



THE UNITED NATIONS IN IRAQ IN 2016



الأمم المتحدة - العراق
United Nations Iraq

UNAMI Public Information Office

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Ján Kubiš

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq

■ UNAMI's main achievements in 2016 ■

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The protection of women and children, particularly girls, from all forms of violence, including sexual and gender based violence has been among the foremost priorities of the mission for a number of years

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The year 2016 was marked by significant progress by Iraqi Government affiliated forces, regaining important territory from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), in particular urban centres and surrounding villages in Anbar (Rutba, Ramadi, Fallujah and Heet) and Salah Al Din (Sharqat), followed by operations that led up to the launch of the Mosul offensive on 17 October. As Security Forces continue to make incremental advances in Ninewa and in Mosul City itself, ISIL still retains territory in rural areas of central and north-central Iraq and maintains the capability to execute significant attacks against military and civilian targets in areas controlled by the Iraqi Government.

The ongoing armed conflict against ISIL, terrorism and acts of violence have taken a terrible toll on civilians and on all communities in Iraq with a corrosive effect on a range of other human rights. In this background a major achievement of the Mission this past year has been on the protection of civilians – through its monitoring and reporting of the impact of violence on civilians, advocacy for policies and programmes that aim at enhancing their protection, and the

provision of information to the relevant stakeholders, including the Government of Iraq, on the impact of violence on men, women and children who are at particular risk, humanitarian service providers and the international community, to enhance the protection of individuals in need or at risk – particularly to vulnerable groups including women, children, people with disabilities, and members of diverse ethnic and religious communities.

The protection of women and children, particularly girls, from all forms of violence, including sexual and gender based violence has been among the foremost priorities of the mission for a number of years. Iraq had made some advances in this area, such as the fact it was the first country in the region to adopt a comprehensive plan on women in armed conflict in 2014. However, the advent of ISIL, and its seizure of large areas of Iraq was a terrible setback for the promotion and protection of women and children from all forms of violence. In areas under its control, ISIL deliberately imposed its takfiri doctrines on women, preventing them from appearing in public without chaperones, prohibiting them from working and imposing

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Among UNAMI's key priorities during 2016 was also the promotion of national reconciliation efforts

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severe penalties on women who break its rules. Furthermore, evidencing its wanton disregard for any standards of humanity, ISIL targeted women and children from ethnic and religious communities, particularly the Yazidi community, subjecting them to the horror of sexual enslavement and to physical, sexual and other forms of violence. However, the resources to provide appropriate medical, psychological and other forms of support to these women and children are scarce –and the international community need to assist Iraq in ensuring that these women and children can access the care and support they deserve and need.

The effects of the ongoing armed conflict have also been devastating on members of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities. Many of these communities, located in areas between Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, were vulnerable prior to the onset of ISIL's seizure of these areas – suffering as they did from lack of security, lack of access to basic services, and other forms of discrimination. ISIL deliberately targeted these communities for gross crimes including murder, rape and other forms of sexual violence, wanton destruction of places of religious and cultural significance and destruction of infrastructure and personal property in a campaign aimed at the permanent destruction, subjection or expulsion of these communities from their ancestral lands in Iraq. Hundreds of thousands of men, women and children from these communities had no alternative but to flee for their lives to safer locations within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq or other locations in Iraq where they remain as IDPS and where they are confronted with a myriad of problems in accessing adequate shelter,

food, water, healthcare and education for their children. The United Nations, with the support of the international community has been working tirelessly to assist the government and people of Iraq deal with these humanitarian needs, but far more resources are required.

It is paramount that ISIL is not permitted to succeed in its campaign – once ISIL is defeated and areas retaken are secure, everything must be done to assist the return of IDPS to their places of origin in full respect of the applicable humanitarian principles – and to support the rebuilding and reconstruction of these communities. Accordingly, the Mission has been working with members of the diverse ethnic and religious communities on legislative and policy reforms that aim to enhance their security and ensure the respect and protection of their rights. A key piece of legislation that the Mission has been working on in partnership with Iraqi civil society is the Anti-Discrimination Bill, which, if passed by the Council of Representatives and implemented, aims to prevent discrimination against persons based on their gender, ethnicity, religion, or cultural background. The Mission is also working with members of these diverse ethnic and religious communities on programmes to promote justice and accountability for the perpetrators of crimes committed against members of their communities and policies that will support the rehabilitation of victims and survivors of those crimes. The mission has also been active in developing and implementing actions, in partnership with those communities themselves, that will rebuild trust within and between diverse communities which in turn will support community and national reconciliation.



POLITICAL

Among UNAMI's key priorities during 2016 was also the promotion of national reconciliation efforts through focusing on a number of issues that constitute the root causes of the ongoing cycles of violence in the country: security, access to justice, equal access to basic services, the care and protection of the rights of women and children (particularly those subjected to sexual and gender based violence), promotion of the respect of the rights of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities, a truly inclusive political dialogues, and formal and non-formal justice mechanisms that will provide care and protection to the victims and survivors of human rights violations and abuses but ensure accountability of the perpetrators of such acts according to law. This would be an Iraqi inspired, drawn and owned process. To this end, over the past months, UNAMI



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For national reconciliation to succeed, it must also be supported by all segments of the society, and also at grassroots initiatives.

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place on 28 January 2017 in Basra, followed by many other throughout Iraq. We have also facilitated a series of discussions titled “Iraq after the conflict roundtable” with intellectuals, academia and civil society in several parts of Iraq including Erbil, Fallujah and Karbala. Such events, where the views of all sectors of society on how Iraq can overcome longstanding and difficult issues are explained, are the key to ensuring that everyone’s voice is heard.

ELECTIONS

Elections remained high on the agenda during UNAMI discussions with Iraqi interlocutors in 2016. Leaders of political blocs approached UNAMI with their proposals for amending the electoral laws, the Law for the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) and to elaborate on their suggestions for scheduling the elections. I (SRSG) made clear during my meetings with the three Presidencies, heads of political blocs and civil society groups that UNAMI would remain engaged in the process, providing global comparative experiences and options on the issues, but that these are crucial decisions for Iraqi authorities to make based on consensus and in line with constitutional and legal parameters. In 2016, UNAMI sustained its engagement with relevant committees at the Council of Representatives and the Council of Ministers that are deliberating on various electoral reform proposals. UNAMI electoral experts worked closely with the Independent High Electoral Commission as the latter prepares for the Provincial Council elections. UNAMI extended high level policy and operational advice

engaged broadly including with the leadership of the Iraqi National Alliance, the largest Iraqi parliamentary bloc, on the way forward particularly in the post-ISIL period. As a result, the National Alliance officially submitted its National Settlement Initiative to UNAMI, on 30 October 2016, following the approval of this vision in various institutions of the National Alliance. UNAMI’s good offices has worked intensely at different levels throughout the second half of the year to bridge gaps in understanding between different components of the Iraqi society to find a common understanding on what could be the way forward on national reconciliation.

The National Settlement Initiative serves as a good starting point for discussion on the way forward regarding a national reconciliation process and we have received positive indications from various compo-

nents, key partners and groups, as well as from the Government of Iraq on their willingness to engage with us to achieve national reconciliation, reform, and stability. Of note, is that the initiative has acted as a catalyst for a broad discussion within the Iraqi political and social circles on a national settlement, a significant step that was taken last year. As a result, many groups including main Iraqi components, civil society and minorities are preparing similar position papers and initiatives. UNAMI is prepared to serve as an impartial guarantor of the National Settlement Initiative.

For national reconciliation to succeed, it must also be supported by all segments of the society, and also at grassroots initiatives. To this end, in the closing months of 2016, UNAMI planned and launched a series of events under the title “Iraq: youth and coexistence”, with the first to take

to IHEC with the aim of promoting inclusiveness of voter registration and electoral processes, particularly for women, minorities and internally displaced persons.

BAGHDAD – ERBIL RELATIONS

The resolution of ongoing political disagreements in the Kurdistan region of Iraq remained elusive in 2016, where the Kurdistan regional parliament has been inactive since October 2015. UNAMI continued to provide its good offices to both sides for reaching a solution. The call on 20 November 2016 by Kurdistan region of Iraq President Massoud Barzani for renewed consultations to overcome political differences and the joint statement issued by the Kurdistan Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan on 11 January 2017 was an encouraging step. In their statement, both parties commit to strengthen their cooperation, promote economic reforms, and address both the financial and the political crisis in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. This is a good starting point for inclusive consultations with other Iraqi Kurdistan political parties and civil society organisations to move forward in solving the current impasse in intra-Kurdistan of Iraq issues.

Unity within the Kurdistan region of Iraq could positively affect outstanding Baghdad and Erbil key issues that require immediate attention. The level of cooperation we have seen during the planning and conduct of the Mosul military operation since 17 October 2016 was unprecedented in the relationship between Federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government, including high level visits of Kurdistan region of Iraq President Massoud Barzani and Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani to Baghdad over the summer, and of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi to Erbil subsequently in November 2016. This year, the Kurdistan Regional Government also allowed the Iraqi Security Forces to stage operations through the Kurdistan Region of Iraq for the first time since 1995, and the Joint Coalition Coordination Centre, a joint ISF-Peshmerga-Coalition military coordination headquarters in Erbil has also been put in place and functioned during the Mosul Liberation Operations. However, cooperation pertaining only to military operations is not enough, at this time when the liberation effort in Mosul and the surrounding areas is progressing steadily, the good-will need to spread to

other areas of mutual concern.

At the same time, while the overall climate between Baghdad and Erbil has improved, flashpoint areas are however continuing to be a cause for concern. Notably, the de facto Peshmerga control of Kirkuk and other disputed areas in northern Iraq following the withdrawal of the Iraqi Security Forces in June 2014 and control of liberated areas from ISIL by Peshmerga in 2016 has introduced new dynamics. UNAMI stands ready to assist the parties in their efforts to find a solution to the thorny question of who will control newly liberated areas. In recent engagement with minorities, they reiterated their calls for UNAMI to be involved in resolving the issue.

GENDER

The signing of a Joint Communiqué to Prevent and Respond to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) between the Republic of Iraq and the UN is tangible step in the right direction towards addressing CRSV. Off course, this is not enough as addressing violence against women requires much more including examining negative attitudes as well as institutional measures available to address violence against women and children. In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq there have been significant advances in protecting women and children from sexual and gender based violence – such as the establishment of the Directorate to counter violence against women, the establishment of shelters to protect vulnerable women and children, legislative reforms that aim to prevent gender based violence from taking place, to protect women and children who are subjected to such violence, and to ensure accountability of the perpetrators. The Government of the region has also actively engaged in public information and awareness raising campaigns to promote respect for the rights of women and children and to raise the public consciousness of violence against women and children and its impact which is beginning to bear fruit. It is hoped that in the coming year the Government of Iraq will take similar action, particularly in passing a law to prevent and protect women and children from sexual and gender based violence. The mission is actively working with civil society, the Government of Iraq, and other stakeholders to promote this legislation.

The fight against terrorism concerns not just Iraq and the region, but engages the entire international community. In this



sense the struggle to end senseless violence in Iraq which claims so many victims and destroys so many lives and livelihoods, and which achieves nothing in political or social terms, is one that the mission is fully engaged in from the legal and policy perspective. The mission, through its Human Rights Office is actively engaged in promoting policies to combat terrorism while respecting and protecting human rights and the rule of law. This includes promoting legislative and policy reforms (particularly the Anti Terrorism Law) to ensure full compliance with due process and fair trial standards, but also the training of security force personnel on appropriate standards of humanitarian and human rights law, and effective and more efficient means of prevention of terrorism, including security sector reform. It is proper to here also take note of the progress during 2016 on the legislative agenda, in particular the timely passing of the 2017 Federal Budget Law, the General Amnesty law and other key legislation. Last year also saw the adoption of the Popular Mobilization Commission Law, which provides a legal framework for the Popular Mobilization Forces and bring them under the helm of Government control. It is important that the Members of Parliament reach an understanding on the modalities for implementation of this and other laws, with a spirit of accommodating the concerns of all sides.



“ UNAMI will continue working with the Government and people of Iraq to promote respect for the rule of law and human rights and which will be inclusive of all sectors of Iraqi society ”

THE WAY FORWARD FOR IRAQ AND UNAMI'S PRIORITIES

Mosul offensive is expected to continue being the main focus of armed conflict activity in the country well into 2017, while ISIL conducts defensive and attrition operations in the general Mosul area along with asymmetric terrorist attacks notably against civilians, in other areas of the country. Such practice, along with the retained ISIL capability despite severe territory losses, keeps the security environment fluid and unpredictable, with potential impact on humanitarian operations even in areas away from the current conflict areas, as the security environment loses clear conventional conflict frontlines and well determined insurgent areas of control.

Given the terrible toll that armed conflict, terrorism and violence are taking on Iraq's people, the protection of civilians is among the foremost priorities of the mission in 2017. The mission undertakes a range of protection activities, the most important of which is monitoring the impact of armed conflict, terrorism and violence on the civilian population and reporting this information to all relevant stakeholders so that action can be taken to ensure that civilians are spared or affected minimally by such violence. Additionally, the mission will continue direct advocacy with relevant Iraqi government and security forces to ensure that the protection of civilians remains at the forefront of military planning and the conduct of military operations. It also conducts advocacy on law and policy reform to enhance the protection of civilians (particularly vulnerable groups such as women, children, people

with disabilities and members of minority ethnic and religious communities), promotes policies for formal and non-formal justice mechanisms to ensure accountability for crimes or violations committed in the context of armed conflict, terrorism and violence, and conducts training of security force personnel and government officials on applicable humanitarian and human rights standards in relation to the protection of civilians.

The mission also is engaged in documentation of crimes and human rights violations and abuses as part of a strategy to promote justice for the victims of human rights violations and abuses that also aims to assist the Government of Iraq ensure accountability, according to law, of the perpetrators of these crimes, violations or abuses. Last, but by no means least, the mission works in partnership with humanitarian service providers (including the protection cluster) and the Government to refer individual cases for humanitarian and other forms of assistance.

UNAMI will continue working with the Government and people of Iraq to promote respect for the rule of law and human rights and which will be inclusive of all sectors of Iraqi society. Fundamental to this will be community and civil reconciliation and National Settlement – to rebuild trust between communities, Iraqi components and society groups by ensuring security for all Iraq's citizens, access to justice, fair and equal access to basic services and economic opportunity, participation in inclusive political dialogue, and formal and non

formal mechanisms aimed at addressing the decades of human rights violations and abuses that have affected all Iraq's people and which has undermined trust between communities. Also immediate attention is needed on post-liberation efforts in Ninewa Governorate in general and Mosul city more specifically with a particular attention to the issues of minorities. As we have witnessed in other areas of Iraq following the defeat of ISIL, support for adequate governance and security arrangements are vital to ensure the safe return of displaced persons and peaceful coexistence among the different components. The tormented civilians that have been held hostage by the so called Da'esh caliphate or have been forced to flee, must be given the chance not only to return home but also to have their basic needs taken care of. Security and stability will be paramount for the possibility to the rebuild the society.

Long-term development and sustaining peace will depend on reforms and the resilience of national and local institutions for governance. Iraq electoral institutions will play a key role in achieving the above, particularly in ensuring that electoral processes are perceived as credible and transparent, for electing Iraqi leaders and representatives at national and local levels. UNAMI support to electoral and other related institutions will thus remain crucial in building such institutional capacity and in promoting public confidence in electoral processes.

That said, as Iraqi political leaders made key decisions regarding the schedule of the elections for the provincial councils and the Council of Representatives, UNAMI



Electoral Assistance Office will continue to provide policy level and expert technical advice to IHEC and other Iraqi institutions. In parallel, agreements need to be reached regarding the electoral legal framework for both elections as well as the institutional standing of IHEC, particularly on the term of the current IHEC Commissioners. In the Kurdistan Region, the situation remains fluid although Kurdish authorities will need to come up soon with a decision on several regional electoral events (the region's parliamentary elections due in 2017, the law on the KR Presidency and the region's provincial council elections), as well as on the role and capacity development needs of the region's electoral management body (K-IHEC).

The issue of Kirkuk will also remain at the core of discussions particularly as the elections for both the provincial councils and the Iraqi parliament come closer. UNAMI's political and technical engagement will thus take these important considerations in mind. Our political engagement with various interlocutors are aimed to build a consensus in accordance, not just with constitutional and legal parameters, but also with principles enshrined in international commitments that Iraq is a signatory to. UNAMI will thus continue to provide expert electoral support, at various levels, to further enhance professional electoral capacities and to promote inclusivity, transparency and credibility of electoral processes.

The stakes are therefore particularly high as 2017 dawns, and in this context it is paramount that Baghdad and Erbil use the positive momentum generated during the second half of last year, to extend their co-operation to outstanding issues in the political, economic, and administrative field, including oil exports, revenue sharing, disputed boundaries, and the return of the internally displaced to their homes in line with humanitarian and human rights principles.

UNAMI will continue to call for the support of the international community to the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi Security Forces to ensure that Da'esh is completely

defeated and that security, stability and unity is fully restored once and for all. This is not going to be easy and it requires a longer outlook, which extends beyond the liberation of Mosul, other still occupied areas, and an approach that encompasses all parts of the Iraqi security sector, including the army, federal police, local police, and intelligence services. More important, the assistance and support of the international community on national settlement efforts is also paramount for building a sustainable peace in Iraq and the region in general.

In this process, one should not forget the need to address persistent and some invisible discrimination against women as key partners in rebuilding a new Iraq. UNAMI will continue its persistent advocacy on the need to afford more opportunities to women with more focused attention on the situation of women's rights in particular in advocating the full implementation of the National Action Plan on the Security Council Resolution 1325, the Joint Communiqué and looking at how women can be better sup-

ported in the electoral process in 2017 and beyond. More attention, cooperation and support will be also provided to civil society, notably to youth.

The United Nations cannot replace primary responsibility of the Government and the people of Iraq for delivering solutions to the challenges that they face. What it can do is continue and deepen assistance and facilitate processes that will enable the people and government of Iraq articulate what the issues are, find mutually agreed solutions to those issues, and be active participants in the implementation of those solutions. The defeat of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ending the scourge of terrorism in Iraq and rebuilding the country as a common home of all, based on equality of rights and representative of all its citizens, will need to be addressed above and foremost by the Government of Iraq and its people. But it cannot be achieved without continuous, consistent and solid support from the UN and other parts of the international community based on strategic partnership.



■ The United Nations in Iraq ■

Fast Facts about 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 significant 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 re-

form, 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 re-

gional levels. In doing this, UNAMI adopts a multi-sectorial 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 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 (IKBMP), 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 partnership 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.

During 2016, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implemented a high impact, pragmatic approach to stabilization that improves citizen-government ties and revitalizes public trust in the Iraqi Government. Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) quadrupled in size, growing from a small undertaking in a few cities to a large programme operating across 19 locations, including in the hard-hit cities of Ramadi and Fallujah in Anbar Governorate. In September 2016, before the military campaign to retake Mosul started, UNDP began preparing for its liberation, liaising with authorities to identify early priorities and rushing to pre-position US\$43 million in essential equipment to immediately jumpstart basic services, notably health, electricity, and water. Overall, UNDP's FFS has contributed to laying the foundations for the return of over 1.39 million Iraqi men, women, and children since the start of the conflict.

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. In 2007, its role was greatly expanded by Resolution 1770.

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

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

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 and electoral 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 2299, adopted on 25 July 2016, the Security Council extended the mandate of UNAMI until 31 July 2017.

UNAMI has an authorized strength of 873 personnel (356 international, 517 national).

The Mission's budget for 2016: USD 119,5 million.

Interview with

Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, for political and electoral affairs

GYORGY BUSZTIN



How do you see your role as Deputy SRSR for Political and Electoral Affairs evolved through 2016?

The year 2016 was a year we spent in a state of war, which caused immense human suffering to the people of Iraq. And it has in many ways tested the abilities of the Mission. Primarily because of the humanitarian work that was badly needed on the ground, with all its political implications, has consumed very significant part of the UN activities and energies. But also because 2016 saw the beginning of the political process that we hope will lead to an eventual reconciliation. This process was launched in consultation with UNAMI by politicians of the National Alliance who shared with us that vision for the beginning of the dialog.

At any rate 2016 was a dramatic year which has seen a combination of work on both sides. As far as we are concerned our activities on pushing for dialog and reconciliation are very important and at the same time we also engaged heavily on human rights. And our push for creating the necessary conditions, legal and political, for election to take place in 2017.

I would also notice my increased engagement in 2016 with the civil society and youth which I deem could play great role in the community-based reconciliation. With the liberation of Daesh-held areas, UNAMI could increase its reach out to the communities and be more present on the ground.

What were you most proud of in 2016? What were, in your opinion, UNAMI's and your main achievements in the political field?

We managed to improve the climate for a dialog that we wish would develop in 2017. We contributed to the maintaining of atmosphere of engagement between several political parties that are partners for us in our regular dialog. We are unable to predict how fast this very consequential

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I think that we have managed to reassure minorities that the solution for their future lays in their ability to connect with each other and within themselves

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work will yield results but we are confident that we have contributed, to the extent possible, in making the foundations for what we will see unfolding as a process of reconciliation after the battle against terrorist Daesh is over.

That the first steps in the direction of national reconciliation were undertaken in 2016 is a source of great satisfaction for UNAMI, as the Mission has relentlessly advocated for this process to start in its messaging to all political forces. This process has gained considerable traction since then.

Engagement on the Missing Kuwaiti Persons and Property file, an important mandated task of the Mission, has also continued with UNAMI recognized by both parties as an added value and a full-fledged partner. This file combines between political and humanitarian aspects and remains in the forefront of the Mission's activities.

Closure of the MEK file, a longstanding humanitarian challenge and a festering political problem, is a special success chalked up by UNAMI in close cooperation with the SG's Special Envoy on the file. It is good to know that the remaining MEK residents of the former Camp Liberty are safely relocated outside Iraq.

Is there any specific thing you see yourself in something that stands out that you've done or you contributed?

Year 2016 was yet another year when minorities were busy looking for solutions. And our dialog with several minority communities have clarified positions to the extent that we can now better prepare for solutions after Daesh has been vanquished in the Ninewah plain. It is too early to say

whether these communities will be able to return as we wish for them to do. But, we have much more profound understanding of that problem and we believe that across Iraqi society the understanding of the tragedy of minorities has become deeper.

We also contributed much to the issue of the plight of women in the Iraqi society.

Part of the UNAMI mandate is protection of minorities and promotion of interfaith dialogue. You mentioned some achievements in 2016? How do you consider these achievements in terms of minorities?

Diversity and inclusiveness involved in decision making are crucial for post-Daesh Iraq.

I think that we have managed to reassure minorities that the solution for their future lays in their ability to connect with each other and within themselves. Many of the minorities suffer the divisions because of the nature of the political conflict in Iraq. We have seen examples of people who left the country returning because they judged that the atmosphere for their communities was improving. We also believe that community leaders are now more realistic in their appraisal of the situation. It is not present anymore that ever repeating demand for the UN and International community to offer protection because we have made it abundantly clear that this commitment has its limits. We made it also clear that for minorities to successfully chart the future for themselves they will need to have cohesive position on how they want to relocate into their original homes. And we are of course intent on helping this process through the stabilization. But it is also important that these

communities should engage with one another and be able to create some form of common representation of their interest vis-a-vis the government and majority society.

Amidst rising incidents of intra-community tensions in liberated areas, UNAMI has emphasized the need for peaceful co-existence with UNAMI senior leadership meeting with political, religious and community leaders to discuss their concerns of the grave impact that the current conflict against ISIL has on civilians, particularly on people from Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious minorities. UNAMI continued to advocate with the Government of Iraq and the international community to undertake all efforts, in strict compliance with applicable international humanitarian law and human rights law, to put an end to the widespread and systematic abuses perpetrated by Daesh, which may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, and to secure the safe release of the civilians still under Daesh captivity.

UNAMI has engaged on concerns related to the potential effects of the proposed National Identity Law, particularly Article 26, on minority ethnic and religious communities of Iraq. UNAMI and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Iraq called on the members of the Council of Representatives to address deficiencies in legislation that could undermine the principles of pluralism and diversity in Iraq and review the Article 26 to ensure it guarantees the freedom of religion.

