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Protection of Iraq's ethnic and religious communities / components: focus of UNAMI forum



DSRSG Jerzy Skuratowicz, addresses participants at the roundtable on the protection of the rights of Iraqi ethnic and religious communities/components, held in Baghdad on 26 September 2011. Photo: Chris Cycmanick/UNAMI PIO

By Mmabatlharo Nono Dihemo, UNAMI/Political Affairs Office

The protection of the rights of Iraqi ethnic and religious communities/ components was the topic of discussion at a legislative framework roundtable held in Baghdad, on 26 September 2011.

The event was facilitated by the Human Rights Committee of the Iraqi Council of Representatives and the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), with funding from the UN Development Programme (UNDP). It was attended by senior Iraqi officials, members of the Ninewa Provincial Council, civil society organizations, Iraqi experts, academics and UN officials.

The forum opened with speeches by Iraq's Minister of Human Rights, Mr.

Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani, and the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq for Political Affairs, Mr. Jerzy Skuratowicz.

Mr. Al-Sudani stressed that it was the responsibility of the Iraqi Government to provide security and sustainable livelihoods for all Iraqis including the ethnic and religious components.

In his remarks, Mr. Skuratowicz noted that all various components in Iraq play a vital role in nation-building and constitute important building blocks for multi-ethnic diversity within Iraqi society. He highlighted the importance of constitutionally mandated legislation that protects ethnic and religious components within the context

“ Democracy cannot be exported or imposed from abroad; it must be generated by the will of the people and nurtured by a strong and active civil society, ”

Mr. Jerzy Skuratowicz, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Iraq (DSRSG) for Political Affairs

of the rule of law and promotes the human rights of all Iraqis.

Participants discussed key concerns including the lack of minority participation in government institutions, the need for legislative reform to ensure effective legal protection, and appropriate remedies for minorities in the areas of security, education, rule of law, representation and property rights.

It was recommended that ethnic and religious communities/ components should have equal access to social services and employment in the private and public spheres. Participants called for the implementation of Article 125 of the Constitution which provides that the administrative, political, cultural, and educational rights of the various nationalities, such as Turkmen, Chaldeans, Assyrians, and all other constituents shall be guaranteed and this shall be regulated by law.

UNAMI officials provided an overview of the international protection of the rights of minorities focusing on equality, non-discrimination and participation in the electoral process. The presentation examined treaties,



Participants to the roundtable on the protection of the rights of Iraqi ethnic and religious communities/components, held in Baghdad on 26 September, 2011. Photo: Chris Cychmanick/UNAMI PIO

conventions and regional instruments incorporating the protection of minority rights.

The roundtable provided a unique opportunity for a diverse group of participants to engage one another, and created a foundation on which to foster inclusive interaction by key stakehold-

ers and to promote cohesive action to address the problems of the Iraqi ethnic and religious communities/components. Participants were unanimously of the view that it is essential that minority communities be preserved and maintained as an important component of the Iraqi society.



Mr. George Bakoos, Political Advisor to the Prime Minister, DSRSG Jerzy Skuratowicz, Mr. Shia al-Sudani, Minister of Human Rights, Dr. Farouk Abdallah, Advisor to the Speaker of the Council of Representatives. Photo: Chris Cychmanick/UNAMI PIO



Participants to the roundtable. Photo: Chris Cychmanick/UNAMI PIO



Mr. George Bakoos, Political Advisor to the Prime Minister, Mr. Khalid al-Jayyashi, Member of the Parliament, and Deputy Minister of Migration and Displacement, Mr. Assgar al-Moussawi, speaking at the event (Right). Photo: Chris Cychmanick/UNAMI PIO



Sheikh Abdullah Wahab, from Ninewa, and DSRSG Jerzy Skuratowicz at the event. Photo: Chris Cychmanick/UNAMI PIO



UNAMI Political Affairs Officer, Ms. Nono Mmabatharo Dihemo, provides perspectives on the international protection of ethnic and religious communities/components. Photo: Chris Cychmanick/UNAMI PIO



