

UNFPA IRAQ

QUARTERLY UPDATE



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UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND - IRAQ
صندوق الأمم المتحدة للسكان - العراق

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

The military operations in North-East Syria which began on 9 October led to the influx of more than 35,211 Syrian refugees to Duhok Governorate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, as of 26 December. The refugees are being relocated to Bardarsh and Gawilan camps in Duhok.

UNFPA Representative, Dr Oluremi Sogunro, held several meetings with officials in Duhok to better tailor UNFPA's response and strengthen the Fund's position as a frontline agency.

Up until 29 December, UNFPA teams had provided 3,367 women and girls with dignity kits, 986 others with psychosocial support and 1,983 with psychological first aid.

In addition, UNFPA has deployed an RH mobile team and two ambulances for referrals at the Sehela border crossing. One RH clinic and one Women Centre have been opened in Bardarash camp. The existing UNFPA-facilities in Gawilan camp have been further expanded.

Furthermore, more than 100 women received neonatal care at the UNFPA-supported reproductive health facilities.

UNFPA-supported mobile teams also conducted outreach visits to refugees in the camps to disseminate information on GBV and inform families about the GBV and RH-related services.



SENSITISING THE FAMILY PROTECTION UNIT & PESHMERGAS ON GBV RESPONSE

UNFPA conducted on 16 October a one-day refresher training of trainers on GBV response and prevention to Peshmerga forces in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

The training programme supported by UN Action and The European Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP), aim to reach more than 1,200 Peshmerga with case management and GBV response to survivors.

Similar trainings were conducted in Duhok, Garmian, and Sulaymaniyah throughout the third quarter of the year.



In Central South, UNFPA organised from 21 to 27 October a training of trainers on GBV prevention and response for 30 members of the Family Protection Unit of the Ministry of Interior.

The training focused on the different forms of GBV, the legal framework related to sexual violence, and the GBV response guidelines in Iraq.

EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING WORKSHOP IN CAIRO ON CENSUS

The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) and UNFPA organised an experience and knowledge sharing workshop on census with Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS). The workshop which took place from 28 to 31 October, in Cairo, addressed issues of census management, ICT, GIS, and other capacity development topics.

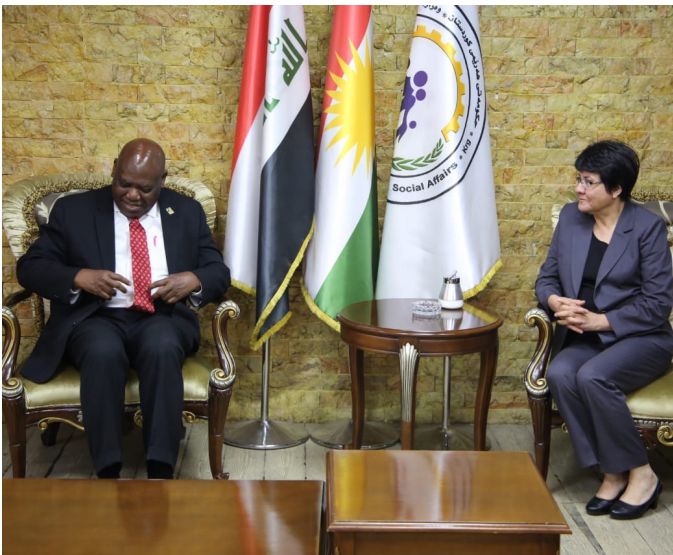
The workshop focused on how to cover the existing technical gaps in Iraq and how to further strengthen them locally and with the regional support, based on the 2017 Census in Egypt. Furthermore, CSO and CAPMAS will collaborate on enhancing the technical structure and governance of the census.

UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE MEETS WITH RELEVANT MINISTRIES IN THE KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

UNFPA Representative to Iraq, Dr Oluremi Sogunro, visited the Kurdistan Region of Iraq from 13 to 17 October, where he met with the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Kwestan Mohammed, the Minister of Interior, Rebar Ahmed Khaled, Minister of Health, Dr Saman Hussein Barzinjy, and the Minister of Planning, Dr Dara Rashid, respectively.