As part of the promotion of co-existence, cohesion, forgiveness and national reconciliation, the UN marked Interfaith Harmo-



“ National reconciliation is essential for post-Daesh Iraq and it should be an Iraqi-led and Iraqi-owned process. UNAMI will continue supporting and facilitating an inclusive dialogue between all Iraqi components ”

ny Week from 2 to 10 February 2016 with a number of UNAMI-organized events in Najaf, Baghdad and Erbil. The events were attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including Members of Parliament, diplomats, religious and cultural leaders, civil society and youth groups. The discussions emphasized the importance of inclusive dialogue to resolve myriad of challenges facing Iraq, while highlighting the need for political leaders to seek long term and durable solutions to help the many internally displaced persons in the country, and to adopt educational and awareness programs to steer youth away from extremist ideologies. The participants also sent a strong appeal to the Government to implement confidence-building measures that would promote tolerance, equality, justice and respect for diversity thus, working also for national reconciliation, for historic compromise that will preserve unity of Iraq and in people.

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 position of women in Iraq?

It is still far from satisfactory, but definitely improving. And I'm not just talking about women's participation as percentage of the whole but I'm talking about their ability to make their voices heard. Not just in public life, but in the areas of several professions, and also in politics. It is strongly felt that women are now more eloquent, expressive, and more efficiently expressive of their interest than they were before. There were some setbacks also. We are aware that the wish of the UN to see adequate government attention to the institutional representation of women, which has been sadly curtailed by the dissolution of the Women's Affairs ministry, should be compensated for. Though this has not happened we believe that the appearance of women ministers in the government is a good sign and also we hope that the Prime Minister will be up to his word in providing more positions for women in decision making.

Throughout 2016, UNAMI continued its efforts to promote women's rights in Iraq in support of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). UNAMI leadership continued to emphasize that in the post-ISIL period, protection of women and girls should be central to all peacebuilding, justice-seeking, stabilization and reconstruction efforts, as well as that women have to be involved in rebuilding Iraq through full participation in community, local and national reconciliation processes.

The United Nations will continue to stand in solidarity with the female victims of ISIL crimes, insisting on full accountability for atrocities perpetrated by the terrorist group. Continuing collaboration with the Government of Iraq to change harmful practices and negative social norms, including through engaging religious and community leaders on sensitization initiatives on women and girls' rights, is also vital.

I believe that visit of Zainab Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict, and signing of the landmark joint communique on the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence in Iraq between the United Nations and the Government of Iraq in September 2016 in New York have made the big contribution to the Iraqi society's better understanding of the gravity of this issue and that it will be able to forge a plan to combat this type of violence. The support envisioned under the agreement includes documentation and collection of evidence of such crimes, strengthening the Iraqi legal framework to be able to better address sexual violence, and putting in place modalities for victim compensation. This plan is now being underpinned with Government action both on the national and on the Kurdistan region level.

How do you see Iraq – Kuwait relations at the moment?

Iraq – Kuwait relations are currently very strong, marked by the positive dynamics and increased coordination and coopera-

tion. What we have seen in 2016 was very encouraging, both in terms of bilateral ties on the official level and also in terms of more engagement on the level of people. We are still far from what I would deem normal situation between two neighboring countries. But compared to the heritage of the past there is a very significant progress. The Joint Commission of the two Governments has met and made important decisions.

Iraq has shown determination to pursue important work of locating missing persons and missing property and achieve results. The number of witnesses coming forward to give information has dramatically increased. Field visits and excavation works continue, both in Iraq and in Kuwait.

Kuwait is playing a supporting role to Iraq, showing understanding for its humanitarian and economic challenges. Kuwait approved for the third time the request made by Iraq to the Governing Council of the UNCC a one-year deferral of compensation payments.

Kuwait has also dedicated \$30 million to the United Nations agencies to ease humanitarian crisis faced by Iraq and alleviate suffering of its internally displaced people.

And there was ample opportunity for certain groups. It is my understanding that there were meetings between representatives of civil society organizations. Also, I'm aware that family ties on two sides of the border gave opportunity to people to make mutual visits, which was not always the case in the past years. I believe that this, coupled with more relaxed atmosphere between Iraq and all its neighbors, will eventually yield better prospect for reestablishing close ties between the two countries as they should be.

You mentioned earlier what you were the most proud of in 2016? What were the lowest points in the past year?

Evidently the most tragic moment in 2016 was the loss of our colleague Amer al-Kaisy. We also had setbacks in areas that relate

to our activities. We have seen that some of the community conflicts that have been scourge on this country for a long time have flared up in areas like the renewed struggle between Shia and Sunna Turkmen. We have seen that in areas where there was meant to be calm and reestablishing of community life, minority groups have been unable to come together. I'm particularly unhappy about the Yazidis still being so divided and I'm unhappy about the tensions between some minority groups over land and property in the liberated areas.

But overall what was the worst news was that the year has seen the unearthing of mass graves in many areas, which is another proof of the horrors that were visited upon minority communities in particular. Our limited ability to contribute to legal process that would be capable of guaranteeing accountability for the perpetrators of these crimes is something that is weighing very heavily on us. Until now it has not been clearly decided how the perpetrators of these crimes would be brought to justice. This is something that will be one of the major topics of our work in 2017. Not just documentation, but finding ways of establishing those mechanisms that might contribute to the rendering of justice.

What are the UNAMI political component's priorities in 2017?

National reconciliation is essential for post-Daesh Iraq and it should be an Iraqi-led and Iraqi-owned process. UNAMI will continue supporting and facilitating an inclusive dialogue between all Iraqi components. We believe that community-based reconciliation is the future of post-Daesh Iraq and it lies with full respect to the diversity of the country. Achieving reconciliation leads to long-term stability and peaceful coexistence which are the prerequisite for economic prosperity and stability.

The centerpiece of the Mission's political activity is contribution to the cause of National Reconciliation, now in the context of the Historic Settlement Initiative, a bold project meant to bring together all sides of Iraq's long standing political conflict for a lasting settlement to major outstanding issues. In this regard UNAMI is closely cooperating with the National Reconciliation Committee of the Prime Minister's Office. We expect important progress here after the elimination of Daesh.

The political future of Ninewa and liberated areas of the DIBS is a concern to be addressed. The future of this broad area



restored to freedom from ISIL rule is one that should be determined by its people. Support should be offered to the current governance structure. UNAMI will be an important partner to the Government of Iraq in its quest to manage this complicated process.

In the context of Baghdad-Erbil relations, the Mission will help resolve a wide range of outstanding issues (oil and revenue sharing, Peshmerga budget, DIBs, etc.).

Regional engagement will continue as the Middle East benefits from a stable Iraq. Stabilization efforts mitigate risks and threats of terrorism to the region, and the neighborhood of Iraq needs to be cognizant of this.

How do you see it achieved? Do you predict a rough road ahead?

On both accounts I predict that the conditions for the implementation will improve. What we have seen over the last month in terms of progress in national reconciliation is promising. I believe that soon we will have the main components of the grand plan for national reconciliation constituted with two major sides contributing their visions, and also hopefully the third partner, and subsequently all the components of the major ethno sectarian groups coming together and being a partner to the dialog. This is hopefully the central project to this country for this year.

Beyond that, preparations for the elections, whether or not they will take place this year, remain major commitment because they need so much work to be done. Both in terms of legal preparations, talking here about the formulating of an electoral law that will guarantee free and fair and transparent elections for the country, to the logistics of the electoral process, which needs not less than the renewal of the voters registry in many areas. And also preparations for the technical aspects of the elections. Like organizing electronic voting and making sure that all

other requirements for the elections to be held would be in place.

As a big connoisseur of Arabic language and culture how do you comment damage to the Iraqi heritage?

It is one of our most important tasks to help Iraq to assess the damage first and then to draw up plans on protection and rehabilitation of its cultural heritage exposed to the vandalism of Daesh. It is not only a matter of physical work but it has to incorporate very broad plan of education and cultural activities that should go hand in hand with the project of national reconciliation.

I have repeatedly pointed out in my meetings over reconciliation with our Iraqi partners that education has to be at the center of all efforts to reestablish the climate of national unity, cohesion and create a narrative acceptable to all on the past history of this country, which is still being seen from many angles and which proved to be a divisive matter that has to be overcome now. So, I think that a common cultural heritage that is based on diversity and is forged in the spirit of inclusivity should be one of the answers to the terrorist challenge. And I have already shared with some of my Iraqi counterparts a vision of how the uncontested Mesopotamian past of this country could be one of the vehicles for joining together the ranks of this society.

Is there anything that you would like to add?

I want to say that 2017 will be a watershed year and I can only hope that our role which is deemed of great significance by Iraqi society will be served by those changes that we anticipate in the organization making our work more efficient. However, I'm fearful that the funding of our work might be jeopardized by unfavorable international policy circumstances and also by the organization being overstretched with multitude of tasks that create difficult situation for us in terms of resources.

Interview with

Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator

LISE GRANDE



In 2016, what did you see as the most significant issues for the United Nations Country Team?

It is important to distinguish between the humanitarian operation and the work being done by the UN Country Team (UNCT) on stabilization, reform and development. (The UN system in Iraq includes the UNCT and UNAMI. All of the 23 UN agencies working in Iraq are part of the UN Country Team. UNAMI, which operates under a mandate from the UN Security Council, is not a part of the UNCT.)

As is the case everywhere, humanitarian

action in Iraq is based on the principles of humanity, independence, impartiality and neutrality. Stabilization is different. In Iraq, UNDP's Stabilization Funding Facility helps the Government to achieve political priorities in newly liberated areas as decided by Governorate Command Cells. Development efforts differ in other ways. Support for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which were unanimously adopted in 2015 by all UN member states, are based on multi-stakeholder partnerships with the Government of Iraq, Kurdistan Regional Government, the Council of Representatives, Governorates and civil society and

framed by parameters established by the UN's General Assembly.

The UN uses different instruments and frameworks for each line of effort. In the case of humanitarian action, partners use the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), which is issued at the start of the year, to channel support. The main instrument for stabilization in Iraq is UNDP's Funding Facility. Development support is channeled through the United Nations Development Action Framework (UNDAF) which is aligned with the Government's National Development Plan and other nation-wide planning and policy frameworks.

During 2016, more than 80 percent of all UN programmes focused on addressing the humanitarian crisis, which remained one of the largest, and most volatile in the world. There were two major humanitarian priorities during 2016—helping people who were displaced or in host communities, and the crisis in Mosul.

Between January 2016 and December, 800,000 Iraqi civilians were newly displaced, bringing the total number of people who have fled their homes since the rise of ISIL to well over five million. In June, when Fallujah was retaken, humanitarian agencies rushed to build emergency camps and provide assistance to the 100,000 people who fled their homes. Humanitarians did the same in Qayyara and Shirgat and in numerous other retaken towns along the Tigris corridor.

At the same time that humanitarians were supporting newly displaced families, they continued to do everything possible to help the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government provide protection and assistance people who were already displaced or living in host communities. At least 2.2 million people received some form of humanitarian assistance every month. By the end of the year, partners had reached six million Iraqis, providing food parcels, shelter, health care, education, psycho-social support, water and sanitation, emergency kits, and specialized services for the victims of trauma and sexual and gender-based violence.

Humanitarians began preparing for Mosul in February. Under Government leadership, partners developed a contingency plan with three scenarios—a most likely case, a best case and a worst case. The most likely scenario assumed that 450,000 civilians might flee their homes; the worst case assumed that 750,000 civilians would flee, the best case, 200,000. Even in a best case, Mosul would be the largest operation in the world in 2016.

In July, after the plan was endorsed by the Government, the Humanitarian Country Team issued an appeal at the Washington Conference, asking donors to provide funding for new camps and additional supplies. Donors were generous and when the fighting started in the Ninewa Plains and eastern Mosul, humanitarians were ready. During the first months of the military campaign, humanitarians were able to reach 230,000 civilians who fled to emergency camps and 550,000 people who stayed in their homes in eastern Mosul. All forms of assistance were provided



including food, water, shelter, health care, sanitation, education, emergency kits and specialized protection support. Stabilization points were established on the frontlines for people with traumatic wounds. Hundreds of complex surgeries were performed at a fully equipped field hospital, which was erected in Bartella in only a few days.

For the second year in a row, the Iraq humanitarian appeal has been the highest funded, in percentage terms, in the world. Humanitarian agencies are very grate-

ful to donors for their support but there were times during the year when partners didn't have the funding they needed. In June, a number of health clinics and front-line support services had to be cut-back, or stopped because of lack of funding. This was very difficult. Every time a clinic closed, hundreds of people who needed care didn't receive it. Humanitarian partners did their very best during 2016 to meet the needs of Iraqis who needed help but more could have been done if more resources were available.

The humanitarian crisis created by the ongoing conflict with ISIL (Daesh) is one of the largest in the world. How have partners responded?

The cost of the conflict on Iraqi civilians has been enormous. Millions of families have been impacted and hundreds of thousands of people have suffered terribly. A massive national humanitarian effort has been underway since 2014; 10 million Iraqis have received aid. More than 80 percent of humanitarian assistance is provided by the Government of Iraq, and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Hundreds of community groups, mosques and religious endowments, and tens of thousands of families provide assistance every day to fellow Iraqis. Humanitarian partners, including UN agencies and non-governmental organizations help to cover the gaps that national institutions, for whatever reason, are unable to fill.

The Government is giving very high priority to stabilization in newly liberated areas. How is the UN helping?

In June 2015, the Prime Minister asked UNDP to establish a Stabilization Funding Facility to help the Government improve conditions as quickly as possible in newly liberated areas. The Facility started operations in seven towns, expanding to 19 cities and districts during 2016. By the end of the year, more than 500 projects were simultaneously underway.

The approach is based on priorities established by the Government. In each of the provinces that have been impacted by ISIL, a Government Command Cell has been created, chaired by the Governor and including members of the Security Forces, religious and tribal leaders and representatives from Provincial Councils. Command Cells are responsible for stabilizing an area; they develop plans and mobilize national resources to execute these plans. If Command Cells need help, they ask the Facility.

Under the terms of the Facility, UNDP is able to repair damaged grids, including the transport, water, sewage and electricity systems. UNDP can also help businesses reopen and put thousands of people to work on public schemes helping to clear rubble and upgrade public buildings. The Facility can be used to boost capacity in the local government, promote reconciliation and rehabilitate public infrastructure including hospitals, clinics, schools and pharmacies.

Requests to the Facility vary. In the case of Tikrit, the Command Cell asked the Facil-



ity to create jobs for hundreds of young people and to help businesses reopen their doors. The Facility responded within weeks, providing cash grants - not loans—to small businesses to restock and employing hundreds of youth to clear rubble, paint-over slogans and upgrade public buildings including Tikrit University. In the case of Ramadi, the Command Cell asked the Facility to re-establish the electricity grid, the water and sewage systems and also to put people to work. In Fallujah, the Command Cell requested the Facility to help repair damaged bridges, hospitals and houses and to provide direct cash support to women-headed households.

The Facility works through the private sector in newly liberated areas. Local contractors, not outside parties, are selected through rigorous competitive bidding

processes. Contractors hire local workers, helping to jump-start the city's economy. In Tikrit, the teaching hospital is being rehabilitated by Iraqi contractors employing workers from Tikrit. In Ramadi, damaged houses are being repaired by Ramadi contractors using labour from the neighborhood itself. This is a winning strategy. The people who live and work in newly liberated communities are rebuilding their city; they see that the Government is working for them and gain a sense of confidence that things are going in the right direction.

Other parts of the UN system are also working in newly liberated areas including FAO, which is helping to restore agricultural systems, IOM, which is working on reconciliation in hard-hit areas, UNICEF, which is helping to reopen schools, and UNHABITAT, which is helping to rebuild damaged

houses.

The impact of stabilization has been significant. More than one million displaced people returned to their homes in 2016, the majority to Anbar, but also to cities and districts in Diyala and Salah al Din, and elsewhere. Conditions are difficult in many liberated towns, but enormous progress has been, and is continuing to be made.

For 2017 what will be the main stabilization challenges?

Stabilization in Mosul will be the largest stabilization challenge ever undertaken by the UN globally. There will be two parts to the operation—eastern Mosul and the Ninewa Plains and western Mosul. In eastern Mosul and the Ninewa Plains, priority is being given to rehabilitating grids and putting people to work. The operation in western Mosul is complex and difficult. Of the 54 residential districts in western Mosul, 38 are either heavily or moderately damaged. Major rehabilitation is required in every single sector—from the water and sewage systems to the electricity grids. Preliminary damage and loss assessments confirm that at least 48,000 houses need to be repaired. More than 700,000 people are displaced from their homes in western Mosul—helping to lay the conditions for their return will be one of Iraq's highest priorities in 2017. The UN will be there to help.

While there was an understandable focus in 2016 on the conflict with ISIL, the humanitarian response and immediate stabilization activities, what do you feel was the most significant progress made on the development agenda in 2016?

The Government has developed a new five-year National Development Plan for the post-ISIL period including a Poverty Reduction Strategy, Reconstruction framework and a series of initiatives to fight corruption and modernize and diversify the private sector. Preparing the Plan during the Mosul operation shows the commitment and determination of the Government to rebuild the country and improve governance as soon as ISIL is defeated. The Prime Minister's reform agenda has also continued to gain momentum. Fighting corruption is hard—it's the hardest thing a Government does. But it is essential and wholly positive that this important agenda continues to move forward. At the request of the Government, the UN Country Team has supported all of these initiatives, providing experts and guidance and working with line ministries in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government to promote anti-corruption, revitalize the agri-



cultural sector, improve service delivery, expand environmental protection and accelerate security sector reform.

2016 was a rich yet challenging year for Iraq and for the UN family in the country. What were you most proud of in 2016?

During 2016, the UN agencies which make up the UN Country Team, and which are distinct from UNAMI, helped millions of displaced persons and hundreds of thousands of people in host-communities through the humanitarian operation. Working closely with the Government, the UNCT helped nearly a million people who returned to their homes through stabilization and recovery efforts. At the same time, humanitarian partners prepared for and helped to launch one of the world's largest humanitarian operations in Mosul.

Before Mosul started, many—in Iraq and around the world—predicted a humanitarian catastrophe. There have been many problems, but the collective efforts made by the Government, the Iraqi Security Forces, the Coalition and humanitarian partners to protect civilians and ensure they receive the assistance they are entitled to under international humanitarian law are exceptional. The Government said to humanitarians at the start of the operation, “we are going to need your help, please don't let us down.” We have done our best. We've worked together and given the highest priority to the civilians impacted the most by the conflict. This doesn't always happen and the fact that it has in Mosul has ensured that the Iraqis who need help have received it.

2016 was an exceptional year for Iraq and



an exceptional year for the UN Country Team.

What were the major obstacles you faced in 2016 and how did you overcome them?

Unlike UNAMI, the UN agencies that form the UN Country Team do not receive funding from UN Headquarters. All of the resources agencies receive are provided voluntarily by donors. It is a huge, massive challenge to mobilize this support. If you look across the world right now there are many humanitarian crises. Because Iraq is a middle-income country with an advanced oil sector, donors are sometimes reluctant to provide funding. This is understandable under normal conditions but what has been happening in Iraq since the rise of ISIL isn't normal. The Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government are defeating ISIL on behalf of the world. This is the time to stand in solidarity with the people of Iraq. This is a powerful argument and has helped to generate generous funding for humanitarian and stabilization efforts. We will be doing everything we can to encourage the international community to continue to stand with Iraq in the years ahead.



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The Office of Political Affairs also engaged civil society actors through a series of roundtables on national reconciliation, to solicit the views of community leaders, academics, youth, women, and intellectuals across the country

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Office of Political Affairs

Interview with

Director of the Office of Political Affairs, UNAMI

MANOJ MATHEW

What were the biggest achievements of OPA in 2016?

2016 was a face-paced and exciting year politically in which Iraq witnessed huge military gains on the battlefield against ISIL, loud calls for reform from the streets to the very centre of the political sphere, the ramping up of national reconciliation efforts, and the passing of key legislation by Parliamentarians.

During the course of the last twelve months, in support of efforts led by SRSG Ján Kubiš, the Office of Political Affairs has worked closely with the Iraqi Government to support their work in a variety of areas, notably, to advance reconciliation in the country, both at the national and local level. This has been a key priority for the Office and remains so for the year ahead.

Of specific note in 2016 was the development by the National Alliance of a vision document as to how reconciliation in Iraq could be shaped. This National Settlement Initiative has triggered intensive discus-

sions across Iraq with all components providing their views on how the next steps of this process could look. The Initiative is Iraqi inspired, drawn and owned - and we are working to assist in bringing in different groups including the Sunni component, Kurds, minority groups, women, and youth, to develop a common vision on how to proceed with this long and hard fought for significant step forward.

To assist in this task the Office of Political Affairs has a wide network of Liaison Officers working across the governorates, who continued in 2016 their vital role as experts on the ground, undertaking outreach at the local level - particularly in meeting with Provincial Council members and administrative figures, and tribal groups.

In addition to high-level political engagement, a number of projects took place involving a wide range of Iraqi actors took place last year. From 2 to 10 February, UNAMI marked Interfaith Harmony Week with a number of events organised in Najaf,

Baghdad, and Erbil, aiming to promote co-existence, cohesion, and forgiveness, and reconciliation at all levels of society. Community members including politicians, civil society representatives, youth groups and cultural leaders among others spoke of the importance of inclusive dialogue and the need to come up with durable solutions to help those displaced due to the scourge of ISIL.

On 12 March, a conference titled “The establishment of the Civil Peace and Social Coexistence Network” took place involving 100 representatives from civil society organisations. The event was jointly organised with the Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation of the Prime Minister’s Office and the Office for Political Affairs, and facilitated discussions on participant’s roles in political and community reconciliation initiatives and combatting societal divisions.

With a number of pro-reform protests taking place around the country, notably in

the first half of 2016, the Office of Political Affairs supported the SRSG in his efforts to de-escalate a situation which saw the Council of Representatives unable to convene for a period of time. The Office met with a number of political, security, religious, and community leaders, including protest organisers, to urge for calm and restraint, as well as respect for Iraq's constitutional institutions, the law, and the right to peaceful protest.

The ongoing fight against ISIL in Iraq during 2016 has been a dominating factor in our engagement with interlocutors. Of particular concern has been the grave impact of the current conflict on civilians, notably minority communities.

The UN has a unique role to play in Iraq as an impartial body, and in this context, initiated outreach to different armed groups under the umbrella of the Popular Mobilisation Forces to better understand their plans and goals going forward. This initiative was welcomed by group members as well as by Member States.

On 10 August, the Office of Political Affairs participated in the Second International Conference on Psychological and Media Operations to Counter Da'esh, hosted by the Government of Iraq in Baghdad.

The Office of Political Affairs also engaged civil society actors through a series of roundtables on national reconciliation, to solicit the views of community leaders, academics, youth, women, and intellectuals across the country. Three roundtables of the series, known as "Iraq-After-Conflict" were held during November and December in Erbil, Fallujah and Karbala. The Office also planned on organising youth forums in a number of governorates to incorporate their voices into national reconciliation processes (the "Iraq: Youth and Coexistence" project was launched in 2017 - see below)

On 2 December, as part of the promotion of cohesion, peaceful coexistence, and national reconciliation, UNAMI marked the International Day for Tolerance with an event attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including religious and cultural leaders, diplomats, civil society representatives and youth groups. In his speech, my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance underlined that the healing of the wounds inflicted by ISIL and previous conflicts could only be achieved by celebrating diversity and promoting the values of tolerance, unity, and compassion.

2016 saw considerable legislative progress in the Council of Representatives. On 30 July and 25 August respectively, parliamentarians passed two important pieces of legislation, a law to ban the Ba'ath Party and a general amnesty law, both part of the of the political agreement of 2014 and the Government programme. The passage of these laws required substantial compromises on both sides, and the fact that this was possible is heartening. The Office of Political Affairs continued its work in 2016 in collaboration with the Dutch and German Governments in a project supporting national co-existence through the adoption of legislation. This project continues to reinforce our relationship with the parliamentary institutions and strengthening cooperation with the political blocs.

What are OPA's key priorities for the year ahead?

Iraq continues to face challenges within its political sphere. Shifting alliances and transitory alignments will set the theme for the coming year ahead with elections on the horizon, and the need for politicians to agree upon and finalise the electoral legal framework remains a priority for the early months of 2017. The Office of Political Affairs continues to support the Iraqi Government's national reconciliation agenda, including through engagement with all components of Iraqi society to support a national settlement.

In support of the Office's ongoing work, plans are underway for the opening of the Office of Political Affairs' newest office in the city of Najaf, the seat of the Shi'a Marja'iyah. In addition, at this momentous time of upheaval in the Middle East, with Iraq placed strategically at the centre of a sensitive regional balance, UNAMI's Liaison Offices in Tehran and Amman will continue to provide valuable political insight and outreach in 2017.

