

# Policy Brief: UNDP Iraq

## Conflict Assessment in Support of Efforts to Improve Local Policing in Iraq

"A Conflict and Development Analysis (CDA) is a tool that assists with analysing a specific context and developing strategies for reducing or eliminating the impact and consequences of violent conflict. It provides a deeper understanding of the issues that can drive conflict and the dynamics that have the potential to promote peace. This type of analysis contributes to the development of clear and attainable peacebuilding programming and policy objectives, and indicators for measuring and monitoring results." <sup>1</sup>



In March-May 2020, UNDP commissioned a conflict assessment to inform its support of local policing in Iraq. The analysis has three purposes: analyse programmatically relevant conflict dynamics and related factors; provide recommendations to mitigate the effects of these factors; highlight future directions for programme implementation.

There have been long-standing efforts to assist Iraqi police to transition from a 'police force' fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) to a 'police service', and to strengthen local police as the primary public security service provider in post-ISIL Iraq<sup>2</sup>. This research is intended to inform local policing programmes in Anbar and Ninewa. In Anbar, there is a relatively positive environment for police development. The political and socio-economic landscape of local policing is more straightforward, the province receives fairly strong support from central authorities, there is a relatively cohesive community and less contentious security sector relations. By comparison, the operational context in Ninewa is far more complex due to the variety of ethnic and religious communities and the range of security actors. Local policing programmes in Ninewa will need to act cautiously to avoid exacerbating conflict and instability.

### Iraq local Police and COVID-19 response efforts

The Iraqi local police have also been engaged in the COVID-19 response in both provinces. Police have been engaged in raising awareness, enforcing curfews, managing checkpoints, transporting residents to hospitals, transporting disinfection/sanitation workers, helping government economic departments monitor markets to ensure no profiteering, and helping provide essential supplies to vulnerable families. Respondents interviewed for this study reported that local police engagement with communities in relation to COVID-19 has been positive. However, some respondents commented on increased tensions due to the police enforcing curfews in the face of people desperate to go to work. Other respondents expressed concern that the local police's focus on COVID-19 response efforts was distracting from operations against ISIL.



1. United Nations Development Group 2016, Conducting a Conflict and Development Analysis, accessed from [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNDP\\_CDA-Report\\_v1.3-final-opt-low.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNDP_CDA-Report_v1.3-final-opt-low.pdf).  
 2. Ministry of Interior, The Republic of Iraq 2018, 'Local Police Service Road Map'.

# Addressing Drivers and Measuring Change

Although local policing programmes have different ways of engaging stakeholders, dealing with drivers of conflict and instability, and ensuring a positive contribution to

peacebuilding and stabilisation, there are several approaches that can be adopted across the programmes to address exogenous and endogenous drivers of conflict.

## Exogenous Drivers of Conflict and Instability



## Recommendations

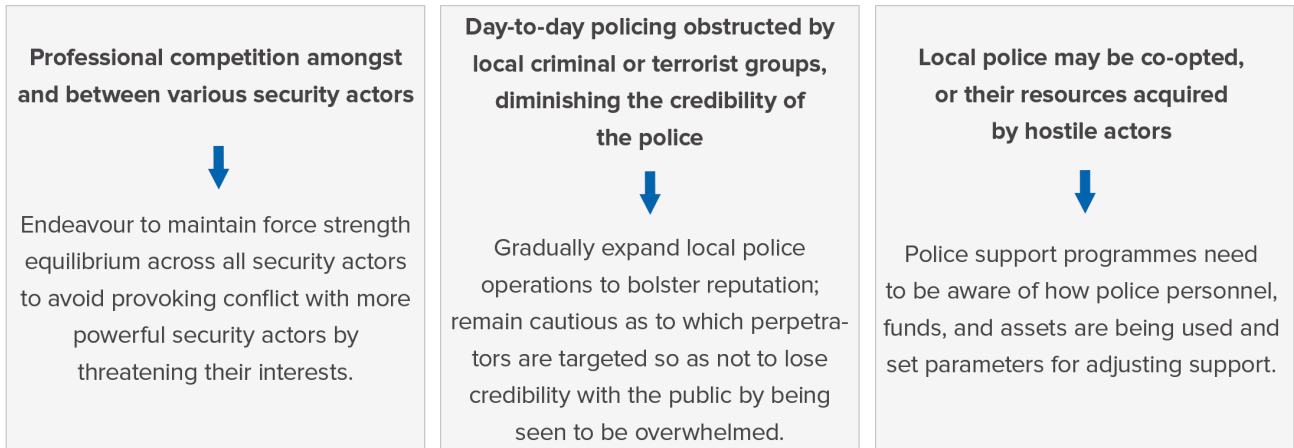
This study makes six overarching recommendations for programme design and management:

- Explicitly prioritise aspects of the programme that reinforce resilience and provide long-term frameworks.
- Adopt an integrated approach to socio-economic analysis, conflict analysis, and stakeholder engagement.
- Actively use a risk register to trigger policy and programmatic adjustments.
- Integrate international partner interventions under the leadership of the Ministry of Interior and governors.
- Use a participatory approach to build a long-term evidence base and use evidence to drive change.

