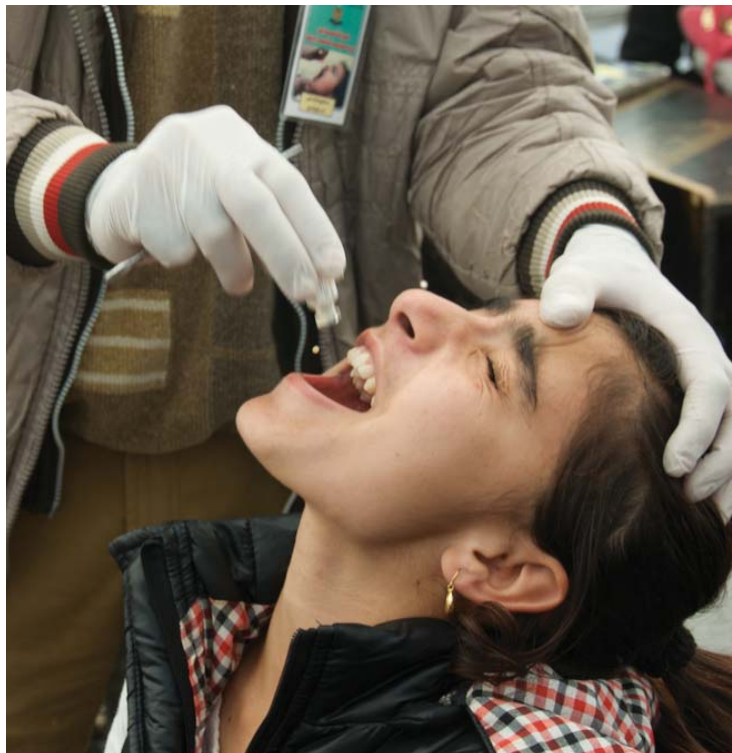
dards; (e) supporting and developing medical education reforms and assuring quality and sustainable development; and (f) providing a special emphasis on leadership development and continuous professional development in the health sector country-wide.

What measures are in place to ensure that Iraq can react to health emergencies effectively and efficiently?

WHO, with the support of other health partners like UNICEF, has assisted the EPI department in the Ministry of Health with an operational strategy for vaccination activities in health emergencies that targeted rapid campaigns and transit vaccination posts establishment at tactically chosen places. These activities are critical to prevent fatal outbreaks of preventable diseases, most notably measles and polio. Internally Displaced Population (IDPs) and Syrian Refugees are all targeted by the ongoing vaccination campaigns.

Millions of Iraqi children were vaccinated against polio in 2015. Are you satisfied with the results?

WHO is satisfied with the quality results achieved in the area of Polio Eradication. This is demonstrated by the fact that field assessment by international polio experts and high level inter-country review meeting in August and October respectively concluded that there was no evidence of the residual infection of polio outbreak in Iraq. Consequently, WHO has removed Iraq from list of infected countries which are no longer infected with polio (but remain vulnerable to importation). It is important to highlight that due to



WHO's recommended operational strategies and intensified technical support through Surge, IDPs and Refugees were give special attention in vaccination campaigns. While there is no statistically significant difference in vaccination rates evaluated by WHO through Independent Monitoring among host communities and IDPs/Refugees, but it is fractionally higher in the latter (90% and 93% respectively).



For the other vaccines preventable diseases mainly measles, situation is not similar especially among IDPs. A total of 143 measles cases among 1446 cases (9.8%) had been reported based on the latest available data with WHO while only handful of cases were reported from Refugees (6 – all from Erbil). There is an urgent need for improvement of basic immunization services in most of Iraq through better management at grass roots levels.

What were WHO's other achievements in 2015?

