

SGBV Sub Working Group – IRAQ: Inter-Agency Newsletter (Final)

1) JULY – OCTOBER 2013¹: UPDATE AND HIGHLIGHTS (SNAPSHOT): SGBV PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Coordination, Action Plans and Strategy

- ✓ Inter-agency coordination mechanism were strengthened countrywide
- ✓ SGBV countrywide inter-agency Strategy was drafted in October (draft 1)
- ✓ SGBV SOP (countrywide) was drafted.
- ✓ Inter-Agency SGBV Action/Workplans were drafted in various locations of Iraq.
- ✓ SGBV Inter-agency mapping report was finalized in October 2013 and is currently translated into Arabic.
- ✓ RRP6 inter-agency SGBV input was finalized in October 2013

Safety/Security

- ✓ A safety Audit was conducted in Al Qaem

Legal/Justice

- ✓ IMC provided legal and social services from PHCs (social workers and lawyers) for 900 GBV survivors (January – September 2013).
- ✓ SGBV Referral Pathways were set up for Al Qaem and Baghdad

Assessment/Research and Mapping

- ✓ NRC and UNWOMEN conducted GBV research in Northern Iraq (KR-I).

Capacity building and awareness raising

- ✓ UNHCR/IRW conducted an SGBV Workshop in Baghdad
- ✓ IRC conducted GBVCC and GBV DMS training with local partner agencies.
- ✓ SGBV training was conducted for MoDM in Basra.

2) BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SGBV in IRAQ (SNAPSHOT)

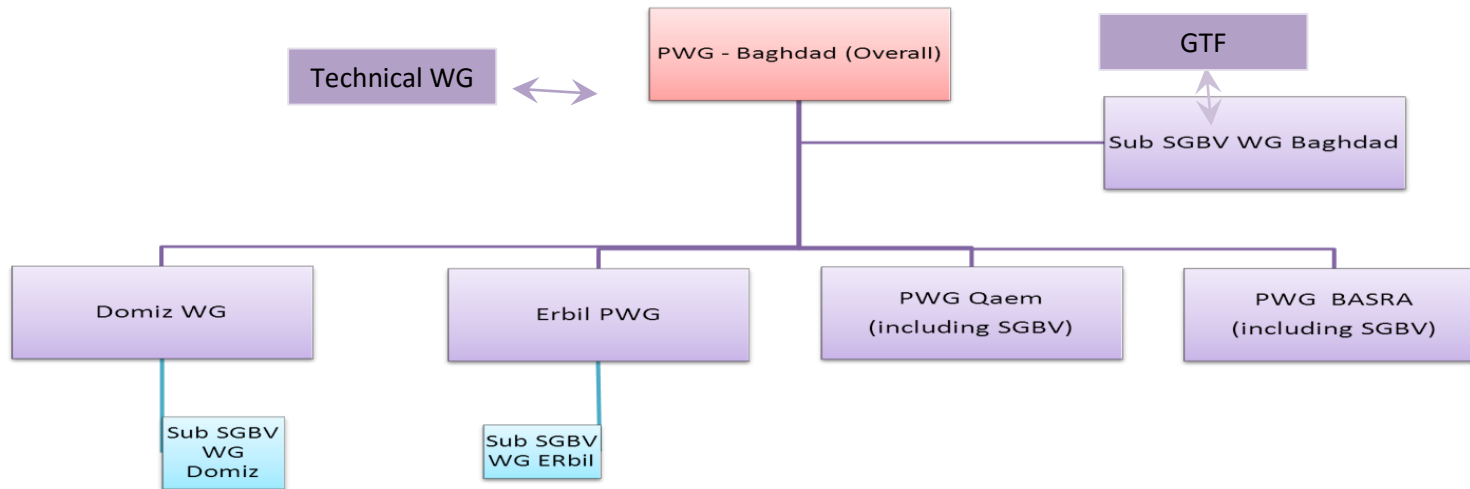
COORDINATION STRUCTURE

- In order to strengthen the inter-agency coordination with regard to SGBV, SGBV Working Groups were set up in Baghdad, Domiz and Erbil in April and May 2013. In addition to this, Child Protection, Health/Nutrition and Food security, Protection and Education Working Groups are operational as well as an array of technical working groups. SGBV is also a dominant topic in the

¹ The fact sheet will be recording quarterly data as of June.

Psychosocial Coordination Sub-Working Group in Domiz whereby agencies come together and discuss coordination mechanisms for cases management and strategies for multi-sectoral response to psychosocial issues.

