



Iraq Foundation
المعهد العراقي



Global Partners
Governance

Iraq Foundation-Global Partners Governance

Project Report

**Improving Policy, Service Delivery, Gender Equality and
Responsiveness to Iraqi Citizens**

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Summary

Since the inception of the project, the political, social and economic contexts in Iraq have shown a growing need for the key target areas addressed by this project. The importance of an effective system of representation of local issues has been the focal point throughout the first year, and is at the root of the recent protests, towards the end of the first project year. Iraqi citizens are still not receiving the basic services such as electricity, clean water, education, healthcare, etc. whilst the economic performance of the country is stagnating, with high youth unemployment. The government and parliament have responded slowly to these concerns, allowing the discontent to be exacerbated by political and regional factors.

However, during the first year of the project, the Iraq Foundation (IF) and Global Partners Governance (GPG) have effectively engaged with key decision makers in the Iraqi Parliament – the Council of Representatives (CoR) – through the parliamentary leadership, MPs, committees and staff, as well as regional Council of Representative Offices (COROs). We have also engaged with civil society organisation (CSOs) to help bridge the gap in the decision-making process, so as to improve policy, service delivery, gender equality and responsiveness to Iraqi citizens. Through IF's existing expertise and network, we successfully started our work to provide cross-cutting support women MPs by building upon longstanding relationships with established women MPs and starting engagement with newly elected women MPs. The progress of the project over the first year, against the backdrop of a difficult political climate, has been extremely positive. The first six months consolidated key relationships, scoping the priorities and needs of both the Iraqi CoR and the Iraqi citizens. This allowed IF and GPG to respond, in partnership, to the needs of all key stakeholders involved in the project. The second half of the year was then focused on how to respond to these challenges and issues being faced, which has resulted in developing frameworks, mechanisms and guidelines for more effective systems of representation in the CoR. In addition, IF and GPG have started working with key parliamentary committees on specific policy areas, which will have a direct impact on issues facing Iraqi citizens, involving CSOs and regional COROs as part of the process, to ensure local input, alongside support from the central parliament.

This report sets out the political context in which the project is currently working, highlighting the importance of the project's areas of intervention, particularly at this challenging time. It also explains the approach and methodology IF and GPG are implementing to adapt to the changing nature of Iraqi politics in relation to the project. It sets out the activities and achievements of the project so far, and how they prepare the ground for the aims of this project for year two. Finally, the report reflects on lessons learned and risks. Working in post-conflict environments requires adaptation and flexibility and we are grateful for Sida's support in recognising this.

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1. Introduction

This report considers the work and activities carried out by IF and GPG in the first year of this three-year project (covering the period from October 2018 – September 2019), to support ‘improving policy, service delivery, gender equality and responsiveness to Iraqi Citizens’, funded by SIDA. The first year of the project was designed to engage key stakeholders within the Iraqi parliament, assess their needs, and design and begin to deliver a programme of activities to build their capacities and support institutional reform. Within this framework, IF and GPG continuously adapted activities in response to stakeholder feedback and to reflect the changing challenges faced by Iraqi citizens and their political institutions.

- The first six months of this project, up to March 2019, laid the foundations for implementation of activities by securing high-level senior support for the project’s objectives.
- The following six months, up to September 2019 put forward strategic frameworks, papers and agreed work plans with the key bodies we will be working with over the course of the three years, explained in more detail across each project strand in this report.

The origins of this project came from numerous requests and assessments made to both IF and GPG by MPs and parliamentary committees in the Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR), to provide them with support on developing mechanisms for public engagement in the decision-making process in line with international best practice. Over a year later, it is now even more important for the international community to continue supporting Iraq’s political institutions in the light of recent public protests (described in greater detail below). In summary, the project was designed to target four main areas of deficiency, namely:

- a) The quality and timeliness of **policy and legislation** emerging from government and parliament, which reflects problems of leadership, organisation and co-ordination within and between government and parliament. It also reflects a failure by parliamentary committees – which are internationally the main route for evidence gathering on public policy issues – to engage and involve the public effectively in the policy process.
- b) The quality of **service delivery** at the local level. There is little, if any, follow-up once legislation is passed by parliament and the links between Baghdad and provincial governments remain both tense and fragmentary, often revolving around finance and administration more than service delivery.
- c) The **responsiveness** of politicians and the CoR as a whole to emerging public concerns.
- d) The need to improve **gender equality** within Iraq’s political processes and to ensure that issues of relevance to women and men, boys and girls, receive equal treatment.

This project design translated this into four key strands of activities (project strands), which are described in greater detail later in this report:

1. Strategic and Reform-Focused Political Leadership within Parliament
2. Parliamentary Committees adopt more inclusive and evidence-based policy mechanisms
3. Linking Parliament with the Provinces and Constituencies on Service Delivery
4. Cross-cutting Support to Women Politicians

Activities, visits and headline achievements in Year 1

Against the backdrop of ongoing political and social uncertainty in Iraq (see the political context section below), IF and GPG have managed to navigate around these challenges, whilst adapting to the needs and priorities of the Iraqi CoR and citizens and targeting the project's activities accordingly. IF and GPG have done this through ongoing assessments (explained more in this report), whilst securing engagement with our key interlocutors in the CoR. Towards the end of the first year, committees we are engaging with have now begun to work on addressing key policy issues, whilst key departments, such as the Parliamentary Directorate, Research Directorate and the Speaker's Office have started to examine fundamental mechanisms in the CoR to support effective responses to the policy issues.

GPG, with the support of IF, carried out 5 country visits to Iraq (Baghdad and Erbil), whilst IF continued to engage with stakeholders throughout the year. The visits, activities and headline achievements can be summarised as:

Visit 1: December 2018

This was the first visit of the project, which largely consisted of scoping the current situation in Baghdad, a needs assessment and analysis, meeting with key stakeholders, re-establishing relationships and introducing our project aims and objectives. With parliament still settling after the recent elections, it was a good opportunity to observe the functioning of the parliament and the retention of the previous knowledge and skills GPG provided to key staff in the CoR as part of earlier projects.

Headline Achievements

- A good overview and analysis of the priorities and focus areas in which Iraqi stakeholders in the CoR would like IF and GPG support.
- Gained high-level support and agreement for the project and the need for such an initiative.
- Able to establish targeted plans of support for the upcoming 6 months.

Visit 2: March 2019

This was a follow on from the December visit as part of the scoping stage of the project. Parliament was more settled, and the annual budget had passed. IF and GPG met with and gained the support of Speaker Halbousi and he provided a framework for his priorities which complemented the project's aims. We held a roundtable with newly elected women MPs to understand the challenges they faced and set a programme of seminars for the upcoming six months. We also met with several committee chairs (interim at the time since committees had not yet been formally established), members and staff to gauge their emerging priorities.

Headline Achievements

- Agreement with the Speaker on our project and established a framework around his priorities and expectations.
- Successfully targeted women MPs and set a workplan based on collaborative needs assessment analysis for the upcoming 6 months of activities and thematic issues they are facing (Oversight, Legislation and Skills).
- Established working relationships and workplans with staff of committees (advisors and secretaries) and interim committee chairs and members, based on their priorities and gaps in support.

Visit 3: April 2019

We were restricted due to Parliament unexpectedly not sitting the week of our visit, however we were still able to meet with key staff, including the Head of the Regional COROs, and staff and managers from the Nineveh and Basra COROs. This resulted in developing surveys for all the COROs and receiving valuable engagement and outcomes for analysis. We were also able to hold a seminar with newly elected women MPs on oversight and the role of MPs in committees.

Headline Achievements

- Established a working relationship and workplans with the Head of the Regional Council of Representatives Offices (COROs)
- Conducted in-depth surveys with all Regional COROs on identifying the key areas of support they need, and the key policy issues they face in the different regions
- Provided an in-depth seminar with women MPs on the oversight role of MPs in the parliament and committees, introducing new tools, methodologies and techniques.

Visit 4: August 2019

Due to intensified security in Baghdad and advice taken from several security and international agencies, we held the fourth visit in Erbil rather than Baghdad. This provided the additional benefit of being able to engage at regional level with politicians and CSOs to understand the relationship with the federal parliament from the other direction. It proved to be a fruitful visit allowing us to hold follow up strategic planning sessions with COROs in the Kurdistan region. We held sessions with CSOs and MPs from the Kurdistan region, and day long strategic planning sessions with the Finance Committee and the Services and Reconstruction Committee. We also met with several officials and staff from the Kurdistan Parliament, including the Speaker, Dr Rewas Faiq, who was very supportive of our work with the Iraqi CoR, and highlighted the need for a similar project to support the Kurdistan Parliament, sharing experiences and international best practice.

Headline Achievements

- Held a successful roundtable with several CSOs, MPs and COROs from Erbil and Nineveh, under the auspices of the Second Deputy Speaker of Parliament.
- Held a full day session with four COROs from the Kurdistan region, developed strategic 6-months plans and frameworks to improve coordination between CSOs, COROs and committees/MPs.

- Agreed on inquiry topics, timelines and terms of references with the Finance Committee (on Banking Sector Reforms) and Services and Reconstruction Committee (on Waste Management).
- Engaged with the Kurdistan Parliament on improving coordination between Baghdad and Erbil.

Visit 5: September 2019

Following on the momentum of the Erbil visit, the central part of this visit was built around the Parliamentary Directorate (PD) who had time to reflect on the work we had undertaken and results we had achieved with the COROs and started with the committees in Erbil. This resulted in the PD identifying a gap in the coordination between committees and regional COROs, thus requesting IF and GPG to help set a framework and mechanism for improving coordination between parliamentary committees and regional COROs. The PD also set up a seminar between three committees and select regional COROs to discuss policy issues as a result.

We made further progress with the Finance Committee, agreeing with the chair to set up a sub-committee for the policy issue on banking sector reform in light of improving the economy, whilst the Services Committee also held several consultation meetings with general managers and departments related to the policy issues we discussed in Erbil. We also met with several other committees to identify and start working on policy issues that are important for Iraqi citizens, which included the Health and Environment Committee, the Youth and Sports Committee and the Education Committee.

We held a session with staff and advisors of the Speaker's Office, which resulted in IF and GPG producing a communications plan and strategy. We held a seminar with women MPs on gender analysis of legislation and we also held sessions with staff from the Research Directorate on how to analyse the impact of legislation. In a workshop with CSOs we explored how they can influence decision makers, particularly with the COR and committees. Several examples from CSOs highlighted their previous work with committees.

Headline Achievements

- Agreed forward plans with the Parliamentary Directorate, several key committees (Chairs and members) and the Speaker's Offices.
- Speaker's Office staff (Head of Administration, Head of Media and Senior Advisor to the Speaker): requested a Strategy Paper for the Speaker. GPG has provided this overview paper
- Parliamentary Directorate team: agreed on revisiting recent parliamentary reforms and designing a mechanism and framework to improve effective coordination between Committees and Regional COROs.
- Parliamentary Directorate held a workshop as a basis for this framework, with approx. 10 managers of Regional COROs and 3 Committees, looking at three policy areas (as identified by the Regional CORO staff) of Agriculture, IDPs and Health.
- Conducted a workshop with staff of the Research Directorate (RD) on evaluating the impact of legislation (post-legislative scrutiny, or PLS).
- Finance Committee: agreement from the Chair of the Finance Committee to work with Dr Mohammed, Chair (plus members and staff) of the Banking Sub-Committee,

who would like us to focus on the implementation of legislation, as the next steps of the inquiry in building public trust in Iraq's banking system.

- Services Committee on Waste Management: the committee held several committee hearings covering key policy areas, as a result of our discussions in Erbil in August.
- Health and Environment Committee: agreed on support needed to conduct oversight inquiries on important policy issues facing Iraqi citizens.
- Youth and Sports Committee: agreed on support to examine the 'Oversight of the Government's Youth Policy', following an options paper GPG prepared for the committee. The Committee will undertake a series of consultations and meetings In Kurdistan.
- Government Strategy Committee: explored mechanisms of support, tools and techniques to monitor and evaluate the Government's performance and programme, based on international best practice and expertise.
- Education Committee: requested support on addressing the issue of school drop-outs amongst young people, particularly young girls. IF and GPG will explore their capacity to support this.
- Women's Committee: requested support on establishing the committee's strategy and priorities in managing effective legislation impacting women, children and families, and reviewing Iraq's CEDAW commitments under the Committee's portfolio (NB: the Chair of the Committee stepped down as of October 2019, which has put this work on hold).
- Workshop with several CSOs to explore how they can influence decision makers, particularly with the COR and committees.
- Seminar with women MPs on gender analysis of legislation, led by a local expert.

Key beneficiaries and partners

The key beneficiaries and partners GPG and IF have engaged with can be summarised against the four project strands as:

1. Strategic and Reform-Focused Political Leadership within Parliament

- The Speaker, Mohammed Al-Halbousi, and the Speaker's Office staff (led by the Advisor to the Speaker, Mohammed Jawad).
- The Second Deputy Speaker, Dr Bashir al-Haddad, and his Chief of Staff, Hoshyar al-Ghafouri.
- The Parliamentary Directorate (the key staff unit tasked with organising parliamentary business, including in plenary and committees), Haidar Muthana, Director General of the Parliamentary Directorate, and his staff.
- The Research Directorate, Dr Mayada Hachimi, Director of the Research Directorate, and her staff.
- The Government Strategy Committee (officially known as the Committee for Oversight of the Implementation of the Government Programme and Planning and Strategy). This newly formed committee has been tasked with monitoring the six-monthly reports from government on its performance.

