



The National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls 2018-2030

**This strategy was developed with support from the United Nations
Population Fund for Iraq and funding from Canada and Sweden**



"Let's Unite to Combat GBV"

**The National Strategy to Combat Violence against
Women and Girls 2018-2030**

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Statement of the Prime Minister

Over a decade, the Iraqi civilians have been facing harsh conditions due to unstable policies, accumulated crises, and destructive clashes internally and with neighboring countries. The Iraqi people experienced a multitude of sufferings, such as social, religious, and political. The destructive politics have resulted in shattered, frustrated, and disillusioned generations.

The transition from dictatorship to democratic reign, the long-suffering Iraqi people, emerged and revealed the extent of the ordeal they had endured and the profound cost it exacted in terms of its impact on both the human condition and the environment.

Iraqi lawmakers are aware of women and children rights, which every individual is entitled to enjoy within the framework of the Constitution of the country. The Constitution states that Iraqis are equal before the law without discrimination, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, origin, color, religion, sect, belief or opinion, economic or social status (Article 14). Article 15 of the Constitution states that every individual has the right to enjoy life, security and liberty, and that deprivation or restriction of these rights is prohibited except in accordance with the law and based on a decision issued by a competent judicial authority.

The State also guarantees the rights of motherhood, childhood and old age that is obligated to secure and care of adolescents and young people accordingly.

We have witnessed the worst forms of humiliation and enslavement of Iraqi women and children by the notorious terrorist gangs whose names will forever be associated with the infamy of their cruel acts. The nation stood up to terrorism with all their strength and determination. Resistance was to the fore in our struggle for a better life. Women were especially motivated and paid a heavy price for their freedom and dignity. Women were forcefully recruited for murder and extermination. They were coerced into becoming suicide bombers or held captive. Till now, unknown numbers of Yazidis remain in captivity, more than a year since the defeat of the terrorist group in Iraq.

The Iraqi government has taken all these issues and their psychological effects into consideration in its programme. We have given priority to combating misconceptions so that we can achieve social equality as well as equality of opportunity, and our aim is to increase the participation of

women and girls in different aspects of society, taking full consideration of the social, psychological, economic and other dimensions

As the government looks at all citizens as equal, we have placed special emphasis on the importance of social revival in our economic and comprehensive development programme. Once stability is been achieved in the liberated areas, the government plans to launch a programme of basic services throughout Iraq, especially in those governorates most affected during the war on terrorism. This programme is intended to serve especially the needs of the thousands of deprived families, including women, widows, and orphaned children all over Iraq, as well as the mothers whose sons fought in the war, sacrificing themselves for the liberation of the land and its people. Women were at the forefront then and now we are fighting another war to overcome the obstacles and practices that stand in the way of change and the need to reform many prevailing attitudes within our society. We also need to addresses those pernicious social phenomena, fueled by extremist discourse, that seek to distinguish between people based on gender and doctrine.

We strive to empower women, to increase their participation in political and economic life, to ensure equal opportunities and wages, to provide education and to create a protective environment for women and girls. As we launch the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls, by which we seek justice for all, I wish to pay tribute to the women of Iraq and their role in having faced the most difficult circumstances.

I salute them and, sharing their hopes for a brighter tomorrow, I look forward to seeing women in the highest positions of responsibility, management, and creativity. I also acknowledge the commitment and drive of those women whose extraordinary efforts defend and sustain human rights, in particular, women from civil society organizations. I agree, we have achieved so far is less than what we expected to achieve. However, it is a start and we have set out our feet on the long road ahead. We are all determined to achieve the grand goals that every Iraqi woman and girl dreams of.

We are earnest to achieve these goals through our collaborative efforts and ensure that Iraq will be better place tomorrow for women, men and children

Prime Minister of the Government of Iraq
H.E. Mr. Adel Abdul Mahdi

Statement of Secretary General of the Council of Ministers

I would like to congratulate the efforts for developing the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls for the years of 2018-2030. As it has been completed, it will serve as a systematic guide to help tackle all acts of violence against women and girls in Iraq.

The country has been supporting and continues to support all efforts to ensure and acknowledge the real role of women in all fields and to protect them from racism, physical abuse, forced displacement, particularly Gender Based Violence and other acts that have greatly affected the proper and orderly building of society.

It is well known to all that Iraqi women and girls were subjected to the brutal occupation of the city of Mosul and other areas by other areas through terrorists. This occupation gave rise to major violations and wholesale injustice targeting Iraqi women and girls. During this time, women and girls in Iraq also faced many problems because of the prevailing political and security situations in the country.

Now, with the elimination of ISIS, thanks to our heroic security forces, the existence of a comprehensive strategy which seeks to promote the human rights of Iraqi women and girls meets an urgent need to help us improve the reality of women and girls by providing legal protection and ensuring enactment of laws and legislation that promote their participation in building a peaceful and sustainable society.

This National Strategy represents an action-based comprehensive approach to these issues and the challenges they present. The principle of partnership is a singular priority requiring all state institutions, government agencies, civil society organizations and international bodies to work together in order to create a participatory environment enabling Iraqi women and girls the opportunity to fulfil their social and economic roles.

The primary responsibility for bringing this about is vested in the government sector, which must make great efforts in advancing the status of women and girls by promoting their rights in the fight against various gender discrimination and in protection from violence.

Implementation of this Strategy requires new approaches to cooperate in order to facilitate and unify the efforts of all governmental institutions

and local councils involved. In doing so it should be noted that civil society organizations have an equally important role to play. Civil society organizations are known and recognized for their long-standing involvement in and commitment to the formulation and implementation of programmes and activities that support women survivors of violence in all its forms.

Finally, the media are among the most important factors that can be utilized to support women's issues, given their professional capacity to disseminate information and educational programmes to raise awareness about domestic and physical violence and the potential psychological effects inflicted on women and girls suffering from violence. The media can help take the lead in this area by widely sharing some of the success stories achieved by Iraqi women in the social, economic, humanitarian and political fields. Additionally, the media have a significant role to play in helping change the stereo-typical societal traditions that have harmed women's status.

**Secretary General of the Council of Ministers
Chairman of the Population Policy Committee in Iraq
Dr. Mahdi Mohsen Al - Alaq**

Statement of Women Empowerment Department

Congratulations on the occasion of the completion of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls 2018-2030 and the fruitful efforts which contributed to the development of a national framework focusing on the most important issues concerning the protection of women and girls in Iraq.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq has consistently supported the rights of women to live in dignity through a national consultative approach that emphasizes the principle of equality of rights between the sexes. This attests to government's commitment to guarantee and support the rights of women and girls.

This Strategy is a national framework that identifies strengths and weaknesses in the current context. In order to maximize our strengths and address the gaps, we need to combine all our efforts as we determine to move forward.

The injustice and human rights violation perpetrated by the terrorist group against individuals are amply evident. After the era of darkness, the Government of the Republic of Iraq seeks to re-develop and strengthen the protection sector for women and girls and enhance their dignity. Women constitute half of Iraqi society. The reconstruction and development process launched after the liberation will have positive impact.

This Strategy represents a new starting point that will specify the roles of government and non-governmental sector based on the principle of partnership and complementarities. If applied effectively and accurately, this will serve as a real development approach that will contribute positively to the recovery process and improve the overall status of women and girls in Iraq.

The Women Empowerment Department will make the greatest efforts to ensure that its provisions are systematically implemented based on the principle of consultation and joint planning to ensure effective implementation.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the role and responsibility of decision-makers in ensuring implementation of this vital National Strategy through supportive legislation and budget allocations.

Dr. Ibtisam Aziz
Director General of the Women Empowerment Department

UNFPA Statement

The Government of Iraq has committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals under Iraq Vision for Sustainable Development 2015-2030. The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint for all to achieve a better and more sustainable future, with Goal 5 aiming to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women, with targets encompassing political, economic and social equality, including, but not limited to, ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, eliminating all harmful practices, ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities, and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

In this respect, the endorsement of the updated National Strategy to -Combat Violence against Women and Girls is yet another win for women and girls in Iraq. UNFPA is proud to have collaborated with the Government of Iraq, especially the Department for Women Empowerment, to develop this national strategy.

The endorsement of the updated National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls translates the commitment of the Government of Iraq and the United Nations to take action towards the prevention and response in relation to violence against women and girls. This strategy provides an overall guiding framework that policy and decision makers can use to take concrete actions to protect survivors and prevent violence against women and girls.

In 2018, Iraq entered the new development and reconstruction phase. However, there cannot be sustainable peace-building, reconstruction or development as long as women and girls' human rights continue to be violated and as long as one woman or one girl continues to suffer from gender-based violence.

UNFPA continues to stand firm, as the UN agency mandated to lead in the areas of GBV prevention and response, to provide the Government of Iraq all the support required to fulfill its international human rights obligations including through implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and Girls to achieve equal rights and respect for all.

Dr. Oluremi Sogunro
Representative, UNFPA Iraq

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Chapter 1

Introduction

- Work Methodology
- The National Strategy for Combating GBV
Significance and the Need for Update
- Reference Framework

“Women are sisters of men, none but the honest would honour them and none but the mean would despise them”

(Honourable Hadith of the Prophet)

Introduction

Violence against women is a global phenomenon. It takes various forms of physical, psychological and sexual violence and harmful practices that jeopardize women's health, life and human potential. It is one of the most common and widespread violations of human rights. Violence against women and girls is practiced in both traditional and contemporary communities. Although, its rates and its forms vary to an extent that they can cover different age groups, social and educational levels as well as geographical areas. It has become a fact that poses a major obstacle in the path of elimination of discrimination and gender inequality at different levels⁽¹⁾.

In traditional societies, violence is firmly rooted in cultural norms, and in the values and patriarchal systems. It is common to a degree that violence has become acceptable both by men and women as they justify the legitimacy of such practices as being “normal practice” and “right”, pressuring women to perceive violence is in their interest to maintain existing power relations in favour of men, despite the negative effects resulting in violence.

Already, the twenty-first century has witnessed too many disputes and armed conflicts of a political and economic nature that have left a negative impact on individuals, families, society and the economy. The negative consequences of these conflicts have aggravated and/or caused the emergence of new forms of social violence, such as sex-slavery, suicide and kidnapping.

In Iraq, gender-based violence (GBV) is not a contemporary issue. It is rather a phenomenon with historical connotations related to the pressures of life and adherence to values and traditions based on the masculinity of society in all its spheres. In the context of a vulnerable and unstable environment extended over long periods, it provides fertile soil for the emergence and development of new forms of violence in both families and communities. This was reality after June 2014 when Iraq faced multiple challenges in a deterioration of environment that included, more than a third of its territory falling under the control of the terrorist organization. The drop in oil prices leading to the decline in Iraq's oil revenues, the

high deficit in the federal budget, waves of displacement resulting in the uprooting of more than 4 million people, =an unemployment rate of 28% in 2017, and a rise in growing poverty rates that reached 41% in regions occupied by the terrorist organization.

This bitter reality of Iraq's economic, social, political, and security environment resulted in new forms of violence against women and girls while leading to priorities diversion and resources-marked implementation of National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and girls 2013-2017.

Since Iraq is determined to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2015-2030 by adopting plans and policies that are responsive to Iraq's Vision 2030, the Women's Empowerment Department under the General Secretariat for the Council of Ministers, in cooperation with UNFPA, decided to update the National Strategy to accommodate all contextual changes post-2014, and to respond to the SDG Goal Five, in particular, Target Two "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation". The updated strategy will serve as a guiding tool for all sectors and entities to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls in Iraq.

