

UNAMI Newsletter



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UN's top political official, Lynn Pascoe, visits Iraq



Mr. Lynn Pascoe, UN Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, meets Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki in the presence of the Head of UNAMI, SRSR Ad Melkert. The meeting took place on 12 June 2011 in Baghdad. Photo: Zaid Fahmi/UNICEF Iraq

“ I hope that with this new tool (*The Iraq Development Management System*), which has the capacity to provide a complete picture of all developmental projects in Iraq, we will all be encouraged to fulfill our information sharing obligations to Iraq. ”

**Ms. Christine McNab,
Deputy Special Representative of
the UN Secretary-General for Iraq**

The UN's top political official and head of the **United Nations Department of Political Affairs**, Under-Secretary General Lynn Pascoe, visited Iraq from 11 to 14 June 2011.

During his visit, Mr. Pascoe held meetings with top Iraqi officials in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Erbil, including Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki; Council of Representatives Speaker Osama Nujeifi; Kirkuk Governor Najm Edin Karim; Kirkuk Provincial Council Chairman Hassan Turan; and, Kurdistan Regional Government's Prime Minister, Dr. Barham Saleh, and Minister

of Interior Karim Sinjari.

“It is our duty to help, but solutions to Iraqi problems and challenges have to be home grown ones. They have to be Iraqi solutions and for them to succeed in the long-term, they have to be sought in an inclusive manner, encompassing



Mr. Lynn Pascoe, UN Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, meets Mr. Nejmedin Karim, Governor of Kirkuk on 13 June 2011, in Kirkuk. Photo: Waseem Wastin/UNAMI PIO



Mr. Lynn Pascoe, UN Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs, meets the Interior Minister for Kurdistan Regional Government, Mr. Kareem Sinjari on 13 June 2011, in Erbil. Photo: Salar Brifkani/UNAMI PIO

the full array of Iraqi ethnic, religious and political diversity, and including civil society, youth and women as full-fledged partners,” USG Pascoe emphasized at the end of his visit to Iraq.

Throughout his meetings, Mr. Pascoe reiterated the commitment of the United Nations to continue assisting Iraq and explored with his interlocutors how the UN could focus its efforts to better respond to the needs of the people. He emphasized the readiness of UNAMI to

provide further assistance to help Iraqi stakeholders identify mutually agreeable solutions to pending issues related to the internally disputed boundary areas.

He also stressed the commitment of the UN Country Team to assist Iraq and its people by providing technical advice and expertise, developing joint projects, and addressing human rights, humanitarian and development challenges, in particular in the area of basic services delivery.

Human Rights

Improving human rights in prison and detention facilities in Basra

By Martin Bohnstedt, UNAMI Human Rights Office

Human rights violations in prisons and detention facilities in Basra and major cities across Iraq are a reality. Incidents of torture and mistreatment of detainees and inmates have been reported in a number of these centers. In many cases, people were arrested, sometimes charged with offences, and held without trial. To make matters worse, they are often detained in confines that are overcrowded, unhygienic and lacking basic facilities.

In an effort to improve the situation of human rights in these centers, Iraqi counterparts in the provincial branches of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice, that have custody over scores of civilian detainees and prisoners, requested the assistance of UNAMI’s Human Rights Office.

With financial support from the Government of the United Kingdom, through the Office of High Commis-

sioner of Human Rights, UNAMI’s Human Rights Office organized a workshop on 29 and 30 June in Basra. The event benefited 21 locally-based officials from the Ministry of Interior (police) and the Ministry of Justice, focusing on human rights in prison and detention facilities.

The workshop was conducted by an Iraqi human rights expert who introduced the participants to both Iraqi and international human rights institutions and standards safeguarding human rights. He also introduced the human rights of prisoners and detainees, stressing non-derogable rights such as the absolute prohibition of torture.

The training used thought-provoking video clips and role-plays that kept the participants engaged during their first exposure to human rights issues in their working environment. It concluded with a session on how to interact with female, juvenile and

socially disadvantaged detainees.

Participants expressed their hopes that such trainings could also be provided to judges and representatives of civil society who have crucial roles to play in upholding the human rights of prisoners and detainees in the country.

