

Operational Gender Assessment

IRAQ

“We should remember that without peace, development is impossible, and without development, peace is not achievable, but without women, neither peace nor development is possible.”

--Ambassador Anawarul K. Chowdhury

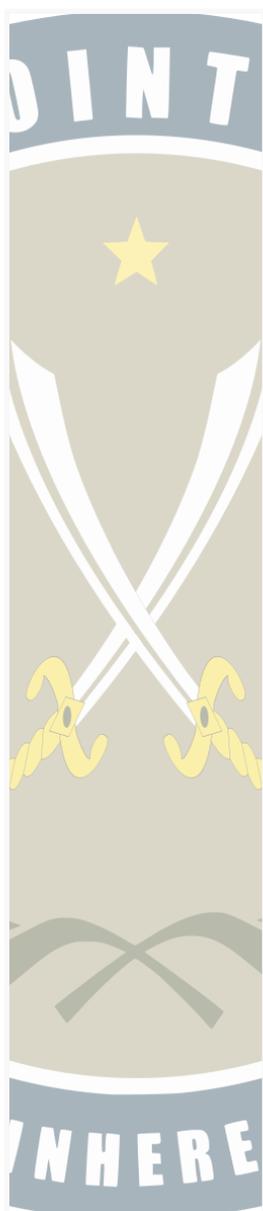
CJTF-OIR – ONE MISSION, MANY NATIONS

LTCOL Rebecca Gordon
L.D. Frazier

UNON.CJTF-OIR-CJ9.GENDER@swa.army.mil
Laporsha.D.Frazier2.ctr@mail.mil

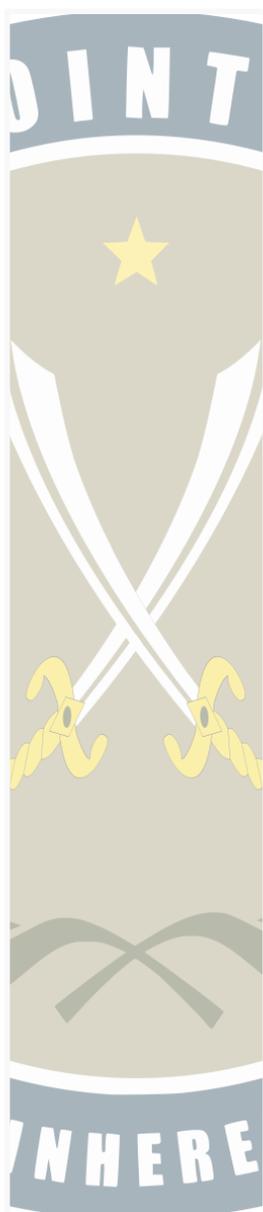
Table of Contents

Introduction	1
The Operational Gender Perspective	1
UNSCR 1325 and the National Action Plan	2
Overview	4
CJTF-OIR Gender Goals in Iraq	5
Background of Gender in Iraq	6
Government of Iraq	6
Cultural Norms and Gender Stereotypes	9
Religion	10
Employment	11
Protection Considerations	12
Effect of ISIS on Population	12
Security Challenges in Internally Displaced Persons Camps	15
Government of Iraq and Non-Governmental Organizations	18
Key Stakeholders	18
Non-Governmental Organizations	19
Gender Participation Considerations	21
Barriers to Women’s Participation in the Workforce	21
Young Men’s Vulnerability to Recruitment by Armed Groups.....	23



One Mission,
Many Nations

Table of Contents



Initiatives for Increased Inclusion of Women in the Iraqi Security Forces	23
Effects of ISIS Occupaion on Children	25
Educational Challenges.....	26
School Attendance	27
Way Forward.....	29
Key Leader Engagements.....	29
Coalition Gender and Protection Training	29
Recognizing Early-Warning Indicators of Conflict Related Sexual Violence	30
Reconciliation and the Reintegration	31
Summary of Recommendations	32
Protection	32
Security Sector Reform	35
Education	36
Conclusion.....	38
References.....	39

Introduction

The Operational Gender Perspective

In order to achieve mission success, the Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) must understand the human domain of the operational environment. Key characteristics of the domain are the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men, women, boys and girls- this is defined as *gender*.

During times of conflict, civilians bare the impact of the conflict in similar and different ways, those being loss of livelihoods and assets, displacement, physical and mental injury, torture, the death and injury of loved ones, sexual assault, and enforced disappearance. Nonetheless, *how* they experience these phenomena during and after conflict is influenced by their gender roles. It is imperative that CJTF-OIR take these factors into consideration during every phase of operational planning.

Appropriate application of the gender perspective is understanding the different roles of various individuals in a social and cultural context. By operationalizing a gender perspective, CJTF-OIR is in a position to leverage the opportunities presented from integrating the gender perspective knowledge in planning, execution, and assessment. This then becomes a Force Multiplier to achieve mission success.

During each and every operational phase CJTF-OIR must keep in mind that men, women, boys and girls are impacted in different ways because they:

- Have different roles and responsibilities in their families and communities and societies thus end up in harm's way differently
- Are targeted differently and their injuries have different social and livelihood impacts
- Have different access to resources including the right to claim, own, and inherit property.

Men, women, and children can all be victims and actors in conflict and post conflict events. CJTF-OIR operations seek to reduce the likelihood of

victimhood and increase the positive agency of all persons who are affected by conflict.

UNSCR 1325 and the Iraq National Action Plan

U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace, and security was established in October 2000. This was instrumental in placing women, peace and security (WPS) issues firmly on the UN security agenda by including women and gender perspectives in peacebuilding efforts and initiated the international women, peace, and security agenda.

UNSCR 1325 recognizes the experiences and needs of women and girls, and how they differ from those of men and boys in conflict and post conflict situations. These differences underlines the essential role of women in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction and recovery efforts.

The four main pillars of UNSCR 1325 are:

- **Protection**- focuses on protecting the safety, physical and mental health, economic security, and ensuring their human rights are respected of women, girls, men and boys
- **Participation**- recognizes the role of women in peace and security efforts, and enhancing women's meaningful participation through more equal representation and empowering women in fragile conflict and post-conflict settings
- **Prevention**- recognizes the role of women in preventing and mitigating conflict, conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence (CRSGBV)
- **Relief & Recovery**- ensures women, men, girls and boys specific needs are met in conflict and post-conflict situations

One of the key challenges when working in the field of women's engagement in peace and security issues is the common misconception that UNSCR 1325 on women, peace, and security does not apply to the internal policies and processes of national security institutions. These policies may include gender, diversity, and cultural reform programs, or human resource activities designed to increase and enhance women's meaningful participation in security institutions and ensure equality for women. This misconception often rises because practitioners have applied

an operational, rather than a strategic, approach to UNSCR 1325's applicability and implementation.

Overview

Conflict uniquely affects men, women and children in different ways. Although men and boys also have rather negative experiences during conflict such as sexual abuses, physical violence, and enforced disappearances- women and girls are disproportionately targeted for human rights abuses, sexual abuse, and gender-based violence. A deeper understanding of how culture, society, local customs and values surrounding the roles and experiences of men, women, and children as an additional analysis tool, can contribute to increased mission effectiveness

Before CJTF-OIR can affect the desired changes to improve women's participation, we must first identify the key issues that hinder women from participating and lobby efforts to increase said participation and overall inclusion of women through the Iraqi Security Force (ISF) and the Government of Iraq (GoI).

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of challenges faced by the Iraqi population including Iraqi women, following the defeat of ISIS and post conflict nation-rebuilding efforts. It will assess how these challenges affect the OIR mission, and the impact on the population including the re-establishment of its security forces. It will conclude with recommendations for CJTF-OIR that aim to increase own force situational awareness, therefore contributing to force protection measures, as well as contributing to overall mission effectiveness through support to inclusion of women in the ISF / Iraqi society.

CJTF-OIR Gender Goals in Iraq

The operational effectiveness of the OIR is increased by a better understanding of the complexities of the human terrain / human domain, the prospects for post-conflict recovery and enduring stability in order to observe increased and liberated populations becoming less likely to be recruited into violent extremism in the future.