2. Parliamentary Committees

- The Finance Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur, and Mohammed Jawad, Advisor to the Finance Committee) a parliamentary inquiry into ‘building trust and reforming Iraq’s Banking Sector) – economic implications,
- The Health and Environment Committee – a parliamentary inquiry into ‘the sources of water pollution and the impact on public health’; implications on service delivery and health and environment reforms.
- The Services Committee - a parliamentary inquiry into ‘improving waste management’; implications on service delivery and health and environment reforms.
- The Education Committee on reducing the school drop-out rate, for a more inclusive education system; implications on Education reforms and youth engagement.
- The Youth and Sports Committee on the oversight of the government’s youth and sports strategy; implications on improving better opportunities and engagement with young people.

3. Linking Parliament with the Provinces and Constituencies on Service Delivery

- COROs in Kurdistan as a pilot to gauge and set baseline expectations
- CSOs in Kurdistan and Baghdad (related to the policy issues parliamentary committees are addressing).

4. Cross-cutting Support to Women Politicians

- Women, Family and Children Committee
- Core group of newly elected women MPs
- The already established Women’s Caucus

The findings and assessment of this report are based on outcome reports from each visit and activity conducted, alongside regular engagements and assessments with key beneficiaries and partners in Iraq. (See Appendix 3)

2. Political Context and Engagement Strategy

Political Context

The political context over the course of this project’s first year fell into two halves which shaped the project’s interventions: (1) the time taken to appoint the government and Ministers in the first half of the year and (2) the growing discontent with the government’s performance after its first year in office, which eventually resulted in the protests that happened shortly after the end of the first project year. These are both symptoms of the exact issues the project is trying to target: creating inclusive policy mechanisms that result in improved local services.

The project’s first year coincided with the appointment of the three leadership positions in October 2018, the President, Barham Saleh, the Prime Minister, Adel Abdul-Mahdi, and the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament (the Council of Representatives or CoR), Mohammed Al-Halbousi. This was a much-awaited result, after elections earlier in 2018 delayed these appointments, because there was no clear agreement on which was the largest political bloc

after the election results (NB: a key point of contention discussed later in this section). The government had still not fully formed for a further six months (May/June 2019), with the Prime Minister, Adel Abdul-Mahdi not being able to gain enough support to appoint all his Cabinet Ministers. The inability of Abdul-Mahdi to gain support from leading political blocs was quickly highlighted as a weakness in his performance as Prime Minister, having promised radical changes to improve Iraqis' lives, and undermined his leadership and ability to deliver the reforms needed.

Ultimately (after the end of the reporting period covered by this report) the Prime Minister tendered his resignation, following a sustained period of public protest in many regions of Iraq, including Baghdad. Abdul-Mahdi failed to convince the Iraqi people of any level of tangible reform and improvement to their lives, and the absence of any backing by a strong political bloc did not help.

Although the protests began in October 2019, after the end of the first project year, it is worthwhile describing their impact so far, since they arise from the very issues the project is targeting and will undoubtedly have an impact on future activities and the nature of our support to political institutions. Iraq is still healing from a post-Daesh era, and citizens' patience has run out, frustrated by a slow government that has done very little to respond to their needs. The protests began as a demand for better service provision, better opportunities for employment, and an end to corruption, particularly amongst political elites. Many had already predicted a summer of political protests and citizens' unrest, so it should not have come as a surprise when the mass protests in Baghdad and the South of Iraq gripped the country. Most of the protests have taken place in the mainly Shite regions in the south, with Baghdad, Najaf and Karbala having the more intense unrest, which is seen as a vocalised discontent with Iranian influence and corruption impacting on Iraqi citizens. The country's presidency (President, Prime Minister and Speaker) called for investigations into the violent response to the peaceful protesters, where hundreds have died, and this resulted in the parliament forming several committees to investigate. One committee in particular was formed, the Constitutional Reform Committee, to review the constitution, against the main demands Iraqi citizens have placed upon the Government, which can be summarised as:

- Electoral reforms
- Addressing corruption through removing corrupt officials, the abolition of Provincial Councils, and the resignation of the Government (some are calling for the removal of all elected MPs and the reduction of high salaries)
- More effective economic reforms
- Reforming the employment market and providing better opportunities for young people to be employed.
- Better provision of service delivery (particularly essential services such as water, electricity, health and education).

The Prime Minister's resignation on 29 October 2019 has thrown up multiple legal and constitutional issues as to who and how his replacement will be carried out. Abdul-Mahdi and his government will remain in an interim/caretaker role until a new PM is appointed. The President has been tasked with nominating the next Prime Minister from a list of

candidates, which usually requires consultation and agreement with the largest political bloc. Herein lies one of the key obstacles as there has never been a clear agreement on which is the largest political bloc from the 2018 election results (as mentioned earlier). Leaders of political blocs will no doubt have a key role to play, which brings us back to the essential grievances of Iraqi citizens, who view the political blocs and elites as the root cause of nominating corrupt officials and not doing enough to improve citizens' lives. With the Provincial Councils elections continuously being delayed, some citizens are calling for a complete clear out of elected officials, and a new round of elections.

The first year of this project has laid the foundations for the implementation of activities by securing high-level senior support for the project's objectives and agreeing on strategic directions and subsequently more specific procedural mechanisms with the parliamentary leadership and committees. We are pleased with the level of traction and buy-in we have achieved in this short space of time, and the activity that our interlocutors have begun working on, particularly given the competing political priorities affecting the institution. We have also used this time to identify alternative entry points not envisaged in the original proposal, for example, work with the Research Directorate on setting parliamentary indicators and monitoring government performance, with the CoR Regional Offices on local-national routes of communication and looking to improve relations between Baghdad and Erbil.

Although it is a challenging context in Iraq, this project is recognised by our interlocutors in the CoR as a critical and an opportune moment for Parliament to play the role for which it is elected. There is also an appreciation that the public is losing patience, and political institutions need to provide a visible demonstration of their relevance. The Speaker, committees and MPs are under more pressure than ever to use this opportunity to communicate with the electorate on how they plan to make the necessary changes required and respond appropriately to the citizens' grievances. As described in detail later in this report, Regional CoR Offices have begun to hold consultation hearings with CSOs, citizens, experts and officials; the Constitution Reform Committee has opened a public consultation form on the CoR website, and the Speaker and President are more vocal than ever in communicating with the Iraqis. During the second year of the project, it will be important to build on this growing recognition that parliament must be more obviously relevant to those it represents, and this project is well placed to contribute to these aims.

Project Engagement Strategy

The Iraq Foundation and its partner GPG are working to make the policy and legislative process in Iraq more representative of the concerns of Iraqi citizens, by strengthening the capacities of parliamentarians and civil society to conduct meaningful dialogue and consultation, with a cross-cutting focus on women's empowerment. The four areas in which the project is seeking progress are:

- i) strategic political leadership, working with the Speaker and his staff to implement key reform areas which will improve the efficiency of parliamentary processes
- ii) effective parliamentary committees, working with a target group of MPs and staff alongside relevant civil society organisations to better represent the views of citizens in policy and legislation
- iii) linking Parliament with the provinces and constituencies, to connect citizens' concerns to the policy process, through work with the regional offices of the parliament and with local government; and
- iv) cross-cutting support to women MPs, working on issues of political leadership and gender-sensitive policy making.

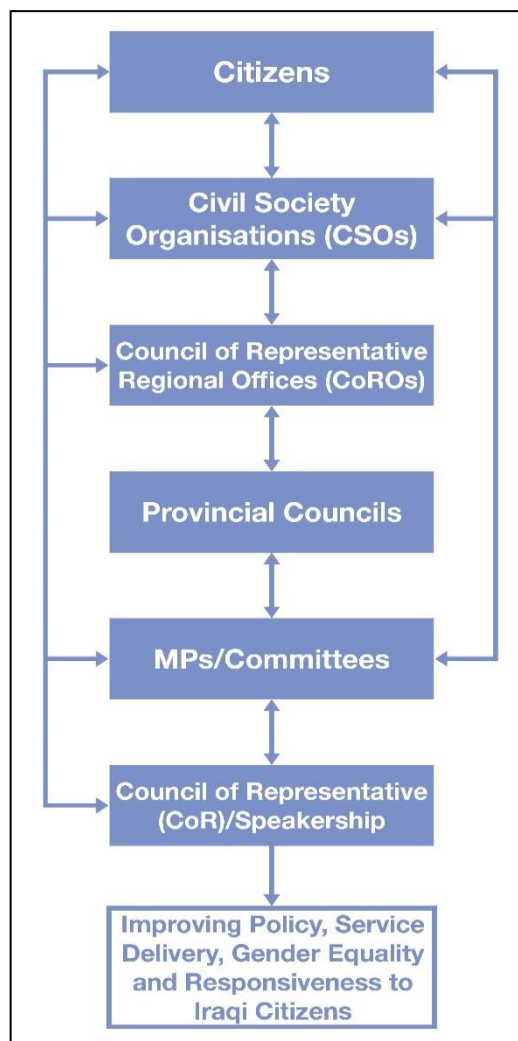


Figure 1: Key actors engaged by the project

Figure 1 shows the key actors that the project will engage, and the relationships between them.

As part of the project engagement strategy, GPG's approach to ongoing political analysis within the project is underpinned by its 'README' approach, shown in Figure 2. README (Research-Engage-Agree-Deliver-Monitor-Evolve) is an implementation approach based on continual political economy analysis, monitoring

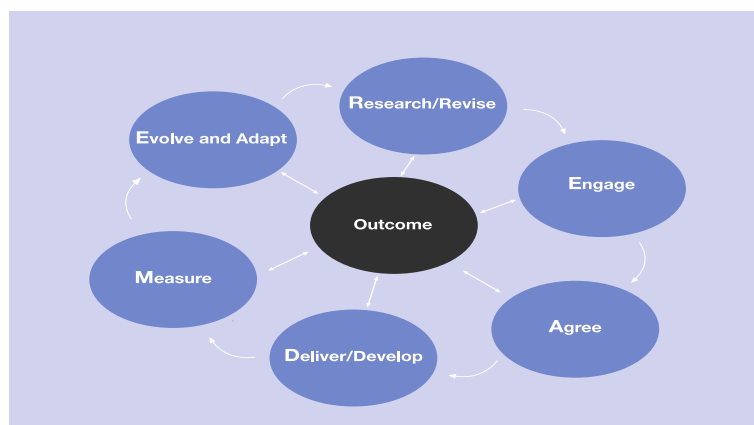


Figure 2: README project engagement approach

and reflection, as well as feedback loops used to inform decision making at all stages of the project cycle. This provides the basis for engaging people around a common understanding of the problem, building a common sense of purpose and a coalition for change amongst key stakeholders. It is then necessary to agree project strategy, content and indicators with stakeholders: without that buy-in, any changes to are likely to be fragile, short-lived, and ineffective. After initial agreement, the more difficult task is in maintaining commitment and holding the coalition together during the delivery of any reforms. This necessitates constant monitoring and evolving of initial planned activities/strategy, depending on changes in context and what is politically feasible. There will at times need to be a revision of the original strategy, results framework and indicators, adapting to the changing context and incentives. This approach has been vital to IF and GPG's ability to operate in Iraq's difficult and changing political context. First, the project team needs to understand what is feasible within Iraq's current political system, and where it is possible to have impact. We have continued to do this throughout the first year. At the end of this first year, we have reached the agreement and delivery stages of the README cycle, although continuous monitoring and evolution is required with the evolving context, as previously explained.

Stakeholder Analysis

As Figure 1 shows, the project targets a number of key stakeholder groups, and aims to improve and strengthen the linkages between them. Since gaining the support of these groups for the project's objectives is crucial, it is important to understand the dynamics of the relationships involved, and how IF and GPG are continuously navigating this stakeholder mapping. The main groupings are:

1. Parliamentary Leadership
2. Parliamentary Committees
3. Parliamentary Staff and Offices
4. Individual MPs (and particularly women MPs)
5. Civil Society Organisations

1. Parliamentary Leadership

The project identified the Speaker and Deputy Speakers and senior staff, including the Secretary General and the Heads of Directorates, as key interlocutors. It is their leadership that will set the tone for parliamentary dialogue and determine whether reforms will be fully implemented. Over the first six months we established agreement with all these key interlocutors around the project's objectives and are pleased with the level of traction that our project has achieved over this period. The Speaker is eager for the project to work with committees, on a parliamentary code of conduct, and on strategic communications, all of which forms the basis of an MoU between the project and the CoR. The second six months of the project has seen GPG and IF develop strategic frameworks and mechanisms as a basis for starting the implementation of activities. The frameworks and mechanisms have been received positively and developed in collaboration with the relevant bodies in the CoR.