Reconciliation at both the community and national levels is the only way to make the military victories against ISIL sustainable, and to ensure peace and unity in Iraq. In this context, the Office of Political Affairs has started 2017 by organising a forum under the theme "Iraq: Youth and Coexistence" aimed at presenting voices of the young generation in the national reconciliation process. The first of a series of cross-country sessions was held on 28 January in Basra. Participants highlighted the importance of the role of youth in the future of Iraq and put forward recommendations that are to be discussed further during a

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national conference in May. The forum, organised by the Office of Political Affairs in collaboration with the Iraqi Al-Amal Association, brought together approximately 120 participants aged between 18-35 from the southern governorates of Basra, Misan, Dhi Qar, and Muthanna. Erbil hosted the second forum on 18 February for young people from Ninawa, Erbil, and Dohuk governorates.

On 4 February, the Office for Political Affairs organised in Kirkuk the fourth in the "Iraq after Conflict" roundtable series. Attendees included members of civil society organisations, Provincial Council members, minority religious leaders, and academics. The discussion focused on their concerns and ideas for governing Kirkuk in the future, with a focus on stability in Kirkuk, the prevention of tribal reprisals post-liberation, and the impact of Baghdad-Erbil relations on Kirkuk.

Since the establishment of the UN National Reconciliation Task Force in 2016, the Office of Political Affairs has played a central role in activating UN-wide coordination, in cooperation with the UN Country Team. UNAMI as such has become to work more efficiently with others members of the "UN Family" on the issue of national reconciliation.

Electoral Assistance Office



Interview with

Principal Electoral Advisor, Head of Integrated Electoral Assistance Team

AAMIR ARAIN

What has been the greatest achievement of the UNAMI Electoral Assistance Office in 2016?

Elections resumed prominence as one of the core agenda of Iraqi political discourse in 2016. There were efforts initiated at the highest governmental levels, including initiatives by the three Presidencies, to reach an understanding on crucial topics such as the schedule of the elections and on proposals for amending the electoral and IHEC laws. Not surprisingly, discussions among Iraqis on these issues are still evolving and there is still no final decision. Under the guidance of the SRSg, the Electoral Assistance Office engaged with interlocutors dealing on the subject, including members of the Legal Committee in the Council of Representatives, the Presidency Office, the Council of Ministers, civil society organizations and women's groups. EAO's approach has consistently been on providing relevant global comparative experiences and options while reiterating that decisions on these matters are for Iraqi authorities to make based on consensus and in line with constitutional and legal parameters.

In 2016, IHEC focused on preparations for the Provincial Council elections, although the schedule for such is yet to be finalized. A working operational timeline was developed and served as guide in the implementation of several activities, including the update of the voter registry that took place in August 2016, the ongoing voter biometric data collection, and the registration of political parties in accordance with

the Law on Political Parties (No. 36 of 2015). Throughout this processes, UNAMI extended policy and operational advice to IHEC with the aim of promoting the inclusiveness of voter registration and electoral processes, particularly for women, minorities and internally displaced persons. UNAMI electoral experts worked closely with the Board of Commissioners and the various IHEC operational departments implementing these various activities.

What was the greatest challenge for your team?

One of the greatest learnings so far, working on elections in Iraq, is to have that readiness for surprises. This is true given the constant fluidity of discussions regarding the schedule of elections and of proposals for amending the electoral law. Often, what you hear presently as an agreement will the next day quickly evolve into something else. This is true for example when on 10 November 2016, there was an announcement that political blocs have already agreed to hold the elections for provincial councils and the Council of Representatives simultaneously, only to be announced on the same day, that this is not so. This uncertainty affects electoral preparations and in planning the allocation of staffing and the resources.

A number of locations in Iraq continue to be challenging theater for electoral operations, particularly as security remains volatile in Mosul and other areas. There is also uncertainty regarding elections in Kirkuk. Finally, while there is a standing MoU between the IHEC and K-IHEC, the fluid political

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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

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situation in the region and the current state of the K-IHEC have made it difficult to proceed in implementing the MoU and in further defining EAO engagement on the matter.

What is on the electoral agenda?

2017 is expected to be a busy year in terms of electoral preparations on many fronts. The provincial council elections are due originally in April 2017 but talks, though not yet finalized, are for such elections to be held in September 2017.

The fate of the current Board of Commissioners will also be up for discussion – either to have the mandate of the current one extended or for a new Board of Commissioners to be appointed instead. A lot will however be determined by whether the IHEC Law will be amended or not, as there are still standing proposals in the CoR, particularly on the composition, size and manner of appointment of IHEC Commissioners.

Preparations for the 2018 Council of Representatives elections will also commence in 2017, including updates of the voter registry for the purpose and the registration of political parties and the nomination of candidates.

What about the UN's role in this process?

The United Nations provides electoral assistance to the Commission through its Integrated Electoral Assistance Team throughout the process. 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 participates in Board of Commissioners meetings and conducts regular discussions with senior IHEC officials regarding policy and management issues affecting IHEC and its electoral preparations. At the same time, UNAMI electoral experts provide technical advice to IHEC counterparts in certain thematic areas, as identified jointly by IHEC and UNAMI.

UNAMI and UN Women 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?

Both the international community and the United Nations would like to see an IHEC that is professionally managing elections in Iraq. It is important that IHEC attains a level of credibility as an institution that has sufficient capability to conduct its affairs free from political pressures and in an accountable and transparent manner. UN played a key role in the past, but now is the right time for IHEC and other Iraqi institutions to assume greater roles.

The selection process for the next set of IHEC Commissioners will be critical, in terms of defining how the IHEC will be managed over the next five years. UNAMI will seek to engage the Council of Representatives committee to encourage them to adopt certain criteria for selection, including greater women's participation, transparency and merit based selection.



Human Rights Office

Interview with

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

FRANCESCO MOTTA

The Human Rights Office plays a key role in promoting equality and protecting the most vulnerable in Iraq. How does the Human Rights Office manage to achieve this delicate yet crucial mission? How was the year 2016 in Iraq in terms of human rights?

The human rights situation remains fragile. Armed conflict has taken a shocking toll on civilians and on all communities in Iraq and has had a deteriorating effect on a range of other human rights. Detrimentially impacted by conflict, terrorism and violence have been women and children, people with disabilities, members of diverse ethnic and religious communities, and aged persons, etc. Iraq also continues to face challenges in terms of access to

justice, compliance with due process and fair trials standards in criminal justice, lack of equal access to basic services, and issues around the respect and protection of the rights of women, children, people with disabilities, diverse ethnic and religious communities, and freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

Assisting the Government and people of Iraq meet these challenges is extremely complex and difficult, but there are a range of principles that underline all our activities, the most important of which are: 1) empowerment – all activities are done in partnership with Iraqi Government, civil society and other stakeholders to ensure that Iraqis themselves are responsible for identifying the challenges that the coun-

try faces in terms of the respect for human rights and rule of law, and in developing and implementing the solutions to those challenges; and 2) all activities of OHCHR/ UNAMI HRO aim to address root causes of human rights and rule of law problems, not merely the symptoms of those root causes. This is to ensure that the activities of UNAMI HRO will lead to lasting and durable solutions that will continue to assist the Government and people of Iraq build an inclusive democratic state to which the respect for human rights and the rule of law is fundamental and in which all its people can participate fully without discrimination.

How is the Human Rights Office addressing these problems?

There are a number of principles that underline all policies, actions and activities of the UNAMI Human Rights Office in order to address the root causes of the problems Iraq faces and to find durable solutions to those problems.

1. OHCHR/UNAMI HRO conducts its activities as inclusively as possible of all other relevant stakeholders, based on appropriate consultation and participation (Government, institutional, civil society, religious, cultural, ethnic, gender, disability, age, etc).
2. OHCHR/UNAMI HRO conducts its activities and programs in a manner that empowers "at risk" or marginalized groups (women, children, people with disabilities, members of ethnic, religious or sexual minorities) by ensuring that they are fully consulted and participate in identifying the problems that affect them, and in identifying and implementing the solutions aimed at addressing those problems.
3. OHCHR/UNAMI HRO conducts its activities in a manner that empowers civil society to the greatest extent possible through active engagement with Iraqi civil society actors, so that they are fundamental participants in all policies, programmes and activities of OHCHR/UNAMI HRO.
4. OHCHR/UNAMI HRO conducts its activities in all governorates of Iraq that are not directly affected by armed conflict. In areas of the country affected by armed conflict and violence, UNAMI has established networks of Iraqi citizens through which it will continue to monitor and report on the human rights situation (including the impact of terrorism and armed conflict on civilians) and to implement activities through local actors within those areas to the greatest extent possible.
5. OHCHR/UNAMI HRO works with all relevant stakeholders (UN, international community, civil society, Government) to facilitate multi-dimensional approaches to addressing the root causes of human rights problems and to ensure concrete, lasting results.
6. OHCHR/UNAMI HRO works to address the sense of victimization and grievance felt by all sectors of Iraqi society owing to decades of human rights violations and abuses, by developing appropriate and inclusive transitional justice mechanisms, but in a positive, beneficial, and inclusive way that encourages community reconciliation



and supports national reconciliation.

In implementing these principles, OHCHR/UNAMI HRO engages in a range of activities in relation to the key areas identified in its program of action, and where appropriate and to the fullest extent possible, in partnership with members of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), international community, Iraqi civil society, and the government of Iraq generally. These activities include:

- monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation throughout Iraq (including the effects of armed conflict, terrorism and violence on civilians; prisons and judicial sector; etc.);
- consultation with Iraqi stakeholders to identify gaps in the respect and protection of human rights and to identify and implement solutions to those issues;
- advocacy on human rights issues and their solutions with a range of stakeholders;
- provision of technical assistance on ways to address gaps or implement solutions (Government/civil society/international);
- training and capacity building on human rights (Government/State institutions, civil society);
- public outreach, awareness raising, and empowerment activities (civil society);
- support to international human rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council, Special Procedures (including country visits) and Treaty Bodies.

OHCHR/UNAMI HRO also provides human rights technical assistance and advice to the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) and to the UNCT (particularly in relation to the Human Rights Up Front /HRUF/ policy) to ensure that the promotion of the respect and protection of human rights and the rule of law are fundamental to all policies, programs and activities of the United Nations in Iraq.



What were the Human Rights Office's main achievements in 2016?

Given the ongoing armed conflict, terrorism and acts of violence in Iraq, the singular achievement of UNAMI HRO has been its monitoring and reporting on the impact of such violence on civilians. UNAMI HRO has a complicated network of sources (civilians, security personal, government employees, civil officials, tribal and religious and other community leaders, and civil society actors) located throughout Iraq by which we monitor and verify incidents of armed conflict, terrorism or violence, and gauge the impact on ordinary Iraqi civilians in terms of loss of life and injuries, destruction of property and infrastructure, loss or impairment of livelihoods, and lack or impairment of access to basic services. This information, including human rights abuses and crimes committed by ISIL against civilians in areas under its control, is gathered in real time and has enabled the mission to provide immediate updates to all relevant stakeholders - Government, humanitarian actors, members of the international community, civil society - to assist them develop appropriate responses in order to minimize the impact of violence on civilians where possible. UNAMI HRO also undertook vigorous advocacy with the Government of Iraq on the need to ensure that the protection of civilians is at the forefront of military planning and conduct of military operations which bore fruit, at least in the conduct of operations to retake Mosul from ISIL and as evidenced by the numerous statements made by the Prime Minister of Iraq and other high officials reiterating that the respect and protection of human rights and the protection of human rights would be paramount in the conduct of military operations.

Also human rights abuses continue to detrimentally impact on a number of vulnerable groups, including women, children, diverse ethnic and religious minority communities, people with disabilities and aged people. UNAMI HRO has been



actively engaged with these groups in monitoring and reporting on the impact of violence on them, but also in promoting policies that provide appropriate humanitarian, medical and other forms of assistance to the victims and survivors of those human rights abuses and violations, that promote the respect and protection of their rights, and which promote accountability for the perpetrators of human rights violations abuses and crimes. To this end, UNAMI HRO has been engaged in documenting human rights violations and abuses, including conducting training with judicial investigators on appropriate standards of documentation, has undertaken advocacy on formal and non-formal justice mechanisms, including restorative justice processes for the victims and survivors of violations and abuses that aim to assist the rehabilitation of them and their communities, and proposed mechanisms for transitional justice processes. UNAMI HRO has also worked with civil society representatives on a range of legislative reforms aimed at protecting women and children from sexual and gender based violence, preventing such violence from taking place and which will ensure that the perpetrators of such violence are held accountable. UNAMI HRO has also been working with representatives of ethnic and religious minority communities to develop legislation that will end discrimination and promote their security and respect for their rights and facilitate the full and equal participation in the political, social and cultural life of Iraq. It is hoped that this legislation will be adopted by the Council of Representatives in the coming year.

More quietly, UNAMI HRO has been working to develop the capacity of Government institutions, the judiciary, investigators and police, and civil society throughout the country to assist them identify gaps in the respect and protection of human rights and the rule of law and how to develop and implement solutions to those problems – including on the rights of persons with disabilities, freedom of expression and access to basic services.

A key focus has been on engaging with youth groups and youth bloggers to raise their awareness of how they can contribute to improving the respect and protection of human rights in Iraq. UNAMI HRO in partnership with UNOPS has also been providing technical and other support to the Committee of Experts appointed by the Council of Representatives to nominate the new Board of Commissioners for the Iraqi High Commissioner for Human Rights. It is hoped that the process will be successfully concluded early in 2017 when Parliament will endorse the new Board of Commissioners.

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?

As noted, a key focus of UNAMI HRO is promoting the respect and protection of the rights of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities. UNAMI HRO has been actively monitoring the impact of armed conflict, terrorism and violence on these communities –which have suffered differentially and disproportionately in relation to the current armed conflict since many of them are located in areas that were seized by ISIL in June 2014 onwards. ISIL has particularly singled out these communities in a systematic and widespread campaign that aims to permanently destroy, subjugate or expel these communities and which may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Hundreds of thousands of members of these communities have become IDPS in other areas of Iraq, while thousands of others remain trapped in areas under ISIL's control, where they are subjected to abuses and crimes that almost beggar description: sexual enslavement, rape, physical and sexual violence, kidnapping, murder, and destruction of their communities and wanton destruction their places of religious and cultural significance. UNAMI HRO has been working tirelessly since the current conflict commenced to monitor, document, and report on the impact

of these human rights abuses and crimes on members of these diverse communities, and has been instrumental in bringing the plight of these communities to the attention of the international community. UNAMI HRO has also been working constructively with these communities to document violations and abuses committed against them, and to promote accountability and justice measures (formal and informal) that will ensure justice for the victims and survivors of such crimes, but ensure accountability for the perpetrators. In carrying out its monitoring work, and as a member of the protection cluster, UNAMI HRO also refers individual cases to Government or civil society humanitarian service providers to ensure that they receive appropriate medical, psychological or other necessary assistance and support. We are also actively engaged with these communities to ensure that they can return to their places of origin, once liberated from ISIL, in dignity and security and in full compliance with humanitarian principles and on developing programmes to restore and rehabilitate their communities.

UNAMI HRO is working in partnership with representatives of minority ethnic and religious communities to develop policies to promote their security and enhance respect for their rights. Included in this is a draft bill that UNAMI HRO is developing with civil society organisations that aims to address and prevent discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or other differences. Also in development is a comprehensive package of legislative and policy reforms that aim to ensure the protection of the rights of minorities in relation to issues such as security, access to justice, access to basic services, education, media and communications, etc.

UNAMI HRO is also working on activities to rebuild trust within and between various ethnic and religious communities that has been destroyed by decades of violence and human rights violations and abuses. Among these activities are intra and inter community dialogues, focusing on human rights and rule of law issues, including access to justice, as a means of identifying commonalities that can be built on in a positive manner to promote community reconciliation and national reconciliation.

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

Women continue to face serious chal-

allenges in the respect and protection of their rights and in participating fully and equally and without discrimination in the political, social and economic life of Iraq. They have also been differentially impacted by armed conflict, terrorism and acts of violence, and continue to be subjected to sexual and gender based violence. Currently Iraq does not have an adequate legislative framework that works to prevent sexual and gender based violence, protect the victims and survivors of such violence, or that ensures accountability of the perpetrators. Outside of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the Iraqi Criminal Code still sanctions honour in mitigation of crimes of violence committed against family members and there are other discriminatory provisions of the criminal and civil law which detrimentally impact on women or discriminate against them. Women's representation in Government, law enforcement and other areas remains inadequate. Owing to the lack of a legislative framework the Government's policy on shelters remains unimplemented and the few shelters that do exist operate without appropriate licenses. In such circumstances, where police are confronted with women seeking protection from sexual or gender based violence, particularly domestic violence, they often have no choice but to return women to situations where they may be at considerable risk, or hold them in police cells for their protection, with few places that are appropriate for their needs, that can guarantee their protection or provide services for their rehabilitation.

UNAMI HRO, in partnership with the UNAMI Gender Advisor, UN Women, UNFPA and other government and civil society partners have been working on a range of activities to promote the respect and protection of the rights of women, and in particular to prevent sexual and gender based violence, to provide appropriate support services to women and children who are the victims or survivors of such violence, and to promote accountability of the perpetrators. Currently, UNAMI HRO is working in partnership with civil society organisations to draft a bill for presentation to the Council of Representatives that will ensure an appropriate legislative framework for the care and protection of women who are subject to sexual and gender based violence and will ensure accountability of the perpetrators. It is hoped that this bill will be presented to the Council of Representatives for consideration in 2017. UNAMI HRO has also been working to train and raise awareness of civil society organisations on women's rights, as well

as with Government stakeholders to promote understanding of international standards in relation to women's rights and their participation in the political, social and economic life of Iraq – as well as with law enforcement officials on appropriate standards for the care and protection of women and children subjected to sexual and gender based violence, particularly domestic violence.

Furthermore, UNAMI HRO has been working with a range of stakeholders to promote programmes aimed at the care and protection and rehabilitation of women who have been subjected to conflict related sexual violence – particularly women and children from diverse ethnic and religious communities. It is essential that these women are not viewed through the lens of being victims, but are empowered as survivors to engage in programmes that assist their recovery and rehabilitation within the context of their families and communities.

Iraq is witnessing the alarming rise in use of death penalty. What can UNAMI do help Iraqi authorities to cope with this issue?

Iraq reintroduced the death penalty in 2005 – and since then (except for 2008) the implantation of death sentences has exponentially increased. This is despite considerable weaknesses in the administration of justice and the criminal justice system, lack of capacity to appropriately investigate crimes, and serious failures in adhering to due process and fair trial standards. A significant concern is the fact that the courts continue to rely on disputed confessions, many of which are alleged to have been obtained through torture and mistreatment, to found convictions and sentences, including death sentences. The Government also consistently fails to inform the public when executions have taken place, disregarding principles of transparency required for the administration of justice and public accountability. There are serious concerns that in such circumstances there will be grave miscarriages of justice and that innocent people will pay the ultimate price. The UNAMI HRO has repeatedly called on the government of Iraq to comply with relevant General Assembly resolutions or to become a party to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by imposing a moratorium on implementation of death sentences with a view to the abolition of the death penalty. However, the Government of Iraq has failed to do so.

In the Kurdistan region of Iraq there has been an unofficial moratorium on implementation of death sentences since 2008. This unofficial moratorium has been largely adhered to except for one case in August 2015 when two individuals were executed, and again in December 2016 when one individual was executed. Both cases involved the murder of children and the Government of the Kurdistan Region indicated that these sentences were implemented in light of the nature of the crimes and to prevent vendetta or further violence from the aggrieved victims' families. Sadly, in the second case there was evidence that the man convicted of the offence may have been intellectually disabled, but this evidence was not properly considered by the court at first instance. Despite this, UNAMI HRO has called on the Government of Kurdistan to reinstitute its moratorium on implementation of death sentences in relation to all cases.

What are the Human Rights Office's priorities in 2017?

OHCHR/UNAMI HRO is focusing its efforts on assisting Iraq address the human rights aspects of the root causes of these violations and abuses which are contributing to terrorism, violence and armed conflict. Addressing these root causes will be fundamental if the country is to break the cycle of violence which afflicts it, and if it is to achieve the overriding objective of developing into a peaceful, democratic and inclusive state built on the rule of law and respect for human rights in which all its citizens fully and equally participate without discrimination.

OHCHR/UNAMI HRO will continue to focus its activities on seven core areas:

1. Protection of civilians from the effects of armed conflict, terrorism and violence
2. Comprehensive Criminal Justice law/institutional reform
3. Transitional Justice mechanisms
4. Comprehensive legal and policy reform on the protection of women and children from SGBV/CRSV
5. Comprehensive legal and policy reform on the protection of minorities and their full and equal participation in the political, economic and social life of Iraq
6. Institutional Capacity Building (NHRI, Committees of Council of Representatives, Judiciary, law enforcement officials, Ministries, etc.)
7. Promotion of Economic Social and Cultural Rights

Integrated Coordination Office for Development and Humanitarian Affairs (ICODHA)

Interview with

Chief of the Integrated Coordination Office for Development and Humanitarian Affairs (ICODHA)

DAVID JOY

ICODHA Office plays a key role in supporting the UN system at the governorate and district level in Iraq through partnerships with Government and key stakeholders.



How was the year 2016 in Iraq in terms of UN partnerships? Did these help to address the crises in the country?

Iraq has continued to face multiple crises in 2016. UN partnerships, which ICODHA supports in every governorate and in districts across the country, have helped to address these. Humanitarian partnerships have made the difference for millions of displaced people. Stabilization partnerships have helped to improve conditions in newly liberated areas and development partnerships have accelerated reforms, promoted good governance and decentralization and laid the groundwork to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Partnerships have had major impact this year. With support from leading countries, the Government has been working in partnership with the IMF to negotiate a Stand-By Agreement to help cover the budget deficit. This complex process has included key reforms which the Government is already implementing. Through a partnership with the Prime Minister's Office, UNDP is supporting the country's reform agenda through a Funding Facility for Economic Reform which identifies and recruits highly qualified international and national experts. UNDP is also helping the Government to reform the customs system and has deployed international experts to the federal Integrity Commission to investigate high-profile corruption cases.

The Kurdistan Region Government and the World Bank have worked together to launch a KRI Roadmap for Economic Reform. Building on the KRG's innovative Vision 2020 Joint Programme Facility Fund, the UN is establishing new funding facility to support the KRG's reform agenda. Other steps are being taken. UN-Habitat is helping the KRG develop legislation to regularize informal settlements, introduce new building codes, and simplify building permit procedures to ensure that new construction meets international standards on climate change mitigation and environmental protection.

When the military campaign against ISIL is over, Iraqis will need to have confidence that their Government is there for them and that major steps are being taken to restructure the economy, attack corruption and improve education and health services. Already, the Government of Iraq is developing its Vision 2030 document, which maps the steps it will be taking to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The Government is also working on

a new Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018 - 2022, a new National Development Plan 2018 - 2022, and a National Reconstruction Framework.

The UN Country Team is committed to supporting these important frameworks through partnerships developed under the auspices of a new Recovery and Resilience Programme and its United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). ICODHA is helping to establish working groups on preventing violent extremism, promoting social protection, curbing community-level violence, and restoring education and health services. Already, these groups are identifying priorities, elaborating strategies and building partnerships to help address the important challenges ahead.

How does ICODHA address these problems?

ICODHA's role is to help establish, build and facilitate partnerships at the governorate and district level. ICODHA is present in all 18 governorates and has an extensive national network that facilitates engagement and partnerships with Governorates, Governors, Provincial Councils, non-government organizations, civil society organizations and all parts of the UN system. ICODHA supports humanitarian, human rights and development engagement, thanks to this network and the expertise of its staff. ICODHA also supports national reconciliation and stabilization efforts, thanks to well established relations with key governmental and community figures, including authorities at the governorate and district levels and with the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC).

ICODHA is key to helping ensure the UN system is more effective and responsive to national priorities. This year, ICODHA has been central to the restructuring the Gender Task Force and has helped to establish a UN Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group. ICODHA serves as the secretariat to the UN Country Team and is the main UN counterpart with the Government on all issues relating to the UN's Recovery and Resilience Programme and its Development Assistance Framework.

What are ICODHA's priorities in 2017?

ICODHA will be very busy during 2017. ICODHA's teams will facilitate and support partnerships and forums at the governorate and district level committed to social inclusion. They will help to identify and advocate for excluded and vulnerable groups, promote and help improve social

conditions for marginalized communities, and promote economic, social, cultural and civil rights of all Iraqis.

ICODHA teams at the governorate level will facilitate and support the efforts of Government, UN Agencies, NGOs and community-based organizations to ensure the safe, voluntary and dignified return of IDPs to newly accessible areas.

ICODHA will also play the major role in facilitating and supporting partnerships and forums which promote women's participation and gender equality. ICODHA will support the UN system to monitor and report on the implementation of the Joint Communiqué between the United Nations and the Government of Iraq on the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence. It will also support UNWOMEN to monitor key gender indicators, using its staff in all 18 governorates.

