

**Project Title:** Iraqi Human Rights Capacity Building Programmes (Phase I)  
**Dates:** June 2004, December 2004  
**Location:** Amman, Jordan  
**Unit:** PCCB  
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**Funder:** UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

### **Project Summary**

As part of a three year training and capacity building programme (2003-2006) with the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR), HRLC devised and conducted two human rights training courses for officials of the MoHR and other key Iraqi government officials in Amman, Jordan. The training programmes focused on the national implementation of relevant international human rights standards, including drafting a national human rights plan of action. Funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

### **Objectives/Purpose**

From 2003-2006 HRLC engaged in a 5-strand capacity building programme to support the work of the Iraqi Human Rights Ministry. The overall aims of the programme were to assist the Ministry in the following ways:

- To develop an understanding of the principles and the operation of international human rights law and their application in the context of Iraq;
- To obtain the skills to monitor, assess and report on key human rights issues;
- To develop the ability to deliver human rights training to other officials from across the Iraqi Government and civil society;
- To have access to sustainable Iraq-specific tools to assist in their ongoing training, monitoring and reporting functions.

The 2004 training course aimed to provide participants with:

- Basic knowledge and understanding of the principles of the international human rights system, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and core human rights treaties;
- Understanding of the international human rights obligations of Iraq, the obligations of the government towards its people and the Government's reporting obligations;
- Appreciation of the relationship between promotion and protection of human rights and both conflict prevention and conflict resolution;
- Appreciation of the gender dimensions of the promotion and protection of human rights, as well of the rights of the child and the rights of minorities;

- Tools to begin the process of addressing the past, as well as for human rights national planning and to adopt human rights based approaches to the national reconstruction and development processes.

## **Participants**

There were 60 participants, the majority of which were working for the Iraqi Human Rights Ministry. Other participants were affiliated with the Women's Affairs Ministry, the Ministry of Culture, the Kurdistan Human Rights Ministry, the Kurdistan Justice Ministry, the Red Cross and the Bar Association.

## **Activities**

As well as the HRLC's expert trainers, the programme brought together human rights experts from Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Jordan and Kuwait to lead the training. The training course involved lectures, group work and plenary discussion. Both courses were conducted in Arabic. Topics focused on were:

- The principles and the operation of international human rights law;
- The international human rights obligations of Iraq;
- Key aspects of the responsibility to implement international obligations, taking account of national identity, religious and cultural specificities etc.;
- The gender dimensions of the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as of the rights of the child and the rights of minorities;
- Tools to begin the process of human rights national planning and to adopt human rights based approaches to the national reconstruction and development processes;
- Tools to address Iraq's reporting obligations under human rights treaties;
- The specific responsibilities of the Human Rights Ministry in monitoring and promoting mainstreamed approaches by other parts of the Iraqi Government, the submission of reports to treaty bodies, and national human rights planning.

## **Outcomes**

The two courses were a great success, with participant feedback indicating high levels of satisfaction. Selected MoHR personnel from the training programmes were invited to a further capacity building course, 'Training the Trainers', to develop skills to train other government officials in human rights standards.

The training programmes contributed to the formulation of a series of human rights capacity building manuals designed for the Iraqi Human Rights Ministry.

Based on its successful work with the Iraqi MoHR, HRLC undertook capacity building work with staff members of the United Nations mission in Iraq (UNAMI) and the UN Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), using the manuals developed in the course of this project training, as part of its *Consolidating the Profession: the Human Rights Field Officer* project.