CJTF Gender Goals for Iraq are as follows:

- Educate the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) on Gender and Protection issues and how they can service the community
- Educate CJTF on Gender and Protection issues within Iraq
- Ensure linkage between coalition training of police and military, and NGO training of local police
- Increase female participation in the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense
- Give support to the ISF on gender mainstreaming efforts

Key tasks for the Gender Advisor (GENAD) and the Gender Team:

- Work with the ISF to increase female participation in security forces through to national governance structures
- Develop and maintain robust relationships with Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agents in the CJOA, including Government of Iraq (GoI), United Nations (UN), Non-government Organizations (NGO), Embassies, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Coalition Aligned Syrian Forces (CASF)
- Develop robust Measurement of Effectiveness (MoE) and Measurement of Performance (MoP)

The OIR gender capability operates along the four main pillars of UNSCR 1325 lines of effort that are *protection, participation, prevention, and relief & recovery* and the desired end state is for CJTF-OIR planners to routinely consider and incorporate gender considerations into operational planning, conduct and assessments.

Background to Iraq Society

It is important to understand that most women of the Muslim religion do not desire for equality in the Western sense of the term. “These women do not wish to emancipate themselves in the sense of feminism”, says Géraldine Casutt, doctoral researcher at the University of Fribourg. In Iraqi society, the goal of women is to be restored back to their pre-conflict norms of being complementary to men; being able to work and also being in charge of their homes.

- After the fall of Saddam Hussein, increasingly impoverished numbers of men reverted back to more traditional values rooted in Iraq’s tribal structure and Islam, where a woman’s place was in the home
- Women’s job possibilities became strictly limited to low paying jobs that did not impede upon their daily household duties
- Increased tensions at home and in the community made it unsafe for women to travel to and from work and school daily
- Lack of proper education and security robbed women of the confidence needed for them to explore job opportunities outside of the home

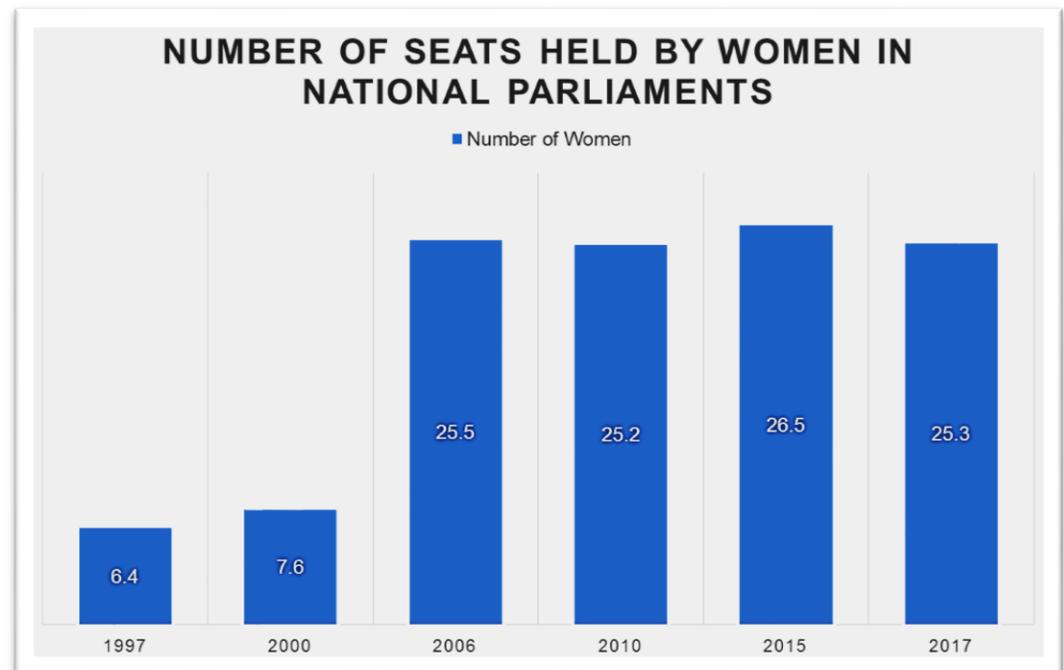
ISIS occupation severely curtailed women’s ability to move outside the home and pursue opportunities to contribute to household income. Men who refused to join ISIS suffered as well, through restricted movement and closure of businesses, and violent retaliations. Men and women both spent more time in the safety of the home, where tension and domestic violence rose.

Government of Iraq

The Iraqi Provisional Constitution was drafted in 1970- this, at the time, assured equal rights to women and made way for other laws that guaranteed women the right to vote, run for political office, own property, and attend school. As a result, historically, women in Iraq enjoyed relatively more rights and freedoms than many of their counterparts in the Middle

East. However, since the 1991 Gulf War (Operation Desert Shield), the position of women in the Iraqi society deteriorated rapidly due to the influence of conservative religious and tribal groups.

Politics – Iraq was the first Arab country to elect a woman to a parliamentary position. The 2005 Iraqi constitution states 25% of parliament is to be occupied by female representatives. Although Iraq has been fulfilling this legislative requirement, the Gol Director of Women’s Affairs stated in 2018 that many male politicians and political parties have interpreted this as a maximum cap to limit female participation to Parliament.



Political empowerment for women is an essential component of general empowerment, because without politicians and officials who consider the effects of various policies, laws, and measures on women’s status, no coherent headway toward social change or reform can be made.

In the studies that target either the Muslim or Arab worlds, sometimes confusing the two, the critique is that authoritarianism (as in the former Iraq and Syria), totalitarianism (as in Iran), or acceptance of an elite royal class (as in Saudi Arabia) characterize political behavior. Therefore, while improving women’s condition—granting democracy to Iraqi people and not

only to Iraqi men—is important; Iraq’s resistance to democracy can also serve to explain the failure of any efforts that are implemented.

Legislation – According to the Iraqi Constitution of 2005, Islam is the main source of legislation and laws that contradict Islamic provisions may not be enacted. Article 41 of the constitution allows for personal status matters (such as marriage, divorce and inheritance) to be governed by the rules of each religious group in the Iraqi Society.

Although the Iraqi Constitution prohibits all forms of violence and abuse in the family, school, and society, there are still a number of laws and policies that are instrumental in the suppression of women and women’s rights, directly effecting women’s personal status in the society. Such laws and policies are as follows:

Divorce: Reforms in divorce laws in Iraq has made it slightly easier for the woman to initiate the divorce process, however, she must have a male representative to present on her behalf. This can prove to be especially problematic for female headed households- where no such male representative is accessible, causing an entire host of issues ranging from women not being able to adequately document their children and receive IDs for food assistance.

Inheritance or Succession: The 1978 amendment of the law strengthened Iraqi daughters’ ability to inherit (if there were no sons). What is at stake now are women’s rights in this area, if regions choose to go with sect-based family law and courts, and if Iraq does not enact a civil law of inheritance/ succession under a “civil” personal status code. In particular, Sunni female heirs could see their shares legally claimed by male relatives if Shari`a courts supervise such matters in areas like Anbar province. In the case of female headed households, if the woman is unable to prove the death of her spouse, she will not receive any inheritance. Which in most cases leaves the family without a home or funds to support themselves, which could result in members of the family finding alternative sources of income.

Beatings/Domestic Violence: We have little information about domestic violence in Iraq, but anecdotal information suggests that women are at risk because of men’s insistence on their authority in the home where a male in present. Domestic violence is not legislated against specifically in other Arab states, however assault is. Civil legal recourse for beatings usually is not sought. As of September 2018, there have not been a

finalized domestic violence legislation- The **Anti-Domestic Violence Law** is still suspended by Parliament for the past three years due to tribal and religious group's objectification of the law being passed. Domestic violence in the home creates a perpetual cycle of violence against women, passed on through the children, thus constantly reinforcing the belief of normality in violence against women.

