

Frequently Asked Questions

THE IRAQ BRIEFING BOOK

What is the Briefing Book?

This Briefing Book was developed by Iraq's development partners (the United Nations, the World Bank and major donors) as means to provide policy options to the new Government and inform forthcoming discussions with Iraqi authorities on key development issues. The Briefing Book highlights possible development options in a non prescriptive manner. Attention has been directed towards the need for practical and implementable guidance to address critical constraints that impinge on Iraq's socioeconomic recovery. The Briefing Book presents an opportunity for the international community in Iraq to support foundations for policy reform while emphasising sustainable development.

What does the Briefing Book include?

The Briefing Book consists of 16 chapters each of which presents a key policy issue. The chapters are consistently structured with an overview of the sector, followed by an outline of the main issues based on a thorough analysis of Iraq's context and experience. A discussion of recent and ongoing policy actions is then presented, as well as recommendations for further initiatives.

The Briefing Book is structured into two parts. The first section addresses key policy issues including: macroeconomic challenges, development planning and prioritization, governance and public sector reform, anti-corruption, private sector development, social protection and the challenges of regional cooperation and internal disputed territories. The second section focuses on the various sectors and cross-cutting issues, including: human rights protection, civil society and the media, gender mainstreaming, basic social services, water resources management, agriculture, environment, energy, transport and telecommunications and cultural heritage.

Why was the Briefing Book written?

The Briefing Book presents policy options from the donor community for the government. The

book aims to inform government priorities while serving as a platform to discuss ways in which international partners might support efforts towards reconstruction and development in Iraq. All partners are active in at least one area, while certain sectors fall outside of the mandate of some partners. As such, partners cannot take responsibility for the content beyond their respective mandates or scope of activities and the report does not necessarily reflect each partner's view.

How will the Briefing Book be used?

The Briefing Book provides development partners with a useful opportunity to discuss priority issues facing Iraq, and it is a means to provide technical support and assistance towards achieving common goals. Recommendations contained within the Briefing Book are not directives to the Government, but rather areas where the international community have been working and stand ready to assist in the future.

What are the key issues presented in the Briefing Book?

Although the Briefing Book covers a wide range of areas, a number of common themes emerge from the analysis. These are:

- » The imperative to continue with implementation of reforms and modernisation processes.
- » The capacity development needs of ministries and government institutions which have been severely affected by the erosion of human capital and the isolation within which they have operated.
- » The human development agenda which has been negatively impacted by the decline in service provision including a serious shortage of qualified manpower and the protracted displacement of over one and a half million persons.

- » The danger of strong economic growth driven by the extractive industries and without job growth, leaving increasing numbers of young people without decent work opportunities.
 - » Urbanisation as both an opportunity and challenge, and particularly in terms of social services, which need to be pro-actively managed by all levels of government if Iraq is to develop sustainable cities and towns.
 - » The imperative to tackle decades of neglect which have negatively impacted on the environment and in particular water resources which will be the source of competition between people, agriculture and industry.
 - » Security shortfalls which continue to negatively impact on socio-economic and political development while also acting as a deterrent to foreign investment and employment-generating growth.
 - » The opportunity to involve the private sector through corporate social responsibility programmes and public private partnerships, in the broader development of Iraq.
- » The opportunity to more directly involve citizens in their own and their communities' development through improved communications, access to quality media, and the enabling of civil society organisations to contribute to the development agenda.

What are the next steps now that the Briefing Book has been shared with the Government?

Development partners are currently using the Briefing Book as a platform to engage with relevant line Ministries in Iraq on key issues and recommendations presented in the book. This provides an opportunity to identify synergies between current activities, to align development activities, and provide technical support and assistance to achieve a set of common goals in development.

To download a copy of the Briefing Book please visit: www.iq.one.un.org



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