Many other achievements were accomplished by WHO in 2015 like:

- Improving the health of mother and child, the backbone of a prosperous and economically productive society.
- The Ministry Of Health with the assistance of WHO and other partners developed a three-year Commission on Information and Accountability-(CoIA) road map (2013-2015). The priorities in the road map have been based on the assessment findings which were carried out by a team of experts from MOH and health partners using the Country Assessment Framework (CAF). It is imperative to highlight that Iraq has made good progress in the implementation of interventions which are outlined in the three-year COIA road map.
- The MOH, with the assistance of WHO and other partners, was able to undertake a rapid and comprehensive assessment for Civil registration and vital statistics- (CRVS) and based on the findings of this

assessment a 3-years improvement plan was developed. Furthermore, a comprehensive review of all the statistical forms being used by MOH at different levels of the health system was conducted. The aim of the review was to update the statistical forms, check duplications, and remove those forms which are no longer needed.

- Another three-year Maternal Death Surveillance and Response Plan (MDSR) for Iraq has been developed outlining priority interventions which will fill the gaps and shortcomings in the MDSR system and thus prevent morbidities and mortalities related to maternal health in Iraq. In addition, MOH and WHO with other partners launched on 17 December 2013 Iraq's National Acceleration Plan for Maternal and Child Health (2013-2015). The three-year acceleration plan delineate cost effective interventions which were planned to be implemented in nine high burden governorates of Iraq in line with the commitment expressed in the Dubai declaration adopted in January 2013.
- Although Iraq had made a good progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4 and 5, Iraq is still falling behind the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4 and 5 which the international community fixed for 2015 due to the IDPs crisis.
- Iraq is removed from list of polio infected countries, a landmark achievement announced in 2015. Five nationwide polio vaccination campaigns have been conducted in 2015, however.

WHO provided upwards of \$10 Million-(\$10,441,707) -for operations, independent monitoring by Iraqi Red Crescent Society, and field and polio laboratory surveillance. This amount excluded WHO's surge staff salary including 11 nationals and two internationals. Iraq is having a functioning AFP and lab surveillance system meeting international standards at national levels. Overall 90% children had four or more doses of OPV this year.

New elements were applied in 2015 reflecting the intensified technical support and innovations optimizing technology on polio eradication, a few of which are presented below:



- Intensified technical support through 12 experienced professionals for improving quality of surveillance and routine immunization at sub-national levels
- Using 1.2.3 survey and tablets to improve quality of independent monitoring and provide timely data for corrective actions like the extension of October 2015 catch-up NIDs which was quoted as the best practice model in the Region.
- In October 2015, a total of 41 man-days of polio experts contributed in measles SIAs; 9359 children checked for access to routine polio vaccination in November 2015 NIDs; 286 children were missed in same November NID but action was taken for vaccinating them. Nonetheless, support to measles/Polio laboratory continued and 120,613 USD were provided. WHO VPI, EMRO mission provided technical support in meeting of EPI Managers and through inclusion of professionals from Iraq in multiple meetings/ workshops for program management, surveillance and laboratory. The challenges WHO and partners face in this area are:
 - i. High vulnerability to importation of new polioviruses and/or emergency of vaccine derived polioviruses and the likelihood of continued measles endemic transmission.
 - ii. One-fifth of governorates have below 90% coverage rates of routine immunization for the second measles dose.
 - iii. One-third of governorates scored below 90% vaccination coverage rates in the last polio vaccination campaign and
 - iv. One-third of governorates do not have two key AFP surveillance indicators meeting the international standards
 - v. Children living in security compromised areas have compromised access for vaccination.
 - vi. Two cases with VDPV2 have been reported in the past three months, one in each of Baghdad and Wassit governorates.

vii. The discontinuation of financial support for polio vaccination campaigns in Iraq is a major challenge for 2016.

How do you see health sector developing in Iraq?