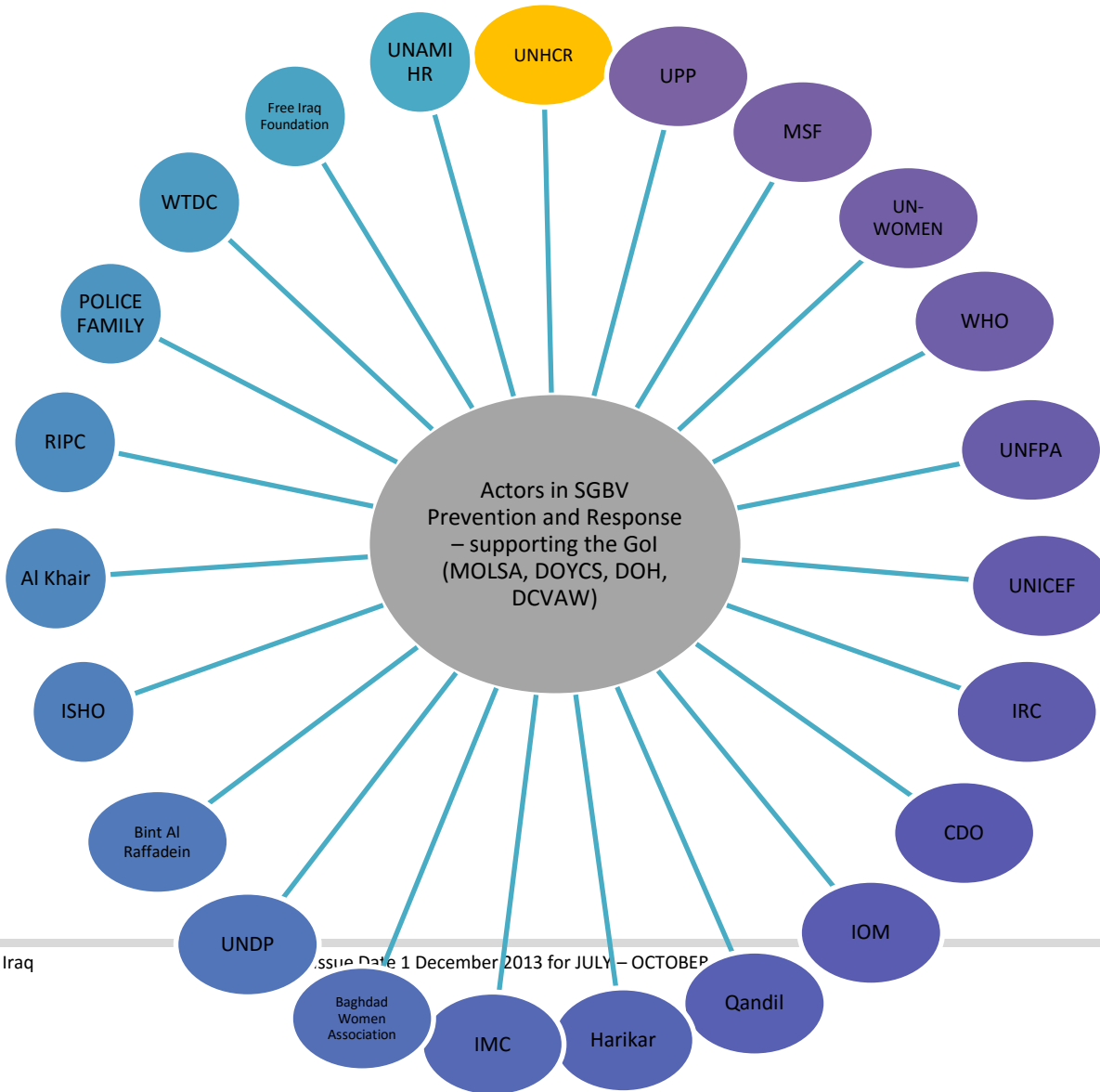
- In addition to this, a **Gender Task Force** is set up and chaired by UNWOMEN, aiming to advise the RC and UNCT in supporting the Government of Iraq towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. It focuses on facilitating the understanding of gender issues in Iraq, existing challenges, and potential opportunities and priorities areas and will advocate for gender mainstreaming in all sectors.
- The following graph explains the current **SGBV Coordination Structure in Iraq** (SGBV Sub Working Groups).



ACTORS IN SGBV PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

- Various agencies currently work on SGBV prevention and Response mechanism to support the Government of Iraq and civil society, particularly on legal assistance, psycho-social support and health response programs, as well as awareness raising, advocacy, community outreach and capacity building.

- Governmental ministries and institutions involved in SGBV prevention and response include Ministry of Women (MoW), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior (Family protection units), DoYCS, Ministry of Planning as well as Directorates of violence against women. Family Protection Units within police stations are established in each governorate and Child Protection Units are available in Domiz and Al Qaem Camps.



MAIN PATTERNS OF SGBV

- According to inter-agency mapping results, main patterns of SGBV in Iraq include **Early/Forced Marriages and Honor Crimes, Domestic Violence and Discrimination as well as Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse and Discrimination.**
- SGBV Mapping results show that domestic violence is widespread throughout the country including intimate partner violence. Trafficking, prostitution and rape was not in particular mentioned during the mapping process, however, other reports were received in this regard as well as with reference to LGBTI individuals.

Statistics (Iraq)

- ✓ **Early Marriage:** Nineteen (19) per cent of girls in the 15-19 age group are married, with nearly the same percentage in urban and rural areas, reaching 21 per cent in the central and southern governorates, and dropping to 10 per cent in the provinces of Kurdistan²
- ✓ **Intimate Partner Violence:** Forty-six (46) per cent of currently married women were exposed to at least one form of spousal violence: 44.5 per cent to emotional violence, 9.3 per cent to sexual violence, and 5.5 per cent to physical violence³
- ✓ **Family Planning:** Twenty-five (25) per cent of women want to use family planning methods but are unable to use them, so they become pregnant unintentionally⁴
- ✓ **FGM:** Twelve per cent of women aged 15-49 years have experienced some form of female genital mutilation (FGM), and the prevalence of FGM in some provinces in Kurdistan reaches 44 per cent⁵
- ✓ **Illiteracy:** Some 28.2 per cent of women aged 12 years or older are illiterate, more than double the male rate of 13 per cent, and the percentage increases significantly for young women aged 15-24 living in rural areas, which have an illiteracy rate of 33.6 per cent⁶
- ✓ **Enrollment Rate:** The average enrollment in primary school for females is 87.4 per cent, with big disparities between urban and rural areas where the percentage of female enrollment falls to 77 per cent compared to 90 per cent male enrolment⁷
- ✓ **Childbirth:** Eighty-four women die in childbirth per 100,000 live births⁸

² UNFPA/ VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN IRAQ FROM A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

³ CSO/KRSO/UNFPA/HEALTH SURVEY(I-WISH 2011)

⁴ UNFPA/ VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN IRAQ FROM A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

⁵ UNICEF/MULTIPLE INDICATOR CLUSTER SURVEY 2011

⁶ CSO/KRSO/UN, IRAQ KNOWLEDGE NETWORK 2011

⁷ CSO/KRSO/UNICEF, MICS 2011

- ✓ **Employment:** Fourteen per cent of women are working or actively seeking work, compared to 73 per cent of men. The unemployment rate is 68 per cent for women with a bachelor's degree and 41 per cent for women with higher education⁹