Work Methodology

The National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women and girls 2013-2017 has been updated based on the following methodologies:

- The principle of partnership, which brought together the concerned parties from the governmental institutions, the private sector and civil society organizations
- A series of meetings and workshops to brainstorm key priorities in accordance with recent development spost-2014
- Review strategies to combat domestic violence and/or GBV of Arab countries to learn and benefit from their methodologies, results and recommendations
- Review theoretical and applied research focusing on violence
- Devise a questionnaire to obtain relevant information from related Ministries to identify needs, gaps and priorities
- Review related legal frameworks and legislation

The National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women 2013-2017
Significance

The National Strategy 2013-2017 was adopted to achieve the followings:

- Providing legal, legislative and executive framework to protect the human rights of women in Iraq
- Providing framework for comprehensive capacity-building programme with focus on women and girls
- Highlighting the basic rights including education, health, training, and housing of women and their empowerment, Strengthening family as the core of social peace
- Promoting culture which renounces GBV and discrimination against women by providing “work plan or manual” for governmental and civil society institutions to protect women and ensure their rights as equal important members of the society

The above points confirm the importance of the National Strategy in a society suffering from crises related to the violation of human rights and limited freedom. The development and endorsement of the National Strategy demonstrated the commitment of the Government to address issues of violence against women and girls in Iraq and to fulfill its responsibilities under the international legal framework.

Achievements made under the previous 2013-2017 Strategy Under the National Strategy 2013-2017, the following was accomplished:

- Establishment of 16 Family and Child Protection Units in the Ministry of Interior
 - Establishment of hotline for GBV survivors that are supported by trained female officers and social workers
 - Activation of community police to complement Family and Child Protection Unit
 - Endorsement of Clinical Management of Rape Protocol by Ministry of Health in 2017
 - Adoption and roll-out of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in 2017-2018
 - Existences of Shelter for GBV survivors under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) in Baghdad
 - Increased level of awareness at the community level on GBV issues resulting from extensive campaign and related activities by the government, civil society and media
- Need for Update

Since 2014, Iraq's and onward humanitarian situations considered one of the largest and most volatile in the world. It consequently changed the country's political, economic, and social context significantly. As in most humanitarian crises, women and girls were disproportionately affected, resulting in the increased vulnerability of women and girls.

Contextual changes included the following:

- The internal displacement had serious consequences for human security, especially its impact associated waves of violence had on women and girls. Out of 4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) estimated by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement at the end of 2017, at least half were presumed to be women. Reports indicate that many women and girls were exposed to human rights violations, including rape and trafficking.
- Emergence of addiction impacted women either through direct exposure or its impact on family members
- The economic recession and the disruption of economic development
- The decline of human development indicators which necessitates adjustment of key priorities and strategies, and their alignment with the international and regional framework on GBV.

To accept the changing environment, Iraq opted to update the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women 2013-2017.

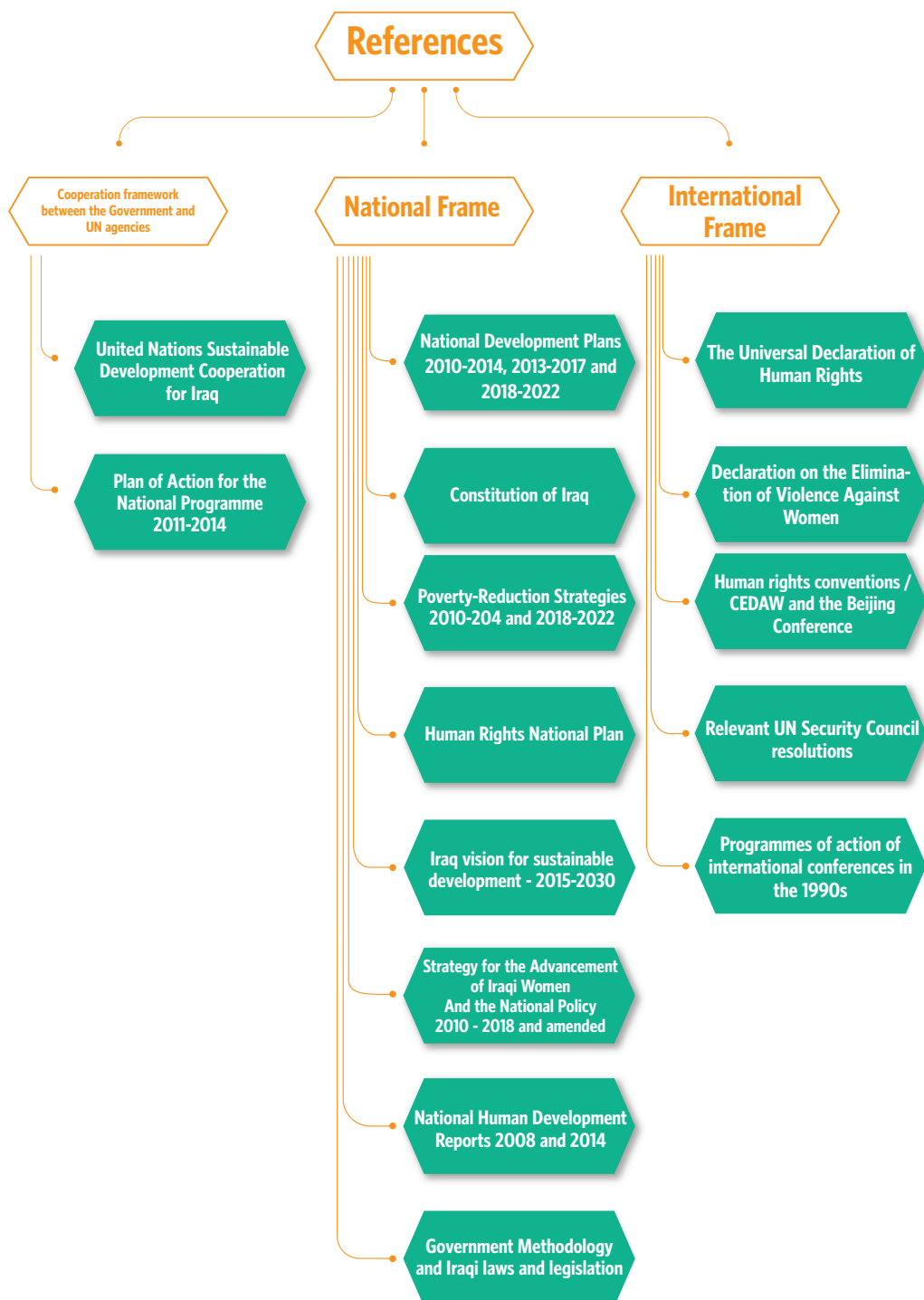
In developing updated version - the National Strategy to Eliminate Gender Based Violence 2018-2030 - particular attention was paid to the following:

- To incorporate and measure the impact of dual shocks encountered by Iraq since 2014, especially as to how these phenomena manifested in different forms of GBV
- To ensure coverage for all women, including IDPs, those with special needs and survivors of armed conflict
- To provide long-term strategic planning for the period 2018-2030
- To include newly emerged social issues such as drug addiction, organized crime, and suicide, all of which have become a major contributing factor accounting for different forms of violence against women and girls
- To identify gaps within the existing legal framework

- To use the SWOT analysis model in helping identify positive and negative factors in dealing with GBV
- To refer to existing data, despite the constraints imposed by the absence of national data in relation to GBV
- To link the updated Strategy with SDGs, Iraq Vision for 2030, the National Development Plan 2018-2022 and the National Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018-2022
- To ensure an effective coordination and monitoring mechanism for the Strategy

Reference Framework

The chart below illustrates the frameworks utilized to develop this Strategy.
Chart (1) Map of references



Chapter 2

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Definition and Different Forms

- Definition
- Forms of Violence
- Causes and Costs of Violence

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Definition and Different Forms

Definition

In keeping with the internationally-agreed standard, the following is the international definition of GBV in Iraq:

“An umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.”

For further details on the conceptual connotations of violence, see the Appendix.

Forms of Violence

Core Forms of Gender-based Violence

- **Physical Violence:** An act of physical violence that is not sexual in nature. Examples include: hitting, slapping, choking, cutting, shoving, burning, shooting or use of any weapons, acid attacks or any other act that results in pain, discomfort or injury.
- **Sexual Violence:** Any form of non-consensual sexual contact that does not result in or include penetration. Examples include: attempted rape, as well as unwanted kissing, fondling, or touching of genitalia and buttocks. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an act of violence that impacts sexual organs, and as such should be classified as sexual assault. (The above does not include rape, i.e., where penetration has occurred).
- **Rape:** Non-consensual penetration (however slight) of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis or other body part. Also includes penetration of the vagina or anus with an object.
- **Psychological Violence:** Infliction of mental or emotional pain or injury. Examples include: threats of physical or sexual violence, intimidation, humiliation, forced isolation, stalking, verbal harassment, unwanted attention, remarks, gestures or written words of a sexual and/or menacing nature, destruction of cherished things, etc.
- **Economic Violence/Denial of Resources, Opportunities or Services:** Denial of rightful access to economic resources/assets or livelihood opportunities, documentation, restriction on movement, education, health or other social services. Examples include a widow prevented from receiving an inheritance, earnings forcibly taken by an intimate partner or family member, a woman

prevented from using contraceptives, a girl prevented from attending school, etc. (Does not include reports of general poverty).

- Forced marriage: The marriage of an individual against his/her will, which occurs without the expressed consent of one or both parties.

Other GBV-related terms

- Child marriage: A formal marriage or marriage out of court before age 18. Child marriage is a reality for both boys and girls, although girls are disproportionately the most affected. It is widespread and can lead to a lifetime of disadvantage and deprivation.

- Child sexual abuse: Refers to any sexual activity between a child and closely related family member (incest) or between a child and an adult or older child from outside the family. It involves either explicit force or coercion or, in cases where consent cannot be given by the survivor because of his or her young age, implied force.

- Harmful traditional practices: Defined by the local, social, cultural and misperception religious values where the incident takes place. For example, "booking" a girl for marriage but never marrying her; honour killing; female genital mutilation/cutting/circumcision; polygamy; forced marriage (to settle a debt), forced marriage (to perpetrator), forced marriage (to settle a dispute), forced marriage (because of killing), marriage exchange of women, forced marriage (for financial reasons).

- Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct sexual in nature.

- Sexual Exploitation: The term "sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Any type of forced and/or coerced prostitution can fall under this category.

- Trafficking: Selling or offering to sell or purchase her or promising to do so, using, transporting, delivering, harbouring or receiving (within or outside borders).

Forms of Violence against Women and Girls in Armed Conflicts

Sexual violence in conflict had long been regarded as a by-product of conflict, rather than as a criminal act in itself. Nonetheless, under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and any other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity are recognized both

as crimes against humanity and as war crimes. Sexual violence in armed conflicts rarely occurs in isolation. Such acts form part of a pattern of abuse and violence that includes killing, child recruitment, destruction of property and looting. Sexual violence can be used as a form of reprisal, to create fear, or as a form of torture. It may also be used systematically, as a method of warfare, aimed at destroying the social fabric.