One of ICODHA's main functions will be to leading the elaboration of the UN Country Team's Recovery and Resilience Programme in support of the Government's National Reconstruction Framework and National Development Plan 2018 - 2022. ICODHA is being asked to serve as the secretariat to the new Development Partners Forum bringing together members of the international community in support of the Government's development and reform agenda and it will continue to facilitate evidence-based planning and advocacy by supporting the Central Statistical Organization's (CSO) data revolution initiative.

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ICODHA will play the major role in facilitating and supporting partnerships and forums which promote women's participation and gender equality.

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FAO in Iraq

Three years of continuous conflict and economic stagnation in Iraq has resulted in 11 million people requiring humanitarian assistance. In total, 3.03 million Iraqis are displaced and around 1.37 million people have returned to retaken areas. Some 2.9 million people – 77 percent of whom are women, children or elderly – are food insecure, forced to rely on severe and often irreversible coping strategies. The large number of displaced people, together with refugees from neighbouring countries, puts great pressure on local infrastructure (water, electricity etc.) and already-vulnerable host communities.

The ongoing insecurity, combined with a shortage of water and the lack, or high cost, of agricultural inputs negatively affects the performance of Iraq's agricultural sector. Violence continues to force people to abandon farms and agriculture-based livelihoods. Cropping cycles have been disrupted, and agricultural production has declined by 40 percent. Herders who are unable to feed their livestock are forced to abandon or sell them.

In many retaken areas, infrastructure such as water supplies for agricultural production and domestic use has been damaged or destroyed, as has agricultural equipment. Heavy contamination of retaken areas with unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive devices pose immediate and long-term risks for the environment and the people, including herders and farmers. Many rural families

fleeing conflict are travelling with important livestock assets, with no access to local pastures and fodder supplies. Most of the animals have not been vaccinated since the Islamic State of the Levant (ISIL) took areas of Iraq in 2014. Some animals may be carrying diseases that could spread to other herds and humans. This could have serious socio-economic and public health consequences, and threaten livestock farmers' livelihoods.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as the co-lead agency in Iraq for agriculture, livelihoods and food security, works with other UN agencies and NGOs to provide support to the country's agricultural sector. This includes monitoring and analyzing the status of food security and nutrition, supporting policy development, strengthening local institutions and building the resilience of communities affected by the ongoing crisis. During 2016, FAO assisted Iraq with the development of long-term agricultural strategies and policies, and supported the response to the ongoing crisis, with projects including rehabilitating irrigation systems and community infrastructure, providing income opportunities, and supporting food and livestock production.

In 2017, FAO's emergency assistance will focus on supporting emergency food and livestock production, restoring agricultural assets, protection of child labour in agriculture, and coordinating an effective, needs-based response.

FAO achievements in 2016

In 2016, FAO activities aimed to rebuild livelihoods and increase vulnerable people's resilience to threats and crises.

In February and December, FAO conducted damage and loss assessments in retaken areas to determine the impact of conflict on agricultural livelihoods, including crop production, livestock rearing, fishery/aquaculture production, accessibility to markets, storing and processing facilities and irrigation water. February's assessment included recommended activities to restore livelihoods and increase food security for the most vulnerable groups. December results will be published in January 2017. Assessment data guides policy, planning and programming across the food security sector.

Currently, FAO is implementing the following projects:

- **Distribution of fertilizer to 2,140 farming families (benefitting 12,840 people) in conflict-affected areas in Ninewa.** The objective of the project is to improve the food availability and nutritional status, though increasing agricultural production and income and strengthening livelihoods of vulnerable farming households in conflict-affected areas.
- **Rehabilitation of critical water supply to 250,000 hectares of the fertile Ninewa Plains for agriculture, livestock and domestic use.** A cash-for-work component of the Al Jazeera irrigation scheme project is employing 646 local workers (benefitting 3,876 people) to clear irrigation canals of debris, to enable water to flow and 5,000 farmers (benefitting 30,000 people) to grow vegetable crops again. This will ultimately provide work for up to 200,000 casual labourers from nearby areas and across Iraq. FAO is demining farming land around the main canal, and repairing the pumping station, bridges, canal gates and siphons.
- **Cash-for-work in retaken areas in Salah Al Din, Ninewa and Kirkuk.** This project will benefit 2,000 conflict-affected households (12,000 people), with a particular focus on households headed by women. The project is providing opportunities for women to earn an income, make financial decisions and further contribute to economic and social development.
- **Improving rural livelihoods, nutrition and food security for refugees, Iraqis who have been displaced by conflict and vulnerable host households in Duhok and Erbil governorates.** The project will establish greenhouses and backyard gardens, distribute poultry for breeding and egg sales, and develop cottage industries, including fruit and dairy processing and honey production.
- Preparing to **provide animal feed and essential livestock vaccines** to highly vulnerable herders.
- With WFP, **coordinating the Food Security Cluster**, to ensure an effective, accountable, needs-based response.



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Populations in areas under the control of armed groups have seen their food production and access to markets severely restricted. Several post-harvest infrastructures (e.g. silos) have been plundered and damaged

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Interview with

FAO Representative in Iraq

■ FADEL EL-ZUBI

How has the conflict affected food security in the country? And what does that mean for the livelihoods of those who depend on agriculture?

The ongoing conflict is jeopardizing agricultural production. Loss of assets and income opportunities from farming, together with disruptions in marketing activities and logistics, have exposed large numbers of people to severe food insecurity. Increasing number of displacement together with Syrian refugees is also putting huge pressure on host communities.

What do farmers/pastoralists in Iraq need most right now in terms of assistance?

Populations in areas under the control of armed groups have seen their food production and access to markets severely restricted. Several post-harvest infrastructures (e.g. silos) have been plundered and damaged, forcing farmers to stock their grains in the open, exposed to weather. Displaced, returnees and host families,

most particularly families with reduced income are struggling to meet basic needs. Farmers in Iraq need support where services are over-subscribed, to prevent families from relying on irreversible coping mechanisms with negative impacts.

How is FAO responding to the crisis?

FAO is concentrating on supporting access to food and ensuring sustainable availability of staple foods to safeguard adequate food security, as well as coordination of food security response based on proper assessment of needs, challenges and resources to achieve sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition.

What is the current focus of FAO's emergency response in Iraq?

1. Secure food production and incomes
2. Protect livestock health and production
3. Increase employment for displaced and host communities

4. Coordinate an effective, needs-based response.

What are the biggest challenges facing FAO in Iraq?

Access remains a challenge, particularly in areas under control of armed groups. Transportation of inputs was also an issue – accessibility to villages and some areas proved to be very challenging. Passing security checks and obtaining official approvals is not easy as well. FAO is assuming a lot more risk and taking on a lot of the work that governments used to do.

What motivates you to work in the agriculture and food security sector?

Agriculture is the lead sector in reducing poverty. Increasingly, countries are counting on agriculture to produce more nutritious food and improve livelihoods, especially for poor families. It is incredibly meaningful to be a part of a proven solution to such a critical challenge.



■ UNDP IN IRAQ

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Stabilization will continue to a top priority for UNDP Iraq, especially in the context of the offensive on Mosul and in the aftermath of its liberation

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Interview with

UNDP Country Director for Iraq

MOUNIR TABET

UNDP plays a key role in promoting development in Iraq. How does UNDP manage to achieve this delicate mission in the challenging security environment?

UNDP is committed to supporting the Government and people of Iraq during their transition towards stability, reconciliation, reform and democracy. We work in close coordination with our partners in the Government, civil society, community leaders, women and youth groups, and in collaboration with the supportive international community, to ensure addressing high priority development needs and challenges in a prompt and adequate manner.

UNDP has been supporting development efforts in Iraq since 1976. More recently we have been a major partner contributing to democratic processes and good governance, providing technical assistance in support of the 2010 national Parliamentary elections and 2013 provincial elections for example. And, despite long years of wars, sanctions, and instability, our support has been instrumental for the Government in prioritizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and safeguarding development gains achieved. We are further committed to help the Iraqi people to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in Agenda 2030 early 2016.

How are the current ongoing crisis and low oil prices influencing the development of the country?

The costly military operations against ISIL and the decline in fiscal resources due to the plunge in oil prices are straining the fiscal budget and affecting the livelihoods of thousands of people. The oil sector represents 90 percent of revenues, and Iraq's economy remains heavily dependent on oil, whilst 80 percent of the budget goes to salaries, social assistance and subsidies. Efforts to diversify the economy and build a strong private sector are underway and may take several years to show clear impact.

Against this background, the Government continued to initiate actions, launching an economic reform initiative aimed at addressing structural economic inefficiencies, diversifying the economy away from oil, reinforcing the role of the private sector, and countering corruption. In the same context, an agreement was reached with UNDP to help strengthen the capacity of the Government to detect, investigate and prosecute high profile and complex corruption cases. UNDP also sustained its efforts stabilizing newly liberated areas, fostering institutional and economic reform, capacitating the Council of Representatives to improve legislative oversight, and supporting security sector reform.

Nevertheless, the country continues to be challenged by needed accelerated reforms, job creation, improved living conditions, public services, rule of law and security, in addition to the challenges of ongoing political turmoil and sluggish reconciliation process. This has contributed to slowing down development.

What were the main projects that UNDP undertook in 2016 in Iraq?

In line with national priorities, and the UNDP Country Programme Document endorsed in early 2016, our organization has been focusing on three main pillars: (I) stabilization of newly liberated areas and resilience building; (II) institutional reform at the federal level; and (III) devolution of administrative and fiscal powers to governorates. Underlying projects included promoting emergency livelihoods and

community dialogue in crisis-hit districts, prevention of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) amongst Syrian refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs), local area planning and development, governance reforms, institutional development, decentralization, rule of law, and environment and climate change.

How is UNDP cooperating with other UN agencies in Iraq?

UNDP cooperates with the Country Team within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Iraq (UNDAF). UNDP is already helping to develop a strategy for national reconciliation in collaboration with UNAMI, whilst cooperating with sister agencies in areas such as returns to liberated areas, mine action, gender, and promotion of women's role in the upcoming elections. Whilst the UNCT considers reviewing the current UNDAF, which was prepared in 2014, UNDP will engage in this process by helping to ensure that longer term, sustainable and people centered development is well reflected in the new UNDAF on the basis of the SDG 2030 Agenda. Of course, UNDP will continue with its ongoing cooperation with other UN agencies in the areas of stabilization and other humanitarian focused activities.

How can UNDP contribute to the development of the newly liberated territories?

In June 2015, at the request of the Prime Minister, UNDP established the Funding Facility for Stabilization to provide fast-track support in newly liberated areas. The Facility is a short-term instrument that helps to quickly repair public infrastructure, provide short-term employment and grants to small businesses, boost the capacity of local government, and promote reconciliation.

UNDP is also helping to reduce tensions at the community level, even in the absence of full-fledged nationally led reconciliation efforts. This is being achieved through the Iraq Crisis Response and Resilience Programme (ICRRP) which focuses on building resilient communities by supporting vulnerable families in liberated areas and in communities hosting IDPs



where social tensions threaten social cohesion. A key component of the programme focuses on partnering with the local private sector to create jobs.

UNDP continued to reinforce the crisis response and coordination capacities of its key institutional partners at the federal level and in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. These efforts have enhanced UNDP's credibility with partners and donors, and contributed to a significant increase in resource mobili-



zation with more than US\$300 million to be invested in 2017-2018.

What would you highlight as the main achievements of UNDP in 2016?

The work done under the auspices of the Stabilization Funding Facility has had major impact in newly liberated areas. Cities have been cleared of rubble, schools, hospitals and pharmacies have been opened, thousands of people are working on public schemes helping to upgrade civic buildings and hundreds of businesses in the private sector are back in business.

Under the ICRRP, over 3.67 million members of host communities, refu-

gees and IDPs have benefited from UNDP supported provision of basic services, such as health facilities, waste management, water supply and electricity in the Governorates of Duhok, Erbil, Sulaimaniyah, Ninewah, and Baghdad. A total of 18,104 refugees, IDPs, and host families have strengthened their livelihoods through temporary employment activities, vocational training, small business development and value chain creation, as well as job placement facilitation.

UNDP has supported the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to launch funding facilities to mobilize resources for economic reform. UNDP has provided high-

level technical expertise and support to help develop a National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Security Sector Reform Strategy.

Access to justice has been expanded for IDPs and refugees, with 8,132 cases related to SGBV and legal documentation benefiting from six UNDP-supported Legal Aid Centres in Erbil and Duhok, Sulaimaniyah, and Baghdad. Under the EU funded Local Area Development Programme, Provincial Development Strategies are being developed with the Governorates of Erbil and Duhok. UNDP is continuing to support the process of modernizing the public sector and has been helping to the Government to elaborate a national Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy.

What are the UNDP Iraq's main priorities in 2017?

In 2017, stabilization will continue to a top priority for UNDP Iraq, especially in the context of the offensive on Mosul and in the aftermath of its liberation. After liberation, we expect national attention to be directed towards reconciliation and reform, including security sector reform. Already, UNDP is being approached by the Government to

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UNDP has supported the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to launch funding facilities to mobilize resources for economic reform

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play major roles in these areas. It is also being approached to use its already strong position as one of the most trusted partners in the area of development to help the Government, and civil society, chart a realistic path to reform and sustainable development. In addition to the exceptional work that the Stabilization Facility is doing, UNDP will continue to reinforce government capacity in crisis management. During 2017, UNDP will work under Government leadership, and in partnership with UNAMI, UN agencies and civil society to:

REINFORCE THE NATIONAL COMPACT BY:

- Facilitating a national discussion on national and local reconciliation including: 1) helping to develop a citizen's archive of Human Rights crimes committed against Iraqis with the aim of identifying and recognizing wrongs done to the most vulnerable since independence, irrespective of the identity of the perpetrators or the victims; 2) establishing a network of locally based peace building committees that promote social cohesion and local reconciliation; and 3) undertaking a nation-wide awareness building campaign on reconciliation, its content and benefit whilst engaging innovative youth, women and other social innovators in such an undertaking.
- Supporting security sector and

judicial reform and facilitating de-radicalization and Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) through youth programmes and specifically focused programmes for former combatants and others who worked directly for ISIL.

- Supporting anti-corruption efforts and promoting the importance of transitional justice through measures that are neutral, transparent, visible, and that would produce immediate positive impact on citizens' lives.
- Enhancing the role of the parliament in its primary functions of oversight, legislation and representation.

ACCELERATE ECONOMIC REFORMS BY:

- Helping to accelerate public sector reform making optimal use of modern technology, innovation and modern management strategies.
- Promoting decentralization as a mechanism for addressing regional inequities, promoting the SDGs at the local level, building up local leadership to address development priorities in an inclusive and participatory manner.
- Promoting private sector investment, especially for SMEs at the local level.
- Promoting opportunities for women and youth.

- Promoting nationalization, localization and integration of SDGs in the national development policies, strategies, processes and plans.
- Promoting more effective targeting of the poor through efficient information systems and policies built on a better understanding of the poor, their number, location and needs.

BUILD RESILIENCE AND PREPARE FOR FUTURE CRISES BY:

- Supporting Crisis and Disaster Risk Management for both man-made and natural disasters including introducing early warning systems and helping to put in place a proper coordination mechanism for national and local response to crisis.
- Adapting and helping to implement national and local climate change mitigation strategies with a focus on energy efficiency, biodiversity and combatting desertification.

Moving forward, UNDP will also work closely with other agencies to promote the global development agendas developed in 2015 and 2016 including the SDGs, the Climate Change agenda, the Financing for Development framework, Disaster Risk Management (Sendai) and others representing important intellectual, policy and operational anchors that should guide our collective work.



Iraq's Marsh Arabs more optimistic after World Heritage status

■ UNEP IN IRAQ

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Marsh Arabs are delighted with the newly achieved World Heritage status for the Iraqi marshlands. They believe it will help preserve not only the marshes but their way of life and culture

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The Marshlands of Mesopotamia in southern Iraq are a rare aquatic landscape in the desert, and a biodiversity hotspot for key migratory birds. UN Environment (UNEP) has been working since 2004 with the Government of Iraq and partners to rehabilitate the marshlands and to try and halt and reverse the damage caused by upstream dam construction, drainage for agriculture, oil exploration, war, drought, desertification and climate change since the 1970s. This damage had a huge impact on the Marsh Arabs, whose homes and livelihoods were based in the Marshlands. With a population of over half a million in the 1950s these numbers dwindled

dramatically to about 20,000 following the draining of the marshes in the 1980s and 1990s by Saddam Hussein, trying to drive the Marsh Arabs from their homes. By 2003, the Marshlands existed only in name, but fortunately, through ongoing work of a range of stakeholders in support of the Marsh Arabs and the ecosystem services on which they rely, the population has rebounded since then.

The marshlands are a unique ecosystem regionally and globally – it is here we see the largest river system in the Middle East, rich in biodiversity, and with historical monuments that date back 5,000 years. They cover four governorates: Thi Qar, Missan, Basra and Al-Warkaa



and their existence and service they provide impacts on these governorates and far beyond.

In July 2016, after a number of years work on both environmental and cultural heritage management and conservation by UN Environment and its partners, the Marshlands were listed as a World Heritage site.

"Marsh Arabs are delighted with the newly achieved World Heritage status for the Iraqi marshlands. They believe it will help preserve not only the marshes but their way of life and culture," says Jassim Al-Asadi, director of Nature Iraq, a non-governmental organization working on the marshes.

"Having our marshes on the World Heritage list is a big 'dream come true' for us. Our life will be better, income will be better and we hope tourism will prosper thanks to the World Heritage status conferred by the United Nations Educational, Sci-

entific and Cultural Organization," says Razaq Jabbar, a boatman, fisherman and singer. Aged 51 and a father of 15, Razaq fled the marshes in 1993 but returned 22 years later.

Today's "Marsh Arabs" live in secluded villages of reed houses. They fish, grow rice and rear water buffalo.

"Marshes and more water mean life. We hope that the World Heritage status can help us rebuild our land," says Hamza Mohamed, a buffalo herder in the marshes.

Locally fishers, such as Salwa Tureer, hope to see their marshes in a better condition with more water.

The hope is that the new status will attract more Government funding to support marshland communities, and put the marshes on the map internationally. Local people also hope improved security will attract domestic and international tourists.

For more information, please contact: Diane Klaimi: Diane.Klaimi@unep.org

See more at: <http://www.unep.org>

BOOST FOR BIODIVERSITY?

Al-Asadi believes the new status will help raise awareness locally of the importance of preserving biological diversity and sustainable livelihoods.

"There are a number of things we need to do: We need to carry out further studies on the marshland ecosystems, assess how human activity is affecting the local environment, and get local businesses involved in schemes to maintain and protect the environment. The development of eco-tourism could also channel funds into environmental protection measures."

Marsh dwellers in southern Iraq are closely connected to their wetland surroundings, he says. Their entire way of life - buffalo herding, reed harvesting and fishing - depends on the maintenance of this ecosystem. They derive material and spiritual sustenance from it.



■ UN Women Iraq

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Since the Mosul Operations began in October 2016, the UN Women team has distributed 3,000 high thermal blankets to women and girls in two camps near eastern Mosul

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UN Women recognizes the immense challenges and heightened vulnerability women and girls face as a result of the current crisis with mass displacement, the heinous violation of women and girls rights at the hands of ISIL (Yazidis, Turkmen and other women who were subjected to sexual slavery and sold in markets). Iraq is a high priority country for UN Women's work globally. UN Women's strategy in Iraq does not only deal with women as victims in need of protection and passive recipients 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. In line with the bolstering of its presence, UN Women has developed programs around its strategy in Iraq and is strengthening its partnerships with Federal and Regional Governments to implement a number of programs.

UN WOMEN FLAGSHIP PROJECTS:



Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access & Protection in Crisis

Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access & Protection in Crisis (LEAP), UN Women's most prominent program aims to support the livelihoods and resilience of women IDPs and returnees including providing assistance to victims of ISIL, in particular women and girls from minority groups. LEAP was developed by UN Women to respond to the increasing trends of protracted conflicts, which affect women and girls the most.



Women Peace and Security Program

The Women Peace and Security (WPS) program supports implementation for the National Action Plan (NAP) on UN SCR 1325. In close collaboration with National, Regional Governments and civil society partners, WPS is aimed at leveraging women's leadership, agency and voice in national reconciliation, countering radicalization and violent extremism, and supporting peace and social cohesion. Most recently, 230 representatives of women's and civil society organizations, networks, parliamentarians worked together to develop a common platform for empowering women and accelerate progress in the implementation of the National Action Plan. Iraq is the first country in the MENA region to support the implementation of NAP.

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LEAP was developed by UN Women to respond to the increasing trends of protracted conflicts, which affect women and girls the most

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ADDITIONAL UN WOMEN PROJECTS

Supporting Syrian Women Refugee's Livelihood in the Baserma Camp

In 2016, UN Women continued the ongoing support of Syrian Women refugees with Women's Rehabilitation Organization as a partner. Trainings were provided in sewing, hairdressing, Sexual and gender based violence awareness, computer literacy and English language literacy.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

UN Women Civil Society Engagement through CSAG

UN Women met with civil society groups in 2016 as part of continuing efforts to engage civil society on gender equality, women's rights, and empowerment. Through a consultative forum called Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) created by UN Women Iraq, the group will continue to play a vital role in ensuring that UN Women's national programming comes from an informed perspective in which the priorities on the ground, and from the ground, are taken into consideration.



Necessity kit and high thermal blanket distribution in Eastern Mosul

Since the Mosul Operations began in October 2016, the UN Women team has distribute 3,000 high thermal blankets to women and girls in two camps near eastern Mosul. UN Women has also distributed necessity kits for 20,000 individuals containing socks, soap, tooth brushes, toothpaste, feminine pads, vaseline, shampoo, nail clippers, laundry detergent, solar lamp/flashlight and other necessity items.

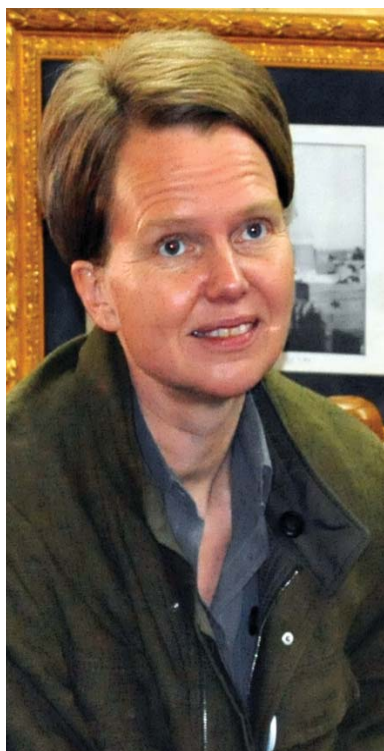


Orange The World 16 Days of Activism Stronger Together Conference

As part of the 16 days campaign, UN Women Iraq partnered with Women's Empowerment Organization to co-host a conference for 130 participants on the theme of "Stronger Together: Men and Boys partnership to end violence against women and girls"



■ UNESCO IN IRAQ



Interview with

Director, UNESCO Iraq Office

LOUISE HAXTHAUSEN

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?

Addressing conflict and violence in

Iraq cannot be achieved alone through military action and security. Building and sustaining peace require the "soft power" of UNESCO's fields of competence, namely education, culture, sciences and freedom of expression.

Investing in soft power cannot wait until conflict is over. It is crucial to address root causes of conflict such as inequalities, injustice, marginalization

and exclusion. Soft power is essential to build inclusive and open societies where no one is left behind and to develop the human capital in Iraq so that it can become a driving force for sustainable development and peace in the country. This is the true meaning of UNESCO's mandate to build peace in the minds of men and women.

The implementation of our mandate in Iraq takes multiple forms.

A priority for UNESCO is to support relevant, inclusive and equitable quality education for young people living in Iraq. Education is the foundation upon which the young generation will build the future and it is essential that they are provided with the knowledge and skills that will allow them to live productive lives and engage as responsible citizens and peace builders.

To build the future, it is also important to be aware of the past, value Iraq's unique heritage and celebrate its rich cultural diversity as an integral part of the country's identity, enshrined in the Iraqi Constitution. Culture and education can build bridges between communities and contribute to learn to live together. This is why it was in Iraq that UNESCO launched its social media campaign #Unite4Heritage and continue to promote the celebration of cultural diversity. This is also why, the protection of the country's cultural heritage and support to cultural creativity remains at the heart of UNESCO's work in Iraq.

2016 witnessed continuous threats and attacks on Iraq's cultural heritage, how has UNESCO reacted in this regard? - What can UNESCO do to protect physically endangered sites?

