



**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**

Funded by  
The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Sida Contribution No. 12530

**Third Narrative Report**  
For the period:  
October 2019-September 2020

Submitted on:  
**31 January 2021**

## Executive Summary

In Year 2 of the project *Improving Policy, Service Delivery, Gender Equality and Responsiveness to Iraqi Citizens*, funded by Sida, amidst many political, social, economic and global challenges which Iraq faced, Iraq Foundation (IF) and Global Partners Governance (GPG) continued to make meaningful progress towards the overall goal to support policy and legislative processes in Iraq, to be more representative of the concerns of Iraqi citizens, whilst addressing the persistent gender inequalities on both policies and political representation.

During the second year, there were many challenges facing the project varying from the unprecedented protests started in October 2019, which resulted in the government stepping down. These protests also witnessed a violent response from Iraq's security and militias, killing over 600 protesters. There was no government in place from November 2019 up until May 2020. Within that time, Iraq's political, social and economic fabric steered into further turmoil with the growing tensions between the United States and Iran, the crash of oil prices and the COVID-19 outbreak.

Despite this, the project moved quickly to adapt to the security and protests implications, by moving all our visits and activities to Erbil instead of Baghdad. The project then adopted an online approach through e-learning courses, mentoring and platform, to mitigate any security and pandemic related risks. Whilst these were "logistical" adaptations of the project, we also had to make "content" changes, through adapting the project's activities to the needs and priority issues of our stakeholders. This included addressing several key issues related to:

1. The protests through conducting a flagship research on young people in Iraq and a reviewed engagement with the Youth and Sports Committee. We also launched a Parliamentary Directorate led initiative on improving mechanisms between Parliamentary Committees and Regional COROs to better respond to citizens' needs.
2. COVID-19, through focusing our capacity-building support for women MPs on the domestic violence law, as a result of rising numbers of cases of domestic violence in Iraq, and strengthening women's rights through the next National Action Plan 1325.
3. Economic challenges due to the pandemic and oil prices, re-focusing our work with the Finance Committee towards the wider implications of banking sector reforms with the overall framework of Iraq's Economic Reform Plan.

Using IF's and GPG's complementary two-fold approach we were able to progress on focused capacity-building and mentoring activities for both the parliament and civil society. This has started to enable both groups to engage in a meaningful and productive way on issues of priority concern for Iraqi citizens. We have ensured this approach continues to address the original focus of the four key strands of the project:

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

Additionally, as part of responding to the changes in Iraq and the project, we have been expanding to a fifth strand focusing on Research and Analysis, and successfully published a flagship research paper on “Economic Drivers of Youth Political discontent in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qar”. This has provided much scope and discussion for policy and decision makers in Iraq through a comprehensive list of recommendations and findings to improve prospects for young Iraqis and Kurds.

The project year has also seen an increased level of engagement between MPs (Parliamentary Committees), their staff and civil society groups and policy experts, towards a more inclusive and evidence-based approach of improving policies and legislation (focused work done with the Finance Committee and Health and Environment Committee). This complementary approach by IF and GPG was also used in supporting especially new women MPs and the Women’s Committee. We targeted and customised capacity-building activities, provided knowledge and skills to improve their work as a committee, provided tools, insights, and expertise to advance their work on policy and legislative issues of the critical impact on women’s and girls’ rights.

Despite all of the challenges, the project has progressed well from the foundations laid in the first year, to now developing concrete processes to help the parliament to effectively respond to citizens’ need. Some main achievements during the second year of the project can be summarised as the following:

- Designed a series of e-learning courses, as an adaptive response to the security, logistical and pandemic challenges.
- As part of responding to the changing priorities in Iraq, we launched a well-received research paper on addressing social and economic issues facing young people in Iraq by publishing “Economic Drivers of Youth Political discontent in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qar”.
- Developing a strategic communication plan to support the Speaker’s Office, creating ground rules for work within the office and improving coordination between different departments within the Speaker’s Office and between the Speaker’s office and the rest of the Parliament.
- Created a mechanism to allow a more systematic approach to improve service delivery through developing inquiries, with an emphasis on addressing specific questions and developing recommendations, with a view to these being published and used to push for change through MPs and government. As a result, the Health and Environment Committee finalised its report on “The Impact of Water Pollution on Public Health and the Environment in Iraq”.
- Provided policy papers for the Finance Committee on Banking Sector Reforms, which have directly been incorporated into the Parliament’s (White Paper) Economic Reform Plan, in response to the government’s Economic Reform Plan (White Paper).
- Effective engagement with CSOs and policy experts. IF compiled four effective reports for (1) the Health and Environment Committee and (2) the Finance Committee with recommendations, fact-finding and views of citizens on the focus policy issues of their inquiries, which had a direct impact on their work and led to constructive engagement of MPs with civil society experts.

- Devised a 'rapid response project' (in response to the protests) led by the Parliamentary Directorate to establish a new mechanism to improve and promote coordination between Parliamentary Committees and Regional CoR Offices (COROs). This is an initiative to help Committees and COROs work effectively together to address citizens' problems.
- Supported women MPs and those in leadership positions to achieve a more prominent role by providing support and mentoring to the Women's Committee and women MPs, working on the anti-domestic violence law specifically, and more broadly, providing skills development sessions to women MPs, and providing insights from local, regional and international experts to women MPs through webinars on how to take further the domestic violence law and the 2nd NAP 1325.

Using GPG's specific KAPE® approach as a monitoring tool for the project, year two of this project has focused on the "application" phase. This means providing frameworks, mechanisms, tools and techniques, based on the "knowledge" phase covered in year one, but also as a continuous review as the political, economic and social landscapes and priorities shift. The "knowledge" phase is based on agreeing priorities and areas of support with our stakeholders. We have started developing these "knowledge" and "application" phases into the "practice" phase by further developing best practices and mechanisms to be adopted by the Iraqi CoR. The project will continue working to translate these processes, procedures and new behaviours across the different layers of the institution to a new adopted system by Iraqi CoR. We will also continue to promote women's political leadership and work towards an enhanced and meaningful engagement of parliament and civil society on issues of real public concern, including on issues of women's and girl's rights.

With many international governments, bodies and donors now focusing more effort and support towards Iraq, as it enters a crucial stage of addressing the challenges it faced in 2020 (its economic reform packages and potentially holding elections in 2021), this project continues to have an important role towards supporting Iraq address these main challenges. It could be considered that two key stakeholders are central to these challenges (1) the political representatives (where the project works closely with the Council of Representatives (CoR)) and (2) the Iraqi citizens, those being represented (where the project aims to improve inclusive representation for Iraqis).

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## 1. Introduction

During the first year of the project, 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 the 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, to improve policy, service delivery, gender equality and responsiveness to Iraqi citizens. Through existing expertise and networks, we successfully started our work to provide cross-cutting support to women MPs by building upon longstanding relationships with women MPs and starting engagement with newly elected women MPs.

This report considers the work and activities carried out by IF and GPG in the second year of this three-year project (covering the period from October 2019 – September 2020). It builds on the report and successful work carried out by IF and GPG in the first year of the project (October 2018 – September 2019) which set the foundation of effectively engaging with key decision makers and stakeholders on this project. It also builds on engagement with civil society organisation (CSOs) to help bridge the gap in the decision-making process, to improve policy, service delivery, gender equality and responsiveness to Iraqi citizens. This is in the context of a challenging year the world has witnessed with the pandemic, but more challenging for Iraq with the additional political and social strife that has crippled the country further.

This report sets out the political context in which the project has continued to navigate through, by highlighting the adaptive progress in each strand. It also explains the approach and methodology IF and GPG are implementing to adapt to the changing nature of Iraqi politics and continuously changing conditions in the field 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 three. Finally, the report reflects on lessons learned and risks. 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.

With regards to the complex nature of the project and its many stakeholders IF commissioned an external evaluator for Year 2 in addition to GPG's internal evaluation (followed through the KAPE approach), which is reflected in this joint report. The external evaluation focused on the IF activities and on those conducted together with GPG in Year 2, and its findings are referenced in the present report as well. The external evaluation and its recommendations will help IF and the project continue pursue our objectives in Year 3.

Having reached a phase of agreeing activities going forward with our Iraqi stakeholders, the second year of the project was designed to mentor and coach key stakeholders in parliament and civil society to engage productively on issues of real public concern aiming to achieve improvements to specific policy areas which would generate momentum by demonstrating the value of consultation and constructive oversight as a route to the solution of public policy problems. The first few months of this project year (October – December 2019) were hampered due to political and social turmoil taking hold of Iraq (the start and rise protest and public unrest in October), which eventually led to Iraq being without a government for up to six months. Furthermore, the oil crisis and pandemic took hold of Iraq economy for the worst. It is against this backdrop that the project design needed to adapt from its original vision of four key strands of activities, into five adaptive project strands mid-year (March 2020). This is described in greater detail later in this report.

In year two of the project, the five areas we focused on are:

Strand 1: **Strategic and Reform-Focused Political Leadership** within Parliament – working with the Speaker and his staff on key reform areas to improve the efficiency of the parliamentary process.

Strand 2: Parliamentary Committees adopt **more inclusive and evidence-based policy mechanisms** – developing practices for consultation and engagement with citizens.

Strand 3: Linking Parliament with the Provinces and Constituencies on Service Delivery- **improve responsiveness** of politicians and the CoR **to public concerns** and **improved quality of services** at the local level.

Strand 4: Cross-cutting Support to Women Politicians- working on issues of **political leadership** and **gender-sensitive policymaking**.

Additional Strand 5 (as part of our adaptive programming): Research and analysis on “**Economic Drivers of youth Political Discontent** in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qar” - in response to the youth protests and discussions with the Youth and Sports Committee.

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 second year of the project could therefore be divided into two main phases: The first (phase) six months of the project year (October 2019 – March 2020), with the focus on implementing strategic frameworks, papers and agreed work plans with the key bodies in person (and remotely) by travelling to Baghdad and Erbil in December 2019 and February 2020 respectively). And the second phase, the following six months, (April to September 2020), with the focus on adapting our approach and activities to continue the implementation remotely (due the pandemic and rising security concerns) through virtual meetings, online e-learning courses and virtual platforms, videos, webinars and research/ policy analysis.



## 2. Political Context and Engagement Strategy

### 2.1. Political Context

Since October 2019, Iraq has faced a flurry of challenges as a country in general and has directly impacted our project in particular. The second year of the project revolved around a number of events that hugely affected the political and the economic context in Iraq. Youth-led protests in October 2019 were touted as a much-delayed display of discontent amongst citizens at tipping point of a government that did very little to address basic service provisions, employment, security and the ongoing issue of corruption throughout the political elites and ranks. The government eventually stepped down in December, leaving a power vacuum for the next five-six months. Soon after, in quick succession, in December 2019, tensions between the US and Iran boiled over on Iraqi soil, swiftly followed by the crash in oil prices and the COVID-19 outbreak, which all had a crippling impact on any form of stability (economically, socially, and politically) Iraq had envisaged.

The appointment of a Prime Minister did not seem to be an issue, rather it was passing his cabinet through the Council of Representatives (CoR), which underlines the crucial yet challenging role the CoR holds. It was on the third attempt of appointing a Prime Minister, that Mustafa al-Kadhimi and his cabinet were passed in May 2020. Kadhimi quickly set to task on attempting to appease and address the issues at the heart of social unrest. His focus has been getting Iraq's economy back on track (publishing an economic reform white paper) spearheaded by the seasoned Ali Allawi as the Finance Minister. Announcements such as holding early elections, cutting public salaries, delivering basic services, jobs and strengthening security (against the potential re-emergence of Daesh) have been met with much pessimism but also with some reserved onlookers to see if this Prime Minister will actually be the one to come up with the goods.

So what did this mean for the project? IF and GPG (in close coordination with Sida) provided quick, ongoing interim reports and short analyses of the situation, the potential impacts on delivering the project, and how we could quickly adapt accordingly. Whilst understandably, many of our Iraqi beneficiaries and interlocutors were preoccupied with the grand scale problems in Iraq, it was through continuous coordination, engagement, and dialogue (both remotely and on the ground), that we were able to ensure the project adapted according to the needs and priorities of our stakeholders and the Iraqi citizens. This was reiterated through comments by our interlocutors that a project such as ours focuses on improving the very mechanisms and fabrics which have been exposed for the country to downward spiral. i.e., improving effective policies and service delivery for citizens, with improved engagement between citizens and legislators. Building trust between political institutions and those it stands to represent (citizens) is at the heart of the many core issues Iraq needs to address.

It is against the backdrop of this context in which this report should be read to understand the **adaptive approaches** which have been made to ensure the project has positively progressed. For example, providing banking reform policy papers for the Finance Committee under the wider scope of impacting the government's economic reform white paper, supporting the Health and Environment Committee on addressing the problem of water pollution, launching a research report on economic drivers of youth political discontent in Iraq, closer support to women in political positions, have all highlighted how the project has adapted to the current priorities and context.

With all the challenges taking place in Iraq, the need for the Parliament to play a prominent role in response to the immediate needs of citizens has increased. There is a need for elected MPs to use the emergent challenges to communicate better with citizens and effectively respond to their needs. This is underlined by the potential elections in 2021.

At the time of writing and submitting this report, the problems Iraq is facing will be for the foreseeable future. With many international governments, bodies and donors now focusing more effort and support towards Iraq, as it enters a crucial stage of implementing its economic reform packages and potentially holding elections in 2021, this project continues to have an important role towards supporting Iraq address its main challenges. It could be considered that two of these main challenges relate to (1) the political representatives (where the project works closely with the Council of Representatives (CoR)) and (2) to those being represented, the Iraqi citizens (where the project aims to improve inclusive representation for Iraqis).

## 2.2. Project Engagement Strategy

Leading on from the political context and how we continue to adapt the project, IF and GPG work across several stakeholders to make the policy and legislative process in Iraq more representative of the concerns of Iraqi citizens, through strengthening the capacities of parliamentarians and civil society to conduct meaningful dialogue and consultation, with a cross-cutting focus on women’s empowerment.

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 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. This reiterates the project’s approach set out in the political context section above, as a ay of responding to political, economic and social change.