Rights to Employment: Despite Iraqi women enjoying equal rights to employment according to the 2005 Constitution, certain inequitable elements remain within the law that limit women's economic choices. In practice, some laws and their interpretations limit women from working in certain sectors that require hard labor, night-time work, or dangerous tasks. It is imperative that laws that directly hinder women from working in such positions as the security forces, because successfully integrating women into vital roles within the security forces could help further legitimize the ISF, promote a positive message of inclusion and growth, while improving the effectiveness of the security forces by covering a vital aspect of the human terrain in terms of security.

Freedom of Movement in Public Space/Driving: Out of fear of attacks on the unveiled, and assassinations and kidnappings, Iraqi women's freedom of movement has been constrained. The legal basis for any such restrictions comes not from Iraqi civil law, but rather from the shari`a principle that women should travel—and these are supposed to be long distances (journeys of more than 1 day and night)—only with a mahram, or a male relative of a certain degree of consanguinity. These unwritten rules play a major part in restricting a woman's freedom of movement to the home. Referencing again the dire situation already imposed upon female heads of households and their families, restrictive freedom of movement is yet another obstacle keeping women from finding meaningful work outside of the home.

Cultural Norms and Gender Stereotypes

Improved bonding in households due to shared suffering under ISIS rule sees men involving wives more in household financial and domestic decisions. Reports from Anbar and Salah al Din Governorates show that most household decisions are made by women. They control household expenses and plan budgets, and are primary decision-makers for their children, such as marriage, health, and education.

Some males dissent on this position, and there is still widespread belief that women should resume their subservient gender roles. Men and boys play a key role in achieving gender equality, thus raising their awareness of women's rights is crucial to empowering women and eradicating gender-based violence.

Because women are reduced to stereotypical roles of child-bearing and managing internal household affairs in Iraq (mostly rural areas), men and boys do not perceive women as capable as men in public and political affairs or as decision makers. Altering these cultural and social beliefs requires a sensitization of men at each level: parliamentary, judicial, and legal, as well as within the political forces, civil society, community, and among religious leaders.

Culture

Social Stratification – Each ethnic group in Iraq has their own social networks, and no one ethnicity dominates another in a caste system. In terms of social class there is great divide between the rich and the poor. Those who compose the high class of the Iraqi society are essentially chosen by the government. The once- dominant middle class of the 1970s has deteriorated in the face of the economic crisis. These people, who are very well educated, now perform unskilled labor- if they have jobs at all- and have joined the ranking of the majority lower or poor class.

Kin Groups - Large kin groups are the fundamental social units, and are of higher importance than ethnic, social class, and sectarian lines. Familial loyalty is considered an essential quality, and the family is mutually protective of each other. The kin group usually is organized through descent and marriage and involves three generations, many of whom live together. They often cooperate in areas such as agriculture and land ownership. If some family members live in nuclear families, they keep up practices such as depending on one another and asking the elders for advice. Individual status within the group is determined by the family's position and the individual's position within that group.

Religion

Islam is the officially recognized religion of Iraq and is practiced by 95% of the population. Islam itself does not distinguish between church and

state, so any distinctions between religious and secular law are the result of more recent developments. Of the two major branches of the Islamic faith practiced in Iraq, the majority, approximately 51% are Shias (Shiites) and the minority, around 42%. A small percentage of the population is Christian and Yazidi.

Employment

During the Iraq-Iran War from 1980 to 1988, many men left home to fight in the military. Because of this, women were required to study in disciplines and to work in positions that were normally occupied by men. These included jobs such as teachers, dentists, physicians, civil servants and factory workers. In professions such as doctors and pediatricians, women were ideal for treating other women and children.

However, by June 2000 the GoI had reportedly passed laws requiring all state ministries to restrict women working outside the home as well as their freedom to travel abroad. It also required co-educational high schools to revert to providing single-sex education. The last years of Saddam Hussein's government, ending early 2003, further downgraded the majority of women and girls' activities to traditional roles within the home; it also reflected a reversion to conservative religious and tribal traditions.

Women not being able to find employment in recent years is of consequence of these laws, with women stating that one of the main reasons being that they have low level of education and/or skills, also citing family opposition, conflict related issues, and deficiency of fundamental work skills. Lack of education and awareness of their rights also limits women's empowerment and employment opportunities.

Protection Considerations

Effects of ISIS on Iraqi Population

ISIS has held notable control over Iraq for over four years, and in that time Iraqi citizens have suffered through a vast number of atrocities and human rights abuses. While men make up the majority killed in armed combat, women and children suffer more from indirect effects of war.

Women and children have a high mortality rate due to indirect factors such as disease, domestic and conflict related violence, economic devastation, and are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence.

For men, the effect of conflict perpetuates further than numbers of men being killed or fleeing their areas of origin to seek refuge. History has shown that when there is conflict, boys are out of school and men are out of work—this in turn makes them vulnerable to recruiting by armed groups promising pay and work because without an education or the ability to work and provide for a family, a man is emasculated.

Mental Trauma

Iraq has been plagued with years of violence. Iraqis have lost loved ones, livelihoods, homes and dignity throughout many generations of conflict. Exposure to continuous trauma has taken a toll on a vast number of Iraqis who have lived in areas liberated of ISIS occupation and IDP camps. Children that were exposed to such violence are in dire need of mental health counseling; as a result of their exposure, children are less attentive in school, withdrawn, and are more likely to become vulnerable to recruiting into armed groups in the future.

Mental health services are available in Iraq, but are extremely scarce. Mental health professions face challenges with administering aid to those in need such as funding, infrastructure, a limited number of mental health professionals, and the location of services, as healthcare is often too far away for some people to travel. One of the main challenges is the stigma surrounding mental illness in a society where families often hide these types of illnesses within their community. With a large number of the Iraqi population likely suffering from the mental traumas experience during ISIS'

reign, it is a significant security concern for the current and future stability efforts.

Increased numbers of Female Headed Households (FHH)

With a significant number of men being killed under ISIS's rule it is now estimated that up to 30% of the households in liberated areas are headed by women. Given the vast number of ISIS enforced disappearances of men, men and boys killed in conflict, and men who have perceived links to ISIS fleeing to escape capture by ISF; women have been forced into a position that their society has set them up to fail in. Without a male relative, women lack economic, physical, and social protection and support while continuing to deal with their rapidly decreasing socioeconomic sanctions.

Female-headed households residing in Ninewa Province are particularly vulnerable to protection risks due to a lack of income, according to a recent USAID/OFDA partner assessment of more than 500 vulnerable households. Although more than 64% of surveyed households reported having no source of income, female-headed households—approximately 43% of surveyed households—were particularly vulnerable, with an estimated 90% of those reporting a lack of access to sustainable income or resorting to begging or borrowing money. This could lead to further significant implications such as women being forced to marry off their daughters or sending children to work- resulting in children dropping out of school and women feeling less empowered to take higher roles in their respective communities.

Explosive Remnants of War (ERWs)

It is estimated by the U.S. Conventional Weapons Destruction Program that Iraq is tainted by 10 to 15 million landmines, unexploded ordinances (UXOs), IEDs, and ERWs from conflicts dating back to the 1940s. A number of large barrier minefields and UXOs remain along the Iran/Iraq boarder due to the conflicts of the 1980s. Between the wars in 1990-1991 and the conflict that began in 2003, substantial numbers of UXOs were scattered throughout the country, with the majority of the contamination concentrated in the south.

In retaliation for being driven out of their previously held territories by ISF, ISIS laid deadly traps in homes, on streets, and in schools with the intent to harm any ISF or Iraqis citizens returning home to their areas of

origins. However, it is unclear at this time just how many IED's ISIS left in their wake in various villages. Because of this, the explosive hazard problem in Iraq is very multifaceted, extensive, and exceeds the capacity of the existing resources to address it. The Government of Iraq, the UN, and other national and international stakeholders have prioritized the clearance of explosive hazards as a crucial first step to any rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

Gender and Sexual Based Violence

At the hands of both ISIS and armed actors, both men and boys, women and girls have experienced rape and sexual violence. This type of sexual violence is also known as Conflict-Related Sexual Violence [CRSV]. In many cases civilians were often targeted deliberately; women and girls as a reward for fighting and men and boys to garner forced confessions or information.