2016 saw the continuation of an unprecedented level of threats and systematic attacks on Iraq's cultural heritage tragically witnessed since 2014. This included deliberate destruction at major archaeological sites and monuments under the control of ISIL/Daesh, looting of artefacts from museums, illegal excavations at sites, as well as collateral damage inflicted on cultural heritage as a result of intense armed conflict.

However, this year was also a turn-



ing point, with renewed hope and engagement for the safeguarding of Iraq's cultural heritage.

In Fall 2016, a number of highly significant cultural heritage sites in the Nineveh region were retaken by the Iraqi armed forces, including the Assyrian sites of Nimrud and Ashur. Moreover, a few months earlier, the Marshlands and the three Sumerian sites of Ur, Uruk and Eridu in the Southern region of Iraq were inscribed on the World Heritage List, as "The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities" World Heritage site. These developments highlighted the unique commitment of the Iraqi people to safeguard and manage its cultural heritage, which is also the heritage of humanity, against all odds.

It is now urgent for the international community to mobilize and scale up assistance to address the immense loss that has occurred and support the Iraqi authorities in recovery efforts. UNESCO is taking a leading role in this regard, working hand in hand with the Ministry of Culture of Iraq. An International Coordination Conference on the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage in the Liberated Areas of Iraq will be held at UNESCO Headquarters in February 2017. It will take stock of destruction, damage and needs and it will devise an Action Plan for a coordinated international response.

Meantime, UNESCO engaged in implementing emergency protective measures to physically secure vulnerable sites and monuments and thus avoid further irreversible loss. Also, as sites

become liberated from ISIL/Daesh, UNESCO is working closely with the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage of Iraq to ensure detailed documentation of damage and destruction of cultural heritage, using innovative technology such as drone surveying: this is essential not only to plan future recovery and preservation aligned with international standards of conservation and management, but also to document potential war crimes related to the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage.

As of November 2016, there were approximately 180,000 displaced from Mosul 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?

Education of the most vulnerable communities in Iraq, including internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees, continued to be a top priority for UNESCO this year. Access to quality education in camps, host communities and communities of origin is not only a fundamental human right, it is also a security imperative. Children and youth subject to forced displacement are particularly exposed to violence and abuse: education provides protection, hope and a sense of normalcy.

Focusing on access to secondary education, UNESCO helped thousands of young adolescents return to school, by establishing or improving school infrastructure, by providing textbooks and school furniture, and by facilitating re-enrollment of those who had dropped



out of school through catch-up classes. To ensure quality of education and attention to the specific learning needs of displaced children and youth, we also invested in training to enable teachers to better perform their work under what are often very enduring circumstances, where both teachers and learners need psychosocial support.

As the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Iraq kept rising and, at the same time, displaced populations began to return to their homes in liberated areas, educational needs of vulnerable communities have been changing and continued growing. At the same time, the progressive retake of areas under ISIL/Daesh control has

been revealing the magnitude of destruction and damage to school infrastructure in these areas. We also begin to measure the devastating psychosocial impact on children and young people of education provided in ISIL/Daesh-run schools. These are major challenges that UNESCO is seeking to address, as it considerably scales up its education programme for IDPs and other vulnerable groups in Iraq.

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

To be a genuine enabler of development and peace, education must become relevant, inclusive, equitable and of quality for all Iraqi children and

young people. This requires a comprehensive approach to the strengthening of the education system and support to the Iraqi authorities in their efforts towards reform and modernization of the system.

UNESCO has a long-term commitment in this regard: it provides advice and develops capacities within the education system to achieve modernization and reform goals set by the Iraqi authorities.

In the current context of economic crisis, where youth unemployment is again on the rise both in central regions of Iraq as well as in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, UNESCO invested in the reform of technical and vocational education (TVET), so as to make it more attractive for young people, that is more relevant to the actual needs of the job market. To that aim, we are notably working with TVET providers and the private sector to review and reform the curriculum, so that, in the future, young people who graduate from TVET institutions have the knowledge and skills to get a decent job and, at the same time, can contribute to economic diversification in the country.

Again, improving the quality and relevance of education is important at all levels and for all types of education. For instance, UNESCO supported efforts by the Iraqi Ministry of Education to reform the curriculum in scientific disciplines both at primary and secondary levels and to train teachers in applying the new curriculum, which



is now being used in the classroom. In this, UNESCO created sustainable professional and institutional capacity, by facilitating the establishment of National Curriculum Development Institutes, with trained staff, in both Baghdad and Erbil.

As we look ahead, a key area of cooperation will be to support the implementation in Iraq of Sustainable Development Goal 4 which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. UNESCO is entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 agenda and will provide guidance to the Government and partners on how to turn commitments into action.

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?

Journalists in Iraq continued facing multiple safety issues: one of the highest number of killings of media professionals in the world and limited judicial follow-up, threats and harassment, as well as insufficient awareness on how to better protect themselves especially when reporting from conflict zones. This situation is a crucial challenge to the full realization of freedom of ex-

pression and of the press in the country.

Addressing this situation requires action at different levels: public accountability related to the safety of journalists needs to be improved. And media professionals need to be better equipped to deliver free, high quality and responsible journalism.

UNESCO facilitated the creation of a national steering committee for the safety of journalists in Iraq. The committee was officially established on the occasion of the “International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists”, in November 2016. This committee is tasked to report on the killing of journalists and judicial follow up in Iraq. Next year, it will submit Iraq’s first ever public report on this topic. The report will be presented and debated at the 39th session of the UNESCO General Conference, in October 2017.

The establishment of this new mechanism of reporting was an important first step towards enhanced public accountability on the safety of journalists in Iraq. UNESCO will further support the committee in developing capacity for monitoring and reporting, and - importantly - to promote stronger awareness on the safety of journalists among law enforcement personnel, as well as the judiciary.

Not many people know that the “S”

in UNESCO stands for Sciences. How can sciences provide solutions for Iraq’s challenges?

Let me start by a reference to the belief system that prevailed here in Iraq in ancient Mesopotamian times. Enki, the deity associated with human achievements and civilization, was also associated with technological progress and intellect. In a similar way, UNESCO’s mandate in sciences aims at putting scientific research and innovation at the service of sustainable development.

A major challenge that Iraq is facing today is the sustainable use of its natural resources – including its fresh water resources. Water shortage has grave consequences for sanitation, for health and for agriculture.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Water Resources, UNESCO is developing the scientific database of the country’s groundwater resources. Using innovative technology, new data on deep aquifers has been generated and can be monitored. The scientific knowledge produced is critical to inform the formulation and implementation of water management policies. Here, UNESCO has been supporting the development of capacities in the Ministry of Water Resources for scientific research to serve policies geared towards sustainable development.



UN HABITAT in Iraq

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UN-Habitat not only provides more dignified and durable shelters, but also prevents the emergence of urban slums which pose additional challenges to the country

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

UN-Habitat follows a multi-dimensional and coherent approach in tackling diverse urban issues. These range from emergency response such as providing safe and basic shelter for IDPs, to projects that aim to build and develop the capacities of local and national governments in planning and managing urbanization, to more theoretical endeavors including research and analysis on the dynamics of urbanization and the impacts of the armed conflict.

UN-HABITAT'S ACTIVITIES – CRISIS RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

PROVIDING DIGNIFIED LIVING CONDITIONS TO IDPS

In Iraq, UN-Habitat has been providing durable IDP shelter sites in governorates receiving large numbers of IDPs. In doing so, UN-Habitat has been bridging the gap between rapid responses and more sustainable solutions. Through the provision of prefabricated shelter units accompanied

by basic infrastructure and public facilities, UN-Habitat not only provides more dignified and durable shelters, but also prevents the emergence of urban slums which pose additional challenges to the country. In addition to the construction of durable shelters, UN-Habitat has comparative advantage in providing technical support for the planning and management of IDP shelter sites. This enables the establishment of socially



sustainable IDP sites that provide comprehensive support to IDPs.

UN-Habitat has constructed ten IDP shelter sites in the seven governorates of Baghdad, Basrah, Kerbala, Missan, Erbil, Dohuk and Suleimaniyah between 2014 and 2016, accommodating approximately 18,000 vulnerable IDPs. These sites are equipped with prefabricated shelter units and provided by basic infrastructure (i.e. water and sanitation systems, electricity and internal roads) as well as public facilities such as primary schools, health clinics and women's centers, all of which are constructed and operated in collaboration with other UN agencies, NGOs and local authorities.

PROMOTING URBAN RECOVERY AND HOUSING REHABILITATION IN AREAS LIBERATED FROM ISIL

To support recovery and stabilization of areas liberated from ISIL, UN-Habitat has established a new community-based housing self-rehabilitation approach. Under this scheme, UN-Habitat provides materials and necessary technical support for the rehabilitation of damaged houses by community members themselves, creating job opportunities for returnees and civilians and in turn encouraging them to engage in the rebuilding of their community. Adopting a community-based

participatory planning process, UN-Habitat's approach addresses five interlinked components: public service infrastructure, housing and shelter, access to income, social cohesion and security; and land tenure support.

Furthermore, UN-Habitat highlights the need to link reconstruction activities with future development plans to ensure the sustainability of gains made. Through this community planning approach, the affected people are placed at the centre of their recovery process. Lessons learned and good practices prove that recovery response is most effective when people are empowered and in control of their own recovery process.

In 2016, UN-Habitat has launched one pilot project in two neighborhoods in Ramadi City, Anbar Governorate, and another in Sinouni/Sinjar sub-district, Ninewa Governorate, using this approach, supporting approximately 8,000 returnees.

HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY ISSUES FACING IDPS AND RETURNEES

Forced displacement almost inevitably means the loss of housing, land and property (HLP); and disputes regarding HLP ownership and usage often further destabilize an unstable community affected by crisis. When displaced individuals eventually consider returning, whether and how

they will be able to reclaim their HLP and thus rebuild their livelihoods will often be one of the most crucial concerns. To the larger community and the nation as a whole, safeguarding progress towards peace and security in a post-conflict period will to a large extent depend on how well these HLP issues are addressed.

In an attempt to tackle this problem, UN-Habitat in Iraq has incorporated a new system into its urban recovery programmes to protect HLP rights of people affected by the crisis through the introduction and implementation of the GIS-based Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM). STDM, a land administration prototype, will help map property claims, promote community-based dispute resolution and expedite land tenure verification procedures. In 2016, this system was piloted in Sinouni/Sinjar sub-district, Ninewa Governorate, addressing HLP rights of returnees.

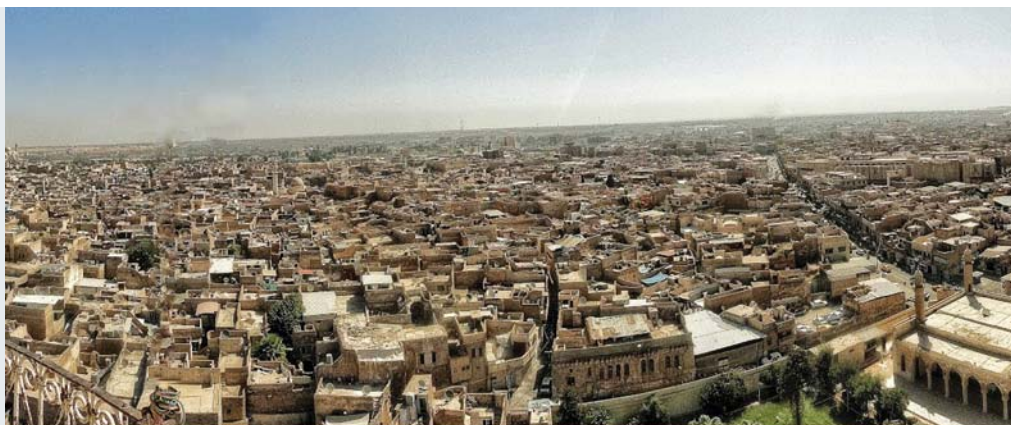
CITY PROFILE OF MOSUL: MULTI-SECTOR ASSESSMENT OF A CITY UNDER SIEGE

In 2016, UN-Habitat in Iraq has published a comprehensive urban analysis on Mosul, Iraq's second largest city where an international military campaign is ongoing to recapture the city from ISIL. The report includes a comprehensive mapping assessment of the city's infrastructure, housing, social services, and demographics to help

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UN-Habitat supports the Government of Iraq to enable IDPs and vulnerable people residing in informal settlements to have increased access to affordable housing with security of tenure and basic services

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CITY PROFILE
Multi sector assessment

in planning humanitarian and development assistance in the highly sensitive and volatile context of ISIL's conflict with the Government of Iraq. The report underlines the factors that contributed to ISIL's occupation of Mosul in June 2014. It shows how decades of neglect, migration, and frustration with slums and poor services created a situation where popular animosity was so great that, for all intents and purposes, Mosul fell to insurgents long before 10 June 2014.

The city profile also describes the further deterioration of conditions in Mosul after ISIL occupation and allied air attacks as new families migrated into the city from Syria and other parts of Iraq. Facilities for education, health care, water, sanitation, electricity, and communications services were damaged or severely restricted by ISIL. New environmental and health hazards, along with the remaining cultural and archaeological sites, are also mapped in the study to advise humanitarian and development actors planning to enter the city after liberation.

The assessment includes several recommendations that could be elaborated when the full extent of damage and needs are known after liberation. UN-Habitat will continue monitoring the urban changes during and after campaign to liberate Mosul, and will continue to update the information through an open data portal.

UN-HABITAT'S ACTIVITIES

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

In October 2016, the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III) took place in Quito, Ecuador, with delegations adopting the New Urban Agenda – a new framework that lays out how cities should be planned and managed to best promote sustainable urbanization. The New Urban Agenda also provides guidance for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially its Goal 11 to “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.” Based on these global agenda, UN-Habitat supports national and local governments in Iraq in areas such as follows:

HOUSING AND SLUM UP-GRADING

The number of informal settlements in Iraq is increasing – today, the number of informal settlements in all Iraqi gov-

ernorates amounts to approximately 1,600, which accounted for almost 7.7 per cent of all neighbourhoods in Iraq. Many of the settlements consist of both IDPs and economic migrants coming to cities in search of better economic opportunities; however not being able to afford housing has led these migrants to live in informal areas with no or little access to water, sanitation, electricity, schools or health services.

UN-Habitat supports the Government of Iraq to enable IDPs and vulnerable people residing in informal settlements to have increased access to affordable housing with security of tenure and basic services through legal reform as well as comprehensive survey and data analysis. One of the most important achievements in 2016 in this area of work in Iraq was the approval of the Informal Settlement Development Fund to support governorates and municipalities in implementing improvement of informal settlements. Furthermore, in 2016 UN-



FILE OF MOSUL, IRAQ

Assessment of a city under siege

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Habitat completed the upgrading of the Kurani Ainkawa informal neighbourhood in Erbil Governorate with community facilities that cater to the needs of community members, which was the first comprehensive intervention in Iraq to upgrade an informal settlement.

NATIONAL URBAN STRATEGY AND GOVERNORATE URBAN STRATEGIES

In 2016, UN-Habitat started to work together with the Ministry of Planning and governorate-level staff to develop a National Urban Strategy based on the New Urban Agenda and Governorate Urban Strategies for 9 pilot governorates, the mapping of indicators and indexes, and the computation of GDP at the governorate level. For this purpose, UN-Habitat has successfully launched an online platform/resource library and an online Blog to favour the exchange of data, reports between governorate staff and the central authorities, as well as engage stakeholders in a participatory discussion on priorities and the



way forward stemming from on-going assessment findings. Counterparts are exploring a 'cluster' approach and the enhancement of 'development corridors' hinging on the cities, nodes and infrastructure that constitute the north-to-south 'spine' of the country.

STRENGTHENING URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING IN THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

UN-Habitat continues to support building and strengthening the technical capacity of staff of the relevant national and local authorities on urban planning, galvanizing political and public support to mobilise changes in the current urban planning practices and land management system in favour of more compact, resource-efficient and inclusive cities. In 2016, a series of training sessions were conducted targeting the government counterparts to help them acquire a new understanding of the effect of the unsustainable urban sprawl of its cities, non-inclusive urban development trends (exemplified by the multiplication of gated-communities and the rise of speculative real estate), land fragmentation, and the high off-site costs of servicing heavily subsidized land. Training specifically focused on several cross-cutting issues of socio-economic and cultural inclusiveness, resource conservation and efficiency, diversification of the economy, resilient infrastructure and services, climate change, facilities and employment for youth.





A turbulent year that might chart a new direction for Iraq

■ UNHCR IN IRAQ

“

UNHCR and its partners are committed to providing continued protection assistance to the most vulnerable families needing help

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2016 was a year of continued widespread displacement in Iraq, as the government undertook military offensives to take back control of key cities which had been occupied by armed groups. Around 600,000 Iraqis were newly-displaced in 2016 and UNHCR responded, in co-ordination with the government of Iraq, its partners and other humanitarian agencies, by providing life-saving assistance, including shelter, emergency kits and protection assistance.

UNHCR'S Representative in Iraq, Bruno Geddo, said 2016 could well be the year that marked the beginning of a new direction for Iraq and urged donors to continue to support humanitarian agencies planning for mass displacement.

“Iraq has been going through intermittent wars since 1975”, he said. “This war now – 2016-2017 – might, with luck, mark a turning point for the country. The international community should not succumb to fatigue.”

The city of Ramadi was brought under gov-

ernment control at the end of 2015, but conflict had displaced thousands of families who were now sheltering in camps and makeshift shelters across Anbar governorate, where UNHCR was providing vital assistance.

The military operation had left the city badly destroyed and littered with booby traps. It was estimated that around 80% of the city was damaged and more than 6,000 houses completely destroyed. Despite the huge risks, many families have gone home. According to Iraq's Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoDM), more than 67,000 families returned to Ramadi in 2016.

Across the whole of Anbar governorate, 120,000 families returned to newly-accessible areas by the end of the year. UNHCR and its partners have been assisting many families whose houses have been completely destroyed, providing sturdy refugee housing units (RHUs) in their own areas where they can stay as they rebuild their homes and lives. In some areas, the agency with its partners carried out quick impact projects (QIPS) – small-



scale, cost-effective community projects that have benefitted more than 181,420 people and can help in the reintegration of returnees and displaced families.

As early as February, the Iraqi government, UNHCR, other UN humanitarian agencies, and partners began to co-ordinate a detailed planning response to what could have potentially been one of the largest man-made displacement crises in many years – a massive exodus from Iraq's second city of Mosul.

As part of its contingency plans, UNHCR began to identify land that could be used for new camps to shelter families who might flee the city as well as looking at shelter alternatives, such as emergency shelter kits that could offer immediate rudimentary protection for families. The agency pre-positioned vital aid, including tents and emergency relief items. Extra staff were recruited to bolster emergency operations.

Military operations in the Mosul corridor and areas around Mosul began in April. UNHCR opened a new temporary site in the grounds of a football stadium in Debaga, Makhmour district, to ease overcrowding at an existing camp, and to host newly displaced families fleeing fighting in villages east of the Tigris river.

As humanitarian planning for Mosul continued, the battle for the city of Falluja began in May – the first Iraqi city to be taken by armed groups in January 2014. It prompted the flight of 87,000

people from the city and surrounding areas, including some 60,000 people in a three-day period in June.

UNHCR responded, setting up camps and providing shelter, emergency relief items and protection assistance for families in Amiriyat Al Falluja, Khalidiya and Habbaniyah.

Falluja was an important learning lesson for UN agencies, who had been struggling with funding for operations. A flash appeal for \$284 was launched for the Mosul emergency preparations.

The start of the Mosul offensive began in mid October, as UNHCR's High Commissioner, Filippo Grandi, was visiting Iraq. He stressed that UNHCR's highest priority was to ensure the protection of civilians. And he said he had received the strongest assurances from the government that civilian protection would be part of their military strategy to retake the city.

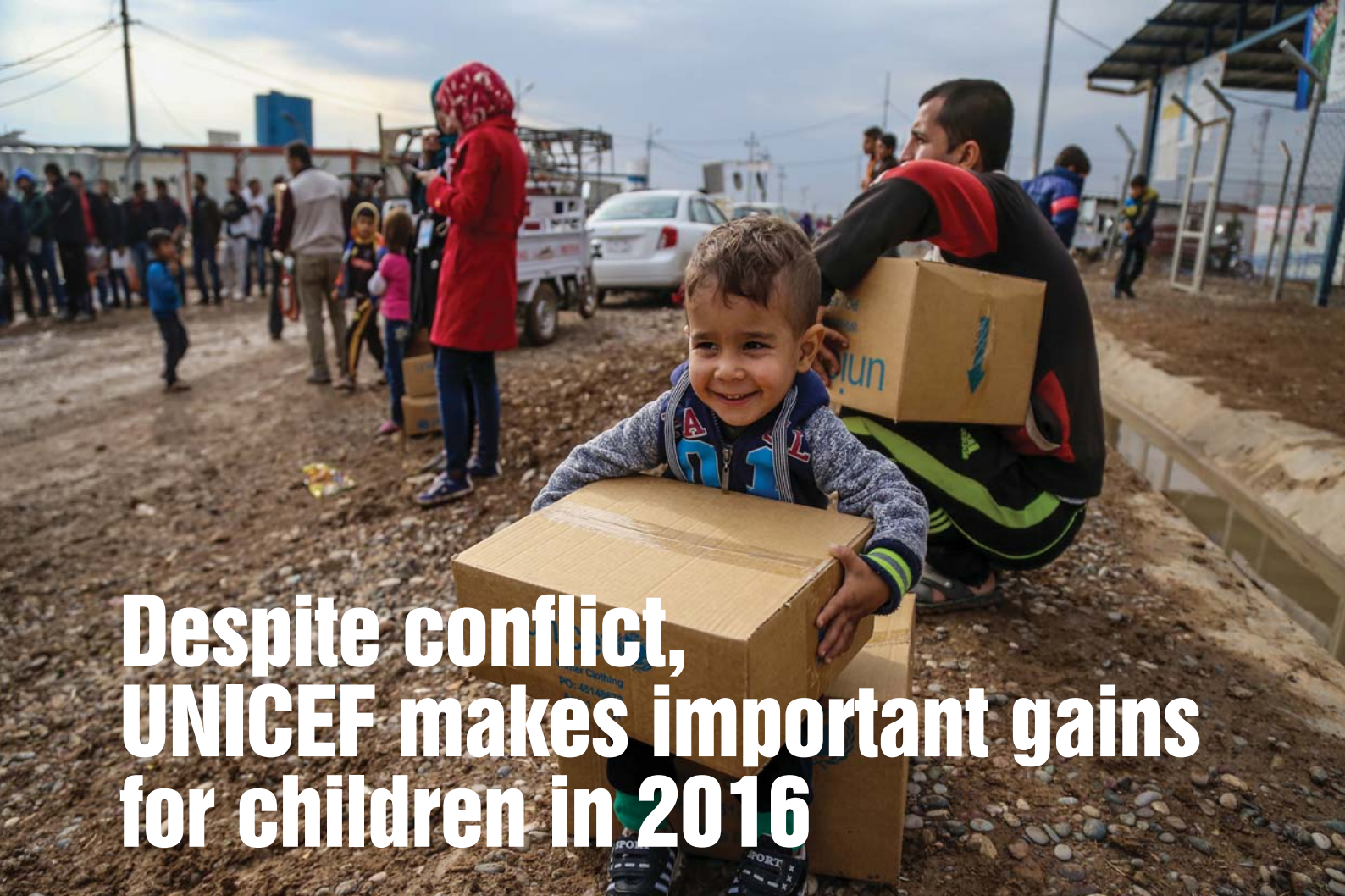
As the year ended, with conflict still ongoing, UNHCR had opened six camps with capacity to host 54,000 people affected by the Mosul crisis, provided emergency relief items to more than 87,000 people displaced from Mosul and surrounding areas, and reached more than 37,000 people through protection monitoring. The agency also supports camp management and co-ordination and distributes emergency items in several government camps for the Mosul emergency.



Iraq's displacement crisis also increased pressure on the more than 230,836 Syrian refugees sheltering in Iraq, most of them living in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), bringing greater competition for low-cost housing, jobs, healthcare and education.

With no let-up to the war in Syria, which had entered a sixth year, UN, humanitarian and development agencies in Iraq at the start of the year had appealed for \$298 million in ongoing assistance for Syrian refugees in Iraq at the launch of the Iraq chapter of the Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP). The protracted nature of the crisis has left many families more vulnerable than ever, having run out of savings and struggling to find money for rent and food.

The impact of events in 2016 will continue to be felt for many months to come. But UNHCR and its partners are committed to provided continued protection assistance to the most vulnerable families needing help.