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, as we witnessed six months into year two of the project. 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 second year. At the end of

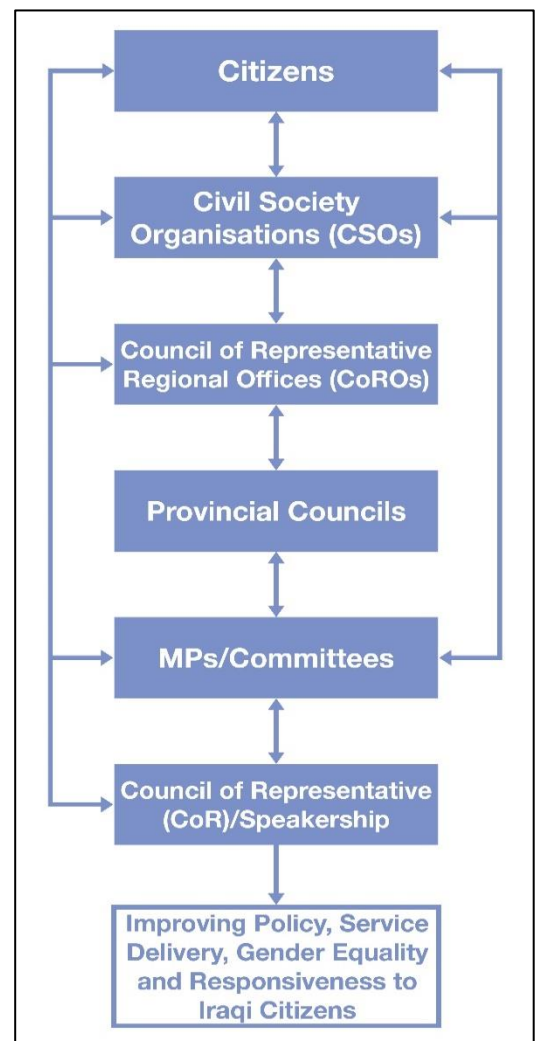


Figure 1: Key actors engaged by the project.

this second 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.

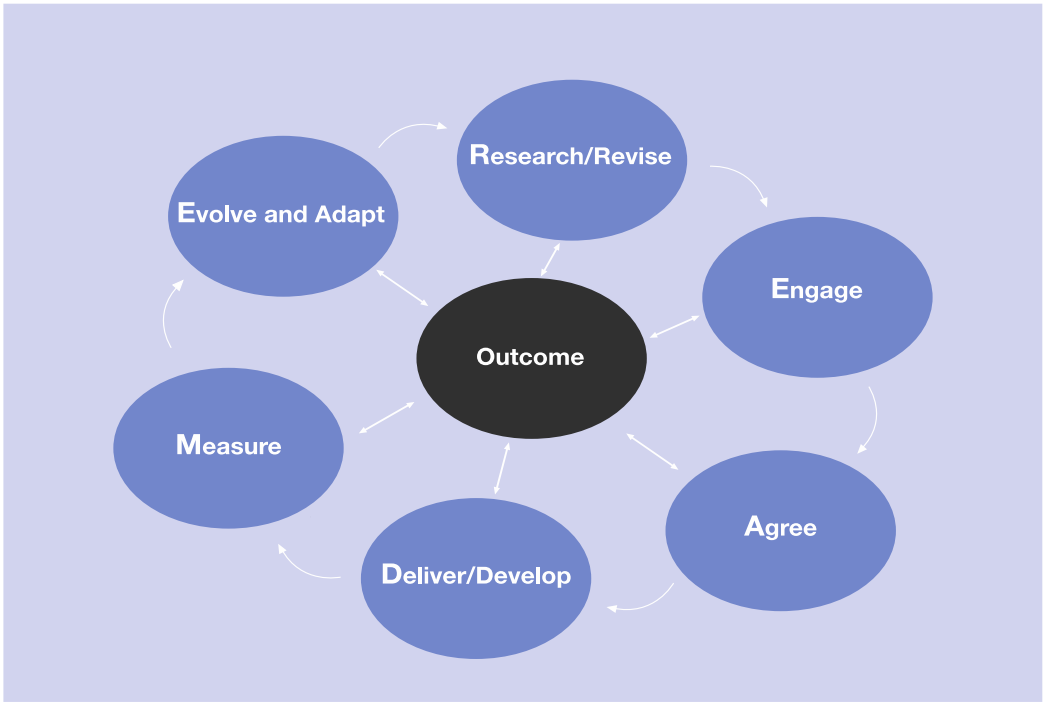


Figure 2: README project engagement approach

### 2.3. 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 through phases of uncertainty and change. 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 and Policy Related Experts

#### Detailed Overview of Stakeholders

##### 1. Parliamentary Leadership

This is an important stakeholder for the project, not only as gaining support and buy-in, but as a stakeholder that could amplify and impact systemic change within the CoR. The project identified the Speaker (and Deputy Speakers), 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. Whilst we established agreement with all

these key interlocutors around the project's objectives in the first year, we have now been able to bring greater focus with specific individuals and departments in year 2. This is namely the Parliamentary Directorate, the Speaker's Office, the Research Directorate, and the newly formed Training and Development Department.

## **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 the CoR 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.

Parliamentary Committee staff (Senior Advisors and Committee Specialists) are also key individuals in carrying out the work on behalf on the MPs and Committee Chairs and are without doubt part of the CoR's institutional memory and a driving force to enable core reforms and improved mechanisms internal and external to the CoR.

#### 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.

Our engagement with women MPs for this project is a multi-step and reiterative process: Building on our close relationships with influential women parliamentarians, that IF identified in Year 1 key female MPs, who have served two or more parliamentary terms. They were important in building our relationships with the **newly elected MPs**, whose capacity-building is a particular focus of this project as well as working with the **women's committee** in Parliament. This year, we continued to use our relationships with senior women MPs, like Ala Talabani and Intissar Al-Jubouri, to build and conduct our activities with women MPs related to the domestic violence law and NAP 1325. Since the change in leadership of the women's committee in the early summer of 2020, we built our activities in close consultation with the new Chair, Maysoon Al-Saedi, and with her now deputy Intissar Al-Jubouri, and had constant updates with the Rapporteur of this committee, Wasfiyah Sheiko on priorities and needs of women in Parliament.

#### 5. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Policy-Related Experts (including women CSOs)

CSOs are a 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, 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 are a key stakeholder for gathering evidence to channel to the relevant committees we are working with, during their inquiry processes and on women-related policy topics and are a prime partner to engage with in hard-to-reach regions.

This year's work included a broader engagement of the project with civil society organizations, which was guided by our activities related to

- policy topics relevant for the women's committee and women MPs, and

- support for the parliamentary inquiries conducted with the Finance and the Health committees.

Early in Year 2, IF identified qualified partners to provide expertise in the areas of the inquiries of the then prospected four parliamentary committees: Health & Environment (Sources and Impact of Water Pollution), Finance (Public Trust in the Banking System), Services (Sewage Management), and Education (School drop-outs, especially by girls) and developed a **civil society experts database** (see List in the Annex).

To guide and coordinate our work on **water pollution**, we decided to work with **Mr. Mezher Al-Aqili**, a former Engineering consultant for the Baghdad Governor and ex-Head of the services and construction committee in Baghdad. We chose three out of the five CSOs from the water-consultation to conduct the water pollution survey in Baghdad (**Al Zuhoor Women Organization**), Basra (**Tawasul Organization for Development**) and Wassit (**Al-Inbithaq for Development and Economic Development**), and provided them with prior training from the survey company Al Mustakilla Group (IIACSS). To enhance their contribution to the surveys, we also included the CSOs' views on the topics at the end of the water survey report. Although both IF reports (the recommendations from the consultation and the survey report) were included by the Health Advisor, Dr. Ammar, in the final report of his committee, we were not able to discuss the findings in a joint meeting with the Health committee and our experts due to the challenging circumstances of the pandemic, that changed the schedule of committees and political priorities of the parliament in Year 2.

For civil society expertise to the **banking inquiry**, IF chose to work with **Dr. Safwan Al Taha**, a financial and economic expert and academic, who led this process with CSOs and finance practitioners from the banking sector (see **civil society experts' database** in the Annex). While these experts developed recommendations to the Finance Committee's inquiry, IF did not ask them to support the field survey because of their high level of specialization. Three of them, however, participated in a post-consultation meeting convened by IF with the Advisor Mr. Jawad and members of the sub-committee on banking to discuss the recommendations from the first report (see below in chapter 3 for details).

### **Engagement with women CSOs**

Based on IF's network with women CSOs and IF's involvement in the first and the second NAP 1325, we identified local, regional and international experts and organizations with expertise related to domestic violence law and the NAP 1325 as speakers for both webinars. These included well-known experts such as **Ms. Amal Kabbashi** (Coordinator of the Iraqi Women Network), **Dr. Saba Sami**, Professor at the College of Law at Baghdad University and member of the National Strategy for Combating Gender-Based Violence 2030 (UNFPA), **Ms. Suhaila Al-Asam** (Iraqi Women Association), and **Ms. Iman Al-Azzawi** (Chairwoman Women Leadership Institute) on the DV-Law, and **Mr. Haider Awadi** (Head of Sawa Organization for Human Rights), **Ms. Manar Zaiter**, a distinguished regional gender specialist. The GPG associated expert on gender mainstreaming and women's leadership, **Ms. Meg Munn**, provided very valuable international perspectives to both webinar conferences.

The engagement of women MPs in the project with the above-mentioned experts provided especially new women MPs and the women's committee, with direct insights, expertise and recommendations from the local, regional and international level on actions to take forward in parliament to advance both agendas (DV-Law and the 2<sup>nd</sup> NAP 1325), and helped shape cross-party dialogue on the promotion of policies for women's rights and on the legislation required for both policy issues. In addition, the large group of local women CSO participating in the webinar on the DV Law (60 women CSOs), not only showed the broad interest in participation on this priority topic, but also gave those women CSOs an opportunity to engage with the women MPs through live discussion and on the chat.

Figure 3 below captures GPG's and IF's current stakeholder engagement.

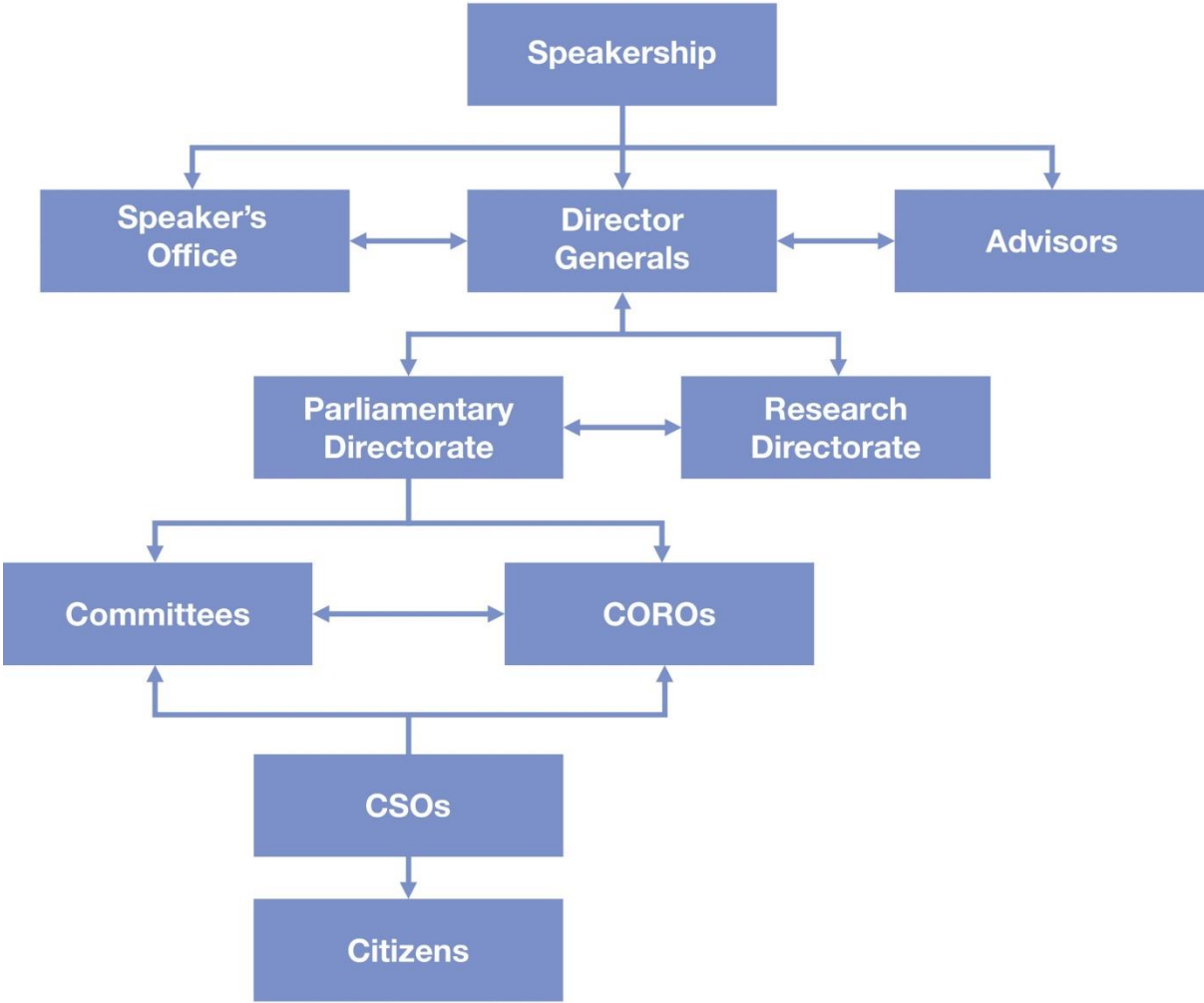
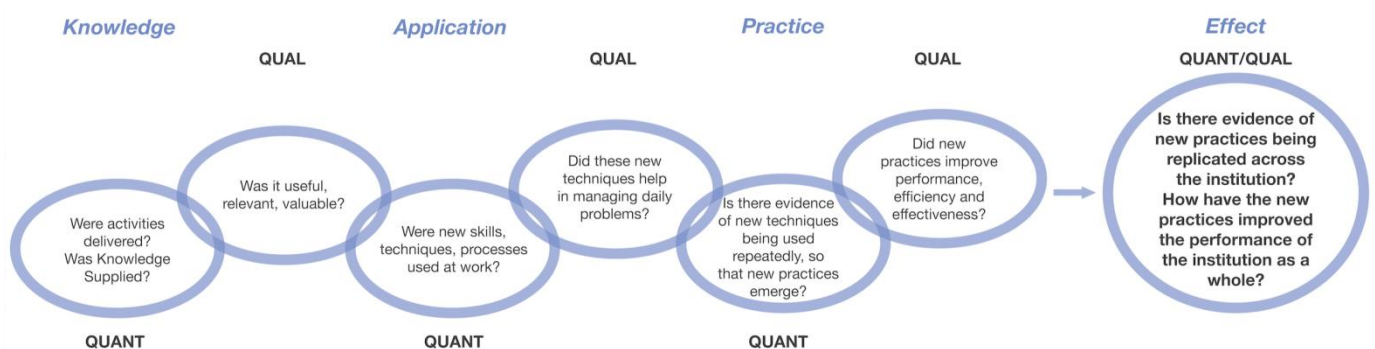