Survivors of sexual violence often have difficulties accessing treatment for their injuries, with reports of women being turned away from hospitals and health care clinics because most centers are either unequipped or unwilling to treat survivors. There is a general lack of awareness regarding survivor's medical needs and guidelines for medical response. In addition, many girls and women do not even attempt to access medical treatment due to the social stigma attached to sexual violence, as reporting the violence can lead to other serious social and cultural consequences such as rejection and re-victimization.

Displacement

During ISIS' climb to power and control, the radical group imposed their harsh rules on many cities of Iraq. Business owners and farmers were heavily extorted, classrooms co-opted, and livelihoods were destroyed. To avoid these brazen neglects of their basic human rights and fighting for control over territory, many families were forced to flee their homes and live in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps.

As of 31 August 2018, there is 1.92 million people living in IDP camps across Iraq. Such a rapid influx of people fleeing ISIS occupation placed significant strain on the economic environmental and infrastructure of other areas or towns. With offensive operations complete in Iraq, IDP camp inhabitants face a wide range of challenges such as IEDs and booby

trapped homes, tribal/village acceptance of returnees, and lack of employment opportunities.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) IN IRAQ ¹	
Governorate	Confirmed Number of IDPs ²
Ninewa	598,578
Dahuk	349,776
Erbil	216,570
Salah al-Din	163,812
Sulaimaniya	150,888
Kirkuk	120,798
Baghdad	85,080
Anbar	71,664
Diyala	62,172
Karbala	23,004
Babil	20,496
Najaf	17,322
Basrah, Dhi Qar, Maysan, Muthanna, Qadisiya, and Wasit	40,296
TOTAL	1.92 million

¹Source: IOM, August 31, 2018. These figures represent the number of IDPs confirmed through the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM). The situation remains extremely fluid, and IDP figures continue to fluctuate. ²These figures represent displacement since January 2014 and do not account for IDPs displaced by previous crises.

Security Challenges in Internally Displaced Persons Camps

A well-documented direct effect of conflict is the mass movement and congregation of internally displaced persons and refugees. Inside of these camps humanitarian representatives have witnessed inhumane conditions and abusive behavior such as verbal abuse, malnutrition and denial of access to healthcare. There are numerous alleged cases of rape and misuse of basic services in order to exploit women and girls (i.e. demanding sexual favors in exchange for access to food or medicine), and also to exploit men and boys into forced confessions of ISIS affiliation by way of exploitation.

Forced Evictions and Camp Consolidations

Since October 2017, over 3,500 families in Salah al-Din, 2,400 in Anbar and 400 in Baghdad have been forcibly evicted from camps and informal settlements. Many protection partners are present outside the camp as they are denied access to the camps to monitor the evictions.

Baghdad - IDPs often leave Baghdad IDP camps following eviction threats and settle in nearby residential areas in order to avoid being evicted from the area. This makes them vulnerable to arrests or renewed evictions. In many cases the forced evictions were overseen by the Baghdad Operations Command (BOC).

Salah al Din – some local police are confiscating identification documents to force IDPS to leave the complex within a very short timeframe (less than 24 hours). Although the evictions are not enforced, most families leave the IDP camps within a week of the eviction notice.

Kirkuk – IDP camp closures were initiated due to concerns about services in the camps. These closures were coordinated with humanitarian actors and authorities on the ground to ensure IDPs were provided with security clearances and escorted to checkpoints.

ISIS Affiliated Families - Foreign and Local

Iraqis fleeing territories under ISIS control who are not cleared in initial security screenings due to suspicions of their involvement with ISIS are generally transferred into the custody of security bodies, most commonly the Anti-Terrorism, Anti-Crime Directorates in Iraq and the Asayish in areas controlled by the KRG. In all such cases documented by Amnesty International, security forces fail to present arrests, search warrants or tell distraught families where their relatives are being taken. This breaches Article 92 of the Iraqi Code of Criminal Procedures (CCP), which requires that a person may be arrested only on the basis of a judicial warrant and informed of the reason for their arrest and of any charges against them.

Inside of these detention camps, many families are denied access to food, water and health care. They are routinely blocked from obtaining new or replacement identity cards and other civil documents. This often means that these women cannot move freely, work, or collect family pensions, and

that their children cannot attend school. They face severe restrictions on their freedom of movement, whether due to the fact that they do not have the proper documentation or that camp authorities block them from leaving, thus placing them in de facto detention. These women have endured sexual harassment and sexual violence including rape. Many of them have also been subjected to sexual exploitation.

Male detainees are subjected to torture and other ill-treatment at the hands of the security actors according to testimonies of released detainees. They endure harsh interrogations to be coerced into confessions before their appearance before judicial authorities. Detainees are frequently interrogated without the presence of a lawyer by security forces on the detention camps which is a grave cause for concern. Torture and the reliance on confessions and other statements extracted through coercion or torture are prohibited by Iraq's Constitution (Article 37.1.c) and under Iraqi law.

Government of Iraq and Non-Governmental Organizations

High political instability is a major hindrance in allowing the Iraqi government to address the crucial challenges necessary for country stabilization- such as the formation of a new government, ongoing withdrawal of foreign troops, the political disagreement over the disputed territories, the disarmament of armed groups and militias and the integrations of some of those groups into the Iraqi security forces. Without addressing seriously those concerns, stability & security would not be guaranteed.

Key Stakeholders

Iraqi Ministry of Health

The Iraqi Ministry of health (MoH) is the backbone of the health system in Iraq and the main health care provider. The Iraqi MoH is centrally funded by the government and delivers services through hospitals, primary health centers and public health clinics.

While the MoH has allegations of being corrupt, they have partnered with the World Health Organization (WHO) to pursue improvements to health security in the country through strengthening preparedness and response capabilities. The partnership will also continue to address health security threats through a series of capacity-building workshops for frontline health care workers which will be funded in part by USAID and ECHO.

The long-term crisis affecting Iraq has weakened the country's capacity to respond to major public health threats. Many avoidable shortcomings in the health sector that result in poor quality health services are due to inaccessible data, information, and knowledge. Given Iraq's increased vulnerability to disease outbreaks, continued investment in health security is paramount if excess morbidity and mortality from epidemic-prone diseases are to be averted.

Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense

The Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MoI) is the government body that oversees policing and border control in Iraq and is comprised of various Iraqi Security Forces. The Iraqi Ministry of Defense (MoD) is the national military institution that is responsible for defending the borders and protecting the people from internal and external threats by coordination and cooperation with other governmental ministries and establishments.

Reports of corruption within both establishments are prevalent, although surveys suggest that the people of Iraq feel as if the security forces have been vital in the defeat of ISIS. Building the trust of the population in the government is one of the most crucial components in creating a sustainable peace in Iraq.

Other Stakeholders include:

- **Tribal leaders/ Village elders/Religious leaders-** Among Iraq's Shiite majority, religious leaders appear to be a more potent political force; in the Sunni population, religious leaders have a lower public profile. In smaller cities and rural areas, especially in the Shiite-dominated south, reports indicate that many tribal leaders played intermediary roles between occupying authorities and the Iraqi people.
- **International Organizations-** Organizations such as UN representatives (UNAMI, UNHCR, UNOCHA) are key stakeholders in Iraq due to the role they have in providing humanitarian assistance to millions of displaced Iraqis and Iraqis in need. These organizations have access to and trust from some of Iraq's more vulnerable populations.

