THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS IN IRAQ

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Introduction

All around the world, the United Nations is encouraging communities to gather together and talk about what matters most for a brighter future—for themselves, their families and their communities. The Republic of Iraq is among the countries in which citizens are taking part in defining a global vision for a better future. With only two years remaining before the deadline of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations is supporting Iraq to help identify which issues the international community should prioritize beyond 2015. To this end, the UN in Iraq organised a series of consultations across the country to contribute to this global conversation.

What does a better future look like?

As people across the globe respond to this question, the common themes that emerge are a testament to our shared humanity. Opportunity, self-sufficiency, and fairness are widely-shared values. How a better future is realised on a practical level, however, requires an awareness of the local context. It is the local context from Iraqi citizens that has been so important, and will continue to be valued throughout this process.

Recognising that "much work remains to be done," the UN Development Programme, on behalf of the UN family in Iraq, implemented a series of consultations with Iraqis to listen to viewpoints from various community groups concerning major themes of interest for what should be prioritised beyond 2015. Civil society actors, persons living with disabilities, academia, media representatives, women, youth and others not traditionally consulted in the development process were invited to workshops in March and April 2013 in Basrah, Baghdad and Erbil to discuss what a future development framework should look like.

Participants at the consultations were self-organised into four working groups. Participants engaged in extensive discussions and shared different opinions, ideas, and challenges in relation to their personal experiences. The groups were encouraged to approach this assignment as a mapping exercise, reporting on the actual and current situation and refraining from identifying specific remedies at this time.

Iraq has made important strides towards reducing hunger, achieving universal education, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. However, despite these achievements much work remains to be done. In particular, promoting gender equality, empowering women and reducing child mortality are crucial areas where figures remain well below the current Millennium Development Goal targets for 2015.

Jacqueline Badcock
Deputy Special Representative of the UN
Secretary-General
and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in
Iraq
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Process

UNDP, in partnership with the federal Ministry of Planning and Kurdistan Region Ministry of Planning, conducted three participatory workshops in March and April 2013. On 1 March 2013, 50 citizens from the Southern region (Basrah, Maysan, Thi-Qar, Muthanna), represented civil society, academia, private sector, and the public sector, and facilitated by a representative from the public sector. Of 50 participants, 36 were men, 14 were women. 7 were youth, 8 were academics, and 2 were living with disabilities.

On, 27 March 2013, 58 citizens from the Central region (Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Diyala, Kerbala, Najaf, Qadissiya, Salahhaddin and Wassit), represented civil society, academia, private sector, and the public sector. Of the 58 participants, 37 were men and 21 were women. Six were youth, four were academics, and one was living with a disability.

On 30 April 2013, 64 citizens from the Northern region (Duhok, Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk and Ninewah), representing civil society, academia, private sector, and the public sector gathered for a one-day consultation in Erbil. The process was nearly identical to the other two consultations, only this session was facilitated by a UN representative

and translation was available not only in Arabic and English, but also in Kurdish. Of the 64 participants, 36 were men and 28 were women. Four were youth, three were academics, and five were living with disabilities.

During these consultations, an appointed facilitator used the guiding questions provided by the UN Development Group (Appendix 2) on conducting the facilitations. Note-takers collected the opinions. Participants were invited to allocate themselves to one of four groups:

1. Poverty Reduction, Inclusive Growth and Job Creation
2. Voice, Participation, Citizen Engagement and Political Inclusion;
3. Access to and impact of basic services: health and education; and
4. Management of natural resources, access to environmental services, and dealing with climate change.

Arabic/English interpretation was provided for the plenary session, while the working groups were conducted in Arabic. Kurdish/Arabic/English interpretation was provided for the sessions held in Erbil.

Within the working groups, individuals were encouraged to identify concerns and share personal experiences. Following the thematic working groups, the views were then presented in plenary sessions at the end of the day to all participants in attendance. Participants from one working group were then able to see the findings of the other working groups. Additional points were added to the notes, but none were removed (Appendix 1).

An emphasis was placed on representing varying views, rather than attempting to arrive at a consensus. Thus some views expressed may appear contradictory.

Following the three consultations, 115 citizens from 14 governorates across the country met in Baghdad for a National Validation Conference. This conference was designed to provide an opportunity for Iraqis to see the collective findings of their fellow citizens across Iraq. A summary of the previous regional consultations' findings was

prepared and distributed to participants. This was complemented by a presentation to facilitate absorption of the material. The findings of each working group across the three regions were presented, disaggregated by theme and geography.

The Validation Conference was divided into four sequential sessions of 50 minutes each. A UNDP national staff member presented the findings of the respective working group for ten minutes, followed by 40 minutes of discussion for participants to add points not reflected in the presentation or summary booklet.

Feedback Summary

The summary below combines the highlights of the opinions, ideas, and reflections that participants generously shared throughout the three regional consultations as well as the Validation Workshop. The detailed notes generated by each thematic working group are included at the end of this report.

What Matters Most

The strongest message that emerged from these groups **is the need for increased accountability and transparency.** These needs affect all parts of Iraqi society. As one academic phrased it, "What we need after 2015 is good governance and human security." Without country-wide awareness or predictable enforcement of laws and regulations, citizens are without a minimum level of expectation by which to hold systems and leaders accountable. **In the absence of a broadly-shared understanding of minimal standards, trust in institutions continues to erode, further discouraging investment and meaningful social and political participation.**

"What we need after 2015 is good governance and human security."