Figure 3 IF and GPG's current project stakeholder engagement

### 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 2 – Seeking Progress through Adaptive Programming

#### 3.1. Strand One: Strategic and Reform-Focused Political Leadership within Parliament

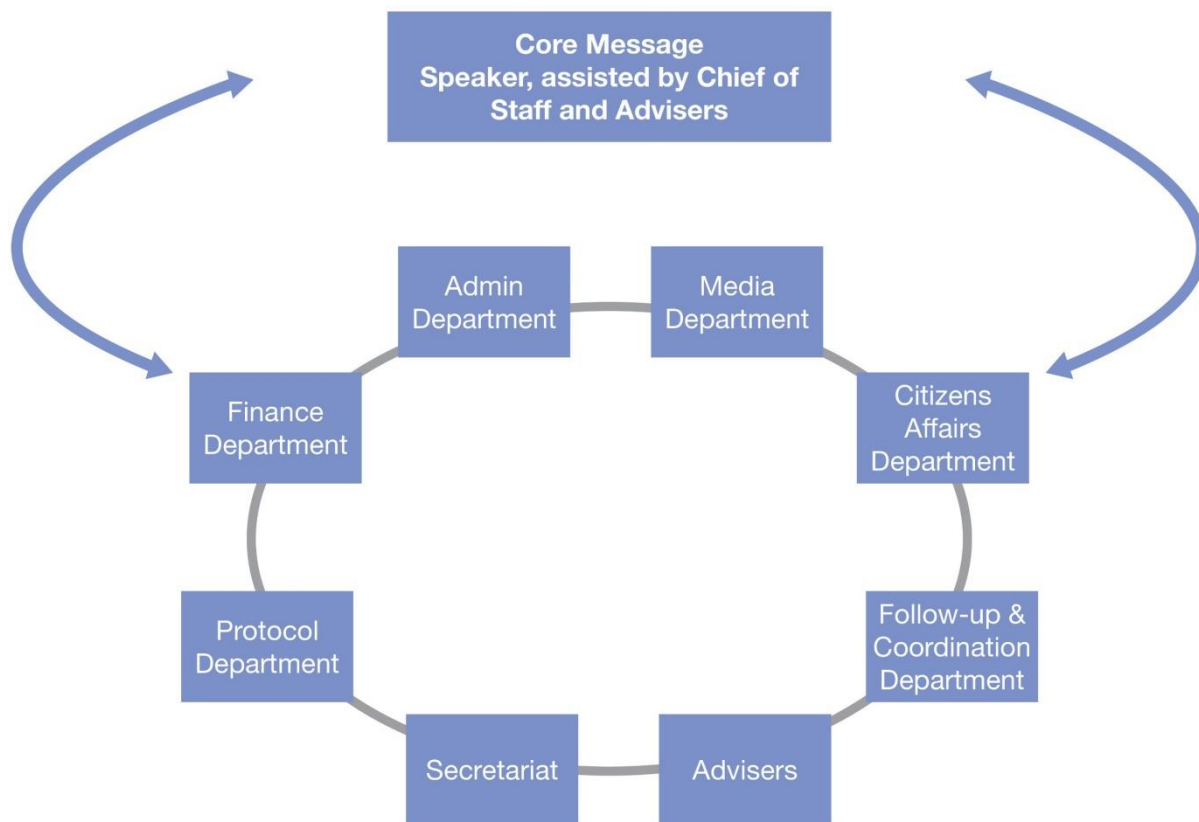
GPG engaged with all the key levels of senior leadership in the CoR during year one and two of the project, **to improve internal processes for co-ordination, communication and strategy within the Speakership**, to assess the blockages and challenges they are facing (including the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Deputy Secretary General; all Director Generals, the Parliamentary Directorate (PD), and Research Directorate).

As a result, during this project year, GPG focused it’s supported on two specific bodies of the Parliamentary Leadership: (i) the Speaker’s Office and (ii) Parliamentary Staff Directorates. Whilst there is scope and much potential to support beyond these two bodies, the project is limited by resources whilst it aims to deliver meaningful outcomes.



## The Speaker's Office: Strategic Communications.

The Speaker highlighted (in year one) 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) 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.



## Online Course on Strategic Communication planning

GPG has developed an online learning platform as part of its strategic response to the limitations imposed by COVID-19 and **specifically designed a module on Strategic Communications Planning** targeting the Speaker's Office of the Iraqi Parliament. This was based on the visit held in Erbil (February 2020) and was adapted to GPG's online learning platform to substitute for any in-country visits and to continue engagement.

The course aims to build awareness in staff which could lead to departments developing their own plans. It has been designed for staff in the Speaker's Office to provide an overview of strategic communications planning. This includes three modules covering – what is a strategic communications plan, how to develop one and how to implement one which will be followed up by direct online engagement with GPG to support the development or refinement of plans. It shares examples of some tools, mechanisms, good practices and examples. Each module has the same structure. It starts with

information – shared via text or video, then moves on to an activity to help reflect and assimilate that information and stimulate their thinking – a questionnaire or an exercise and finally there is the live session where participants are encouraged to apply their learning in practice. The exercises, and questionnaire and final session are also intended to identify and draw on existing good practice.

The project will continue co-develop and finalize the strategic communications plan with Speaker's Office and provide ongoing training and capacity development for staff in Speaker's Office on effective strategic communications and its implementation.

### **Parliamentary Staff Directorates:**

**The Research Department:** GPG worked closely with staff from the department to introduce a **mechanism for scrutinising and evaluating the impact, outcomes and consequences of a law** after it has been implemented, that is **Post-Legislative Scrutiny (PLS)**. PLS will enable MPs and the staff in the parliament to make the law work more effectively and to address public concerns about the effects of the law. As a result of its inquiry, the committee and the staff may recommend changes to the law or to the way it operates in practice. GPG worked on PLS from year 2 by introducing the main principles of post legislative scrutiny to the staff and raising their awareness of its importance in identifying any gaps in a piece of legislation. GPG will continue working with the research department to provide ongoing training and capacity development for the staff of the research department on assessing the impact of the legislations.

**The Parliamentary Directorate (PD):** GPG discussed several mechanisms and methodologies to (a) strengthen committees in the CoR, and (b) establish better coordination between the Parliament (Speaker) and the Executive (government), by way of enhancing coordination and collaboration between the Speakership and Government around the planning, scrutiny, and follow-up of legislation. Both areas sat within the PD's remit. However, given there was no government in place for a large part of the project year, and a change in the PD's focus, the PD requested GPG to develop and establish a framework to improve coordination between the Parliament (parliamentary committees) and citizens (regional parliamentary CoR Offices), as a direct response to the protests. Therefore, **support to the PD now sits under Strand 3** (below), which is explained in more detail.

**The Training and Development Department:** Towards the end of the project year, GPG started to work closely with the important, newly formed Training and Development Department in the Parliament on strategic direction and planning for an effective approach to training and developing Parliamentary staff and MPs. As this is a newly established department, it is through the long-standing relationships and reputation with officials in the CoR that GPG was approached by the Senior Advisor to the department's Director General to provide strategic advice, planning and direction for the department. This provides the project with a direct opportunity to support the parliamentary leadership through an effective training and development strategy for staff and MPs.

### 3.2 Strand Two: Parliamentary Committees adopt more inclusive and evidence-based policy mechanisms.

Having gained the buy-in and agreed areas (policies) of focus for target Committees in year one of the project, during the second year, IF and GPG set out to deliver the next phase of activities through bringing in the voices of citizens (CSOs) as a way of informing and engaging with parliamentary committees. This namely included the Finance Committee and the Health and Environment Committee, whilst progressing these activities with the Youth and Sport committee and the Education Committee has been much slower. Our work with the committees has laid the groundwork for this interim outcome.

It is also in this project strand that the **complementary** character of GPG's and IF's work come to life. The IF-led process with civil society experts and specialized CSOs provided important recommendations, evidence and analysis of facts in the form of four reports to the GPG-mentored oversight inquiries supporting the Health and Environment Committee (on Water Pollution and the Impact on Public Health), and the Finance Committee (on Banking Sector Reforms). This approach, enhanced by hearing sessions with civil society experts on both topics, has contributed to support the committees to adopt more inclusive and evidence-based practices in policy and legislation.

Our work this year was focused on improving the quality of policies through a parliamentary oversight inquiry process, in particular by including a wider range of sources from civil society and relevant policy experts. As a result of our support:

- The Finance Committee gathered a wider scope of issues inside Iraq to consider a range of recommendations for reforming Iraq's banking sector
- A parliamentary report on the sources of water pollution and its impact on public health and the environment was finalized in September 2020 by Health and Environment Committee. The reports and insights gathered by civil society experts for the Committee, including recommendations and holding hearing sessions helped support the Committee's final report.
- Both the Health and Environment Committee and the Finance Committee were able to engage with specialized CSOs, practitioners and experts, and gained views and survey-based evidence for their inquiries to review or prepare legislation on issues of priority concern for Iraqi citizens.
- Through GPG's published research report on "Economic Drivers of Youth Political discontent in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qarr", we have been able to highlight the extensive and complex nature of many political, social and economic issues facing young people. More importantly, this can now be presented to the Youth and Sports Committee in the first instance to explore the finding and recommendations as a basis for our work with the Committee as tangible activities. It also serves to inform and shape the thinking of other parliamentary committees interested in wider economic reforms, and youth engagement in Iraq.

#### Finance Committee

During this year, GPG built on the work from year 1 with the committee on supporting the Finance Committee's Sub-Committee on Banking (Chaired by Dr Mohammed al-Tamimi) on "Building Public Trust in Iraq's Banking System", as one of many priorities the committee identified to improve Iraq's economy and move towards a more diversified economy. We agreed the ToRs for such an activity would revolve around the protesters' demands in terms of how the banking system would support

inclusive economic growth and job creation, as well as the role of banks in resolving the housing crisis through ease of access to loans and investments in new builds.

Through several meetings held in Iraq (Dec 2019 and Feb 2020) and follow-up remote calls, we identified four main areas which the committee should explore, so to have meaningful information to form its recommendations:

1. Foreign Investors.
2. Businesses in Iraq.
3. Individual people.
4. Banking investment in housing and development in Iraq.

As a result, GPG arranged discussions with leading experts and banks in the region (IMF, Standard Chartered and World Bank representative) as a way of understanding the first point (foreign investors). A report, led by the expert Dr. Safwan, was formed to address the second and third points (Businesses in Iraq and individuals). This involved working with civil society practitioners and specialized CSOs to gather recommendations and survey-based evidence for the committee. This contribution was submitted as two reports to the Banking Sub-Committee (see section below on IF's work with experts and specialized CSOs).

In parallel, as part of GPG's README and KAPE approach, we continued to hold discussions with the committee and its senior advisor on (a) following up with current activities, but more importantly (b) ensuring the efforts continue to be of priority in an ever-changing economic and political climate. As a result, the committee requested a concerted focus on Iraq economic reform agenda, which the government had been planning to develop an economic reform white paper (during August and Sept 2020). The Finance Committee had started devising its own economic reform white paper, and asked for GPG to provide to a policy paper on how banking sector reforms could (and should) play a part as part of the reform agenda. The recommendations posed in GPG's paper were included in the Finance Committee's white paper (which has been published publicly in response to the government's white paper). Although this has now progressed into the third year of the project (post September 2020 at the time of writing this report), we will continue to work with the committee on their economic reform agenda, of which the banking sector is still a part of.

## **Health and Environment Committee**

Through several discussions and strategic overview meetings between GPG and the Health and Environment Committee, the committee identified "the sources of water pollution and its impact on public health and the environment" as a priority policy issue to explore (as part of a parliamentary oversight inquiry), which responds to the protesters' demand to improve water & sanitation services. Having agreed the ToR, key areas to cover, an indicative timeline and stakeholders for the committee to engage with, the Committee established a sub-committee solely devoted to undertaking the inquiry. Following on that, the Committee staff undertook a consultation session with several representatives of civil society organisations – which were identified and invited by the project team - working on the ground to answer questions related to water pollution issues.

The civil societies provided the committee with an overview of their work, their approaches to tackling water pollution, and evidence (in the form of information and data) on the importance of the government taking this issue seriously. Their contribution helped inform the committee and form their recommendations on what was needed to address the situation. They took a constructive and

informative stance which could help the committee produce a report from the inquiry with recommendations rather than focusing on critique or demands on government and parliament. It is worth mentioning that this was the first time that the committee had engaged with civil society, so this had an additional potential impact of demonstrating the value of engaging with civil society. The CSOs were able to address the questions in the ToR and provided more findings and information on different regions of Iraq. The project continued work with another group of specialized CSOs to provide recommendations and a large evidence base for the inquiry through a subsequent survey in Baghdad, Basra and Wasit (see chapter 2.2.)

Due to the travel restrictions (COVID-19), we continued remotely mentoring and supporting the committee, namely Dr Ammar Alatta, the Committee Specialist leading on the parliamentary report, through reviewing the draft reports, providing international best practices on effective parliamentary reports, future engagement plans to ensure the report has the intended impact after it is published. As a result, the parliamentary report was finalized in September 2020 and was based on the project's evidence gathering, holding hearing sessions, data analysis and producing final recommendations. The report also included recommendations and findings from the consultation with the next group of specialized CSOs, led by Dr. Mezher, and from the survey conducted by that group in cooperation with IACSS on the water situation in Baghdad, Basra and Wasit.

The sub-committee's final report lays the foundation for a valuable parliamentary inquiry and reflects the seriousness that the Committee attached to the issue of water pollution and the amount of work carried out to address it as an imminent and fundamental challenge to public health and the environment. As of September 2020 the report is still waiting for the approval of the Committee's Chair to be published as an official parliamentary report by the Committee. Once published, the project will continue advising and supporting the Committee in order to promote findings and recommendations to achieve considerable change on the issue of water pollution.

### **Youth and Sport Committee:**

GPG continued to hold meetings with members of the Youth and Sports Committee, by way of identifying clear entry points of support to the committee. Given the youth protests were a central focus in Iraq, the committee was interested in further suggestions to support youth political participation. The economic crisis was also a priority concern for the committee, with the risk of Deash returning to exploit the situation, targeting vulnerable young people. As with the other strands, we had to adapt our approach (due to travel restrictions) and proposed a research analysis on "Economic Drivers of Youth Political discontent in Iraq" which was welcomed and shaped our adaptive approach to supporting the committee. The research was launched towards the end of the project year, so discussions with the committee are continuing into the third year of the project. However, GPG has already started to devise an online course for the Youth and Sports Committee towards the end of the project year, focusing on youth political participation and engagement.

### **Education Committee**

Throughout Year 2, the project continuously engaged with the Education Committee through its Advisor, Mr. Ali Naim. After he first confirmed the topic of School drop-outs as a still important issue to address by the committee, this topic was not pursued further, since it required the discussion with and approval of the Chair of the Committee, to be facilitated through the Advisor. Passing via Mr. Ali, IF and GPG submitted a letter and written proposal to the Chair regarding support through the project. This letter was followed up on by IF, but not answered due to the shift of priorities in the Education

Committee: As we knew late in Year 2 by a committee member, since the outbreak of the pandemic in Iraq, they needed to primarily address the impact of COVID-19 on schooling in Iraq.