2. Parliamentary Committees

It is important to understand the role of parliamentary committees in representative systems as key to achieving the desired impact of the project. Parliamentary committees should sit at the centre of a web of government and non-government relationships, which enables them to act as early warning systems to resolve incidences where policy implementation is deficient and negatively affecting citizens. In Iraq, committees have tended to act far less strategically, mostly reacting to individual complaints or issues, often motivated by nepotistic or service-related motivations. So far, most ministries have conducted little systematic stakeholder engagement across the country to explain or communicate their reforms, raising the possibility of resistance from vested interests (who may lobby their MPs to complain about the effects of reform). If it can adopt a more systematic, constructive, and inclusive approach, this is a challenge that parliament is well placed to address, given the direct link between MPs and constituents, and the ability of committees to mediate between the public and interest groups, on the one hand, and government ministers and officials on the other. However, this depends crucially on developing the relationships which would enable it to operate effectively as a feedback mechanism, both with citizens and sectoral groups and with government.

3. Parliamentary Staff and Offices

Staff provide the institutional memory of a parliament and in Iraq, the permanent staff of the institution remain in post often for their entire careers, whereas MPs come and go at each election. This makes them key stakeholders for the project. Haidar Muthana, Head of the Parliamentary Directorate and Mohammed Jawad, Advisor to the Speaker and the Finance Committee are the two central figures of our project within the CoR. They command the confidence of Speaker Halbousi who named both as the key stakeholders with whom we should engage, support and communicate. Secondly, both have influential reputations in the CoR for getting things done and cutting through some of the red tape GPG and IF could face in this project; and thirdly, both are very positive advocates and supporters of our project and work we have conducted in the past. Notably, both are permanent parliamentary staff who have been working in the CoR for many years, therefore form part of a strong institutional memory for the CoR at the turn of each parliamentary term.

The Parliamentary Directorate is central to three key engagement strands for this project; (1) impacting the strategic political leadership, as Haidar Muthana regularly meets and advises the Speaker on plenary, committee and parliamentary related matters; (2) all committee-related affairs report to and sit under this directorate (this is managed by Ahmed Saad, Head of the Committee Affairs); and (3) the Regional COROs report directly to the Parliamentary Directorate (managed by Abdullah Hussein, Head of Regional COROs).

We also have positive working relationships with the Director of the Research Directorate, Dr Mayada Hachimi, and the Parliamentary Committee staff with whom we have worked previously, and therefore are aware of the effective impact our support can have for the newly formed committees and MPs. Developing better working relationships between these

two bodies will prove invaluable for the quality of reports, findings and evidence produced by committees.

Regional Council of Representative Offices (COROs) report to and sit under the Parliamentary Directorate. They are branches of the central CoR set up in each region across Iraq with the objective of better engaging and representing local citizens. They help and support MPs in their constituencies and engage with the local issues and policies impacting citizens. They also engage with CSOs. If used effectively, they are an important tool in the mechanism of local service delivery, representation and impacting on policy.

4. Individual MPs (and particularly women MPs)

Although working with the core staff of the CoR is important for sustainability of any support given to the parliament and its institutional memory, it is crucial to bring individual MPs along the same journey, as they are the elected representatives of Iraqis, the public facing influencers on policies and legislation, and hold voting power in plenary sessions. As part of our work with committees, we work towards embedding appropriate roles for MPs and staff where committee members set direction and determine policy recommendations, with the bulk of the detailed analysis work falling on committee staff. Since Iraqi committees are large by international standards, it is often preferable to work with a sub-committee of MPs, but it is particularly important to get the buy-in and support of the Chair/Vice Chair of the committee.

As part of our work with supporting women MPs, IF and GPG have engaged with 25 MPs, and have identified a core group of 8 women MPs, who have shown continuous engagement with the project and who will support our work with the women's network in Parliament (see Annex 4 of IF evaluation: some of MPs here such as Dr. Vian Sabri, Dr. Bahar Mahmoud Fattah and Dr. Alia Faleh Al Emara). It has also been crucial to engage with established women MPs who have served two parliamentary terms or more, and seen as influential figures such as Ala Talabani, Huda Sajjad, Majida Tamimi, Intisar Jabouri.

5. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

CSOs are an instrumental stakeholder in the aims of the project, and in relation to the four other stakeholders. They are the bridge between citizens and political institutions (Fig. 3), often unaffiliated to any political party or bloc and have the main aims of advocating for better policies for citizens, based on the significant accumulation of expertise around a particular policy area. They will be a key stakeholder for gathering evidence to channel to the relevant committees we are working with, during their inquiry processes, and are a prime partner to engage with in hard to reach regions.

Through its extensive reach and networks of CSOs in Iraq, IF arranged several sessions with multiple CSOs in August and September 2019, which gave an initial broad outlook of various policies they are working on, in response to issues facing citizens. One session in Erbil particularly brought together CSO representatives and MPs from the Kurdistan region, on how the two bodies can work better together to represent and respond to citizens' needs, resulting in the Deputy Speaker, Dr Bashir Haddad calling for a closer monitoring system of

committees' engagement with CSOs. Another key component of that same visit in Erbil was that it allowed our team to engage with NGOs, and to convene effective planning meetings between NGOs, staff from the COROs and MPs from the region. These meetings provided indeed a good basis to build effective and functioning mechanisms for the purpose of this project, through convening all these actors together for discussions and strategic planning to improve future cooperation and coordination on issues of service delivery that are of concern for the Iraqi civil society.

Other sessions with CSOs have been fine-tuned to represent policy issues the project will be concerned with. In September 2019, IF held a workshop with 18 CSOs from 6 Governorates to explore how they could feedback citizens' concerns into the work of parliament, particularly into the committees' inquiries. All CSOs covered in their work the policy issues relevant for the policy inquiries by parliamentary committees of this project: Public Services, Finance, Health & Environment, Education, Youth, Human Rights and Women. In the focus of discussion with CSOs were data-gathering techniques, challenges to access information, including contacting MPs, and the consequences of not communicating and cooperating appropriately with MPs and the committees. All CSOs expressed the importance for official mechanisms of communication with the parliament and they are ready to play their role in that. A separate discussion on the Banking System in Iraq showed the interest of CSOs in enhanced cooperation with private banks and to help bridge the gap between citizens and the banking system by performing awareness-raising activities.

This workshop also helped to identify areas for support and learning, expressed by the present CSOs. Among the top priority for skills development were: How to write international reports, advanced training on data collection tools, and knowledge and skills in new methods of data analysis.

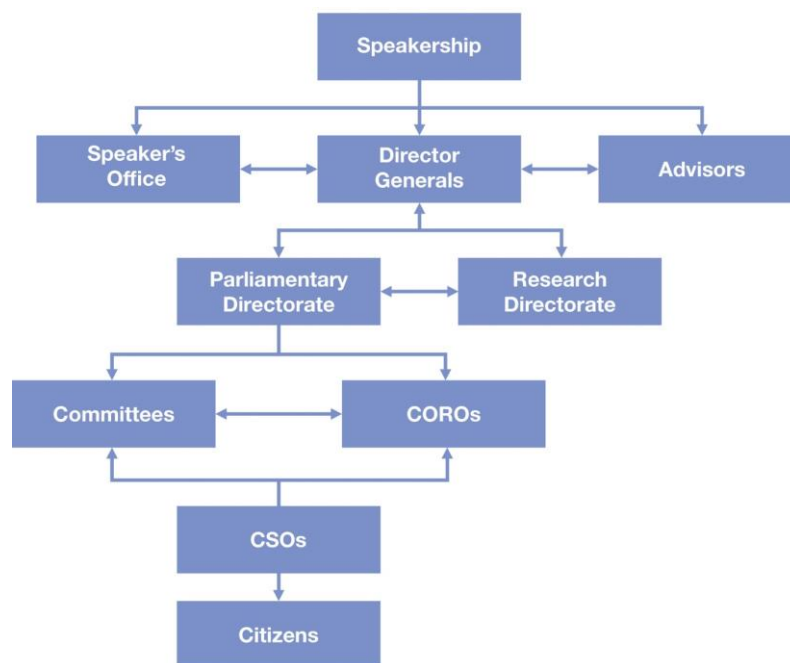
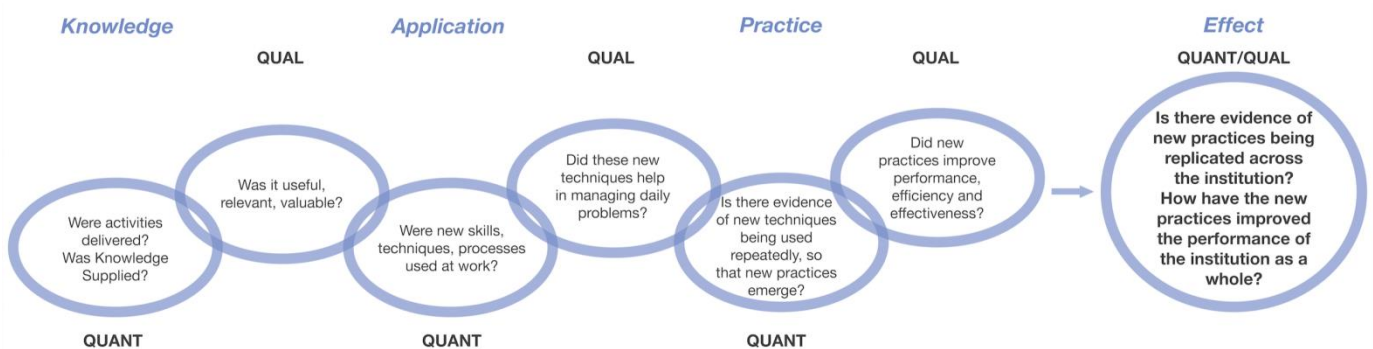


Fig. 3 GPG's and IF's current stakeholder engagement

3. Project Objectives, Main Activities and KAPE Approach

IF and GPG’s political reform projects always adopt a ‘learning by doing’ approach, characterised by helping partners to find practical and pragmatic solutions to real problems, and providing hands on guidance and mentoring for partners to implement and institutionalise positive behaviour change. Sustainable reforms must be led and implemented by those affected by the changes. Local partners are the ones to ultimately have to make things work in the long run and therefore must own and drive the process from the beginning.

To support operationalisation of this approach, GPG uses its own project management tool, KAPE® (see diagram below). KAPE stands for Knowledge – Application – Practice – Effect. It provides a framework for thinking about sustainable behaviour change through a chain of mutually reinforcing steps beginning at a basic level with the provision of new knowledge to project partners, then supporting the application of these new techniques in the management of daily work. GPG works with its partners to ensure that these new ways of working are used repeatedly over time, so that they become accepted and standard practice amongst the target group. Having established such pockets of good practice, the aim is to replicate these techniques more widely, creating a wider effect that alters the processes, behaviour and performance of the system as a whole. This section of the report outlines the main activities achieved in each strand of the project and provides an analysis of progress against the KAPE chain.



Main Activities conducted in Year 1

The main activities conducted in the first year, are detailed below under each of the project strands.

1) Strategic and Reform-Focused Political Leadership within Parliament

The first strand of the project seeks to strengthen the strategic leadership within the CoR. As we set out in the original proposal, the purpose is to support parliamentary leaders in developing the internal mechanisms of the CoR, implementing procedural reforms, and co-ordinating dialogue around policy priorities between different trends to improve both the legislative and accountability functions of parliament. As explained in the stakeholder analysis, the leadership of the parliament engaged in this project strand covers three key actors: the Speaker, the Deputy Speakers, and the Parliamentary Staff Directorates.

Support to the Speaker of Parliament

We met with the Speaker in March 2019 to discuss ways in which we might support his strategic leadership of the parliament and are in regular contact with the senior staff he deputed to work with us on the project's objectives. The Speaker is aware of both IF and GPG's work with previous parliaments and was enthusiastic about the prospect of further support. He has appointed Mohammed Jawad, his Advisor as the main point of contact for GPG and IF to report back to him directly on developments and anything we may need. He has also appointed Haidar Muthana, Head of the Parliamentary Directorate, The Speaker's objectives can be summarised in four main areas:

i) Building the capacity of MPs

The Speaker was enthusiastic for IF and GPG to build the capacity of Iraqi MPs to be effective in their roles, especially given that the majority are newly elected MPs. This will best be achieved through training and peer-to-peer mentoring through the other project strands (such as committee work). The Speaker clearly explained that MPs need better tools and techniques, drawn from international best practice, on how to effectively manage and scrutinise legislation. This activity refers to the second and fourth project strands which have begun and are explained more below.

ii) The perception of MPs as acting in the public's interest.

This touches on elements of the conduct of MPs, which has been a repeated issue in Iraq and was again called into question in December 2018, when the Prime Minister, Abdul-Mahdi put forward his cabinet nominations for the CoR to vote on. With a majority of new MPs taking up their places in the CoR, the Speaker faces some challenges in engaging and educating MPs on the parliamentary code of ethics and conduct, of which GPG was instrumental in the design and implementation in the previous parliamentary term. However, the more urgent approach in addressing this perception links closely with the strategic communications of how the public views MPs and engages with them, not only through their performances in plenary aired on TV or social media, but through the actual work and impact they are conducting in their committees, how they are impacting legislation, their work in the constituencies and engagement with the electorate.