Participants to the roundtable. Photo: Chris Cychmanick/UNAMI PIO

International Day of Democracy celebrated at Iraq's Council of Representatives



On the occasion of the International Day of Democracy, DSRSG, Mr. Jerzy Skuratowicz, delivers a speech in a forum organized on 15 September, 2011, by the Iraqi Council of Representatives in Baghdad. Photo: Sarmad Al-Safy/UNAMI PIO

“Democracy cannot be exported or imposed from abroad; it must be generated by the will of the people and nurtured by a strong and active civil society,” said Mr. Jerzy Skuratowicz, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Iraq (DSRSG) for political affairs at a forum organized by the Iraqi Council of Representatives. The event took place on 15 September in Baghdad at Iraq’s Council of Representatives, under the theme: “Political Account-

ability: Strengthening the links between parliament and citizens.”

The forum was attended by top government officials, including Iraq’s Parliament Speaker, Mr. Usama Al Nujeifi and Dr. Ibtihal Al Gossid, the State Minister for Women’s Affairs, together with representatives of civil society and UN Country Team.

Addressing the audience, Speaker Al Nujeifi highlighted the role the Council of Representatives in enhancing democ-

racy and promoting the rule of law. Of significance, he said, was the Council of Representatives’ responsibility towards fostering political, legal and democratic values in Iraq in line with the body’s own diverse political views; while rejecting oppression and terrorism; and respecting the rights of individuals and the freedom of expression. He also stressed the need for the United Nations to continue to support the democratic process in Iraq.

DSRSG Skuratowicz noted the many ways in which the United Nations has been working to help Iraq. Chief among these, he said, was the Organization’s technical assistance and support in the areas of constitution-making and review processes, national reconciliation, elections and human rights.

“The United Nations stands ready to place at your disposal the expertise, experience and best practices it has accumulated from many different contexts in strengthening democratic institutions and practices,” he indicated.

International Day of Democracy is held each year to underscore the role of Member States together with the UN in developing and strengthening democratic institutions and practices around the world. The occasion serves to reinforce the international principle and practice that democracy provides the foundations for durable peace, security and development.

Human Rights

Supporting an Independent High Commission for Human Rights in Iraq

By Alex El-Jundi, UNAMI Human Rights Office

The Government of Iraq is in the process of establishing an Independent High Commission for Human Rights. The entity will serve to advance open and democratic governance by undertaking the promotion and protection of human rights.

In an effort to provide Iraq’s Committee

of Experts with insight into the formation, structure and function of a human rights body, Iraqi commissioners took part in a workshop organized by the United Nations in Istanbul from 7 to 9 September 2011. The event was attended by representatives from Human Rights Commissions in South Africa, Malaysia, and Palestine shared their experience and

knowledge with Iraqi participants.

The Committee of Experts was appointed by the Iraqi Council of Representatives in 2009 with the passage of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights Law No. 53. It is tasked to develop and implement a transparent and open procedure for appointing commissioners.

Human Rights

The Committee is also entrusted with assisting the Government in drawing up regulations that will govern the role, duties and operation of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights once it is established. The Committee has screened more than 3,000 applications for the Commissioner's post and interviews began in October 2011.

The workshop was supported by the Human Rights Office of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Development Programme. Each of these United Nations entities is supporting the Government of Iraq in the establishment of this body by providing technical advice and capacity building to support the establishment of the selection framework for the commissioners.



Participants to a workshop on the establishment of an Independent High Commission for Human Rights organized by the United Nations, in Istanbul, from 7 to 9 September 2011. Photo: UNAMI Human Rights Office

Humanitarian Assistance

UNHCR assists displaced children in Iraq's Kurdistan region

By Hélène Caux, UNHCR – Iraq



Iraqi children in the Amin Zaki Arabic-speaking school in Erbil; one of the schools rehabilitated by the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) last year. Photo Helene Caux/UNHCR

Firas still remembers when a bomb exploded just outside of his school in Baghdad some years ago. The 13 year-old boy still has nightmares; a consequence of the intense fear he experienced at the time of the explosion.