The meetings focused on the UNFPA new Country Programme Document, which will determine the Fund's roadmap for 2020-2024, on the importance of the 2020 Census and the Population policy. Talks also tackled the family planning strategy drafted with the Ministry of Health at the Federal Government level and the Nairobi Summit. UNFPA Representative briefed the Ministers on the Fund's humanitarian intervention at the heels of the new influx of refugees fleeing North-East Syria and seeking refuge in Duhok.

Dr Sogunro insisted on the valuable partnership with each of the Ministry and the Government bodies in the Kurdistan Region.



CAMPS CLOSURE LEADS TO NEW WAVES OF DISPLACEMENT IN CENTRAL SOUTH IRAQ

Following the government's decision to close displacement camps and move internally displaced persons to their home provinces, thousands of families were moved to Laylan camp in Kirkuk, Jadaa camp in Qayyarah, and Karama camp in Tikrit. Nearly 90 per cent of the families who arrived in camps were in secondary displacement.

To alleviate the suffering of women and girls recently displaced, UNFPA and partners distributed 1,600 dignity kits in Jadaa camp, 264 kits in Al-Karama camp, and 348 kits in Laylan camp. These dignity kits help meet women's immediate hygiene needs, protect them and enable them to access the services, including sexual and reproductive health services.



IRAQ'S PARTICIPATION IN THE NAIROBI SUMMIT

At the Nairobi Summit, 12 to 14 November, top government officials, including heads of state, parliamentarians and representatives from non-governmental and civil society organisations announced financial and programmatic commitments, policies and other initiatives to achieve all the goals laid out in the Programme of Action stemming from the ICPD in 1994.

On 13 November, the Minister of Planning, HE Nouri Sabah al-Dulaimi, heading the national delegation of Iraq, read Iraq's commitment to the ICDP25, which included providing high quality, integrated and comprehensive health care all, integrating reproductive health issues into national policies and strategies; lowering the maternal mortality rate by at least fifty percent from 31 deaths per 100,000 live births to 15; accelerating the promulgation of the Domestic Violence Act, which addresses sexual abuse, harmful practices and gender-based violence by 2022; reducing adolescent marriage rates from %25 to less than %10; increasing the female enrollment in primary education by %100 and ending female genital mutilation in the Kurdistan Region. ([full list of Iraq's commitments](#))



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The crime of rape is a severe human rights violation, yet it remains widespread around the globe.

Sexual violence is an epidemic that thrives in times of conflict and during emergencies, once the rule of law and criminal justice systems collapse and, far too often, rape is wielded as a weapon of war.

As we mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and launch the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, we must stand up together, speak out together and take action together — against rape and all forms of violence against women and girls. An estimated 15 million adolescent girls worldwide have been forced to have sex, but only around 1 in 100 will seek help.

[\(read more\)](#)

Human Rights Day

On this Human Rights Day, we at UNFPA salute the young people who are pushing for progress and making meaningful change in their communities, countries and around the world.

Twenty-five years ago, women's rights activists and advocates galvanized the political will that led to the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and its historic Programme of Action. Many of them were young women, fighting to change the status quo and transform people's lives through their unwavering commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Today, we see the same drive from young women activists helping tear down the remaining barriers standing between them and their rights and choices.

[\(read more\)](#)

To celebrate the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, UNFPA partners organised recreational and awareness activities to women in camps and from the host communities. More than 1,500 women have celebrated with the teams.

The activities included informative discussions on the 16 Days and the definition and types of GBV. The sessions focused on the best means to prevent and mitigate GBV within communities and in camps.

UNFPA partners also organised exhibitions where women attending the centres could sell their products and gain some income to provide for their families.



IMPLEMENTING UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2250: YOUTH, PEACE, & SECURITY

UNFPA with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA), organised, on 5 December, a two-day consultative meeting in Erbil, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, on UN Security Council Resolution 2250, on Youth, Peace & Security.

The meeting aims to advocate for and work with the Ministry of Youth and Sports in the Federal Government and the Ministry of Youth and Culture in the Kurdistan Region Government towards a new narrative where young people are peace ambassadors, peacebuilders and agents for positive change.

Participants from the youth Directorates across the country discussed the roadmap towards a national strategy on youth, peace and security and the ways to implement the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 in Iraq.

The consultative meeting is followed by a five-day training in partnership with the FBA on inclusive dialogue processes in peacebuilding. The training is part of a three week-programme laid out over seven months (September -2019March 2020).