The Iraqi health sector in Iraq faces considerable and complex challenges, such as improving access to quality health, shortages of essential medicines, and rehabilitation and deployment of health workforce. The Ministry of Health is the main provider of health care, both curative and preventive. The coverage of almost all key maternal and child health interventions along the continuum of care in Iraq shows some inequities between those living in rural and urban areas of the country. The main concern in service delivery, however, is the perceived limited quality of publicly provided services given the MOH deficient plan for human resource development. The dual practice model (civil servants working in private sector) in Iraq is another major challenge and management issue the ministry has to work on in 2016.

Nonetheless, the EPI/Polio aspect is strategically significant at this point in context of decentralization, notwithstanding the fact that procurement of vaccines and surveillance for vaccines preventable diseases have been kept as federal functions. With decentralization, there is a chance to improve governance if right leadership at right time is approached with right advice.

What are the WHO's priorities in 2016?

Among WHO and MOH priorities for 2016 are:

- Fulfilling the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This priority will require new evidence-based approaches backed by innovative and sustainable financing mechanisms.
- Build momentum towards a wider health sector reform through emphasis on the recently endorsed national health policy. WHO will work with Iraqi counterparts to pursue the roadmap that progressively ensures extending health coverage and access to quality care and protection from financial ruin.
- Another major 2016 priority for WHO is to provide the support required to pursue the implementation of a comprehensive package of health services that includes promotive, preventive,



- curative and rehabilitative services.
- Critical in 2016 is to support MoH to enhance production of a motivated health workforce with the relevant skill mix, equitably deployed and effectively managed.
- Also critical in 2016 is to strengthen the national regulatory capacity to ensure access to and rational use of essential medicines and health technologies.
- To strengthen capacity to effectively undertake essential public health functions and respond to public health emergencies.
- WHO will as well provide support for MoH to transform its health information and research capacity for better and informed decisions.

As for WHO/MOH priorities for EPI and Polio, the following is currently in focus:

EPI:

- To assist the Government in areas of vaccines management and improvement of basic immunization services to prevent measles outbreaks in 2016 in IDPs/Refugees camps and southern governorates.
- As the Middle East Polio Outbreak is over, MOH may cover the total cost of polio vaccination campaigns which may constitute a critical financial constraint for the government.
- Develop a comprehensive plan for routine immunization, polio eradica-

tion and measles elimination for year 2016 keeping in mind the national targets and regional/global priorities as well as the above challenges. The plan may give special focus to:

1. The introduction of IPV which is delayed (target time: 31/12/2015); registration of bOPV and Switch from tOPV to bOPV.
 2. Special attention to vulnerable populations, IDPs, Refugees
 3. Special strategies for vaccination of children in areas having compromised access including engagement of Partners, NGO/Private and community based influences.
 4. Adjustment in communications strategies for routine immunization with a 'push' effect on communities
 5. Establishment of environmental surveillance may also be considered
- Bimonthly program review of EPI by the Minister of Health with the Governorates, Program staff, WHO and UNICEF Country Representatives.
 - WHO to continue with intensified technical support, at federal and operational levels, in areas of surveillance and monitoring with continued strategy of synergizing polio eradication assets and activities with routine immunization for improving coverage and other public health priorities like supporting activities in influenza season.



POLIO

- The priority here is to improve the population immunity with a focus on vulnerable populations as the IDPs and Syrian refugees; enhanced surveillance and monitoring activities supplemented by initiation of environmental surveillance in tactically chosen places; access mapping and contingent plans for vaccinating any newly accessible populations; and preparedness plans simulation for response to any new importation/outbreak of polio.
- Also, accomplishing the “switch from tri-valent oral polio vaccine (tOPV)” with bi-valent OPV as part of the globally synchronized activity due to be conducted on 30th April 2016 in Iraq.





Introduction

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is the part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies. OCHA also ensures there is a framework within which each actor can contribute to the overall response effort. Established in 1991 under UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182, OCHA's mission is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors in order to alleviate human suffering in disasters and emergencies. OCHA advocates for the rights of people in need, promotes preparedness, and facilitates sustainable solutions.