In Iraq, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist group also used sexual violence as a war tactic, mainly targeting women and girls from particular ethnic groups. Those who lived under the sway of ISIL suffered from rights violations, abduction, sexual slavery, rape, torture and abuse. ISIL consistently advocated the systematic use of sexual violence against women and girls in order to install and spread terror in areas under their control. They also used sexual violence as a means of suppressing or undermining societies that did not conform to their beliefs, targeting particular ethnic and religious communities.

Even in the context of displacement, the threats and risks of GBV, in particular sexual violence, have grown, leading to increased reporting of intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual exploitation and abuse, harassment and underage marriages.

Causes and Costs of Violence

Causes

(A) Violence against Women in Non-Conflict Settings

- The mis-conceptualized cultural and social norms have placed more importance ascribing superiority to men meant women's expense. Such cultural and social norms are so ingrained in the belief system and social settings that women accept men's without clarifying the fact.
- Lack of understanding of and non-adherence to the principle of human rights, restricting human rights of women
- Studies have described male gender identity crisis as a possible cause of violent behaviour by husbands. According to these studies, such men derive their sense of self and manhood from feeling superior to their wives and are thus are likely to report to violence if this sense of their masculine power is challenged.
- In similar fashion, violence may occur as a reaction to women's advancement in terms of employment or education. Men who in such circumstances, may perceive a diminution of their male status and power,

may feel threatened and resentful and react with disrespectful and violent behaviour towards women.

- Violence is an acquired behavior. According to some researchers, male violence can have its roots in violence witnessed or experienced in the family during childhood. Many studies confirm that witnessing domestic violence in childhood can be a direct cause of violence perpetrated against women in adulthood⁽²⁾.
- Similarly, an individual's social upbringing can play a significant role in influencing whether or not incidents of GBV occur in life subsequently. If parents imprint misconceptions among their children by treating sons and daughters differently, this can inculcate the concept of female subordination and inferiority to the male, which in turn can be rationalized as justification for violence against women and girls.

Other contributing factors for GBV that exacerbate the social protection environment include the following:

- Lower levels of education increase the likelihood of women/girls being subject to violence. Degraded level of education usually equates with a less productive role in the economy/society, thereby increasing the dependency of women/girls on men. Girls who drop out of school are also more likely to experience child marriage.
- Deteriorating standards of living due to conflict, economic recession and displacement can put a lot of pressure on men in their role as "bread winners".

Caught in such economic situations, individual can turn violent and vent their sense of helplessness and anger on women. The fact that society gives men greater authority in matters of household expenditures also makes women more vulnerable and adds to their dependency on men.

- The alcohol and drug factors: Recent studies and research show that drug addiction and alcohol consumption are major contributing factors when it comes to violence against women and girls by men. Intemperate and/or addictive use of these substances may increase the frequency and severity of incidents of violence and abuse.

(B) Violence against Women in the emergency setting

Vulnerability of women and girls is often aggravated during emergency settings. Numerous studies point out the following fact.

For example, sexual violence against women is used repeatedly in conflicts

as a weapon of war; in addition, as a form of ethnic cleansing or suppression to force members of a particular ethnic, cultural or religious group to cause humiliate and pressure abandon residency. It can even represent a strategy of war and means of genocide.

Rape is a physical and psychological torture to its direct survivors. It is also considered a form of psychological torture when male family members are forced to witness the rape of their wives, sisters, mothers or daughters. Where sexual violence is used as a tactic of warfare in an organized manner, crimes of sexual violence against women and girls have been committed deliberately as a path to disgrace and humiliate individual ethnic, cultural or religious groups.

Studies have also shown a correlation between a husband's violent behavior and military service experiences. It was notable that how husbands beat and harassed their wives after serving in the war, and how alcohol consumption led to increased levels of violence against wives.

Militarization of society can lead to a culture where violence becomes a norm that saturates daily life. Moreover, use of violence to resolve conflicts at the national level also leads to violence becoming acceptable as a means of resolving conflicts in the family and in the local community.

Economic and Social Cost

(A) Economic Costs

GBV deprives women of economic empowerment and adds commensurately to their vulnerability. As their health deteriorates, they require absent from work; and, they and/or their children miss out on school, forced to suffer loss of educational opportunity. The economic costs mount too since the toll of GBV-related incidents impacts productivity and mentality. Since women and girl fall victims to violence they are unable to continue working, and then there is the cost incurred by victims for medical services including counselling, etc. plus, replacement of property. There are also the indirect economic costs associated with unfulfilled women being unable to fulfil their potential or realize their aspirations due to loss of work and income and

the mental pressures causing pain, suffering, humiliation, and health problem associated with being victimized by GBV.

The economic costs of GBV are composed of:

- Costs of service delivery for women and girls suffered from GBV
 - Costs of other social welfare programmes provided to women and girls suffered from GBV
 - Lost income
 - Loss of productivity
- Calculation of the economic costs of GBV should be a national priority just as is the case in countries such as Sweden and Egypt. Understanding the economic costs of GBV is critical to garner public support to tackling the issue eagerly and reasons are
- To emphasize the significance of GBV as a public issue
 - To demonstrate economic consequences of violence in quantitative terms
 - To raise awareness on the effects of GBV at societal level
 - To inform policy makers about public spending priorities and increase awareness on the necessity of gender-responsive budgeting
 - To provide an evidence-base for legislation and policy frameworks to address GBV
 - To direct planning in terms of allocation of additional resources to reduce GBV

(B) Social Costs:

The harm and damage caused by GBV can be long-term, threatening economic and social development over and above the losses and other negative consequences that occur at individual and family level.

GBV is a cause of mental health issues including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and suicide attempts. Essentially, it inhibits and undermines the social functionality of women and girls. Often paralyzed by fear and trauma, women and girls suffering from GBV are at considerable risk of retreating into social isolation and becoming marginalized. The more this happens, the more limited the participation of women and girls in social and economic activities, the more likely the outcome will result in slower economic and social development of the country.

Beyond direct consequences, there are also very real inter-generational social costs to be considered. For example, a child witnessing violence is more likely to have emotional and behavioural problems, to perform poorly in school and to be at risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence in the future.

Furthermore, GBV severely restricts women's ability to exercise their reproductive

rights. Reports indicate that women who experience physical or sexual violence during pregnancy face an increased likelihood of miscarriage, stillbirth, abortion, and premature labour and/or low birth weight. The incidence of GBV reveals that women have fewer control over decisions affecting their sexual and reproductive lives, that could have significant negative impact on maternal and child health.

Women and girls constitute half of the human capital available to assist in reducing poverty and achieving Sustainable Development Goals. However, GBV undermines human rights, social stability and security, women's social and economic empowerment opportunities, and well-being as well as posing a threat to the development prospects of children and communities at large.

Chapter 3

Situation of Violence against Women and Girls

- Global and pan-Arabic perspectives
- Violence in the conflict-affected communities
- Situation Analysis of Iraqi Women and Girls
- SWOT Analysis

Situation of Violence against Women and Girls

Global and pan-Arabic perspectives

United Nations reports indicate that violence is the most widespread, persistent and destructive human rights violation in today's world. Through continues efforts Gender inequality and the spread of violence continues to exist throughout the world. In Germany, which has the highest rates of incidences of physical violence among European countries, there are 30,000 cases, more than 25,000 cases of sexual assault and about 7,000 cases of rape and France, Sweden and Belgium follow after⁽³⁾.

A survey on girls in South Asia also showed an increase in the rates of girls suffering from violence, especially in early childhood, and among those who did not marry early. Such abuses include emotional, physical and sexual mistreatment at home and at school. It also happens in public spaces as in cases of violence against homeless girls on the streets. In addition, sexual and physical abuse in juvenile facilities and instances of sexual exploitation for commercial purposes are increasing. During conflict or natural disaster, girls are exposed to new forms of violence when family structures are disrupted and unable to provide them protection⁽⁴⁾.

According to the Relief Web and the United Nations Office, more than 700 million women worldwide have married in childhood; nearly 200 million girls around the world have been subjected to female genital mutilation before the age of five; and, 30% of women have suffered from intimate partner violence (IPV). The situation in the Arab world is no different, with data indicating that the rate of violence against women in some countries exceeds by 70%, of whom 37% were subjected to physical or sexual violence at least once in their lives. Moreover, girls and women account for about 70% of victims of trafficking, while women above age 18 make up to 50% of all survivors of trafficking⁽⁵⁾.

In 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that nearly 38% of female murders around the world were perpetrated by male partners, compared to 6% for men⁽⁶⁾. Of statistics on female murder victims, 20% lack data in reference to the survivor's relationship with the perpetrator.

Though violence against women and girls appears to be a global phenomenon, its occurrence varies considerably from one country to another. For example, a review of more than 50 population-based studies, carried out in 35 countries before 1999, shows that the proportion of women who reported

physical abuse by an intimate partner at some point in their lives ranges from 10% to 52%. The proportion of women who experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner range from 10% to 30%⁽⁷⁾.

A UNICEF study in 2000 estimated that between 20% and 50% of women have experienced domestic violence at during a stage of their lives. The World Health Organization (WHO) report also highlighted that 42% of women who suffered physical or sexual violence from their partners suffered injuries and wounds as a result of violence. Some estimates showed that more than one in four women, injured by their partners, required immediate medical intervention to treat injuries of the head, body, limbs and neck⁽⁸⁾. Girls fleeing their homes end up living on the street and face multiple types of violence and mistreatment, likely to be more than their male counterparts when compared. Studies in Bangladesh in 2007⁽⁹⁾, in India in 2007⁽¹⁰⁾, and in Pakistan in 2010⁽¹¹⁾, showed that most female street children had fled from violence at home. The Bangladesh study revealed girls face twice as much violence as street boys, particularly sexual violence. This may be related to the age structure of street children. For example, in India, the highest proportion of street children have been of ages between 10 and 14 years, making them vulnerable to sexual exploitation due to their inability to protect themselves from older persons⁽¹²⁾.

Those working as domestic servants are also among the most vulnerable categories, especially migrant workers. Many surveys showed high levels of violence and abuse against female workers by both males and females. This situation reflects their position in the private sector and their lack of guaranteed labour protection. These violations come to light when only 17% of countries have ratified the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

As for violence in schools, field data states that one of the most important factors decreasing the chances of continuing education for girls is the high level of sexual violence in schools, not only from their classmates but from teachers as well.. In Kenya, for example, in 1991, 71 adolescent girls were raped by classmates, and 19 others were killed in a mixed boarding school in Meru⁽¹³⁾. The South African demographic and health survey shows that 38% of rape incidents of girls between the ages of 15 and 49 were perpetrated by the teacher or principal. Serious consequences of sexual violence in schools include the possibility of higher rates of early pregnancy and school dropout. This adds to the vulnerability of girls and raises the likelihood of

violent relationships later in life. Documented reports of sexual harassment of adolescent girls in India at school by male students, or on their way to and from school, particularly when using public transport, have shown that these experiences undoubtedly undermine girls' desire to continue school or exacerbate parental concerns regarding their safety at the expense of their education⁽¹⁴⁾. Other international studies indicate that parental fear for their daughters' physical and sexual safety is the main reason why girls are kept out of school in most countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. A study of 2013 about 200 secondary school teachers in 45 countries found that marriage/pregnancy, together with the risk of sexual violence, is one of the most common explanations for girls' school withdrawal⁽¹⁵⁾.