Iraq's education sector serves as a microcosm for this overarching challenge. While minimum standards for education exist, their enforcement remains ineffective. Parents who have children attending inadequate schools

do not have a mechanism by which to complain about the situation and take steps to demand improvement. As negative factors compound, such as outdated teaching methods, inadequate and unsafe infrastructure, lack of capacity to serve special needs, or lack of servers to provide nutritious meals to children in need, the family becomes increasingly disempowered. This negative cycle deteriorates into hopelessness and compounding vulnerability, offering little incentive to prioritise education over dropping out and pursuing avenues that provide some short-term relief on financial pressures for families, such as begging or early marriage. These paths further perpetuate the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and disengagement.

Developing laws, standards, and codes for all systems, including medicine, education, and environmental protection, that are accepted and trusted by Iraqis, will give citizens a starting point for expectations in terms of quality and practice. Requiring **transparency** from organisations means citizens have access to the information necessary to

assess how or if institutions are meeting standards and engaging in appropriate practices. Finally, the thematic working groups expressed an overlapping interest in nurturing effective partnerships between the government and the UN and/or international NGOs.

Thematic Working Group 1: Poverty Reduction, Inclusive Growth and Job Creation

Group discussions focused heavily on **unemployment**, specifically noting current deficiencies in the private, public, and agricultural sectors as adversely affecting job creation.

Education and training is inadequate for meeting the needs of the job market. Without proper studies to assess the needs of the labour market needs and without the ability to predict emerging specialisations, there continues to be a mismatch between an individual's education and skills, and the job opportunities available to them. Participants suggested unemployment could be reduced if the government were proactive in supporting courses and trainings that were developed and promoted based on research about the actual needs of the current economy.

Finding employment is especially difficult for women and persons with disabilities who are often excluded from job opportunities. Without entry-level job opportunities in the public sector, the unemployed are denied the opportunity to gain experience. The **agricultural sector is under-developed** and needs national and local initiatives to create job opportunities. For individuals interested in starting or expanding their existing business, the process for securing **loans**

and micro-financing should be clear and simple, with special efforts made to provide these opportunities to women and the unemployed.

Several factors are discouraging growth in the private sector. There is a **deficit of laws to effectively support economic development.** Public sector hiring has traditionally been used by the Iraqi state to reduce unemployment rates. To spur healthy growth of the private sector, the relevant laws and regulations must be updated and regularly revised to ensure their relevance. Participants suggested the private sector would likely be able to attract higher interest from job seekers if it provided social protection to its employees as the public sector does.

In the area of policies and regulations, **there is a need for stronger labour laws, proper contracts, terms of reference, and social protection.** There is an absence of sufficient financial audits and transparency. Unemployment benefit policies need to be updated, and social protection should extend to people travelling

to and residing in different governorates. The Social Security Law does not cover the informal sector. There were also some calls for equalisation between international and national employees, though private sector representatives explained this would harm their competitiveness.

"Polygamy will deny girls their right to education."

Addressing access to resources, the groups noted that **investments in rural communities should be prioritized rather than perpetuating the trend of focusing on urban areas**. There is also a need for quality provisions of **basic food security** to ensure people under the poverty line are receiving fair rations through need-based criteria. In line with this, those who can afford food should no longer be included in the country's national ration card hand out, the public distribution system. There is an interest in identifying and adopting best practices for poverty reduction, as well as interest in international expertise from other countries that have overcome similar challenges.

More than the need to change and update laws, there is a **need to change culture and tradition**. Many years of food rations have created a sense of entitlement in which citizens expect free food regardless of their ability to afford food. Work within the public sector has developed a tradition of laziness, with few incentives to upgrade skills. Iraq's educational systems should prioritise efforts to transform these expectations within youth culture, since some cultural and traditional values are potential barriers to opportunities for Iraqi citizens. As an example, a representative of a civil society organization in Kerbala declared, "Polygamy will deny girls their right to education."

Thematic Working Group 2: Voice, Participation, Citizen Engagement and Political Inclusion

The group expressed overall enthusiasm about engaging citizens in planning, implementation, and oversight processes. In order to facilitate citizen engagement, there is a need to develop **a legal framework** aligned with international principles and a need to improve transparency and access to information. For example, there is little awareness regarding standards or expectations for publishing annual reports, evaluations, and inspections. **Citizens are losing faith in civil society organisations and the government.** Participation will need to be expanded in order to increase **diversity**, especially to include women, youth, persons with disabilities, vulnerable populations, and labour unions.

Several issues could be addressed to foster **diverse participation**: conduct a **population census**, improve the **security** situation, **increase literacy rates**, and build skills in **information technology** for communication.

While some participants pointed to a lack of cultural awareness, customs, and traditions, others maintained that it is the culture and traditions themselves that are contributing to current challenges of poverty, gender inequity and inadequate education. **Political participation itself must become a primary value within the culture.**

Participants want to see a balancing of the **disparity in development** among different governorates, between rural areas and urban cities, and between women and men. Policies should expand and activate participation of citizens and decentralise decision-making by sharing joint-cooperation documents among parties; setting development plans via joint committees and bodies; allowing freedom of trade union work and expression; and providing many channels of communication in order to diversify active voices.

Thematic Working Group 3.1: Access to and Impact of Basic Services: Health

General concerns focused on the need to establish a level of quality and structure within the health system to effectively serve community needs. **The healthcare system must improve its quality assurance and control**, with a clear **code of practices** for healthcare professionals. There is a need for a health insurance system and **rural areas in particular need access** to proper health services. Participants suggested leveraging treatment and prevention programmes to lower cancer statistics, as well as enforcing and enhancing pharmaceutical quality control in the private sector.