OCHA re-established an office in Iraq in June 2014 in response to the escalating humanitarian crisis. The organization employs more than 70 staff across five offices, including Baghdad, Erbil, Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk. Mr. Giovanni Bosco has headed the OCHA office since June 2015.

Interview with

GIOVANNI BOSCO

OCHA Head of Office

What is OCHA's role in Iraq?

We work to support effective humanitarian leadership and to ensure that humanitarian decision-making is based on common situational awareness. We facilitate need assessments and planning and monitoring of humanitarian interventions to ensure that humanitarian action is guided by joint planning based on prioritized needs and to ensure preparedness for new emergencies or deteriorations. We support humanitarian leaders in leading strategic and operational coordination mechanisms, in ensuring that those mechanisms are fit for purpose, and are effectively coordinating the delivery of assistance. OCHA works to ensure that humanitarian financing is predictable, timely and allocated on the basis of priority needs. And last but not least, we work to promote protection for civilians and access to assistance as a result of advocacy and coordination.

2015 was a difficult year. What is the humanitarian situation at the moment?

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq is highly complex, volatile, becoming protracted and expected to widen and worsen in the year ahead. Last year, the number of people in need in Iraq doubled. Over 10 million people are estimated to now need some form of humanitarian assistance. Nearly half of those in need are children.

Since January 2014, over 3.4 million Iraqis have fled their homes, through multiple waves of displacement, spread across over 3,700 locations. Another 624,000 people who were displaced have recently returned to their places of origin. Thousands of people remain in dire conditions, unable to escape conflict areas or effectively under siege by combatant forces. Compounding this further is the nearly 245,000 Syrian refugees in the country, the vast majority of which are in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. An estimated 3 million people live in areas under ISIL control.

How would you describe the humanitarian needs on the ground?

The needs are enormous. Nearly one third of the population requires humanitarian assistance,

many of whom live in areas that are very difficult to reach. Millions have had to flee their homes in the last two years to escape conflict and brutal violence, often multiple times and with little warning. People are living in temporary arrangements. Around 590,000 displaced people live in critical shelter situations, such as unfinished or abandoned buildings, religious buildings, and informal settlements, and need greater support. Displaced people need the basics – food, clean water, suitable shelter, education for their children, and a job to earn some money and keep their dignity. As displacement protracts, needs are growing among host communities as well. Communities across Iraq have been generous, taking people in and providing for them when they had nowhere else to turn. But after two years, this generosity is pushing local resources beyond capacity.

Tragically, across Iraq, people are subject to grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. Civilians suffer targeted attacks, restricted access to safety and freedom of movement, alarming levels of gender-based violence, and threats from explosive weapons, including explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices. Thousands are trapped in cities and towns effectively under siege, unable to escape or receive assistance where they are.

This is unacceptable and deeply worrying. People must be able to access safety and assistance. We are particularly concerned about vulnerable people, such as the poor, the ill, or older people. These are the ones least likely to be able to reach relative safety or provide for their own needs.

What are OCHA's current activities in the country?

OCHA's activities occur along five lines of effort: coordination, policy, advocacy, information management and humanitarian financing. OCHA's work in coordination occurs on strategic and operational levels. In the former, OCHA supports the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team in providing strategic leadership to the crisis, including through policy setting. In

UN OCHA



the latter, OCHA facilitates operational coordination amongst national and international actors at the national, regional and local levels. For example, we lead geographic-focused coordination out of each of our sub-offices, where we work to bring local government, national NGOs, international NGOs and UN agencies into a common response framework. A very important part of that operational coordination is OCHA's leadership of humanitarian civil-military coordination, which facilitates dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors, essential to protect and promote humanitarian principles, protection of civilians and staff safety.

How difficult is it to reach those in need?