The first training took place in September where sessions focused on enhancing the knowledge and practical ability of 25 young men and women in the areas of peacebuilding, mindful communication, gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding, conflict analysis; inclusive dialogue, as well as the design and facilitation of dialogue sessions within their communities.



KRG, UNFPA INCREASE EFFORTS FOR ENDING FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION IN THE KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

The Kurdistan Regional Government, represented by the Kurdistan High Council for Women Affairs (KHCWA), launched, with the support of UNFPA, the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Communication for Behavioural Impact (COMBI) plan for the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, on 15 December.

In the Kurdistan Region alone, close to 15,000 girls have been circumcised in the last year. The prevalence of FGM has been higher in the Kurdistan region than in the rest of Iraq,

In Iraq, with the support of the European Regional Development and Protection Programme for Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq (RDPP), UNFPA and KHCWA developed a communication for behavioural impact plan for this purpose.

The COMBI plan stipulates that teams from the Ministries of Religious Affairs, Interior (GDCVAW), Justice, Health, Education and Labour and Social Affairs will approach an initial 7,500 mothers in the next 12 months with awareness-raising campaigns in order to save young girls from this harmful practice in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, especially in the areas of Sulaymaniyah, Erbil, Duhok and Halabja Governorates.



INTEGRATING GIS WITH OFFICIAL STATISTICS

UNFPA conducted on 12 & 11 December a workshop for the 10 staff from Central Statistical Organization (CSO) in Baghdad on Integrating GIS with official statistics. The sessions based on the Environmental System Research Institute (ESRI) resources focused on setting up an ArcGIS Organization account giving access to different applications needed to integrate the GIS with the official statistics. During the workshop, participants learned mobile data collection which allows CSO to have an overall understanding of the technical solutions available from ESRI company.

KEEPING UP WITH IRAQ'S COMMITMENTS TO THE NAIROBI SUMMIT

On 14 December, UNFPA organised a follow-up luncheon for the participants in the Nairobi Summit to put together a roadmap enabling Iraq to fulfil its commitments stated during the summit. Among the attendees were Dr Ali Al-Shukri, the Head of the President's Advisory Board and Dr Nouri Al-Dulaimi, Minister of Planning.

During the luncheon, participants agreed on forming a national taskforce, under the leadership of the Ministry of Planning, to set the roadmap and timeframe to ensure all the commitments are met. The taskforce is to include representatives from the relevant ministries, academics, researchers, representatives of the private sector, civil society and youth.



During the meeting, the Government of Iraq reaffirmed its trust in UNFPA work through the reactivation of the US\$ 50,000 yearly contribution to the Fund's core resources as of 2020.

Dr Al-Shukri emphasised the importance of allocating resources for GBV mainstreaming and establishing the High Commission for Women Affairs in Central South to respond to the challenges faced in preventing GBV.



KRG, UNFPA INCREASE EFFORTS FOR ENDING FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION IN THE KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

UNFPA supported on 3 December two six-day orientation workshops on the Adolescent Friendly Spaces and the integration of the reproductive health services. A total of 40 individuals from two primary healthcare clinics participated at the six participates of orientation.

The workshop aimed at paving the way to the integration of youth and adolescent friendly services into the health care system and improve the capacity of health service providers in the selected primary healthcare clinics for piloting in Baghdad.

This move will ensure the specific needs of young people, especially adolescents girls, are met and they have access to proper information related to their health.



TRAINING FOR THE SURVIVOR CENTRE STAFF IN DUHOK ON MHPSS CARE

On 15 December, with the support of UN Action Fund and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), UNFPA conducted a five-day training for the ten staff of the Women & Girls' Treatment and Support Centre in Duhok on mental health and psychosocial support care to survivors.

The training combined theory with practice and group activities. The topics focused on case management, first care to survivors, psychological first aid, trauma-informed care, among others.



PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTERMISM IN IRAQ

UNFPA and partners conducted a series of workshop to 50 young men and women from Anbar, Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Maysan, Najaf, Nineveh, Salah Al Din, and Thi-Qar, on the prevention of violent extremism (PVE).

The workshops aimed at developing the participants' communication skills and leadership, improving their understanding of peace, citizenship and dialogue. At the end of the workshop, teams were formed to work on initiatives through where young people can bring peace to their communities in the upcoming year.