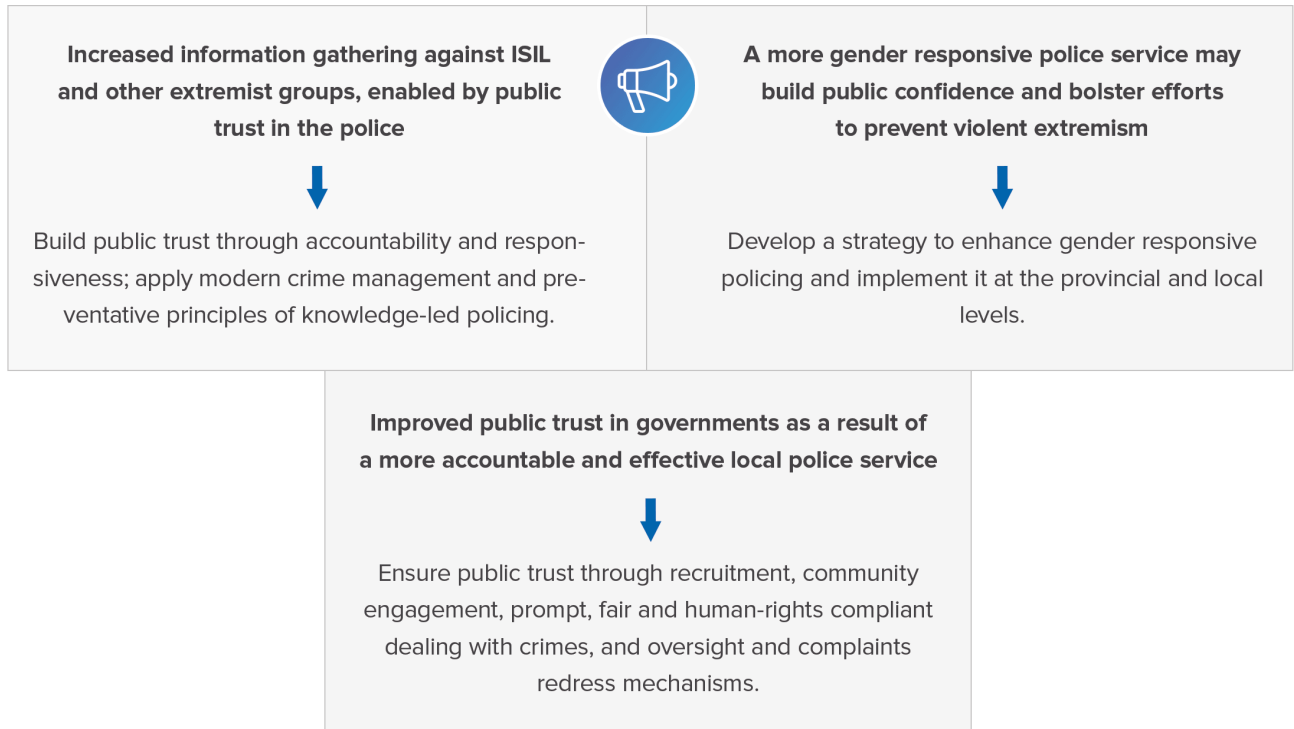
- Prioritise steps to promote the role of women in the police and improve women and girls' access to the police.



## Endogenous Drivers of Conflict and Instability



## Force for Peace



Research, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (RME) can contribute positively to the technical success and peacebuilding potential of programmes. In regard to the Iraqi local police, elements of a RME system exist and there is an opportunity to bring these elements together into a coherent whole. There are four features of this RME system that will be important:

- The data collected should include qualitative analyses of conflict issues and community tensions.
- The process should be permanent and sustainable to provide long-term analysis and drive performance.

- Better synchronisation of programming and research and a commitment to long-term Iraqi capacity building.
- Commitment to transparent sharing of findings and to being held accountable for delivering change over time.





## GENDER AND LOCAL POLICING

There is clear political support for improving the gender-responsiveness of the local police. Several measures should be central to programs seeking to improve the gender-responsiveness of the police, including those listed below.

However, care needs to be taken not to push too fast on gender issues, as such action may expose individual women to risk and undermine broader community support for police development, especially in conservative communities.

- Deploy and promote more female police officers in Anbar and Ninewa and demonstrate the tangible security results to be gained from greater engagement of female officers.
- Awareness campaigns on the role of female police officers to change police and community attitudes.

- Promote women's roles in community policing forums and strengthen the ability of police to deal with gender related issues.
- Employ female police officers in selected frontline duties (e.g. investigations, traffic, and management).
- Protect female police personnel, witnesses and victims through anti-harassment policies and improved physical layout in police stations.
- Ensure that local police stations have the necessary infrastructure to accommodate female officers, and women and girls who seek help from the police.

*This conflict assessment was conducted with generous funding from the Netherlands. UNDP is grateful for its continued support.*