Delivering assistance in the current conditions on the ground is often incredibly difficult. Humanitarian partners currently assist around 2 million people each month. Unfortunately, insecurity often prevents us from reaching people in areas of active conflict or those outside Government control. The threat of improvised explosive devices on key roads and areas newly under Government control continues to affect access in

many parts of central Iraq. Violence against aid workers, including harassment and forcible seizure of assets by conflict parties continues. Checkpoints, harassment and extortion delay or block humanitarian staff and aid deliveries. Restrictions on national staff because of sectarian, ethnic or tribal affiliations are prevalent. OCHA supports the humanitarian community in Iraq in addressing these issues by facilitating efforts to establish and maintain relations with those who have influence over humanitarian access to people in need. Expanding access is a key priority for OCHA in Iraq.

What are OCHA's key priorities for 2016?

OCHA's priorities for the year focus on expanding the reach of the humanitarian response into underserved areas, including Anbar, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, and other critically affected areas, and preparing for additional displacement as a result of the ongoing and forthcoming military operations. We are also working to better engage national NGOs and other local actors providing assistance across Iraq and to mobilize new partners and funding for emergency response along the critical Anbar and Mosul corridors.

OCHA continues to advocate with all parties to conflict to increase respect for the protection of civilians, freedom of movement for civilians fleeing conflict, and the ability to provide aid to people in need wherever they might be found.

We have developed strong working relationships with the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center in Baghdad and the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre in Erbil, which has led to a significant strengthening of humanitarian coordination in Iraq over the past year. In 2016, OCHA is continuing to strengthen this collaboration, to ensure that the maximum support possible is provided to Iraqis suffering the consequences of horrible violence.

Finally, mobilizing additional international financial support for humanitarian needs in Iraq remains a critical priority. As of end April 2016, our appeal is only 26 per cent funded. So we desperately need more funding to properly respond to the needs that already exist. As displacement increases during the year ahead, these financial requirements will continue to rise. Donors have been generous, but tragically, the needs of Iraqis continue to rise, requiring us to do more.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Beneficiary figures

- 494,900 received non-food item and rapid response mechanism kits.
- 152,800 received medical assistance through 12 medical units.
- 15,200 families received tents, caravans or sealing-off kits.
- 4,500 directly assisted by livelihoods programming.
- 15,500 received psychosocial care.
- 17,000 transported to safety, shelter or school.
- 3,000 received assistance to return home from abroad.
- 101,000 received fuel for cooking or heating.
- 750 attendees of migration management and capacity building training

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF MISSION, DR. THOMAS LOTHAR WEISS

Since 2003, IOM has worked across all of Iraq's 18 governorates to support the Government of Iraq to address the needs of displaced persons and communities affected by conflict and/or displacement. With more than 800 staff working in the main office in Baghdad, regional offices in Basra and Erbil, and a number of sub-offices, IOM is uniquely positioned to assist the government at the central, governorate and local levels to deliver lifesaving humanitarian assistance, provide community stabilization support and address migration management challenges.

According to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), in 2015 more than 3.2 million Iraqis were identified as displaced, and during the same period over 460,000 returned to their homes in liberated areas. The data that DTM generates assists IOM, the United Nations Country Team, the Government of Iraq and other partners to respond to the most vulnerable displaced and host communities.

Working with the Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government, the United Nations Country Team, donors and local and international partners, IOM continues to deliver lifesaving assistance to the most vulnerable. IOM also offers capacity building training programmes for government officials and partners to enhance migration management skills in the context of the ongoing crisis. The below programme descriptions provide an overview of IOM Iraq activities in 2015.



1) Humanitarian Assistance

Displacement often takes place abruptly; families' daily activities are suddenly interrupted by an immediate threat to their lives. They must quickly flee, attempting to reach safety with only the clothes they are wearing and the few belongings they can quickly gather and carry.

IOM Iraq's Rapid Assessment and Response Teams (RARTs) staff members operating on the ground throughout Iraq stand ready to assess needs on the ground in coordination with local authorities to advise on needs and gaps, collect data and conduct non-food item distributions in response to displacement. Humanitarian assistance provided by IOM also includes shelter support, transportation services, primary health care and psychosocial support for displaced and host communities.