According to its mandate aimed at promoting the protection of human rights in Iraq, UNAMI has maintained a Human Rights Office in Basra since 2005. The Office monitors the human rights situation, engages with interlocutors in the government and civil society, and undertakes visits to various rule of law institutions, particularly prisons.

As the security situation increasingly improves in Basra, the mission’s Human Rights Office has begun to focus on institution-building, fostering human rights awareness through dialogue, and on addressing human rights violations.

Victims of torture on path to social reintegration

By Dina Baslan and Caroline Hammarberg, UNOPS



A staff member presents the work of the outreach team which provides services to victims of torture in nearby provinces.
Photo: Bahjat Al Fouad Rehabilitation Centre

As the world and Iraq marked the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on 26 June, the Bahjat Al Fouad Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (BFRCT) in Basrah held its annual seminar to raise awareness on the impact of violence on victims and the society as a whole. The BFRCT is one of two Iraqi rehabilitation centres supported by the "Programme for the Protection of Detainees and Torture Victims," a European Union project implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

Since 2008, over 4,000 victims have approached the two centres for professional

attention to help them overcome traumatic experiences. "We cannot afford to abandon victims of torture and violence in this society," says Abdul Nasser Hussein, the Director of BFRCT. "As a community we must rise above the effect of emotional scars and move in the direction of rehabilitation and reintegration."

Medical experts treat patients' ailments through physical therapy and medications and psychotherapists organize counseling sessions aimed at addressing suppressed traumatic memories. The centre functions as a support system, boosting their clients' confidence levels and improving their mar-

ketable skills through vocational trainings. Counseling sessions are not limited to the victims themselves, but are also extended to their family members. Relatives of torture victims often suffer from secondary trauma and are sometimes exposed to domestic abuse and violence as a result of the long-lasting effect of trauma on the victims.

"The act of torture cannot be reversed, but we can still prevent the after-effects of torture which can be detrimental to family members who are also considered victims of such unjust practices," Mr. Hussein explains.

The EU-UNOPS project makes the provision of these services possible through financial support to the centres, which covers the cost of rent, medication and equipment for physical therapy, amongst other things. The project also provides staff with continuous advanced training in treatment methods as well as management skills and fundraising, to help sustain their activities beyond the duration of the current support.

As occurrences of ill-treatment and abuse continue to be reported across Iraq, the project assists a limited number of people, but for the patients that receive help, the services are precious.

"Honestly I feel that the centre has changed the path of my life," says a beneficiary who has been attending the centre's psychotherapeutic sessions for 14 months. "Now I feel that my worries and sorrow are starting to fade away."

For more information, please contact Ms. Ailsa Jones: ailsaj@unops.org or +962 6 5902134



A medical consultant at Bahjat Al Fouad Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims speaks to local media during an advocacy event to mark the International Day in support of torture victims. Photo: Bahjat Al Fouad Rehabilitation Centre

Interview

Iraqi government told to protect its civilians

Iraq is being urged to take stronger action when it comes to protecting civilians from violence. Ivan Šimonovic, the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights says 4,000 people are still dying each year in the country as it struggles to rebuild. It was eight years ago that a coalition of countries invaded Iraq and toppled its former leader, Saddam Hussein. Julie Walker spoke with Assistant Secretary-General Šimonovic about his recent 10 day trip to Iraq.



Ivan Šimonovic

Duration of Interview: 5'12

Deputy SRSR McNab launches Iraq Development Management System

The Iraq Development Management System (IMDS), an instrument designed to significantly improve Iraq's tracking of external assistance and capital investment projects, was launched on 16 June 2011.

In a ceremony attended by Iraq Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki, Minister for Planning Al Shukri and other distinguished guests, the UN's Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) for Iraq, Ms. Christine McNab, noted that the measure was a significant step forward in the developmental effectiveness of the country.

The IDMS, largely funded by the EU, Spain and USAID, came about just over one year ago when UNDP and the Tatweer project were converging towards the same agenda: supporting the Government of Iraq in better planning, managing and monitoring of its entire capital investment project portfolio, be it from the national budget or from external aid.

Donors will also use the system and update their information as often as possible. "I hope that with this new tool, which has the capacity to provide a complete picture of all developmental projects in Iraq, we will all be encouraged to fulfill our information sharing obligations to Iraq," said the DSRG.