Now safe in Erbil, located in Iraq's Kurdistan Region, Firas attends classes in Amin Zaki, a school that the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) helped repair last year. Most of the 1,500 children at the Arabic-speaking school originally fled their homes with their families in Baghdad, Mosul, Kirkuk and Diyala following the eruption of sectarian violence in 2006. They found refuge in the northern region. Most are from Arab and Kurdish origins and were raised in the Arabic language.

"Many of the children in the school have been deeply traumatized by violence in our country," explains Nazifa, the manager of the Amin Zaki school. "Some saw their fathers killed in front of them. They are not fit to be in a normal school; they would need special schools with psycho-social counselling. But we don't have those services here."

Humanitarian Assistance

Overcrowded rooms is another major issue faced by schools that provide classes for displaced children in the Kurdistan region. In Shlama, a nearby school mainly attended by some 1,400 displaced, primarily Christian children, the teachers complain that having 50 to 60 pupils per class is simply too much. It becomes nearly impossible for the children to learn properly. With such a high number of children per class, the school is not able to offer a full day of classes and had to put in place a two-shift schooling system due to a lack of teachers and space. UNHCR renovated Shlama school last year after a fire had damaged several rooms, as well as the roof.

The 52 teachers working in the school are all displaced from Baghdad. With an average monthly salary of US \$450, they hardly manage to pay for their daily expenses. "My rent is US \$400 in Erbil and I am happy that my husband found daily labour work, as it would otherwise not be possible to survive," explains Ana, one of the teach-

ers who fled Baghdad. Teachers like Ana voluntarily contribute part of their salaries to pay for transportation fees for children whose families have found cheap accommodation in places such as Khabat, located in the outskirts of Erbil.

Displaced families have limited resources and cannot afford to pay the US \$50 monthly bus fee for their kids to go to an Arabic-speaking school located in central Erbil, as there are none in their neighbourhood. "It's not always possible to pay for transportation fees for all the needy children. So, some of them stay at home since their families just can't afford to spend that amount for two or three children per family," says Ana. Families also have to pay for school uniforms and school supplies.

In Gojar, located in the Sulaimanya Governorate, 122 children have started the school year by attending classes in tents. They were displaced with their families in July following shelling along the Iraq-Iran

border and now reside in a tented camp managed by UNHCR located some kilometres away from their homes. "Despite the rough schooling conditions and difficult daily lives, it is still very cheerful to see all these displaced children picking up with their lives," says Bushra Halepota, UNHCR's Head of Office in Erbil.

The children should soon be able to attend classes in proper rooms in the nearby city of Qaladiza, as the authorities committed to organize daily transportation from Gojar.

UNHCR and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) are closely working together to address the education needs of displaced children in the Kurdistan region and elsewhere in Iraq.

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Development

UNDP supports landmine victims in Iraq

Ibrahim Baba-Ali Ismaeel, UNDP - Iraq



Participants to the second national victim assistance workshop, held in Erbil, in Iraq's Kurdistan region, from 26 to 27 September, 2011.
Photo: UNDP

To address the rights and needs of landmine victims and other persons with disabilities in Iraq, the second national victim assistance workshop took place in Erbil, in Iraq's Kurdistan region, from 26 to 27 September 2011. The event, entitled "Victims of Mines are Debts from Previous Wars," was organized by the Ministry of Environment with the support of the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

More than 120 participants took part of this event, including representatives from the Ministries of Health, Labour and Social Affairs, Planning, Education and Defence; the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency, UNDP, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), and several national and international non-governmental organizations and agencies.

The participants succeeded in developing a plan of action for addressing the rights and needs of landmine victims and other

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persons with disabilities in Iraq. The plan establishes the steps for raising awareness of Iraq's obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Cartagena Action Plan to assist war victims.

The event opened with speeches by ministry officials from Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government, Australia's Ambassador to Iraq, and representatives from the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency,

Iraqi Alliance for Disability and UNDP.

During the workshop, groups of participants discussed six thematic areas of victim assistance; namely emergency and continuing medical care; physical rehabilitation; psychosocial/psychological and peer support; social and economic inclusion; data collection and; legislation and policy.