The health system needs to be affordable, accessible, and efficient. One strategy for effective change could be supporting pilot projects developed by the UN or NGOs in the health sector. Specific issues were raised regarding how vulnerable groups are affected by the current challenges and deficits. **Persons with disabilities have inadequate access to services and there are too few centres that assist them.** Proper care and/or treatment are particularly difficult when disabilities are misdiagnosed or undiagnosed due to poor understanding or skills in addressing disabilities.

Children face **malnutrition**, which could be decreased if free nutritious meals were provided at school for children from low-income families. There is a need for **reproductive health education**, particularly for women. Controls preventing **female circumcisions** should be enhanced**.**

More needs to be done to meet the specific health needs of **internally displaced persons and refugees**. There is a need for centres for the **elderly**. Drug abuse is a growing problem and there is a need for treatment centres, as well as awareness campaigns to prevent drug abuse.

Thematic Working Group 3.2: Access to and Impact of Basic Services: Education

Infrastructure

Schools lack the **infrastructure and capacity** to provide an effective learning environment for students. Six thousand schools were told to be in need of structural improvements. It is common for several school shifts to operate in one building on the same day in an attempt to accommodate a large population within inadequate structures. **Over 80 per cent of schools are in need of basic services** such as water and sanitation, resulting in health challenges, including a high rate of urinary infections in girls who do not have access to lavatories all day. Many schools also need electricity, ceiling fans, water fountains, and cooling equipment.

Quality of Education

Participants highlighted the need to introduce quality assurance and control into the educational system, and activate NGOs' participation and involvement in the planning and development processes. Both material resources and human resources are scarce. Participants want to develop learning environments that stimulate innovation, including resources such as specialized staff, laboratories, and tools for children with special needs.
Participants in Erbil noted the need for instructors in Arabic and professional special education teachers.

For **educational opportunities beyond the traditional school setting**, there is a need for literacy programmes, vocational educational programmes, summer schools, creative activities, and continuing education opportunities.

Marginalised Groups

Discussions also identified **issues of inequity** in the current educational system. Schools lack free meal programmes to ensure children **from families below** the poverty line are getting proper nutrition.

Girls who marry young subsequently drop out of school, and other **children drop out** and spend their days as street beggars. These realities make it important to apply the Law on Compulsory Education to reduce drop-out rates, and to integrate gender as a core component within the educational sector to affirm commitments to gender equity.

Children in **rural areas** have limited access to education, as the schools are academically inadequate, with many areas only teaching up to grade six. **Students with disabilities** need a specialised education system to ensure they have fair and equal access to education. One participant who is blind emphasised that many people with disabilities have the interest and motivation to pursue higher education, but that universities in Iraq do not provide the special support necessary, such as escorts/helpers so that the students can attend classes, study, and conduct research. Furthermore, there is a need to address the **lack of integration of internally displaced persons and refugees** in the educational system and a need to decrease the mental and physical burdens that many students are experiencing.

Thematic Working Group 4: Management of Natural Resources, Access to Environmental Services, and Dealing with Climate Change

This thematic working group identified several issues related to legal regulations and societal attitudes. A crucial component to the next phase in Iraq is raising awareness about environmental issues at all levels: citizens, media, government, and corporations. People generally lack awareness and are not educated regarding environmental issues. The use of media will be important for

educating and developing awareness campaigns. Recognizing that environmental issues have an impact on health, the Ministry of Health should be involved in finding solutions for environmental crises. Criteria when reviewing potential projects should include not only economic considerations, but also environmental considerations. The efforts of NGOs working on environmental issues should be supported further by the government.

Legislation should be strengthened regarding natural resource management and protection. Corporations that contribute to pollution and environmental destruction currently have little sense of social responsibility, so **laws are necessary to properly regulate their impact.** There is a need to address **pollution and waste from oil refinement**, and to mitigate environmental impact of oil exploration.

Water is an urgent concern to the participants of this group, expressing the need for effective water harvesting practices. Many communities are in need of potable water as well as needing their sewage systems upgraded.

Participants want sustainable management of natural resources. The Erbil consultation generated the suggestion of conducting a Kurdistan Region-wide survey on available natural resources. **Cities need planning and zoning regulations** in addition to more green areas, inside and outside cities to decrease the risk of desertification. Areas contaminated with **radioactive pollution, land mines, cluster bombs, and other remnants of war must be cleaned up, and effective waste management and recycling systems must be implemented.** There was also a suggestion to set up a mechanism for forecasting **climate change** in order to reduce hazards of natural disasters and poverty.

Emerging Cross-Border/ (Sub)Regional Issues

Two components carry significant cross-border and regional implications for Iraq's development prospects and priorities: political realities and environmental degradation.

Iraq lives within a highly volatile region, surrounded by competing interests on all sides. Iraqis contributing to the consultations recognised the role of regional influence in their own country's development trajectory, and proposed the utilisation of existing regional forums, such as the Arab League, as well as the establishment of new mechanisms.

Environmental challenges in Iraq are also cross-border in nature. Sandstorms, drought, and reduced water flows are all challenges Iraq faces that it cannot tackle alone. The interconnected nature of these challenges highlights the need for concerted, regional cooperation on common environmental problems.

The Arab Development Forum, held in Amman on 10-11 April, demonstrated the linkages between emerging themes from Iraqi consultations and broader regional concerns. Four of the five stated values that emerged from the ADF can also be found predominantly throughout the feedback from participants at the workshops in Iraq.

Issues of sustainability emerged when discussing environmental issues. The groups reflected a deficit in **access to information, quality control and consistent processes** within various sectors that

would improve **accountability and participation**. Furthermore, the working groups noted the need for **equity** when it comes to **sufficient healthcare, education, and employment for marginalized groups, especially women, people with disabilities, and the unemployed**.