The UN will continue to support the Government of Iraq in its institutional aid management arrangement and is currently supporting the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Planning in defining new aid management mechanisms, policies, workplans, protocols and structures. As a partner, the UN can only advise, guide and suggest; the rest will be in the hands of the Government.

Ms. McNab also noted that the UN is supporting Iraq's participation to the 2010 Paris Declaration Survey and has submitted its contributions to the National Aid Coordinator. Further UN support on completing the international partners' contributions



Deputy Special Representative of United Nations Secretary General for Iraq, Ms. Christine McNab. Photo: UNAMI/PIO

and the national part of the survey is ongoing.

The envoy finished her address by expressing her "desire to hear the IDMS entering into our common language in Iraq and [...] the progress of its implementation across all levels of Government and across the donor community."

Education

Building the University of the Future in Iraq

By Semia Saadaoui, UNESCO Iraq

To enhance the quality of higher education in Iraq, the UNESCO Iraq Office, in partnership with the Office of H.H. Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, First Lady of Qatar, hosted the fourth in a series of workshops aimed at developing and expanding the Avicenna Virtual Campus for Iraq (AVCI).

The Campus will serve as an e-learning knowledge network with partner universities throughout the Mediterranean region, using information and communication technologies to help educate students and build international linkages among the institutions, sharing best practices, research and resources.

The event held in Jordan from 21 to 22 June, 2011, brought together four e-learning international experts from France, Turkey and Germany and a team of 18 Iraqis from nine universities, to build a vision for a university of the future in Iraq.



Director of UNESCO Iraq signs a memorandum of understanding with the head of Philadelphia University in Jordan. Photo: UNESCO Iraq

Education



Participants in the Avicenna Virtual Campus Technical workshop, held in Philadelphia University in Jordan on 21-22 June 2011. Photo: UNESCO Iraq

Hosted by Philadelphia University, a leading UNESCO e-learning Center in the Middle East, the meeting focused on enhancing the quality of education through the improvement of online course production and virtual teaching processes while building consolidated partnerships among Iraqi and international universities.

Iraqi teams composed of manag-

ers, technical and pedagogical experts from the Universities of Baghdad, Basra and Salahaddin were gathered to launch the three main e-learning centers. Key computer department officers from six other Iraqi universities, Kufa, Mosul, Muthana, Al-Anbar, Wasit and Sulaimaniyah, also attended the event in the hopes of expanding the network to encompass nine further centres by the end of

the project in 2013.

The event was also an opportunity for Mr. Mohamed Djelid, Director of UNESCO Iraq, to unveil the Virtual Portal of Avicenna Virtual Campus of Iraq in the presence of key officials from both Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Baghdad and Kurdistan.

The Portal is the end-users interface encompassing the technical platform, the Virtual Library, the Avicenna Quality Assurance System. The Iraqi e-learning team will be intensively producing online courses for the two upcoming months for submission to the Avicenna Scientific Board for accreditation. The accredited courses will then be uploaded in the portal for practical use by Iraqi students.

In addition to this meeting, the UNESCO Iraq Office also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Philadelphia University to support the Office's efforts in expanding the Campus in Iraq, thereby facilitating linkages with the Mediterranean Avicenna Network and transferring expertise and experience they built over the past few years.

The meeting allowed Iraqi participants to become better acquainted with the experiences of the Middle East Technical University in Turkey and from the University of Hamburg in Germany, seeing the great opportunities offered by e-learning to improve learning as a whole and develop lifelong learning processes.

For more information, please contact: Ms. Semia Saadaoui, Higher Education Project Manager, UNESCO Iraq-Office: s.saadaoui@unesco.org Or +962 775454702

Refugees

Refugees in Iraq camp to gain more services, rights after registration

By Helene Caux, UNHCR Iraq

More than 10,000 Turkish refugees have been registered in Makhmour camp, in northern Iraq, in the latest phase of a nationwide exercise to give refugees residency documents and access to services.

The UN refugee agency and the Iraqi government have entered the final phase of registering refugees in Iraq with the recent completion of registration in Makhmour. The nationwide registration of refugees in Iraq was initiated by the government in 2008 and seeks to give the refugees a wider range of rights and services, including access to education and health care, and the right to work and travel.