Non-Governmental Organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been playing a major role in providing humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. At first most of these NGOs were dedicated to humanitarian and relief efforts, but NGOs have since begun to focus on human rights and democratic development, including elections and constitutional reform. Their engagement in Iraq is undeniably necessary for several reasons:

- There are still huge humanitarian and development needs in Iraq that the government does not yet have the capacity to effectively address
- They build the capacity of the Iraqi NGOs through partnership in the field
- They involve community members in a way that promotes their ownership over decision making. This is fundamental to ensure an adequate and sustainable recovery process

The work and efforts of NGOs are an integral part of the peacebuilding processes at work in Iraq. Families effected directly by the consequences of ISIS rely heavily upon these organizations for housing, education, training, food, and health. Some NGOs are even instrumental in programs to empower women, provide mental health services, and trade skills.

Major NGOs operating within Iraq include:

- **International Organization of Migration (IOM)**- provides services and advice in relation to migration to governments and migrants, including displaced persons and refugees
- **War Child UK**- provides psychosocial support, education, and protection to children
- **Sanad for Peacebuilding**- provides administrative and technical support to build and strengthen peace, democracy and human rights in Iraq by providing support and technical expertise to civil society networks
- **The Free Yezidi Foundation**- provides comprehensive assistance to all Yezidis in need
- **Rehabilitation, Education and Community Health (REACH)**- focuses include exactly what the name suggests
- **Iraq Health Access Organization (IHAO)**- provides primary health services

Most NGOs do not use armed protection, preferring to utilize a security model that relies on seeking acceptance & support of the communities where they work. This is an important practice due to locals having more trust in NGOs that are generally unaffiliated with the militaries of outside nations which sheds further light on the importance of cooperation, proper policing and security protocols from the ISF.

Gender Participation Considerations

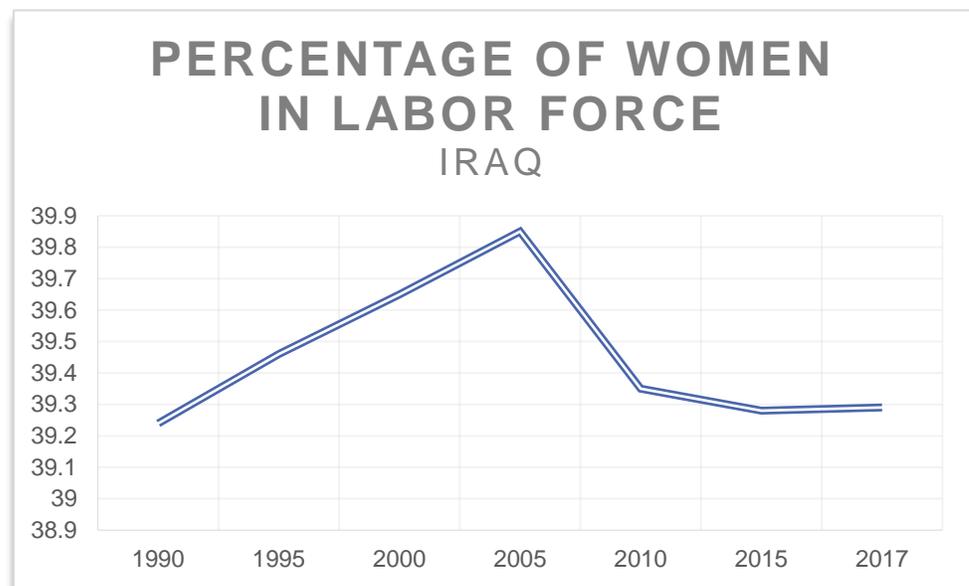
Barriers to Women's Participation in the Workforce

Insecurity in Iraq is a significant obstacle to women's political engagement and participation and this has led many women to leave politics or activism. Social and cultural barriers also often hinder women's participation in Iraq, particularly the patriarchal cultural norm whereby women often need permission to engage in activities outside the home. These barriers inform decision-making and are thus reinforced in post-conflict reconstruction and political settlements.

Peacebuilding in Iraq also often relies on tribal hierarchy, religious leaders and the established political actors, thus restricting women's room for involvement. Additionally, for women to become involved in Iraq's peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, they often have to rely on partisan support and thus become an extension of their sponsor. As a result women who could promote women's interests and/or have a history of campaigning for women's rights and participation are often overlooked and as a result these issues are sidelined. Therefore, it is argued that in order to advance women's role in peacebuilding a key challenge is to shift the mind-set of Iraqi society and thus considerable support and capacity building is needed for women's organizations. Suzan Aref, Director of the Iraqi Women's Empowerment Organization, contends that it is pointless having new laws for women, or services if women cannot take advantage of or access them. Thus, education is needed in order for these laws to be internalized by the wider society, so that they can actually be implemented.

Participation in the Labor Market

Iraqi women's overall economic participation is low. The labor force participation rate (that is, the proportion of the working-age population that actively engages in the labor market either by working or looking for work) among young women aged 15-24 is 8%, while the corresponding percentage for young men is 48%. For women aged 15 years and above, the labor force participation rate is only 14% (compared to 69% for men). Globally, the labor force participation rate of women is 52%.



(www.data.worldbank.org)

Home-based Responsibilities/ Spousal Acceptance- Generally, it is perceived by men that women cannot be effective in their duties within the home if they are employed outside of the home, and this is problematic due in part to social/ tribal norms whereas a woman's responsibilities to the home and family comes first.

Societal Views and Perceptions- For many Iraqi men, especially in rural areas, women are considered to be followers of men in both the household and society. Women are not perceived to be as capable as men in public and political affairs or as decision makers. They are often limited to the stereotypical roles of child-bearing and managing internal household affairs.

Educational Drawbacks- Low participation in the labor market is a consequence of women's lower levels of education and lack of skills together with a mix of legal barriers as well as cultural and social obstacles.

Traditional cultural and social factors often remain obstacles to improving access to education for girls. The main reasons for women failing to complete their education are the refusal of their families and early marriage.

Security Issues- security factors for employed women ranges from unsafe/ unreliable transportation (if any) to being subjected to physical and/or verbal abuses, especially for women living within IDP camps or women in tribes with deeply religious roots that may not agree to women outside of the home.

Young Men's Vulnerability to Recruitment by Armed Groups

Iraqi citizens perceive that a man's appropriate marriage age is 19-24 years of age. Armed conflict disrupts life development and young men are often unable to form their own families, serving to emasculate and alienate them within their communities.

Among displaced persons, adolescent men are considered the most vulnerable to recruitment into violent extremism for a few reasons:

- Armed groups give them income to attract a spouse and start a family
- Young men are bored in conflict settings, with no other livelihood options
- Inclusion in a group gives them a sense of purpose and community in a society otherwise fragmented by war
- Societal Standards for Men
Lack of Employment Opportunities and Education

Initiatives for Increased Inclusion of Women in the Iraqi Security Forces

To ensure all of Iraqi society is afforded the same safety and security, it is important to have women representation in the ISF. The effective employment of women in all areas of the security force has been proven to benefit the community immensely. To recruit women in ISF the CJTF-OIR is looking at several initiatives such as:

- **Media campaign** – this is designed to educate the local population on the benefits of female police in the community.
 - The fight to defeat ISIS has demonstrated that females are capable of undertaking demanding roles within the security sector in areas such as counter insurgency and terrorism, border crossings and checkpoints.
 - The benefit to communities of females undertake local police functions would assist the police investigate crimes such as domestic violence, child abuse and human trafficking.
 - Highlight the potential employment streams that females can undertake within the security sector to provide critical income and stability for their families.

- **Training and Development** – an important factor to increasing female participation in the security sector is to ensure facilities and training are provided at the same standard as their male counterparts.
 - An initiative being undertaken by CJTF-OIR is to improve the MoI Female Police Training Academy. Currently the academy graduates between 1500 to 2000 female graduates each year which is considerably less than the male academy. Improving classrooms, teaching aids and general facilities will allow the female academy to train more females in each course, thus graduating more female police officers each year (target is 5000 per year).
 - CJTF-OIR only teaches two female police courses that are based around gender and protection issues. To increase female participation in areas such as investigation and trafficking, CJTF-OIR will need to change its curriculum to incorporate more female courses. This is achievable; however, CJTF-OIR facilities will need to be improved to ensure there are both male and female accommodation and ablution blocks.