Priorities in Practice: Zuhria's Story

Although stories of hardship are not hard to find, each family has a unique story. What the stories typically share is the reality that there is not one challenge or barrier to a healthy, safe, and prosperous future, but a combination of interconnected challenges. Zuhria's story[1] vividly illustrates how one issue—in this case, a disabling injury caused by a land mine—has a cascading impact on an entire family.

Zuhria Ahmed Yonis was only 15 years old when she lost one of her legs.

"It was spring time. I went with my mother and friends to harvest, when suddenly a mine exploded under my feet," Zuhria recalls.

[1] Adapted from the article "Bringing Back the Smile - Zuhria's story" by Ibrahim Baba-Ali, 4 April 2012, http://www.iq.undp.org

Now Zuhria is the mother of five children, two of whom do not attend school so that they can care for their elderly father at home. Zuhria is the sole provider for the family.

The Diana Prosthetic Limbs Centre (DPLC) in Erbil's Soran district was able to help Zuhria with prostheses and enrolled her in a six-month vocational training programme in tailoring, funded by the Government of Japan through UNDP Iraq.

"My husband could not work and we had hardly any source of income," Zuhria explained. "I needed a profession, and becoming a tailor was a great opportunity to have a better life for my children and me."

Zuhria further demonstrated her determination by enduring a daily two-hour commute to the centre where the course was taught. After completing her training in March 2010, DPLC helped Zuhria establish a tailoring shop at home. Through this small business Zuhria is now able to support her family.

Zuhria believes the training had a considerable impact on her life: "Through this support, my life has changed and our worst problems are now solved. We are smiling again."

Like most citizens in Iraq, the challenges that Zuhria and her family are facing are multi-faceted and interconnected. To address their needs, it is more than a matter of addressing one issue. Her family's experience reflects many of the problems identified in this report. Her story also echoes the sentiments expressed in the participatory workshops about what changes can be made to improve lives, and illustrates how the challenges identified in each of the working groups are interwoven, with an improvement or setback in one single area having a ripple effect on the others.

Poverty Reduction, Inclusive Growth and Job Creation

Zuhria received relevant training that would meet a real need within the economy, resulting in her ability to support her family with a reliable income.

Voice, Participation, Citizen Engagement and Political Inclusion

As a woman and as a person with a disability, Zuhria represents two populations from which the working groups say should be fairly supported by development efforts.

Access to and impact of basic services: health and education

The working groups called for basic care for elderly people. In Zuhria's family there is an immediate need for such support, as two of their children must sacrifice their education to serve as caretakers for their father. The children's lack of education has a long-term impact on their future employability, putting them at risk of returning to the cycle of poverty.

Management of natural resources, access to environmental services, and dealing with climate change

The workshop participants in this working group stressed the need to clear landmines, which have life-altering and deadly effects. This urgent environmental issue also increases the population of persons with disabilities, thus increasing the need for services and opportunities for this marginalised group.

Conclusion

While Iraq and its citizens focus on the country's development, the strong overarching themes that emerged from this process are highly applicable on a global level.

In order for citizen participation to increase, citizens need tools for gathering information and working within a framework of laws and rights. A recurring issue in the consultations was a lack of understanding of minimal standards or codes: Iraqis are seeking a basic level of understanding of standards—if they exist—by which to hold their institutions accountable. If the global development agenda includes minimal standards in various sectors that are accessible and transparent, citizens can leverage those nationally-adopted standards to reward and encourage the organisations and entities which honour those standards.

Appendix 1: Notes from the Thematic Working Groups

Below are the notes generated by the participants during the workshops. The content has been reproduced here as reference documents providing raw data. The writing style and organization of the notes vary greatly from group to group. Minor edits have been made here for clarity and formatting purposes only.

THEMATIC WORKING GROUP 1
REDUCTION OF POVERTY, PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT, AND JOB CREATION

Notes from the Basrah Workshop

This group focused specifically on "enabling the private sector."

1. Revision of regulations and instructions of governmental contracts.
2. Reclassification of contractors by companies.
3. Protection of local private sector products.
4. Revision of laws to encourage the private sector.
5. Encouraging investment in private sector and preferring principle of monitoring window.
6. Encouraging integral industrial complexes.
7. Encouraging investment through partnership agreements with international companies (PPP) by a minimum 50%.
8. Setting up of development fund for agricultural and industrial sectors.
9. Coordination between education outputs and labour market.
10. Encouraging social contribution to and reducing taxes on private sector.
11. Amending the Social Security Law, covering unofficial sector.
12. Engagement of all in discussions and developing policies, plans, and programs.
13. Benefiting from experiences of other states in development.
14. Developing policies achieving leadership of private sector.
15. Engagement of civil society organizations in enhancement of training capacity and contribution to development.

Notes from the Baghdad Workshop

Members of the working group of this axis focused on the great challenges encountering families' standards of living, which are unemployment, illiteracy, and poor enrolment in education or skill-building courses and training. They attributed that to the inaptness of education outputs to the labour market demands and lack of studies estimating the labour market needs of emerging specializations.

Objective 1: Provision of complete productive labour and decent job for all, including women:

Indicators:

1. Percentage of loans granted to the unemployed.
2. Percentage of women benefiting from the Social Protection Network [social welfare].
3. Programs of capacity building provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for unemployed (training courses, developmental courses, etc.)

Objective 2: Encouraging national and local Initiatives in agricultural sector to create job opportunities

Indicators:

1. Labour benefiting from agricultural loans (male, female).
2. Labour in handicrafts.
3. Reclamation of agricultural lands
4. Number of poultry farms.