Those registered to date include Palestinian refugees in Baghdad and Mosul, as well as Syrian refugees in Mosul. The latest phase of the exercise was completed in Makhmour camp on 19 June, registering a total of 10,240 Turkish refugees who received residency documents for the first time. "It is quite an achievement," said Tarik Kurdi, UNHCR Deputy Representative for the Iraq operation. "This registration is about building confidence internationally in the civilian nature of the camp."



A Turkish refugee woman and her children take part in the new registration in Makhmour camp. The camp hosts 10,240 Turkish refugees. Most arrived in Iraq in 1994 following armed conflict in southeast Turkey. The Government of Iraq, assisted by UNHCR, started a new registration of all refugees in the camp on 31 October 2010, which was completed on 19 June 2011. Photo: Helen Caux/UNHCR Iraq

Refugees

Makhmour's inhabitants fled Turkey into Iraq in 1994. They first stayed in Atroush camp near the Turkish border, then split into two groups in 1997. Between 4,000 and 5,000 refugees moved to local settlements in the governorate of Dahuk and Erbil. A larger group relocated to Makhmour camp, which today looks like a small town with mud-brick houses and several shops selling food.

The recent registration was undertaken by Iraq's Ministry of Interior Permanent Committee for Refugee Affairs with help from UNHCR. "In Makhmour, UNHCR has been assisting in the organization of the whole registration process, including training ministry staff in the collecting of data, and providing the appropriate technical equipment," said Iraj Imomberdiev, UNHCR's acting head in Erbil. A UNHCR team of four to six persons – including information technology officers – were present during the entire registration which lasted several months in the camp.

Highlighting the importance of the exercise, UNHCR's Kurdi said, "The registration is a crucial step for refugees who will strengthen their refugee status by receiving a refugee residence card entitling them to several benefits, including traveling throughout Iraq without any restriction."

The card is initially valid for one year and thereafter renewable for five years. With it, refugees can be issued a travel document allowing them to travel, for instance for students who want to study abroad. The refugees will also have access to Iraqi courts to register marriages, the right to medical services and education provided by the government, and the right to work.

Some 2,000 refugees from the camp already work in companies or as daily labourers in the nearby town of Makhmour or even in Erbil, 90 minutes away by road. With the recent registration, they may be able to access government posts, an opportunity university graduates have requested for several years.

Those registered will also have the right to own land, property, vehicles and businesses. They can receive a public distribution system card from the government, which will entitle them to receive food rations as all Iraqi citizens and residents do.

UNHCR's work in the camp includes monitoring the general situation and providing cash assistance on a case-by-case basis to the most vulnerable refugees, such as those with chronic illnesses. The agency also provides transport fees for young refugees studying in Erbil and Dahuk, and conducts protection and social activities for women and youth through two implementing partners.

Following Makhmour camp, UNHCR and the Government of Iraq will soon start a new registration of refugees in Barika camp, home to an estimated 1,929 refugees from Iran.

For more information on UNHCR Iraq, please contact Helene Caux, Senior External Relations Officer: caux@unhcr.org

World Refugee Day

UNHCR celebrates World Refugee Day

By Helen Caux, UNHCR Iraq



Palestinian refugee women look through a hole in a tent in Al Waleed camp. The camp, located along Iraq's border with Syria, now hosts 540 Palestinians. UNHCR relocated some 1,200 Palestinian refugees from Al Waleed camp to various resettlement countries. Of the estimated 34,000 Palestinians in Iraq in 2003, less than 10,000 remain in the country at present. The camp also hosts 173 Iranian Kurds and 101 Iranian Ahwazis. Photo: Helen Caux / UNHCR Iraq

World Refugee Day was celebrated on 20 June to pay tribute to the millions of refugees and displaced people throughout the world who have been forced to flee their homes because of

the fear of persecution.

In Iraq, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and partners hosted several activities to mark World Refugee Day.

In Baghdad, UNHCR and Islamic Relief had organized drawing activities and a magic show for 120 Palestinian refugee children, and initiated poetry, music, dancing, drama and sport activities in Al-Waleed.

In Erbil, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) took part in painting, handicrafts, photography, music, and street theatre activities. In Suleymania, a photo exhibition showing the daily lives of those in Barika and Shewaran settlements was inaugurated by Iraq's First Lady, Ms. Hero Ibrahim Ahmed Talabani. The Day was marked in collaboration with the Office of the Erbil Governor, NGO partners and the UNHCR Protection Assistance Center.