Violence in Conflict-affected Communities

Women's experiences of conflict and war, like those of men, are diverse. There are many different ways women and girls become involved in, influenced and/or affected by conflict⁽¹⁶⁾.

Women in Conflict Situations

- **Women as victims of War:** Rape is the weapon of war used against women and girls. In Sierra Leone, 94% of displaced families were sexually assaulted. Moreover, one quarter to half of women were raped in the genocide in Rwanda. Women were abducted to become "wives" of soldiers in the military in countries such as Angola, Mozambique, and Kosovo. One of the consequences of war is the rise in the proportion of widows that could be counted as half by the end of the conflict. Many women have little choice but to resort to morally wrong acts to support their families⁽¹⁷⁾. This has led to an increase in the incidence of HIV and AIDS among women in conflict areas.
- **Women as participants of War:** Women often become active fighters in countries like Algeria, El Salvador, Eritrea, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, South Africa, and Sri Lanka. A survey of 55 countries found that women were active in militarily through 38 of them, accounting for between one-tenth and one-third of the forces, and not just in support functions (cooks, correspondents, etc.) but also as active combatants. For example, in south-eastern Nigeria, women supported the fighters with money and food, while some actively engaged in the conflict. In Kashmir, women have helped separate is a seascape, providing shelter and event

serving as couriers carrying letters, weapons, and ammunition⁽¹⁸⁾.

- **Women in War Economy:** Women assume new roles during war. When men go off to fight, they leave jobs behind them with a consequent loss of family income. Women often have to take on the role formerly played by the men and fill the gap just as in the first and second World Wars, women played the role of breadwinners in order to provide income and child care.

Women in Post-Conflict Situations

Historical experience in societies subjected to conflict show that the negative repercussions on women extend far beyond the immediate conflict. Women's role in peace negotiations, reconstruction programmes, political decision-making and national reconciliation tend to be neglected. This contravenes with UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which calls for an active role for women in achieving peace and security in post-conflict situations. Historically, women have been excluded from formal and informal peace negotiations and their potential contribution ignored or bypassed in many reconstruction and economic recovery and disarmament and demobilization programmes. Women also have faced employment problems in the formal sector once the men return from the conflict⁽¹⁹⁾.

Situation Analysis of Iraqi Women and Girls

A combination of economic, cultural, social, legal, political and security factors has played a role in increasing GBV incidents in Iraq. The following sections describe the situation of women and girls in Iraq and the relationship with their vulnerability towards GBV.

Economic spheres

The Iraqi reality shows a continuous increase in violence against women and girls in different forms. According to a major study, more than 20% of Iraqi women and girls have experienced violence⁽²⁰⁾. A study on empowerment levels compared to other Arab countries shows Iraqi women did not exceed the medium level⁽²¹⁾.

The economic and security environment faced by Iraqis since June 2014, affected by low oil prices and the expanded military operation to dislodge the terrorist groups' control of more than one-third of Iraq, resulted in massive waves of displaced and homeless people. The most vulnerable

among these groupware women and girls. The statistics estimate the gender breakdown among the displaced as being 51.1% male and 48.9% female⁽²²⁾.

The displacement and the economic recession negatively impacted the status of women and girls is demonstrated by the following indicators dating from 2016⁽²³⁾:

- Percentage of working displaced women was 4.1% compared to 64.5% for men in 2016
- Average unemployment rate among displaced women aged 15 and above was 35.9% compared to 14.2% for men in 2016
- Economically active level among displaced women was 6.4% in comparison with 75.2% for men in 2016
- Percentage of displaced young females aged 15-29 not in the labour force was 94.5% in 2016
- The percentage of displaced young females who are working, was 2.6% in 2016
- Net average primary school enrolment rate for displaced girls, in primary schools was 68.4%; for boys, in comparison with 71.7% boys in 2016
- Net average enrolment rate of displaced girls in intermediate schools were 29%; for boys, 35.2% boys in 2016
- Net average enrolment rate of displaced girls, in high schools, 16.7%; for boys, 11.9%
- In addition, to the above, the poverty rate increases to 41% in 2017 from 19% in 2014 was mainly attributable to large-scale displacement⁽²⁴⁾

These statistical figures give us a glimpse of the economic vulnerability of Iraqi women and girls, especially those who are displaced.

The following data indicate just how vulnerable the socio-economic situation of women and girls is in general⁽²⁵⁾:

Approximately 50% of females are in the 15-64 working age group, yet they account for only 16% of the total economically active population compared to 84% for men

- The rate of economically active women in rural areas was 25%, while it was 75% in urban areas
- Unemployment overall reached 10.8% in 2016 but was 21.9% among females compared to 8.4% for males. In urban areas, female unemployment was 24.6%, while it was 14.3% in rural areas
- Data from the Ministry of Education of Iraq indicate that male enrolment rates are higher than for females in academic years 2016-2017. The net enrolment rate for males is 95% compared to 90% for females for the same period and for the same grade⁽²⁶⁾.
- The dropout rates for elementary, intermediate, and high school were 4.7% for girls, compared to 3.6% for boys in 2015/2016.
- The percentage of female-headed households at the national level was 10.5% according to the food security and vulnerability survey of 2016

These disparities between women and men can be explained as follows:

- Insecurity and prevalence of violence, is limiting women's participation in the economy
 - Family preference for educating boys and/or limitation of economic means for educating girls
 - Inherited social/cultural values perceiving women and girls as inferior
- The combination of these economic and educational disparities and discriminatory attitudes negatively impacts the growth, employment and economic empowerment of women and girls.

They could additionally set back implementation of the National Development Plan 2018-2022.

Social sphere

There is no doubt that all forms of GBV pose significant challenges against achievement of sustainable development. The circumstances of inequality and violence always lead to the loss of basic rights as well as ability to participate in the public life.

Field data in Iraq reveals that traditional culture and social norms justify discrimination and provide men with rights that are denied to women. The results of the Iraq Woman Integrated Social and Health (I-WISH) survey showed that 46% of women believe that there is discrimination between men and women. This is due to the preference of males over females, especially in rural areas (59%), a prevailing attitude that is reinforced by customs and traditions (30.7%)⁽²⁷⁾. In general, there is discrimination in favours of men, with 47.8% of women feeling discriminated against in terms of free movement out of the house. One fifth of the sample (20%) felt discriminated against when it came to participation in decision-making within the family on issues such as selecting friends and a life partner. Regarding equality of rights and duties, about 30% of the women believe that they have full equality, while 38.6% think the opposite is true.

Although it is difficult to obtain accurate figures on incidents of GBV due to cultural factors and the lack of a national database on this, the general trend of violence in Iraq has continued to escalate in recent years. Levels of violence against juveniles such as murder, physical assault, sexual assault (rape, abuse and sodomy) have increased significantly for the years 2015-2017 (See Table 1).

Table 1: Assaults against adolescents according to assault type for year 2015-2017

Legal description of the violence	2015		2016		2017	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Intentional murder	78	48	86	53	104	41
Honour Crimes	0	5	0	3	1	3
Physical assault (Intentional abuse)	594	101	873	1111	1033	184
Verbal and psycho-logical assault	26	23	83	34	88	17
Sexual assault (dishonourable act, rape, sodomy)	140	51	170	47	167	61

*Source: Ministry of Planning, CSO, Several years

Following data also indicate social status of women and girls⁽²⁸⁾:

- At 53.9%, the rate of marriage for girls aged 12 and above was high at the national level. The average age at first marriage for females was 20.8 years.
- Increasing rates of divorce -- 56,594 cases recorded in 2016; 52,028 cases in 2014
- Domestic violence reached highest level in 2016 with 8,552 cases recorded within Family and Child Protection Units, Ministry of Interior
- The Community Police Unit, Ministry of Interior, also recorded 10,701 cases of violence against women in 2016
- More than 4,000 women were subjected to rape and kidnapping in a year, creating serious psychological, economic and social damage⁽²⁹⁾
- Low level of women's social participation: less than one-in-ten women participate in a forum, social club, women's association, trade union or party
- Percentage of women in leadership positions is still low

Assessments and surveys⁽³⁰⁾ indicate that one out of every five women (21%) in Iraq aged 15-49 years has suffered from a husband's physical violence; and one in three (33%) women has suffered abuse or a psychological

violation. Some reports indicate that approximately 50% of married women have been subjected to a form of violence by their husbands, 46% of girls between the ages of 10 and 14 years have been subjected to violence at least once by a family member; 46% of currently married women have been subjected to at least one type of violence by their husbands⁽³¹⁾; 44.5% have experienced emotional violence, 5.5% have experienced physical violence, and 9.3% have experienced sexual violence.

The data in Table 2 shows that the most common form of violence in Iraq is violence between spouses, particularly husband's assault on wives. The table summarizes the number of registered cases in the Family and Child Protection Unit in Baghdad and other governorates.

Table 2: Number of registered cases in 2017 and 2018 (January to July)

Types of abuse	Year 2017	from 1/1/ 2018 to 1/8/2018
Husband abuse on wife	6,544	3,904
Wife abuse on husband	1,310	664
Assaults between brothers and sisters	1,014	475
Parents violence on children	270	148
Child abuse on parents	1,584	931
Others	897	429
Total	11,619	6,551

It is important to note that these statistical and numerical data related to discrimination and violence against woman and girls do not necessarily reflect the real picture of GBV due to reporting and records.

The available services offered to GBV survivors are insufficient to address the needs of survivors across Iraq. Protection shelters for GBV survivors are limited (dedicated for human trafficking survivors as opposed to GBV survivors⁽³²⁾) under Federal Government. Safe houses run by the government and NGOs are often targeted violently. Under the current legal framework, NGOs are not legally authorised to build shelters. Some NGOs do operating shelters to provide a temporary safe space as a life-saving measure for victims. For example, an NGO based in Baghdad provides protection for women from drug dealers and domestic violence. Some NGOs built shelters for homosexuals who were afraid of being attacked. Such

organizations regularly receive threats and are forced to continuously change locations for security reasons⁽³³⁾.

The Federal Ministry of Interior runs 16 family protection units with the aim of solving family disputes and transferring GBV survivors to shelter services. These units give priority to family reconciliation over protection and are not capable of providing continuous support for the survivors. There is no regular referral system to provide legal assistance and shelter shelters⁽³⁴⁾. For example, the vast majority of staff members in family protection units in Basra and Kirkuk are male making it difficult for women to enter those units. Moreover, the law on protection from domestic violence has

yet to be endorsed despite national and international advocacy efforts for its approval since it is opposed by parliamentary groups such as the Legal Committee and Awqaf (Religious Endowments) Committee, which maintains that there is insufficient support to reach agreement on this law.

It lacks the legal quorum for approval thus that the remaining parliament term is short to allow enactment. All such arguments appear discouraging considering that is weak because this law has now been on hold remained for five years waiting to be approved.

Even if these services are available on the ground, lack of knowledge about where to access them and the limited capacity of service providers hinder delivery of quality services. The limited freedom of movement among women and girls, and the distance from the location of services, not to mention the social obstacles, including fear of shame and social stigma, remain barriers in gaining access to the required care. Given the immediate and long-term negative effects of rape and sexual abuse on the physical and psychological health of survivors, medical responses as life-saving measures remain very important. The clinical management of rape (CMR) is a key factor in caring for and rescuing lives of survivors of sexual violence.