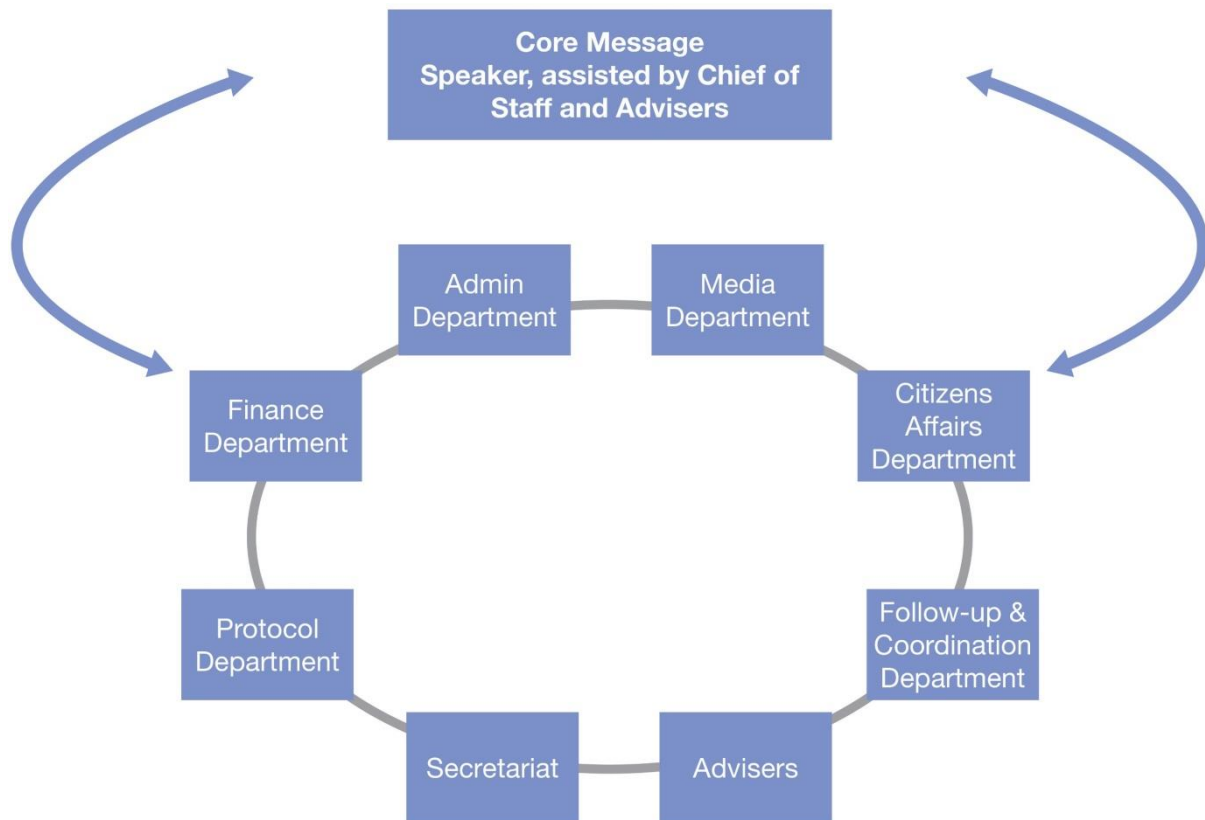
iii) Support to key committees

The Speaker was eager for us to provide targeted support to several committees. GPG previously worked closely with one of the Speaker's senior advisers, Mohammed Jawad, when he was the senior staff member on the Finance Committee, and both the Speaker and Mohammed Jawad were keen for us to continue to work with the Finance Committee in this parliament, given its critical role in the budget oversight process as well as in oversight of economic, trade and investment policy, crucial to Iraq's future prosperity.

iv) Strategic Communications

The Speaker highlighted key aspects of his approach to parliamentary leadership and a strategic programme of reform and his priority to project the CoR's efforts and achievements to the Iraqi people, and to the international community. We have begun work with Speaker's senior staff to develop that strategy and a communications plan to run alongside it. It involves a) public communications strategy for the Speaker around his leadership (internal and external facing), b) strategic communications by parliament, e.g. work of the individual committees and policy areas tied to a central CoR strategy, c)

communicating effectively with the international community. This can be summarised by the following diagram taken from the initial strategy framework produced for the Speaker's Office.



We have begun with developing four main principles of the Speaker's Offices Strategic Communications Plan:

1. Defining the message.
2. Identifying the roles and contributions of each department in the Speaker's Office and linking them with relevant departments in the CoR.
3. Planning and implementing specific activities which fulfil the plan.
4. Coordinating activities between departments and feeding back to the overall strategy.

Engagement with Deputy Speakers

We met with and secured support for our project from the Second Deputy Speaker, Dr Bashir Al-Haddad, and his Chief of Staff, with whom we worked previously. Dr Bashir is keen for us to work with committees as well as provide support to the Kurdistan region and parliament. His recent visit to a NATO conference in London allowed us to reinforce this relationship in supporting a key meeting between Dr Bashir and his UK counterpart, the (then) Deputy Speaker of the UK's House of Commons, Lindsay Hoyle, who is now the elected Speaker of the House of Commons.

GPG has no direct contact with the First Deputy Speaker, largely due to Sairun's official stance on having no contact or lines of communications with the UK and US. Through GPG's

reputation and contacts in the CoR, the First Deputy Speaker is aware of GPG's previous work on reforms and is supportive of our project. As we have done in the past, we will continue to work around this. This ability to navigate political sensitivities is one of the strengths of the collaboration between IF and GPG.

Support to Parliamentary Staff Directorates

On our first visit to Baghdad, we were able to meet with the (then) Secretary General, Salaheddin Zangana, and the Deputy Secretary General, Dr Baadi, with the support of Haidar Muthana. After meeting with all the Director Generals, arranged by Dr Baadi, to discuss our project proposals, we established how best we can support the Director Generals and senior staff across the CoR as a whole. They were highly supportive of our work, and on the basis of their feedback, we have targeted three directorates as our key contacts and interlocuters, Haidar Muthana, Head of the Parliamentary Directorate, Dr Mayada Hachimi, Head of the Research Directorate, and Ali Salam, Head of the Protocol/ International Affairs Directorate. These three Directorates were indicated by the Speaker for us to support, and who have the most interaction with parliamentary committees and offer the greatest opportunities for impact in public engagement.

- Support to Haidar Muthana, Head of the **Parliamentary Directorate** has consisted of developing strategic plans and mechanisms for improving coordination between committees and regional CoR offices, in responses to citizens' needs, improving service delivery and policy. He has highlighted the importance of working with key regions (such as Nineveh, Basra, Karbala and Anbar), where there has been public unrest, or which are emerging from occupation by Daesh. As a result, and on request from Haidar, GPG has produced a detailed paper for a strategic framework and mechanism to improve systems, processes and coordination between the regional COROs and committees which now forms the foundation of our support to the Parliamentary Directorate for the second project year.
- Support to Dr Mayada Hachimi, Head of the **Research Directorate** has focused so far on providing tools and techniques on how to measure the performance of committees and the CoR as a whole, using the data collated for the parliamentary term 2014-2018. This will serve as the basis for an annual parliamentary publication, and we have already delivered an intensive seminar on how to write, structure and present findings, based on similar examples in parliaments internationally. The report will serve three purposes: (1) to help the Speaker/parliamentary leaders coordinate and evaluate the work of the individual committees; (2) to provide an internal stimulus for better performance amongst committees; and (3) to provide public accountability on the performance of parliament.

Dr Mayada has also asked for our support to measure the government's performance more systematically, which will help to provide a monitor of whether the government is delivering in key policy areas against its programme, and provide useful materials and mechanisms for committees on which to base their oversight approaches, thus improving parliament's overall ability to hold the government to account. We envisage linking this stream of work with the new Government Strategy Committee (which is explained in more detail below).

2) More Effective Parliamentary Committees

The purpose of the strand is to increase the ability of parliamentary committees to deliver effective policy legislation and oversight. Although the plenary session of any parliament generates the most media coverage, the detailed scrutiny and amendment of policy and legislation is conducted in committees. The effectiveness of the CoR's committees as a driver of more inclusive policy processes depends on the extent to which their members can put aside partisan or religious differences and work collaboratively to develop common policy objectives that deliver for all citizens and engage effectively with those on the receiving end of legislation and service delivery. In particular, committees should be playing a regular and routine role in post-legislative scrutiny (PLS), testing whether laws have been implemented properly, whether they are having the desired effect and whether they could be improved.

We have held constructive meetings with several key committees, their members, chairs and committee staff, some of whom we have known for many years from GPG's and IF's previous projects in Baghdad. The impact achieved through this previous work was evident when meeting with committee members, who referenced and acknowledged our work with committees in the previous parliamentary term and requested a similar approach to build on past achievements for this new term.

After committees, chairs and members were formally formed (approx. June 2019), we held targeted meetings with committees who showed good potential for impacting policy and service delivery for citizens and effective engagement with CSOs. The high level of demand from several committees is a positive challenge but means there are more committees than we can work with, given the level of resources. Therefore, we took advice from key figures in the CoR leadership and made an assessment on the potential impact each committee could have on meaningful policy and service delivery. GPG and IF held consultation and strategic planning sessions with targeted committees, and will be supporting them to conduct parliamentary fact-finding inquiries as listed below:

Finance Committee on an inquiry in building public trust in Iraq's banking system. The Chair of the committee has agreed to the importance of this inquiry, designating a sub-committee and chair for it, with the support of Mohammed Jawad. Through our strategic planning meetings with the committee members and staff, we have developed a set of draft terms of reference, a timeline and sources of information to gather evidence as a starting point for the inquiry to begin.

Services and Reconstruction Committee on an inquiry into sewage and waste management in Iraq. Through our strategic planning meeting with the committee members and staff, we have developed a set of draft terms of reference, a timeline and sources of information to gather evidence as a starting point for the committee to begin their inquiry. The committee has already held several consultation and evidence gathering sessions with heads of key departments.

Health and Environment Committee on an inquiry into water pollution and the impact on public health. Through our strategic planning meeting with the committee members and

staff, we have developed a set of draft terms of reference, a timeline and sources of information to gather evidence as a starting point for the inquiry to begin.

An integrated environmental and climate perspective is one of five perspectives which the Swedish Government has decided that Sida's activities are to be built on and permeated by. Sweden and Sida have led the way in raising the environment and sustainable development on the global agenda. This includes strengthening and promoting environmental sustainability in different sectors and in dialogue with stakeholders at all levels.

Another important element is active work to ensure that the processes, actors and co-operations having the environment as a primary goal – ranging from climate negotiations to contributions for better waste management – are based on a poverty and rights perspective and involve the active participation of women.

IF and GPG's work with the Health and Environment Committee on water pollution and work with the Services Committee on waste management is strongly aligned with Sida's commitment and priorities of addressing environmental issues in Iraq. Close cooperation with the two committees, relevant Ministries and local actors will be key to addressing these issues, along with the active participation of women MPs on the two committees and CSOs.

We are currently assessing the viability and capacity of supporting the **Education Committee** on addressing the issues of young people accessing education and the levels of school drop-outs, particularly that of girls; and the **Youth and Sports Committee** on an oversight inquiry of the Iraqi Government's Youth Strategy. GPG has produced an options paper for the Youth and Sports committee, and the committee has since undertaken a series of consultations and meetings in the Kurdistan region as a first step.

We have also engaged with the **Women, Family and Children Committee**, and the **Human Rights Committee**, however their requirements are more generic for support in setting the committee's strategy, identifying key issues/legislation to address and how to manage effective legislation. It is worth noting the chair for the Women's committee has recently stepped down, and the Human Rights committee is stretched for resources in responding to investigations of violence used on protesters.

Lastly, one key committee we envisage supporting is the **Government Programme and Strategic Planning Committee**. The committee's full title is 'Committee for Oversight of the Implementation of the Government Programme and Strategic Planning'. This is a new committee, with the remit to consider the Government's strategic plan, assess the extent to which Ministers are delivering on the strategy set out by the government and call Ministers to account on that basis. The Iraqi Government published a six-month evaluation during the summer of 2019, of its own performance and achievements against its set Government Programme. The Government Strategy Committee in the CoR responded with its own evaluation, contesting what the Government had claimed it had achieved. The methodology for both the government's report and the committee's response are currently rudimentary and could be significantly improved. We have held several conversations with the Research Department (RD) and the CoR's Government Strategy Committee on the best methods,

tools and mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the Government's programme and performance. Since then we have met with key members and staff of the Government Strategy Committee and given suggestions of different approaches, based on international best practice and expertise, to develop methods, tools and techniques to monitor and evaluate the Government's performance and programme. We have produced a paper outlining our approach in September 2019, although the committee has since been focused on the current unrest taking place.

IF and GPG will continue to adopt a flexible approach to working with committees, that is capable of adding support for other committees, such as the Legal and Regions Committees (as suggested by some in the leadership), should they (or other committees) increase their prominence.

3) Linking Parliament with the Provinces and Constituencies on Service Delivery

The objective of the third strand is to create more productive links between the concerns of citizens locally and the policy and legislative concerns in the CoR. The rationale is to engage with and improve coordination between MPs, civil society and provincial government around improving policy and service delivery at the local level. This strand was designed as an incremental part of the project, which would build on initial work in the other three strands, and as such work has scaled up in the second half of the year once specific policy issues have been identified amongst MPs and regional CoR offices.