- **Extent of Leadership Commitment to Gender Equality** – a critical step to increasing female participation in the ISF is the support of the MoI and MoD leadership. This critical support would ensure females are employed in all areas of the MoI and MoD. A first step would be incorporated how the Iraqi Security Road Map to ensure strategies and funding support initiatives.

Effects of ISIS occupation on Children

Traumas caused by ISIS Occupation

Hundreds of thousands of children have spent up to three years trapped under ISIS control and endured deeply traumatizing experiences. Children have been forced to witness executions and the murder of their friends and family. Their education has been disrupted and replaced with exposure to a warped and violent ideology. It is hard to truly appreciate the harm these experiences will have had on these children, but what is clear is the need for dedicated and prolonged support for the harm to be addressed. If critical psychosocial services are not provided by the GoI or UN providers, children exposed to the trauma inflicted by ISIS could potentially support similar armed actors in the future and come into direct conflict with CJTF-OIR.

Lack of Security and Unsafe Conditions

For children living in IDP camps they continue to encounter various threats to their safety and have challenges in accessing their rights. For most families having fled recently liberated ISIS controlled territories, their proximity has created suspicion of ISIS affiliation and sympathy despite being powerless to resist ISIS domination of their lives.

This is extremely problematic for ISIS suspected children and their families as the ISF continue to search for ISIS fighters that have escaped into the IDP population. Proper policing measures influenced by comprehensive training of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states:

“Children shall be held in conformity with the law and [detention] shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time by coalition forces could ease the burden placed on children detained without due process.”

Educational Challenges

It is important for CJTF-OIR to understand how the education of children has been effected by the ISIS occupation. Being able to understand which schools closed and which schools remained open and taught an ISIS ideology could assist the ISF understand issues occurring in the community.

Challenges on IDP Camps and in Communities

- **Very large Class sizes-** the school infrastructure is inadequate to cater for the increased numbers of children: rooms designed for 35 students hold classes as large as 80. Children share desks, often with three or four having to occupy a seat designed for two, with others forced to sit on window ledges. Such large numbers of pupils, far from optimal class sizes, degrades the ability of the child to learn.
- **Classes taught by unqualified volunteer teachers-** many towns and IDP camps lack qualified teachers for newly opened schools. As with the rest of society, many teachers were either killed or fled areas as ISIS occupied towns. The void is now being filled by unqualified volunteer teachers who are eager to assist children, however the level of education being taught is well below the national standard.
- **Financial constraints-** even trained, qualified contract teachers do not receive a regular salary, with many not being paid for months. Teachers understandable concerned about providing for themselves and their families can result in distraction and absenteeism as they seek paid employment elsewhere.
- **Lack of teaching and classroom equipment-** teachers reported an inadequate provision of classroom materials, furniture and age/subject appropriate textbooks in many of the schools in their area.
- **Child labor-** many children are now seeking employment to supplement their family income. This leaves them with limited time to attend class, while mental and physical tiredness reduces their ability to concentrate when they do attend classes.
- **Attitudes towards the education of girls-** although in most households the education of girls is permitted, it will always come second to marriage, household responsibilities, and if the family is impoverished, the boy's education becomes priority and often times girls are forced to drop out of school
- **Lack of transportation for long distances in unsafe zones-** generally women in Iraq are hesitant to travel to far from home for any reason,

given the recent conflicts in Iraq, traveling nearly any distance from the home is dangerous due in part to poor security in most areas, and the risk of UXOs and ERWs

Disabilities- some men, women, and children in Iraq suffer from disabilities as a result of years of fighting (i.e. mental illnesses such as post-traumatic stress disorders and injuries to the head, loss of limbs and/or motor functions, etc.) that makes attending school particularly difficult, especially when a school may not be equip to handle individuals with extensive disabilities

School Attendance

With over 1.2 million children, including 90% of children in conflict-affected areas out of school, it is clear that the likelihood of an entire generation of children in Iraq being lost is increasing with every passing school year. Quality education and availability of schooling is scarce for children on and off of IDP camps. For children with access to schooling, their hours are very limited and can only attend classes for a few hours a day- which severely impedes on their ability to catch up on what they have missed over years of conflict. Other educational challenges for children include:

- Half of the schools are in conflict-affected governorates with 157 attacks on schools recorded in 2017.
- Children affected by conflict and violence has their abilities to actively participate in learning processes negatively impacted by their experiences
- A shortage of teachers due in part to under payment and lack of investment in their development

Recent assessments by Save the Children have found that nearly half of 8 year olds cannot identify a minimum of four Arabic letters (out of 10) and less than one-third of 12 year olds can read at a second grade level. Younger children have lost out on critical early years of education and are thus much less ready to succeed in school when presented with an opportunity to enroll. Additionally, many conflict affected children have been exposed to varying levels conflict and violence which has a negative impact on their ability to actively participate in the learning process.

Failure to balance the educational requirements and the psychosocial needs of children may result in high drop-out rates, poor learning outcomes and exposure to negative coping mechanisms such as recruitment into armed groups, early marriage and child labor. Under investment in Iraq's educational system risks creating a generation of children not meeting their full potential and such will not be able to contribute to society and the rebuilding of Iraq's future. These children, especially young men, will then be at a higher risk of being recruited into armed groups.

Way Forward

Key Leader Engagements

By working through and in tandem with the Iraqi Security Forces, the CJTF-OIR can raise the critical points annotated within this document to the respective government departments so that a central government approach can be initiated and executed. The ISF plays an instrumental part in informing the GoI of issues faced by the various communities of Iraq (i.e. sexual assault, trauma, health and welfare, crime, etc.) that are key elements to the ongoing instability in Iraq.

Coalition Gender and Protection Training

The CJTF-OIR has constructed and began the implementation of a Gender and Protection Program of Instruction (POI) that aims to train Senior and Junior Leadership, Qwat Khasah (Iraqi Special Forces), Iraqi Security Forces, and Kurdish and Iraqi Female Police Officers in gender and protection considerations that should be considered with each of their respective, unique situations.

General Course Overview:

The training will explain what it means to protect vulnerable people and how a gender balance can assist communities move forward from conflict.

Comprehensive Course Contents:

1. Benefits of gender diversity in the military and police forces and in the community
2. Gender and sexual based violence as a tool of war (UNSCR 1308, 1325, 1820 and 1888).
3. Recruitment and use of children in armed conflict (UNSCR 1261-2252)
4. Protection of vulnerable people during conflict (men, women, boys and girls), including human remains and mass graves
5. Child protection (UNSCR 1261-2225)

6. IDP control and movement, including dealing with the UN and NGOs
7. Slavery/ human trafficking
8. Genocide and ethnic cleansing

Training courses range from four to ten weeks depending on the subject matter.

Recognizing Early-Warning Indicators of Conflict Related Sexual Violence

It is important for CJTF-OIR to adhere to the early-warning indicators of Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in Iraq and support key stakeholders in not only taking action to respond to CRSV incidences, but to also detect, anticipate and take preventative action.

The “Joint Communiqué of the Republic of Iraq and the United Nations on Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence” provides a framework for constructive engagement to prevent and respond to CRSV. The indicators are one way of supporting implementation of the agreement. Some sexual violence indicators are:

- Continued reporting of CRSV received from victims, witnesses and secondary sources
- Reports of missing wives, daughters, mothers and other female relatives continued to be received and documented at the Office of Abducted Affairs/KRG
- Tendency to fall back on tribal structures and practices to address conflict and define justice; in certain cases leading to the violation of women’s rights
- Reports on the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence being used to extract confessions.
- Reports of male detainees forced to remain naked for long periods while in their cells or during interrogation.
- Threats to/reprisals against victims, witnesses and others involved in prosecuting sexual violence offences

These indicators should also inform what actions to take and to enhance preparedness to respond to observed risks and to improve how sexual violence is reflected in contingency plans. Furthermore, the information generated should be used to alert both national and international actors as well as communities at risk.