### Work with Civil Society Organizations and Policy-Related Experts

IF's work with experts and specialized CSOs in Year 2 was designed to complement the parliamentary inquiries and focused on collecting evidence and measuring the impact of legislation. As a result IF

- Provided the Health and the Finance Committees with two reports each, summarizing the opinions and **recommendations from experts** on the Iraqi banking system and the sources and impact of water pollution, and **gathering evidence through surveys** on these policy issues, including the view of the public and officials on the impact of water pollution, and the views of the public and businesspeople on the question of public trust in the banking system, in order to have these views and facts represented in the committees' review of existing and the preparation on new legislation
- Achieved **meaningful representation of women** (through choice of CSOs, interviewees in the surveys, and survey results broken-down by gender)
- Provided **capacity-building** for CSOs to enable them to better collect data and represent facts to parliamentary committees
- Supported civil society groups/CSOs and experts in **engaging with parliamentary committees**, and
- Helped them **participate in policy-making processes** through direct meetings and written reports.

For the first stage of our work with civil society, we chose the approach taken by the committees to address specific questions of the inquiries and develop recommendations. **Consultation sessions**, led as online meetings and via phone calls due to COVID-19 by the experts Dr. Mezher on Water Pollution and by Dr. Safwan on Public Trust in the Iraqi Banking System, were held with groups of five CSOs each and produced reports with the views and recommendations of the CSOs and the experts. Both reports were submitted to the Health and the Finance Committee in May and June of 2020, and served as a basis for follow up meetings of the experts and CSOs with the sub-committees.

At that regard, IF achieved to directly connect the sub-committee on Banking and its Advisor, Mohammed Jawad, with Dr. Safwan and some of the CSOs who had contributed their expertise to the inquiry: Samir Al-Nassery (Association of Banks), Mahmoud Dagher, (former general manager at Central Bank) and Dr. Akram Abdul Aziz Abdul Wahab. That Zoom-meeting discussed the findings and recommendations of the first report and provided positive feedback by the sub-committee to the experts' findings. The meeting also confirmed the committee's interest in understanding the obstacles that banks are currently facing (through regulations or other).

In the second stage we complemented the recommendations by systematic **fact-finding through surveys** in the field on the topics of The Human Impact of Water Pollution and Public Trust in the Banking System. After vetting several companies in the region, we chose to work with IIACSS – Al Mustakilla Research Group to lead and coordinate the fact-finding for the Health and the Finance Committee's inquiries. For both surveys, the interview data was collected face to face all the while ensuring enumerator and interviewee safety in a difficult health environment due to the COVID pandemic. Difficult conditions in the field, including street protests in Basra (water survey) and the impact of the pandemic (banking survey), led to a prolongation of the data-collection for both surveys into late summer (water) and early fall (banking).

To ensure a meaningful inclusion and representation of women in these fact-finding exercises for the parliament, the analysis in the survey reports is broken down by gender. In the banking survey, 50 % of the in-depth interviews were conducted with business women.

Both survey results reports were submitted to the Health and Finance sub-committees to provide evidence and recommendations to their inquiries, and were sent to Sida in early Year 3 of the project. Summaries of both surveys and the related study reports can be found in the [Annex](#) to this report.

### 3.3. Strand Three: Linking Parliament with the Provinces and Constituencies on Service Delivery

The project devised a ‘rapid response project’ for new mechanisms to promote coordination between Committees and COROs in the CoR. This is an initiative to help Committees and Regional CoR Offices to work effectively together to solve citizens’ problems.

Senior officials and staff in the CoR identified the need for a strategy to improve procedures and coordination between Regional COROs and Parliamentary Committees as a first step. GPG provided direct support to staff in developing an action plan for reforming the legislative/policy process in the CoR. The Speaker and the parliament director 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).

During this year we agreed with the Parliamentary Directorate that the mechanism will include two key staff groups selected by the Parliamentary Directorate to represent Committees and COROs:

- ‘Committee of Committees’ – a minimum of two staff from each of the following Committees: Services; Human Rights; Labour and Social Affairs; Health and Environment; Higher Education; Finance (due to its cross-cutting responsibility for ensuring funding of government commitments)
- “Committee of Regions” – minimum of two staff from each of the following Regional COROs: Nasiriyah; Karbala; Ninawa; Erbil; Basra

These groups of staff will be supported by the Parliamentary Directorate and GPG to improve their performance in the following two ways:

1. Reporting on Priority Issues for Citizens: The Core Task of COROs is to analyse priority issues for citizens in their region and report them to committees.
2. Responding to Citizens’ Needs: The Core Task of Committees is to take clear and visible action to investigate and resolve reports from COROs about the problems that citizens are experiencing.

Whilst this was agreed in Erbil, February 2020, we were hampered by the pandemic to hold a follow up meeting in which we planned to launch the event with all the relevant staff from the two groups of key staff (explained above). Therefore, GPG built an e-learning course based on regular mentoring and coaching virtual calls to support the Parliamentary Directorate of the Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR) in developing this activity. The course set out the main principles of building a culture of effective parliamentary oversight, core tasks for committees to create a responsive Parliamentary Oversight and core task for Regional office’s staff to address the priorities of citizens. The online course is the first step of engaging individually with some of the COROs staff via videoconferencing and then bringing them together and pulling together some of their ideas and reports and strategies. Whilst progress has been slow, we now have a basis to develop this initiative further in year three of the project.

IF will complement this initiative with civil society engagement, as agreed with the Parliamentary Directorate, to provide the regional COROs in two provinces with accurate information on priority issues of citizens' concern and will lead to a direct engagement of CSOs and COROs to discuss mechanisms to connect citizens to the Parliament on issues of service delivery.

### 3.4. Strand Four: Cross-cutting support to women politicians

During the second year of the project, IF and GPG provided support and mentoring to women MPs in committees and in parliamentary leadership positions with particular regard to first-term women MPs. Focusing this year's work on enabling women MPs to gain a more prominent role in parliament, our work provided

- support and mentoring to the Woman, Family and Childhood committee by working on the anti-domestic violence law
- capacity-building through skills development sessions in areas identified by women MPs as critical for their work in parliament and with their constituency
- insights and expertise for women MPs through webinar-conferences with civil society organizations, regional and international experts on how to address policy issues of high relevance for women and girls in Iraq, such as the anti-domestic violence law and the next National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325, and
- the connection of the women's committee's work with the Women's Caucus and the support of UN Women on these policy issues.

To achieve these results, IF and GPG conducted activities in the following areas:

1. Work with the women's committee on the anti-domestic violence law
2. Skills development sessions
3. Webinars on the anti-domestic violence law and the next National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325, supported by
4. Online resources on the anti-domestic violence law and UNSCR 1325

For detailed information on these activities see their summaries in the Annex.

#### **Main outcomes** (for detailed summaries, see [Annex](#)):

Work with the **women's committee** has built or started to build the understanding and skills of the committee members in their scrutiny role. They have developed a better understanding of their role in scrutinizing draft laws and in applying tools to do so consistently using a checklist. They have developed a better understanding of how they need to organize themselves as a committee in order to help get the law through parliament; how to mobilize support; how to engage with and get information from their own blocs; and how to document their discussions with blocs and individuals and to keep track of voting numbers. In addition to that, the project helped **women MPs to practice and consolidate learning**, give them a space, and practice the skill in a live situation in their role as an MP.

As a result of the **two webinar-meetings** with local, regional and international experts on the domestic violence law and a new NAP 1325 (see below: 3. Webinars), women MPs now have an increased understanding of the importance and impact of the domestic violence law and of the implementation of



UNSCR 1325 through a Second National Action Plan. The release of **video-clips** sent to all 83 women MPs in Parliament on both policy topics helped build knowledge and enhance the awareness on these priority topics related to women's and girl's rights. Also, 90% of participants in the projects' strand 4 activities believe that the IF and GPG activities helped women MPs promote legislation aimed at improving the status of women and families, in particular with regard to promoting the anti-domestic violence law in parliament (see IF-commissioned M&E report on Year 2, pp.20-21).

### 3.5. Strand Five: Research and Analysis

#### *“Economic Drivers of Youth Political discontent in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qar”*

On the one-year anniversary of the protests in Iraq (01 October 2020), GPG published its research report on “Economic Drivers of Youth Political discontent in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qar” to highlight the extensive and complex nature of many political, social and economic issues facing young people, merely scratching the surface of several, complex deep-rooted problems and factors. The timescale of this research was three months and focused on all provinces in the Kurdistan region and three provinces in the rest of Iraq (Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qar), which have seen the most consistent protests and unrest since October 2019.

The research content started with explaining the context and deep-rooted issues young people have faced since 2003. These help to frame the current political, economic, and social challenges being experienced by young people in Iraq. It set out the data and statistics, and surveys in which the specific regions were examined, to highlight the gravity of the challenges facing young people, and the underlying causes for political discontent among young Iraqis including those in the Kurdistan region. The core part of the research explored youth perceptions, attitudes and suggestions (as recommendations) on political and economic challenges they are facing. This was done through fieldwork and in-depth interviews to inform qualitative analysis. The conclusions, key findings, and recommendations provided meaningful, timely analysis and discussions amongst policymakers in Iraq, Kurdistan Region-Iraq (KRI), the wider international community, and more importantly our project stakeholders, all of whom welcomed this crucial research.

It has also informed and shaped our programming and priority areas in the scope of this project (such as the design of the e-learning course for the Youth and Sports Committee on Youth Political Participation). The findings have also been of wider interest to organisations and institutions operating in Iraq, and indeed the wider MENA region, in which similar demographic issues are at stake. The project will be following up with the Youth and Sports committee on the findings and the recommendations, through delivering the e-learning course, in the third year of the project.

### 3.6. Analysis of Year 2 activities conducted against GPG's KAPE® project management model.

The activities and achievements discussed under each project strand above have been continuously monitored and evaluated using our internal KAPE® model, to ensure the activities move progressively into the next stages of the chain, whilst managing the adaptive change of the political, social and economic challenges in Iraq. By the nature of this project, the first year was heavily focused on the

'Knowledge' phase, and during this second year, we moved solidly towards the 'Application' phase. Towards the end of year two, some activities began to progress closer to the phase of 'Practice'. It is in the final year; we envisage to be able to monitor and evaluate 'Effect' of the project.

#### **Knowledge:**

- Delivery of seminars/coaching:
  - Women MPs (x3 seminars)
  - 2 webinars for women MPs (DV-Law, NAP 1325)
  - Capacity-building training for 3 CSOs conducting the survey on water pollution
  - Webinars (and in-country consultation sessions) on effective oversight processes for x2 committees (Finance Committee, and the Health and Environment Committee);
  - Staff from the Research Directorate (x2 seminars); on how to write effective reports and on post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) inquiries
- Produced a strategic framework for the Parliamentary Directorate on improving mechanisms and coordination between Committees and COROs.
- Designed and created an online e-learning course for Parliamentary Directorate based on the strategic framework.
- Produced framework and outline of a communications strategy for the Speaker's Office
- Designed and created an online e-learning course for the Speaker's Office on Strategic Communications.
- Produced several policy papers for the Finance Committee on Banking Sector Reforms.
- Produced several guidance papers for the Health and Environment Committee on holding consultation sessions, gathering evidence and compiling a Committee Report. Also reviewed drafts of the Committee Report.
- Produced two consultation reports with recommendations for the Finance Committee and the Health and Environment Committee and their oversight inquiries
- Produced two analytical survey reports for the inquiries of the Finance Committee and the Health and Environment Committee.
- Released 5 videos for women MPs (2 on the DV-Law, 3 on UNSCR 1325 and the Second NAP)
- Continue to engage with all stakeholders.

#### **Application:**

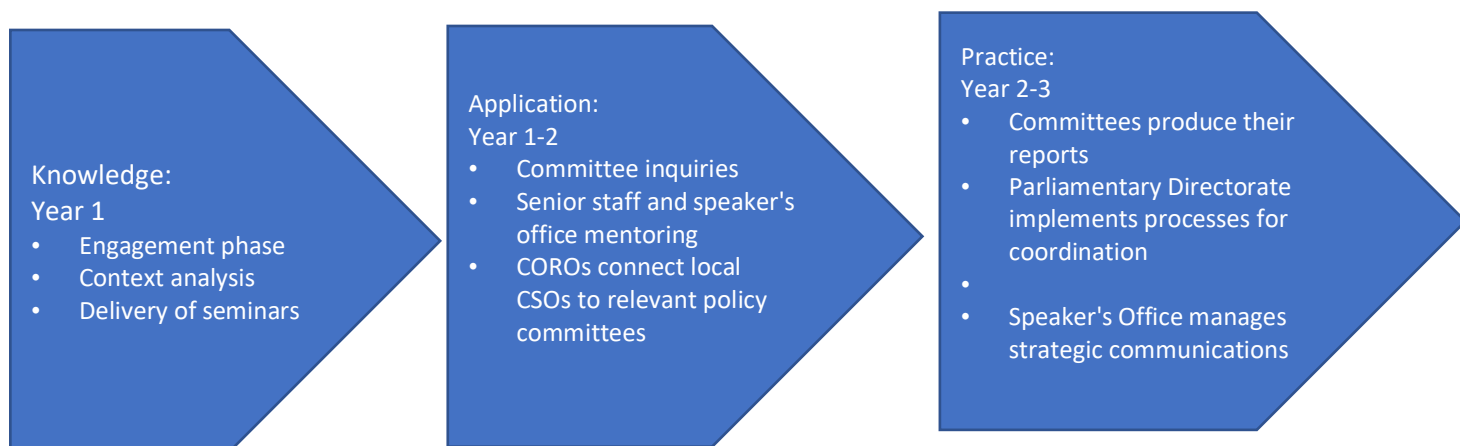
- Through starting to deliver the Strategic Communications e-learning course with the Speaker's Office, we will start to develop a strategic communications mechanism to be implemented within the Speaker's Office.
- Through continuous engagement and mentoring of Finance Committee and Health and Environment, develop an evidence-based mechanism to address and improve the policy areas of focus (Banking Sector Reforms and Water Pollution respectively)
- Conducted two surveys, one together with CSOs, on the human impact of water pollution and on public trust in the Iraqi banking system
- Develop a mechanism to connect COROs and CSOs to work effectively on relevant policy committees, via the Parliamentary Directorate (covered through delivery of specifically designed e-learning courses in the "Knowledge" phase).
- Provided a platform for discussion and learning for women MPs through two webinar-conferences with civil society experts, international organizations and the government.

- Provide guidance papers to women committee and number of women MPs on reading and interpreting legislations using the anti-domestic Violence law as a case study in addition to the specialised peer-to-peer mentoring on priority topics.
- Launched a research paper on “Economic Drivers of Youth Political Discontent in Iraq”

**Practice:** The project will continue to build on the “Application” phase achieved in year 2 activities, and towards implementation (“Practice”).

- The Health and Environment Committee has completed its Inquiry Report, having gone through its oversight process into water pollution.
- The Finance Committee adopted GPG’s key recommendations (policy paper) on Banking Sector Reforms to include them amongst the Committee’s Economic Reform White Paper.
- The Speaker’s Office has started to evaluate, map and develop its internal mechanisms towards a strategic communications plan.