FINALISING THE RESULTS OF THE ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH SURVEY

On 18 December, UNFPA organised a technical meeting in Erbil to review the findings of the Adolescents and Youth Survey. Fourteen representatives from the Central Statistical Organisation, the Kurdistan Region Statistics Office, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Culture and Youth, UNICEF and UNFPA attended the meeting.

Participants discussed the findings of the survey and the ways forward and finalization of the results before the official launch of the outcomes to the public.



GBV COORDINATION IN EMERGENCIES

The GBV sub-cluster, led by UNFPA, organised a five-day workshop on Coordination of GBV in Emergencies on 1 December.

The purpose of the workshop was to roll-out the GBV coordination handbook, to share experience and knowledge among participants, enhance GBV coordination in emergencies and discuss the challenges faced by the GBV sub-cluster and working groups. In addition, the participants agreed on the Sub-Cluster's priorities for 2020.

RDPP CONTRIBUTES US\$ 3.36 MILLION TO SUPPORT WOMEN, GIRLS AND BOYS IN IRAQ

UNFPA renews its partnership with the European Regional Development and Protection Programme for Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq (RDPP II) with a multi-year grant of a total of DKK 22,056,446, equivalent of US\$ 3.36 million to the Fund's on-going interventions to mitigate and respond to gender-based violence in Iraq.

The conflict in Iraq and the subsequent humanitarian crisis have exponentially exposed the population, particularly women, girls and boys, to various forms of gender-based violence, including in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

RDPP's contribution supports training, capacity building and system strengthening initiatives targeting institutions and government entities. This partnership ensures the continuity of mentored service provision related to survivors and well-being of women and girls from refugee, internally displaced and host communities across the country. Furthermore, this new funding enables UNFPA to work with partners on strengthening the legal framework and enhancing behavioral changes through evidence-based advocacy. ([read more](#))

The [European Regional Development and Protection Programme for Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq \(RDPP II\)](#) is a joint European initiative running until 2021. The Programme is supported by the Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union, Ireland and Switzerland.

NORWAY CONTRIBUTES NOK 17 M TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN IRAQ

We had to run quickly: they were coming in at us. We could hear them from far. My whole life crumbled that same moment. I froze but I could hear my sister screaming: "move or they will kill you, or worse take you," said Minar from Qamishli, in Syria, recollecting the moment she and her family had to flee their home in Syria and seek refuge in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

To protect girls like Minar and ensure that no woman suffers or dies from gender-based violence in Iraq, the Government of Norway contributed to NOK 17 million (US\$ 1,872,452 million) to UNFPA interventions aiming at mitigating, preventing and responding to gender-based violence in humanitarian crises.

This contribution is part of the Government of Norway's agreement to provide funding against the appeals in different countries including Iraq for a total amount of (approximately US\$ 12,344,685 million) NOK 111.5 Million and (approximately US\$ 2,7 million) NOK 25 million to the Humanitarian Thematic Fund. Norway is the top donor to UNFPA core resources in 2019.

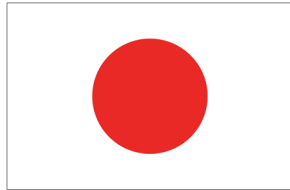
In Iraq, UNFPA will utilise the funding to build the capacity of GBV actors, to prevent and respond to GBV through quality services provision targeting vulnerable survivors, including refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities. Norway's contribution will also support UNFPA's efforts to strengthen policies and the legal framework on gender-based violence, as well as to change behaviours towards survivors of GBV. ([read more](#))

DONORS

UNFPA is extremely thankful to its donors for their contribution towards humanitarian and development programmes and response in Iraq this quarter.



STOP RAPE NOW
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STORY FROM THE FIELD

A LOOK BACK AT THE 2010S: A DECADE OF VOICES AND CHOICES

As another decade draws to a close, the world is preoccupied with perils on the horizon. Climate change is beginning to ravage communities everywhere. The global displacement crisis has reshaped demographics on an unimaginable scale, contributing to political upheaval around the world. Information technologies that enable the creation of vibrant online communities also enable the spread of extremism and misinformation.

But it is worth looking back at the gains humanity has made – especially in addressing gender inequality. Below are four changes that have helped define the last 10 years as a decade of growing voices and choices for women and girls.