Non-food items

IOM assists hundreds of thousands of displaced persons in Iraq through non-food item kit distributions, including blankets, mattresses, tarps, kitchen sets, hygiene kits and heaters or fans and cool boxes, depending on seasonal priorities. In 2015 more than 494,900 individuals benefitted from IOM non-food item and rapid response mechanism kits. Distributions of fuel, warm winter clothing and cash assistance are also conducted to assist the most vulnerable displaced persons and host community members. In 2015 more than 101,000 individuals received fuel for

cooking or heating.

Shelter

In response to sudden and protracted displacement, IOM provides emergency shelter support in formal and informal settlements. In 2015 more than 15,200 families received shelter support, including caravans, tents and sealing-off kits as well as durable upgrades of critical shelters, helping families to survive Iraq's extreme weather conditions. For IDPs returning to their areas of origin, IOM provides assistance to repair essential living spaces within partially damaged houses.

Health

Mass displacement and conflict damage infrastructure, particularly health facilities. Displaced persons often live in camps or unfinished buildings, or spend most of their savings on rent, and are therefore unable to access or afford basic healthcare. IOM fills the gap by deploying mobile medical health teams and establishing clinics that provide medical assistance, health advice, and equipment and supplies in the camps; These efforts support the existing health facilities, which are overloaded in their effort to assist IDPs and refugees. In 2015 more than 152,800 individuals received medical assistance through 12 medical units. IOM medical units also support the National Tuberculosis Programme through training and capacity building, screening and treatment of patients, and public awareness raising.



Psychosocial Support

The emotional stress of displacement is a significant and often understated challenge for those who have fled their homes. To allay the tension that many experience in the current crisis, build the resilience of displaced populations and host communities, and enhance social cohesion, IOM psychosocial staff members provide support through activities including guided group discussions, awareness raising sessions, individual counseling, recreational sessions and constructive play for children. In 2015 more than 15,500 displaced Iraqis received psychosocial care.

2) Community Stabilization

Following years of conflict and the displacement of millions of Iraqis, in cooperation with government authorities and humanitarian partners, IOM is providing multi-

sectoral assistance aimed at supporting the stabilization and recovery of communities across the country. IOM adopts a conflict-sensitive approach in its programming, ensuring that both displaced persons and their host communities receive assistance. IOM programmes aim to enhance employability through job placement and training, to support economic recovery through business development of micro and small enterprises and to rebuild social and economic infrastructure. In 2015 more than 4,500 individuals were directly assisted by livelihoods programming.

Through the reconstruction of critical services, such as schools and public health centres, as well as community outreach and awareness raising activities, IOM is increasing the social capital within communities and enhancing their resilience. The USA-funded Community Revitalization Programme is IOM Iraq's largest programme

and covered 15 of Iraq's governorates in 2015.

Community Policing

Under the Community Policing Project, IOM supports overall efforts to advance democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Iraq by promoting democratic governance in the security sector. IOM aims to strengthen trust and cooperation between the police, civil society organizations and communities, and to enhance knowledge and capacities to implement a community-policing model in Iraq. The Community Policing project provides training for police officers, judges and civil society, and establishes Community Policing Fora across Iraq to promote dialogue between police and communities. In 2015 Community Policing Fora engaged: 574 community members, 86 government officials, 84 police officers and 70 members of civil society.

3) Migration Management

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)

Tens of thousands of Iraqis travelled to Europe in 2015; thousands have also made the decision to return home. Through the AVRR programme, IOM supports Iraqis who request assistance to return to safe areas in their home country, in cooperation with the host country and Government of Iraq; in 2015 over 3,000 Iraqis received return assistance. Transportation, and in some cases reception and reintegration assistance, are also provided, including support to start small businesses and vocational training opportunities, to promote sustainable return.