UNHCR's 2010 Global Trends report, issued on World Refugee Day, reveals that Iraqis were among the top 10 nationalities of refugees at both the start and end of the decade. It also notes that 43.7 million people are now displaced worldwide, as opposed to 2.1 million Europeans who had been uprooted by the second World War who were under UNHCR's care.

The report notes that out of the 43.7 million individuals, 15.4 million are refugees (10.55 million under UNHCR's care and 4.82 million registered with the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees), 27.5 million are displaced internally by conflict, and nearly 850,000 are asylum-seekers.

In Iraq, UNHCR is taking care of some 40,000 refugees, including Palestinians, Iranians, Syrians and Turks who remain either in camps or settlements, or live in urban areas.

UNHCR is also working closely with the Government of Iraq to assist the 1.3 million IDPs in the country, including 467,000 people who live in dire conditions in 382 settlements or public buildings throughout Iraq.

Among that group of most vulnerable IDPs, 148,000 live in 121 settlements in Baghdad. In addition, UNHCR is collaborating with

the Iraqi authorities to better document the situation of stateless people—mainly Faili Kurds and Bidoons, with an estimated figure of 120,000 persons.

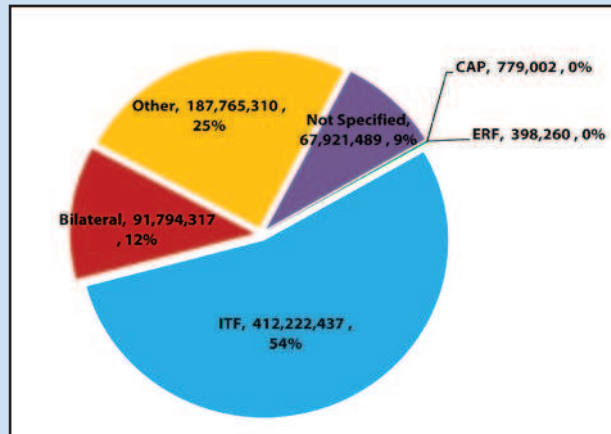
“One refugee without hope is too many,” said United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres on 20 June 2011. “The world is failing these people, leaving them to wait out the instability back home and placing their lives on hold indefinitely. Developing countries cannot continue to bear this burden alone and the industrialized world must address this imbalance. We need to see increased resettlement quotas. We need accelerated peace initiatives in long-standing conflicts so that refugees can go home.”

For more information, please contact Helene Caux; Senior External Relations Officer for UNHCR Iraq operation: caux@unhcr.org

UN in Iraq Report

Who Does What Where Report

By Tara Abdulmajid, UNAMI-Information and Analysis Unit



The Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit in cooperation with the UN Country Team has published the Who Does What Where (3W) Report. Illustrated with maps and graphs, it covers all current UN agency activities in Iraq, providing an analysis of the UN's 224 active projects and funding, as well as the sectors and governorates in which they work.

The 3W is a database of what UN agencies, NGOs, and other organizations are doing in Iraq and where they are doing it. Information on which organizations (Who) are carrying out what activities (What) in which locations (Where) helps coordinate efforts to respond to the needs of Iraq's most vulnerable by identifying gaps and avoiding duplication of activities. Since the implementation of the database in February 2008, information has been provided on over 1,200 projects in Iraq.

For more information please contact Tara Abdulmajid, abdulmejid@un.org, +962-77-725-1501

UN in Iraq Report

Iraqi doctors, IOM partner to provide assistance

By Courtney Webster, IOM Iraq

Utilizing its network of external partners, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has successfully referred children in need of urgent medical attention to local doctors committed to the humanitarian cause within Iraq.

IOM Iraq's ongoing Medical Referral Initiative has proved immensely successful in 2011, and continues to grow and expand throughout the country. As a result of these external referrals, six beneficiaries in Iraq have been provided with vital medical consultations, assistance, and surgeries. Many more referral cases are currently underway, as IOM has begun conducting nearly one



IOM staff remained at Mahmood's side throughout the medical referral initiative. Photo: Matt Graydon/IOM Iraq

UN in Iraq Report

external referral each week.