Conflict and Displacement

Iraqi women made relative progress in political, community and leadership positions after 2003, a period when women won seats in the Council of Representatives, attained ministerial and leadership positions, expanded their place in public and private economic activities, and their voices were heard through civil society organizations. This progress was shaken up by the security and economic crises in Iraq that occurred after June 2014.

The terrorist organization in Iraq targeted all segments and categories of society, the Yazidis in particular, whom they tried to destroy completely⁽³⁵⁾. International sources estimated in August 2016 that the number of Yazidis killed by terrorism between August 2014 and August 2016 ranged between 2,000 and 5,500. The number of abductees reached about 6,417 persons (3,547 women, 2,870 men). It was also reported that 3,048 people managed to escape the ISIL's clutches, leaving 3369 remaining --, including 1,636 women and girls, and 1,733 men and boys⁽³⁶⁾.

The women and girls under the control of ISIL, either from the Yazidi community or other minorities, were subjected to violations and abuses of the International

Humanitarian Law and the International Human Rights Law. The assaults involved forced displacement, abduction, deprivation of freedom, slavery, cruelty, inhuman and degrading treatment, forced conversion, sexual assault, rape and other forms of sexual violence. Due to the ferocious nature of these acts, many women and girls who survived were subsequently deprived of psychological, social and material support by their families. Furthermore, women who have been subjected to these violations, including sexual slavery and other forms of sexual violence, and the children born as a result are regarded as objects of shame by their communities upon their return to their homes⁽³⁷⁾.

A study⁽³⁸⁾ conducted in Iraq on women survivors of abduction by terrorist groups showed two-thirds of respondents in the sample (66.5%) confirmed rape was one of the most significant methods of torture and abuse they experienced during the abduction period. This compared to 4.5% respondents who confirmed that flogging was one of the methods, while 1.5% were burnt with cigarettes. More than a quarter of the respondents (26.5%) confirmed that they had been subjected to rape, whipping, burning with cigarettes and deprivation of food during the abduction. Another study on kidnapping in Baghdad reached similar results⁽³⁹⁾.

One significant method of violence perpetrated by the terrorists is isolation. The study of those who survived abduction revealed that 61% of the women were isolated during their ordeal according to age; 35.5% of the women were isolated according to their religion; 2.5% of the women were isolated according to their doctrine; and only 1% of the women were isolated according to nationality. The study also showed a distinction among abductees on the basis of age for the purpose of sexual intercourse, forced marriage or harassment. The older abductees were used for service and forced labor. Furthermore, there was discrimination-based religion, doctrine, even nationality, as well as discrimination based on appearance, elegance and beauty⁽⁴⁰⁾. After the terrorist groups occupied a number of governorates of Iraq in June 2014, about 4 million Iraqis were internally displaced. Surveys by the International Organization of Migration (IOM) in 2015 showed that displaced women faced risks and restrictions that threatened their safety, dignity and privacy. Women's participation in camp management has been shown to be low with 91% of camp management committees lacking women representatives⁽⁴¹⁾. Due to the lack of separate and safe

living spaces and the lack of access to clean water and sanitation, the extent of hardship for displaced women and girls has expanded. Terrorist groups also targeted displaced women for sexual slavery, kidnapping and human trafficking⁽⁴²⁾.

These conflict and displacement situations intensified the gender inequality and discrimination Iraqi society had already faced, and increased the vulnerability of women and girls to GBV. They have been at the forefront of those negatively affected by this conflict and displacement.

The impact of conflicts has to be assessed both in the context of ongoing conflicts and in post-conflict situations. The disappearance of male family members and the resultant increase in the proportions of widows and female-headed households make women more vulnerable to sexual violence as well as sexual exploitation and abuse. There is also a high level of poverty among women survivors of war. Such situations result in severe consequences that impact women and girls, who will have to support and sustain their families.

Legal sphere

In this section, the most important laws in relation to GBV are reviewed, starting from the Iraqi Constitution.

(A) Legal framework

▪ Constitution of Iraq 2005

The Constitution of Iraq stipulates that Islam is the official religion of the State, and it is a main source for legislation, and that no law shall contradict the basic principles of Islam⁽⁴³⁾. This paragraph, in some circumstances, is used to justify keeping the reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW). Article 41 of the Constitution stipulates that “Iraqis are free to abide by their personal status according to their religion, sects or beliefs, and their choices, and this shall be regulated by law”. The presence of this controversial article, which allows the sectarian and religious disputes in passing laws that may violate many of the rights and privileges granted by the Iraqi Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959. This urged the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its report issued on 14 March 2014 to include in recommendations No. 17-18 the necessity to work on the abolition of this controversial article, which comes as an infringement of Article 14 of the Constitution and is contrary to CEDAW. .

This recommendation also indicates to withdraw the Jaafari Shiites Personal Status Bill, and to work to cancel and modify penalties that discriminate between men and women. The same recommendation also points to the need to speed up the passing of the Domestic Violence Law⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Articles of the Constitution related to protection from GBV:

- **Article 14:** Iraqis are equal before the law without discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, origin, colour, religion, creed, belief or opinion, or economic and social status.
- **Article 15:** Every individual has the right to enjoy life, security and liberty. Deprivation or restriction of these rights is prohibited except in accordance with the law and based on a decision issued by a competent judicial authority.
- **Article 29 A:** The family is the foundation of society; the State preserves its entity and its religious, moral and patriotic values.
- **Article 29 B:** The State guarantees the protection of motherhood, childhood and old age and shall care for children and youth and provide them with the appropriate conditions to further their talents and abilities. Third clause under article 29 B: Economic exploitation of children shall be completely prohibited. The State shall take the necessary measures to protect them. Fourth: All forms of violence and abuse in the family, school and society shall be prohibited.
- **Article 37, Third:** Forced labour, slavery, slave trade, trafficking in women or children, and sex trade shall be prohibited.

▪ **Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969**

- **Protection from Domestic Violence**

The Penal Code stipulates in article 41 that a husband has the right to punish his spouse (under the so-called right to discipline the wife) and that this right of the husband is one of the grounds for permissibility.

- **Rape**

The crime of rape is one of the crimes stipulated in the Iraqi Penal Code in Article 393. It is punishable by 15 years of imprisonment. However, Article 398 stipulates that if the perpetrator is legally married to the victim, the legal proceedings against him shall be suspended and the criminal case against him shall be suspended.

Rape and sexual assault are criminal offenses according to the Penal

Code, but the law does not recognize marital rape as a crime. The Penal Code also states that a husband has the right to punish his wife (under what is called wife disciplinary measures)⁽⁴⁵⁾.

- Sexual Harassment

The Penal Code prohibits some forms of sexual harassment. A person who commits an "act of disgrace" with a man or woman without his/her consent is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year with a fine⁽⁴⁶⁾. The law criminalizes anyone who harasses a female in a public place with words, actions or signs in a manner that threatens her grace and reputation by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months with a fine⁽⁴⁷⁾.

- Honour Crimes

The Penal Code is lenient in cases of honour crimes and imposes lenient penalties since the law considers crimes committed in the name of honour have a mitigating factor⁽⁴⁸⁾. The Iraqi Penal Code sets a penalty of imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years for the husband who surprises his wife or one of his mahrams (unmarriageable girls) in the act of adultery or sharing a bed with a partner, if the husband kills them immediately or kills one of them or assaults one of them and the attack results in death or permanent disability⁽⁴⁹⁾.

In 2002, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) passed a law abolishing the mitigated penalties for the murder of a female member of the family by a male relative as result of shame or honour⁽⁵⁰⁾. KRG also suspended the Article 409 of the Iraqi Penal Code, but this did not prevent the occurrence of such crimes in the region.

- Marital Adultery

The Penal Code punishes the adulterer wife and the partner who committed the crime of adultery with her with a sentence from three months to five years' imprisonment. The same penalty applies to the husband if he commits the crime of adultery, but only if the adultery occurs in the marital home.

- Abortion Crime

The Penal Code prohibits abortion except where necessary to protect the life and health of pregnant women, or in the case of fetal deformities. It states that

1) a woman shall be punished with imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year and a fine not exceeding one hundred dinars⁽⁵¹⁾, or by one of the two punishments, for aborting herself by any means or otherwise enabling somebody to abort with her consent.

2) The same penalty shall be applied to the one who intentionally performs abortion according to her consent. If the abortion or the means used during resulted in the death of the victim, the penalty shall be imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years.

3) It shall be considered an aggravating circumstance for the offender if he or she is a doctor, pharmacist, chemist, midwife or any aide.

4) It shall be considered an extenuating judicial circumstance if the woman terminates the pregnancy herself to avoid disgrace being pregnant as an act of incest⁽⁵²⁾.

- The crime of incitement to adultery

Article 380 of the Iraqi Penal Code stipulates that "every husband who incited his wife to commit adultery, and she has been convicted of adultery, shall be punished by imprisonment." This crime does not occur unless the act of adultery takes place. Incitement alone is not sufficient to make this a crime. Therefore, unless the act of adultery is committed, it is not possible to punish the husband for incitement, as this is unfair judgment on behalf of any female and support disgrace, disrespect towards her and questions her dignity under prevention of male dependent. This constitutes a sort of coercion practiced by the husband on his wife to satisfy his personal motives. However, the legislator is criticized for not punishing the act of incitement unless the act of adultery is really accomplished, which makes the article devoid of content in protecting the wife, and what can happen to her due to the different methods used by the husband. The husband may urge her to commit such an act, so the legislator should have criminalized the deed of incitement to commit adultery per se, regardless of whether or not the act of adultery took place, as in other provisions of the Penal Code itself⁽⁵³⁾.

▪ The Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959 as amended

- Overview

The Personal Status Law of 1959 covers the family affairs of Muslims. When the Personal Status Law was passed in 1959, the Shari'a courts

were replaced with a written law that abolished the treatment of Sunnis and Shiites on a different basis under the new law.

However, Article 41 of the Constitution of Iraq of 2005 states that Iraqi citizens are free in their personal affairs. The existence of Article 41 raises concerns that some women's rights will be subject to deprivation under this article.

Christians are now preparing their personal status law. Kurdistan Region of Iraq also amended the Personal Status Law of 1959 as it serves the Kurdish communities in the region⁽⁵⁴⁾.

- Marriage

The law considers women aged 18 and over to be of majority age. The male guardian condition is not required for adult women to get married. The consent of the man and woman must be obtained to make marriage legal. The legal age for marriage is 18 years for both men and women⁽⁵⁵⁾. The legal age may be reduced to 15 years with the consent of the guardian and after obtaining a court order⁽⁵⁶⁾.

There is no requirement for virginity screening tests before the marriage. However, it is proposed by the Council of Representatives. The virginity tests imposed by the court on women are considered to be court practices. A man can ask the court to apply his wife to virginity tests if he accuses her of not being a virgin on the next day after their wedding. The Institute of Forensic Medicine conducts these tests for the courts⁽⁵⁷⁾. Such tests are conducted only when the woman is accused of lacking virginity and in some cases, the wife is the one who files a complaint against the husband in cases of incorrect or false accusation made by him.

- Polygamy

The law permits polygamy, but a court order must be obtained. A judge may allow polygamy if the husband has the financial capacity to support more than one wife, and there is a "substantial excuse" that justifies marriage to another woman and that justice will be provided between wives⁽⁵⁸⁾.