Resettlement

IOM also provides movement assistance to Iraqis entitled to resettlement in other countries. In cooperation with the Government of Iraq and the countries of resettlement, in 2015 IOM assisted more than 7,600 Iraqis to relocate to 19 different countries.

Training and Capacity Building

As mass displacement in Iraq continues, IOM helps build migration crisis management capacities in the Iraqi and Kurdistan Regional Governments and in civil society organizations through trainings and workshops. In 2015, the trainings given by IOM Iraq's HIJRA AMINA programme—meaning “Safe Migration” in English—funded by the European Union, featured topics including migration crisis management, housing, land and property, and combatting human trafficking; these trainings were provided to more than 750 attendees. In cooperation with the Government of Iraq, IOM also car-



ried out a campaign to promote protection of potential trafficking victims and to provide direct assistance to trafficking victims.

THAMIR'S STORY:

Thamir Ahmed Mohammed, a 60-year-old father of three from Anbar governorate, tells the story of his family's displacement with bitterness. “At four in the morning we were suddenly awakened by the sound of shelling nearby. We knew we had to leave immediately.”

Thamir, who was a minibus driver, drove his family and neighbors to Bzebiz Bridge, the checkpoint to Baghdad governorate, where they were required to leave the minibus, and then proceeded by foot and

public transportation to a settlement in al Jam'eh neighborhood. “It took us two days to arrive. The journey was so difficult,” said Thamir's wife, Siham.

The family now lives in a tent in a camp in Baghdad. “We can't find another family to rent an apartment with,” explained Thamir. “We didn't bring enough money to rent one by ourselves.”

The family is grateful for the support they have received. The Ministry of Migration and Displacement provided shelter and electricity, and the nearby mosque assisted with food. IOM distributed non-food items such as blankets, pillows, cooking stoves, hygiene kits and other essential items. “People here have been good to us,” said Siham. “I'm especially happy with this green dress a woman gave me. I wasn't able to bring any clothes.”

“She looks beautiful in this dress,” agreed Thamir. “It reminds me of when I first saw her and wanted to marry her. She was from Baghdad and I was from Anbar.”

“I said yes to him, even though I was better looking,” said Siham with a smile. “I love him. We've been through so much together. I had to wait years for him when he was captured during the Iran-Iraq war, but I know that together we can go through anything.” “At least we have a stove now, so I can cook the food that my family likes and not have to sit in the tent all day thinking about our situation,” said Siham.





Founded in 1919, the ILO was confirmed as the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946 with a unique tripartite structure where government and social partners of 186 member states of the United Nations can freely debate and elaborate standards and policies.

The main mission of the ILO is to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues. The ILO gives an equal voice to workers, employers and governments to ensure that the views of the social partners are closely reflected in labour standards and in shaping policies and programmes. Tripartism and social dialogue are central to the planning and implementation of a coherent and integrated ILO programme of assistance to constituents in member States.

Iraq is a Member State of the ILO since

1932. ILO provided over the last 15 years technical advice, support and assistance and capacity building activities to its constituents in Iraq (Government, employers' and workers' organizations) in the areas of Local Economic Development, Skills Development, TVET, Private Sector Development, SMEs, formulation of social security schemes, training on ILS, Labour Statistics, social dialogue. ILO has technically contributed several times to the review of the new labour code which was adopted in August 2015 by the Iraqi Parliament. The new labour code is in line with ILO standards on a number of issues. It includes amendments proposed by the Iraqi unions with ILO support. It recognizes the right for collective bargaining, including for workers not affiliated with a union. It reintroduces the right to strike (banned since 1987), limits child labor and provides improved protections against discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace, and consti-

tutes a strong advancement for tripartism and social dialogue in Iraq.