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENT

- **Protection Networks/Protection and Reintegration Centers (PARC)** are available in each governorate of Iraq offer counseling, legal advice, psychosocial support (in North/South Iraq), advice and referral services (Asylum Seekers/Refugees, Stateless, Returnees, IDPs, Host Population). Also **Return Integration and Community Centers (RICCS)** are accessible for any survivors of violence in Baghdad. **Listening Centers** ("safe spaces") providing dedicated psychosocial support and legal advice are operational in Al Qaem, Babylon and Domiz camps as well as in Baghdad (IDP). In addition to this, many other agencies offer multiple SGBV prevention and response services.
- UNHCR and partners are committed to "**age gender and diversity (AGD)**" approach "in their operations, with particular attention being paid to vulnerable individuals for participation, field visits, group discussions, assistance, and capacity-building and awareness campaign.
- **An SGBV Strategy, SOPs and action plans were drafted and have to be finalized.**¹⁰

1) **Legal/Justice/Safety/Security**

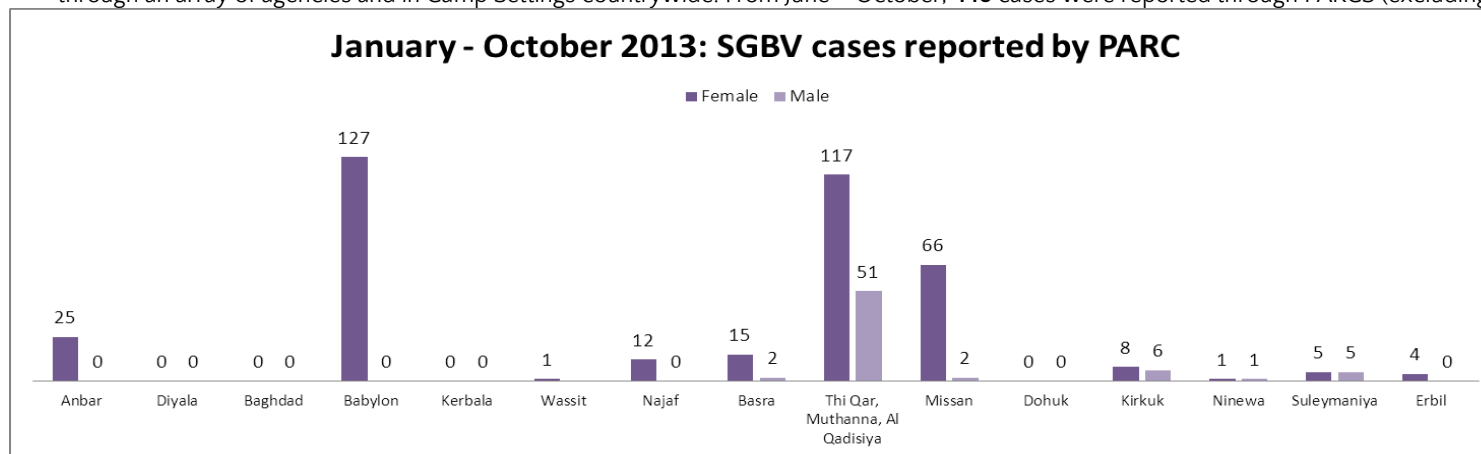
- A **National Strategy on Combating Violence against Women** for 2013–2017 was endorsed in March 2013 by the Council of Ministers
- The **National Database on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** provides for unified and consistent reporting through the Ministries of Interior at both the Federal and Regional levels
- Multiple NGOs provide **free legal services** to survivors of Sexual and Gender based Violence, including: legal consultations, representation, trainings on legal mechanisms, legal awareness-raising services and advocacy campaigns targeted toward the government. Some organizations contract female and male lawyers to work part- or full-time to provide legal consultations and/or representation to GBV survivors.
- The **Iraq Foundation (IF)** provides legal services to women victims of violence in Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Babil and Erbil through legal clinics established in each of these provinces. These clinics operate under the PEACE project, the goal of which is to promote peace and end violence through supporting a women-led advocacy and action coalition. The project seeks to establish a National Task Force in Iraq on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence (GBV) , provide a national platform for women and male leaders and community-based organizations that are advancing successful efforts to eliminate violence against women and other forms of gender based violence. PEACE also includes an advocacy campaignThe project will ultimately reach 1500 women with 500 following up on cases in court. During the quarter July – October, 870 women were assisted and 280 women followed up on their cases in court. Contact information for the legal clinics has been shared among SGBV members to enhance referral pathways. . Other organizations provide legal awareness-raising services, legal trainings, and implement advocacy campaigns.

⁸ WHO/COSIT/KRSO/MOH, IRAQ FAMILY HEALTH SURVEY 2006-2007

⁹ CSO/KRSO/UN, IRAQ KNOWLEDGE NETWORK 2011

¹⁰ Kindly refer to SGBV mapping for recommendations/work plan (draft)

- **Listening Centres** also provide legal services to help women access state-provided social services support. IRC's supported Listening Centres also refer to non-state service providers, such as other NGOs and community based protection mechanisms. Listening centres rely on coordination and cooperation efforts with different governmental parties, including women and children's committees within the municipal councils, the Baghdad provincial council, Family Protection Units (FPUs) of the MoI, and emergency hospitals and safe shelters in other areas of Iraq (especially the KRG). A **Listening Center** providing legal and psychosocial support to vulnerable women and girls, including GBV survivors, is operational in Al Qaem Refugee Camp since in May 2013. **40 survivors** or families of survivors have received legal assistance in the Central Governorates from January - October.
- **Safety Audits** were conducted in Domiz and al Qaem camps between January - October 2013.
- Common legal needs are mostly linked to **documentation, alimony, custody and divorce cases**. Legal aid/counseling is provided through all UNHCR PARC centers and IRC Listening Centers, through an array of agencies and in Camp Settings countrywide. From June - October, **448** cases were reported through PARCS (excluding July for North and Southern governorates).