Reconciliation and the Reintegration

Reconciliation is crucial to ensuring the return of some 2.2 million people displaced by the conflict, including thousands with family ties to the militants. Yet many locals in different areas of Iraq often try to block the return of families due to the stigma of perpetrating or being a survivor of violence. A key issue that can complicate reconciliation efforts is tribal, religious and ethnic affiliations. However, the ISF can play a critical role in facilitating reconciliation and reintegration within the community.

The inclusion of women in developing and implementing reconciliation and reintegration programs can greatly assist communities build a lasting peace. History has demonstrated when women are involved in peace building initiatives, peace is seven times more likely to last than if they are excluded. CJTF-OIRs advocacy for the inclusion of women in Iraq's reconciliation and reintegration plan can be achieved through key leader engagements with the GoI and ISF leadership.

Iraq is a patchwork of communities—Sunni and Shia Muslims, ethnic Kurds, and smaller religious minorities such as Christians and Yazidis. In areas where conflicts became violent in the past, and where the risk is high now, community-level dialogues led by Iraqis themselves have been very cost-effective to prevent further bloodshed. An examples of a local reconciliation and reintegration agreement is as follows:

- Tribal sheikhs from Hawija- southwest of Kirkuk, created a roadmap for using dialogue to resolve differences, agreeing to seek justice through the rule of law instead of through tribal traditions that would hold an entire tribe responsible for the crimes of its members.

Reconciliation entails the transformation of sentiments among local populations, such as dealing with those accused of working with IS. In this regard, tribal institutions have used their own mechanisms of honor, reconciliation and reintegration when the Iraqi justice system has failed.

Summary of Recommendations

“If gender reform is to take place, it will have to be within the context of Islamic Law.”

Protection

The damaging effects of conflict, such as displacement, the destruction of community structures, poverty, and lack of resources increase the risk of gender-based violence. CJTF-OIR, through the ISF, should reinforce its efforts to provide timely and comprehensive assistance and protection, in the full respect of humanitarian principles, to protect those in need from all forms of gender-based violence.

Strengthen Prevention Measures:

Prevention measures should include:

- Ensuring that the implementation of our operational activities prevents putting affected populations, especially girls and women, at risk of gender-based violence.
- Supporting national authorities to ensure effective security for civilian populations, particularly women and children, including through policing and deterrence measures.
- Promoting the effective administration of justice so as to strengthen accountability, including by providing legal counselling and supporting victims/survivors' access to justice.
- Providing training programs for police and military personnel on the prohibition of sexual violence in international legal instruments, and
- Encouraging the increased presence of women in police and the military.
- Implement proper forensic examinations of women prior to admission to any detention facility. If evidence of rape is found, provide immediate treatment and accountability for the perpetrator
- Supporting capacity development and training of national governments, national NGOs, and local communities in undertaking preventive measures.

Addressing Gender Discrimination/ Implementation:

Gender inequality is directly linked to gender-based violence. Addressing gender discrimination, including by ensuring that women and girls become full participants in decision-making, is a critical step towards ending this form of violence.

Promoting Reintegration and Reconciliation

There are major security risks to ignoring the needs of returnees and families formerly suspected of having ties to ISIS. It is imperative that the GoI, with the assistance of the ISF, Governorates, religious, ethnic and tribal leaders support the reintegration of millions of Iraqis back into the community. If people are not reintegrated then they may become unproductive, turn to crime or may simply join new armed groups out of desperation, lack of options in the community. This can have a long term destabilizing effect on Iraq.

It is also important to understand that there are also risks to providing assistance to returnees and formerly suspected ISIS families/sympathizers. If people in the surrounding neighborhood cannot afford their own basic needs, they are likely to resent vital support that is provided to families once considered to be ISIS supporters. This may lead to destabilizing communities again. There is thus an urgent need in any future policy or programming, for transparent and effective communication between formerly suspected ISIS families, tribal leaders, village elders, community members, government and organizations providing assistance.

Promote Compliance of International Law

In situations of armed conflict, gender-based violence, must be seen in the broader context of violence against civilians (to include civilians in IDP camps). In order to be successful, CJTF-OIR, through the ISF, must encourage Local and State Governments to comply with the provisions of international law during and after armed conflicts. The GoI must support more decisive action on the part of State and Local Governments to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. Some of the actions include:

- Direct all judges and security ministries that evidence, and not confessions, is the primary basis for all criminal convictions, including where suspects are charged with terrorism
- Implement a policy of zero tolerance for all forms of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, especially sexual abuse
- Issue and publicize directives stating that the government will not tolerate illegal arrests, torture, and other ill-treatment by law enforcement officials, will promptly investigate reports of illegal arrests, torture and ill-treatment, and will hold accountable those responsible
- Announce a zero tolerance policy for corruption including soliciting bribes from IDP camp residents/detention facility detainees.

Improve Reporting and Data Collection:

Increase capacity to monitor and report on acts of gender based violence, particularly sexual violence, on the basis of international law, and support mechanisms for seeking redress. This will include enhancing cooperation with human rights mechanisms (treaty bodies and special procedures), including in particular the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, regional human rights mechanisms, and human rights NGOs. Promote systematic sex- and age-disaggregated data collection and analysis as a basis for developing effective programming as well as monitoring and evaluation. For example:

- Provide detainees and prisoners with written regulations governing their treatment and authorized methods of seeking information and making complaints. If the prisoner is illiterate, provide such information orally
- Investigate all allegations of sexual abuse, torture and ill-treatment, and institute disciplinary measures or criminal prosecution, as appropriate, against officials at all levels who are responsible for perpetrating or condoning the abuse of detainees
- Modernize the Justice Ministry's record-keeping, and inform prisoners about available grievance mechanisms

Security Sector Reform

Reforming the security sector is at the heart of the changes occurring in the new Iraq. The successful reform and rebuilding of the Iraqi security sector remain vital CJTF-OIR goals. It is imperative that the international communities continue to identify areas for reform, adapt policies to the evolving political environment, and adopt more efficient implementation.

Implementation of Two Generations of Reform:

- Major Structural Reforms Must Happen in Stages of Democratic Transition
- Prevent active military interference in the political sphere
- Establish appropriate constitutional arrangements and chains of command
- Create civilian-led ministries of defense
- Separate military from policing functions
- Instituting a legal framework to govern military

Micro-Level Reforms to Establish Democratic Control over Defense and Security Policy

- Build civilian capacity in the security sector
- Broaden democratic involvement in defense and security planning
- Ensuring an even distribution of power
- Focused, adequate, training for army and security forces
- Establish Leadership Development programs that emphasizes:
 - **Initiative:** Iraqi officers are encouraged to innovate, use their skills and act decisively, often without guidance, to achieve their mission;
 - **Subordination to civilian authorities:** Officers must strictly observe the principle that the military is subject to civilian control and they must not involve themselves in domestic politics or policy;
 - **Discipline:** Officers are required to obey all legal orders in peace or war, but they must not carry out illegal orders that undermine democracy or the Iraqi constitution;
 - **Competence:** A continual pursuit of excellence, knowledge and education is encouraged throughout an officer's career; and,
 - **Loyalty:** Officers must show loyalty both up and down the chain of command-upwards to the democratically-elected government and downwards to their subordinates and men through respect.

There must be an even application of both generations of reform in order for the “culture” in the security sector to change.

While many elements of reform in Iraq are time sensitive, the establishment of large-scale structural reforms and institutions, first-generation reforms, is still, for the most part, complete. However, the work of “cultural” change (the second-generation of micro-level reforms) is still ongoing. It is recommended that the international community continue to encourage democratic practices and must apply strong diplomatic and financial coercion when necessary. Particularly if the critical democratic principles are threatened in the future. The delicate nature of the Iraqi political and security structure means that the loosening of even one thread of reform could cause the entire system to unravel.