ILO provided also assistance to the KRG government in developing its National Employment Policy and reviewing its labour code. ILO organized during the period under review, capacity building workshop in Istanbul during August 2014, and in Erbil 10-13 May 2015 to the focal points of the Federal and KRG Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs and other line ministries on the implementation of the National Employment Policy which was developed with technical and financial assistance of the ILO. Also, training activity 26-28 October 2015 in Beirut on International Labour Standards and Labour Law to strengthen the capacity of the Parliamentary social and labour committee and the officials of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Federal and KRG governments, in collaboration with the HQ Labour Law Unit, and Turin.



The ILO is physically present in Erbil represented in two staff members: an International staff member, Chief Technical Advisor, and a National Project Associate, to implement in KRG two TC projects: 1) a project to formulate an action plan to implement the KRG National Employment Policy, directly funded by the Government \$505,000; and 2) a project to promote civic, social and economic participation of the disadvantaged youth in Kurdistan, funded by the KRG 2020 Facility fund with a budget of 1.1 million U.S.\$ in partnership with the government and UNFPA. The ILO leads the project which aims to empower some 750 disadvantaged young women and men through accelerated vocational training, provision of a public employment scheme, entrepreneurship training, and soft loans for enterprise development. ILO implemented within the context of this project, training workshops 2-9 December 2015 on vocational curricula design using the DACUM and Competency Based Training –CBT-approach for Fourteen instructors from seven MOLSA VTCs from Erbil, Duhok, Sulaymaniyah, Soran, Germyan and Zakho. Those are currently working, under the ILO guidance and supervision on developing new CBT-Curricula for six occupations. It is expected to com-

plete the development of the new curricula by the end of February 2016 to be piloted in MOLSA's VTC's: Erbil, Duhok, Sulaymaniyah, Soran, Germyan and Zakho in March-April 2016 to equip the disadvantaged youth with the vocational skills required in the labour market.

The ILO manual "My first Business"(MFB) was translated to Kurdish –Badini during the period October-December 2015 and will be printed in January 2016. Capacity building workshops on My First Business were conducted in Erbil during October and December 2015 for 23 participants from MOLSA Directorate of Loans participated, using the MFB manual in Kurdish-Sorani, and in Kurdish –Badini in Duhok for 27 participants from MOLSA Loan Directorate.

ILO developed an unemployment benefit scheme, and drafted a law for extension of social security to specific categories of workers (mainly construction workers). The office is increasing its efforts to institutionalize methodologies and tools through capacity building especially in the area of SME, and continues provision of technical support and assistance to its social partners the Employers' and Workers' organizations.

The ILO strategy for the biennium

2016-2017 will continue to support the Federal and KRG governments in the creation, adoption, and implementation of integrated policies, strategies and programmes to promote decent work for young women and men, to reduce the unemployment rates, and to assist in increasing participation of adult women and youth in the public and private sector; expand the number of occupations and opening jobs to newly skilled women and men, increase their participation in targeted skills development and their access to existing employment opportunities; and foster labour market analysis and dissemination of information on the labour force. Specifically the ILO will continue providing technical assistance as follows:

- Developing a national framework for formalizing the informal sector;
- Reforming of the social insurance system for public and private sector workers to progressively establish a national Social Protection Floor (SPF); actuarial evaluation of the social security schemes for public and private sector workers aiming at the extension of social security coverage and benefits, and ensuring the financial sustainability of the schemes; and reviewing the draft Federal social security law which the ILO worked on in 2007-2008;
- Reviewing legislation related to private sector development in Iraq, including reviewing the SME draft law which the ILO had drafted within the context of the Private Sector Development Programme, and drafting the internal by-laws of the Iraqi Federation of Industries.
- Implementing of the National Employment Policy of the Federal Government, and to develop the skills and capacities of the youth to facilitate their transition from training to work, Occupational Safety and Health, labour statistics, and labour inspection.
- A second review of the KRG labour code which was drafted with ILO assistance, drafting KRG TU law, ratifying C87, and capacity building in Labour Inspection.



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