The conditions of polygamy are more rigid in KRG Personal Status Law and its amendments, where the following conditions and requirements must be met for obtaining a marriage permit to another woman⁽⁵⁹⁾:

- The first wife's consent before the court that her husband marries a second wife

- The husband must prove his ability to financially support the second wife
- The husband must undertake to deal with all his wives with justice and equality in terms of intercourse and other marital relations, material and moral. If a wife is suffering from a chronic illness that prevents intercourse, or, in the case of a wife's infertility, evidence this must be obtained through a certified report issued by a specialized medical committee.
- The absence of a condition in the marriage contract of the first wife to prevent the husband from marrying another

- Divorce

Men have the right to divorce their wives unilaterally without specifying the reasons⁽⁶⁰⁾. Women may seek divorce if certain justifications are available (e.g. should the husband mistreats her and/or the children in such a way that makes marital life impossible)⁽⁶¹⁾. A woman can also obtain khula (a wife's request for divorce) but must give up her dowry and any financial support in the future⁽⁶²⁾.

In cases of divorce, women are entitled to the custody of children up to the age of 10, and during this period, the father must pay expenses for the child's maintenance. This custody can be extended to 15 years of age if considered in the child's best interests. At that point, the child can decide whether to live with the mother or the father⁽⁶³⁾. The father is the holder of the right to legal guardianship over his minor children.

According to the KRG Personal Status Law and its amendments, if a man marries another woman, his first wife has the right to request separation⁽⁶⁴⁾. Even under the Iraqi Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959, a woman may request separation if the husband marries a second wife without her knowledge because as it's considered a moral injury.

- Inheritance

The 1959 Personal Status Law granted men and women equal rights to inheritance, but subsequent amendments to the law reintroduced the provisions of Shari'a as a framework for regulating inheritance provisions⁽⁶⁵⁾. Women can inherit but their share is less than men in general. For example, a daughter inherits half of what the son usually inherits.

The 1959 Personal Status Law for the Kurdistan Region was amended to give greater equality to women's rights to inheritance.

Despite these provisions, accessibility to the official system of the courts is limited in reality. Furthermore, the ability of women and girls to defend their rights often depends on decisions taken by their families, tribal authorities or religious leaders, especially in relation to disputes of personal affairs, which are usually settled without applying to the civil courts⁽⁶⁶⁾. When GBV cases are reported, the authorities often try to mediate between a woman and her family to enable her to go back home as an alternative to the legal justice channels.

- **Labour Law No.37 of 2015**

- **Employment**

Women may not be assigned to perform specific hard or harmful tasks in accordance with the instructions of the Labour Law of 2015⁽⁶⁷⁾.

Women are prohibited from working at night, subject to exceptions including administrative, commercial, recreational, transport or communication services⁽⁶⁸⁾. In other respects, the Labour Law supports equal opportunities for women and prohibits discrimination in recruitment and employment⁽⁶⁹⁾.

- **Staying at Work**

The Labour Law of 2015 contains explicit legal guarantees for equal pay for equal work and guarantees the right to work, with equal opportunities for all citizens who are capable of working, without discrimination on the basis of gender (or any other reasons)⁽⁷⁰⁾.

The Labour Law applies to all domestic workers and servants⁽⁷¹⁾.

The Labour Law stipulates penalties for discrimination on the basis of gender, including vocational training, or working conditions and circumstances. The penalty for discrimination is imprisonment of up to six months and/or a fine of one million Iraqi dinars⁽⁷²⁾.

Women are entitled to pay maternity leave of 14 weeks, which should be paid by the employer⁽⁷³⁾.

Women have the right to return to their authorized job secured by contract after end of leave, or a similar position with the same pay⁽⁷⁴⁾.

- Sexual Harassment in the Labour Law

Law No. 37 of 2015, which is a positive and progressive step towards eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace as well as any other behaviour that leads to intimidation or hostility in the workplace, prohibition of sexual harassment and exploitation in the work context. Article 10 of this law stated in paragraph 1, that sexual harassment is prohibited in the employment, or in terms of the search for work, vocational training or employment. The same article in paragraph 3 defines sexual harassment as being "physical or verbal behaviour of any sexual nature or any other conduct based on sexual abuses that affects the dignity of women or men, and is undesirable, unreasonable and degrading to mutual party, and the rejection of the person and non-submission to the harassment, whether explicitly or implicitly, may lead to or result in a decision that may affect his/her job."

This definition of sexual harassment is very close to the international definition of sexual harassment.

The penalties for sexual harassment are imprisonment for up to six months and/or a fine of one million Iraqi dinars⁽⁷⁵⁾.

Such a light penalty does not match with the seriousness of the deed and its economic and psychological effects⁽⁷⁶⁾.

▪ Law No. 28 of 2012 Combating Trafficking in Persons

Iraq issued law number 28 of 2012 for combating trafficking in persons, banning most, but not all, forms of human trafficking. This law does not consider facilitating child prostitution to constitute trafficking and requires that a purchase/sell transaction must take place before it can be considered a human trafficking crime.

In addition, the Penal Code criminalizes child prostitution and punishes it by sentences that reach up to 10 years of imprisonment⁽⁷⁷⁾. The law against prostitution criminalizes sexual exploitation (the use of deception, coercion, force or threat to make male or female perform acts of prostitution) and this law applies to adults as well as children. In 2015, the High Judicial Council appointed two judges to work solely on processing human trafficking cases⁽⁷⁸⁾.

The law states that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs should build shelters⁽⁷⁹⁾. Government officials interpret this text as government the only authority to build and the shelter. The government runs a shelter for human trafficking survivors in Baghdad, which can accommodate both

males and females. The government also runs some shelters and facilities for foreign workers waiting to go home.

- **Combating Prostitution Law (No. 8 of 1988) Amendment**

Combating Prostitution Law was issued in 1988 as an amendment to the law on combating sex trade⁽⁸⁰⁾ the decrees by the former Revolutionary Council imposed harsher penalties against criminals convicted of organizing or involvement in sex trade, making it a capital offence punishable by execution⁽⁸¹⁾. Combating Prostitution Law states that anyone who is convicted of prostitution will be punished by detention in the correction facility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for rehabilitation⁽⁸²⁾.

- **Nationality Law (No. 26 of 2006) Amendment**

Women, according to the Nationality Law, cannot confer their nationality on their children the same way men can. The Iraqi Nationality Law prohibits women from conferring their Iraqi nationality to any of their children born outside the country. A child, born to an Iraqi woman, can apply for Iraqi nationality within one year of reaching puberty. In spite of unknown father or does not hold any nationality, under circumstances of the individual residing in Iraq during the time of submitting application.

- **Law of Political Parties (No. 36 of 2015)**

The law of political parties was issued in August 2015. Many women's organizations had reservations about it and presented a memorandum to the three Presidential powers of Iraq in September 2016 demanding it be amended since it did not mention a women's quota in forming, managing or leading political parties. They objected that it only contained a reference to "taking into consideration women's representation", pointing out this contradicted the Constitution and the elections law, both of which stressed a quota for women representatives. Other objections cited were that the new law would lead to the continuation of women running for office without any background or involvement in political work; and that it would restrict political empowerment of women. In violation of Iraq's international obligations⁽⁸³⁾, especially CEDAW, which states that special provisional measures should be taken according to Article 4 and the recommendation 25(1) of CEDAW committee, as well as the recommendation 35 b&c of the committee to the Iraqi government. The memorandum also noted how the law was in contradiction of the national

plan for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325, which had been approved by the Iraqi Council of Ministers, and which stressed the importance of increasing women's involvement in the peace-building process and enabling them to reach leading decision-making positions. A group of NGOs and public figures filed a lawsuit at the federal court in January 2016, which contained a number of objections against this law, cited a number of these issues including that of the women's quota.

▪ **The Law on Parliamentary Elections (No. 45 of 2013)**

In its Article 11, the law states that the number of seats in the Council of Representatives should be 328, of which, 320 seats are distributed among the governorates and eight seats are the quota to be given to minorities, like Christians, Yazidis, Shabak, etc. However, the law does not mention the women's quota in this particular article, meaning that all eight seats could be given to male representatives.

Article 13 of this law does mention the women's quota, stating:

- 1) Women candidates should be no less than 25% of the electoral list and women representatives in the parliament should be no less than 25%.
- 2) The electoral list should include the name of a female candidate for every three male candidates nominated.

Stating the name of a women quota nominee be listed fourth after being preceded by three males suggests that Iraqi lawmakers consider women to be inferior and secondary to men, and their involvement as candidates is token, an empty formality. The text of the law reflects poor formulation when attention should have been paid to the women's quota in a more respectful and considerate manner. It is noteworthy that this law remains in its original form on the statute books and has still not been amended despite being given a preliminary reading in parliament on 20 November 2017⁽⁸⁴⁾.

Article 15 of the law deals with the case of what happens to a potential empty seat that belonged to a female representative. It states that it is not obligatory for the seat to be given to a female, that it can be given to a male representative unless this affects the overall women's quota. Yet, contrarily, should the empty seat have been that of a male representative, it must be assigned only to a male representative.

(B) Policies

Iraq adopted the national strategy to combat violence against women 2013-2017 in 2013. Kurdistan Regional Government adopted a similar strategy for 2012-2016 in 2013⁽⁸⁵⁾. This national strategy focused on developing laws for family protection and criminalizing violence against women and encouraged the Ministry of Interior and federal police to be involved in efforts to fight violence against women.

▪ National Strategy for Security

Despite government's approval of Iraqi National Strategy for Security on 1st March 2016, which adopts their form of the security system in Iraq, and despite the government adoption of the UN Security Council's Resolutions 2170 and 2178 on combating terrorism, the strategy itself fails to refer to adopting specific mechanisms to improve the role of women in the security institution. Also, this strategy does not consult other officially approved National Strategies as references for implementation⁽⁸⁶⁾.

▪ The role of Women in the National Reconciliation Process

The formation of a new national committee for the national reconciliation was announced by presidential decree on 31 December 2015.

The committee consisted of six members, all men, in keeping with an agreement among the three presidential powers. This indicated the lack of political will to admit the role of women as creative powers in the peace- building process. This decree violated the two decisions of UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 2242, which asserted the importance of women's involvement in setting anti-terrorist and anti-extremist national strategies. Also, the relevant meetings and conferences of the committee did not involve women when presenting agendas and invited only a limited number of women⁽⁸⁷⁾.

▪ Women in the governmental programme for 2018-2022

The Iraqi Council of Representatives voted on the ministerial programme of Mr. Adil Abdul-Mahdi's new government in its session on 24 October 2018, and pointed out that the subject of gender discrimination was not among the programme objectives. However, the draft attachment of the details of the programme contains chapter entitled "Sustainable Development and Social Services"⁽⁸⁸⁾. This chapter includes (last priority number 27) "the empowerment of the Iraqi women and

increasing women's involvement in achieving the goals of sustainable development"⁽⁸⁹⁾. In discussing priority 27, the chapter listed a set of projects and programmes with specific implementation dates, along with the programme's current status and its targets.

The Women Empowerment Directorate was assigned to implement projects and programmes as follows:

- 1) Gender-responsive budget
- 2) Building effective national network of offices and structures for women issues
- 3) Fulfilling international obligations (CEDAW, UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Joint Communiqué and relevant decisions)
- 4) Building capacities and structures for women in the governorates
- 5) Providing a legislative environment that is sensitive towards women and providing legal protection for women
- 6) Executing the articles of the Joint Communiqué⁽⁹⁰⁾.