Family Protection Units

- There are **16 Family Protection Units** within Police Stations at the Federal Level and 16 hotlines
- The **Ministry of the Interior (MOI)** investigates SGBV related crimes committed, compiles statistics about GBV crimes, and operates Family Protection Units (FPUs) designed to investigate crimes. FPUs are tasked with receiving survivors of SGBV at police stations and providing legal assistance. They also engage in "unofficial" mediation amongst family members through requesting the perpetrators to sign a "commitment letter" to stop the violence. They also run a hotline and are available in each governorate. At present, no psycho-social counselling and shelter options are available for the survivors. UNDP is conducting capacity building of FPU staff on data management/collection and analysis. Also, Refugees and Stateless Populations can access the services.
- It is socially unacceptable for many women to visit a police station, however, and the FPUs' staffs are **not qualified or appropriately** trained to deal with GBV. Furthermore, the staff wears police uniforms which can intimidate GBV survivors.
- Also, the GDVAW has services in this regard in Kurdistan.

- Challenges are faced by women when accessing FPU related services for violence-related cases, and especially sexual violence.

2) Health

- In Iraq, **the government is the principal provider** of primary, secondary and tertiary health care (MoH). UNHCR and its partners are working on integrating refugees in the national health care delivery and social system as well as establish a community based monitoring system by strengthening the public system. IDPs and Returnees have free access to health since they are Iraqi Nationals. Referrals to hospitals and clinics are conducted whenever needed. Some NGOs in Baghdad provide health services to GBV survivors.
- Multiple agencies currently work on health related programs in Iraq countrywide. Survivors of SGBV can **access any public health facilities** to receive medical treatment. Referrals to hospitals and clinics are conducted whenever needed.
- Survivors of SGBV can furthermore approach the **PARC/RICCs** and **Listening Centers** to be referred to health related services. Some **NGOs** in Baghdad provide direct health services to GBV survivors.
- Health **referral mechanisms/pathways** are in place in the context of Domiz camp. A **Gynaecologist** and a **midwife** nurse (who is dedicated to dealing with the medical response to SGBV) are permanently based in Domiz camp.
- **Reproductive health services** with include rape kits are available in both Domiz and Al'Qaem. Staff in Domiz is well trained on management of rape however in Al'Qaem, there is a need to strengthen the capacity and ensure the presence of a female gynaecologist in the camp. A UNFPA **Women's space/reproductive health center** is established in Domiz camp.
- Challenges are faced by women when accessing health services for violence-related cases, and especially sexual violence.

2) Psycho-social

- Psychosocial support services as well as referral mechanisms are accessible for all persons of concern to UNHCR as well as host community in all governorates of Iraq. UNHCR and partners respond to SGBV cases through **PAC/PARCs, RICCs** by referring survivors to service providers free of charge.
- **Listening Centres** (Domiz (IRC, Harikar), Al Qaem (IRC), Babylon (IRC, Bint Al Raffadein), Baghdad (IRC, BWA)) provide quality and confidential individual psychosocial support and case management services to vulnerable women and girls, including SGBV survivors. Each Listening Center effects referrals to other service providers through a location-specific referral pathway.
- Between April 2013, when the GBV DMS was first used to record GBV incidents, and July 2013, Listening Centers managed by the IRC and its local partners in central Iraq provided psychosocial support to a total of 267 survivors of SGBV.
- UNHCR operates a scheme to strengthen the response towards Extremely Vulnerable Individuals in non-camp settings (prevention). Refugees, Asylum Seekers, IDPs, Stateless and Returnee populations are included. Cases are recorded on an online database in a confidential way, referral mechanisms are included and support mechanisms integrated.
- Women's safe space is set up as well as women committees/family protection committees in an array of locations.
- Referral pathways were established through all LCs.
- A Women's Social Center is functional in Domiz. They facilitate knowledge and experience sharing among women and serve as an identification and referral point for SGBV cases, provide capacity building services for women and relevant actors.

Snapshot (Statistics)

- In total, 226 SGBV cases (175 female, 51 male) were identified and assisted by PARCs in Iraq between **January and June 2013**. From May to July 2013, 287 instances of SGBV were provided with psychosocial counseling at Listening Centers in the Central Governorates (Non-Camp/Camp). 16 SGBV Syrian Refugee cases were identified and assisted through an organization in Central Iraq in June/July. From June – July, UNHCR partners in the southern governorates report that 548 survivors have been given a type of counseling, out of a target of 2,300. 355 cases were referred to

different interlocutors. During the reporting period, four different SGBV advocacy sessions took place in the southern governorates. In total 43 SGBV survivors were identified/counseled from January – June in Domiz. They were supported through legal, medical or psychosocial assistance.

- 87 women were received and assisted from January – June through the Women social Center in Domiz.
- The PEACE women caucuses were formed in each of the 5 provinces to discuss issues of violence affecting women, relevant cases of violence committed against women. They also hold monthly meetings to examine developments on GBV issues.
- IF distributed 500 copies of the gender-based violence (GBV) Case Studies report to partner NGOs as well as organizations and individuals that support the empowerment of women and elimination of violence against women.
- Five local collations of 10 men and 10 women were established. The local collations held monthly meetings in Babil, Erbil, Diyala and Basra and a list of recommendations were developed to end violence against women and activate UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. IF and partners NGOs continued to provide legal assistance to women victims of violence while documenting and monitoring legal cases. 870 victims of violence received legal counsel during this reporting period. Among them 280 received legal representation in court.