Despite conflict, UNICEF makes important gains for children in 2016

■ UNICEF IN IRAQ

Remarks by

UNICEF Representative in Iraq

PETER HAWKINS



It's been a very challenging year for children in Iraq. More than three and a half million children are at risk of their fundamental rights being violated. UNICEF produced "A Heavy Price for Children" report in June 2016 highlighting major areas of concern, such as child labour, children caught up in conflict, recruitment into militant groups, those who have been displaced and girls who have been sexually abused.

Displacement has increased. In Fallujah 85,000 people come out overnight. And so far

in Mosul 160,000 people have been displaced. Displacement is ongoing in Heet, Kirkuk and Hawija where 60,000-70,000 people are at risk.

UNICEF has responded by reaching more than 1.3 million vulnerable people on the move with immediate relief through the Rapid Response Mechanism consortium in collaboration with WFP, UNFPA and seven NGO partners.

Safe water has reached more than 1.2 million people, more than 560,000 of them children.

UNICEF has successfully monitored and reported around child rights and rights' violations.

We have increased capacity by training 250 partners in Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), and as a consequence we're getting much more information, particularly about child recruitment into armed groups. We have looked at how we can help children who have been under ISIL control for the past two to three years, and meet the psychosocial needs of those who have been through the trauma of sexual abuse and gender based violence, by setting up teams of specialists to support them.

More than 138,000 displaced children have accessed psychosocial support in Child-Friendly Spaces in displacement camps and host communities.

As part of our emergency response around Fallujah we have been providing water and sanitation, Child-Friendly spaces, and early educational and informal educational activities. While it was very difficult at the beginning to get to the standards we aspire to, the team used all its resources and expertise to respond quickly and professionally. The ultimate success was that everybody did get water, everybody has access to sanitation and the camps continue to be serviced with sufficient amounts of water and maintained with sanitation facilities. The child friendly spaces grew into educational centres, so children are learning.

For Mosul and Kirkuk we have responded with exceptional preparedness, not only in the camps but also in the host communities. In Qayyarah we were able to respond within a day with water. For the long term drinking requirements, we got water purification supplies in within the first couple of weeks. In four camps in Qayyarah we have established and are maintaining WASH facilities, collecting garbage, and ensuring that families have acceptable amounts of safe water.

In eastern Mosul we were on the ground within days and distributing non-food items –water aquatabs --so that people could have drinkable water and hygiene kits.

In the camps we've provided water supplies and sanitation facilities. The child friendly spaces and educational

spaces were ready as the people came into each one of those camps.

But then the critical part of what UNICEF is all about is building capacity and systems so that education, health, child protection and social protection and welfare needs are being met by host populations. So where people have returned, whether it be to Ramadi or Fallujah, we've been able to ensure that the schools are there.

More than 33 schools in the central

Euphrates River region have been re-opened, teachers have been encouraged to return, and both pupils and teachers are meeting their educational aspirations.

What is important to take forward in 2017 is that out of the rubble there is hope. Many people are returning to their homes, which means we can evaluate and meet their needs and work with them to build their futures, wherever they are in Iraq.





UNMAS IN IRAQ

Overview

UNMAS supports global mine action efforts to clear the path from conflict to sustainable peace and development. UNMAS leads, coordinates and implements mine action policy and operational responses to enable humanitarian actors and peace operations, and to support affected states to address the threat of explosive hazards. Active in Iraq since 2015, UNMAS supports the Government of Iraq and United Nations stabilization efforts, as well as humanitarian activities enabling the return of displaced people to areas previously occupied by ISIL.

In support of UN Security Council Resolution 2299, UNMAS has been conducting critical explosive hazard threat mitigation to assist stabilization and early recovery in retaken areas. The presence of explosive hazards has continued to impede security and stability efforts assisting civilians to return their former homes. In response, UNMAS has led and coordinated explosive hazard mitigation activities, including emergency response, capacity development and delivery of risk education.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

UNMAS has been enabling emergency survey and clearance response in areas retaken from ISIL, in direct support of the Government of Iraq stabilization and return plans. UNMAS started the coordination of the overall response in Al Anbar Governorate in April and with emergency response operations began in Ramadi in May, and in Fallujah in August. UNMAS teams conducted threat impact assessments and surveys of 210 priority sites and residential areas in Ramadi and Fallujah, removing life threatening explosive hazards from prioritized areas. Over 1.7 million square meters have been surveyed and cleared. UNMAS initiated a multi-partner emergency response in Mosul and the surrounding area UNMAS provided technical advice on UN inter-agency assessment missions including high threat security risk assessment missions into Mosul city districts; conducted 47 explosive hazard assessments which were shared with UN partners and the humanitarian. Without the work of UNMAS, UN agencies and offices would not

be able to gain entry to suspected hazardous areas to complete critical stabilization and humanitarian interventions to enable returns. UNMAS works closely with UNDP to ensure that the explosive hazard threat has been addressed all areas prioritized through the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization (FFIS).

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

UNMAS has been working closely with the local government partners, including the local mine action authorities, to further develop an explosive hazard threat mitigation capacity in Iraq. Throughout 2016 UNMAS Iraq provided technical advice and support to the committee established by the Ministry of Health and Environment, led by the Iraqi Directorate of Mine Action (DMA), to draft the National Mine Action Strategic Plan (2017-2021). The strategy will be pivotal to guide the mine action sector with future activities in Iraq. UNMAS Iraq also supported the Government of Iraq to submit an extension



UNMAS has been able to assist the Government of Iraq in creating conditions for the sustainable return of displaced people by reducing the risks posed by explosive hazards, while at the same time increasing national capacities to manage emergency response within these areas



request to Article 5 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. This was presented to the international community in November 2016.

UNMAS delivered two intensive Improvised Explosive Device - Defeat training sessions to local police and staff from mine action authorities to build on existing EOD capacities to conduct longer term clearance operations in support of emergency response. UNMAS delivered two risk education and victim assistance management courses in order to further develop the capacity of the mine action authorities to manage future programming.

RISK EDUCATION

UNMAS delivers risk education directly, as well as through partners, to at-risk populations including IDPs, returnees and host communities. Intensive risk education activities were rolled out in Anbar and Ninewah governorates. Risk education was provided to over 69,000 beneficiaries assisting high risk groups on how to behave safely in the presence of explosive hazards. Sessions were delivered primarily in and around

IDP camps, schools and critical infrastructure.

UNMAS delivered training sessions for a total of 152 humanitarian staff from UNAMI, UN agencies and NGOs in Iraq. The aim of the trainings was to enhance Mines/ERW/IED risk mitigation procedures to humanitarian workers currently operating, or planning to operate in potentially hazardous environments in Mosul and surrounding areas.



■ UNIDO in IRAQ

In 2016, UNIDO has expanded its technical assistance to Iraq for strengthening the resilience of the IDPs, refugees and the host-communities, by launching two new projects in addition to its ongoing "Investment Promotion for Iraq" (IPI) and "Strengthening the National Quality Infrastructure to Facilitate Trade and Enhance Consumer Protection" (NQI) projects.

"Integrated stabilization, economic recovery and reconstruction support for displaced persons and returnees" project was launched in March 2016 with the aim of:

- (1) supporting income generation activities via vocational skills training;
- (2) the restoration of micro- and small-scale enterprises damaged during the conflict, and
- (3) reconstruction of community infrastructure, specifically by the design and construction of a range of greenhouses that will grow food crops for the residents of a refugee camp in Erbil and be operated by the camp residents and the Ministry of Agriculture.

UNIDO is working closely with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to deliver vocational trainings for internally displaced people, refugees and host-communities. It is expected that over 500 persons will be able to upgrade their learning, including

skills and safety training in forklift truck operations, MIG and arc welding, basic metal works along with smartphone and tablet repairs. With the further influx of internally displaced people to the north of Iraq, trainings will be extended to communities residing in the refugee camps built around the city of Erbil.

At the start-up phase of the second objective, UNIDO conducted a mapping and damage assessment of over 150 micro and small-scale enterprises in light manufacturing and service industries (automotive, metal, woodwork, hairdressing, food preparation etc.) in the liberated areas of Tikrit and Kirkuk. Businesses selected during the evaluation shall be equipped with a range of products and equipment to enable them to become operational and restore their livelihoods.

The project element for the greenhouse, focuses on a site operated by the General Directorate for Agricultural Research and Extension in Ainkawa, Erbil. The five large production greenhouses will be installed by UNIDO, where the planting, cultivation and harvesting shall be conducted by production group of IDPs and Refugees living in Harshm Camp under training and supervision by General Directorate for Agricultural Research and Extension. Harvest of the crops and sale or use of the produce

shall be determined by the production group and the General Directorate for Agricultural Research and Extension.

All three elements to the project present unique and independent challenges and UNIDO draws upon a team of local and international staff, Government partners, agencies and individuals to bring their own skills, knowledge and talents to benefit the people of Iraq.

The other UNIDO project launched in 2016, "Creating employment and improving food security for Syrian refugees, Iraqi internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities in Northern Iraq" aims to contribute to the development of agribusiness industries in the country as a means to improve the livelihoods of the target communities. The project kick-started in November with a field assessment, through focus group discussions, interviews with key stakeholders and observations, which validated the project's objectives and its overall contribution to the development of agribusiness industries in the country. Participatory discussions ensured the ability and willingness of the displaced, refugees and host community members to improve their livelihoods through this project in responding to the existing needs, their ideas and experience of the concept of cooperatives. The active

participation of diverse groups assisted in understanding their vulnerability as well as the concerns of possible social tensions among the groups of various profiles. The interviews with entrepreneurs provided good examples to draw from, with their use of local methods and tools in food processing. The interviews probed the cyclical process of such projects such as the availability and diversity of potential agricultural products with adequate quantity and quality, sources of crops, and competition with imported items. In addition, the possibility that these local processors support the project in terms of training and transfer of skills. The interviews with traders assisted in identifying market factors and specific indicators like costing and pricing, potential and actual income, and seasonal variation and trends. Similarly, identification of microfinance institutions were also carried out as well as the mechanisms of loan provision available for the beneficiaries. Consultation and sharing of findings with local authorities focused on key identifiers such as policies influencing the project and other forms of support. Logistical constraints and security risks were also assessed to ensure the successful implementation of the activities within the scope of the project.

In 2017, the Project Team will start with a rapid market assessment in order to identify key actors in production, processing and marketing arenas in the value chain of potentially profitable agricultural produce(s), whose results will feed into the selection of direct beneficiaries among refugees, the displaced, returnees and host communities as well as the required skills set for the demand of the market, followed by a thorough situation analysis on livelihoods and available skills set of the target population in the Erbil Governorate. The identified gap will be supported with agri-business and entrepreneurship training, aiming at upgrading the technical and business skills of the beneficiaries in order to meet with the requirement and the standard of the market at the later stage.

IPI project while continuing to support entrepreneurship development and investment promotion in Iraq through the UNIDO supported Enterprise Development Centers (EDCs) in Baghdad, Basra, Erbil and Thiqr also expanded its technical assistance to the Iraqi Federation of Industries (IFI) as part of its wider private sector and inclusive and sustainable industrial development agenda. The EDCs, which offer one-stop-shop services to SMEs, facilitated interaction between Iraqi

and foreign companies by organizing 11 delegations to international fairs and exhibitions abroad, and helped advancing bilateral business ties via B2B match-making support. IFI, as the primary representative of the industrial sector in Iraq, received various new tools such as a fully digitalized web-based members directory, a communication and marketing strategy oriented for social media era, a renewed website, and COMFAR software. UNIDO also played a catalyst role in re-energizing the Industrial Zones (IZ) development in Iraq by organizing a workshop in August 2016 to bring together various stakeholders to review the status of IZs and deliberate on further actions which resulted in re-activation of the IZ High Level Committee chaired by the Minister of Industry and Minerals and includes a representative of UNIDO. In 2017, IPI project will be streamlining its various components towards establishment and operationalization of IZs in Iraq.

The NQI 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 the Central Organization for Standardization and Quality Control (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. A major milestone was finalization of the national quality and regulatory policy through a participatory multi-stakeholder approach as to support the Gol in reforming its national quality system. The Iraqi Accreditation System (IQAS) has a full quality management system in place and continued to offer its services to Iraqi conformity assessment bodies to provide accreditation to testing laboratories. A national WTO accession negotiation team was qualified and well equipped to proceed with the country's WTO accession process, and substantial progress has been made in the finalization of relevant documents such as Iraq's Memorandum of Foreign Trade Regime (MFTR), as well as the country's offer on market access for trade in goods. In turn these achievements will allow Iraq to enter into the next phase by initiating bilateral access negotiations. Moreover, to ensure the



food safety, upgrading of the inspection system continued at two selected border crossing points, five selected food testing laboratories, and nine selected food processing enterprises in different areas of Iraq. Overall, 63 missions were conducted in 2016 with a total of 461 mission days. 868 people were trained through 74 trainings/workshops that were conducted. The number of policies/manuals/procedures that were developed were 68.

2017 will bring about the closure of all but "Creating employment and improving food security for Syrian refugees, Iraqi internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities in Northern Iraq" project and while UNIDO re-affirms its commitment and willingness to support Iraq, extensions and new projects will need to come about even to keep UNIDO technical support at its current level.



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The inter-agency Iraq IDP Information Centre (Iraq IIC) is a unique project for the UN in many ways, not least because it supports the growing recognition that information is a vital form of aid

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UNOPS in IRAQ

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. Our mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve sustainable development. Through providing project management, procurement, and infrastructure services, our partners currently rely on our proven expertise to increase the speed, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of over 1,000 projects, often in the most challenging environments. UNOPS projects in Iraq during 2016 included operationalization and management of an inter-agency IDP call center, the construction and installation of security items to increase the safety and security for camp residents, strengthening the capacity of the Community Police Directorate, and providing solar energy for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and those in critical need. UNOPS also continued to support the capacity of the Independent Human Rights Commission, as well as the work of our UN partners, including UNAMI, UNHCR, WHO, and UN Habitat.

IRAQ IDP INFORMATION CENTRE

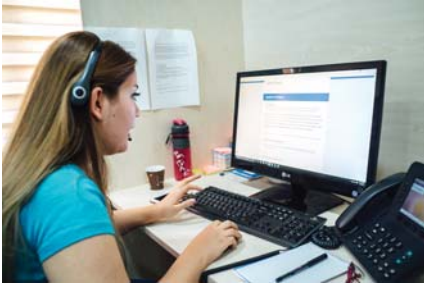
In humanitarian crises, it is those affected who are often the last people to be asked for input into how to respond to their needs. "The inter-agency Iraq IDP Information Centre (Iraq IIC) is a unique project for the UN in many ways, not least because it supports the growing recognition that information is a vital form of aid," said Mr. Bruno Geddo, UNHCR Country Representative to Iraq, "In a conflict that has seen more than 3.2 million Iraqis flee their homes in multiple waves of displacement to more than 3,000 different locations across the country, the importance of information sharing cannot be underestimated." The Iraq IIC operates a free national helpline service those in Iraq who have been displaced by conflict, offering a unique and innovative mobile solution to information and communication needs of the affected population. During 2016, the Iraq IIC handled more than 50,000 calls, sharing information to more than 300,000 individuals.

Tapping into Iraq's 90% mobile phone

penetration rate, the Iraq IIC uses the country's three mobile phone carriers to create a nationwide toll-free number to provide a simple solution that links displaced persons to service provision, provides a direct communication channel to those living in ISIS-controlled areas, documents serious protection issues, identifies service gaps, and improves the humanitarian response. In fact, it serves as a centralised complaints mechanism for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Iraq Taskforce. "The centre is an important achievement for the Iraq operation and clearly path-breaking in terms of the accountability to affected populations agenda" stated Lise Grande, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident / Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Resident Representative UNDP Iraq.

The Iraq IIC is implemented by the UNOPS with support from UNHCR, WFP, OCHA, and the UN Iraq Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

More information about the Iraq IIC is available at Lives on the Line.



INCREASING SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR CAMP RESIDENTS

The project, “Increasing the Safety and Security of Vulnerable Camp Residents in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq” helps to improve camp infrastructure, including the construction of safety operations centres, the installation of surveillance cameras, fencing, and 205 solar street lights. In an effort to provide camp residents with improved safety and security, the project focuses on two Syrian refugee camps (Kawergosk and Qushtapa), IDP camps in Erbil Governorate (Baharka and Harsham), as well as community IDP camps based in nearby Dohuk Governorate (Chamishku and Rwanga). The project is implemented

by UNOPS on behalf of the Government of Canada as part of Canada’s continuing support to Iraq.

“IMPROVING THE IMPACT, EFFECTIVENESS, AND GENDER SENSITIVITY OF THE COMMUNITY POLICE DIRECTORATE IN THE KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ (KR-I)”

On behalf of the Government of Japan with implementation by UNOPS, the project aims to strengthen the capacity of the Community Police Directorate of the Ministry of Interior in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), to respond to the IDP and refugee needs and en-

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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

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sure safety and security throughout the KR-I. Actions include the rehabilitation or construction of community policing centers in thirty police stations across the KR-I, the provision of necessary IT and communication equipment, provision of police vehicles and motorcycles, and the design and implementation of training programs to improve the impact, effectiveness, and gender sensitivity of new and existing police officers.

SOLAR STREETLIGHTS ACROSS IRAQ

“Increasing Safety through the Installation of Solar Street Lights for IDPs, Refugees, Returnees, and Host Communities in Critical Need” entails the installation of 680 solar streetlights in the most critical locations across Iraq. The project is implemented by UNOPS on behalf of the Government of Japan as part of Japan’s continuing support to Iraq. Solar streetlights are being installed in areas where the need is greatest and as identified by the Iraqi authorities. Areas includes governorates of Salaheddine, Kirkuk, Diyala, and Baghdad where IDP and refugee camps and returnees are located, while ensuring that a portion of lights are installed in host communities as well, allowing these communities to benefit from their generosity in supporting vulnerable IDP and refugee settlements.

Background

In 2016, UNFPA delivered services for Sexual and Gender Based Violence Survivors through 80 women spaces and 26 mobile teams, reaching out to more than 270,000 women and girls. The UNFPA supported one-stop centre (Duhok) for addressing the needs of survivors of sexual violence has provided psycho-social, psychiatric, psychotherapeutic and clinical help to more than 800 young women and girls who were subjected to various degrees of sexual violence.

During the same period, UNFPA provided Reproductive Health Services through 65 static RH clinics as well as 14 mobile facilities, including 4 mobile delivery units. Through this outreach, UNFPA was able to provide 394,321 RH consultations in 2016, including supporting 112,412 deliveries. UNFPA's use of mobile delivery units in frontline conflict areas in Iraq is a global first, as is its collaboration with WHO in establishing RH surgical capacity, including CEmONC, within field hospitals.

In addition to the humanitarian response linked service delivery, UNFPA Iraq, under the current Country Programme (CP 2016-2019) supports the Government of Iraq in policy formulation, review, and capacity development. Within the sexual and Reproductive Health pillar, besides strengthening national RH strategy and governorate level RH action plans, the Country Programme also aims at supporting further development of family planning guidelines and youth-friendly health services.



UNFPA IN IRAQ

MOSUL RESPONSE

a) Context

The offensive to retake Mosul city from ISIL, which commenced in the morning of 17 October 2016 is estimated to displace between 1.2 to 1.5 million people of whom 276,000 to 345,000 could be women of reproductive age. At least one million people are estimated to remain out of reach of humanitarian access in Mosul city, sheltering from the fighting, trying to survive or hoping to escape.

UNFPA's major population concern are women and girls of reproductive age who are usually a quarter of the IDP total population.

b) Emergency Response

The following are a number of highlights of the services that have been provided to IDPs since the onset of the Military operations in Mosul that started on the 17th of October 2016 till 25 December 2016:

i. Reproductive Health Response

UNFPA supported Reproductive Health facilities and mobile teams assisted in more than 420 safe deliveries, UNFPA supported medical teams also conducted in about 22,600 Reproductive Health consultations were conducted.

ii. Gender based Violence Response

UNFPA supported Women Centers and mobile teams provided to more than 5,400 women and girls with emergency psychosocial support since the onset of the operations. UNFPA supported teams also reached around 21,000 individuals with awareness sessions on available services to combat Gender Based Violence as well as other services available to IDPs. In addition, some 720 women were referred by UNFPA teams to specialized services. Also UNFPA teams distributed about 21,000 Dignity kits dignity kits contain 14 essential items including menstrual items, a dress and veil) to women and girls.

iii. Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM)

UNFPA in collaboration with WFP and UNICEF has established a mechanism of distributing emergency kits through common partners. This mechanism distribute essential food, sanitary kits and dignity kits (dignity kits contain 14 essential items including menstrual items, a dress and veil). These kits are provided to women on the run within the first 72 hours.

Since the onset of the Military operations, more than 21,000 RRM dignity kits were distributed in Erbil, Ninewa and Kirkuk governorates.



UNFPA supported Women Centers and mobile teams provided to more than 5,400 women and girls with emergency psychosocial support since the onset of the operations



FALUJAH RESPONSE

a) Context

On 22 May 2016, About 14,200 families or over 85,000 people (85,374) have been displaced from Fallujah from 23 May to 23 June 2016, according to IOM. The majority of people who fled Fallujah were displaced to in three main camps prepared by the Government: Ameriyat Al Falluja (AAF), Khalidiyah and Habbaniyah Tourist City (HTC).

b) Emergency response

Over 14,000 RRM kits were distributed from 20 May to 20 June 2016 by the Rapid Response Mechanism, which is managed by UNICEF and WFP in collaboration with UNFPA and a consortium of NGOs (in Anbar NRC and RIRP).

The UNFPA and partners supported health teams were able to provide over 1,000 consultations per day on average in two static health clinics, eight mobile clinics and with four mobile health teams. Over 280 babies were born in one of the delivery rooms that have been operational in each of the three camps.

Three static women's community centers in AAF, HTC and Khalidiyah have been functional and providing a safe space for women, girls including GBV survivors to receive psychosocial support and case management. Over 2,900 women and girls have received psychosocial support in group sessions and individual counselling in AAF, Habbaniya camps and Khalidiyah camp.

LAUNCH OF "SECURING MY FUTURE" CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT CHILD MARRIAGE IN KURDISTAN REGION

Erbil, 16 October 2016 – The High Council of Women in Kurdistan Region, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, announced the launch of the behavioral change campaign aiming to end child marriage in Kurdistan Region under the slogan "Securing My Future". The launch of the campaign was done in a press conference in the presence of Ms. Pakhshan Zangana, President of the High Council of Women in Kurdistan region and Mr. Ramanathan Balakrishnan, UNFPA Representative in Iraq.

"Securing My Future" campaign is a behavioral change campaign aiming to combat child marriage in Kurdistan Region using a holistic approach. The multi-focal campaign advocates towards girls empowerment and initiating a social movement lead by local communities leaders with the overall aim of securing a better future through empowering young girls to fulfill their role in building the future of Kurdistan Region in Iraq. The campaign is assembled into three phases, starting by capturing the attention of general public through initiating discussions among the target groups in Kurdistan Region about the interpretation of securing the young girls future in better education and health. The campaign will then shift to raising interest among girls in having a successful future through edutainment, student activities and civic engagement. In addition targeting household decision makers and young girls with messages focusing on success stories of women from the region that were able to excel in their careers to reflect the positive outcomes from women empowerment and having equal opportunities. The third phase of the campaign will be focused on encouraging the public opinion and decision makers to open a policy dialogue on developing a strategy to combat child marriage in the region.

The campaign has been unfolded over the local communities and households in Kurdistan Region including Refugees and Internally Displaced Population camps, and the main target audience of the campaign includes young and adolescent girls in Kurdistan region, households decision makers, while working closely with policy makers and key opinion leaders.

UNFPA PROGRAMME IN IRAQ: PRIORITIES FOR 2017

According to the Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq (2017), an estimated 4.2 million internally displaced persons will be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2017, in addition to 3 million host community and 1.4 million residents in re-taken areas. Of this population, 2.05 million are women in reproductive age, and 344,000 women will be pregnant or giving birth throughout the year.

As the humanitarian context in Iraq enters a critical and decisive phase in 2017, UNFPA in Iraq is at the forefront of providing humanitarian response to the Iraqi people including Internally Displaced People, host communities, refugees, returnees and residents in newly re-taken areas. UNFPA Iraq's humanitarian response is centered on the pillars of delivery of services for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) survivors and ensuring access to Reproductive Health Services, including emergency obstetric care for Iraqi women.

Within the pillar of gender equality and empowerment of women, the UNFPA CP in 2017 will continue to improve the policy environment and technical capacity for gender equality and empowerment of women through formulation of national and regional violence against women strategies and action plans, and the endorsement of the Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) protocol. Continued advocacy campaigns on elimination of child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation, particularly in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) will be a critical priority.