GPG has worked previously with the CoR regional offices and has helped them develop from basic meeting spaces, often under-utilised by MPs, towards a more strategic resource that can provide targeted support for policy work. However, their competencies remain fragmentary and inconsistently used. A meeting we held in Baghdad with senior staff and managers from the CoR offices in Basra and Nineveh provinces identified some of the principal challenges they face locally and resulted in a survey of all 20 regional CoR offices (conducted June 2019). The results from the survey indicate that electricity, water, employment, health and education are the main policy areas of concern facing citizens who engage with the COROs. The survey also helped to compile a list of skills and training required for staff to effectively operate in their regional offices. We conducted a day long-session with several COROs in the Kurdistan region in Erbil (August 2019). The outcomes from this session, along with the survey results, provided invaluable information to the Parliamentary Directorate, Haidar Muthana in identifying the key areas of support. As a result, GPG produced an extensive paper and plan for the Parliamentary Directorate, based on a needs assessment/ analysis conducted with Haidar Muthana in September, resulting in the Parliamentary Directorate requesting a strategic framework and mechanism to improve systems, processes and coordination between the regional COROs and committees. We envisage coordinating and linking this with the Strategic Communications plan being carried out with the Speaker's Office. To reiterate, this activity of work with the Parliamentary Directorate will prove pivotal for the project, as it cuts across all three of the first project strands.

4) Cross-cutting support to women MPs

The rationale of this fourth strand builds on, and informs all of the previous three objectives, as a cross-cutting theme of all our work in supporting women politicians in Iraq. Women politicians have played an important role in the Iraqi parliament and public life. Yet, they remain under-represented in senior political, party and public positions. The inadequate representation of women in political institutions at both the federal and provincial level distorts the way in which policy is formulated and implemented. This cross-cutting strand aims to support women politicians at every level, but particularly in leadership roles within the parliament, as well as improving skills and tools for women MPs to play a greater role within their blocs and parties at national and local level, shaping policy, gender sensitive policy-making, campaigns and dialogue and establishing support networks within parliament for women politicians nationally.

The implementation of project activities has progressed very well over the past year, and has achieved the planned intermediate outcomes, with engagement with newly elected, influential MPs, as well as long-standing and established MPs. In the early stages, we identified key female MPs who were re-elected and with whom GPG and IF have longstanding relationships, such as Ala Talabani, Huda Sajjad, Intisar Jabouri and Dr Majida Tamimi. They have been important in building relationships with the newly elected MPs, endorsing our project, but also exemplifying GPG's and IF's approaches to using locally led expertise and knowledge.

To support women politicians in Iraq with view to enhancing their role in the Iraqi parliament and to help promote gender-sensitive legislation, three seminars were held by IF and GPG in the first year of the project (2018-19):

1. March 2019 in Baghdad which scoped the challenges facing women MPs and how the project can best help address the challenges.
2. April 2019 in Baghdad held a seminar on the roles of women MPs in parliamentary oversight, and an introduction to gender analysis of legislation.
3. September 2019 a seminar focusing on gender analysis of legislation with local experts.

The total number women MPs that have engaged with the project is 25 (to each of the first two workshops) which demonstrates the relevance of the issues covered. The lower turnout of the September workshop with 8 attendees was due to the busy parliamentary schedule during that week. An analysis conducted by IF has identified the most engaged and effective women MPs we have worked with.¹ We will continue to work with this core group of women MPs and the women's network in Parliament, with special emphasis on newly elected women MPs to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to strengthen their role in parliament, and to help them promote gender-sensitive legislation and policy-making.

¹ See Appendix 3: **Progress Report - work-strand 4: Cross-cutting support to Women MPs**

IF's expertise in this area meant we were able to mobilise and engage with a good number of women MPs and continue to build on the positive relationships which IF have cultivated. GPG Associates Baroness Alison Suttie, who has extensive expertise in parliamentary committee work from her experience in the House of Lords, and European Parliament, and Meg Munn, former FCO Minister and Minister for Women and Equalities in the UK facilitated a series of seminars, which focused on supporting women MPs to better understand and improve their roles in parliamentary oversight. Meg used the recent *'Global Parliamentary Report 2017—Parliamentary oversight: Parliament's power to hold government to account'*, which she helped develop with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, with a particular focus on 'tips for MPs'. The publication is available in Arabic also and was deemed as a very useful resources for the newly elected MPs.

The IF-led workshop on "Gender analysis of legislation" in September 2019 presented a number of key legislations with impact on women, and conveyed knowledge and skills to use for gender analysis in legislation, with regard to approved bills and proposals of law. The need for more focused training for women MPs on the application of gender analysis in legislation, and continuous support to help them strengthen their role, especially at this regard, in parliament, were important outcomes of this last workshop.

To further develop the strategic direction of this strand, GPG and IF have recently developed a short questionnaire, and conducted face-to-face/phone discussions with the women MPs that have engaged with us on the project thus far (although this activity has taken place outside of the year 1 project timeframe). The results will help determine the next stages of development and programming for year two activities.

[Analysis against GPG's KAPE project management model](#)

The activities and achievements discussed under each project strand have been continuously monitored and evaluated using our internal KAPE model, to ensure the activities move progressively into the next stages of the chain. By the nature of this project, the first year has been heavily focused on the Knowledge phase and has started to move towards the Application phase at the end of the first year. Year two will be focused on developing the activities through the application phase, although some activities have already started this stage. By the end of year two, we envisage activities to have progressed closer to the phase of Practice, before being able to monitor and evaluate any Effect.

Knowledge:

- Delivery of seminars/coaching:
 - Women MPs (x3 seminars)
 - Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) and oversight inquiry training for x3 committees (Finance, Services and Reconstruction and Health and Environment);
 - Staff from the Research Directorate (x2 seminars); on how to write effective reports and on post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) inquiries
- Produced a guide to inquiries booklet for Committees and the Parliamentary Directorate (in Arabic and English)
- Produced a strategic framework for the Parliamentary Directorate on improving mechanisms and coordination between Committees and COROs.

- Produced templates of strategic plans for COROs
- Produced papers for the government strategy committee and approaches for measuring and evaluating the government’s performance, based on international best practice
- Produced framework and outline of a communications strategy for the Speaker’s Office

This phase also relates to IF’s and GPG’s own knowledge and understanding of the context, which includes:

- Surveys conducted with the COROs
- x2 interactive sessions held with CSOs (in Erbil and Baghdad)
- all the introductory meetings we held throughout the first year, which includes the first six months of scoping, meetings with officials from the Kurdistan Parliament, and the international community such as the British Embassy, US Embassy, Canadian organisations and the World Bank.

Application:

This phase is just starting with some activities, at the end of year one, where the committees have begun to implement the inquiry process, such as the Services Committee, the Finance Committee and the Health and Environment Committee for example. They have identified the policy issues they want to focus on, set their terms of references (set of questions and issues they will examine), a realistic timeline and the sources of information they will collate evidence from.

Practice: It is too early in the project phase to expect any activities to fall into this phase at this stage. However, the work we have started with the Director General of the Parliamentary Directorate, Haider Muthana, on how to coordinate the whole parliamentary system better will begin to flow into this section, which has just started towards the end of the first year. The Speaker’s Office strategic communications work also falls into this phase, as we begin to implement and develop the communications strategy plan and frameworks to apply.

Effect: Again, it is too early to expect any Effect from project activities, after only year 1.



Looking ahead

The first year of the project has developed a sound basis on which to proceed with the implementation of activities. Work on the first strand, **Strategic Political Leadership** will be an important focus for this project in the coming months, particularly in light of the public protests and the need for parliament to prove its value. Thus far we have won crucial support and endorsement from the most senior levels of leadership in the Iraqi CoR, in a short amount of time. On the basis of shared priorities, we have developed plans and templates for discussion with our partners. The next step is to translate these plans into specific actions which will begin to create the basis for new processes and procedures and new behaviours across the different layers of the institution.

We expect to see continued momentum in the second strand on developing **Effective Parliamentary Committees**. We have highlighted the key committees with which we plan to work (Reconstruction and Services Committee, Women's Committee, Foreign Affairs Committee, Finance Committee, Health and Environment Committee, and the Committee for the Oversight of the Implementation of the Government Programme and Strategic Planning). Whilst this strand was initially delayed by the time taken to formally appoint committee chairs, we were able to start the strategic planning process with the committees informally and this meant that work on inquiries progressed significantly in the latter part of the year. A challenge may be in managing expectations as we will not be able to support all the committees who would like to work with us, but it is more important to ensure that committees undertake the engagement process effectively and that this can form the basis for effective processes which can be documented and disseminated across the institution later in the project.

Equally, once the committee inquiry processes are underway, we will be in a position to make progress on the third strand, **Linking Parliament with the Provinces and Constituencies**, through linking Regional CoR Offices with committees conducting policy inquiries on specific issues of local importance, bringing in civil society expertise.

Lastly, we will continue to deliver bespoke **mentoring for women MPs around legislation, parliamentary oversight, leadership skills and gender-sensitive policy-making**. On the basis of a feedback exercise conducted at the start of year two, we will adjust our approach and ensure it meets the needs of the women's network in Parliament, with special regard to the newly elected women MPs and the core group of women MPs who are most likely to influence reform. We will also engage with the new Chair of the Women's committee to offer our support.

In summary, the first year has laid the foundations for future work in all four project strands. The politics of Iraq continue to be uncertain, but we are reassured by the level of traction that the project's objectives have already achieved with the key political stakeholders in Iraq who have continued to engage with us even in difficult circumstances, demonstrating that they value the targeted, politically agile and expert form of support being offered by IF and GPG.

4. Lessons Learned

On the whole, there are many positives for IF and GPG to take away from the first year of the project. Most of the MPs we engaged with, had a genuine commitment and appetite to address the issues faced by Iraqis. For example, during our consultation meetings with committee MPs, there were lengthy and in-depth discussions on selecting issues that directly impact the citizens, which showed they were engaged with their electorate, but also genuine in their aim of holding an inquiry that will help citizens. This was reflected in the policy issues they have chosen, already discussed in this report. The engagement by women MPs in the workshops translated their strong interest to better understand and strengthen their roles in parliamentary legislation and oversight. Their commitment to better respond to the needs of their constituents in the legislation process, and their wish to acquire more knowledge and skills for work on gender-sensitive legislation was another important outcome in this first year. The network of women MPs, established in Year 1 and supported by a WhatsApp group, helped to start cross-party dialogue and has played an important role in activating discussion on specific legislation related to women. The level of engagement and good-will shown towards IF and GPG was reassuring. Despite the political turbulence, it was highlighted by several of our partners how much it was appreciated that IF and GPG continued to travel to Iraq, adapt our programmes in Erbil and continue to engage and support them. This level of continuity, building and sustaining relationships is crucial for this project.

Of course, there were also challenges and we use this section to reflect on how we would approach things differently in future. The delayed formation of the government ministries slowed down the initial progress of the project, particularly with the committees. On reflection, we could have started our work with committees and staff indirectly on some of the basic foundations of conducting parliamentary inquiries. We could have also used this time to focus on other strands of the project, for example starting to work with the regional COROs and CSOs to map the issues and policies concerning citizens in different provinces, which could have been presented as research and data for committees to consider, once they had been formally appointed. It is however worth noting the issues of protocol and bureaucracy in the CoR, where many advised us to wait until the committees had been formally appointed before proceeding, so there would have been some risk in this approach.

We also spent some time focusing on the elements of support that actually have moved on a lot from the work we did previously in Iraq. The COR and COROs are more advanced, so the basic level of training is not what is needed any more. We quickly adapted to their needs which is moving more towards to the strategic frameworks, mechanisms and systems to get the parliamentary machine working in a self-sustaining manner. IF and GPG are starting to play more of a politically astute advisory role, rather than offering training on the fundamentals.

We also identified improving the legislature-executive communication and co-ordination mechanism early on in the project as an important area of need, which was something GPG focused on previously in Iraq. One of the previous reforms that GPG suggested was appointing parliamentary liaison officers to liaise between each ministry and parliament.

This was implemented (through the PD), but in a partial way and has proven challenging to progress. As mentioned, the absence of a complete government and lack of policy substance in Year 1 of the project meant that we were not able to push the parliamentary authorities on their links with government. Political sensitivities abound in that relationship until all government appointments have been made. Whilst this is an important issue to address in the future, we will most likely make very little progress on this (improving the communication between government and Parliament via the Speakership) in year two, particularly with the government resigning at the end of November 2019.

Our work with the women MPs had a high level of engagement at the start of the project, however engagement and interest were diminishing towards the end of year one. This could be due to several factors, ranging from choosing inconvenient dates to hold sessions, clashing with a busy parliamentary schedule, or that the women MPs are not feeling the sessions are useful for them. We have already started to address this in year two, through an impact engagement survey, face-to-face meetings and phone calls to re-engage and establish relationships with them and refresh our understanding on how we can most effectively support them. Our work with the Women's committee has equally been disrupted with the chair resigning as an MP.