The working groups made several recommendations for each thematic area to

the Government and its counterparts to implement through developing action plans for each theme for 2012 – 2014. The coordinated plan will serve as a road map for future actions; thus contributing to improving the situation of persons with disabilities in Iraq and ensuring their rights.

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Development

New law to boost literacy

By Jad Merhi, UNESCO-Iraq



Booksellers in Baghdad streets. Photo: UNESCO

Like any country going through a critical phase of transition, adequate education is an essential element for the different stages of the reconstruction process in Iraq. It is also a vital necessity for sustainable socio-economic growth and individual development.

In Iraq, the cumulative effect of 30 years of unrest and sanctions have severely undermined the educational system and affected the literacy rate in the country. It is estimated that one in five are illiterate. Among the population, women are particularly affected, especially those in rural areas, where nearly 50 per cent of

women between the ages of 15 and 24 are illiterate, compared to 28 to 30 per cent of women living in urban and metropolitan areas.

As the lead agency in coordinating literacy and non-formal education, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is assisting the Government of Iraq to address the current situation and respond to the various challenges in this field. In addition to the infrastructural limitations, the country faces a significant scarcity in qualified human capacities and an outdated legal framework which have prevented inclusive access to education.

The Government's responses to these circumstances have been diversified and wide reaching. With UNESCO's cooperation, Iraqi authorities developed new literacy textbooks, introduced accelerated learning programmes, and inaugurated new literacy centres over the recent years. However, despite these measures, equal access to education remains a challenge.

Since 2004, UNESCO Iraq has led three main literacy-related projects. After the considerable impact of the Literacy and Life Skills Development Project (2004-2008), funded by the Government of Japan and primarily aimed at Iraqi women, the Organization embarked on a Joint Project with the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), UN Women and the UN Agency For Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT) (2008-2010); an initiative funded by the European Union. Building on the success of these projects, UNESCO launched the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment Project (LIFE) for the period 2010-2014.

The LIFE Project, launched in partnership with the First Lady of Qatar and the UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, supports the national literacy campaign and contributes to strengthen the capacity of Government of Iraq and civil society to deliver sustainable and empowering literacy for all. After many achievements and breakthroughs in this area, the Project, through its wide network of cooperation between Iraqi authorities, civil society and UNESCO, was able to reach another level in educational reform; namely legal adjustments.

Iraq's legislative bodies have finally amended the new literacy law; a measure that will impact the life of millions of the country's illiterate. Working with the Iraqi Council of Representatives and the Ministry

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of Education, UNESCO provided technical assistance in the formulation of the new literacy law that replaces the 1978 law and compliments the National Literacy Strategy set by the Organization and the Iraqi authorities.

In contrast to the 1978 law, the new legislation benefits illiterates over the age of 15 with a specific focus on life skills and empowerment, including the need to work on the quality of literacy programmes. It targets issues related to good governance since it clarifies the roles of central and local authorities and enables strong partnerships with civil society and the private

sector. The new law will also enable the launching of the national literacy campaign and will ensure the formulation of a nation-wide, coordinated response toward meeting the learning needs of those who are illiterate.

Working with the Government of Iraq and Civil Society, UNESCO has identified concrete areas of intervention in order to support the national endeavour to achieve the Education For All goal of reducing illiteracy by 50 per cent by 2015.

Building on the latest achievements, the LIFE Project will strengthen the institu-

tional capacity required for the planning, development, implementation and monitoring of sustainable and empowering non-formal education and literacy policies. This will be done while supporting the capacity of the Ministry of Education, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations to deliver quality literacy courses and life skills training for all.

For more information, please contact Mr. Alberto Biancoli, Education Project Manager, UNESCO-Iraq Office, a.biancoli@unesco.org

Development

Urban planning focus of study tour by senior Iraqi delegation

By Fiona McCluney, UN-HABITAT - Iraq



Members of Iraqi delegation meet with Malaysian experts at the Kuala Lumpur city hall, on 11 September, 2011. Photo: UN-HABITAT

To expose Iraq to the Malaysian experience in urban planning, one of the most advanced in the world, the Iraqi General Organization for Physical Planning and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), organized a study tour on urban planning in Malaysia, from 10 to 15 September 2011, for senior Iraqi delegation of technical experts and decision-makers.