SWOT Analysis

In addition to the analysis above, a SWOT analysis was conducted to identify both external and internal factors contributing to and limiting prevention and response to violence against women and girls in Iraq.

A-Strengths

- 1) Clear political will to support and improve women's status and reduce GBV as well as gender discrimination
- 2) Existence of national plans and strategies that can be used to support women and girls
- 3) Leadership of the Women's Empowerment Directorate
- 4) A series of training programmes on GBV prevention and response conducted in recent years
- 5) Establishment of social protection directorate in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to support the rights of violence survivors
- 6) Strong civil society organizations working in the field of GBV prevention and response
- 7) Collaboration and coordination between government and civil society organizations to address violence against women and girls
- 8) Supportive international partners
- 9) Endorsement of Clinical Management of Rape Protocol

- 10) Establishment of Family Protection Unit under Ministry of Interior
- 11) Existence of Standard Operating Procedures to prevent and respond to GBV

B- Weaknesses

- 1) Dissolution of the State Ministry for Women Affairs
- 2) The absence of the women's quota frothed executive power and political party law
- 3) Weak implementation of national plans and strategies due to the shortfall of financial allocations and specialized human resources for women issues
- 4) Pending endorsement of Law on Protection from Domestic Violence
- 5) Inadequate governmental legal assistance for GBV survivors
- 6) Shortage of safe shelters for GBV survivors
- 7) Shortage of statistical data about women's issues, especially GBV
- 8) Lack of laws that criminalize GBV
- 9) Lack of legal framework to systematically address the issue of children of sexually abused women by ISIS
- 10) Multi-sectoral referral pathways among governmental organizations yet to become functional
- 11) Non-existence of mandatory reporting of sexual violence cases

C. Opportunities

- 1) Existence of Iraqi Constitution 2005 that supports women and their rights, accompanied by new legislation or amendments in existing laws to improve women's status, protect their rights and prevent GBV and discrimination.
- 2) Activation of equal opportunity units in the ministries and formation of other units in all institutions to help empower women to acquire their constitutional rights
- 3) Increasing social understanding and commitment towards fighting various of violence
- 4) Increasing national concern and awareness about the importance and necessity of ensuring human rights
- 5) Efforts to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (security and peace) on the ground
- 6) National movement towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 5 and Target 2 of Goal 5

- 7) Religious leaders who understand women's issues and the importance of addressing GBV
- 8) International framework, declarations and resolutions, empowering women economically, politically and socially and addressing gender discrimination
- 9) Improved financial status of Iraq due to the rise in petroleum prices in 2018

D. Challenges

- 1) Existence of violent extremism
- 2) Prevalence of traditional culture inimical towards women's' human rights, in terms of movement, employment, economic activities, education, etc.
- 3) Lower prioritization by decision-makers/policy-makers of women's empowerment and GBV issues
- 4) Vulnerability of security and socio-economic status and continuity of political conflicts that can fuel/sustain violence
- 5) Absence of the equal opportunity principle as a basis for sustainable development, which condones continuation of discriminative behaviour
- 6) Negative customs, traditions and culture that oppose the developmental roles of women
- 7) Continuity of gender gaps in education, marriage, work, property/ownership and other social and political involvement
- 8) Social stigma towards GBV survivors
- 9) Religious discourse, which, for example, sanctions men's use of violence to "correct" their wives' behaviour
- 10) The absence of comprehensive economic and social empowerment programmes, particularly in conflict-affected zones
- 11) Unprecedented increase of social issues such as drugs, begging, underage marriage, divorce, etc.

Chapter 4

Strategy Results Framework

Strategy Results Framework

Vision: That Iraqi women and girls may live in a safe and fair environment with a united family, free from any kind of gender-based violence, and are economically empowered and can exercise their human rights ensured by responsive and supportive legislation

Results Framework

Goal 1 Prevention: Prevention of all kinds of GBV

Objective 1: Empowerment of Iraqi Women and Girls

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
Economic empowerment of women by: * Increasing women's involvement in economic activities * Addressing wage gap for men and women * Increasing training opportunities for women * Providing loans for women to start-up businesses * Expanding job opportunities for women in private sector * Providing job opportunities for men as violence mitigation measures	* Percentage of economically-active women * Percentage of female wage against male wage * Number of training programmes for women (public/private/civil) * Total numbers/amounts of loans provided for women * Percentage of female labour force in public/private sector	* Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Planning * Ministry of Trade * Ministry of Industry * Ministry of Agriculture * Private Sector * CSOs * Government and Private banks * Vocational education institutions

<p>Social empowerment of women by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensuring all girls finish primary education * Reducing girls' dropout rates from schools * Increasing life-long educational opportunities for women * Increasing number of schools for girls * Increasing number of female teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Literacy rate for female and male * Female enrolment rate * Percentage of girls dropping out * Number of girl schools * Percentage of female teachers * Percentage of increase in life-long educational opportunities for women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ministry of Education * Ministry of Higher Education * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Private sector * CSOs
<p>Political empowerment of women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Reviewing/amending laws and regulations to enhance equality and inclusion and reduce discrimination and violence * Increasing participation of women in decision-making * Sensitizing the policy/decision makers on gender-responsive governance and budgeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of reviewed/amended laws * Number of institutions introducing gender-responsive governance and budgeting * Percentage of women in decision-making positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Council of Representatives * Council of Ministers * Ministry of Justice * Executive institutions * NGOs

<p>Women empowerment in conflict-affected areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Support implementation of the national action plan for UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and implementation plan of Joint Communique on prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence * Enhancing availability and access to legal support for conflict-affected women and girls * Increasing accessibility for economically-poor displaced women and girls to financial and vocational resources to sustain livelihoods * Ensuring girls in conflict-affected areas enroll in schools * Reducing forced/early marriages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Implementation status of the national action plan for UNSCR 1325 * Implementation status of the implementation plan of Joint Communique * Number of women and girls accessing legal support in the conflict-affected areas * Number of women and girls benefiting from programmes to sustain livelihoods * Girls enrolment rate in conflict-affected areas * Number of campaigns/ interventions to address forced/early marriages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Education * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Provincial and local Councils of liberated governorates * Ministry of Displacement and Migration * Ministry of Trade * Ministry of Industry * Ministry of Agriculture * Reconstruction fund * Religious endowments councils * CSOs * International organizations
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Objective 2: Fostering positive social norms

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Develop and implement strategy to change cultural and social norms to prevent GBV * Awareness, educational and training programmes to create community environment that rejects violence against women and girls * Invest in communication technology and media to renounce and reduce GBV * Integrate gender equality and GBV prevention in educational curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Implementation status of cultural and social norms strategy to prevent GBV * Number of educational and awareness campaigns/ programmes conducted against GBV * Number of trainings organized for media on GBV * Number of media campaigns organized on GBV issues * Number of male and female viewers/listeners for anti-violence media programmes * Availability of educational curriculum integrating gender equality and GBV prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Culture * Iraqi Media Network * Cultural institutions * CSOs * Ministry of Education * Ministry of Higher Education * Provincial and local councils * Religious Endowments Councils

Develop and implement a national framework for policies and programmes to engage men and boys to prevent and respond to GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of national framework to engage men and boys * Implementation status of national framework to engage men and boys * Number of male champions of GBV prevention and response * Number of men and boys reached by engagement programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Iraqi Media Network * Ministry of Culture * Ministry of Education * Ministry of Higher Education * CSOs * Religious Endowments Councils
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Objective 3: Strengthening evidence-base on GBV

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
Conduct scientific, inclusive and regularly-updated surveys/researches on GBV and its costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of surveys conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Higher Education * Ministry of Education * CSOs * International organizations * Universities * All executive institutions in the government

Develop academic network among universities and research institutions on GBV issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Existence of academic network * Number of collaborative initiatives by the network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Higher Education * Ministry of Education * CSOs * International organizations * Universities
Build the capacities of female researchers in the field of GBV prevention, mitigation and response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of female researchers working in GBV field * Number of programmes/ initiatives/ scholarships / fellowships for female researchers in GBV field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Higher Education * Ministry of Education * CSOs * International organizations * Universities

Establish national unified database on collecting reported GBV incidents	* Existence of national database on GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Interior * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Planning * CSOs * International organizations
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Goal 2 Protection: Creation of protective environment for women and girls

Objective 1: Legal review/reform

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
Accelerate the enactment of the Law to Protect Families from Domestic Violence	*Approval of Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Council of Representatives * High Judicial Council * Ministry of Interior * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Health * Women Empowerment Directorate * CSOs * International organizations
Review and revisit current laws in terms of cancellation or amendment to eliminate gender-based discrimination and GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of laws reviewed/revisited * Number of hearings held on laws at the Parliament * Number of laws amended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Council of Representatives * High Judicial Council * Ministry of Justice * Women Empowerment Directorate * CSOs * Union of Lawyers
Address the issue of mandatory reporting requirement to ensure survivor-centred approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of advocacy sessions organized on mandatory reporting * Existence of agreement on mandatory reporting requirement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Council of Representatives * High Judicial Council * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Justice * Ministry of Interior * Ministry of Health * CSOs * International organizations

Ensure proper legal framework and its implementation to address children born during the conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of action plan/ framework * Number of children supported to receive birth certificates and IDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Council of Representatives * Council of Ministers * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Interior * Religious Endowment Councils
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Objective 2: Strengthening Rule of Law and enforcement of Justice

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
Increase availability and accessibility to the court for women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of specialized courts for GBV issues * Number of lawsuits on GBV registered at the court * Percentage of successful lawsuits on GBV * Number of people receiving information about justice/legal sector in relation to GBV cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * High Judicial Council * Courts * Council of Representatives * Union of lawyers * local councils * Ministry of Justice * Women Empowerment Directorate * CSOs
Ensure survivor-centered legal process for GBV cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of guidance note/tools for survivor-centered legal process * Number of judges, prosecutors, lawyers and other relevant actors trained in survivor-centered legal process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * High Judicial Council * Courts * Union of lawyers * local councils * Ministry of Justice * Women Empowerment Directorate * CSOs

Develop institutional policies, and codes of conduct to promote zero tolerance for violence against women and girls, and guide the work of police and other uniformed personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of policies and codes of conduct for police and other uniformed personnel * Availability of training modules on GBV (incident response, protection of survivors and witnesses, investigation and referrals) for police and other uniformed personnel * Number of police and other uniformed personnel trained on GBV * Number of GBV cases reported to police * Number of GBV cases successfully investigated by the police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ministry of Interior * High Judicial Council * Ministry of Justice * Women Empowerment Directorate * local councils * CSOs * Ministry of Defence * Security actors
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Ensure documentation and reparation for human rights violation and crimes committed during the conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Availability of mechanism for report, investigation, documentation and reparation * Number of people benefitting from the mechanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Council of Ministers * Ministry of Interior * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Foreign Affairs * CSOs * International organizations
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Objective3: Establishing coordination and governance structure

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
Allocate adequate national budgets and other financial/human resources to prevent and respond to GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Proportion of the national budgets allocated to GBV prevention and response programmes * Number and proportion of staff dedicated full-time to work on GBV prevention and response programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Council of Representatives * Council of Ministers * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Finance * Ministry of Planning * CSOs
Ensure full implementation and monitoring of GBV Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of institutions/ agencies implementing GBV SOPs * Number of policy-makers and service providers trained on GBV SOPs * Number of reviews/ updates made for GBV SOPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Interior * CSOs * International organizations