3) Shelter and Safe Houses

- A shelter system is established in **Kurdistan** region; however the existence of shelters/safe houses in other parts of the country is unknown, sporadic and unregulated. Challenges are faced with regard to long waiting periods and survivors require accessing the formal legal system. Women are not allowed to bring their children to the shelters, which may act as a barrier to access shelters/safe houses.
- The **Directorate of Combatting Violence Against Women** (DCVAW) in the North is actively engaged in providing shelter to survivors of SGBV.
- Several organizations work to arrange **temporary shelter** for women and their families as needed – however, these shelter standards are undefined and they rely on a “spirit of cooperation”. Survivors have difficulties to access shelter systems.
- Agencies in **Anbar and Babylon** reported (SGBV mapping) that survivors of SGBV have no access to security and safety services (including police and safe houses).

4) Protection Hotline

- Multiple organizations provide hotline services (6 of them **24-hours a day** including UNHCR – Protection Hotlines). The hotlines direct SGBV survivors to appropriate care, and commonly schedule sessions with social workers or lawyers. Women who are unable to travel to listening centres or other safe spaces can talk to a social worker on the phone.
- IMC is also developing a **hotline** for GBV survivors and vulnerable women (Baghdad). The calls will be answered by trained social workers. Hotline services were established in KRG several years ago.
- Many hotlines are run by NGO such as ASUDA, WEO, KARKAR and others by governmental and semi-governmental organizations (GDVAW in Erbil, Dohuk and Sulimaniya, Kurdistan Women Union of Zhinan (PUK Party), Kurdistan Women Union or AFRATAN (PDK party). Now a helpline is established by Al-Masallah organization and WEO and it is in service daily from 8:30 am to 4:00pm.

5) Resettlement

- Resettlement is used as a protection tool for refugee survivors of SGBV.

6) Advocacy

- Advocacy with regard to SGBV prevention and response is practised by **different actors** in Iraq on various levels.
- In Babylon, the IRC's partner Bint Al Raffadein has excelled in local level advocacy with local government to pass legislation support women's rights, namely a Domestic Violence by-law which was passed in late 2012.
- IF is implementing an advocacy campaign as part of PEACE to raise awareness of the issue and to motivate the government to bring laws in line with the National Charter and international conventions on women's rights. The advocacy campaign conducted under the Women for Equitable Legislation (WEL) project, is working to put civil society pressure on the government to pass reforms to protect women's rights.

7) Community Mobilization/Participation, Empowerment and Outreach

- **Outreach** activities are conducted through UNHCR's protection networks/PARCS as well as through partners, committees and outreach volunteers.
- Women/family protection committees were formed in Domiz and Al Qa'im.
- Mobile teams are in place in Domiz camp, conducting **health awareness raising activities** (e.g. hygiene, health promotion, interpersonal communication skills, SGBV). 60 Health community outreach volunteers/mobile teams are working in Domiz.
- As part of IF's Widows' Initiative for Economic Sustainability (**WIES**), IF works locally to respond to local needs by providing widows and female heads of household with the skills required to meet local demands and provide services to the local community. From July – October, IF and partner NGO's continued provided trainings to 131 women received training on business and job-related skills. IF identified 79 job opportunities in the local communities utilizing the women's new skills.

8) Capacity Building/Awareness Raising

- Multiple organizations engage in **community-based awareness-raising** activities, training/workshops countrywide.
- IF conducts media outreach through radio and TV for the advocacy campaigns of PEACE and WEL.
- IRW plans to target the Palestinian community in Baladiat to conduct GBV sessions to raise their awareness about this critical issue for both men and women.
- Multiple Capacity Building activities were conducted in SGBV in 2013 including SGBV concepts and definitions, case management and referral mechanisms, PSEA etc. Trainings are on-going in the field and through the Protection Network for service providers and key actors. IRC implements a one year SGBV capacity building program together with UNHCR.
- An inter-agency countrywide **Protection and Community Services Training Strategy and Plan** is in place for 2013.
- The **16 Days of Activism Campaign** (25 November – 10 December) was prepared for in October 2013.

Training snapshot (Statistics)

From January – October, together with Partners, **UNHCR and IRC** implemented four (4) training activities e.g. in Erbil, Domiz, Baghdad and Basra on SGBV as well as Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). **137** participants attended the trainings (UN, INGO, NNGO, civil society, GoI). From May 2013-June 2013, **5 technical trainings** on SGBV have been delivered by IRC. Partners were trained on the Gender Based Violence Data Management System (GBVDMS)—an adaptation of the global GBVIMS system—agreed upon with UNHCR as the central reporting mechanism for SGBV service providers countrywide. Partners also received training in gender based violence core concepts (GBVCC), Psychosocial Support and Case Management, and Becoming an Empowered Woman in your Community (BEWIYC). Various agencies conducted SGBV related **awareness** activities through PARCS, RICCS (Social Workers/Lawyers/Healthcare Workers),

Listening Centres and mobile teams (outreach), as well as during events such as Women Day and Refugee day celebrations, Mobile Teams, hotlines, brochures and publications. Five trainings in SGBV prevention and response were organized for community members through the **PARCs** run by IRC in Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala, Najaf, Salah Al Din and Wassit. 12 events were organized to raise awareness about SGBV. **Women rights awareness** was given during International Women Day's events countrywide. **During January – June, IRC and UNFPA** conducted one SGBV training in Domiz camp including women volunteers (Syrian refugees) and Social Workers (DOLSA). The aim of the training was to acquaint the volunteers with the conceptual framework of the gender based violence and violence against women in particular, and to provide them with skills on case management and referrals to relevant facilities in the camp. It is anticipated to recruit 2–3 volunteers from the trainees to observe and run the day-to-day activities at the **women and girls safe spaces** which were established by UNFPA inside Domiz camp. The spaces will be managed by DOLSA with its full time staff.