The high level delegation included Iraq's Minister of Planning, the Director Generals from the Ministries of Planning, Municipalities and Public Works and the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism in the Kurdistan Region.

The aim of the visit was to help Iraq benefit from the mature synergies between different town planning institutions in Malaysia at the federal, state and local levels.

The programme included visits to the country's Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, the Board of Town Planners, the Malaysian Institute of Planners, the Kuala Lumpur City Hall, and several academic institutes and leading private planning firms.

During the tour, the Iraqi delegation met with planners and officials and brainstormed on several of the best planning practices they were exposed to in Malaysia and on how these might be adapted to the context of Iraq.

The initiative falls under UN-HABITAT's "Local Government Association and Urban Development Capacity Building Project", which is carried out by the agency and funded by the European Council and Spain under the Iraq Trust Fund.

UN-HABITAT is the lead United Nations agency for cities and human settlements and is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.

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Water Road Map for Iraq

By Andreas Lück, UN-HABITAT Iraq

On 14-15 September 2011, a high level committee of the Government of Iraq on water and sanitation discussed in Amman, Jordan, the Road Map for the Institutional Water Sector Reform of Iraq. The event was jointly supported by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) Iraq programme and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), under the Iraq Public Sector Modernization Programme.

The two-day session was chaired by Iraqi Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works, Mr. Kamil Chadirji, and focused on the recommendations of the Road Map, which are derived from an analysis and comprehensive interpretation of the previous functional review that serves as the backbone to the actual Water

Sector Reform Process of Iraq.

The Road Map represents the foundation of all subsequent support measures and related water and sanitation support mechanisms by UN-HABITAT. It is divided into eight core strategies: institutional and organizational; regulatory; asset management; operational effectiveness; public participation; legal; financial; and, capacity building. Each of these areas includes several actions, supported by various implementation activities.

The Road Map is designed to implement a corporatization model for water and sanitation services. This model ensures that all assets and resources are owned by the Government, while the management of the delivery of these services is performed by the private sector. This model was discussed and chosen by the

Ministerial Advisory Committee earlier this summer.

The purpose of the Road Map is to implement this vision within the context of Iraq's socio-political, economic, technical, legal, environmental and administrative constraints. The document is guided by the following principles: water is a public good and therefore shall remain in public ownership; a utility shall be publicly owned but privately managed; every citizen is entitled to water and sanitation services; and, the utility shall strive to meet maximum possible efficiency.

For more information, please contact Dr. Andreas H. Lück, Water and Sanitation Reform Adviser, UN-HABITAT Iraq Programme: andreas.lueck@unhabitat.org

Development

Helping Iraqis gain better knowledge of disaster risk management

By Abier Amarin, UNDP -Iraq



Iraqi delegation takes parts of a UNDP-funded training and exposure trip to Bangkok, Thailand, from 14 to 20 August 2011.
Photo: UNDP

To gain a better understanding of disaster risk management and international practices in this field, a delegation of Iraqi Ministers benefited from a training and exposure trip to Bangkok, Thailand from 14 to 20 August 2011.

The trip, funded by the UN Development Programme, was organized by the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES) Center for Africa and Asia, an international and intergovernmental institution. It allowed for the first-hand interaction of the Iraqi delegation with a large number of local organizations working in disaster risk management.

The delegation included representatives of the Ministries of Science and Tech-

Development

nology, Environment, Defense, Interior, Planning, Health, and Municipalities, as well as secretaries from the Council of Ministries and the Kurdistan Regional Government's Council of Ministries.

The participants visited the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, the Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning systems, the Thai Meteorological Department, the Royal Irrigation Department, the Royal Rainmaking

Project, the Chung Hua Mun Royal Project, the Thai Red Cross Society and the UNDP Regional Office in Bangkok.

The group was able to learn about the disaster risk management systems in view of exploring the applicability of similar technologies to manage disasters and with the possibility to replicate these in the Iraqi context.