**Effect:** We are expecting the ‘Effect’ to be the processes that we are developing during year 2 will be adopted as practices in the parliament and by civil society actors.



### 3.7. Looking ahead

The second year of the project has demonstrated this project can withstand the difficult and complex challenges that it has faced (political, social, economic and the pandemic), and has made progress nonetheless through its adaptive approaches. This gives us a strong basis to move into the third year of the project, to continue implementing activities. Whilst activities in the second year of the project focused on developing effective mechanisms within the parliament, with specialized CSOs and experts from civil society, GPG's KAPE analysis and model will be looking to ensure that new patterns of behaviours are established and repeated over time. It is envisaged we will do this through building on our activities, as a basis to establish new processes, procedures, and new behaviours across the different layers of the institution. The next step is to continue supporting the application of these new processes to be adopted as a new practice in the parliament. On the first strand, **Strategic Political Leadership** will be an important focus for this project in the coming months, particularly in light of the new government that gained the trust of the parliament. The government's new Economic Reform Plan (White Paper) and potentially upcoming elections will be central theme throughout Iraq, and the project will need to be adapted accordingly to support the priorities of the Parliamentary Leadership as such. This will partly be done through ongoing mentoring, training and capacity development for staff in Speaker's Office on effective strategic communications and ensure the effective implementation of the strategic communications internally for the CoR and external for the Speaker. It will be an important priority for the Speaker (and Parliament as a whole) to demonstrate and communicate a meaningful plan and approach to respond to citizens' concerns and holding to account the government's Economic Reform Plan. Equally supporting the different Directorates in the CoR (Research Department, Parliamentary Directorate and Training and Development Department) will be important to allow them to support the Parliamentary leadership.

We expect to see continued momentum in the second strand on developing **Effective Parliamentary Committees**. We will continue to finalize the inquiry reports and results with Health and Environment Committee, and begin the post inquiry engagement activities. We will complement these activities with providing an opportunity for meaningful and productive engagement of the involved groups, and support committees in analysing collected evidence to use this in developing effective policy recommendations. We will also develop effective communications and public engagement plans for the committee to enable some of these follow up activities. We will continue supporting the Finance Committee in its economic reform plans, of which the banking sector reforms are also included. We will begin working with the Youth and Sports Committee by way of focusing on youth political participation, as a follow up from the research on Economic Driver of Youth Political Discontent in Iraq. We will also continue our efforts to engage on a priority topic with the Education Committee, whose Chair early in Year 3 has renewed his interest in working with the project.

At the same time, we will be working 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, and through connecting Regional CoR Offices with civil society and their expertise.

We will continue **to deliver bespoke mentoring for women MPs around legislation, parliamentary oversight, leadership skills and gender-sensitive policymaking** in the fourth strand of the project. We will continue to monitor the contexts and adjust our approach to ensure it meets the needs of all the stakeholder in this strand, who are most likely to influence reform.

Lastly, we will continue to build on the excellent outcomes of the research paper on Economic Driver of Youth Political Discontent in Iraq, through building an e-learning course for the Youth and Sports Committee focused on Youth Political Participation and working with the Committee through an inquiry process of improving policies and legislation the encourage youth political participation. This will include close engagement with CSOs (when mention “youth” it also includes young women and girls). We will also expand this additional strand (on research and analysis) through new research publications and policy papers, which are based on the relevant to the priorities and issues in Iraq. This could range a from series of topics from political engagement, economic diversification or women’s economic empowerment in Iraq.

In summary, we have made a solid base in the second year of the project to pave the way for practices to be effectively adopted in the Iraqi CoR, and amongst CSOs in Iraq.

## 4. Lessons Learned.

### Learning by doing

We have found the most useful way for our stakeholders to obtain any skills is by connecting the skills they were acquiring in the sessions, webinar, workshop, etc. with real-time situations that also complimented their other parliamentary and personal endeavours. GPG developed skills sessions with small group of women MPs on specific skills development. These sessions focused on ensuring that each woman gains advice and information relevant to her situation. The sessions gave each MP the opportunity to be able to put the learning into practice and then return to the group to discuss and reflect on the experience. We have designed the sessions in such a way that beginners up to advanced proficiency level could equally participate and share experiences.

Similarly, through continuing our work with the Finance Committee, this is one of, if not the most important committee in the CoR. Its priorities are always changing and having to adapt to the realities and challenges Iraq faces as a country. Our relationship with the committee has only been strengthened through our continuous support and adapting accordingly to their needs and priorities.

### The benefits of an adaptive approach

Iraq is going through one of its most challenging times since 2003. As we have explained the several challenges the country has faced, it has had huge repercussions upon its citizens, particularly women and young people. Due to the unexpected changes in the political, economic and social context in Iraq during the second year, some new issues emerged as priorities for our stakeholders, and decisions needed to be made in even the most unpredictable circumstances. The project’s adaptive approach to online-based activities (e-learning courses), virtual meetings and webinars, allowed IF and GPG to continue effective engagement. In many ways, our interlocutors, and stakeholders in Iraq have identified our project as an important mechanism of support for them to navigate through the several challenges they face. This was reinforced through GPG’s adaptive KAPE and README approaches and models.

While many vulnerable citizens (namely women) have now been confined to their homes during the lockdown, there has been a clear surge in the number of domestic violence cases (not only in Iraq, but globally, even in developed countries). IF and GPG’s work with women MPs and CSOs, particularly on the anti-domestic violence law became more important.

Young people in Iraq have also suffered disproportionately from recent conflicts and poor economic conditions, including high rates of youth unemployment, insufficient educational provision, little support for start-ups or young entrepreneurs and difficulty accessing affordable housing. The formal political process is dominated by older men, and the political party structures do not facilitate young people's voices. Young people's frustration with these circumstances has been visible in the recent protest movements. The project responded to the new priorities through working on and publishing the research paper on "Economic Drivers of Youth Political Discontent in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qarr". The outcomes of the report reinforced the extent and complex nature of many political, social and economic issues facing young people. Through its findings and recommendations, the report has created a space for further dialogue, policies and programmes to be developed.

### **Adaptive programming and flexibility are intrinsic**

During the second year of the project, the escalation of measures to combat the Covid-19 pandemic has presented challenges related to deliver the activities of the project. However, IF and GPG remained in close contact with partners and beneficiaries and continued to shape our programs in response to the needs of our stakeholders, including the shifting topical priorities – where they were compatible with the overall goal of the project and our four high-level outcomes (Strands 1-4), with the additional need of strand 5 as mechanism of research and analysis to inform our project's programmatic priorities and approaches. Whilst GPG created new ways of collaborating internationally (through e-learning courses and virtual meetings and mentoring sessions), IF continued to support on the ground, finding new ways to navigate the challenges on the ground, and importantly keeping close engagement with CSOs, local groups and women MPs. IF's use of social media to communicate with stakeholders despite curfews and the release of activity-related videos through IF's Youtube channel brought the project's work and objectives to the attention of a broader audience in Iraq. GPG's extensive library of online e-learning materials will be available to a wider audience in Iraq, alongside on-demand personal and interactive advice from our expert Associates and staff. The project has adapted all its engagement and activities to be done remotely through virtual programming, but nonetheless requires important on-ground engagement.

### **Strong relationship with the Director General of the Parliamentary Directorate**

GPG has a strong relationship with the Director General (DG) of the Parliamentary Directorate (PD), which was essential to moving this work forward. The important session we held with the DG in Erbil, February 2020, helped shape and get agreement on programme of activities going forward. The DG is a key stakeholder in the CoR, whose engagement, support and agreement of our work is important. While working remotely, it does appear to have become more difficult to maintain these relationships, all of the beneficiaries were very keen to keep the engagement remotely.

### **Wider engagement with women MPs**

Using our strengthened network of women MPs in Year 2, we were able to provide support not only for the women's committee, but we also reached women MPs from other committees such as Services and Reconstruction, Finance, Labour Social Affairs and IDPs, and Economy. A vast majority among these deputies being newly elected women MPs, we achieved to provide knowledge and skills to this special focus group of the project. We also used our communication with women MPs through a WhatsApp group, specifically created for the Sida project, to update their needs and interests, inform our support for them, and ensure their buy-in. Despite the increase in competing demands on the time of women MPs in Year 2, almost half of the project's constant group of 30 women MPs participated in the IF and GPG activities on the domestic violence law and on the role of Parliament to monitor the next NAP 1325 (see List of women MPs participants in Year 2 in the Appendix). By means of the webinar conferences,

we also achieved to bring together the two key groups of women in Parliament, the Women Caucus led by Ala Talabani and the women's committee headed by Maysoon Al-Saedi, to help advance Iraq's agenda on Women, Peace and Security through the next National Action Plan 1325.

## 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 second year of the project can be found in the **Appendix**.



# Appendix

## Detailed Summaries of Main Activities

### 1. Country based visits/ activities (December 2019/February 2020)

#### **Visit One: 2nd - 6th December 2019:**

This visit took place in Erbil from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 aiming to hold progressive meetings with our project's key stakeholders despite the crisis that Iraq in general, and the Iraqi CoR in particular, was going through. The meetings in Erbil included the Speaker's office, the Finance Committee, and the Health and Environment Committee.

Speaker's Office: We met with Mohammed Jawad and Yasser from the Speaker's office. GPG strategy paper, which had been produced and shared with the speakership office as a result of our meeting in September, had been well received, and have requested for a further development to begin implementation of the strategy.

#### Committees:

**The Finance Committee:** after gaining agreement from the Chair of the Finance Committee to work with Dr Mohammed Tamimi, Chair of the Banking Sub-Committee along the members and staff, the focus of our meeting in Erbil with the Advisor of the Committee reiterated the importance of continuing the focus on the Banking Sector reforms inquiry to respond to the protests' main demands which are essentially economic in nature since the banking systems are fundamental to this. We agreed that the inquiry's ToRs would revolve around the protesters' demands in terms of how the banking system would support inclusive economic growth and job creation, as well as the role of banks in resolving the housing crisis through loans and investments in new builds.

**The Health and Environment Committee:** We met with MP Salman Badeer (Advisor/Consultant to the Committee), Ammar Alatta (Advisor/Consultant to the Committee), and Ammar Al Oboodi. During our meeting with the Committee's representatives in Erbil, they requested GPG's support to conduct a parliamentary inquiry on the issue of water pollution and the impact on public health

#### **Cross-cutting support to Women MPs**

IF and GPG have designed a questionnaire and disseminated it among the women MPs with whom we previously engaged. This questionnaire aimed to help shape the next phases of our work with the women MPs, while using it as a monitoring tool of the impact of work carried out so far.

#### **Visit Two: 1st - 5th February 2020:**

This visit took place in Erbil during which our team met with the Speaker's Office staff, the Parliamentary Directorate, the Finance Committee, the Youth and Sports Committee, and the Health and Environment Committee.

The Speaker's Office: we examined a group of questions, which were prepared and shared with the Speaker's Office ahead of the visit. These questions aimed to identify the structure, approaches and working patterns which the staff of the Speaker's office follow in more depth. The staff answered the most relevant questions that reflect their challenges. The answers they provided paved the way for us to target the most specific departments working within the Speaker's Office such as the Administration

team, the protocol team, the Media team, the Citizens' Affairs team, in addition to the advisors to the Speaker.

The Parliamentary Directorate: we held a very progressive meeting with the Director General of the Parliamentary Directorate, Haidar Muthana, and the Head of Committees, Ahmed Saad. They provided a very good overview of the current political situation and some feedback to the 'Committees – COROs coordination' paper which GPG had produced for Haidar. Haidar was in agreement with the framework and overall strategy of the paper according to what he requested and wanted to focus this session on exploring in more depth, an action plan for the upcoming months, which targets specific committees and regional COROs. During this visit, we agreed to start working on the Rapid Response Project and agreed that the Parliamentary Directorate will establish two core groups to establish this intended improved coordination **(1) "Committee of Committees"** consisting of two staff from each of the following 6 Committees: Services and Reconstruction; Human Rights; Labour and Social Affairs; Health and Environment; Higher Education and Finance; and **(2) "Committee of Regions"** consisting of two staff from each of the following 5 Regional COROs: Basra, Erbil, Karbala, Nasiriyah and Ninawa

#### Committees:

**Finance Committee:** GPG met with MP Shirwan Mirza, MP Jamal Artoushi who are part of the banking sub-committee, and Mohammed Jawad (Advisor to the Finance Committee). We held a progressive meeting with them where we identified four areas of inquiry. This meeting in February explored each of the four areas in more depth, the key issues that the Sub-Committee and GPG have identified in each area, the remaining research and evidence-gathering that needs to take place, and the next steps agreed between the Committee and GPG.

**Health and Environment Committee:** GPG met with Dr. Ammar Alatta (Senior Advisor and Committee Specialist), and Dr. Ammar Al Oboodi (Senior Advisor and Committee Specialist). MPs (namely the Deputy Chair of the Committee) were unable to attend the session (due to an emergency meeting in Baghdad regarding the Coronavirus), we went ahead with a very successful consultation meeting between Committee Specialists (Senior Advisors) and three representatives from CSOs (Waterkeepers, Save the Tigris and Un Ponte Per) with the presence of Komal Adris from Oxfam and Chris Burnett-Cargill from SIDA, to discuss the topic of the inquiry – 'sources of water pollution and the impact on public health in Iraq'. The CSO representatives provided the committee with an excellent overview of their work, their approaches to tackling water pollution, and evidence (in the form of information and data) on the importance of the government taking this issue seriously. The presentation by the Committee Specialist, Dr Ammar Al-Atta, highlighted the grasp and understanding he has about the inquiry procedures and what the committee needs to do in the next few weeks, before our return to Erbil.

**Youth and Sports Committee:** GPG held a meeting with two very active MPs from the Youth and Sports Committee from the Kurdistan region; MP Diyar Berwari and MP Arzo Mahmoud, who showed commitment to working with us on this project. This was a follow up to the meetings we held with the committee (and Chair) in September 2019, in addition to several conversations since. We had a very good overview of the work the committee has been conducting, having passed a key bill on Iraq's National Olympics Strategy, and another two draft bills going through their first readings. One of the key suggestions the Committee has proposed to GPG is to support Iraq's Youth Parliament, which is currently inactive. Such an approach/initiative would be very timely amidst the protests and discontent amongst youth.

**Between April and September 2020**, our team focused on the following:

Speaker's Office: GPG have held a couple of mentoring and catch-up calls with key staff from the Speaker's Office via Zoom throughout April to support them in developing their own Strategic Communications plan. To help them further with the plan, GPG developed an **online e-learning course on Strategic Communications** to give the Speaker's Office staff good insights on what a strategic communications plan is, how to develop one, and how to implement it.