Given the current context of Iraqi politics, we will be closely monitoring the political context to ensure our support remains relevant to the changing circumstances. This may produce new opportunities to engage with MPs and committees who see the need to reform in the face of public protest, but there is also the risk of disruption to project plans in the event of unexpected developments. Ongoing political analysis and communication with our partners will be essential, as well as careful risk management.

5. Risk Assessment and Management Plan

IF and GPG Approach to Risk Management

Both the Iraq Foundation (IF) and Global Partners Governance (GPG) have extensive experience working with political actors in the fragile and volatile context of Iraq. Programming in unstable political contexts requires contingency planning to be integrated into project design from the outset in order to be delivered effectively and to maximise impacts. Our risk register assesses the level of different kinds of risk (including political, operational, financial, reputational, physical safety and any other relevant risks) and proposes mitigation or management approaches. Project Managers oversee the risk registers and review them regularly.

Our approach is problem driven and designed to ensure we only support activities that enjoy a high level of legitimacy with and ownership by our counterparts. This is achieved through carefully calculated political engagement at national and provincial level around clearly bounded problems that are owned by our counterparts from the outset. These problems act as the entry points for iterative activity to address the critical shortcomings in political governance and government delivery that are currently apparent in Iraq. Throughout this process we continually develop and manage relationships with multiple interlocutors, to limit the impact of individuals withdrawing ownership or changing position. Risks are scored according to the matrix below:

RATING	LIKELIHOOD OF THE RISK ARISING	PROBABILITY	CONSEQUENCE/SEVERITY/IMPACT				
			INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC
5	Almost certain to happen	>90%	5 MEDIUM	10 HIGH	15 HIGH	20 EXTREME	25 EXTREME
4	High likelihood of the risk happening	75%-90%	4 LOW	8 MEDIUM	12 HIGH	16 EXTREME	20 EXTREME
3	Probably could happen	50%-75%	3 LOW	6 MEDIUM	9 HIGH	12 HIGH	15 HIGH
2	Likely to happen but would be surprised if it did	25%-50%	2 LOW	4 LOW	6 MEDIUM	8 MEDIUM	10 HIGH
1	Could happen but it is considered unlikely	0%-25%	1 LOW	2 LOW	3 LOW	4 LOW	5 MEDIUM

The risk matrix for the first year of the project can be found in the Appendix.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Monitoring And Evaluation Of Year One’s Proposed Outcomes

This table aims to give an overview of progress and report against each project strand, in accordance with the Year One outcomes proposal submitted in 2018. The ‘High Level Outcomes’, ‘Intermediate Outcomes’ and ‘Activities’ columns were submitted at the start of Year One. The final column, ‘Progress and follow-up’ gives a summary of year one progress. This table is complementary to the KAPE analysis in the report. Some Intermediate Outcomes and Activities in the original proposal and below cross-over between Year 1 and 2, and are highlighted as such below, otherwise everything else relates to Year 1 activity only.

High-Level Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Activities	(M&E) Progress and follow up
1. Strategic and Reform-Focused Political Leadership within Parliament			
<p>The Speakership of the CoR develops more efficient and streamlined policy and legislative processes.</p>	<p>1. Speakership identifies priority areas for reform within CoR procedures through better coordination and communication within the Speakership.</p> <p>2. A strategy for Improving CoR procedures is developed based on priorities to enhance coordination and collaboration between the speakership and government around the planning scrutiny and follow up of legislation.</p>	<p><i>(Year 1 & 2)</i></p> <p>1. GPG to engage with senior leadership in the CoR and assess the blockages in the policy/legislative process.</p> <p>2. GPG to hold a series of peer-to-peer mentoring sessions with the speakership and parliamentary staff to agree priority areas for improvements.</p> <p>3. GPG to provide direct support to staff in developing an action plan for reforming the legislative/policy process in the CoR.</p> <p>4. GPG to provide guidance to senior leadership in creating a public engagement strategy for the CoR.</p>	<p>1. We have engaged with all the key levels of senior leadership in the CoR to examine and assess the blockages and challenges they are facing (including the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Secretary General; all Director Generals, the Parliamentary Directorate (PD), and Research Directorate). This has resulted in the Speaker identifying three key areas of support for IF and GPG to target. We have examined the reforms and priority areas with the PD and are currently developing a revised set of reforms for the CoR.</p> <p>2. Senior officials and staff in the CoR have identified the need for a strategy to improve procedures and coordination between COROs and Committees as a first step; GPG has provided a framework which is being further developed in Year 2 of the project. Coordination and collaboration between the speakership and</p>

			<p>government is more politically sensitive and can follow the above strategy.</p> <p>GPG has begun mentoring sessions with the Speaker's Office, upon agreeing priorities to develop a strategic communications plan and engagement strategy. GPG has also begun mentoring sessions with the Parliamentary Directorate staff, upon agreeing priorities to develop a mechanism and framework to improve coordination between Regional COROs and Committees for better policy delivery. (= former activity under work-strand 3 to support CoR regional offices to engage effectively with local groups and channel evidence to relevant CoR bodies).</p> <p>IF and GPG have also agreed with the Deputy Speaker for Committees to improve engagement with CSOs in Iraq.</p> <p>3. Based on the agreed priorities under the second activity above, the Speaker and the PD have asked the project to focus on improving the CoR's responsiveness to public issues (through committees, developing MPs' capacities, better public engagement strategies, and better coordination between committees, COROs and the Parliament). GPG has started doing this with the PD staff and the Speaker's Office staff, and this will continue to develop throughout Year 2.</p> <p>4. This activity has begun through several papers, mechanisms and strategies GPG has developed for the PD and Speaker's Office. This will continue into year 2, in an adaptive and iterative</p>
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			process of piloting ideas and strategies with the senior leadership staff.
2. Parliamentary Committees adopt more inclusive and evidence-based policy mechanisms			
Committees in the CoR are more representative of their constituents by regularly feeding public concerns into the policy making process, holding government to account for implementation, and as a result improving service delivery.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Committees prioritise key policy areas for improvement, through constructive dialogue between committees and civil society. 2. Committee members and staff have better understanding of techniques and standard practices for consultation and engagement with citizens to evaluate the delivery of existing laws as well as the proposal of new ones. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GPG to hold a series of capacity building sessions with the aim of introducing new oversight techniques to committee members and staff, including PLS, underpinned by peer-to-peer mentoring and coaching from GPG Associates. 2. IF and GPG to facilitate consultation sessions with local CSO's and NGOs to identify priority issues that need to be addressed. 3. GPG to support committees in selecting inquiry topics based on evidence collected from consultations with the public. 	<p>1. We have identified several committees and policy areas through a series of capacity building sessions (GPG):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Committee: agreement from the Chair of the Finance Committee to work with Dr Mohammed Tamimi, Chair (plus members and staff) of the Banking Sub-Committee, who would like us to focus on the implementation of legislation, as the next steps of the inquiry in "Building Public Trust in Iraq's Banking System". Inquiry ToR, timelines and stakeholders have been identified and agreed upon. • Services Committee on Sewage Management: the committee held several hearings covering policy areas resulting from discussions in Erbil in August 2019. The inquiry ToR, timelines and stakeholders have been identified and agreed upon. • Health and Environment Committee on Sources of Water Pollution in Iraq and the Impact on Public Health. Inquiry ToR, timelines and stakeholders have been identified and agreed upon. • Youth and Sports Committee – requested support on 'Oversight of the Government's Youth Policy; an oversight inquiry on the Iraqi Government's Youth Strategy'. To be explored further based on IF and GPG

			<p>capacities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Strategy Committee – requested support on methods, tools and techniques to monitor and evaluate the Government’s performance and programme. GPG to assess capacities. • Education Committee – requested support on addressing the issue of school drop outs amongst young people, particularly girls. To be explored further based on IF and GPG capacities. • Women’s Committee – requested support on managing effective legislation and issues relating to Women, Children and Families. • Human Rights Committee – requested support on the Committee’s 6-month strategy. <p>2. Consultation sessions have begun with some committees; IF to further target relevant CSOs/ policy areas.</p> <p>3. Topics have been identified and agreed upon; work has begun to support committees and staff on improving techniques and standard practices for consultation and engagement with citizens to evaluate the delivery of existing laws as well as the proposal of new ones (this is cross-cutting with the proposed work with Parliamentary Directorate).</p>
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3. Linking Parliament with the Provinces and Constituencies on Service Delivery (Initial work in Baghdad as a pilot followed by Basra and Erbil)

<p>A clear mechanism for the escalation and resolution of local service delivery issues established between national and local governments.</p>	<p><i>Year 1 & 2</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local government, groups, and civil society stakeholders are supported to bring their concerns and evidence to the parliament and to feed them into the national policy making process effectively through the network of CoR regional offices. 2. CoR regional offices are supported to engage effectively with local groups and channel evidence to relevant CoR bodies (e.g. committees conducting policy inquiries) 	<p><i>Year 1 & 2</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IF, GPG and Basra NGO and research teams meet with lawmakers locally in Baghdad and Basra at COR regional offices. 2. IF to organise monthly Call-in radio for committee members. 6 radio programs in each province IF and Basra NGOs and teams meet with provincial councils and governments in Baghdad and Basra on selected topics. 3. IF, GPG and Basra NGO organize town hall meetings in Baghdad and Basra with MPs, and provincial council members and/or provincial government. 4. GPG to support the CoR, CoR offices, and provincial council in developing a mechanism for better coordination, communication, and feedback on emerging policy issues. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work has begun to support NGOs and CSOs on the policy issues that committees have identified. Work in Basra has been hindered due to security concerns, although work in Erbil (Kurdistan region) has developed in its place. Therefore, there will be a revised focus for Year 2 on Baghdad, Kurdistan and other priority regions that are mostly impacted by the policy issues being examined. 2. Not yet started – see Year 2 revised plans submitted August 2019. 3. Not yet started – see Year 2 revised plans submitted August 2019. 4. This activity has started with work in Erbil and Baghdad, resulting in a series of survey results, which has formed the basis of priorities and frameworks for the PD developing improved mechanisms between COROs and Committees, both departments and is now part of support to the Speakership and PD (see Work-strand 1: GPG support to PD-led initiative to develop a mechanism and framework to improve coordination between Regional COROs and Committees for better policy delivery).
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4. Cross-cutting support to women politicians

<p>Women MPs are better placed to take up senior leadership positions and to use these positions effectively to bring gender issues onto the political agenda.</p>	<p>1. Effectiveness of Women MPs strengthened through peer-to-peer mentoring and coaching</p> <p>2. Women and Men MPs have a greater understanding of how to examine the differential impact of policies and legislation impact based on gender.</p>	<p>1. IF and GPG to identify women MPs to engage with in building a clear picture of specific obstacles facing female representatives, incentives and barriers to greater empowerment.</p> <p>2. IF and GPG provide targeted mentoring and coaching sessions for women MPs on tackling discrimination and other barriers based on this analysis.</p> <p>3. IF and GPG to deliver capacity building sessions to help men and women MPs better assess the impact of policies and legislation on women and girls.</p>	<p>1. IF and GPG have identified and began working with group of newly elected women MPs, including a core group of most engaged women, on gender analysis of legislation and better tools for oversight. IF continues to build on the positive relationships cultivated with women MPs by staying engaged with them through regular face-to-face/phone meetings, by email and social media.</p> <p>2. IF and GPG have held several targeted mentoring and coaching seminars for women MPs on tackling discrimination and other barriers based on this analysis.</p> <p>3. Not yet started – see Year 2 revised plans submitted August 2019.</p>
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Appendix 2: Risk Matrix For Year One

Risk	Mitigation Strategy	Update at end of Year 1 (Sept 2019)	Current Rating
<p>Political Dynamics and Conflict Sensitivity Complex conflict dynamics have the potential for interventions to inadvertently drive conflict rather than contributing to stability. The fractured nature of Iraqi society means it is important to establish, deploy and continuously monitor an effective political engagement strategy. There is a risk that project work might be perceived as unwanted external political interference.</p>	<p>The experience of IF and GPG in Iraq over many years means that we have existing relationships cross-party with politicians from all parts of the political spectrum in Iraq, and a close understanding of how they interact. Our team will use their understanding of Iraqi politics alongside a focused problem driven approach to help our counterparts map out appropriate change pathways and implement new policies and strategies.</p> <p>Effective governance support depends on detailed understanding of political context at national, provincial and local level – meaning a vertically integrated approach. The partnership between IF, an Iraqi organisation, and GPG, an organisation which has a long track record of work within the Council of Representatives, enables us to combine high-level strategic engagements at national level with the capability to provide implementation at provincial level using IF's national partner network. IF and GPG already have extensive experience of national and provincial governance in Iraq and have an inclusive and participative approach to build legitimacy and strengthen political settlements, particularly at lower tiers of government.</p> <p>The project team will continuously build on our existing knowledge, further developing entry points, refining our</p>	<p>During the first year of the project, there was a prolonged process of government formation which involved brokering between the different sectarian blocs post-elections. This delayed the work of the Parliament and particularly formation of its committees, where posts also needed to be negotiated across sectarian/political lines.</p> <p>At an early stage, the project team sought and gained introductory meetings with senior interlocutors from key blocs, including the Speaker and Second Deputy Speaker, as well as influential figures within different movements and institutions (for example, senior women MPs; senior staff; representatives of the Iraqi and Kurdistan Embassies in London etc). The purpose of these meetings was to gain buy-in for the project and allay any fears about external political meddling. The project also met informally with a wide spectrum of likely committee members before the committees were formed, to gain an understanding of the political issues likely to be on their agenda.</p> <p>Since the summer, as work</p>	<p>Likelihood: 4 (High) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 8 (Medium)</p>