The participants recognized the impor-

tance of ensuring effective community participation as an important element to bringing added value towards an integrated programme that is envisioned to be implemented in the future.

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Empowering Iraq's Council of Representatives' Committees to support the Development Agenda

By Luay Shabaneh, UNFPA - Iraq

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Iraq organized a consultation meeting on 27-28 September 2011, for senior officials from several Iraq's Council of Representative committees to discuss their role in supporting the agency's development agenda in Iraq.

The meeting, held in Amman, Jordan, brought together 26 legislators from the federal and Kurdistan regional Council of Representatives, representing the specialized committees of Health and Environment, Youth and

Sports, and Women, Family and Childhood. Also taking part of the meeting was the Deputy Minister of Planning and officials from the Research Department of Iraq's Council of Representatives.

The event included UNFPA's representative in Uganda and two expert parliamentarians from the Ugandan Parliament who shared their experiences and their lessons learned with their Iraqi counterparts. UNFPA Iraq chief technical advisor facilitated the discussions and made presentations on the role of the committees. This covered representativeness of the commit-

tees, legislative capacity, accountability, the role of oversight, transparency and accessibility, as well as their role in supporting international policies and the work of the United Nations.

A needs assessment to improve the capacity of the committees was drafted, along with an outline of a plan of action to upgrade the capacity of the committees. The participants agreed to finalize the plan of action in consultation with other committee members within four weeks and to start its implementation accordingly.

News Briefs

Findings of environmental survey released

The Government of Iraq, in cooperation with the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the European Union launched on 22 September 2011, the findings of a survey on the state of the environment in Iraq. Assessing the conditions of the water, sanitation and garbage disposal services, the study provides the first comprehensive understanding of environmental conditions and services across Iraq since 2005.



Mr. Osama Makkawi, UNICEF Representative a.i., addresses Iraqi Government officials and International agencies during the launch of the findings of the Environmental Survey in Iraq. Photo: Sabah Arar/UNICEF-Iraq

News Briefs

The findings, obtained from 425 utilities in all of Iraq's 18 governorates, show that one in every five Iraqis lack access to safe drinking water and that one third of the population does not have access to adequate sanitation services. The majority of those without these services live in rural areas.

The survey shows that the main challenges facing these sectors are an unstable electrical supply, equipment shortages, poor waste disposal practices and the need for enhanced capacity of technical and administrative officials to improve the overall provision of quality services.

UNICEF, EU programme to increase amount of safe drinking for Iraq

Guidelines for the utilization of Reverse Osmosis technology for water desalination and treatment projects were adopted by the Government of Iraq, on 13 September 2011. As part of a US \$10 million UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) programme supported by the European Union to develop Iraq's water and sanitation sector, the guidelines detail a step-by-step process to implement and operate reverse osmosis water treatment projects.

"The current high salinity of water sources in Iraq is contributing to the limited availability of safe water to a large proportion of the Iraqi population," said UNICEF Iraq's Chief of Water and Sanitation, Mr. Hrachya Sargsyan. "These guidelines will ensure water treatment systems have effective desalination technologies in place," he added.

Trainings on the guidelines, to be applied to over 300 reverse osmosis plants across Iraq, will soon be held for officials within relevant Government departments.

Basra's first-ever landfill site compliant with international standards

The first ever landfill site in Basra that is compliant with international environmental standards was handed over on 11 September 2011 to Governorate au-



Mr. Muhsin Abdul-Hay, Advisor to the Governor of Basra, at the opening of Basra's first solid waste landfill compliant with international environmental standards. Photo: UNICEF-Iraq

thorities. The opening marks the commencement of the Basra Governorate Integrated Solid Waste Management Master Plan; a component of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) programme supported by the European Union to develop Iraq's water and sanitation sector.

The site ensures that environmentally harmful liquids are drained to a safe area via a system of pipes and also weighs and sorts solid waste so it can be adequately disposed.

UNICEF intends to use the model for Iraq's 12 other governorates in developing their solid waste master plans in the coming years.