Notes from the Erbil Workshop

Issues Raised

1. Development of Agricultural sector
2. Need for vocational training
3. Lack of law supporting economic development
4. No social protection in private sector, encourages public sector employment rather than private sector
5. Inadequate employment regulations in private sector
6. Lack of disaggregated statistical data
7. Outdated unemployment benefit policy
8. Need to revise and enhance microfinance regulations and opportunities, particularly for women
9. Need for evidence and planning based investment, and focusing on across the region, not strictly Erbil
10. Need to adopt best practices for poverty reduction – desire for more triangular and South-South Cooperation
11. Need for employment agencies
12. Social protection for people travelling to different governorates
13. Need for quality provision of basic food security to people under poverty line, and procurement of this from KRG
14. Need for entry-level opportunities in the public sector for unemployed
15. Support family-based small enterprises
16. Need to use domestic labour
17. Need for balance between profit and social responsibility
18. Need for inclusion of marginalized groups, particularly persons with disabilities, in employment
19. Need for stronger labour laws, proper contracts, terms of reference, social protection
20. Need for equalisation between international and national employees
21. Introduction of financial audits and transparency

Additional notes from Erbil: Poverty Mapping

Questions and additional comments of the other groups about Group One:

1. Corruption is very related to poverty, but it's not mentioned in the group one presentation

2. Government to think about strategic plans to reduce poverty. This point is missing

3. The word «greedy» is not appropriate at all.

4. Specify sectors to work on in order to mitigate poverty.

5. Tourisms sector is not given enough attention as it is important, as well as agriculture, trading and industry.

6. Privatization is important, it decrease government›s role in labour market, e.g. disguised unemployment. For example hiring people with no need in KRG, where out of 5 million populations, there are 1 million employees working with government.

7. Recommendations are very general, e.g. agriculture sector to be supported!!! How and who will do it? It›s not clear t all.

8. Chamber of commerce is very weak and it›s not playing key role in development process of the market.

9. Shortages in supply of man power. Public sector is burdened with big number of employees, no strategic plans to reform the public sector in KRG, and reform of public sector management.

THEMATIC WORKING GROUP 2
VOICES OF SOCIETY, PARTICIPATION BY CITIZENS, AND POLITICAL PARTNERSHIP

Notes from the Basrah Workshop

Society Bodies:

1. Civil society organizations and trade unions. (Challenge: Lack of trade unions role).

2. Municipal Councils ((Challenge: Poor performance).

3. Media.

4. Educational institutions.

5. Local decision makers (community leaders, mayors, tribal leaders, etc.).

6. Political parties.

7. Social communication.

What do we want?

1. Equality in development and eliminating disparity.

2. Legal framework to activate participation in development.

3. Engagement of citizens in planning, implementation, and control processes.

4. Freedom of trade union work and expression.

5. Transparency and freedom of access to information.

6. Organized decentralization in developmental decision planning, making, and implementation.

7. Versification of voice delivery channels and communication channels.

Problems and challenges

1. Lack of inclusive vision for participation in development.
2. Not conducting a population census for a long time.
3. The security situation.
4. Lack of cultural awareness, customs, and traditions.
5. Illiteracy.
6. Lack of competence in using information technology for communication.
7. Losing faith in work of civil society organizations and the government.

Solutions

1. Participation in setting developmental plans via joint committees and bodies.
2. Developing policies to expand and activate participation of citizens.
3. Joint cooperation document among parties.
4. Formulating new developmental model of social dimension.

Notes from the Baghdad Workshop

The main challenge indicated by members of the working group is the lack of listing of their needs and requirements in national plans and lack of accountability regarding the services provision

The question is; who is a member of the society? They indicated the following:

1. The Society includes all various classes of population, specially, marginalized groups, vulnerable and poor groups.
2. Means of communication and media.
3. Members of provincial councils and municipal councils.
4. Academicians and intellectuals.
5. Civil society organizations.
6. Private sector.

II. What are voices?

1. Why is there disparity in development between different governorates, between rural areas and urban cities, or between women and men?
2. How to raise people awareness and make development as part and parcel of peoples' life?
3. Engaging all bodies concerned to commit there selves to development achievement.
4. Activation of national and societal dialog and role of civil society organizations.
5. Diversifying the means of spreading our voices via information technology.
6. Building capacity and skills in our outreach, particularly in rural areas, and encouraging initiatives.
7. Ensuring dissemination of education and development of teaching methodologies.
8. Are needs and requirements of people listed in local national plans?

Purpose 1: Public participation in designing programs and projects following to decision making

Indicators:

1. Annual governmental reports on services provision.

2. Published evaluations, inspections, and investigation plans' qualities from the citizens' perspectives.

3. Opinion polls of citizens and levels of satisfaction on the quality of provided services.

4. Number of consultative meetings of associations and local society centres regarding various economic and social issues.