	<p>engagement strategy and building our understanding of local power dynamics through implementation, reflecting our findings through our iterative approach. We will consider the underlying structural dynamics – including tribe/sub-tribe, sect, political affiliations and the proximate drivers – such as the liberation of areas currently or recently not under GOI control, displacement, stabilisation efforts and security provision. Our aim will be to ensure we are not supporting agendas that might drive conflict. To mitigate this risk, IF and GPG will strive to establish collaborative dialogue between citizens and local and national CoR officials. These dialogues will help deal with citizens’ concerns and strengthen the capacity of parliament to address priority issues like citizen insecurity and restore trust between citizens and local officials.</p> <p>There are occasions when national politics will inevitably lead to delays or postponements of parliamentary business. The design of the project to work both at national and local levels means we will be able to shift focus between different strands to continue work when this occurs.</p>	<p>with Committees on oversight inquiries has begun, IF and GPG have worked with committees to select subjects which will be of relevance to citizens and will meet their priorities for improved service delivery in the different regions of Iraq. Issues including wastewater management, the financial system, the quality of education and the situation of young people are policy areas in which there is good potential for positive engagement with civil society at local and national level. The recent public protests surrounding continued poor services (October 2019) demonstrate the need for significant improvement in levels of engagement between citizens and their representatives on these issues.</p> <p>The project visit to Erbil in August 2019 enabled the team to deepen their analysis of regional dynamics outside Baghdad and in particular of the crucial Erbil-Baghdad political relationship. The visit to Erbil also allowed the project to progress on work with the Regional COROs, who are at the forefront of responding to issues facing citizens.</p>	
<p>Local Ownership and Sustainable Behaviour Change Local ownership is an underlying driver of progress toward achieving project outcomes. Externally</p>	<p>Our approach is problem driven and designed to ensure we only support activities that enjoy a high level of legitimacy with and ownership by our counterparts. This is achieved through carefully calculated political engagement at national and provincial level</p>	<p>Because of GPG/IF’s previous work in Iraq, we were able to access senior stakeholders in the CoR from the very start of the project. We have had productive meetings with the Speaker and his staff</p>	<p>Likelihood: 2 (Low) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 4 (Low)</p>

<p>driven interventions have the potential for wasted efforts, resources and inability to achieve sustainable change. The project also needs to invest in the capacity of local partners to ensure their ability in practice to use the new techniques and training independently, following the end of the project.</p>	<p>around clearly bounded problems that are owned by our counterparts from the outset. These problems act as the entry points for iterative activity to address the critical shortcomings in political governance and government delivery that are currently apparent. Throughout this process we continually develop and manage relationships with multiple interlocutors, to limit the impact of individuals withdrawing ownership.</p> <p>The project design is based on experience of previous IF and GPG work in Iraq and consultation with key and senior CoR stakeholders who have expressed interest in working with us on these issues. IF will leverage existing and previous partnerships and networks across Iraq to recruit capable NGOs with strong organizational and financial capacity, a track record in research and advocacy, experience conducting grassroots outreach to implement the activities envisaged.</p>	<p>around key reform areas. These requests have formed the basis for IF/GPG programme of activities with the parliament. We have also held numerous meetings with senior parliamentary staff who are all fully supportive of this project and its objectives.</p> <p>We have also held parallel sessions with civil society organisations, locally and nationally, led by IF. These sessions have established the extent to which civil society can currently access parliamentary processes, particularly via committees, and have identified areas of good practice which can be shared more widely (e.g. parliamentary bulletins and briefings; local meetings with MPs) as well as capacity gaps which the project will need to address. This will provide a good foundation for work bringing together civil society and parliamentarians on specific policy areas.</p>	
<p>Turnover in Key Stakeholders Changes in elected officials and institutional pose the risk loss of key contacts, changes in priorities, and set-backs in activities</p>	<p>Individual relationships underpin institutional links in Iraq. We know from our experience of delivering policy level technical assistance that reshuffles are common. We build relationships with senior staff at the levels directly underneath elected officials that survive changes as well as working with elected officials themselves. We therefore have a proven ability to maintain relationships with successive chairs, speakers, and committee chairs. Our national network among CSOs will widen engagement to ensure continuity.</p>	<p>Most of the Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteurs were not formally appointed until Summer 2019. In many cases, predictions about who might occupy these roles proved fairly inaccurate. However, IF and GPG had held a wide range of engagement meetings during the initial stages of the project. This, combined with our good links with parliamentary staff (who rarely change roles) enabled us to quickly start work with relevant Chairs during our</p>	<p>Likelihood: 4 (High) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 8 (Medium)</p>

		<p>August and September activities. Further significant changes in political roles are not expected, although they could happen in response to political events.</p>	
<p>Inclusivity of Project Benefits Women, youth and marginalised groups should be able to benefit equally from programming. Monitoring and reporting of results should ensure that outputs are leading to the intended outcomes for all target groups.</p>	<p>Gender and inclusion have always been a key part of IF and GPG’s work in Iraq, forming a cross cutting theme in all engagements with counterparts at national and provincial level. A specific strand of this project relates to women’s political participation, but it is also a cross-cutting theme which will be integrated into all our interventions.</p> <p>As part of this project, IF will lead on support for legislation and policy relating to women’s rights in Iraq, where they have a long track record of effective intervention. Wherever possible, as part of our wider support for effective oversight and engagement with civil society across policy areas, we will support the implementation of measures that promote the interests of women, girls and marginalised groups as part of a wider commitment to promote inclusive political settlements.</p> <p>IF and GPG conduct in-house review and monitoring using MEL techniques developed over years of governance programming work. Baseline surveys, activity surveys, and end of project evaluations are carried out to measure change. GPG has pioneered the use of more sensitive indicators for measuring political change, which would be deployed for this project.</p>	<p>Within the gender strand of the project, we have delivered a series of seminars to newly-elected women MPs on legislation, parliamentary oversight, leadership skills and gender-sensitive policy-making. IF and GPG were involved in the parliamentary conference to mark international women’s day and have also arranged conferences on particular items of legislation of interest to women, in particular the long-delayed domestic violence bill.</p> <p>The project team continues to engage closely with the Chair of the Women’s Committee as her committee starts its work but has also forged links with female members of other policy committees (particularly Services and Health). We have identified areas within the policy issues chosen by these committees for oversight inquiries within which it will be important to consider differential impacts on women and men, boys and girls. For example, the inquiry on school drop-outs, selected by the Education Committee, will look specifically at the reasons why girls do not complete their schooling. We will also work closely with the Human Rights Committee to</p>	<p>Likelihood: 2 (Low) Impact after mitigation: 3 (Moderate) Overall Score: 6 (Medium)</p>

		<p>help them prioritise their workplan for the year, identifying key policy areas that are most concerning and impactful upon marginalised groups and citizens (such as IDPs, young girls and women, journalists’ rights).</p> <p>We continue to refine our approach to MEL. Given the political complexity and uncertainty in Iraq, we fully expect that over the lifetime of the project we will see significant changes in context, which will in turn shape the prospects for reform in specific areas. The project will therefore need to be highly adaptive, based on an ongoing political analysis. The appendix to our 6-month narrative report to SIDA set out a framework for operationalising a form of political economy analysis/adaptive programming, which may provide a basis for future reporting based on the political context. We will continue to develop this approach in future reporting.</p>	
<p>Financial Regularity Internal audit processes and financial control should ensure accurate accounting records, policies, and financial statements and avoid any risk that funds are not used for the purposes intended. There are also supply chain risks (e.g. failure</p>	<p>IF and GPG have strict financial and accounting procedures recorded in a Procedures Manual. IF and GPG conduct an external audit by a certified auditing firm on an annual basis. The audit has additional stringent requirements for non-profits. The Manual guides employees of the Iraq Foundation in the application of various compliance regulations required of non-profit organizations in the U.S. For the proposed project, IF will also be</p>	<p>During this year, IF underwent an external audit of its controls and financial processes and is implementing the Action Plan submitted to Sida. . No concerns have been raised internally by auditors or accountants in either IF or GPG about use of project funds.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 1 (Unlikely) Impact after mitigation: 4 (Major) Overall Score: 4 (Low)</p>

<p>of sub-contractors, ensuring quality of sub-contracted personnel).</p>	<p>conducting a programmatic audit according to SIDA regulations.</p> <p>We have undertaken due diligence on all our partners and sub-contractors and have been successfully managing work in Iraq since 2003 (2008 for GPG). The programme operations manual sets out processes for vetting and monitoring partner activities. Aside from our monitoring and internal audit processes we have a whistle-blowing policy. All GPG staff are trained on the provisions of the UK Anti-Bribery legislation as it applies to their work and IF staff have similar US provisions.</p>		
<p>Security and Operational Risks</p> <p>The security situation in Iraq and the wider region is fragile. Deterioration could lead to short or long-term difficulty in accessing target groups or institutions.</p> <p>The security environment may pose a risk to project personnel in terms of stress-related performance or health risks.</p> <p>There is a risk of operational disruptions due to security events (e.g. internet disruptions, site unavailability).</p>	<p>Our flexible and scalable model of delivery uses a combination of well-known high level strategic international advisers, a core programme team with expertise in political governance including decentralisation, public administration, fiscal policy and financial management, and a national partner with reach across the country. This blended approach will allow us to flex delivery to reflect a dynamic security environment. Where possible we prioritise face-to-face high-level engagement, preferably in the workplace of counterparts. Where this is not possible, we will bring senior counterparts to secure locations accessible to our senior team. Our national team will have more flexibility and will be able to follow up on-site and maintain relationships when there is a heightened security threat.</p> <p>All IF's deployed international personnel will have undergone re-deployment training and an appropriate psychological assessment. Long term deployed staff (our in-country programme manager) will be provided will</p>	<p>Security risks are a constant feature of working in Iraq. Both IF and GPG have security plans and procedures in place which have enabled us to continue our activities despite periodic security problems in the country and wider region.</p> <p>In June, GPG's planned visit to Baghdad had to be cancelled due to a security alert connected to US-Iranian hostilities. In consultation with SIDA, we replaced this visit with work in Erbil, which was not affected by security issues to the same extent. This visit brought unplanned benefits in enabling the team to deepen their links in the Kurdistan region, including with the Kurdistan Parliament and working directly with the regional offices of the Federal Council of Representatives in the region.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 5 (Very High) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 10 (High)</p>

	<p>regular assessments every six months. IF staff have access to an employee assistance programme. IF programme design minimises exposure of key staff to security risks through the programme model and our risk management framework. GPG's short term deployments are monitored by our Operations Manager who ensures adequate recovery periods and access to appropriate health-related services</p>		
<p>Quality Risks Capacity and management capabilities of project staff needs to be adequate to avoid the risk of poor project management or technical input, leading to inability to achieve results</p>	<p>IF and GPG have worked together previously and both have considerable track record of effective delivery in Iraq. In case of any short-term non-availability of staff, both IF and GPG have in-house capacity for direct delivery if needed to ensure continuity during changes of key staffing and partner organisations.</p> <p>To mitigate the risks of poor staff performance, IF and GPG arrange training or experience-sharing activities to staff members involved in the management and supervision of the project and have set out policies and procedures guidelines in its Personnel Policies and Procedures manual governing the conduct of staff and the probity requirements in relation to the management and operation of the organization. IF and GPG conduct regular staff performance evaluations and provides feedback when necessary to ensure that performance level is always up to the standard required. GPG and IF Staff managing this project have previous experience in Iraq.</p>	<p>IF and GPG hold regular remote meetings to discuss project progress, and conduct activities together during periods when GPG is in Iraq. In September, IF, GPG and SIDA held a joint call on project progress and agreed to hold further joint calls over the coming year to ensure lines of communication are maintained.</p> <p>IF and GPG staff regularly attend seminars and conferences relating to Iraq, including the recent Chatham House Iraq Initiative conference in London and the Iraq conference organised by the Middle East Institute in Washington.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 1 (Very Low) Impact after mitigation: 3 (Moderate) Overall Score: 3 (Low)</p>

This progress report provides a summary and evaluation of the activities deployed so far with **women MPs** in Iraq in the first year of the Sida project, as a basis for further investigation and for tailoring the next activities to the women's needs. The report relates to the workshops, their topics and outcomes, the numbers of attendees and – where possible – the identification of women who have been engaging well with IF-GPG. Finally, information on the follow up related to the workshops and the present situation complements the report. (Status, Oct. 31 2019)

Executive Summary

To support women politicians in Iraq with view to enhancing their role in the Iraqi parliament and to help promote gender-sensitive legislation, three seminars were held by IF and GPG in the first Year of the project (2018-19):

1. March 9, 2019 in Baghdad: IF-GPG seminar “Challenges facing women MPs”
2. April 27-28, 2019 in Baghdad: GPG seminar: “The roles of women MPs in parliamentary oversight”
3. September 17, 2019: IF-seminar “Gender analysis of legislation”.