UNESCO Office arranges forum on future of scientific research in Iraq

A forum to chart the way ahead for sci-

entific research in Iraq was held on 26-27 September 2011 in Beirut, Lebanon. The meeting was organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Iraq and attended by a group of experts. It focused on possible, preferred and optimal futures for scientific research in Iraq with respect to policies and institutional frameworks; legislative and regulatory arrangements; manpower and funding resources; priority disciplines and application areas.

A final report on the situation and perspectives of scientific research in Iraq will soon be prepared and shared with counterparts towards drafting a roadmap for the rehabilitation of scientific research in the country.

First national multi drug resistance tuberculosis hospital in Iraq

On 17 September 2011 a delegation of officials from the Ministry of Health in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Iraqi National Tuberculosis Programme, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and World Health Organization visited the multi drug resistance tuberculosis hospital in Suleymania, in Kurdistan region of Iraq to review the progress of the ongoing rehabilitation work.



An Iraqi delegation visits the multi drug resistance tuberculosis hospital in Suleymania, in Kurdistan region of Iraq. Photo: UNDP

News Briefs

The hospital, the first of its kind in Iraq, will provide long-term care with a capacity of 30 beds for a period of up to six months. It will provide medical services to patients for up to two years.

UNDP-Iraq with funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis (GFATM) is undertaking the hospital's rehabilitation. "I would like to thank UNDP for their work on the hospital's rehabilitation, a crucial service to the Iraqi people and a key step in combating TB in Iraq," said Dr. Tahir Hawrami, the Minister of Health in the KRG.

Updating the National Nursing, Midwife Strategy

The World Health Organization (WHO) - Iraq Office, in collaboration with Iraq's Ministry of Health, organized a national workshop on 26-27 September 2011 on updating the National Nursing and Midwifery Strategy and Strategic Plan of Action for 2012-2016.

The event, held in Erbil, in Iraq's Kurdistan region, was attended by members of the Council of Representatives in Kurdistan and 60 health experts from Baghdad, Babel, Ninawah, Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaimaniya. The event reviewed and updated the country's current Strategic Plan (2003 - 2008) in



Participants to a workshop on updating the National Nursing and Midwifery Strategy held in September 2011, in Erbil, Iraq's Kurdistan region. Photo: WHO

nursing and discussed the latest developments and trends in nursing education at the global and regional level.

Nursing and midwife services serve as a vital resource in achieving health and development goals. However, ensuring such services that are responsive to the health needs of the people of Iraq has been a major challenge.

Reviewing guidelines on pregnancy and new born care

A forum reviewing the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines on pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum and newborn care, was conducted in Baghdad from 18 to 21 September 2011.

The Iraqi Ministry of Health event, held with the support of the WHO, was attended by 22 participants from the Ministry and reproductive health managers working in primary health care centres and maternity hospitals.

The workshop identified a number of issues and obstacles that face newborn care. Each was examined from various perspectives in order to produce quality and reliable information in a timely manner and to ensure their adequate use by all stakeholders. A consolidated objective was produced to review the module on managing complications of pregnancy and childbirth and future steps were made to finalize and distribute the national adapted version of the manual.



Minister of Health, Dr. Taher Hawrami, and WHO Representative, Dr. Syed Jaffer, at a workshop reviewing guidelines on pregnancy and new born care, held in Baghdad, in September, 2011. Photo: WHO

News Briefs

Kurdistan Regional Government, FAO discuss agriculture sector potential

FAO conducted a series of meetings with the Governor of Erbil, the Ministries of Planning, Agriculture and Water Resources of the Kurdistan Regional Government, in Erbil, in Iraq's Kurdistan region,

during the first week of September 2011. FAO discussed with Iraqi partners future projects and programmes to be implemented in a variety of agricultural sectors in the region. Most notably this included improving the productivity of small livestock, the transfer of fish breeding technology and better agricultural output through seed production and quality control.

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Photo Gallery

International Day of Democracy celebrated at Iraq's Council of Representatives



List of the United Nations Acronyms

The United Nations Country Team has 20 members, including 16 resident and four non-resident agencies. Members of the Team are: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), World Food Programme (WFP) and World Health Organization (WHO). In addition to UN entities, the United Nations Country Team includes the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the World Bank.