Besides integrating youth within its other pillars of intervention, the UNFPA Country Programme (CP) for 2017 focuses on operationalization of the national youth strategy, including strengthening youth networks and their life skills. On the data front, UNFPA 2017 Programme will focus on the follow-up to national level surveys such as I-WISH (Iraq Women Integrated Social and Health Survey) and support to the elaboration of population strategies.

UNFPA Programme in Iraq is generously supported by the Governments of United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, Norway, Sweden, European Union (ECHO) and through the Integrated Humanitarian Pooled Fund for Iraq.



WFP IN IRAQ

Overview

Throughout 2016, WFP has continued to carry out food distributions in all 18 governorates of Iraq, assisting the most vulnerable IDPs affected by the on-going and escalating conflict between Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and fighters from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Around three million people have been displaced since 2014, and accessing affordable food has been one of their biggest challenges. Throughout 2016, WFP has assisted over one million of the most vulnerable people with monthly rations of wheat flour, rice, chick peas, oil, salt and sugar. However, as markets are functioning well in many parts of the country, WFP is steadily increasing cash based assistance. Not only does this allow families choice over the food they buy, it also injects capital into the local economy, supporting local shop owners and new businesses.

COUNTRY-WIDE RESPONSE

In the spring, WFP was responding to those affected by the conflict in the ISIL-held areas of Fallujah, Ramadi, Qayyarah, Heet and Haditha, which had resulted in large scale displacement. WFP provided ready to eat food upon arrival at Habbaniya Tourism City and Amariyat al-Fallujah and by August, 90,000 people from Fallujah had received emergency assistance. In addition, over 90,000 people in Anbar were assisted with ready to eat food rations in March.

MOSUL RESPONSE

While dozens of villages, towns and cities across the governorates of Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din were hit by fighting, media headlines were dominated by the Mosul offensive that started October 17. Over the summer and well into the fall, WFP along with other UN agencies, NGOs and the national authorities were preparing for the Mosul response and at one point estimated a possible exodus of up to one million displaced people. Up to 70 trucks were coming into the country every day, filling up warehouses and enabling WFP to adapt to any developments on the ground. Once the offensive was launched it led to a rapid scaling up of food assistance. By the

end of the year over 121,000 people had fled to camps, tens of thousands of other families were living in host communities or had remained in their homes. At the end of December WFP had assisted 407,000 people affected by the conflict in and around Mosul with ready-to-eat food, and of those over 313,000 have been followed-up with monthly food rations.

CHALLENGES

Access and security have been the major obstacles for the humanitarian response to all conflict affected areas. One challenge was to assist families once they reached the safety of camps, another was to organize distributions in newly-retaken areas, increasing the risk to WFP staff, its dedicated partners and thousands of beneficiaries. Every single distribution was thoroughly planned with prior security and needs assessment missions before trucks carrying food were allowed to set off from warehouses towards the selected distribution sites.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Along with serving displaced Iraqis, WFP also assists Syrian refugees who have sought shelter and safety in nine camps in the governorates of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah



Through the Communicating with Communities (CwC) mechanism, Iraqis receiving WFP support were at the heart of improving food assistance, ensuring it was focused on the needs of the people



and Dohuk. Syrian refugees receive monthly e-vouchers or unrestricted cash worth USD 17 per person every month. Numbers have fluctuated throughout the year, but in December 2016, WFP assisted 65,000 Syrian refugees with cash based assistance.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG)

SDG #2 is in line with the core WFP mandate and the key goal: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. Besides, WFP is working actively to achieve SDG #17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Both goals are pursued through WFP planning, targeting, outreach and daily implementation, through cooperation with authorities, partners and donors, and through WFP-led clusters.

CLUSTERS

WFP leads the logistics and Emergency Telecommunications clusters in Iraq, helping the humanitarian community to access shared storage, transport services, and telecommunications services, such as radio programming and wireless internet. WFP also co-leads the Food Security Cluster with FAO which ensures agencies are sharing information and co-ordinating an effective response.

Last year, WFP implemented wireless internet access to Syrian refugees living in Domiz refugee camp through the Emergency Telecommunications cluster, enabling refugees to stay in touch with their families in Syria.

In addition to this, the logistics cluster enabled WFP to set up a One Stop Shop (OSS)

with the Ministry of Interior of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The OSS will speed up the customs clearance of incoming humanitarian items, helping to improve the humanitarian response within Iraq.

THOSE WE SERVE

Through the Communicating with Communities (CwC) mechanism, Iraqis receiving WFP support were at the heart of improving food assistance, ensuring it was focused on the needs of the people. WFP engaged with beneficiaries to inform them of programmatic changes, assist two-way communication and increase understanding of WFP assistance. Each month, WFP issued key messages for all families receiving food assistance. These gave clear and relevant information on a wide range of issues, such as distribution times and schedules, information on assistance, information on the rights of beneficiaries and details on preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). In addition, WFP gave updates on how to complain, targeting criteria, entitlement qualifications, programmatic changes and what to expect in the coming months.

PARTNERS AND DONORS

As part of its operations during the Mosul offensive, WFP has partnered with Samaritan's Purse, Muslim Aid, Mercy Hands, Save the Children, Danish Refugee Council, Norwegian Refugee Council and the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development. WFP is also working with ACTED, Muslim Aid, NRC, Save the Children, WEO, RIRP, Mercy Hands, Samaritan's Purse, ISHO, BCF, CDO, REACH, World Vision and Islamic Relief to provide food assistance to people



displaced or otherwise affected by conflict in Iraq.

In 2016, donors supporting WFP food assistance operations for IDPs in Iraq included: Australia, Andorra, Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, International Humanitarian Pooled Funds, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States, UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and private donors.

SCOPE FACT BOX

To manage assistance WFP has developed an electronic SCOPE platform. More than one million people have registered on WFP's SCOPE database to date. Through SCOPE WFP collects, manages and provides reliable data about the families we serve, enabling better decision-making and targeting. Currently, over 390,000 people receive cash-based transfers through electronic SCOPECARDS. Using the card as any bank card when paying in designated stores, SCOPECARD holders can pay for the food that they prefer, and in some cases the cards can be used to withdraw unrestricted cash.

Interview with

Country Director and Representative

SALLY HAYDOCK



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The main things people can do is to support the needs of the people affected by this conflict. Let's help them to live in dignity during this period – even if that is away from their homes

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The Mosul offensive started in October. How will WFP respond to this crisis in 2017?

Thousands of families have been displaced in camps, and by the end of 2016 WFP had provided immediate food assistance to around half a million people affected by the conflict. Of those approximately 400,000 also received monthly food rations, enabling them to prepare a decent meal regardless of whether they lived in camps or remained in their homes. This is in addition to the million people that WFP has been assisting on a monthly basis who are in camps or being hosted by local populations. I am extremely concerned about the safety and food security of people still trapped in Mosul, and WFP will do its utmost to respond with life-saving food assistance as soon as we have access to these families. With fighting ongoing, and food sources unreliable, people have enough to worry about - the least we can do is make sure they are able to feed themselves and their families.

What will happen once the battle for Mosul is over?

WFP's response will change. The Public Dis-

tribution System (PDS) is starting to function again, and will provide monthly food rations to Iraqis throughout the country, allowing WFP to target the most vulnerable families. What we are seeing is that Iraqis are very quickly returning to normal life after an area is retaken; businesses pick up again, stores and food markets begin selling food and prices normalise. Cash assistance will be important where markets are functioning.

How will you assist the most vulnerable?

The situation in Iraq will change in 2017. People's lives will change for the better, and WFP will need to change accordingly: Our targeting, modalities, and our activities. To plan this transition, we will be working closely with the Iraqi authorities to know their priorities and co-ordinate how we reach those in need of support. WFP's will continue to support the most vulnerable communities but cash based assistance is a much more sustainable modality in the long run, injecting money in to the local economy and giving people choice over what they buy. We will be looking at enhancing people's skills e.g. digital or labor skills to help them find jobs or start small



businesses.

Haider Al Ithawi is a Programme Policy Officer for the World Food Programme Mosul response. He tells us about the challenges of getting food to people in besieged areas, and the experiences from 2016 that will stay with him forever.

Can you explain what your role involves?

I manage WFP's immediate food response in emergencies. When the conflict forces people from their homes, I monitor where they are moving to and assess what their needs are. This helps WFP know what we need to provide and where we need to provide it. I liaise with inter-agency partners, such as UNICEF, UNFPA, OCHA, UNHCR and IOM, and government ministries to ensure we are working together to reach people affected by the Mosul conflict.

I spend a lot of time talking to the people we are supporting – are markets functioning in their area? Can they afford to buy food? How are they coping? All of these questions allow us to identify how to best support them.

What are some of WFP's biggest achievements this year?

In December, we distributed food to over 42,000 people across two neighbourhoods inside Mosul, providing families with enough food for 6 days. I managed one of the three distribution sites and despite it being a challenging environment, it was very successful. People were in a desperate state and so grateful to receive food.

When you talk to people displaced by the Mosul crisis, what are some of the urgent concerns they raise?

Actually the major problem that has come up again and again is the lack of income. Many people have been besieged for over two years and have had no access to the state wages system. In addition to that, the conflict meant that the food supply was cut off to some areas so availability of commodities was also a worry. As the conflict continues, the main concern is the security. Even in retaken areas many families do not feel safe as they are still so close to the frontline.

How does your job affect you personally, and how does your family cope knowing you are working in conflict-affected areas?

When I know that people are hungry but we cannot access them due to the conflict, it makes me feel helpless. That's the biggest personal challenge I face. On the other hand, when I see the happiness in people's faces when they get the assistance they need, it motivates me to keep going. Of course, my family worry but they feel proud at the same time. They know what we are doing is so necessary.

Do you have any particular memories of people you've met?

One incident that stays in my mind is from a food assessment we did in Mosul. A lady approached the team and asked for the commander of the Iraqi Security Forces

who was accompanying the mission. She said she had three children and nothing to feed them. The commander immediately asked the soldiers to open the vehicle and provide with anything they had that might help. He then contacted the mayor and asked for additional food to be sent to the area. It was a heart-warming moment.

As an Iraqi national, do you feel you are part of a bigger effort to support your country and help rebuild it?

When I look at WFP's achievements in Iraq – reaching more than one million people with food every month – I feel part of a huge humanitarian movement that is helping the Iraqi population to cope with this crisis. I hope this support gives people hope and that this conflict ends quickly so that people can go back to living their normal lives.

What can the international community do to support the people of Iraq?

The main things people can do is to support the needs of the people affected by this conflict. Let's help them to live in dignity during this period – even if that is away from their homes. I think it is also important that we support the rebuilding of retaken areas that have been damaged during the fighting. How can we help people to cope with the things they have witnessed? Especially the children – too many have had to see horrible things and they will need support in overcoming that.

WHO response in Iraq, January-December 2016

WHO IN IRAQ

Context

More than 8 million people are currently in need of health assistance in Iraq, including around 3.2 million internally displaced persons living in overcrowded settlements across 11 governorates in the country. Many areas affected by ongoing conflict remain largely inaccessible and have limited access to health care services. The new waves of displacements and the movement of returnees in 2016 have continue to challenge WHO's and health authorities' response operations due to shortage of medical personnel, supplies, and funding resources.

In four of the most severely affected areas in the country Anbar, Ninewa, Salah Aldeen, and Diyala 14 hospitals and more than 170 health facilities have been damaged or destroyed. The escalating crises in Falluja and Mosul have further impacted an already overstretched health sector. Compounding the situation, the fiscal collapse in the country has led to shortages in salaries for public servants, including health staff.

Message from

Acting WHO Representative for Iraq

ALTAF MUSANI



In 2016, it was estimated that more than 8 million people were in need of health assistance in Iraq, including around 3.2 million internally displaced persons were living in overcrowded settlements across 11 governorates in the country. Many areas affected by ongoing conflict remain largely inaccessible and have limited access to health care services. The new waves of displacements and the movement of returnees in 2016 have continued to challenge WHO's and health authorities' response operations due to a shortage of medical personnel, supplies, and funding resources.

In response, WHO, through the close cooperation with the Ministry of Health and cluster partners, succeeded to ensure considerable access of IDPs to health facilities, availability of essential and trauma health care, immunization and reproductive health services, and pharmaceuticals and lab equipment.

Among our top priorities in 2016 was trauma care. Three trauma stabilization points were established and fully equipped in Gogjali, Al Zahra, and Karamlees in Ninewa governorate for referrals from Mosul. Referral of the injured to Erbil was facilitated through supporting 27 emergency medical teams and through the ongoing support to Erbil Emergency and West Erbil Emergency hospitals. Kits and line item medication were handed over to Iraqi health authorities and to WHO partners covering the needs of more than 1500 surgical procedures. Sixty medical doctors in Erbil, Ninewa, and Dohuk were trained in addition to 33 paramedical teams trained and engaged in managing civilian casualties from Mosul.

WHO RESPONSE

LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

- WHO leads a network of over 30 health cluster partners including UN agencies and local and international NGOs to meet the needs of vulnerable populations in Iraq.
- In 2016, health cluster and sub-cluster meetings took place in Baghdad, Dahuk, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk and Salahdeen to discuss ways to strengthen coordination between health partners on the ground and ensure an effective and comprehensive response to the urgent health needs of host communities, internally displaced persons and refugees.

TRAUMA CARE

- WHO delivered 66 new ambulances to DOHs in 2016 to strengthen referral pathways in Anbar, Baghdad, Dahuk, Erbil, Kirkuk and Ninewa.
- WHO established a network of trauma stabilization points in Zahra, Gogjali, Karamlees and other locations in Ninewa to provide the first line support to trauma patients.
- WHO delivered a total of eight trauma kits (A+B) and two surgical supply kits to treat 1000 severely wounded cases.
- A 12-bed capacity emergency prefab unit was established in Anbar as an extension to the existing emergency unit in Amriate Al-Fallujah hospital, and a 96 square meter drug store prefab was established for Amriate Al-Fallujah health sector. Al-Fallujah General Hospital was provided with two-bed capacity ICU equipment, and laboratory and medical equipment.
- WHO provided 120 sets of personal protective equipment (PPE) to directorates of health in areas where referral hospitals were identified in Ninewa, Kirkuk, Dahuk and Erbil governorates to manage patients of probable exposure to chemical agents. An additional 130 PPE sets are in reserve for replenishments.
- WHO along with ICRC supported Shikhan hospital to increase the emergency referral capacity of the hospital.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND VACCINATION

- WHO delivered medicines and medical supplies for more than 911,380 treatments including interagency health kits, trauma kits, surgical supply kits, diarrheal disease kits, antibiotics and medicines for chronic diseases. Of these:
 - 745,718 treatments were delivered to 12 implementing NGOs; and
 - 155,662 treatments were delivered to DOHs Erbil, Ninewa, Dahuk and Sulaymania;
 - 10,000 treatments were delivered to MOH Baghdad.
- 59 mobile medical clinics and 66 ambulances were provided to strengthen referral pathways in Anbar, Baghdad, Dahuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salahdeen.
- WHO strengthened primary health care services inside and outside camp settings by establishing primary health care centres and health houses, supporting existing primary health care centres, providing medicines and medical supplies and equipment.
 - Two comprehensive primary health care clinics supported in Dijlah and Moutasim districts in Salahdeen;
 - Two prefabricated structures were donated to DoH Kirkuk to support the provision of health services in Daquq camp; in addition Nazrawa camp was supported with medical equipment aiming at improving the quality of care in that camp;
- 6 mobile medical clinics and 2 ambulances been donated to Salah Addin DOH.
- 14 community health houses were established in Dahuk to provide services for the displaced persons and returnees in newly liberated areas of the northern plains of Ninewa;
- One comprehensive primary health care facility established, equipped and fully supported in Ashty camp in Sulaymania.
- Two comprehensive primary health care centers established and fully supported in Hasan Sham and Qayarah Airstrip camps in Mosul. Additional PHCC is under construction in Debaga 2 camp.
- One primary health care facility in Gogjali with a provision of caravans to support PHCCs in Hammam Aleel and Jadaa camp around Mosul.
- 4 caravans of 2 rooms each were donated to Al Alam camp in Salah Addin to serve as a static PHCC. Additional 6 caravans were also donated to three different informal settlements of IDPs in the governorate which are: (Saqoor, Dream City, and Shaqlawa housing complex) to serve as health unites.
- From January to November 2016, more than 5.8 M children below the age of five were immunized in governorates across Iraq. WHO supported all immunization activities in Iraq by ensuring logistics and providing incentives for vaccinators and supervisors.



SECONDARY HEALTH CARE

- WHO provided medical equipment including ICU ventilators, defibrillators, laboratory equipment, maternity and neonatal devices including neonatal ventilators, phototherapy units and infant incubator; diagnostic devices; operating theatre device including Anesthesia machines, electrosurgical units and operating tables, medical supplies, and medical furniture including ICU patient beds and hospital beds. The equipment was provided to 11 main hospitals:
 - Fallujah General Hospital and Amirate Al Fallujah Hospital in Anbar;
 - Heevy Pediatric Hospital and Maternity Hospital in Duhok;
 - Rizgary Hospital and Teaching Hospital in Erbil;
 - Shikhan Hospital and Al Qayyarah Hospital in Ninewah;
 - Chamchamal General Hospital and Darbandikhan Hospital in Sulaymaniyah; and
 - Salaheddin Hospital in Tikrit;
 - The Emergency and West Erbil Emergency hospitals;
- 12 medical doctors were recruited in secondary and tertiary health facilities to support the referral system in Dahuk.



MENTAL HEALTH

- WHO conducted a rapid assessment mission to review the resources, capacities and needs available for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in Anbar province and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq following the military operations in Ramadi and Fallujah, and in light of military operations in Mosul and subsequent population displacement.
- WHO hosted a meeting chaired by the WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean to discuss the role of medical schools in supporting mental health and psychosocial services to internally displaced persons and vulnerable groups.

DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND OUTBREAK RESPONSE

- In March 2016, WHO, UNICEF and the Ministry of Health of Iraq, together with water and sanitation and health cluster partners held a consultation meeting in March 2016 to review lessons learnt and best practices from the successful 2015 response to the outbreak and prepare the plan for 2016. WHO supported cholera surveillance, case management and response trainings to cover all governorates in Iraq. WHO also provided 14 IDDKs, lab reagents and 12,000 RDT kits to the MOH for the preparedness of cholera 2016 season.
- WHO strengthened the existing surveillance system in fixed primary health care centres catering to IDPs in host communities in order to early detect and respond promptly to epidemics such as cholera, measles, pertussis and polio. The expansion took place in two phases covering 54 health clinics in governorates hosting IDPs (Sulaymaniyah, Dahuk, Erbil, Diyala, Ninawa, Salahuddin and Anbar). By November 2016, an additional 19 sites had been added, bringing the total number of reporting sites in Iraq to 157.
- WHO supported the Directorates of Health in Erbil, Salah Addin, Duhok and Ninewa to upgrade the surveillance system through expanding the reporting sites by providing 73 electronic tablets for data entry, processing and reporting by operators who were trained by WHO.
- In Makhmour in Erbil and Kirkuk, vector control activities were conducted over two rounds in spring and autumn 2016, with four months of total support by WHO.

MATERNAL, NEONATAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- 5 caravans delivery room was established in Al-Khaldia and 6 caravans delivery rooms in Al-Habanyia cities as part of a joint project between WHO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to establishing delivery rooms in Ramadi City, Anbar governorate. WHO supported these delivery rooms with medicines and medical supplies in addition to 8 ambulances to provide emergency referral services.
- A new nine-bed neonatal intensive care unit was established in Heevi Paediatric Hospital in Dahok as part of a wider project between WHO and Dahok health authorities to scale up the capacity of the hospital. WHO provided nine incubators, trained the unit staff in the hospital and developed protocols and standard operating procedures for the unit.

HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM

- In January 2016, five assessment teams from Ninewa Directorate of Health were trained on using the Health Resources Availability and Mapping System (HeRAMS) form and related tablet devices. The teams assessed all health facilities in the new retaken areas north of Ninawa governorate.
- WHO implemented an Emergency Community Assessment Program in Zakho district in Dahuk to assess critical health needs in the area.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- WHO conducted 10 consecutive EWARN training sessions for health staff from Erbil, Anbar, Baghdad, Ninewa, Diyala, Salah Addin, Kirkuk, Duhok and Sulaimaniya governorates in 2016. A total of 374 health staff from the surveillance units of the departments of health, health clinics of the DOHs and other health partners received comprehensive training on the early warning alert and response network system (EWARNS) before deployment to the new health facilities to resume related EWARNS functions.
- Five assessment teams from Ninewa Directorate of Health were trained on the Health Resources Availability and Mapping System (HeRAMS) form and related tablet devices
- A WHO specialised expert trained 90 medi-

PARTNERSHIPS WITH NGOS

- In 2016, WHO supported national NGOs that provided a total of 1,055,954 treatments, 5,580,354 outpatient consultations, 6,077 surgical interventions and 90,335 deliveries, focusing on vulnerable groups and internally displaced people (IDPs).
- WHO trained more than 510 staff from 30 DoHs & NGOs on disease surveillance, primary and secondary health care, mental health, nutrition, trauma care and health information.

WATER AND SANITATION FOR HEALTH (WASH)

- WHO supported Water Quality Monitoring teams in Sulaimaniyah and Dohuk governorates, as well as newly liberated areas of Ninewa governorate. The teams collected water samples from camps and non-camp locations including schools and unfinished buildings.

cal staff on chemical weapons preparedness and response. The first phase of the training was organized for medical staff from Erbil, Dahok, Suleimaniya, Kirkuk and Ninawa and covered both theoretical and practical parts; the second phase was conducted in selected hospitals in each governorate. 30 additional medical staff were trained on mobile emergency decontamination in Erbil and Dahuk.

- War surgery experts were recruited by WHO to work with more than 75 general surgeons and junior medical doctors from Ninewa and Erbil.
- WHO conducted a workshop in Amman, Jordan to explore ways to strengthen the accreditation of medical education in Iraq and develop a roadmap to enhance institutional capacities and operational systems to implement accreditation of medical education institutions in the country.





UNODC IN IRAQ

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UNODC supported the government of Iraq in strengthening its national capacities to fight terrorism which have been exacerbated by the ravages caused by ISIL over the past two years

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Message from

Regional Representative a.i. for the Middle East and North Africa

CHERINE RAHMY

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a global leader in the fight against transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking, terrorism and corruption. By promoting ratification and implementation of international conventions, protocols and other instruments falling under its mandated areas, UNODC plays a key role in promoting international peace and stability and contributing to implementing related UN Security Coun-

cil resolutions. Of particular importance to the Office is Resolution 2195 on the nexus between terrorism and transnational organized crime, and Resolution 2178 on foreign terrorist fighters.

UNODC works to strengthen the rule of law and justice institutions in order to improve crime prevention and to build safer societies, where people can live without fear and work towards a more prosperous future for themselves and their families. UNODC also

works to educate about the dangers of drug abuse and to strengthen international actions against drug production, trafficking, and drug-related crimes.

UNODC has been present in the Middle East and North African region since 1997 and has been supporting the Government of Iraq since 2010 in vari-

ous areas, mostly on rule of law-related matters such as prison reform, anti-corruption and asset recovery, countering trafficking in human beings, maritime container control, terrorism prevention, as well as drug demand reduction.

The year 2016 was particularly challenging for Iraq. UNODC is committed

to remain a close partner to further support Iraq's efforts to combat transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking, terrorism and corruption and as such to mobilize efforts to expand this partnership with Iraq in the course of 2017, with the ultimate goal of reestablishing a programme presence in Baghdad.

HIGHLIGHTS AND RESULTS 2016

COMBATING AND PREVENTING TERRORISM

UNODC supported the government of Iraq in strengthening its national capacities to fight terrorism which have been exacerbated by the ravages caused by ISIL over the past two years. In this regard, UNODC supported the development and implementation of a functioning legal regime against terrorism in accordance with relevant international legal instruments and Security Council resolutions and in compliance with the rule of law and human rights. In the past year, the Iraqi Government requested UNODC to focus on kidnapping for ransom, illicit trafficking in Iraqi cultural properties that funds terrorism, and the forced recruitment and use of children and women by ISIL. The government also asked for support to its Financial Intelligence Unit, international cooperation and in the drafting a new counter-terrorism Law.

With regard to the latter, the Iraqi Government developed and finalized a new counter-terrorism Law, which was adopted in January 2017. The Law will be reviewed by the Parliament in February 2017. This is the result of close collaboration with the Iraqi Deputy Minister of Interior, the Director General of the Counter-Terrorism Commission, as well as with experts from the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). UNODC provided expertise and facilitated extensive discussions and in-depth analysis of the draft Law, as well as the sharing of best practices and recommendations, which were incorporated in the final draft prior to submission to the Parliament.