In terms of turnout, the numbers of 25 attendees to each of the first two workshops can be seen as a proof for the relevance of the issues covered. The lower turnout of the September workshop with 8 attendees was due to the busy parliamentary schedule during that week. Regarding the question, which women MPs engaged well with IF and GPG in the project so far, it is worth noting that among the participants of the workshops in March and April there was a core-group of 8 women attending both seminars (see Annex4). The most recent workshop in September with 8 attendees overall counted 3 participants of the April-session, of which 2 women had also participated in the training in March. The continued interest by women MPs can also be retraced by their follow up with IF through a WhatsApp group after the March and the April sessions (see below under “Workshops and Follow up”). We don't have that kind of data as a follow up to the last workshop in September.

The first workshop was attended by 25 new MPs, and 4 re-elected/ established MPs which included Ala Talabani (Foreign Relations Committee), Huda Sajjad and Intisar Jabouri. Awfy Zuhair (Head of the Research Dept) also attended, as did the then-new Chair of the Women's and Human Rights Committee, Haifa Al-Amin (see below). With MP Dalia Farhad Shereen the Health Committee was represented as well. The workshop helped IF and GPG shape their mentoring for women MPs around the identified areas of support: legislation, parliamentary oversight, leadership skills and gender-sensitive policy-making.

With 25 participants in the following workshop in April 2019, - of which 7 had attended the workshop in March -, the project could build on the momentum from the first session. By focusing the two-day workshop on the role of women MPs in parliamentary oversight, important mechanisms and tools were conveyed to help women politicians contribute more effectively to oversight in the future. At the same time more areas of support were identified, such as improving the cooperation of the CoR with the governorates, as well as the representation of women in parliamentary committees, and to provide more training to help women MPs play an effective role in oversight procedures. As a follow up with IF, we

were told by a participant about the need to hold next trainings outside of Baghdad: Regular parliamentary duties in the capital are an important factor to prevent women MPs from participating – a statement forecasting the low turnout of the workshop in September.

Focusing on “Gender analysis of legislation”, the IF-led workshop presented a number of key legislation with impact on women – approved bills and proposals of law –, and highlighted need for the knowledge about gender-related issues as much as about women’s human rights in laws as a capacity to develop. Therefore, the necessity of more training for women MPs to improve their abilities in doing and applying gender analysis in legislation, and to help them enhance their role in parliament, - for example by building coalitions related to specific laws -, were important outcomes of this last workshop. This could lead IF-GPG to the last area of support, voiced by women MPs in the March session, which is to help them develop and strengthen leadership skills in parliament, including in committees.

Also related to the next steps in this work-strand, IF and GPG now have to deal with the recent step down of Haifa Al-Amin as Chair of the Women’s and Human Rights Committee, which occurred as a protest to the current situation in Iraq.

Workshops and Follow up

1. March 9, 2019 in Baghdad: Joint IF-GPG seminar “Challenges facing women MPs”

Attendance: 25 participants (women MPs, committee members, Research Dpt.)

Outcomes:

Asked for their top challenges, women MPs mentioned customs, religion and traditions. They also highlighted three main areas of support:

- Supporting women MPs to better understand and improve their roles in **parliamentary legislation**. Understanding of the legislative process as well as the details of the legislation they were examining in their committees were areas of concern. It was felt that a workshop on the legislative process would be useful. This workshop could also serve as a refresher course for longer serving MPs.
- Supporting women MPs to better understand and improve their roles in **parliamentary oversight**. A greater understanding of the mechanisms for effective parliamentary oversight, including scrutinising the implementation of laws (PLS).
- Supporting women MPs to strengthen their **leadership skills**.

Follow up:

Suggestions after the workshop through the WhatsApp group of women MPs

- A part of the training should focus on appearing in the media, including how to talk, and mechanisms to help deal with visual media in the first place
- Sessions exclusively outside Iraq, related to the representation of women in international forums and foreign activities, both according to their competences and the committee. This would be a practical training and help women to develop their expertise and skills (by MP **Intisar al-Moussawi**)
- Training on Intl. Women's Mechanisms and Security Council Resolution 1325
- Regional training and benefit from the experiences of neighbouring countries (by MP **Haifa Al Amin**)

- Need for the parliamentarian to read, see, question and inquire from her colleagues with experience and previous sessions, must read everything related to its committee, the rules of procedure, previous meetings, laws and legislation in the process of legislation (by MP **Huda Sajjad**).

2. April 27-28, 2019 in Baghdad: seminar led by GPG (Meg Mann): “The roles of women MPs in parliamentary oversight”

Attendance: 25 participants (of which 7 had attended workshop in March)

The Workshop was divided into seven sessions over two days:

- 1) The basic roles of MPs
- 2) Oversight and gender mainstreaming
- 3) Oversight in Committees
- 4) Oversight in general meetings
- 5) Engage in, develop and use networks
- 6) Linking oversight to legitimate representation
- 7) Conclusions and future learning needs highlighted that
 - Decisions must meet the needs of the constituents and avoid discriminatory policies;
 - Legislation has to ensure that services are provided to the beneficiaries.
 Taking the example of co-educative education for both girls and boys, they discussed challenges faced by schools and by teachers.

Regarding sessions 1-6, the following **areas of work and need for support** were highlighted:

- 1) Introduction and getting acquaintance with each other.
- 2) Oversight and gender mainstreaming
 - How to provide advice and cooperation of the CoR with the governorates?
 - Cooperation of the three branches to develop a proposal for a draft law
- 3) Oversight in committees
 - Ensure complementary work of the legislative and the regulatory government branches
 - Improve representation of women in parl. committees (only one woman per committee)
 - Ensure application of the law in all governorates, e.g. by sanctions.
- 4) Oversight in plenary sessions and budgetary control
 - How can women MPs contribute effectively (e.g. by consulting with experts, doing gender analysis of laws; ask good questions prepared by sound research; make use of reports/studies done by the Research Dpt. of the CoR)
- 5) Engage in, develop and use networks
 - Communicate with constituents to identify their concerns and problems (e.g. hold meetings to assess impact of policies and legislation)
 - Engage with CSOs to get their support for examining existing laws and policies
- 6) Linking oversight to legitimate representation
 - Raise issues that are specific to a particular region rather than the whole country, and illustrate them by statistics and numbers to underline their validity.

Follow up:

Suggestions after the workshop through the WhatsApp group of women MPs

- Have training outside Baghdad because holding it in Baghdad or inside the parliament dome will hinder the parliament from continuing; also women MPs have to go to their committees when requested, or need to get to any other work - may that be in the ministries or any other meetings.
- Women MPs stressed that Ms. Mann's information was excellent and useful to them and enriched them with her great experience.

3. September 17, 2019: seminar led by IF (Dr. Bushra Al-Obeidi) "Gender analysis of legislation"

Attendance: 8 participants (3 had attended April-workshop, of which 2 women March & April: MP Alia Faleh Al Emara and MP Wasfiya M. Sheiko)

The Workshop focused on the current situation of approved legislation and proposals of laws with impact on women.

Outcomes - Women MPs identified following **areas of support:**

- Full and accurate knowledge about gender-sensitive legislation
- How can women MPs have an effective role in parliament for amending and passing gender-sensitive legislation? (e.g. through a women's coalition in CoR; continuous training to do legislation from a gender perspective)
- How to develop supervisory abilities in the field of state institutions to become gender-sensitive?
- How to develop and strengthen the women's bloc in support of women's human rights in parliament?

Follow up: As of October 2019, we don't have data as a follow up to the last workshop in September. For that reason, we will conduct a survey with women MPs who attended the workshops in Year 1, including feedback on follow up done by the women's network.

Annex 1: List of attendees of workshops in March 2019

No	Name	Committee
1	Dr. Bahar Mahmoud Fattah	The Legal Committee
2	Mrs. Ala Tahsin Talabani	Member of the Foreign Relations Committee
3	Dr. Dalia Farhad Sherine	Health Committee
4	Dr. Mayada Mohamed	Member of Parliament
5	Dr. Alya Faleh Al-Emara	Foreign affairs
6	Dr. Enas Nagy Kazem	Saeroon Alliance
7	Dr. Al-Jumaili Unit	National Theme / Arab Project
8	Mrs. Siham Al-Mousawi	The Alliance of Fath
9	Mrs. Nahla Hamad Abdul	National contract
10	Mrs. Shamael Sahab Al-Obeidi	The Arab Project
11	Mrs. Layal Mohammed Ali Al-Bayati	Turkmen / Badr Organization
12	Mrs. Haifa Al-Amin	Saeroon / Communist Party
13	Mrs. Hoda Sajjad Mahmoud	Reform and Reconstruction Coalition
14	Dr. Suad Jabbar Al-Waeli	National contract
15	Mrs. Nisreen Al-Waeli	Saeroon/Al Istiqama
16	Mrs. Salma Omar Othman	Kurdistan National Union
17	Mrs. Almas Fadel Kamal	Kurdistan National Union
18	Mrs. Sarwa Wanas Omar	The movement of the new generation
19	Mrs. Safia Muhammad Sheikho	Kurdistan Democratic Bloc
20	Mrs. Ashwaq Karim Mohsen	Sadecoon block
21	Mrs. Haddar Zubair Al-Barzani	Kurdistan Democratic Bloc
22	Dr. Iqbal Al Mazni	State of law
23	Mrs. Ofi Rahir Khudair	Research Department / House of Representatives
24	Mrs. Maha Mohamed Hussein	Adviser to the Iraqi Women Parliamentarians Association
25	Mrs. Athraa Abdul-Jabbar Saleh	Secretary of MP Ala Talabani

Annex 2: List of attendees of workshops in April 2019

No	Name	Committee
1	Dr. Enas Al-Maksousi	Higher Education
2	Mrs. Hoda Jarallah Al-Jubouri	Education
3	Dr. Dalia Farhad	the health
4	Mrs. Mona Hussein Al-Obaidi	Services and construction
5	Dr. Bahar Mahmoud Fattah	Legal
6	Mrs. Willan Ghafour Saleh	Economy and investment
7	Mrs. Almas Fadel	Legal
8	Mrs. Safia Muhammad Sheikho	Women, family and children
9	Mrs. Salma Omar Othman	Martyrs' Committee
10	Mrs. Siham Abbas Ali Al-Jubouri	the health
11	Mrs. Haddar Al-Barzani	Martyrs' Committee
12	Mrs. Mahasin Hamdoun	Finance
13	Dr. Alya Faleh Al-Emara	Foreign affairs
14	Mrs. Intisar Al-Jubouri	Women, family and children
15	Dr. Vian Sabri	The committee monitoring the implementation of the government program and strategic planning
16	Mrs. Zeitoun Al-Dulaimi	
17	Mrs. Haifa Al-Amin	Women, family and children
18	Dr. Ghaidaa Saad Kambash	Higher Education
19	Mrs. Yousra Ragab Kemer	human rights
20	Dr. Wehda Al-Jumaili	human rights
21	Mrs. Shamael Al-Obaidi	Services and construction
22	Mrs. Lubna Rahim	Services and construction
23	Mrs. Belisa Abdul Jabbar Farman	The committee monitoring the implementation of the government program and strategic planning
24	Mrs. Fatima Abbas Al-Mousawi	human rights
25	Mrs. Laila Mahdi Al-Tamimi	Services and construction

Annex 3: List of attendees of workshop in September 2019

No	Name	Committee
1	Mrs. Intisar Al-Jubouri	Women, Family and Childhood Committee
2	Dr. Khaleda Khalil	Immigration and Displacement Committee
3	Dr. Vian Sabri	The committee monitoring the implementation of the government program and strategic planning
4	Mrs. Intisar Hassan Al-Mousawi	Economy and Investment Committee
5	Mrs. Rayhan Hanna Ayoub	Foreign Relations Committee
6	Mrs. Safia Muhammad Sheikho	Women, Family and Childhood Committee
7	Dr. Alya Faleh Al-Emara	Foreign Relations Committee
8	Mrs. Rana Refaat Abdel Amir	Women, Family and Childhood Committee

Annex 4: List of 'core group' of women MPs related to their attendance in workshops

Name & affiliation	Governorate	March	April	September
Dr. Bahar Mahmoud Fattah Legal Committee baharfatah@yahoo.com	Sulaymaniya	Y	Y	Y
Dr. Alia Faleh Al Emara Foreign Affairs Dr.aliah2018@yahoo.com	Baghdad	Y	Y	Y
Dr. Enas Nagy Kazem Higher Education Dr.enasnaji@yahoo.com	Wasit	Y	Y	
Dr. Wahda Jumaili Human Rights Dr_wihda@yahoo.com	Baghdad	Y	Y	
Ms. Shamail Sahab Al Obaidi Services and Construction Shamayel.sahab@yahoo.com	Salaheddin	Y	Y	
Mrs. Haifa Al Amin Women Family and Children alaminhaifa@gmail.com	Dhi Qar	Y	Y	
Mrs. Wasfiya Mohammed Sheiko Women Family and Children Wasfiya.shikho@gmail.com	Dohuk	Y	Y	Y
Dr. Vian Sabri Committee to monitor the implementation of the Government program and strategic planning Viansabri1998@gmail.com	Dohuk		Y	Y