Notes from the Erbil Workshop

Issues Raised and Recommendations

1. Establishing a mechanism for citizen participation in development process

2. Provide equal opportunities for citizens participation regardless of gender, geographic…..etc considerations

3. Depend on international and national relevant reports on the citizen's participation

4. Awareness raising

5. Civic education

6. Reaching vulnerable, youth, women, disables

7. Media, specially free media, and women media

8. Working closely with religious leaders-

9. Legal framework inline with international principles

10. Access to information

11. Coordination and cooperation between main actors

12. Enhancing UN role in this regard

13. Set up strategic plan

14. Working with syndicates, unions and relevant associations

THEMATIC WORKING GROUP 3.1

ACCESS TO AND IMPACT OF BASIC SERVICES: HEALTH

Notes from the Basrah Workshop

Purpose: cancer prevention and treatment

Indicators

1. Number of cancer treatment hospitals.

2. Number of patients subject to check-up, and cancer patients.

3. Percentage of provision of treatment equipment for patients suffering from cancer.

Goal: Reduction of drug abuse

Indicators

1. Percentage of persons abusing drugs.

2. Percentage of patients subject to check-up at hospitals

BASRAH Discussions and interventions

After revising the group's work, discussions and interventions were conducted in the following topics:

Health

1. Increasing child care and reducing mortality at early their age.

2. Protecting children physically and prohibition of using them as beggars and combating this phenomenon.

3. Acknowledgment of mental diseases and preparing qualified nursing staff through enabling and capacity building of women working at health centres.

Notes from the Baghdad Workshop

Objective 1: Reduction of average infection with cancer/tumour

Indicators:

1. Number of hospitals specialized in cancer.

2. Number of cancer treatment centres.

3. Number of departments specialized in cancer treatment in public hospitals.

4. Number of patients in cancer treatment hospitals.

5. Average occupancy of beds in cancer treatment hospitals.

6. Number of patients subject to check-up at hospitals and cancer treatment centres.

7. Number of specialized and consulting physicians of cancer diseases.

8. Average number of physician/ nurse in cancer treatment hospitals and centres.

9. Extent of provision of medicines of cancer treatment.

10. Extent of provision of raising awareness on health issues (Posters, advertisements, forums, TV programs, websites), particularly, of early diagnosis of cancer diseases.

Objective 2: Ensuring provision of school feeding programs [Free Meals] and enhancing dissemination of nutritional health awareness

Indicators:

1. Percentages of schools provide school feeding [free meals].

2. Sorts of school foods.

3. Percentage of students covered by school foods.

4. Monthly reports of evaluation of school foods quality.

5. Level of governmental support for school feeding.

6. Level of international human support for school feeding.

7. Activities of the Ministry of Health (Posters, advertisements, TV programs, websites, forums) to raise health and nutritional awareness.

8. Number of civil society organizations concerned to health and food.

9. Activities of civil society organizations to raise health and nutritional awareness.

10. Number of physicians and other employees of Health Media Department at the Ministry of Health

Objective 3: Ensuring and enhancing pharmaceutical control in private sector

Indicators:

1. Number of private pharmacies [private sector pharmacies].

2. Number of pharmacists in private sector.

3. Number of drugs warehouses in private sector.

4. Percentage of pharmacies, which were closed due to their violation of pharmaceutical control requirements.

5. Poor quality origins of drugs.

6. Percentage of invalid drugs seized in private warehouses and pharmacies.

7. Number of drug control teams.

8. Number of physicians, pharmacists, and other employees in medicine control teams.

Notes from the Erbil Workshop

Questions and additional comments of other groups:

1. Where is the mechanism of the health system?

2. Quality control is missing

3. Talk about the quality of education (curriculums)

4. Give enough space to private education system

5. In KRG the education law and policy has established in 2007, so there is no change in education system due to changes of ministers.

6. Focus on school teachers more (capacity building)

7. There is a real problem with the quality of medications entering KR.

8. The group did not talk about the «human being» as individuals within both education and health system

9. The points outlined in the group presentations are very good.

10. Special concern to focus on SRH to girls and adolescents.

11. Add: starting from intermediate stage, applied education should be separated from scientific/literature education (social sciences).

12. Preserve patient›s rights

13. Shortages in health services, separate private from public in terms of health staff.

14. Education system in KR is an «instruction system», namely dictation system that means it›s not an education that helps to creative thinking, or freedom of thinking.

15. All recommendations of group 3 focusing on primary and intermediate education, meantime it›s not shedding the light on the higher education.

16. There is no system in place to control the private health sector.

Notes from the Basrah Workshop

Goal: Ensuring access to pre-primary education

Objective: Covering children with education as of age of 4 years.

Indicators:

1. Net average children enrolled to kindergartens.
2. Ratio of kindergartens in rural areas to urban cities.
3. Ratio of female to male enrolment.
4. Average number of students per female teacher.
5. Average number of specialized female teachers.
6. Average provision of teaching aids in kindergartens.

Purpose: adoption of basic education

Indicators

1. Average enrolment to basic education.
2. Average students enrolled to primary grade 1 and continued until middle grade 3.

Within the second objective, achievement of primary education, a purpose for improvement of education quality will be added.

Goal: Ensuring the best quality of education, reducing number of schools in one building to be 2 schools, and increasing grads divisions in schools.

Indicators

1. Average number of school shifts in one building.
2. Average number of students per class room.

Goal: Proper environment that stimulate innovation

Indicators

1. Ratio of specialized educational staff to educational staff.
2. Number of laboratories and teaching aids.
3. Percentage of higher-performing and talented students.
4. Percentage of provision of school meal.
5. Provision of assistant tools for students with special needs.

Purpose: Reduction of students schools dropout

- Reduction of beggars.
- Dropout of female students, reduction of female early marriage percentage.

Indicators

1. Percentage of married girls under 18.
2. Proportion of dropout of female students to male students.
3. Reduction of average beggars and homeless children.

Discussions and interventions

After revising the group's work, discussions and interventions were conducted:

1. Compelling all institutions to achieve the millennium goals and follow-up of progress of goals achievement every three months.