Finance Committee: GPG have held consultative sessions with the senior advisor to the committee, who has specified an adaptive approach and support from GPG on addressing the banking sector in light of the current economic crisis. During June 2020, we spoke with Iraq's Representative for IMF, and followed up with Mohammed Jawad based on that, and prepared a short options paper for the Committee to review and decide the next steps. We have highlighted the importance of sticking as close as possible to the current inquiry. Moreover, we provided a briefing paper for members of the finance committee to equip them with the needed knowledge to effectively hold their first consultation session with the chief executive officers from Standard Chartered. IF worked with experts to provide recommendations and data-based evidence to the committee's inquiry on Public Trust in Banking, and achieved to hold a discussion with the sub-committee and experts on the related findings.

Health and Environment Committee: The Committee Specialist (Advisor ) Dr Ammar Alatta has worked on the committee's final parliamentary report. Since May, we have been mentoring and supporting him on the report to identify the gaps and act accordingly. We also agreed with him on the next steps in order to be able to promote the report's findings and recommendations after getting the approval of the Committee's Chair and members. IF engaged with civil society experts to contribute recommendations and fact-finding to the committee's inquiry on water pollution through two reports.

The Parliamentary Directorate: GPG has developed an e-learning course on its online platform to present an initial approach on "Responsive Parliamentary Oversight: Committees and Regional Offices Working Effectively Together to Solve Citizens' Problems" for the Parliamentary Directorate. It is an initial phase to start engagement with key COROs and Committee Staff, to begin initial activities on focused policy issues facing Iraqi citizens in the focused regions.

Women MPs: we focused on several areas of support to this strand which are supporting the Women's Committee, provided specialised peer-to-peer mentoring with GPG Associate Meg Munn and support for all women MPs, especially new women MPs on legislation for women's rights. IF held webinar-conferences for women MPs with civil society organizations, regional and international experts on the role of Parliament with regards to the anti-domestic violence law and the next National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325. IF also produced two videos on domestic violence in Iraq under COVID-19 and the domestic violence law and three videos with speeches of the webinar-conference on UNSCR 1325 and the Second NAP for Iraq to provide women MPs with sustainable online resources, that help advancing the draft of the DV-Law and support an effective implementation and monitoring of the next NAP for Iraq.

Moreover, GPG held sessions with the women committee and number of women MPs on reading and interpreting legislations using the anti-domestic Violence law as a case study. The sessions gave the women MPs a good understanding of the aims of the anti-domestic violence law and an ability to judge whether those aims are met. GPG also provided tailored support to help women MPs developing a

comprehensive and co-ordinated strategy for communicating their message about the law externally and to help them developing a plan to monitor objections to the law and to decide on how to manage those objections.

**Research Strand:** GPG has launched a research paper on “Economic Drivers of Youth Political Discontent in Iraq” which was finalised by the end of Year two.

### Online E-Learning Courses

As a couple of example of the e-learning courses that have been developed as part of adapting to remote working, below are some screenshots.

#### 1. Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments (for the Speaker’s Office of the Iraqi CoR)

The screenshot shows a course page with a left-hand navigation menu and a main content area. The navigation menu includes sections for 'Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments' and 'Communications for Parliaments', with sub-items like 'Participants', 'Grades', and 'General'. The 'General' section is expanded to show 'Introduction to Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments', 'Module 1: What is a Strategic Communications Plan?', and 'Module 1.1: Why have...'. The main content area features the course title, a breadcrumb trail, and a 'Course Outline' section. The outline includes a description of the course and a list of facilitators with their credentials. Below this is a table of modules and topics.

**Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments**  
 Home / My courses / Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments / General / Course Outline

**Course Outline**

This tailored and facilitated training course is designed as part of GPG’s project to address strategic communications planning for staff in parliamentary and political offices. This course was kindly done in cooperation with the following GPG associates:

- Greg Power:** GPG Founder and Board Chair.
- Lord Jeremy Purvis:** Member of the House of Lords and Former Member of the Scottish Parliament.
- Aileen Walker:** Former Director of Public Engagement at House of Commons.
- Lord Jonny Oates:** Former Chief of Staff to the Deputy Prime Minister.
- Baroness Alison Suttie:** Member of the House of Lords and Former Deputy Chief of Staff to the Deputy Prime Minister.
- Richard Good:** Former Adviser to the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- Alistair Burt:** Former FCO Minister and MP.
- Jacqui Smith:** First Female Home Secretary, Former Minister and MP.
- Stephen Gethins:** Former MP.

**For the Course's Main Topics, Please click on the Course Outline.**

MODULE	TOPIC
Introduction	Introduction to Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments
Module 1	What is a Strategic Communications Plan?
	1.1 Why have a Strategic Communications Plan and How developing One will help Your Team operate more Successfully?
	1.2 Your Office and your Current approach to Communications
	1.3 Facilitated Review of the Analysis Exercise and Planning Next Steps
Module 2	Drafting a Strategic Communications Plan
	2.1 How to draft the Plan and what do you want your Communications plan to achieve?
	2.2 Facilitated Review of the Analysis Exercise and Planning Next Steps
Module 3	How to ensure a Strategic Communications Plan is implemented?
	3.1 Who and how will the Plan be delivered and on what Timescale?
	3.2 Facilitated Review of Outputs from the Analysis Exercise and Planning Next Steps
Next Steps	Strategic Communications: Next Steps

Last modified: Sunday, 19 July 2020, 2:02 PM

Jump to... [Introductory Video to Effective Strategic Communications](#)

## Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments

Participants

Grades

General

Introduction to Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments

Module 1: What is a Strategic Communications Plan?

Module 1.1: Why have a Strategic Communications Plan and How developing One will help Your Team operate more Successfully?

Module 1.2: Your

## Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments

Participants

Grades

General

Introduction to Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments

Module 1: What is a Strategic Communications Plan?

Module 1.1: Why have a Strategic Communications Plan and How developing One will help Your Team operate more Successfully?

## Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments

Participants

Grades

General

Introduction to Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments

Module 1: What is a Strategic Communications Plan?

Module 1.1: Why have a Strategic Communications Plan and How developing One will help Your Team operate more Successfully?

# Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments

Home / My courses / Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments  
/ Introduction to Effective Strategic Communications for Parliaments  
/ Introductory Video to Effective Strategic Communications

## Introductory Video to Effective Strategic Communications


Please watch an Introductory Video that has been recorded by Greg Power on Effective Strategic Communications



## Module 1.1: Why have a Strategic Communications Plan and How developing One will help Your Team operate more Successfully?

The purpose of a strategic communications plan is to ensure that your communications function is fully aligned with – and focused on – the priority objectives of your political organisation. This will help ensure that you are communicating what is most important to you as an organisation and, in turn, it will reinforce the focus of your organisation or office on its core organisational priorities.

This module will help you identify the benefits of having a Strategic Communications Plan, the key challenges in its formulation, and how to develop a successful plan to overcome those challenges.

 Please watch a Q&A Video on the Importance of Strategic Communications



Please click on the title to watch the video that has been recorded in-conversation with Lord Jonny Oates and Aileen Walker.

 Activity - Think about the methods used in your Parliament for Effective Strategic Communications.



## Please watch a Q&A Video on the Importance of Strategic Communications

Please watch the following Q&A Video that has been recorded in-conversation with Lord Jonny Oates and Aileen Walker.



## 2. Responsive Parliamentary Oversight: Committees and Regional Offices Working Effectively Together to Solve Citizens' Problems (for the Parliamentary Directorate of the Iraqi CoR)

**Work effectively between committees and regional offices**

- Participants
- Grades
- General
- Responsive Parliamentary Oversight: Introduction
- Module 1: Building a Culture of Effective Parliamentary Oversight

### Responsive Parliamentary Oversight: Committees and Regional Offices Working Effectively Together to Solve Citizens' Problems

Home / My courses / Work effectively between committees and regional offices / General / Course Outline

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#### Course Outline ⚙️

This course is designed as part of GPG's project to support the implementation of a very important initiative which aims to directly address some of the poor service issues experienced by citizens in Iraq as well as to demonstrate to the public the value of parliamentary scrutiny and oversight. This course has been created by the below GPG associates:

[Lord Jeremy Purvis](#): Member of the House of Lords and Former Member of the Scottish Parliament.

[Meg Munn](#): Former FCO Minister and Minister for Women and Equality.

[Baroness Alison Suttie](#): member of the House of Lords and Former Deputy Chief of Staff to the Deputy Prime Minister.

[Dr Sue Griffiths](#): Executive Director of GPG

**To see the main topics will be covered in this course, please click on Course outline.**

MODULE	TOPIC
Introduction	Introduction to the course
Module 1	Building a Culture of Effective Parliamentary Oversight
Module 2	2.1 Responsive Parliamentary Oversight: Core Tasks for Committees 2.2 Local and Regional Priorities for Citizens: Core Tasks for Regional Offices
Module 3	Case Study of Effective CORO work: Basra

Jump to...

Introduction Video ▶

**Work effectively between committees and regional offices**

- Participants
- Grades
- General
- Responsive Parliamentary Oversight: Introduction
- Module 1: Building a Culture of Effective Parliamentary Oversight
- Module 2.1- Active and Responsive Parliamentary Committees: Core Tasks for Committees
- Parliamentary Oversight
- Module 2.1- Active and Responsive Parliamentary Committees: Core Tasks for Committees
- Module 2.2- Local and Regional Priorities for Citizens: Core Tasks for Regional Offices
- Module 3- Basra CoR office & post legislative scrutiny of journalists rights law 2011- Case Study
- Next steps
- Dashboard
- Site administration
- Parliamentary Oversight
- Module 2.1- Active and Responsive Parliamentary Committees: Core Tasks for Committees
- Module 2.2- Local and Regional Priorities for Citizens: Core Tasks for Regional Offices
- Module 3- Basra CoR office & post legislative scrutiny of journalists rights law 2011- Case Study
- Next steps
- Dashboard

### Responsive Parliamentary Oversight: Introduction

In any parliamentary democracy, parliamentary committees have a vital role to play in monitoring the quality of services provided to the public and holding the government to account for its performance and for the delivery of its commitments. In order to do this effectively, committees need to have access to accurate information from local areas to understand the quality of services being provided in each region, and what action needs to be taken to improve matters where there are problems. This course aims to support the Parliamentary Directorate of the Iraqi Council of Representatives initiative in implementing an important project which aims to directly address some of the poor service issues experienced by citizens in Iraq as well as to demonstrate to the public the value of parliamentary scrutiny and oversight.

The Parliamentary Directorate of the Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR) has requested the support of Global Partners Governance (GPG) in implementing an important project which aims to directly address some of the poor service issues experienced by citizens in Iraq as well as to demonstrate to the public the value of parliamentary scrutiny and oversight.

The CoR already has a network of regional offices in each governorate (Council of Representatives Regional Offices – COROs) as well as active parliamentary Committees in each policy area. The aim of the project is to connect the COROs and Committees more effectively, so that COROs are reporting to parliament on the key issues for citizens in their regions, and Committees are responding rapidly with actions which can resolve those issues.

#### Introduction Video



#### What are the challenges facing you in your role as a staff in the Parliament?



Please write down the top 3 challenges you experience in your role?

#### What are the challenges facing you in your role as a staff in the Parliament?



Please write down the top 3 challenges you experience in your role?

#### What are the challenges facing you in your role as a staff in Iraqi COROs?



Please select the top 3 challenges you experience in your role?

### Module 1: Building a Culture of Effective Parliamentary Oversight

Oversight and accountability are crucial elements of the relationship between Parliament and Government. Effective oversight brings more people into decision-making so that

## 2. Strand 2 - IF surveys with civil society experts for the Finance and the Health Committees

### IF survey on - Understanding the Human Impact of Water Pollution in Baghdad, Basra and Wasit

Building on the findings and recommendations from the IF report on the related CSO consultation, the survey provided fact-finding and analysis for the Health inquiry, focusing on the human impact of water pollution with regard to the local population in the Governorates of Baghdad, Basra and Wasit. The choice of locations followed the terms of reference of the Health Committee. Working with three CSOs from the prior water-consultation, the survey was implemented over 2.5 months and captured the views of citizens, water and health officials and one academic, Dr. Shukri Ibrahim Alhasan of the University of Basra, on water quantity, quality, the causes of water pollution and on interactions of citizens with public authorities on water-related issues.

The results of the survey revealed that not the access to, but the quality of water is a major problem in all three governorates, since 79% of Baghdadis, 84% of Basrawis, and 83% of Wasitis believe that their

water is not safe. This issue is enhanced by a significant trust deficit in the public of these three governorates toward the authorities who oversee water-related issues. Iraqi water officials in Baghdad, Basra and Wasit, on the other side, are aware of significant problems with water pollution in their governorates, but mostly refer to the lack of funding as the reason why water problems are not addressed.

It is against this backdrop, that the recommendations from the study to policymakers, like the Health and Environment Committee, gain significance, as one of the main conclusions is the need for an increase in funding to water programs. This money, however, gets lost, if the allocations cannot be monitored and don't take into account the variety of problems for the supply of sufficient freshwater, including different causes for water pollution, but also climate-change. With regards the trust deficit of the public towards authorities on water problems, the study highlights that if the water situation in Baghdad, Basra, and Wasit is to improve, there might be a need for political reform and improved ways of communication and interaction between public authorities and citizens on water supply and health issues as well.

### **IF survey on - Public Trust in the Banking system – Baghdad, Basra and Erbil**

Using the findings of the IF consultation with Dr. Safwan and the experts on the banking system related to the finance committee's inquiry, this survey sought to understand how Iraqis view and use the banking sector in Iraq, how much they trust banks, how they perceive the risks involved with using banks, and what they perceive to be the weaknesses with Iraq's banks. Targeting the three cities of Baghdad, Basra and Erbil as the biggest economic hubs in the country, the survey was conducted by IIACSS over 2.5 months and collected opinions from Iraqi business people, general public (not involved in business) and did 5 in-depth interviews with Iraqi business owners, including two business women.

The results report/study came up with a series of valuable insights and conclusions for policy-makers, among which the important differences between ordinary Iraqis and businesspeople when it comes to their experience with and attitudes toward banks in the country. In all three cities included in this study, the vast majority of ordinary Iraqis do not have bank accounts. Most ordinary citizens do not believe they need bank accounts. If they do have a bank account, it is to keep their money safe, help with electronic banking, or to receive their salary. Almost all of the general public respondents trust their own banks but that trust drops when it comes to banks in general in Iraq. This view is shared by the businesspeople who are much more likely to trust their own bank as opposed to the banking system in Iraq. The safety of bank accounts is a major source of concern among businesspeople, who also criticise banks for having overly complex procedures and poor customer service. A major point that came out of the in-depth interviews is how much businesspeople lay the blame for the poor state of banks in Iraq at the feet of Iraqi politicians. Political party leaders and the central bank are cited as being particularly responsible for the problems with Iraqi banks.