UNODC also provided capacity-building to the newly-established Iraqi Financial Unit (FIU), under the jurisdiction of the Central Bank. Officials were trained on the investigation, prosecution and ad-

judication of cases related to the financing of foreign terrorist fighters and on the prevention and suppression of the illicit trafficking of cultural properties that funds terrorism. Furthermore, Iraqi officials from the FIU and law enforcement officials met with peers from the Lebanese FIU and international experts from Switzerland, the International Monetary Fund, the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team for the UN Security Council Resolutions 1267/1989 and UNESCO, and discussed challenges and best practices to detect, analyze and deal with suspicious transactions.

UNODC also tackled the emerging issue of the exploitation of women and children by terrorist groups and in this context, organized a workshop, the first of its kind, to address the recruitment of women by extremist groups, including terrorist groups. The workshop brought together representatives from key Iraqi counter-terrorism institutions and examined the phenomena of women recruitment at large, the myriad of complex factors that led to its growth, and the legal framework governing it. Iraqi officials also participated in a regional event on how to effectively deal with preventing and denying the benefits of kidnapping for ransom by terrorists. This event gave judicial and law enforcement officials, as well as policy-makers from across the MENA region, the opportunity to exchange views and discuss how to deal with the complex legal and technical questions surrounding the fight against kidnapping for ransom.

UNODC will stay engaged in Iraq providing further assistance on combating and preventing terrorism. In 2017,

UNODC will focus on operationally oriented support, e.g. on good practices to address terrorism-related threats to critical oil infrastructure and on terrorist bomb scene management.

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING



UNODC invited Iraq to participate in various regional events related to combating human trafficking. Together with IOM and UNHCR, UNODC organized a major regional conference on "The nexus between human trafficking and asylum: protecting victims and refugees, including in conflict and disaster settings", in which Iraqi officials participated. UNODC also commenced work on addressing human trafficking amongst refugees and displaced persons from Syria and Iraq, as well as on combating migrant smuggling in the Levant. Relevant Iraqi officials and representatives from civil society who work closely with refugees and displaced persons were trained together with their counterparts from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey on the screening, detection and referral to assistance and protection services. During 2016, UNODC also actively engaged with Iraqi officials and provided capacity-building on the identification and investigation of migrant smuggling cases and on the protection and assistance of smuggled migrants.



Brief biography

Ivo Freijsen is currently the Head of Office at OCHA Iraq. He is a 51 years old Dutch national. Academic background: MA in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies (Leiden and Cairo Universities) and post-graduate studies in International Relations. After navy service in the Middle East during the first Gulf War, Ivo Freijsen held increasingly senior managerial roles and leadership positions, since 1993, with MSF-Holland, CARE USA, ECHO and United Nations OCHA in, inter alia, Sudan, Iraq, Rwanda, Eritrea, Syria, Libya, Egypt, the UAE, and Geneva / Switzerland.

UN OCHA IN IRAQ

Interview with

OCHA Iraq Head of Office

IVO FREIJSSEN

What does OCHA do, and what is its mandate?

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) works to support effective an effective inter-agency response effort. To do this, we ensure that common situational awareness is developed across the humanitarian community, which enables better decision making. OCHA brings together humanitarian partners 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. It has scaled up its activities in Iraq in the last 12 months in response to the Mosul crisis. The organization employs more than XX staff across five offices, including Baghdad, Erbil, Dahuk, Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk.

What has OCHA Iraq done to help address the humanitarian situation in Mosul?

One of the main avenues that OCHA was pursued was the establishment in October 2016 of the Mosul Humanitarian Operations Centre (HOC). The HOC was developed to facilitate a coordinated response on the Mosul emergency that focuses response activities in areas

of greatest humanitarian need in the most effective and efficient manner. The HOC also supported operational planning and inter-cluster coordination of the humanitarian response for the Mosul emergency. This brought together key actors, strengthened coordination between humanitarian clusters, emergency response managers, Civil – Military coordination, UN Mine Action Service and the NGO community, so that these resources were easily accessible to all humanitarian responders.

To ensure a common awareness, the HOC acted as a repository of humanitarian information, distilling the multitude of response activities, reports and assessments into digestible and usable analysis. To communicate this, the HOC also had a reporting function to ensure this analysis is distributed to all entities requiring this analysis. The primary tool for this was the OCHA weekly Mosul Situation Report, but it also produced fact sheets and info-graphics summarizing much of this information.

By tracking humanitarian needs and analyzing the response to those needs, the HOC was also well placed to highlight significant humanitarian gaps. Where humanitarian gaps were due to structural impediments to aid delivery, the HOC fulfilled an advocacy role, using the OCHA Iraq office or the Humanitarian Coordinator to ensure these structural impediments were addressed.

Once these tasks had been established, in April 2017 the HOC transitioned to become a Mosul field-office of OCHA Iraq.

What kind of humanitarian needs are expected in Iraq in 2017?



The humanitarian crisis in Iraq remains one of the largest and most volatile in the world. The pace of displacement over the past three years is nearly without precedent. In 2014, over 2.5 million civilians were displaced in Iraq; in 2015, more than an additional 1 million were forced to flee. During 2016, nearly 700,000 people in areas impacted by the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have been newly displaced. Every one of the nine major military campaigns during 2016 has created new displacement. Over 3 million Iraqis are currently displaced, living in 3,700 locations across the country; more than one million displaced and refugees are in the Kurdistan Region. In 2017, depending on the intensity and length of fighting in Mosul, Hawiga and Tel Afar, as many as 1.2 million additional civilians may be forced from their homes.

Families in Mosul, Hawiga and Tel Afar, and other districts under the control of ISIL, face some of the gravest threats in the Middle East. Civilians risk being caught in cross-fire and are subjected to bombardment; they face execution,

abduction, rape, looting, detention and expulsion. Thousands of people are already caught between the front lines of opposing forces and tens of thousands more may become trapped in the months ahead. Civilians being screened are fearful of mistreatment and sectarian violence, although localized, threatens to destabilize embattled communities. For more than three years, hundreds of thousands of men, women, girls and boys have been brutalized by violence, denied access to safety and basic services, and subjected to exploitation, harassment, and intimidation. An estimated 3.6 million children in Iraq – one in five – are at serious risk of death, injury, sexual violence, abduction and recruitment into armed groups.

Is there anything else that OCHA Iraq does to help?

As I mentioned earlier, OCHA brings together different part of the humanitarian system so there is a shared understanding of the problems faced and how these needs to be addressed. OCHA also ensures there is a framework within which each actor can contribute

to the overall response effort.

One of the things that we also do to ensure that critical life-saving assistance is delivered in a timely manner to people in need, is to manage the disbursement of funds through the Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund (IHPF). The IHPF is a fund in which donors pool their funding together to ensure critical humanitarian priorities are supported and strengthened. OCHA helps to manage the allocation of these funds at the country level and monitors how this funding is subsequently used.

In 2016, the IHPF served to support both partners' projects which aligned with the HRP, and to reinforce the cluster system. In 2016, the IHPF allocated USD 88.3 million to 55 partners and 135 projects in nine of the eleven clusters active in Iraq, as well as Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) and the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM). Almost half of funding went towards improving emergency water and sanitation services and health care projects. The impact of the 2016 IHPF allocations cannot be overstated.



IOM in IRAQ

Message from

IOM Iraq Chief of Mission

DR. THOMAS LOTHAR WEISS



more than 3 million displaced Iraqis, and with thousands of newly displaced due to Mosul operations, IOM expanded its operational scope and capacity. In its effort to meet the needs of Iraq's most vulnerable displaced persons, IOM Iraq delivered aid throughout the country in coordination with the Iraqi government, donors and UN agencies.

To provide higher levels of assistance, IOM Iraq staff numbers expanded from 800 to more than 1,200 in 2016. Based in Baghdad (main office), Erbil and Basra, and with 27 sub-offices in key locations across 18 governorates and a small support office in Amman, Jordan, IOM has the largest operational footprint of any humanitarian organization across Iraq.

As a member of the United Nations Country Team for Iraq, IOM works closely with the UN system and with Iraqi authorities in support of the Iraqi National Development Strategy and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. As an active partner of the United Nations



Humanitarian Response Plan, IOM has been coordinating emergency response actions across multiple project areas with government authorities, partner UN agencies and NGOs.

IOM Iraq is fully integrated into the UN cluster system, assumes national co-ordination for the Shelter/Non-Food Items (NFI) and the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) clusters; takes an active part in the Health, Logistics, Emergency Livelihoods and Social Cohesion clusters and Protection cluster; and is the chair of the UN Returns Working Group.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), which became the UN Migration Agency in 2016, provided support for more than 1.2 million vulnerable Iraqis throughout the year in the areas of emergency humanitarian assistance, community transition and recovery, and migration management.

In 2016, as the conflict continued in Iraq with



THE PROGRAMME DESCRIPTIONS BELOW PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF IOM IRAQ ACTIVITIES IN 2016

MOSUL CRISIS RESPONSE

From the beginning of Mosul operations in mid-October 2016 through the end of December 2016, more than 175,000 Iraqis were displaced by Mosul Operations in affected governorates according to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Emergency Tracking. In support of the Govern-
















ment of Iraq's response and in close cooperation with Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoMD), IOM Iraq has been directly responding to the needs of the displaced.

IOM assistance provided to hundreds of thousands of displaced from Mosul in 2016 included non-food items, kerosene, sealing-off kits, emergency

shelter kits, tents, medical consultations, psychosocial support, and Camp Coordination and Camp Management services. In cooperation with MoMD, IOM constructed and led the establishment of two emergency sites in Al-Qayara and Haj Ali, Ninewa governorate. Now nearing completion, these sites will have the capacity to shelter over 100,000 individuals.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Main Beneficiary and assistance figures

-  510,500 received non-food items.
-  53,000 received fuel for cooking or heating.
-  23,800 families received tents, sealing-off kits, emergency shelter kits, communal shading kits, family shading kits or shelter upgrades.
-  125 displacement sites covered by CCCM activities.
-  227,500 medical consultations and treatment provided.
-  57,500 psychosocial services provided.
-  28,000 transported to safety, shelter or school.
-  12 DTM reports published.
-  185,600 Communication with Communities (CwC) print material (leaflets, posters and brochures) disseminated.
-  3,700 beneficiaries directly assisted by livelihoods programming (both Iraqis and Syrians).
-  95,000 benefitted from rehabilitation or construction of light infrastructure
-  650 police officers and 256 community members participated in training or workshops on community policing.
-  8,500 beneficiaries received assistance to return home and resettle from abroad.
-  10,000 beneficiaries received movement assistance to resettle in other countries
-  500 attendees of migration management and capacity building training.

Overall Main Achievements 2016



EMERGENCY RESPONSE NON-FOOD ITEMS

During 2016, IOM reached over 85,000 internally displaced families (approximately 510,500 individuals) across all 18 governorates in Iraq with NFIs. IOM's NFI kit items are selected and have been expanded to meet the needs of IDPs and seasonal priorities. Full NFI kits include a kitchen set, hygiene kit, tarpaulin, rechargeable light, jerry can, mattresses, blankets, pillows, towels, sewing kit and stove. Summer kits include a fan, cool box and plastic mat; winter kits include a carpet, heater and warm blankets. As part of winterization efforts, IOM distributed over 8,820 barrels of kerosene (200L each) to displaced Iraqi families last winter, providing warmth to more than 53,000 IDPs.

SHELTER AND CCCM PROGRAMME

IOM is one of the largest shelter partners in Iraq and the co-chair of the sub-national Shelter/NFI and CCCM Cluster for Center and South Iraq. In 2016 IOM shelter interventions assisted over 23,800 families through the provision of tents, shading kits, sealing-off kits and emergency shelter kits, and the upgrading of shelter units and Transitional-shelter units and shading kits – both communal and family types. This includes shelter upgrades of more than 800 religious buildings and partially damaged houses in eight governorates, assisting both displaced and returnees.

CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT (CCCM),

13 teams were established to improve overall conditions in camps; 125 sites benefitted from CCCM activities and 29 camp management caravans offices were installed.

HEALTH

IOM supports the Iraqi National Health System, which is overstretched by the conflict, to assist IDPs and host community members. In 2016, over 227,500 primary health care consultations were provided through 17 Mobile Medical Teams and five static clinics in seven governorates and 12,650 individuals were referred to secondary health facility, including transportation assistance as needed.

More than 32,700 individuals benefitted from health awareness activities.

To expand the capacity of available health services, 18 health facilities were supported through the provision of medical equipment, medical staff, medicines, furniture and caravans. Through a project supported by the Government of Japan, more than 9,000 individuals received ophthalmology services and more than 800 displaced and vulnerable children received prescription glasses.

PSYCHOSOCIAL

In 2016, IOM reached over 17,800 beneficiaries with 57,500 direct psychosocial services in IDP camps and informal settlements in six governorates: Dahuk, Erbil, Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf, and Babylon. Eight psychosocial and recreational centers were established. Psychosocial activities include recreational activities, arts and crafts, individual counseling, group discussions, awareness, sports, livelihood, social gatherings, religious events, referrals and specialized consultations.

TRANSPORTATION

IOM continues to provide transportation services to both IDPs and Syrian refugees. In 2016 IOM provided inter-camp transportation in Dahuk and transportation from checkpoints in Kirkuk to camps outside the city for over 27,500 IDPs, and school transportation for 446 refugee children and university students in Dohuk.

DISPLACEMENT TRACKING MATRIX (DTM)

The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), IOM's information management system, tracks and monitors population displacement and returns on behalf of the UN Country Team. The DTM collects key information on internally displaced persons and returnees, gathers and processes multi-layered data and disseminates an array of information products that facilitate understanding of the evolving needs of the affected population across the country.

In 2016 a total of 12 DTM reports and 48 datasets (on IDPs and returnees) were produced. For the period January 2014 to 22 December 2016, the DTM identified 3,034,614 internally displaced individuals (505,769 families) and 1,370,862 returnees. DTM Emergency Tracking provided early reports on rapid population movements —including from Mosul operations and from Anbar; a total of 432 Emergency Tracking updates were produced in 2016.

COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITIES

Through Communication with Communities initiatives, IOM promotes two-way communication and disseminates knowledge to inform and sensitize displace and vulnerable communities on a range of topics including health awareness, camp safety, shelter kit set-up and irregular migration. The programme released 30 videos and six radio public service announcements, and disseminated over 185,000 leaflets, posters and brochures.

COMMUNITY TRANSITION AND RECOVERY PROGRAMME

IOM's expanded Community Transition and Recovery Programme in Iraq aims to improve resilience and enhance stability in conflict-affected communities through income generation, social cohesion and capacity building initiatives, and the reconstruction of infrastructure.

Under the fifth phase of the Community Revitalization Programme, more than 3,000 households (18,000 individuals) in 15 governorates benefitted from livelihood assistance.

Furthermore, 54 Community Assistance Projects (CAPs), several in retaken areas improved the living conditions of more than 90,000 Iraqis through the rehabilitation or construction of light infrastructure. Additionally, IOM engaged several local non-governmental partners to implement social cohesion activities across six governorates. These activities reached approximately 1,290 community members.

SYRIA CRISIS RESPONSE

In 2016 nearly 6,000 Syrian refugee families in Iraq received NFI assistance, including kerosene, cash or clothing vouchers.

Services included transportation assistance for students (446 from camps to school or to university in Dohuk); resettlement services (750 beneficiaries); health awareness raising sessions (2,145 services); livelihoods services (over 600 beneficiaries) and common services, through Community Technology Access Centers (30,180 services).

Two Quick Impact Projects were implemented to reinforce the socio-economic infrastructure in communities where Syrian refugees are located: 1) Expansion of the emergency unit at Ranya General Hospital in Sulaymaniyah and 2) Construction of a sports field and rehabilitation of Hamom Primary School in Koya town, Erbil, together benefiting more than 5,000 Syrian refugees, displaced Iraqis, and host community members.

COMMUNITY POLICING

To contribute to stabilization, IOM's Community Policing Programme brings together police and community members to promote positive partnerships. Community policing forums and trainings create space to foster better understanding between security actors, communities and civil society. In 2016, trainings, conferences, and workshops, involved more than 250 community members, 650 police officers, the police academy and various other government agencies and departments. Sixteen Community Policing Forums were established to enable local residents and displaced families to advise police on local priorities.

MOVEMENT AND ASSISTED MIGRATION

ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION

In coordination with the Iraqi government, IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return

and Reintegration (AVRR) programme supports Iraqis who have chosen to return home from abroad to reestablish themselves in their communities. IOM offers comprehensive assistance, including post-arrival assistance, cash grants and in-kind assistance for small businesses. In 2016, more than 8,500 Iraqis who chose to return home were assisted.

PROTECTION ASSISTANCE is provided to vulnerable migrants. In 2016 a total of 50 vulnerable migrants either received protection assistance, services for victims of human trafficking or support to voluntary repatriate to their country of origin.

THE RESETTLEMENT AND MOVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME provides movement assistance to those entitled to resettlement or refugee status in other countries, in collaboration with the resettlement

country, Iraqi authorities, and UNHCR; in 2016, resettlement services were provided to more than 10,000 beneficiaries.

INTEGRATED BORDER AND MIGRATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The Integrated Border and Migration Management Programme addresses capacity-building needs in the context of the ongoing migration crisis. The EU-funded HJRA AMINA programme, meaning "Safe Migration", a capacity-building programme aimed at enhancing the migration management of the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government conducted activities on the topics of Migration Management; Housing, Land and Property; and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. In 2016, a total of 514 individuals received training through 25 training workshops.



Um Nour's Story

Um Nour, her husband and nine children fled Ninewa in early September. "We were starving. There was no food. ISIL controlled our village. We were obliged to leave."

The family escaped by foot at night. "We had cars and equipment, but had to leave everything behind. We only brought water, and carried our youngest children, who are one and two years old."

Um Nour's family, along with several of their friends and neighbors, are now staying in Debaga camp in Makhmur district, to the south of Erbil governorate.

"I am pleased that my children will soon go to school here. But I want to go home. We have more services there. My husband was working in a grocery store, but no

one in our family is working now, so our relatives are helping us. We buy limited quantities of food and supplies according to our needs."

"We lived in a mud house in our village, with a pomegranate tree in our yard. My dream is for us to live in a more comfortable house, and for all my children to go to school."

Um Nour received a non-food item kit from IOM, to provide household items for her family, who are living in a tent. "We are living with nothing, just what our neighbors have shared. These materials today will be helpful for us, especially for the children to sleep more comfortably with pillows and sheets."



ILO IN IRAQ

Founded in 1919, the ILO is the first specialized agency of the UN 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 mission of the ILO is to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen social dialogue. The ILO gives an equal voice to workers and government 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 has been an ILO Member State since 1932. Over the last 15 years the ILO has provided its constituents in Iraq (government, employers' and workers' organizations) with technical support and advice, as well as capacity building in the areas of local economic development, skills development, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), private sector development, enterprise development, formulation of social security schemes, training on International Labour Standards (ILS), review of the labour code and capacity building on its implementation, trade unions law, labour statistics, and social dialogue.

The ILO became a non-resident Agency in Baghdad at the end of 2013, and in Kurdistan at end of September 2016. The ILO's most recent projects in Baghdad concluded with the closing of a technical cooperation project entitled "Private Sector Development Program (PSDP) in 2013 implemented alongside with seven other UN Agencies, led by the UNDP. In 2016, the ILO completed two projects in Erbil, one financed by the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq (KRG), and the other by the KRG 2020 Vision facility.

The project financed by the KRG 2020 Vision facility covered employment promotion and enterprise development for disadvantaged youth was completed in September 2016. Under this project, the ILO launched the ILO's My First Business (MFB) training package adapted to the Kurdish socioeconomic context. Also, 20 Kurdish trainers were trained using a tailored in Kurdish-language (Sorani and Badini) MFB package, which is now being rolled out by the KRG Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) under the auspices of its Loan Direc-

torate. Financed directly by the KRG, the ILO second project to develop an Action Plan for the Implementation of the Employment Policy was completed at the end of November 2016. The Action Plan was presented to the KRG government in December 2016. The Plan provides an update to the employment and labour market context given the fluid economic environment, which has persisted since the adoption of the NEP in 2012. The Plan also establishes a viable implementation framework and organises 82 interventions into a three-phase short-, medium- and long-term structure.

Over the course of 2016, the ILO Regional Office for Arab States has also provided 22 fellowships to strengthen the capacity of the Iraqi nationals. Training took place in Turin, Italy and in the field. The fellowships covered a broad range of areas such as management of development, advanced contract management, ILS, as well as occupational safety and health (OSH). Iraqis also took part in the ILO-run Academy on Promoting Decent Jobs in Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings and the Academy on Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations.

In August 2015, the Federal Government of Iraq adopted the new Labour Law, which was revised by the ILO on several occasions and incorporates key provisions of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The ILO has also provided advice on the text of a separate 2016 draft labour law developed by the KRG, in addition to capacity building for employers' organizations and trade unions. A training workshop, which brought together representatives from MOLSA, different trade union federations, employers' organizations, and delegates from the KRG, was held in October 2016 on Iraq's draft

trade union law. Another workshop on international labour standards with focus on Freedom Of Association was held in Beirut, Lebanon and attended by tripartite Iraqi constituents (including delegates from the KRG). Following the workshop, the Council of Ministers endorsed the ratification of ILO Convention No. 87 on 25 October 2016.

In December 2016, the ILO also provided technical assistance to Kurdistan Region Statistical Office (KRSO) in order to assist the office in finalizing a Labor Force Survey questionnaire and sampling methodology. The updated methodology takes into account the large number of the Internally Displaced Persons, which have caused the population in KRG-run areas to increase to some 5 million people, an increase of

around 30 percent since 2014. The ILO plans to increase support to the KRSO in 2017 by providing fellowships for a selected number of KRSO staff to attend the Academy on Labour Market Statistics and Analysis in Turin, Italy. ILO will also plans to provide technical assistance to develop a sample design for the new survey as well as compile analytical reports on the main findings of the previous surveys.

ILO BIENNIUM STRATEGY (2016-2017)

The ILO strategy for the biennium 2016-2017 will continue to support the Federal and the KRG governments' efforts and programmes towards the creation, adoption, and implementation of integrated policies, strategies as well as programmes to promote decent work. Efforts will be made to improve decent work for young men and women, reduce unemployment, and labour market participation among adult women and youth, foster labour market analysis, and disseminate of information on Iraq's labour force. Throughout this process, the ILO will continue to its efforts with the Central Statistical Offices of each of the Federal and KRG governments.

The ILO's Programme of Assistance developed in cooperation with MOLSA will shape the ILO strategy for the biennium 2016-2017. The Programme focuses on providing policy advice, studies, and capacity building activities in the following areas:

SOCIAL PROTECTION

- An actuarial valuation of the social security schemes for public and private sector workers;
- capacity building activities in Erbil on social security standards, principles, policies and financing mechanisms;
- capacity building activity in Baghdad for tripartite stakeholders and relevant UN agencies the establishment of national social protection floors;
- comprehensive policy recommendations for the reform of the social security system;
- legal and technical review of the draft social security law for private sector workers.
- map existing social protection schemes and evaluate their efficacy;
- assess of the social security coverage gaps and of the costs of addressing them;
- initiate a fiscal study to explore the possibilities of financing social protection;
- initiate a study to improve the coherence of the different social protection benefits;
- support the establishment of tripartite national social protection floor's board.

LABOUR INSPECTION / OSH/ILS

- Preparation of a national OSH Profile;
- develop an action plan to promote the labour inspection services in line with ILS; and
- develop the capacity of labour inspectors and their supervisors on modern labour inspection procedures.

EMPLOYMENT

- Launch the ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Program (EIIP) approach in Iraq; and
- Work with relevant institutions on skills and entrepreneurship development focused on youth employment (in cooperation with UNESCO).

ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

- Provide technical advice to revise legislation related to the private sector development in Iraq, including reviewing the SME draft law.

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Over the course of 2016, the ILO Regional Office for Arab States has also provided 22 fellowships to strengthen the capacity of the Iraqi nationals

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SOCIAL DIALOGUE / WORKERS' & EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATIONS

- Provide technical advice on the draft union law focusing on trade union pluralism and the public sector; and
- Build the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations to draft internal by-laws as well as formalize and organize workers in the informal economy.

CHILD LABOUR

- Develop a comprehensive programme on child labour including both policy work, capacity building and awareness raising, particularly in terms of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.







الأمم المتحدة - العراق
United Nations Iraq