2. Promoting financial initiatives and school feeding, in order to encourage students to regular attendance.

3. Empowering and educating female widows.

4. Monitoring indices of education quality, in addition to quantitative indices.

Notes from the Baghdad Workshop

Education

Objective 1: Achievement of basic education for males and females

Indicators:

1. Number of primary, middle, and high schools.

2. Number of basic education schools.

3. Net average enrolment to primary and middle schools.

4. Average total enrolment to primary and middle schools.

5. Percentage of primary school graduates enrolled to middle schools.

6. Number of teaching staff in primary and middle schools.

7. Number of child labourers, who are not enrolled to education.

8. Extent of provision of information to activate the Law on Compulsory Education.

Objective 2: Expansion of school buildings and enhancement of school environment

Indicators:

1. Number of primary schools according to multiple-shift schools.

2. Number of school buildings.

3. Number of girls primary schools according to environment.

4. Number of girls middle and high schools according to environment.

5. Number of schools made with clay/mud.

6. Indicators of school environment (potable water, sanitation facilities, water fountains, access to electricity, and access to ceiling fans and cooling equipment, etc).

Notes from the Erbil Workshop

Access to and Impact of Basic Services: Health and Education

The main questions that highlighted during the discussions were q1& q2 in the guiding questions outlined in the facilitator guidelines:

1. What is important for any person (woman, man, boy and girl) in this country/community to live well?

2. Are there things that some people need in particular?

Discussions went around answering these two questions mainly and below are mostly the "words of mouth" of group members:

Education:

- Provide participation and involvement of CBOs and NGOs in the planning and development processes in Iraq

- UN focuses its attention on partnership with government (legal agreements), especially to implement projects in the field of education. Needs to bring partnerships between Gov, NGOs, and UN to do things better together.

- 80% of schools are lacking to basic needs, e.g. classrooms contain more than 40 students, desks are in bad condition, curriculum are not sufficient, more than 2, and sometimes 3 and 4 shifts at each school building, private education is not affordable for the vast majority of people, lack of sanitation facilities.

- Gender integration into education system.

- Provide education to refugees (asylum seekers and IDPs), namely plan B for integrating refugees/ IDPs within education system.

- Persons with Disabilities PWDs face difficulties to access the education system, there is still a dire need to put in place facilitations required to help PWDs to access to schools and have opportunity to learn. (problems with mobility: in general PWDs lack mobility in the schools, crossing the street, access to buildings, health facilities, e.g. ramps, ...etc)

- Note: a comment made by one of the participants, he was person with special needs (blind), he said that there are many people like his case have eagerness to pursue with their higher education, and they need for special support, such as allocating escorts to support these people with their researches' writing, but unfortunately these kinds of support are not afforded by universities in Iraq in general

- NGOs can play a key role to provide education services to PWDs, but bureaucracy is constraining NGOs intervention.

- Need to focus on staffing, where there is a big need to build the capacity of the teachers and equip them with sufficient skills.

- There are 6700 school buildings in KRG, 80% are lacking for water and sanitation facilities, and not proper environment at all. Due to survey done by WHO, more school girls are infected with urine tract infections.

- Summer holydays are too long in Iraq, lack of summer schools› activities, lack of creative activities.

- Lack of consistency between the education level and the needs of labour market.

- Lack of proper nutrition system in the schools which is important for children growth. «School feeding program» is very critical to school children in KRG, and government should allocate budget to afford it.

- Curriculum need to be revisited. School bags are too heavy and children are mentally and physically burdened with it.

- Literacy programs are neglected in KRG, where the government is not paying enough attention to mitigate illiteracy.

Notes from the Basrah Workshop
Objective 1: Education and Information Media

Indicators:

1. Listing environmental topics and sustainable development within educational curricula.

2. TV and radio programs of environmental sustainability.

3. Magazines, labels, and posters of environment and developmental sustainability.

4. Events and activities provided by civil society organizations on environment.

Objective 2: Combating desertification

Indicators:

1. Percentage of desertification areas, which has been reclaimed.

2. Percentage of increased forestation and forest areas in desertification areas.

3. Number of projects of desertification combating.

4. Percentage of using wastewater in projects of desertification combating.

5. Rationalization of water consumption and following of modern methods of irrigation.

6. Setting up windbreaks to reduce dust storms through planting green belts and cities reforestation.

7. Number of wells and water oases in desertification areas.

Objective 3: Applying Principles of green economy

Indicators:

1. Type of fuel used in transportation.

2. Percentage of reducing the use of private vehicles and using public transportation.

3. Type of wheels/tires.

4. Increasing the percentage of cultivated lands.

5. Percentage of using renewed energies.

6. Reducing use of polluting fuel and energy generation.

7. Percentage of increase in number of sustainable touristic areas.

Objective 4: Activating and enhancing environmental institutions and sustainable development

Indicators:

1. Developing a strategy for the environment and sustainable development.

2. Training of personnel working in environmental aspects.

3. Following principle of sustainable development in dealing with natural resources, such as water and oil.

4. Following a system of follow-up and control, in order to promote structure levels of such institutions, servicing environmental aspects.

5. Engagements of private sector as investors, as wastes are considered as natural resource.

Objective 5: Merging environmental considerations with economic considerations at study and approval of projects.

Indicators:

1. Overpopulation.

2. Reduction of horizontal extension of housing and conversion agricultural lands to housing lands, unless they are non-arable.

Objective 6: Wastes, management of them, sorting them, and recycling them

Indicators:

1. The quantity of littered hazardous and non-hazardous materials by sectors (municipalities, household, industrial, medical, etc.).