The study sees the situation of banks in Iraq as a fundamental crisis of confidence, since both the business sector and the public have serious concerns with the banks. They are viewed as unreliable, corrupt, inefficient, and not at all useful for helping Iraq's economy grow. Most of the Iraqi businesspeople interviewed for this study view the reason for the crisis in the banking sector in banks being a victim of the predatory politics in Iraq, and that they are a way for political parties to gain and exercise power. Thus, for Iraq to reform its banking sector, it will have to reform its politics. The study strongly recommends to de-politicize the banking sector, starting with the central bank.



### 3. Strand 4 – IF and GPG cross cutting support to women politicians

#### Design and adjustment of activities

The priority topics for capacity-building activities for women MPs had first been identified by a questionnaire in early Year 2 sent to all women who had participated in the workshops of Year 1. These topics were Knowledge and Skills for Legislation, Media Communication and Political Leadership Skills. This helped shape our program, and served as a monitoring tool of the impact of work carried out during the first year of the project. Later in Year 2, IF and GPG conducted another short survey, which gave us an update on the women's priorities on legislation topics and training. As a result, we identified a number of areas to support women MPs to build their knowledge and capacity on priority policy topics (DV-Law, NAP 1325), to support their constituency work, their leadership skills, and helped women committee members in addressing their priorities by delivering coaching and mentoring sessions.

With the non-possibility to hold in-person trainings or meetings during the pandemic, that survey also confirmed the readiness and interest of women MPs to shift to **online-based mentoring activities**.

In Year 2, capacity- and knowledge building activities for women MPs were conducted through the following activities:

1. Work with the women's committee on the anti-domestic violence law
2. Skills development sessions
3. Webinars on the anti-domestic violence law and the next National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325, supported by
4. Online resources on the anti-domestic violence law and UNSCR 1325

#### 3.1 Work with women committee on anti-domestic violence law

Lockdowns, closed markets and job losses around the world are bringing a rise in domestic violence, leaving women and girls at increased risk of all forms of violence and abuse. With families in lockdown worldwide, the number of victims has increased in Iraq and worldwide which increased the necessity to pass a law against domestic violence in Iraqi CoR. The project has responded to the priority of the women committee by providing direct support to the recently elected Chair, Maysoon Al-Sa'adi and the previous acting Chair, Intisar Jabouri through several guidance papers, checklists and international comparisons for progressing the anti-domestic violence law. The project supported the women committee in:

##### Designing a tool for identifying support and objections

We have helped the women committee in monitoring support and opposition within parliament by supporting them in identifying who is not going to support the law at all and who will support a law which is a very helpful mechanism to identifying where to spend time and effort to gain support.

##### Creating a narrative for Domestic violence law

A narrative sets out the reason behind passing the law. It contains all the arguments that can be used to persuade those who are not convinced of the law. It can be used to develop the messages to be used in a campaign to gain support for the law. GPG supported women committee to develop a narrative for the reason behind passing the Iraqi law.

### Developing Media campaign

GPG supported the Women's Committee in developing a comprehensive and co-ordinated strategy for communicating their message about the Domestic Violence Law externally. The narrative regarding the Domestic Violence Law is essential as this forms the arguments that will continually be used within press releases, social media posts and in interviews. The need for getting the message across has is very important.

### Guidance on domestic violence law and checklist

The project has developed a mechanism to help the committee assessing a law using a checklist of what makes a good anti-domestic violence law.

### Using a wider range of experience and examples

The project provided an experience that is wider than just the UK experience of building the capacity of women MPs, and of domestic violence law in particular by presenting examples from countries within similar context. This is important given the differences in cultural and religious objections to an anti-domestic law that the committee have to contend with and also attitudes to women.

## 3.2 Capacity-building in a two-fold and complementary approach

### Skills development sessions (GPG)

#### Practice Makes Perfect

The questionnaire with women MPs in early Year 2 had identified as priority areas of training for women MPs: Knowledge and Skills for Legislation, Media Communication and Political Leadership Skills. It had also highlighted their interest in getting general knowledge and skills as well as for their practical application. On that basis, IF and GPG submitted to women MPs via social media (WhatsApp) a two-fold and **complementary approach** for capacity-building, which includes training activities that respond to both needs:

In addition to **IF-training workshops**, which provide **general and comprehensive knowledge** on principles and mechanisms of the topics selected by women MPs, GPG identified a small core group of women MPs with whom to work closely to develop their skills and roles. These **Skills Development Sessions** are held by an international expert for a small group of participants and focus on **putting learning into practice** by applying the topic to a specific legislation which currently is a priority for women MPs in parliament (such as the DV-Law in Year 2).

To do this, GPG designed three sessions of an hour for each skills area. Each MP will be able to put the learning into practice and then return to the group to discuss and reflect on the experience. The aim is to learn through undertaking activities and to receive ongoing support in skill development from experts and fellow female MPs.

The range of skills required has been identified by a group of women MPs. These are:

- How to read and interpret legislation
- Public speaking skills
- Negotiations
- Women MPs and the media
- Leadership skills

In order to ensure that MPs can put their learning into practice, the sessions will focus on applying the skills to a specific priority. The chosen priority is the Anti-domestic Violence law.

GPG held the first session on how to read and interpret legislation using anti-domestic violence law in order to cross cut with other objectives, as an example which will help them reading and understanding any piece of legislative. The session was designed to give them a good understanding of the aims of the anti-domestic violence law and an ability to judge whether those aims are met, the means to compare the law to other similar laws from the region, an understanding of how and when it is possible to amend the law and an understanding of the importance of plans to implement the law and follow up after the law is passed.

### 3.3 Webinars on the domestic violence law and the next National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325 (IF)

In Spring 2020, in close consultation with the women’s committee, we decided to build our capacity-building support around two priority policy topics that, as a result of the ongoing pandemic, had gained great importance in parliament and with the public: the rising numbers of cases of domestic violence due to the curfews for COVID-19 (leading to its nomination by the people of “a pandemic during the pandemic”) had made it an urgency for the women’s committee to act on the draft **anti-domestic violence bill**. Complementary to this, with the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **UNSCR 1325** and two years after the First National Action Plan (NAP) 1325 for Iraq (2014-18), discussions and different drafting processes of a Second NAP were gaining momentum in the country.

Adjusting the formats of our activities to the prolonged curfews due to COVID-19, and aiming to reach a broader audience from in and outside parliament, we decided to address both topics through **online webinars** rather than training workshops with a limited number of participants. This allowed us to

- connect women MPs with specialized women civil society organizations, with the support of UN Women and other UN organizations, with the governmental Women Empowerment Department and with the Head of the Women’s Caucus on these policy issues
- provide women MPs, especially the women’s committee, with direct insights, expertise and recommendations from local, regional and international experts on actions to take forward in parliament to advance both agendas (DV-Law and the 2<sup>nd</sup> NAP 1325)
- help shape cross-party dialogue on the promotion of policies for women’s rights and on the legislation required for both policy issues.

#### a) Webinar on Domestic violence under COVID-19 and the domestic violence law (DV-Law), July 11, ‘20

Initially planned as in-person meeting in June, it was moved to July due to repeated curfews in June (COVID-19), and ultimately held on Zoom:

With 73 participants, the meeting was very well attended and included women MPs (5), Government Agencies (4), international NGOs (3 – UNAMI, UNDP, UN Women) and women CSOs (61). The agenda presented the perspectives of the government and of the parliamentary women’s committee on the DV-Law, as well as views of civil society organizations (Iraqi Women Network, Iraqi Women Association, The Women Leadership Institute), academics (Prof. Sabah Sami, Member of Writing the the National Strategy for Combating Gender-based Violence 2018-2030/UNFPA) and international experts (Meg Munn/GPG).

Contributions to the discussion agreed on requesting the government to pass the draft law on to the parliament, and on the need for further amendment of the draft law in order to fill its gaps and address its weaknesses. MPs highlighted the need for support by CSOs to raise awareness and educate the public about the law and the urgency to get it adopted by parliament. Most CSOs are ready to play that role and engaged in constructive discussion with women MPs about how to overcome obstacles on the

way for passing the law, as well as about steps in its implementation. Final recommendations pointed at urging the Council of Ministers to pass the law on to parliament still in the current session, to subsequently form a special committee to unify the two different draft laws, and to mobilize advocacy and support for the DV law in and outside the parliament, while highlighting that it is not in contradiction with Islamic law, customs and traditions in the Iraqi society.<sup>1</sup>

A written evaluation after the webinar with women MPs participants showed the usefulness of the activity for them and the need for more workshops and discussion in Parliament, especially with those deputies who are opposing the law for cultural and religious reasons. (A results' report of this webinar was submitted to Sida in Year 2.)

#### **b) Webinar on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Second NAP for Iraq, Sept. 3, 2020**

Scheduling this webinar in the period leading up to the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 on October 31 2020, it provided a timely and important opportunity to provide knowledge and a better understanding to especially new women MPs about UNSCR 1325, the First NAP, and discuss implementation and monitoring mechanisms for the Second NAP 1325. Opened by the First Lady of Iraq, Dr. Sarbagh Saleh, the high-level meeting also featured the UN Representative for Iraq and Yemen, Dina Zorba, the then DG of the Women Empowerment Department, Dr. Ibtisam Aziz, the Head of the Women's Caucus in Parliament, MP Ala Talabani, the Head of Sawa Organization, Mr. Haider Awadi (working within the Iraqi network for Resolution 1325), the IF regional expert on gender, Ms. Manar Zaiter, and the international expert by GPG, Meg Munn.

The meeting presented updates on the next NAP 1325 for Iraq from UN Women and the Iraqi government department for Women Empowerment, and provided local, regional and international perspectives on mechanisms to implement UNSCR 1325. A special focus was dedicated to the role of the Parliament to draft related legislation, to monitor the NAP and allocate funds.

Attended by the Chair and senior MPs of the women's committee in Parliament and the head of the Women's Network in Parliament, Ala Talabani, the meeting resulted in meaningful and substantial discussion between the two groups and international stakeholders on next steps. Recommendations on the follow up focused on the need for a mechanism for implementation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> NAP 1325, its monitoring and evaluation, and a media plan to improve communication with all stakeholders involved.

The feedback received by IF to this webinar proved that it had been very successful, not only with regard to the knowledge provided to women MPs on UNSCR 1325 and its implementation in Iraq, but also as a platform for discussion that brought together different women groups of parliament and provided them with the support of UN Women. (A report on this webinar was submitted to Sida in early Year 3 of the project.)

#### **3.4 IF online resources on the anti-domestic violence law and UNSCR 1325**

In the period leading to the IF webinar on Domestic Violence and after the webinar on UNSCR 1325, IF produced video-clips with key stakeholders related to these topics to raise awareness and educate women MPs and civil society on these key policy issues on women's rights, explained their urgency and high impact on women and girls.

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<sup>1</sup> Update on the status of the DV-Law: In late January 2021, the draft law had been approved by the Council of Ministers and was passed back to parliament. Currently the draft is being reviewed by different committees, including the women's committee. Provided there will be an agreement on the draft by the committees, it will then be put on the agenda of parliament for a first reading.

On the topic of **domestic violence** and the need for a related **law**, IF released two videos, one with the Head of the Community Police, General Ghalib, and one with the then Chair of the women's committee in parliament, Intissar Al-Jubouri: Both videos were sent to all 83 women MPs through the WhatsApp group created for this project. They helped them shape their approach to take the draft law further and highlighted the impact of domestic violence on families through testimonials by the community police, psychologists and others. The videos also addressed the obstacles encountered by the police and by women MPs, who are trying to pass a DV-Law.

As a follow up to the webinar on the **NAP 1325**, we released videos with the speeches of First Lady, Dr. Sarbagh Saleh, Dina Zorba (Head of UN Women Iraq) and Dr. Ibtisam Aziz, the then DG of the government's Women Empowerment Department. These videos, together with the presentations by Manar Zaiter on lessons-learned from NAPs 1325 in the MENA region and by Haider Al-Awadi on the role of women CSOs in implementing and monitoring the next NAP, were provided again to all women MPs as sustainable online resources to help prepare for an effective implementation and monitoring of the next NAP for Iraq.

## Risk Matrix for Year Two

Risk	Mitigation Strategy	Update at end of Year 2 (Sept 2020)	Current Rating
<p><b>Political Dynamics and Conflict Sensitivity</b> 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 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</p>	<p>The protests in Iraq started at the beginning of the second year in October 19. Iraq has witnessed nationwide protests that spread to 11 Iraqi majority Shia provinces, and took over Baghdad's Tahrir Square. The protesters were met by suppression from the government's security forces which resulted in the killing of more than 600 people and made the protesters expand their demands and further embed their position by demanding the prosecution of the killers. As a result of the protest, Adil Abdul Mahdi stepped down as Prime Minister on November 30. Two failed Prime Minister nominations followed - Mohammed Alawi and Adnan al-Zurfi – due to the lack of parliamentary support to their cabinets until May 2020 when former intelligence Chief Mustafa Al-Kadhimi officially became the new Iraqi Premier. During year 1, the project gained the buy-in of the stakeholders which helped in easing the communication and gaining an understanding of the political issues and new the new emergent issues likely to be on their agenda during the protests. The project also responded to the emergent needs of the stakeholders during the protests through many analysis and research aim to highlight the extensive and complex nature of many political, social and economic issues facing stakeholders then</p>	<p>Likelihood: 4 (High) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 8 (Medium)</p>

	<p>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>developing concrete processes to help the parliament to effectively response to citizens’ need.</p>	
<p><b>Local Ownership and Sustainable Behaviour Change</b> Local ownership is an underlying driver of progress toward achieving project outcomes. Externally driven interventions have the potential for wasted efforts, resources and inability to achieve sustainable change. The project also needs to invest in the</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 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</p>	<p>Year two focused on developing the activities and mechanisms to response to the needs of the project’s main stakeholders. The project’s aim for these mechanisms and activities to be embedded within parliaments through providing practical support in each step and follow the support with guidance papers to be distributed among the staff and the MPs.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 2 (Low) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 4 (Low)</p>

capacity of local partners to ensure their ability in practice to use the new techniques and training independently, following the end of the project.	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.		
<b>Turnover in Key Stakeholders</b> Changes in elected officials and institutional pose the risk loss of key contacts, changes in priorities, and setbacks in activities	Individual relationships underpin institutional links 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.	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 August and September activities. Further significant changes in political roles are not expected, although they could happen in response to political events.	Likelihood: 4 (High) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 8 (Medium)
<b>Inclusivity of Project Benefits</b> 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.	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.  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	Within the gender strand of the project, we have delivered a series of seminars to newly elected women MPs and we provided practical support to the women committee on anti- domestic violence law. The project also published its report "Economic Drivers of Youth Political discontent in Iraq: The Voice of Young People in Kurdistan, Baghdad, Basra and Thi-Qarr which aims to highlight issues facing young people. The project works with committees to improve service delivery. As part of consultation that feed into the inquiries, the project heard from both genders who were affected by the issue and	Likelihood: 2 (Low) Impact after mitigation: 3 (Moderate) Overall Score: 6 (Medium)