One such example was Mahmood, a bright, inquisitive boy who was suffering from a severe hernia. In May 2011, IOM staff conducting an assessment of a village in the Shekhan district of Ninewa met with the family and after gathering further details on Mahmood's case, the Organization contacted Dr. Qadir Dosky at the Dahuk Paediatric Teaching Hospital.

Dr. Dosky generously agreed to donate the time and resources necessary to treat Mahmood. He described the boy's case as one

of the most severe hernias he had ever seen in a child of that age. "Left untreated, hernias get progressively worse, and there's no telling when the condition could suddenly become life-threatening," said Dr. Dosky. The procedure went smoothly and IOM will continue to follow up on his progress.

Of course, these medical referrals would not be possible without the hard work of IOM field staff and the generosity of the many dedicated doctors throughout Iraq. These doctors are eager and willing to offer their services and facilities, free of charge,

to Iraqis in need, and truly embody the humanitarian spirit that is so commonly seen throughout the country, yet often goes unrecognized.

As a member of the UN Country Team (UNCT) for Iraq, IOM Iraq works closely with the United Nations system and the Iraqi authorities in support of the Iraqi National Development Plan 2010 - 2014, and is integrated into all sector outcome teams of the UNCT Coordination Structure.

For more information on IOM Iraq, please contact Bertram Chambers: bchambers@iom.int

Feature

Proud owner of sweets shop and landmine survivor

By Kai Peter Stabell, UNDP Iraq



Amin Hassan Sulaiman, a proud owner of sweets shop and landmine survivor. Photo: UNDP Iraq

In the spring of 2001, Amin Hassan Sulaiman threw rocks at what he describes as a 'strange object with several small sticks on top' that he had found while grazing his animals in the Bekma village. This turned out to be one of the explosive remnants of war (ERW) littering the Iraqi landscape. It exploded, and Amin lost his right leg, left arm, left eye and three fingers on his right hand. He was ten years old.

Beyond the physical and emotional scars inflicted upon Amin as a result of the horrific accident, further economic strains were placed on a family already struggling

to make ends meet. Amin's outlooks were bleak. He no longer attended school, and even after recovering from his injuries he became uncomfortable and shy around other people, including his friends.

During this time, his father provided both for the family as a shepherd, and also acted as Amin's main caretaker. This all ended abruptly when Amin's father lost his life in a landmine accident two years after his son had been injured. Things were going from bad to worse. Amin's mother was now left alone with three daughters in primary-school, and two young boys – Amin being

the eldest.

The Diana Ortho-Prosthetic, Rehabilitation and Vocational Training Center (DPLC) in Soran District, with funding from the Australian Government Overseas Aid Program (AusAID) through the UN Development Programme, was able to assist Amin by providing him with prostheses and helping him establish a small income generation project as part of the socio-economic rehabilitation and reintegration assistance offered to mine victims.

Amin is now one of the over 4,000 Persons with Disabilities (PwD) who received physical rehabilitation and became independent in their daily lives, through the provision of more than 3,880 ortho-prosthetic devices and over 3,190 mobility aids since 2009. In addition to DPLC, UNDP supports three other national non-governmental organizations that provide victim assistance in the three Governorates of Kurdistan Region through funding provided by AusAID.

Amin is now the proud owner of a 'Sweets Shop' and with the income generated in the first year, Amin was able to buy a TV and a satellite receiver for his small shop to improve business.

"I feel that I am not a useless person and a burden to my family anymore. I am now almost the only source of income for the family. I am really happy for that. I am also not shy to see my friends anymore, on the contrary, I am encouraging them to visit my

Feature

shop and I even have more friends than before. They do not laugh or make comments at me anymore", said Amin.

It was a smart move from his side as it encouraged the children in the area to go to the shop and watch cartoons or football games together. This led to more customers

frequenting and spending time in his shop.

"My only dream for now is to expand my shop and hopefully my income to provide sufficient financial support for my family, and see my sisters and brother finish school," said Amin.

For more information, please contact:

Kai Peter Stabell, Programme Specialist - Mine Action, UNDP Iraq: kai.stabell@undp.or

Areej Al-musttaf, UNDP Iraq: Areej.Al-musttaf@undp.org

News Briefs

Parliamentarians meet within context of Standing Consultative Mechanism

Under the auspices of UNAMI and within the context of the Standing Consultative Mechanism, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ad Melkert, hosted a meeting on 16 June for Kirkuk's Kurdish, Arab, Turkoman and Christian members of the Council of Representatives to discuss ways forward on issues related to Kirkuk including Provincial Council elections and power sharing.