2. The recycled, buried, and burnt quantity (treatment and processing of wastes).

3. Percentage of sorted wastes to total wastes.

Objective 7: Biological diversification

Indicators:

1. Percentage of protected area.

2. Main biotypes.

3. Percentage of biotypes exposed to extinction.

4. Number of intruder or transitive biotypes.

Objective 8: Mine-clearing and elimination of radioactive pollution

Indicators:

1. Percentage of areas contaminated with mines, cluster bombs, remnants of wars and weapons, unexploded ordinance, fission weapons, and radioactive pollution.

2. Percentage of areas cleared from mines and remnants of wars.

3. Registered numbers of survivors, death, and handicap casualties of mines and wars.

4. Percentage of helping mines victims.

Purpose 9: Control of air quality

Indicators:

1. Number of dust storms.

2. Calculating suspend particles.

3. Control of CO_2 rising (Air polluters).

4. Number of projects working using clean development mechanism.

Discussions and interventions

After revising the group's work, discussions and interventions were conducted in the following topics:

I. Environment and its protection

1. Stopping violations against agricultural lands and prohibiting trees uprooting and abstraction of agricultural lands of streets and roads under the pretext of security.

2. Reforestation of cities and activating the role of the Ministry of Environment and providing it with sufficient financial allocations, in order to play its role.

3. Necessity of studying environmental effects when setting up industrial projects.

4. Stimulating media, in order to develop cultural programs to recycle used assets to ensure environment protection.

5. Processing lands exposed to hazards of pollution and mines.

6. Helping for cleanness of Iraqi environment and raising environmental awareness.

Notes from the Baghdad Workshop

Objective 1: Providing households with potable water by 70% by 2020

Indicators:

1. Percentage of households with potable water.

2. Per capita share of potable water.

Objective 2: Raising environmental water balance, in order to reduce area of saline cape

Indicators:

1. Percentage of water revenues of Tigris and Euphrates and their resources.

2. Percentage of change of the amount of incoming water flow.

3. Shares of industrial, agricultural, etc. sectors from incoming water flow.

Purpose 3: Processing of waste water and improvement of sanitation services within environmental determinants:

Indicators:

1. Percentages of households provided with upgraded sewer systems.

2. Percentages of regions provided with upgraded sewer systems.

3. Number of operating units of sewage treatment.

4. Amount of annually wastewater treatment.

Objective 4: Adoption of alternative environmentally friendly energy sources

Indicators:

1. Emissions of carbon dioxide.

2. Environmentally friendly energy sources.

Objective 5: Mine-clearing and elimination of radioactive pollution

Indicators:

1. Percentage of regions exposed to radiation, minefields, and unexploded ordnance.

2. Percentage of areas cleared from mines and ordnances.

3. Percentage of helping mines victims.

Objective 6: Developing the methods of waste disposal and the environmentally friendly treatments:

Indicators:

1. Quantity of hazardous medical wastes, which were treated.

2. Quantity of non-hazardous medical wastes, which were treated.

3. Number of sunken ships and objects in rivers inside cities.

4. Quantity of recycled or buried wastes.

Objective 7: Setting up a mechanism for forecasts of climate change, in order to reduce hazards of natural disasters and poverty:

Indicators:

1. Weather forecasts issued by metrology departments.

2. Percentage of farmers depending on metrological indices.

3. Percentage of farmers who took specified procedures in the light of metrological indices.

4. Number of concluded agreements regulating using natural resources and international multinational partnerships.

Notes from the Erbil Workshop

1. Need for sustainable management of natural resources

2. Improvement of quality of water and sanitation

3. Need to improve water harvesting practices

4. Need to mitigate environmental impact of oil exploration and production

5. Need to address pollution and waste from oil refinement

6. Need for further support to NGOs working on environmental issues

7. Need for Kurdistan Region-wide survey on available natural resources

8. Need for improved legislation surrounding natural resource management

9. Need for data and research

10. Need for development of green belts around cities and increase green areas, inside and outside cities

11. Improve land utilisation and zoning regulation

12. Need for corporate social responsibility

13. Need for awareness campaigns on environmental issues

14. Lack of city planning

15. Non-availability of natural resource survey.

16. Problems between the KRG and GoI on the use of natural resources.

17. Reduction of poverty and corruptions of KRG Ministry of Water Resources.

18. Non-availability of the representatives of Ministry of Natural resources and Board of Environment in KRG, for at least answering the queries raised by the participants.

19. Dealing and treatment of trash materials, which cause of diseases.

Appendix 2: Guiding Questions provided by the UN Development Group

For each stakeholder group, consider the following questions when summarizing their inputs:

WHAT?

1. What is important for any person (woman, man, boy and girl) in this country/community to live well?
2. Are there things that some people need in particular?
3. Who are the people who are not living well in this community?
4. What is a person lacking who does not live well in this country/community?
5. What do you think has made your life better or worse recently and what could be done about this situation (including your own role)?
6. Are there things that some people in your community lack in particular?
7. What will be needed for future generations to live well in this country/community?
8. What aspects of your community life do you think are important to protect in order to ensure that people live well?

WHY?

9. What are the main reasons why some people do not live well in this country community?

(Participants are encouraged to provide evidence-based arguments, whenever possible)

10. Is the gap between those who live well and those who do not growing? Why?

WHO?

11. What can be done (by an individual or community) to help achieve this?
12. Which actors and institutions in the country need to do something to achieve this?
13. Which actors and institutions outside the country need to do something to achieve this?

HOW?

14. What do these actors and institutions need to do?
15. What do they need so they can act?
16. How can change best be achieved (what are people's theories of change?)

WHEN?

17. By when do we want to achieve this?
18. How can we ensure collectively we know that we have or have not achieved it?
19. How could the mechanisms we used for these consultations be used in future reviews of progress?