Education

As the international community comes together to plan for the recovery and reconstruction of Iraq, investing in the education of all children is the best way to build a stronger, more stable Iraq. The Government of Iraq and international partners should support education in Iraq by:

- Building and rehabilitating schools, including by easing bureaucratic impediments to school rehabilitation, as well as ensuring the clearance of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and explosive remnants of war (ERW) from schools. The Government of Iraq should consider endorsing and implementing the ‘Safe School Declaration’ to ensure schools are protected from attack and military use in the future.
- Prioritizing and investing in early childhood education to support younger children who have lost out on critical years of learning and to ensure that they are entering into early grades ready to learn and with critical basic skills that will enable them to succeed and progress in formal school. This includes developing and implementing a policy on early childhood development (ECD) and regulations for kindergartens to ensure that they meet minimum quality learning criteria.
- Supporting children of all age groups to successfully learn from a quality certified formal and non-formal education, that mainstream foundational and life skills from early grades.

- Ensure that children and youth are offered multiple/recognized pathways to access learning opportunities, beyond formal education.
- Provide specialized support services, including non-formal education and accelerated learning programs, for children and youth who are out of school or not attending school on a regular basis and who require additional contact hours and targeted support with trained teachers.
- Ensure continued partnership and support for remedial support programs that assist children and youth with critical gaps that cannot be met with regular classroom education.
- Increase funding to age and gender appropriate mental health and psychosocial programming in humanitarian contexts. This includes expanding school-based group interventions such as Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) by training teachers or other local community members to broaden children's access to supportive adults and enhance the role of schools as supportive community resources.
- Reintegrating children educated under ISIS back into education. Especially children who have been taught an extremist ideology for several years. Guidelines and teacher training should be developed as part of a nationwide process to standardize reintegration. Such guidelines should be developed alongside the young people in Mosul with expert consultation. Acknowledging the differing impacts that age and gender may have had on student experience. Parents must be supported to play a role.
- Psychosocial support for teachers whom, themselves, have also gone through challenging experiences while living under ISIS control. It is critical that they too receive psychological first aid and continuous psychosocial support.
- Non-formal education opportunities need to be available so that education is accessible to all. Including to those who are working. School schedules should include flexible shifts that allow young people engaged in the labor force to attend when they are able. Donor funding is needed to pilot new approaches where flexible models can be tested.

Conclusion

To conclude, women's empowerment is a complex concept that implies social transformation in a linear progression. Although it is frequently and facilely expressed in public policy statements, it far less easily achieved. Many Iraqi women believe empowerment means something both transitory and transformational: movement from today's insufficient resources and lack of security to adequacy; from no income to increased opportunities, to be followed by legal reform and political participation.

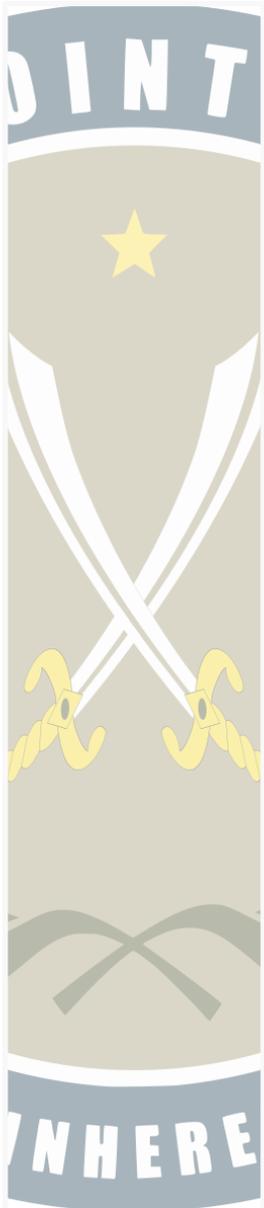
A truly sustainable peace in Iraq cannot be achieved without inclusion of women, reconciliation for the millions of displaced persons, trauma counseling and psychosocial services for populations affected by conflict, and investment in Iraqi children's education. Without proper reform of the Iraqi government and security sectors, sustaining any steps towards peace will be unseen.

CJTF-OIR can be instrumental truly in influencing these peace efforts by educating the ISF on gender and protection concerns and how they can service the communities of Iraq for the better, training and educating key actors within CJTF on gender and protection and its importance in Iraq, ensuring a link between coalition training of police and military, as well as the NGO training of local police, giving support to the ISF on gender mainstreaming efforts, and encouraging the Ministry of Iraq and the Ministry of Defense through security actors to increase female participation within the ministries.

References

Dr. Harith Hasan “Beyond Security: Stabilization, Governance, and Socioeconomic Challenges in Iraq” (July 2018)	USAID “Iraq Displacement Fact Sheet Countrywide Map” (January 12, 2018)
https://reliefweb.int/country/irq	UN OCHA “Iraq Humanitarian Bulletin” (August 2018)
Elizaveth C. Pietanza “Culture of Iraq” (2004)	Conference Note “No Lost Generation Briefing” (2018)
UN Women “EMPOWERMENT OR SUBJUGATION: An analysis of ISIL’s Gendered Messaging” (June 2018)	Jennifer Wittwer “The Holistic and Strategic Approach to Peace and Security: The Nexus between UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Gender Equality, and Culture” (July 4, 2018)
Chamila Hemmathagama “Enhancing Police Role and Responsibilities In Criminal Investigations in Iraq” (May, 10 2018)	Ms. Lanja Ibrahim Dizayee “Mental health system strengthened in Iraq” (January 28, 2009)
Report “Women Accused of IS Links Sexually Abused in Iraqi Camps” April 18, 2018)	DR. Matthew Griffiths “Girls Education in Iraq” UNICEF (2010)
War Child UK “‘I want to Go Home, but I am Afraid’ the Impact of War on Mosul’s Children” (2017)	UNFPA “Preventing Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Iraq”
“National Action Plan – for the Implementation of the United Nation Security Council Resolution 1325, Women, Peace, and Security.” (2014-2018)	Peter Khalil, Analysis Paper, “Rebuilding and Reforming the Iraqi Security Sector.” (July 9, 2006)
Sherifa D. Zuhur, “Iraq, Women’s Empowerment, and Public Policy. (December 2006)	Dietrich, L., & Carter, S. E. “Gender and Conflict Analysis in ISIS Affected Communities of Iraq. Oxford: Oxfam.” (2017)
Katharina Kneip, “Female Jihad – Women in the ISIS” (2015)	UNOCHR, “Occasional Paper: Situation of Women in Iraq.”
“Iraqi Kurds Amend Law to Reduce Honor Crimes,” AFP, (August 14, 2002); UNOCHR, “Occasional Paper: Situation of Women in Iraq.”	“Saddam Bans Iraqi Women from Work.” (June 15, 2000)
“Joint Comments by Women for a Free Iraq and Women’s Alliance for a Democratic Iraq.” (July 15, 2003)	U.N. Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (UNOCHR), “Occasional Paper: Situation of Women in Iraq.” (May 28, 2003)
Guthrie, E. “Iraq’s Women: From Poster Children to Peacemakers.” (2017)	Khodary, Y. M. “Women and Peace-Building in Iraq” Peace Review (2016)
Erika Solomon “Sunni and Shia Struggle with Iraq’s Reconciliation Process” (April 23, 2018)	“Gender-Based Violence in Iraq the Effects of Violence – Real And Perceived – on the Lives of Women, Girls, Men and Boys In Iraq” (2009)

U.S. Dept. of State “U.S. Conventional Weapons Destruction Program – Iraq” (November 28, 2017)	Relief Web “WHO and Ministry of Health build capacity of frontline health care workers in Iraq” (March 23, 2018)
---	--



Contact Information

Rebecca Gordon

LTCOL

CJTF-OIR Gender Adviser

UNON.CJTF-OIR-

CJ9.GENDER@swa.army.mil

Laporsha D. Frazier

Contractor

Gender Focal Point

laporsha.d.frazier2.ctr@mail.mil

Company Information

CJTF-OIR – ONE MISSION, MANY NATIONS

UNON.CJTF-OIR-CJ9.GENDER@swa.army.mil



**One Mission,
Many Nations**