	<p>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>developed a mechanism to communicate their voice to decision makers.</p>	
<p><b>Financial Regularity</b> 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 of sub-contractors, ensuring quality of sub-contracted personnel).</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 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>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. Year 2 has continued to work to following the same level of standards, controls and processes.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 1 (Unlikely) Impact after mitigation: 4 (Major) Overall Score: 4 (Low)</p>

<p><b>Security and Operational Risks</b> 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 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>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. In consultation with SIDA, we replaced our visits to Erbil, which was not affected by security issues to the same extent.</p> <p>As a consequence of instability and political unrest in Year 2 in particular in Southern Iraq, IF decided to move the field-activities planned in Basra and other areas with CSOs on a broad needs assessment and presentation to the COROs to Year 3 of the project.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 5 (Very High) Impact after mitigation: 2 (Minor) Overall Score: 10 (High)</p>
<p><b>Quality Risks</b> Capacity and management capabilities of project staff needs to be</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</p>	<p>IF and GPG hold regular remote meetings to discuss project progress, and conduct activities together during periods when GPG is in Iraq. We also design many activities in a complementary approach to make best use</p>	<p>Likelihood: 1 (Very Low) Impact after mitigation: 3 (Moderate) Overall Score: 3 (Low)</p>

<p>adequate to avoid the risk of poor project management or technical input, leading to inability to achieve results</p>	<p>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>of both our expertise and relationships with stakeholders.</p> <p>IF and GPG staff regularly attend seminars and conferences relating to Iraq to gain all needed understanding about the emergent political, economic, and social issues.</p>	
<p><b>COVID-19</b></p> <p>Disruptions as a result of potential staff absences, airline/travel restrictions, closure of public spaces and restrictions on large gatherings, and any other operational factors due to the escalation of measures to combat the Covid-19 pandemic</p>	<p>In March 2020, Iraq witnessed an increased number of cases and as a result the Kurdish Regional Government imposed many measures to combat the Covid-19 pandemic this includes complete curfew, travel restrictions, restrictions on the number of people who can gather, etc.</p>	<p>The project partners have been in close discussion and in touch with the interlocutors. Based on that, the project created new ways of collaborating internationally through using online platforms which are already familiar to our partners to deliver materials and then host seminars and interactive sessions with smaller groups and building a GPG's online platform. We have identified a number of technologies that our project partners have used effectively in Iraq). Also, we worked to ensuring that projects' activities are designed, delivered and monitored in a way that they can respond flexibly and adapt to the evolving context.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 5 (high) Impact after mitigation: 3 (Moderate) Overall Score: 15 (High)</p>

## IF Database of Civil Society Experts and Practitioners to Support CoR Inquiries in Strand 2

Topics	CSO/Practitioner 1	CSO/Practitioner 2	CSO/Practitioner 3	CSO/Practitioner 4	CSO/Practitioner 5
<b>Topic 1: Finance Committee: Building public trust in Iraq's banking system</b>					
Name of CSO / Practitioner	Dr. Safwan Halem	Dr. Mahmoud Dagher	Mr. Ali Tareq	Dr. Sadiq Al-Shimmari	Iraq Institute for Economic Reform
Address & Contact person	Dr. Safwan Halem - <b>Baghdad</b>	Dr. Mahmoud Dagher - <b>Baghdad</b>	Mr. Ali Tareq - <b>Baghdad</b>	Dr. Sadiq Al-Shimmari - <b>Baghdad</b>	Dr. Kamal Al-Basri - <b>Baghdad</b>
Phone number/Email address	safwanhalem@yahoo.com 07903174163	7712903417	ipbl-iraq.org ipbl@ipbl-iraq.org 07714472214	7813152988	www.lier.org info@lier.org 0770254747
Relevant area(s) of expertise	Economist Expert	General Manager for Financial Operations at the Central Bank	Executive director of the Iraqi Private Banking Association	Former bank manager	Economist and Academic
Relevant Track record of studies, projects etc. + in which year and where conducted in Iraq's provinces ?	Dr. Sarwan Halim is an economist and academic. Many international organizations uses his expertise in financial and economic issues, including the banking sector, and he has been a guest on satellite channels many times. He talks about economic files in Iraq in addition to his participation with Takamul program on governance and good performance.	He was nominated by Dr. Safwan Halim, he worked as Director General of Operations at the Central Bank.	The Association of Banks is greatly involved with developing and training cadres of banks, both civil and governmental, in addition to holding several workshops for bank cadres and the central bank through partnerships with other banking agencies such as the global credit rating agency "Capital Intelligence" and the Islamic Rating Agency and has close contact with the Iraqi company for guarantee deposit.	Dr. Sadiq Al-Shammari has been working for the Central Bank, as well as he has been working as the General Manager of the Islamic Bank for years and has great experience.	Dr. Kamal Al-Basri has occupied several academic positions with a number of British Universities. Subsequently, he has worked for a number of International financial institutions: GE Capital, Barclays and Lloyds Bank. In 2003, he as Deputy Minister of Finance and as an Economic Advisor to the PM. He has worked with international organizations such the IMF and World Bank, DFID and with other non-governmental institutions, including IRI, USIP, CIFE, and CATO. Dr. Kamal has also contributed to major international economic literatures and written several policy papers. See more info: <a href="http://lier.org/page_content.php?smenu_id=126">http://lier.org/page_content.php?smenu_id=126</a>
Experience with collecting and analyzing data: Yes/No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Experience of work with Iraqi Government or CoR: Yes/No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Topic 2: Services Committee: Sewage Management (probably in Salaheddin, Baghdad and Wasit provinces)</b>					
Name of CSO/Practitioner	Al-Mada Foundation For Human Rights	Al-Zhour women org	Tawasul for Development Org	Al-Noor Universal Foundation	Assemble of Al-Inbithaq for Development & Economic Development
Address and contact person	Ms. Azhar Al-Jibouri - <b>Wasit</b>	Ms. Hanan Joudi - <b>Baghdad</b>	Dr. Qusay Al-Eedany - <b>Basra</b>	Mr. Ahmed Jassam - <b>Diyala and Salaheddin</b>	Mr. Maher M. Nasser - <b>Wasit</b>
Phone number/Email address	azhar_almada@yahoo.com 07716137752	alzhoor14@gmail.com 7712202620	7705697208	ahmediraq2008@yahoo.com 7710204202	mahersbdc@yahoo.com 07809007117
Relevant area(s) of expertise	Water and sanitation	Water - sanitation	Water pollution	Water - sanitation	Water - sanitation
Relevant Track record of studies, projects etc. + in which year and where conducted in Iraq's provinces ?	A project funded by Mercy Corps has been implemented. It is an advocacy project on policy reform and improvement of services related to drinking water and sanitation. The project was implemented in Wasit and Kurdistan. The project was implemented in 2013.	The organization worked with Takamul program team. They had several activities in waste issues and the extent of their impact on water pollution. They made a questionnaire in the Diyala bridge and Husseinieh area and went to the homes to inquire, meet them and ask them questions.	Dr. Qusay Al-Eidani is a physician and works in the Ministry of Health. He is the head of Tawasul organization for development. Tawasul org partners with several international organizations such as UNICEF. He works with the WASH file which includes several sectors, particularly the water pollution file.	Al-Noor University Foundation worked in 2019 on a small project with USAID on the topic of rationalizing water consumption and services provided to citizens. It conducted awareness-raising campaigns in this regard, in addition to a study on the reality of services in Diyala Governorate and the study includes several sectors, including water Sanitation, municipalities, etc.	A project funded by Mercy Corps has been implemented. It is an advocacy project on policy reform and improvement of services related to drinking water and sanitation. The project was implemented in Wasit and Kurdistan. The project was implemented in 2013.
Experience with collecting and analyzing data: Yes/No + which methods ?	YES	yes	yes	yes	yes
Experience of work with Iraqi Government or CoR: Yes/ No	YES	yes	yes	yes	yes
<b>Topic 3: Health and Environment Committee: Sources of water pollution in Iraq and its impact on public health</b>					
Name of CSO/Practitioner	Al-Mada Foundation For Human Rights	PAO Public Aid Org - Erbil	West Tigris Development and Reconstruction Organization - Nenawa Zamar District	Tigris River Protection Organization representative	Iraq Water Protection Organization
Address and contact person	Ms. Azhar Al-Jibouri - <b>Wasit</b>	Mr. Nazim Ahmed - <b>Erbil</b>	Dr. Thabeit Alyas - <b>Nenawa</b>	Mr. Ali Al-Karkhi - <b>Iraq</b>	Mr. Nabil Musa - <b>Sulaimania</b>
Phone number/Email address	azhar_almada@yahoo.com 07716137752	nazim_pao@gmail.com 0770221738	info@thwodic.org 7503233290	<a href="https://www.savethetigris.org/">https://www.savethetigris.org/</a> coordinator.en@savethetigris.org	info@waterkeeperiraq.org 07703594408
Relevant area(s) of expertise	Water and sanitation	Water and sewage	Drinking water stations	Water protection	Effective Water Resource Planning and Water Protection
Relevant Track record of studies, projects etc. + in which year and where conducted in Iraq's provinces ?	A project funded by Mercy Corps has been implemented. It is an advocacy project on policy reform and improvement of services related to drinking water and sanitation. The project was implemented in Wasit and Kurdistan. The project was implemented in 2013.	A project funded by Mercy Corps has been implemented. It is an advocacy project on policy reform and improvement of services related to drinking water and sanitation. The project was implemented in Wasit and Kurdistan. The project was implemented in 2013.	They received training from Takamul project/ USAID Project on oversight and accountability programs for community development and service provision by local governments. Indeed, they were following the issue of the water plants that were out of work and coordinating with international organizations and local governments to solve this problem and providing water in 2018.	Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes is a civil society advocacy campaign that was started in March 2012 by a coalition of Iraqi and international non-governmental organisations to save the World Heritage on the Tigris River from the impacts of dams and other destructive megaprojects.	The organization advocates and works to protect the rivers, streams and waterways of Iraq and support local communities in the sustainable use of these natural resources. Currently it has one Waterkeeper on staff (the Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeeper, IUFW) based in Sulaimani, Kurdistan, northern Iraq, but in future, as Waterkeepers Iraq is developed, their jurisdiction will cover additional waterways and basins throughout the country.
Experience with collecting and analyzing data: Yes/No + which methods ?	YES				
Experience of work with Iraqi Government or CoR: Yes/No	YES				
<b>Topic 4: Education Committee: School drop-outs, especially from girls, and how to address them</b>					
Name of CSO / Practitioner	Al-Khlood Org. for Women and Child Capacity Building	Al-Zhour women org	Vera Humanitarian institution for womens development	Dr. Qais Al-Kelaby Director General in Education ministry , the second Karkh sector	Dr. Qais Al-Kelaby - <b>Baghdad</b>
Address and contact person	Ms. Khlood Al-Shimmari - <b>Baghdad</b>	Ms. Hanan Joudi - <b>Baghdad</b>	Dr. Etamad Al-Azawi - <b>Diyalaa</b>	Dr. Qais Al-Kelaby - <b>Baghdad</b>	
Phone number/Email address	7830001620	alzhoor14@gmail.com 7712202620	7710293000	kaissalkelaby@yahoo.com 07901528624	
Relevant area(s) of expertise	Education	Education	Economic empowerment and Education	Education	
Relevant Track record of studies, projects etc. + in which year and where conducted in Iraq's provinces ?	Mrs. Khlood Al-Shammari is an educational and a founder of the organization for children and women. Her organization gives priority to educational projects, especially those related to students' commitment to work. Implemented a project with a grant from Mercy Corps from 2016 to 2018 about returning displaced students to school seats (girls and boys) and in the second phase they went to older students affected by wars, returning them to school benches and integrating them with their peers.	The organization is among the institutions accredited to the Coordination Committee of NGOs in the education sector. It has several programs to work. Implemented a project with a grant from Mercy Corps, which has a program for years and is still ongoing for education.	The head of the organization, Dr. Etamad, a former educational supervisor, is one of the organizations accredited by Mercy Corps within the education program that Mercy Corps is working on.	Dr. Qais Al-Kalabi in addition to being the general manager of the second Karkh Education, he is also a civil activist and he has many community activities and very effective and cooperative with the NGOs. In addition, he cooperated with IF in implementing the NUMI project.	
Experience with collecting and analyzing data: Yes/No + which methods ?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Experience of work with Iraqi Government or CoR: Yes/No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

## List of Women MPs who Participated in IF and GPG Activities in Sida Project Year 2

List of women Mps participated in IF and GPG activities in Sida project Y2

	Name A	Name E	Main Committee	Other Committee	IF webinar DV law	IF webinar 1325	GPG training DV law	Number of parliamentary sessions	Party	Provinces
1	النايبة / ميسون جاسم داود الساعدي	MAYSOON JASIM DAWOOD AL-SAEDI	Head of Women Committee			attend	attend	New	تحالف سائرون	Diwanyaa
2	النايبة / انتصار علي خضر الجبوري	Intisar Ali Khedr Al Jaboury	Deputy of Women Committee	Economy and investment	Attend	attend	attend	3 Sessions	تحالف القوى	Nainawaa
3	النايبة / وصفيّة محمد شيخو	WASFIYA MOHAMMED SHIKHO	Rapporteur of Women Committee		Attend	attend	attend	New	الحزب الديمقراطي الكوردستاني	Dhouk
4	النايبة / سروة ونس عمر رشيد	SRWA WNS OMAR RASHID	Women Committee	Regions and provinces	Attend		attend	New	مستقلة - الجيل الجديد	Erbil
5	النايبة / منى حسين سلطان العبيدي	MUNA HUSSEIN SULTAN AL OBAIDI	Women Committee	Service	Attend		attend	New	تحالف القوى	Nainawaa
6	النايبة / شمائل سحاب مطر	SHAMAAL SAHAB MUTAR	Service Committee		Attend	attend		New	المشروع العربي	Salah Al-Dein
7	النايبة / سهام شنون عبد الله العقيلي	SIHAM SHANNOON ABDULLAH AL-OGAILI	Finance Committee			attend		New	تحالف النصر	Mayssan
8	النايبة / الا الطالبياني	AIA AL – TALABANI	Foreign Relations Committee			attend		3 Sessions	تحالف بغداد	Sulaymaniyah
9	النايبة / ريزان شيخ دلير	RIZAN SHAYKH DALIR	Women Committee			attend	attend	3 Sessions	الاتحاد الوطني الكردستاني	Sulaymaniyah
10	النايبة / كفاء فرحان البدرابي	KAFA FARHAN - ALBADRAWII	Finance Committee			attend		New	ائتلاف النصر	Salah Al-Dein
11	النايبة / خالدة خليل رشو	KHALIDAT KHALIL RSHU	LABOR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS ,IMMIGRATION AND THE DISPLACED				attend	New	الحزب الديمقراطي الكوردستاني	Nainawaa
12	السيدة/ لليال محمد علي يونس البياتي	LELYAL MOHAMMED ALI YOUNUS ATOO	Economy and investment				attend	New	تحالف الفتح	Nainawaa