Empower national and sub-national level coordination bodies for prevention and response to GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of clear TOR for coordination body * Availability of sufficient human and financial resources for the coordination body * Frequency of meetings held by coordination bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Council of Representatives * Council of Ministers * Ministry of Finance * local councils * CSOs * International organizations
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Goal 3 Response Services: Strengthening care for and reintegration of GBV survivors

Objective 1: providing multi-sectoral support for violence survivors

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
Enhance availability and accessibility of psycho-social support for violence survivors through institutionalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of service provision points providing psycho-social support for violence survivors * Number of service providers trained/coached on psycho-social support services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Education * Ministry of Higher Education * CSOs

Expand the capacities of shelters for GBV survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of shelters for GBV survivors in operation * Number of GBV survivors receiving services from shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Interior * Council of Representatives * High Judicial Council * CSOs
<p>Strengthen health services for GBV survivors by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ensuring full-implementation of Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) protocol * Integrating GBV services into health system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of health facilities providing CMR services * Number of people received CMR services within 72 hours * Availability of strategy/ guidance note on GBV service integration in health system * Number of health facilities with integrated GBV services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Interior * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Women Empowerment Directorate * CSOs

<p>Expand availability and accessibility to legal services by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Providing accessible legal service points (including mobile services) * Facilitating fast-track procedures for handling GBV cases * Conducting awareness programmes on legal rights and procedures for the communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of legal service points * Number of GBV cases handled by the courts and the average number of days required for the entire process * Number of people receiving awareness sessions on legal rights and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ministry of Justice * High Judicial Council * Women Empowerment Directorate * Union of lawyers * CSOs
<p>Ensure timely and smooth inter-governmental as well as government-CSO referral mechanism based on GBV SOPs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of multi-sectoral referral guidance note 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Interior * Ministry of Justice * High Judicial Council * Council of Representatives * CSOs * International organizations

<p>Ensure institutionalized capacity-building of service providers for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Social workers * Counsellors/ Clinical psychologists * Psychiatrist * Lawyers * Police officers * Prosecutors * Judges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of comprehensive social work degrees offered at the universities * Availability of clinical psychology/ counselling degree at the universities * Number of institutionalized training programme available for legal, justice and security sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Interior * Ministry of Justice * High Judicial Council * Universities * Ministry of Higher Education * CSOs * International organizations
<p>Operationalize hotlines for women and girls to access required services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of functional hotlines based on survivor-centered approach * Number of calls received by hotlines * Number of referrals made by hotlines to specialized services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Interior * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Health * Ministry of Communications * CSOs

Objective2: developing therapy and rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators of violence against women

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Institutionalizing therapy and rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators * Developing peer support groups for perpetrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Availability of guidance note on therapy and rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators * Number perpetrators reached by therapy and rehabilitation programs * Number of functional peer support groups for perpetrators * Number of perpetrators who joined peer support groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ministry of Interior *Religious endowment councils *Ministry of Health *Ministry of Justice * Courts * CSOs

Objective 3: Providing long-term re-integration and empowerment support

Implementation mechanisms	Indicators	Responsible agency
Expanding re-integration and empowerment support for GBV survivors through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vocational training programmes - Loan provision - Job-matching - Education another livelihood-support programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of GBV survivors who completed vocational training * Number of GBV survivors who received loan for business start-up * Number of GBV survivors who were employed through job-matching support * Number of GBV survivors who completed education programmes * Number of GBV survivors who received livelihood support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women Empowerment Directorate * Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs * Ministry of Education * Ministry of Higher Education * Ministry of Finance * Ministry of Trade * Ministry of Industry * Ministry of Agriculture * CSOs * International organizations

All the above-mentioned interventions will be designed and implemented taking into consideration different needs and circumstances according to geographical locations, rural-urban settings, religious/ethnic affiliations, different physical and mental status, age groups, etc.

Follow-up and Monitoring Mechanism

A coordination body comprising different stakeholders will be assigned to follow-up and monitor implementation of this Strategy. Sectoral plans, to be developed based on this Strategy, will guide the implementation process, detailing what specific actions need to be taken by whom. The coordination body will convene meetings on a regular basis (minimally, bi-annually) to ensure implementation of the Strategy as well as sectoral plans. Monitoring reports will be prepared by the coordination body every five years.

Chapter 5

Appendix: Conceptual Connotations of Violence

Appendix: Conceptual Connotations of Violence

1: Violence in Lexicology and Other Disciplines

The word al-Unf (meaning violence) in the Arabic language refers to the breach by the command and the lack of compassion for it. Therefore, it refers to somebody is violent if s/he is not compassionate in her/his command. On the other hand, the word ta'neef (meaning taunting) is used for maltreatment, blame and violence with the use of force or physical energy by the person who commits it⁽⁹¹⁾. And i'tunafa means being overtaken by force, whereas i'tanafa means detesting something⁽⁹²⁾. The word anaftahu or aanaftahu means something combined between the rule and reprimand⁽⁹³⁾.

In philosophy, violence is the antonym of "kindness", and it is synonymous with cruelty, hardness, and roughness. Every act that is violent is against the nature of the thing, and is imposed on it from outside, and in the sense that it is imposed is a violent action⁽⁹⁴⁾. In another definition in philosophy, violence is defined as "an action whose doer resorts to violate the personality of the other by breaking into the depths of its existential being, forcing it in its deeds and destiny, violating its rights and dispossessing its rights and possessions or both of them"⁽⁹⁵⁾. It is also known as "the treatment of things with severity and intensity"⁽⁹⁶⁾.

There is no notable difference in defining the meaning of violence in Arabic language dictionaries. The word "violence" designates any behavior which contains connotations of hardness, harshness, and/or reprimand. Hence, violence can be both physical and verbal.

2: Violence in some other languages

That the Latin origin of the English word "violence" is Violentia, which means spontaneous and unobserved manifestation as a response to the use of intentional force, i.e., the use of force in its direct and immediate form. The American scientists (Graham and Wager) defined violence as a method that tends to inflict physical harm on persons or inflict loss on their money⁽⁹⁷⁾.

In the Oxford Dictionary, violence is defined as the exercise of physical force to inflict harm on persons or property, or as an act that causes physical harm⁽⁹⁸⁾. Also, in the same dictionary, it is defined as the unlawful use of

physical force to inflict harm on persons and damage to property, punishment, rape and interference with the freedoms of others. Violence⁽⁹⁹⁾, in la Land's dictionary of philosophy, is described as the illegal use of force.

3: Violence in United Nation Documents

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1993, and endorsed by all States that are Members of the United Nations, has the following definition of violence against women: "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life".

This Declaration also states that the concept of violence against women should include, but not be limited to: "physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation".

4: Concepts of Violence in Various Disciplines

The connotations and implications of the concepts of violence vary with different disciplines,

- The economic concept of violence:

Economic violence is an attempt to make the person a follower, be dependent on another person by controlling his/her access to resources and economic activities. Economic violence often takes the form of domestic violence where the intimate partner or spouse controls the partner's ability to access economic resources, resulting in the other person's inability to financially support him/her, and therefore be economically dependent on a provider. Often, women's work will be limited to doing domestic chores for free. It also includes financial deprivation in the present and future by means of preventing a person from attaining education and work. This is explained by the lower rates of female enrolment in the various educational stages, and the lower rates of economic participation of females. This is also one of the reasons that leads to lower level of

economic empowerment for women and girls in most countries, especially in the Arab countries. This contributes to the high costs of economic violence, both material and non-physical, constituting an obvious violation of human rights, and doubling the negative impacts on women's rights, economic growth, productivity, unemployment rates and levels of poverty and illiteracy.

The most important manifestations of economic violence are the followings:

- Denying women access to and/or use of economic resources
- Preventing women and girls from studying or completing their studies, thus depriving them from participation in economic life
- Non-participation in financial decisions that affect them or affect their future, and the denial of making use of their property/assets
- Deprivation of spending on basic needs for women and girls
- Deprivation of inheritance or property
- Exposure to economic exploitation (unpaid and care work), probably for rural women

- The social concept of violence:

From a social perspective, violence is defined as: "an aggressive behaviour or act by a party that may be an individual, group, social class or a State, aiming to exploit and subordinate another party in an unequal economic and political power relationship, causing physical, moral or psychological harm to an individual, a group, a social class or other State".

Sanda Paul Rocking defines it as the illegal use of power, or threatening the use of power to harm or inflict damages on others. It is a form of behaviour and a product of a relational predicament that causes the destruction of that person at the same time with the other to terminate him/her. Aggression constitutes a particular way of entering into a relationship with the other⁽¹⁰⁰⁾.

Sociologists H. Graham and T. Gore define violence as a conduct that tends to cause physical harm to persons or to the loss of their money, regardless of whether the conduct is of a collective or individual nature⁽¹⁰¹⁾.

If this concept is to be applied to family, then domestic violence will be:

“an aggressive behavioural pattern that results from unequal relationships within the system of division of labour between women and men within the family, and the consequent determination of the roles and positions of each member of the family, as dictated by the prevailing social, economic, and social system”. It is also a behaviour or act directed against women in particular, whether they are mothers, sisters or daughters, characterized by varying degrees of discrimination, suppression, oppression and aggression resulting from unequal power relations between men and women in society and the family alike, as a result of the control by a patriarchal system, with its economic, social and cultural mechanisms.

This type of violence against women can be practiced by individuals, groups or institutions in a systematic or disorderly manner, and it is a global phenomenon. The threat of committing such an act, coercion or the arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether at the family level or at the community level, is an act of violence against women as well.

- The Psychological Concept of Violence:

It is a form of violence and abuse that is ascribed to a person who subjugates others by means of a behaviour that may cause psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression or post-traumatic stress disorder. It is also known as emotional violence/abuse or mental violence. Some scholars define it as “committing acts that are psychologically harmful to others and such acts can be at the hands of an individual or a group possessing power and control, which affects their behavioural, emotional, mental and physical functions. Examples of psychological violence include humiliation, intimidation, exploitation, isolation, indifference, as well as imposing opinions and views on others by force”.

This type of violence can be more serious than physical violence because of its invisibility and long-term impact. Among its most prominent consequences are loss of self-confidence, loss of self-respect, feelings of guilt, a sense of dependency and reliance on others, feeling of frustration and depression, a sense of helplessness, humiliation and degradation, and, the absence of feelings of peace and tranquillity.

- The Legal Concept of Violence:

The criminal codes/laws in all countries around world criminalize violence, and it is considered as either an illegal behaviour which leads to punishment committed and considered by the law, or as an aggravating factor of penalty if it was used as a means of committing certain crimes.

In the Iraqi context, Penal Code No. 111 of 1969 does not define violence per se, but it states in Articles 410 that it is "the crime of beatings leading to death" and Article 412 in assault crimes against the human right to the safety of his body. Iraqi legislation also considers violence as an aggravating factor if it is used to commit other crimes, such as robbery and kidnapping. However, jurists tend to define it as "any verbal or actual behaviour that involves the use of force or the threat to use it in order to harm people or property to achieve certain purposes." This definition is most closely related to the definition of the French Court of Appeal which defines it as "acts which, if not physically injuring the person, are psychologically damaging to him/her due to pain and terror".

Chapter 6

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**This strategy was developed with support from the United Nations
Population Fund for Iraq and funding from Canada and Sweden**