The meeting builds on previous efforts of UNAMI to bring together the various components of Kirkuk towards addressing outstanding issues in an open dialogue, with the objective of reaching a mutually agreeable agreement.

The talks were attended by 12 parliamentarians who agreed to continue discussions and to work together.

First WHO-World Bank global report on disability

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Kurdistan Regional Government Ministry of Health launched the Global Report on Disability on 21 June, in Erbil, located in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

The first ever WHO-World Bank global report on disability provides a global assessment on the issue using the latest scientific

evidence. It also gives the new prevalence estimates since the 1970s and highlights a number of approaches and recommendations to enable people with disabilities to access services, infrastructure, information and jobs.

Currently, the government is expanding the community-based rehabilitation services which will relieve the strain on the estimated 123 disability and rehabilitation centres in Iraq.

WHO Iraq is supporting the Ministry of Health to strengthen and improve its disability registration system, to ensure health systems are more inclusive and responsive to this population. The data will be used to show the magnitude of the disability burden in Iraq. This, in turn, will be instrumental in developing future strategies and plans aimed at improving access to services for those with disabilities.

Roadmap to agricultural growth and employment generation in Iraq

Representatives of the Government of Iraq and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) held the first ministerial meeting of the Iraq Agricultural Growth and Employment Generation Support program in Beirut, Lebanon, on 21-22 June 2011.

Attended by senior officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Plan-

ning and Ministry of Water Resources, the meeting acknowledged the central role of the agricultural sector in achieving economic diversification, employment generation and prosperity in Iraq. It also discussed a roadmap for developing an evidence-based National Agricultural Policy National Agricultural Investment Strategy and priority programs.

The key objective of the programme is to remove the binding constraints to growth at the policy, institutional and agrarian systems level by strengthening public investment and providing greater space for the private sector.

Participants agreed that the successful implementation of the initiative will rest on effective engagement with the broader Government of Iraq and the adequate delineation of responsibilities.

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Editor-in-Chief: Radhia Achouri
Managing Editor: Aicha Elbasri
Editor: Christopher Cycmanick
Photo Editor: Bikiem Ekberzade
Graphic Designer: Salar A. Brifkani

List of UN Acronyms

There are 16 UN organisations, programmes, agencies and funds working in Iraq. They are the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), World Food Programme (WFP) and World Health Organization (WHO).

Photo Essay

In search of a shelter in Erbil

According to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR), a total of 9,704 internally displaced families (53,372 individuals) take shelter in Erbil, a city in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, from the violence that still ensues in other parts of the country. The majority of these displaced are Kurdish families who fled violence in Mosul and Baghdad, followed by Arab families from the center and south of the country. Christian families from Baghdad, Mosul and to a smaller extent from Kirkuk, also take refuge in Erbil. As central Erbil is expensive, most of these displaced families live in the sub-districts and villages surrounding the city. UNHCR through its local implementing partner, Public Aid Organization, is providing funds for food and non-food items, as well as legal protection and counseling through its Erbil Protection Assistance Center. *Photographs by Bikem Ekberzade, UNAMI PIO*



Ahmed Enad Awad heads a family of seven. An Arab, Awad says he fled with his family from Baghdad to Erbil last month in search of safety from the sporadic attacks that still plague the capital.



Displaced within his country, Awad has been unemployed for some time. The house they managed to find is basic. Having left Baghdad with whatever they could take with them, the family also lacks basic materials.



Awad's family will soon be registered as IDPs and receive food and non-food items through UNHCR and its implementing partner, Public Aid Organization.



With schools opening in the fall, registering the children will be a challenge as many displaced families lack the necessary civil documentation, such as identity cards.



Ahmed Fazil Nassar and his family have been displaced since 2006. Following the Samara mosque bombing and the violence that followed, Nassar brought his family to Erbil in search of relative security.



The head of a family of five, Nassar shares the house they temporarily made their shelter with his brother's family. His nephew, Sara Sa'ed Fazil, is hearing impaired. However, there is hope she may hear again if she undergoes a surgery.



Disabilities do not phase the children. Sara and her cousin have developed a special language between themselves.