9) Needs Assessments/Research/Mapping

Various **assessments** were conducted up to date countrywide by various agencies to understand better the scope of SGBV in the context of Iraq.¹¹

- **Mapping** on Baghdad Services was compiled.
- A **needs assessment** was conducted for Domiz and a **GBV Rapid Assessment** in AlQaem.
- **Participatory assessments** were carried out by the multifunctional teams throughout the country in 2013.
- NRC/UNWOMEN currently conduct a **survey on SGBV** in the north (900 households)
- A comprehensive **SGBV inter-agency mapping exercise/analysis** was conducted between April and June, followed by a detailed analysis/mapping report which was shared with all partners involved in the SGBV response in November (final version).
- IF's PEACE Case Studies report detailing information on 100 women interviewed; IF's PEACE National Charter has been drafted and published including recommendations to end violence against women and improve the social and economic situation of women victims.
- Mapping on Psychosocial and Legal Support Services was compiled for KRG by IRC and UNWOMEN.
- SGBV Research

MAIN GAPS/CHALLENGES/UNMET NEEDS

Despite provisions for gender equality and respect for human rights in applicable national and international law, an array of protection gaps remain with regard to prevention and response towards SGBV.

- ✓ The **National Strategy of Combating Violence against Women (VAW)** in Iraq (2013–2017) was passed in Iraq in 2013. While this is commendable and a step towards ensuring the rights and protection of women, it nevertheless remains a concern that the National Strategy to Combat VAW has not been implemented by the
- ✓ **The range and degree of SGBV may vary as well as the range of risk.** An increase of Gender Based violence can be linked to restrictions of movement (e.g. in Al Qaem Camp) placed upon refugees residing in the camp, to external factors such as unemployment, harsh economic and social conditions or trauma resulting from armed conflict, poverty,

¹¹ For a detailed overview on assessments/research conducted, kindly refer to the SGBV mapping

Government. Due to challenges in obtaining a consensus from the relevant ministries on how to implement this strategy, the process of implementation is currently at a standstill. Agencies continue to advocate for full implementation of this strategy which is vital for the protection of women and girls, especially those in vulnerable situations, such as refugees and displaced persons.

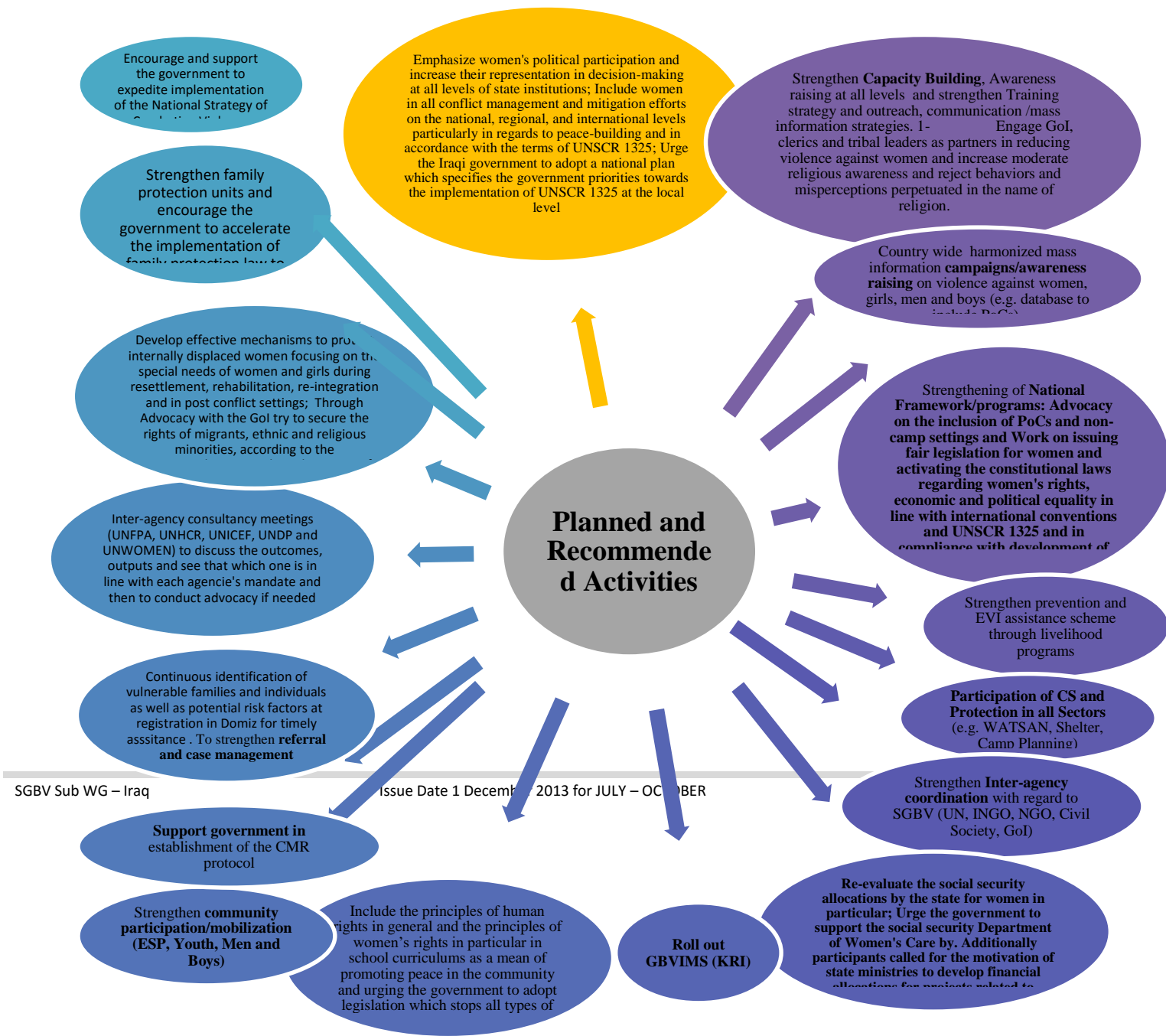
- ✓ Further, it is worth noting that a **National Database against Violence against Women** was also established in 2013 with the National Strategy to Combat VAW. For reported incidents of violence against women in Iraq, non-identifying information on survivors, types of violence and services (Government run health, security, legal and shelter related services only) will be recorded. The core objective of the database system is to document cases and services in a central database and to monitor the implementation of the strategy. The database does not at present specify if VAW survivors are POCs to UNHCR, and UNHCR has enquired if this could be possible.
- ✓ **SGBV cases are often underreported** and only few survivors of violence take legal action. Mapping Surveys indicate that there is ignorance with regard to rights of SGBV survivors and legal awareness in the context of Iraq, stigma attached, tribal laws, cultural practices/traditions, culture of impunity, lack of confidential services, fear of retaliation by the perpetrator, or lenient law enforcement. The cultural context prevents survivors of SGBV from disclosing experience of violence and sees sexual violence in particular as a cause of “dishonor” for the survivor and her entire family. Early marriage is culturally, religiously and socially acceptable in many communities in Iraq as well. Violence against women is often culturally acceptable and survivors and their families are not encouraged to speak out.. The same accounts for men. LGBTI individuals face a strong lack of acceptance, stigmatization, violence and discrimination.
- ✓ **Limited outreach**, awareness raising, community mobilization and empowerment programs exist especially in non-camp settings.
- ✓ For the **southern governorates**, early marriage and poverty remain the major drivers behind SGBV. Much more should be done by the partners, and by UNHCR to tackle this issue. The follow up on the cases has been weak. Three reasons may explain this shortcoming: reluctance in the society which will not easily welcome proactive actions against perpetrators of SGBV, the lack of institutional support to victims, the size of the problems compared to the resources and capabilities in hand. The PARC and UNHCR Protection team do some