1. Women's voices have never been louder

For millennia, women endured inequality, discrimination and violence in relative silence. Issues affecting half the human population went neglected by predominantly male policymakers, historians, artists and leaders. But in the 2010s, as technologies enabled women to share their experiences more widely than ever before, anger over these injustices began to smoulder and then ignite.

Between 2010 and 2019, the number of people using the Internet more than doubled from 2 billion to 4.1 billion. Social media networks proliferated, and although men continue to comprise a slightly higher percentage of Internet users than women in most of the world, women's presence online achieved a critical mass.

In 2017, high-profile actors in Hollywood – including Ashley Judd, a UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador – spoke boldly about their personal experiences of sexual harassment. The #metoo movement elicited millions more accounts of sexual assault, discrimination, exploitation, and degradation, sparking a fire that continues to rage around the world, toppling male leaders across governments and industries.

The conversations are happening offline, too.

Bipana Nepali, a youth activist in Nepal who works with UNFPA, says people are speaking more openly than ever about gender-based violence and harmful practices like child marriage, which were previously “hidden due to shame, stigma and taboo.” She noted, “It’s a good sign that today we are talking about it loudly, publicly, which means we are trying to find a solution.”

“If we go back 10 years ago in Iraq, women were not outspoken about gender-based violence and domestic abuse. With more awareness, we see today women coming forward and taking the future in their own hands,” added Rahma Abdul Kareem, of the Noor al-Rahma Centre for Human Rights, a UNFPA partner.

And as women's voices rise into a global chorus, they are not only addressing gender-based violence. They are also rejecting centuries of stigma – calling for an end to period shame, for better access to feminine hygiene supplies, and for better data on long-neglected women's health issues, like post-partum depression and gynaecological disorders.

2. Contraceptive choice has expanded

Couples have never before enjoyed as much choice in reliable modern contraception. Since 2000, there has been an explosion in contraception technology, with methods such as vaginal rings,

STORY FROM THE FIELD

implants, injectable devices and patches entering the market. As the method mix has expanded, preferences have changed.

Globally, the prevalence of both female and male sterilization has declined. In some places, long-acting methods have gained prominence.

“Ten years ago, women who were not for permanent family planning used to go for short-term methods,” Kalawati Chaudhary, a family planning counsellor in western Nepal, told UNFPA. “Today, many of them are opting for long-term contraceptives like intrauterine devices. This is a massive change.”

Tens of millions more women are using modern contraceptives, especially in places that have the highest levels of need. Since 2012, users of modern contraceptives grew by 53 million in 69 high-priority countries.

The stigma around contraception is also falling away, said Dr. Hind Kamal, a gynaecologist at a UNFPA-supported clinic in Iraq. “Today, thanks to intense awareness-raising in camps and communities, both husbands and wives come to our clinic for advice on family planning and contraceptives.”

And programmes to educate people about family planning are helping to lower maternal and child death rates in places like Afghanistan, said Dr. Nasreen Oryakhel, president of the Afghan Family Guidance Association, who has been working on these issues for 30 years. “Through family planning and adding intervals between child births, we can have a healthy child and mother,” she said.

Still, there is a long way to go.

Choices have not expanded enough. Data from the UN show that in about one fifth of countries or areas, a single method of contraception accounts for half or more of all contraceptive use.

And, due to patterns in population growth, overall improvements in unmet need for contraception have been meagre. In 2010, an estimated 14.3 per cent of women around the world had an unmet need for modern contraception; in 2019, that number is 14.2 per cent.

Women also continue to shoulder the vast majority of the family planning burden. Methods that require men’s direct participation – including male sterilization, male condoms and even withdrawal – account for only 27 per cent of global contraceptive practice.

3. Gender roles are less rigid

This decade has seen continued increases in women’s and girls’ education levels, with global secondary school enrolment rising from just under 70 per cent in 2010 to 75 per cent in 2018, according to UNESCO (for boys, the increase went from 72 to 76 per cent). Fertility rates also continued to fall, from 2.5 births per woman in 2010 to 2.4 in 2017.

These changes have been accompanied by a rise in the status of women and girls.

“Ten years ago, girls were not considered worthy of continuing their education but were rather sent off for early marriage,” said Itaimad Rasheed Hameed, the manager of the Eman Al-Qolooob Women’s Community Centre in Iraq. “Today, I see women with college degrees, working and succeeding and leading. Young girls are given the opportunities to grow and learn.”

[\(read more\)](#)



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