insecurity, (protracted nature of) displacement, lack of documentation, limited social networks, access to labor market and mobility, limited access to services and resources and documentation., Single heads of household, children in informal settlements and child labour are at heightened risk of SGBV, exploitation and abuse. Criteria for entry in Iraq and sponsorship lead to family separation in Al Qa'im. Displaced populations in Iraq often live in confined and overcrowded living spaces. Government encampment policy in Al Qa'im results in the full dependency of refugees to humanitarian aid and created an environment which might favour sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

- ✓ Limited/non-targeted self-reliance and income generating activities exist especially for displaced populations (Risk of Exploitation).
- ✓ In the KR, the increase in the number of new arrivals combined with lack of allocated space for adequate shelter in the camp has caused further congestion and a high number of families are now left with no option but to host their newly arriving relatives or friends, resulting in **insufficient space and privacy, especially for females**.
- ✓ **Case management** and referral mechanisms/pathways are established in many locations but need to be strengthened and systematized. **SGBV tools** (identification, documentation, follow up, monitoring etc.) are not harmonized throughout the country given the complex work environment and the high number of agencies working on SGBV prevention and response. Thus, data collection with regard to SGBV related individual refugee cases in non-camp settings is very challenging. Listening Centers managed by the IRC and its partners have successfully introduced the GBV Data Management System, modeled on the global GBV Information Management System, in early 2013 to collect, store, analyse and share data about services accessed by SGBV survivors in four locations in central Iraq. UNHCR and its partners will work on strengthening SGBV related referral pathways and mechanisms countrywide.
- ✓ **Limited coordination** and information sharing among all actors countrywide.
- ✓ More focus needs to be given to **youth, men and boys** involvement in the prevention and response towards SGBV. **Limited awareness and capacity building and outreach**.
- ✓ The number of **safe houses/shelters** is limited in KR, and there is none in Baghdad. Limited number of safe houses/shelters is available and safety is still an issue hindering reporting of SGBV, especially about incidents that occur in Domiz Camp.
- ✓ Difficulties were encountered in **recruiting suitable female staff** in field locations, which hampered efforts in the area of activity. The lack of

- type of counseling, but it remains basic and is not necessarily fruitful. Much more should be done on this matter.
- ✓ **Security constraints** prevent international staff to be based in Al Qa'im and hinder UNHCR's capacity to monitor protection activities. Also, recruitment of national staff for Al Qa'im is particularly difficult (no female applicants, low capacity, need to recruit from the area)
 - ✓ The **budget allocated** to the Syrian response is limited and there are competing priorities.
- female staff in the camps also contributes to difficulties for refugee women and girls in accessing services.
- ✓ Limited **coordination** between actors involved in reducing risk of SGBV.
 - ✓ SOPs exist but need **harmonization and inter-agency focus**. No SGBV SOPs are available for Central Iraq yet.
 - ✓ Levels of reporting on SGBV cases **among IDP and Returnee** population are extremely low, because of stigma, cultural barriers, lack of awareness about services and a culture of impunity for perpetrators. Little information is known with regard to SGBV in IDP communities in Iraq.

JOINT INTER-AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS/PLANNED ACTION



LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Iraq has adopted the National Strategy of Combating Violence against Women (2013–2017) and ratified CEDAW. Sectoral plans of actions to activate National VAW strategy in Iraq were drafted in 2012 (Iraq) with the support of UNFPA. The Strategy tackles prevention, protection and response to women survivors of violence. 5 plans of action have been developed and endorsed by the government. Furthermore, a National Database against Violence against women (VAW) database was launched.
- As general background information, Iraq is not signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol. The current framework regulating refugee and asylum policies is governed by the Political Refugees Act 1971, and new refugee legislation is currently being drafted.

- The below table provides a snapshot with regard to the legal framework of SGBV in Iraq.

SGBV legal framework and prevalence (Compiled by UNHCR)

Type of SGBV	Legal framework	Law Applicable and Article	Trends
Child marriage / Forced marriages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal age of marriage is 18 years old (16 in KRG), under certain circumstances from 15. Unrecognized religious marriages of persons below 15 leave girls extremely vulnerable. • Forced marriages are prohibited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Violence Bill & Article 5 of Law 15 of 2008, • KRG: Article 7 Personal Status Law & 1979 amendment to the Personal Status Law • Family Violence Bill & Article of Law 15 of 2008 which replaces Law 188 Personal Status Law, KRG; Article 9, Personal Status Law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently reported in IDP communities (UNHCR). Numbers are said to be growing throughout Iraq. • Cases of child marriage concerning boys and girls were reported both prior and after displacement in Al Qa'im (UNHCR) • Men and boys are equally at risk from factors like honour crimes and early marriages.¹²
Honour crimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lenient punishment if the accused has "honourable motives". • KRG: In KRG is considered as a homicide. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 128(1) of the Law No. (111) of 1969, Penal Code; Article 409 Iraqi Penal Code • Law No. 14, Article 1, of 2002 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread in all Iraq. Affecting men and women. High number of unreported incidents.¹³
Domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husband's legal right to discipline his wife within certain limits but no specific criteria; • The Domestic Violence law in Baghdad is in the drafting process. • KRG: Domestic Violence bill was ratified on 20 June 2011 (KRG). • KRG: Verbal, physical and psychological abuse of girls and women criminalized in KRG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 41 Iraqi Penal Code • Domestic Violence Bill • KRG: Family Violence Bill, KRG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread in all Iraq with a reported increase in recent years. 1 in 5 married women is subjected to domestic violence,¹⁴ 14% during pregnancy. • Higher risks of intimate partner violence, rape and sexual violence since displacement in Al Qa'im (UNHCR)
Rape and sexual violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rape is a private offense. Marital rape is not a criminal offense. • The perpetrator is excused if he marries the victim, even after a sentence has been imposed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 393 Iraqi Penal Code • Article 398 Iraqi Penal Code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent, including as a result of forced/child marriage and forced prostitution¹⁵. • The most likely context for sexual violence in Al Qa'im is the survivor's home, toilets, markets or service points (UNHCR) • No reports on rape of male children, yet indications of prevalence (UNHCR). However, rape happens also to boys.

¹² UK Fact Finding Report, Northern Iraq 2010

¹³ UK Fact Finding Report, Northern Iraq 2010

¹⁴ www.unis.unvienna.org/pdf/factsheets/Iraqi_Women_Facts.pdf

¹⁵ <http://www.refworld.org/docid/51c2f3b544.html>

Sexual exploitation, prostitution, harassment and trafficking¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution prohibits trafficking in women or children and enforced prostitution. Trafficking not criminalized in Iraqi law but law drafted. • <u>KRG</u>: Forced prostitution criminalized in KRG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 17 of the Constitution • <u>KRG</u>: Family Violence Bill, KRG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary marriages among Shi'ites used for prostitution and trafficking. Trafficking widespread since 2003, extent unknown. Iraqi boys also affected. This issue cannot be tackled easily because it is "halal". In Shi'as believe and its permissible by their Imams (Wilayat Alfaqih), and it has a formal name called "Muta'a or Seegha". • Reports over survival sex have been reported in Domiz and Al Qa'im camps.(UNHCR) • Lack of access to services and resources exposes women to risks of further violence in the attempt to access services or secure resources, including the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse in Al Qa'im(UNHCR) • Survival sex and sexual exploitation and abuse appear particularly rife in Al Qa'im which signals a severe lack of alternative sources of livelihoods (UNHCR) • Gypsies in southern Iraq, at times at risk of statelessness, have repeatedly reported harassment and violent incursions into their community by local residents, often targeting women specifically. In one settlement, 83% of respondents replied that they do not feel safe. In Basrah governorate, prostitution is reported to be common among the Gypsy population, with some sources even stating that they are exploited in an organized scheme. The Ashar neighbourhood of Basrah for instance contains a number of hotels where Gypsies are allowed to live in return for partaking in this. In Moquble camp, home to some 75 often stateless families, women are facing psychological issues as a result of their isolation, boredom and lack of future perspectives. One woman reported that children are abused as a result of their mother's frustration with the situation. (UNHCR)
Female Genital Mutilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not criminalized in Iraqi law • <u>KRG</u>: criminalized in KRG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>KRG</u>: Article 6, Family Violence Bill, KRG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of girls and women in Iraqi Kurdistan suffer female genital mutilation (FGM) and its destructive after-effects¹⁷ • Shortly after the publication of a June 2010 Human Rights Watch report on female genital mutilation in Iraqi Kurdistan, a Kurdistan Health Ministry survey of 5,000 women and girls revealed that 41 per cent had been mutilated.¹⁸ • According to Wadi, there is a significant decrease of FGM in Iraqi-Kurdistan noted in the last decade– new survey data received (Kurdish Tribune)

¹⁶ <http://www.refworld.org/docid/51c2f3b544.html>

¹⁷ Human Rights Watch, 2010 *Iraqi Kurdistan: Girls and Women Suffer the Consequences of Female Genital Mutilation*: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2010/06/16/iraqi-kurdistan-girls-and-women-suffer-consequences-female-genital-mutilation>

¹⁸ AUSAID, IRC, *Working Together to Address Violence against Women and Girls in Iraqi Kurdistan*, 2012

Targeting of LGBTI persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The penal code does not prohibit same-sex relations but some provisions are problematic. • Perpetrators of attacks considered as having "honourable motives". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph 401 (immodest acts in public), 402 (indecent advances), 403 (publications violating public decency), 501 (indecent state of undress) and 502 (loitering with indecent intent), Iraqi Penal Code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted attacks reported in 2010, 2011 and 2012 in many parts of the country, 750 killings since 2003, thousands harassed and tortured between 2003 and 2009, Feb/March 2012 wave of brutal killings of "emos" and or gay/effeminate men.¹⁹
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¹⁹See <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/03/16/iraq-investigate-emo-attacks>, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/12/us-iraq-gays-emo-idUSBRE82B0VZ20120312>, <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/meast/07/24/gay.iraqis/>